

# Oasis

## A NOISE IN THE VALLEY

All six candidates sought out Messianic believers, and wanted to spend personal time with us as Election Day approached - even though we only constitute around 1% of the electorate in the Jordan Valley Region.

This February elections were held to choose the new Head of the Jordan Valley Regional Council, overseeing 22 villages from Capernaum in the north, around the Sea of Galilee and down along the Jordan River. This includes the village where we and most of our congregants live - Poriya Ilit. Our village of around 1000 souls, contains around 15% believers, easily the highest percentage of any secular Israeli community in the country.

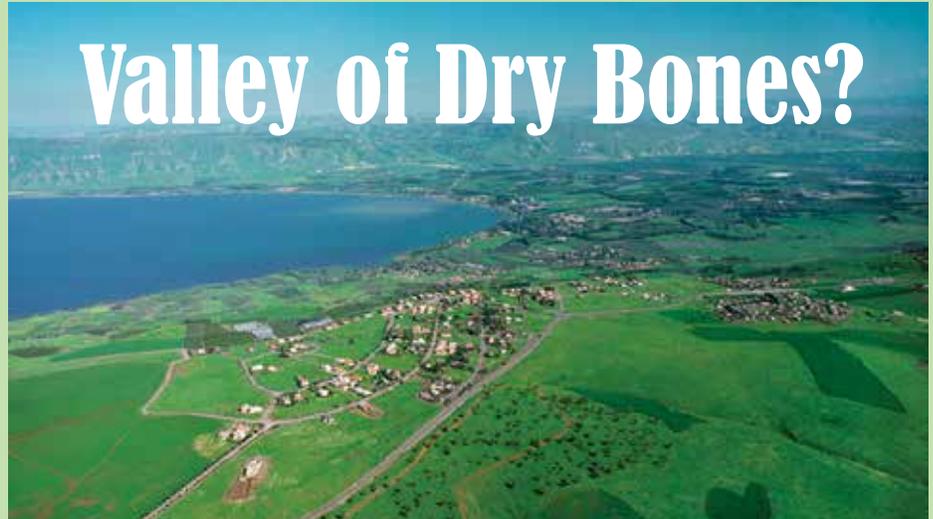
*They wanted to know who we are, and what we believe!*

You can say they wanted our vote, which of course they did, but they spent an inordinate amount of time for 1% of the electorate. The candidates told us that the local believers have made a positive impression on the society here, including students in the schools, soldiers, volunteers on various committees, and the establishment of businesses in the area. Believers have been part of the Local governing committee of Poriya Illit Village - for most of the last 20 years.

We see a broadening acceptance of our Messianic communities here in the area, and a desire to connect with us. This is part of a new trend of transition from animosity to cautious acceptance and even favor.

*We are making an impact in Israel!*

*Praise the Lord!!!* ✨



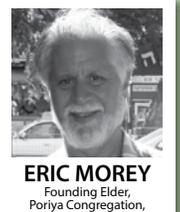
**“The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the midst of the valley...as I prophesied, there was a noise...and the bones came together...”** (Ezekiel 37:1-7)

The *Jordan Valley* is a spiritually strategic place, and possibly “the” Valley of Dry Bones God brought Ezekiel to.

- Moses looked into the Promised Land from Mount Nebo, overlooking the *Jordan Valley*
- Joshua and the children of Israel entered the Promised Land first in the *Jordan Valley*
- Elijah was transported into heaven from the *Jordan Valley*
- Yeshua established His ministry “headquarters” in the *Jordan Valley* (Capernaum), and most of His teachings and miracles took place here.

In the early 20th century, during and subsequent to the Second Aliyah (1904--1914), many of the major building blocks of the modern State of Israel were started in the *Jordan Valley* or by people who came out of the *Jordan Valley*. This includes one of the first agricultural schools, the first kibbutz, the first moshav, the Histadrut (the labor union that at one time represented 75 of the workers and owned 25% of the industry), the first health fund, the largest bank, the first department store, the largest construction company and many other institutions. Many of the heroes of the early days of Israel, such as Igal Allon and Moshe Dayan were born or bred in the *Jordan Valley*.

God brought Ezekiel in a vision to “THE” valley, seemingly a particular valley. There the dry bones were physically restored to life, from the exile (the whole of chapter 37 is about Aliyah). After the physical restoration, there was to be a spiritual restoration. If the physical restoration of the modern nation of Israel began in the *Jordan Valley*, then might it be that the *Jordan Valley* is the Valley of Dry Bones Ezekiel visited in his vision, and that the spiritual restoration of Israel may also begin here? ✨



**ERIC MOREY**  
Founding Elder,  
Poriya Congregation,

**NETWORK UPDATE from:**



# DIGGING TOGETHER

Upper Nazareth is a town built during the modern era of Israel. The majority of its inhabitants are Jews, including numerous Russian speaking immigrants. It is located adjacent to its older counterpart, Nazareth, where the population is predominantly Arab.

