



This summer 80 youth participated in the national Katzir-Harvest teen camp and conference. At times some of us on the staff can't help but observe these teenagers and think that they are still so young - too young - and that they still have so much to learn in life...

In spite of what we think or know, God has special plans for each and every one of them. They only need a safe place where they can get emptied of themselves and full of the infinite love of God, and that is what we try to create at the Katzir conferences.

During the latest conference there was a wonderful opportunity for the teens to open their hearts in small groups. We encouraged them to discover who they are in truth—beyond the image others may have of them, or that they may be projecting—and to recognize what is truly happening in their lives. In these discussions, God began working and touching them in their open-ness. Their hearts were so changed that in one of the evening meetings 23 teens came up front to receive Yeshua!

Afterward, that which the teens received, they also gave. The theme of the conference was, “*Freely you have received, freely give.*” In the spirit of this command, we went out onto the main streets of Tel Aviv to share the Good News. There were amazing testimonies about strangers being willing to not only listen, but also receive prayer and blessing from these teens, right there in public!

At times it seems to us that teens don't “get it”, yet we are witness to the way that God's spirit is expanding and transforming them from the inside out. The Katzir team loves to work with and serve these teenagers because we know they are in the process of becoming the ones who will soon enough teach, evangelize, be sent out, and pastor – because God has a plan for *each and every one* of them!

YGAL

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Not So

At the end of July, our Reshet (Network) Camp once again brought together elementary age children from the Tents of Mercy Network of congregations in northern Israel, for a week of fun and impartation.

Each day was full to the brim with activity and fellowship. Israeli volunteer teen-counselors accompanied the children 24/7, shepherding and caring for each member of their group. A whole team of devoted volunteers from Texas fed us all, led water games, ESL sessions and showered love on every child present. During the days we spent as a community, hearts were changed and in the evening meetings lives were dedicated to Yeshua. A number of brave young campers stood up before everyone and shared how God had spoken to them personally.

This year's theme was "Secrets of the Kingdom," taken from Matthew 13:11 where Yeshua referred to His parables as the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven. Throughout the week we sent our energetic bunch of kids "hunting" for the attributes that form God's spiritual kingdom. Each day the games and mini-sermons highlighted a different parable. One evening the camp counselors acted out the parable of the unforgiving servant. Another evening, Eitan was our



Hidden Treasure

guest speaker. He and a young camper acted out the parable of the shepherd searching for a single lost sheep. On the last day, the teaching centered on the verse from Matthew 6:21, **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also,”** and the teams went on a treasure hunt. The “prize” for each child was a bracelet stamped with that verse (and some candy too!).

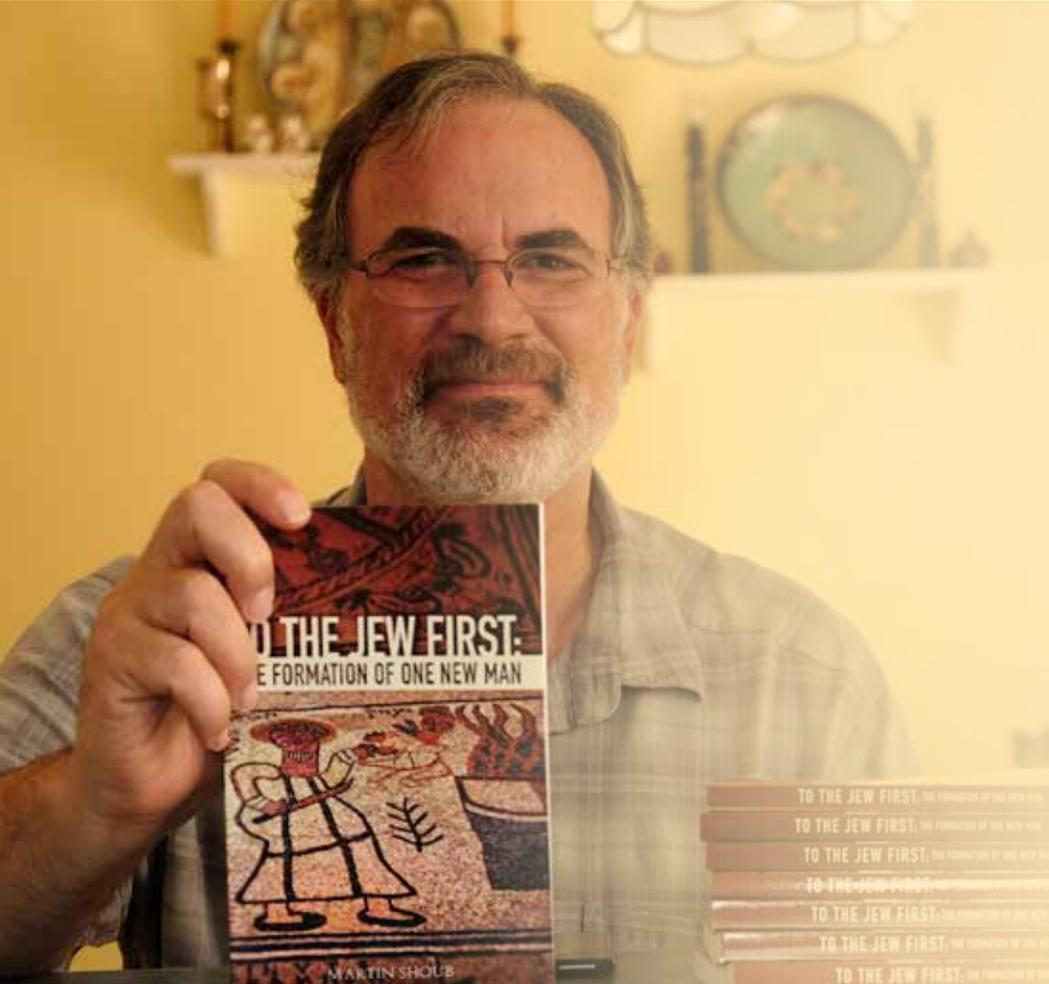
I believe that the concentrated love and teaching received by the campers year after year have a special role to play in their spiritual growth and development. It is my prayer that this summer each camper went home with the understanding that His treasures are easily found and freely given!

