

Russia Mission Report May 2010

Romans 11:24 (NIV)

²⁴ After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

In September 2004 Celebrate Messiah pioneered an outreach to the “forgotten Jews of the Far East of Russia” with the main thrust of the work in the Jewish Autonomous Region in the city of Birobidzhan. Today we have seen God bless this ministry beyond our expectations and eight messianic outreaches have been established across the Far East Russia region including parts of Siberia. We now work in partnership with Chosen People Ministries across Russia to reach the Jewish people in this great land.

This mission trip from the 16-27th of May was undertaken to further the work of Celebrate Messiah in the Far East of Russia, Siberia and also the Urals. The goal of our mission work in Russia is to share the Good News of Messiah with our Jewish people who are often scattered in remote areas and in small communities. We genuinely care for the welfare of our people in these often impoverished regions and we seek to do what we can minister to their needs both spiritually and practically.

This mission, as with others before, surpassed our expectations. It is obvious to us that God is working in amazing ways with Jewish people in Russia and it is such a privilege to come alongside His purposes for His people and see Him draw His people to Himself.

For the sake of the protection of the on-going work in Russia I have to be careful on what I report about, but I can say that over the 11 days we saw more than 23 Jewish people pray to receive Yeshua as Saviour and Messiah. We had several extraordinary opportunities to address groups of Jewish people right within Jewish community centres. On two occasions, in two different cities, we had the privilege of leading a group of Jewish people in a prayer to receive Yeshua as Messiah. This kind of opportunity is absolutely unique as we witnessed God soften the hearts of Jewish people to Messiah. To see and hear our Jewish brothers



and sisters pray to receive Yeshua as Saviour and Messiah was incredible. One by one God is grafting the broken off branches into their own Olive Tree.

On one such occasion, as Rita Ivenskis was leading a group of Jewish people in prayer to receive the Lord, I noticed one man in particular. He had a beautiful smile on his face as he closed his eyes and repeated the words of the prayer. We found out later that he was an accomplished surgeon and that it was his birthday that day. We chatted to him and he told us that he loved the prayer and that he had prayed it from his heart. He asked Rita to write the prayer on a piece of paper as he wanted all his patients in hospital to say this prayer while they were under his care. Wow, this was not only physical birthday, but his spiritual birthday also. Pray for this man as he is now leading others to know the saving power of the Messiah.



On another occasion we met a group of elderly Jewish persons at a Jewish community centre. Their choir entertained us with some wonderful Yiddish and Russian songs and they were very warm and hospitable. Again we had the opportunity to share our trust in the Messiah and again during our time of sharing, Rita led them in a prayer of repentance and faith. One of the beautiful Jewish ladies we met



that day was a Holocaust survivor. She had fled from Poland into Russia as a young eighteen year old girl and then was transported by cattle train by the Russians to Siberia. When I first met her I could see that she has a spark in her spirit. She was so keen to hear what we had to say that day and God ignited her heart and she prayed to receive the Lord with such joy and delight, as did several others.

In each of the 6 cities that we visited we worked together with both Jewish and Gentile believers in Messiah in support of the work they were already doing amongst Jewish people in their localities. We were certainly encouraged to see how God has His people reaching out to his Chosen People in Russia. It was a privilege to come alongside these faithful believers and support them in the pioneering work they were doing.



In this regard, we held several seminars on Jewish ministry and teaching and the biblical basis of the messianic movement. We helped network these folk with other messianic believers in Russia and in particular, we encouraged them to have contact with our partner ministries in Moscow and Berlin. Please pray that some of these folk will be able to attend a training conference held in July in Moscow led by the Directors of the work in Russia and Germany, Kirill Polonsky and Vladimir Pikman.



The work that we established in Birobidzhan in the Jewish Autonomous Region in 2004 has continued to develop and through some amazing circumstances has taken on a unique dimension. Again I cannot say too much at this stage but I will ask you to pray for the incredible opportunity that God has given us in Birobidzhan to make a significant impact on the Jewish people of this region. Over the past 6 years, since we have established the work in Birobidzhan our work has made a difference in the lives of many Jewish people in the region. A messianic community called Club Simcha has continued to provide fellowship and teaching for the many Jews who have come to faith in Messiah. Over the years, several Jewish believers have been baptised.



In due course, I hope to be able to let you know more details of the current opportunities presented to us in Birobidzhan as we reach out to the “forgotten Jews” of this region.

This mission trip brought us face to face with Jewish people who were hungry for the good news of Messiah. This mission was certainly on the coalface of Jewish ministry in Russia. At this stage it is certainly a grassroots move of God amongst Jewish people.

Your ongoing support and prayers for this vital work in Russia is much needed and appreciated. As more Jewish people come to faith in Russia, we will need to do more to disciple new believers, train up new leaders and develop Messianic Jewish communities. I am happy to let you know that as we work hand in hand with our partner ministry, Chosen People Ministries, we are getting the work done step by step.



The spirit of Communism still looms large over the people, keeping many in spiritual blindness. But the Spirit of the Lord is moving across the land of Russia setting people free. God is pouring his Spirit out over Jewish people across Russia and grafting them back into their own Olive Tree.