Over a decade ago, when the Shavei Tzion fellowship was itself only two years old, we launched a congregation in Upper Nazareth (Natzeret Illit) and **Branch** of the Galilee Fellowship was born. The Hebrew name of the congregation, "**Netzer HaGalil**," comes both from the name of the town and also from one of the prophetic names of the Messiah – Netzer meaning branch: "**...a Branch will grow from His roots. The Spirit of the LORD will rest upon Him...**" (Isaiah 11:1-2).

The congregational leader Vakif is from the traditionally Muslim Tatar ethnic group. While living in Russia, he met his future wife, who happened to be Jewish. At the time, both of them were atheists. Then their lives were transformed when they came to faith in God and His Messiah. From that moment on, they were zealous to serve the Lord. God turned Vakif's life around and eventually led him to become a Messianic *rabbi* in Upper Nazareth! With God all things are possible. He can use anyone to reach the lost – including Muslim Tatars!

We began conducting worship services in an industrial zone building of 9,000 ft<sup>2</sup> – teaching the Scriptures and organising special events for Holocaust survivors and others. A soup kitchen allowed us to serve the poor and needy of the town.

The fellowship grew. Its role in the community was recognised by the department



We just completed a session of the Discipleship and Agriculture program. Three young Israeli men in their 20's participated, along with me as facilitator. The participants came from different congregations in central and northern Israel. The 3 month long work- study program combines vocational and spiritual elements. Tents of Mercy provides oversight.

Some highlights were: studying passages from the book of Romans together, building a chicken coop, **digging** vegetable garden plots, hiking up Mt. Tabor, helping receive dozens of new baby goats as they were born on a nearby farm and ... the delicious bonus of how rainy mornings extended our time in the Word and worship by the fireplace.

We interacted with the prophesied promises of the New Covenant: Not only collectively, but also

individually, each of us has the full potential to know the Lord, and be taught by the Spirit.

**"...I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah...I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts...they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest."** (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

And so we practiced - each guy daily **digging** a well for himself in the Word and then sharing with the group what he received. ✨



Morning devotions



Chicken coop that we built together



DAVID



Vakif overseeing a Torah reading



Congregational meal

of social services as we developed friendships with its representatives. Back in 2005 the governmental perception of Messianic Jewish fellowships was quite negative. Therefore the collaboration with the local council was a great encouragement for all of us - a recognition of our work in Upper Nazareth.

For a believer living in Europe or North America it is probably hard to even conceive that such a discriminatory attitude would exist in our day. But in Israel, unfortunately, it has been the norm. Historical Christian anti-Semitism including that of the Crusades and the Inquisition, led to the name of Yeshua being unwelcomed among Jews for centuries.

## Bar Closes

Five years ago a bar opened next door to the congregation. Members of the congregation committed themselves to intercessory prayer for the situation to be resolved. And praise be to God, for He does not allow us to be tested beyond our strength. We persevered in prayer, and the bar has now been closed!

We recently made an offer to purchase the space that formerly housed the bar. With God's help, from this January the fellowship's premises has doubled in size. We give thanks to our Heavenly Father and believe that in the coming years, Netzer HaGalil will grow, not only in size, but in its influence in the city.

Expansion is costly in terms of time, effort and finances. Nonetheless, we remain determined, for we know that the Lord is with us. He is our rock in whom we trust wholeheartedly, and our reassurance comes from Him. Think about it – a

place that used to be a *den of drunkards* has been *turned into a house of worship to the King of Kings!* It's an incredible transformation. We find a comparison in the writings of Paul to Corinthian believers where he reminds them that they too were delivered from darkness.