LEORA Camp Director



MARTY'S STORY:

A JEWISH NEW-AGER FROM MONTREAL FINDS MESSIAH



I grew up in a traditional Jewish home in Montreal. We were not observant, but Jewish identity was central to who we were. We were Jews and we stuck together. We were God's chosen people, but that status meant little to me except as a barrier that separated us from those who were not. As a teenager I began to explore all sorts of alternate, "New Age" spiritual paths. I was open to everything and everyone; everyone, except Yeshua. Despite my liberal outlook, the caution engrained in me through our people's collective distrust to "stay away from that man" was so deeply embedded I could not allow myself to consider who Yeshua was. The irony was that the more I sought for truth, the more I encountered the words of Yeshua, whether quoted out

of context by an Indian guru or through the witness of well-meaning Christians. When I was nineteen years old I had a powerful encounter with the living God. I did not understand anything about Yeshua's sacrificial death on a cross. I had almost zero theological knowledge of the Christian faith. All I really knew was that I was wrong and God was right. The offer was simply, "Will you trust me with your life? Will you follow me?"

I said yes, and my life changed in the most profound way. At once I understood that the promises God made to Abraham were real, and I was part of an enduring legacy stretching back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. My Jewish back-story was not old fables but a reality that served to bless the whole world. However, I soon disassociated myself

from that legacy! I was now a Christian. A Jewish Christian, yes, but that was no more significant than being an Italian Christian or a Chinese Christian or any other ethnicity. No more of this burden of being "The Chosen People."

Even as a Jew I accepted the narrative that the Church had replaced Israel as God's chosen people. I was grateful for my background because it linked me to how my own people had been used by God in the past, but it no longer had significance for what God was doing in the present. Like everyone around me, I "spiritualized" the Hebrew Scriptures so as to remove their significance and meaning as they related to the people who originally received them.

Then, many years later I re-discovered within the scriptures the wonderful plan to see Jew and Gentile made one in Messiah. Like any good relationship, blessings and responsibilities must flow both ways. A relationship where only one side gives and the other receives is either tragically co-dependent or sinisterly oppressive. Our Heavenly Father's plan brings mutual blessing, and mutual calling to both Jews and Gentiles - all to the praise of His glorious grace.

Paul's gospel "To the Jew first" is not the biased prejudice of a Jew who could not shed his old "chosen people" wineskin, but a beautiful love story, a revelation given to a Jew on behalf of the Gentiles he was called to serve; a love story that not only blesses both Jews and Gentiles but prepares the way for the return of Israel's king, Who is also the savior of the world.

Senior Editor's note from Eitan: It was my joy to serve side by side with Marty in Israel at Tents of Mercy for eight years. There's no one I'd rather have represent our work in Israel on the world stage. It is also a joy to meet Marty again on the pages of the "Israel's Restoration" publication which he lovingly edited for many years. Marty's first book "To the Jew First: The Formation of One New Man" is available through the Tikkun bookstore and Amazon.

MARTY SHOUB



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