



# Caspari - Newsletter from Jerusalem

April 2008

The Caspari Center's leadership training program, "Lev Lesharet" ("Hearts to Serve"), was started in 2002 and has served students from about one-quarter of the Messianic congregations in Israel. Every year over 20 students from different backgrounds and congregations (both Messianic Jews and Christian Arabs) are trained for leadership in their local settings. The teaching consists of relevant practical and theological teaching on a wide variety of subjects, and all lecturers in the course belong to the Messianic community in Israel. The aim of the course is to equip and motivate the students in order that they may serve as the next generation of Messianic leaders for the Body of the Messiah in Israel.



## *A Heart to Serve*

Naamah is a young Israeli woman in her thirties who works full time in the Hebrew speaking student ministry. She started to work in the student movement over four years ago while working part-time at Caspari Center. This is also where she heard about the leadership training course Lev Lesharet. A friend of hers gave good feedback about an earlier course, and since she did not have experience working in the ministry, Lev Lesharet seemed like a good opportunity to get resources for her new work.

*Providing  
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"A few other people who were involved in student work participated in the same course, giving us a good opportunity to talk about what we had learned and to put the general teaching straight into practice." Naamah says that she found the two one-year courses she participated in very useful for her. The teaching helped her to build the vision and structure her work among students. Lev Lesharet was also a great way to get to know other people in ministry in Israel and to build a network.

"I had the opportunity to study together with people from different ages and backgrounds. Especially studying together with students from both Jewish and Arab backgrounds helped us all see the importance of working with people that are different from you."

"Being a young, single woman in a leadership position is a challenge! Personally, in the beginning, I did not consider myself qualified for the work but I took it as a challenge from God." Naamah says that she had to learn on the way and the vision of the work started to grow in her and among the students. She also had to challenge some congregations. There are different theological views in the Messianic community about women in ministry, and some people would have been more willing to listen if she were a man. Naamah feels that she has proved by now that she is not creating a ministry for herself, but wants to serve the community. With her friendly smile, she has continued to build relationships and gain trust. "I learned in Lev Lesharet that I can see myself in the overseer role, building a vision, getting work started, equipping leadership in order to keep the work going and then stepping back myself."

Naamah wishes to emphasize that "there are different ways and places to serve in leadership, not exclusively through teaching in a congregation. More and more young people are getting a vision for ministry and they are ready to carry the responsibility." According to Naamah "there is a need in the Messianic Community to let the dynamic growth develop naturally, but at the same time to provide training for those who have a heart to serve!"



## New worker

We are very pleased to announce the appointment of a new part time Administrator for the Caspari Center. Katharine started in her position at the beginning of March and has already been making a difference in our lives! One of her first jobs was to take care of the necessary repairs that are required in the building, and she has successfully negotiated with the landlord for work to begin on Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Katharine is in the process of building up her knowledge of Hebrew to meet the needs of our work here at Caspari, as she has only been in the country a relatively short time, but she has the important advantage of being fluent in English. She brings with her a love for making cakes and drinking Finnish coffee – all of which have been appreciated by the rest of the team!

### *Selected Quotes from the Caspari 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/).*

### **Messianic Jews** (*Jerusalem Post, March 21; Ma'ariv, March 21, 24; Haaretz, March 21 (pp. 1, 10), 23, 24; Yediot Ahronot, March 21, 23, 24, 2008*)

On Thursday, March 20, a *mishloach manot* – traditional Purim gift package – was delivered to the Ortiz home [The Ortizs are the leaders of a local Messianic congregation] in Ariel. The youngest son, Amiel – 15 – opened it and set off the bomb inside, which seriously injured him in the eye, lungs, hands, and legs. At the moment of writing, he is in stable but serious situation in Schneider Hospital in Tel Aviv – with no threat to his life but with a long period of recovery ahead of him.

*Ma'ariv* carried a report under a the title: “Explosive gift.” It emphasized the “mysterious” aspects of the incident which, it suggested, “may even expose a secret religious war being conducted under our noses.” In addition to suggesting that the police are considering the attack linked to the family’s Messianic identity the piece indicated that “people in the neighborhood say that the youth’s family has been under a lot of attack because they belong to the organization called ‘Messianic Jews,’ who believe in Yeshua the Nazarene.”

On the following Sunday (March 23), *Yediot Ahronot* ran an account of the incident, under the headline, “We hope we aren’t next in line,” with the subheading, “The serious wounding of a youth by an explosive in Ariel is arousing concern amongst the members of the sect, who are experiencing unceasing attacks.” This article reported on the ongoing harassment of Messianic congregations in the Negev, especially in Beersheva and Arad.

This report also quoted a friend of the Ortiz family, Michael Decker [a lawyer and member of The Jerusalem Institute of Justice], as saying: “We’re dealing here with an awful hate crime against a minority group which is harassed in the State of Israel. Amiel is a completely ordinary teenager studying in an ordinary school and everyone is in shock over what has happened to him.”

In his column “Religious gangsterism” in *Yediot Ahronot* (March 24), Yaron London noted that a “tone of reconciliation, or at least a sense of understanding, has penetrated the reports concerning the attack which took place on Thursday in Ariel.” His conclusion was clear: “We don’t know who perpetrated the attack. But we do know that amongst those who harass the missionaries the Ultra-Orthodox who are jealous for God’s name are prominent. These people do not understand that violence demonstrates Judaism’s weakness and not its strength. In a State in which the lives of non-Jews are much harder than those of Jews, and in which a Jew cannot be forced to convert, nor be enticed by showing him that the gates of society will be opened before him if he bows his knees before an icon of the cross, the marketplace of ideas must be open to all competitors. Jews who fear competition and engage in gangster-like manipulation in order to warn off competitors, do not trust the nature of their merchandise. We thought that the Jewish State would free us from such fear. But lo and behold, it once again turns out that the captive does not release himself from his own bonds. The prison is in his own soul.”

### **Anti-missionary Activity** (*HaModia, March 11, 2008*)

Having received a letter from Yad L’Achim’s director containing “full details” of all “124 missionary congregations” operating in Israel, MK Shmuel Halpert has announced his intention to present a bill to the Knesset “prohibiting all missionary activity whatsoever” – in addition to the current law which forbids the giving of benefits in order to induce a person to convert. Halpert was astonished to discover that “a number of the congregational leaders are Jewish.”

### *Please pray with Caspari for:*

- Our workers and volunteers, for visas and good working conditions.
  - The "Hearts to Serve" course and all current and former students serving the Messianic Body in Israel.
  - We are thankful for the large number of participants at the Sabbath School Seminar in March.
- Pray that the participants will be able to put what they have learned to good use in their congregations.*

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

Caspari Center



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