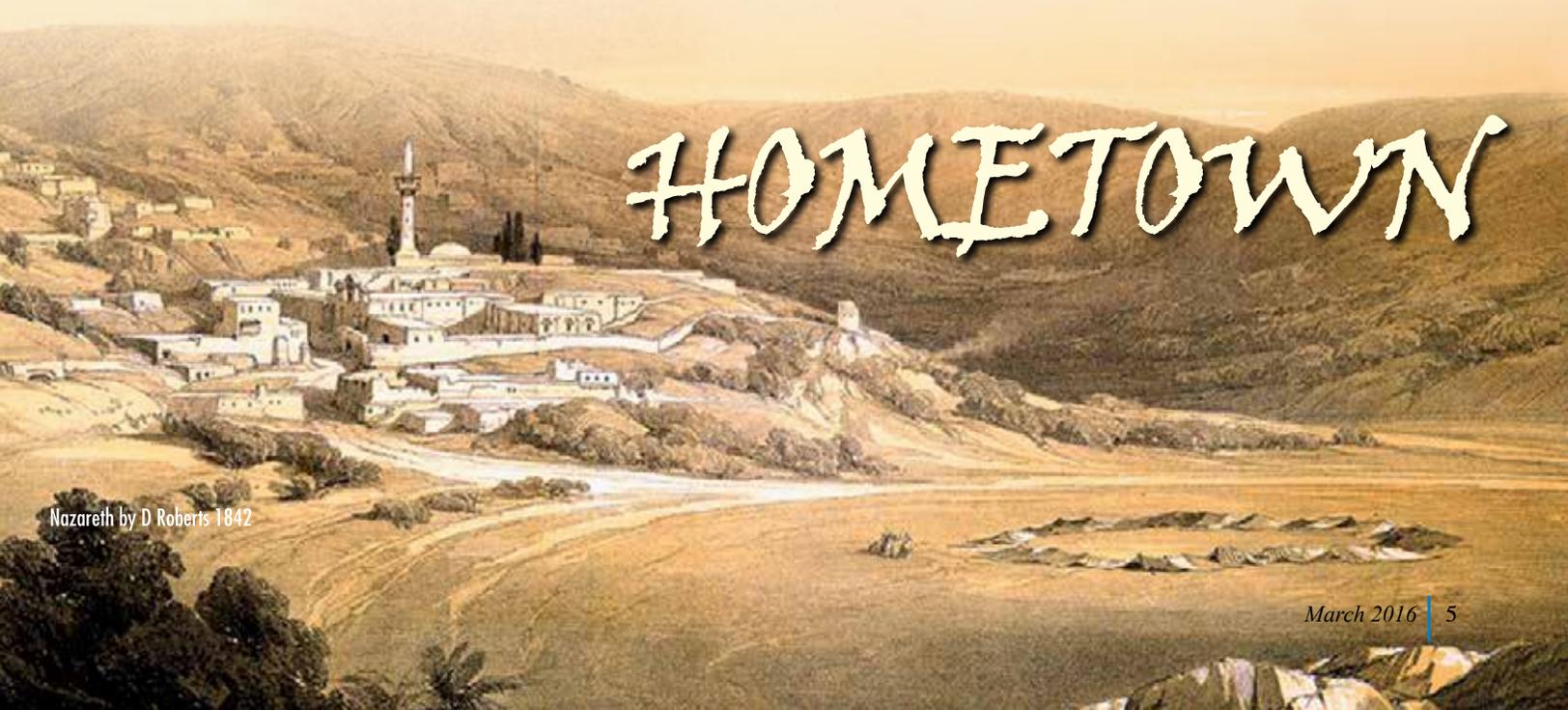
**“Do not be deceived. Neither... drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God”** (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Given the task at hand, we ask for your prayer support and ongoing intercession for the lost. Nazareth continues to be a challenging place to spread the Gospel. It is as if the *exile of the Messiah* has been extended to our days. Two thousand years ago Yeshua was driven from *His home town's* synagogue by an angry mob. His words are still relevant today: **“A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own relatives, and in his own house”** (Mark 6:4).

Evangelism and good conduct, standing in prayer and growing strong in faith – this is what we continue to pray for that we may succeed in changing the attitudes of people towards the Messiah here in His home town where He grew to manhood. We are calling upon Him to return home. ✡



LEON  
MAZIN



Nazareth by D Roberts 1842

# BURNING ALTAR ON AN ISLAND



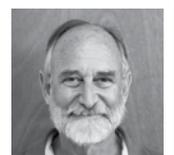
In a high mountain village on the island of Cyprus passionate worshipers are appealing to God for His Spirit to move upon the nations. Young (and not so young) lovers of Yeshua have come from France, Belgium, Germany, Rumania, Argentina, Holland, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Israel, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the U.S.A. to grow as sons and daughters of the King, preparing to serve Him wherever He leads. Their outreaches in Europe, Israel and elsewhere bear lasting fruit in healing, salvation, and relationships.

This is *Gateways Beyond*, a Messianic Jewish center for world mission. Its first session opened in the year 2000, making this year the 17th group of first year students. Each of those years it's been my delight to dive into four days of life impartation with the students, based on the rich examples of Scripture. Having just returned from my February 2016 time with them, I'm again amazed at the closeness achieved in this brief but intense encounter. The experience never fails to inspire and energize me – especially the deep, dynamic, ever-fresh praise and worship that *revs up* each morning.

Gateways' days begin against the backdrop of a small lake surrounded with pines trees. Packed into a former restaurant, several dozen students, staff, and visitors open their hearts wide to God in praise. Blues harmonica in hand, I'm caught up – fused with the worship team, feeling that we are *more alive* spending hours in this pursuit than we would be in any other. Without the music stopping, a staff member comes forward, exhorting the students to shift their attention from themselves to Yeshua. Later, a European couple receives prayer for life direction. Keen prophetic words arise from students and staff, generating fresh faith. One observes a gift for releasing young adults into servant leadership.

Warmed by a wood stove, student body and guest teacher have four hours a day to delve into God's word. Pre-dinner service time (physical maintenance of the base, meal preparation, child care, etc.) fills out the day, emphasizing the importance of simple tasks done in faithful quality. Close by, the community owns fertile farmland where grape vines, beehives, olive trees, and their own flock of sheep provide both food and vital organic experience in agriculture.

The founders of Gateways Beyond are David and Emma Rudolph, who've enriched our Tikkun covenant brotherhood for more than a quarter of a century. Drawing from their own vast experience in world ministry, and the close-knit quality of their own large family, they instilled kingdom values of mutual honor and reliance upon the Spirit, in the Gateways culture. I treasure my participation in this continuing adventure. [Average enrollment for the half-year program is 20. More information is available at [www.gatewaysbeyond.org](http://www.gatewaysbeyond.org)] ✡



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