

# Rolling Stone

## ministries

*"An angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it... And the angel...said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who as been crucified. He is not here, for He has risen just as He said.'" Matthew 28:2, 5-6*

Newsletter April 2011

## Israel 2011



Walking in the footprints of Jesus cannot be adequately described to those who have not had the privilege of visiting the Holy Land. When you add to that the blessing of teaching the saints in Israel, you might imagine how blessed Laurie and I were to have taken our first teaching trip to Israel.

Last fall we were expecting to return to India in late January or early February, but the schedules did not come together. In late December I made the decision to clear time to teach in Israel, even before we had any firm invitations to come. It had been on our hearts since we spoke with author Joel Rosenberg in India two years ago to come to the Holy Land to teach. We waited for open doors, and as soon as we took the step of faith and clear time on our schedule, two invitations came in--one from a Messianic congregation south of Tel Aviv, and another from a congregation in the Golan Heights in northern Israel.

We were blessed to meet and become friends with our hosts, and teach in their Messianic congregations. One congregation was primarily Sabras (Israeli born) the other primarily Russian born. Regardless of the cultural backgrounds and language differences, we were one in Christ, whom the Israeli believers refer to as "Mashiach" (Hebrew for "Messiah" meaning "anointed one") rather than "Christ" (English for the Greek word "Christos," meaning "anointed one").



We also had the chance to visit with some old friends from the days I taught at Melodyland School of Theology in Anaheim, California, Peter and Rita Tsukahira, who co-pastor one of the largest Messianic congregations in northern Israel. It was great to see how the Lord has blessed their ministry, but it is also sobering to hear the challenges that believers face in Israel, both from the rampant secularism, but especially from Orthodox Jews who consider Messianic believers to be subversive (or worse).

We made several visits to Jerusalem, especially the Old City, and prayed more than once at the Western Wall ("Wailing Wall"), praying for the peace of Jerusalem

(Psalm 122:6). During one of our visits we got a tour of the Calvary Chapel Bible School Jerusalem, where 20 students spend about 10 weeks studying the life of Christ.



As time permits, we hope to arrange a tour of the Holy Land for February or March 2012. Many Rolling Stone Ministries partners have expressed an interest, and we will keep you updated on the development of the tour. If the tour comes together, I can promise you that walking in Jesus' footsteps is a life-changing experience.

Thank you for your prayers for our Israel mission. Although I came down with a bad cold and sore throat about half-way through our time in Israel, I was able to teach as scheduled. Compared to the hardships believers around the world face every day, we try to consider our health issues "momentary, light affliction" (2 Corinthians 4:17). As the Spirit of the Lord continues to move in Israel (Ezekiel 37), we look forward to doing whatever the Lord calls us to do in the Holy Land.

Shalom, *John*



## Send a "Pastor to Bible School" Update

In late January we announced that it had come to our attention that at least 20 of the pastors who were attending Manna Bible Institute were not able to continue their studies due to financial difficulties. Manna's principal, Pastor George Muguro, shared with us the names of the students, and their church affiliation, and let us know the urgency of the financial need. Based upon what he told us, the pastors needed approximately \$9,000 for their combined tuition needs for the year (room and board, which involves a very spartan existence by American standards). We put the word out to our congregation in California and on our Rolling Stone Ministries website, and by the end of March we had raised \$8,000. About half of the funds have already been sent to Manna, and we are bringing the balance with us. John's "Cutting Edge" Sunday School class signed cards for the students that we will deliver to Manna when we arrive. Pastor George considers it a miracle that the Lord has provided in such a dramatic way through the friends of Rolling Stone Ministries. Thus, for those who have given toward our "Send a Pastor to Bible School" campaign, you are part of a miracle! As they say in Kenya, "Bwana asifiwe" ("praise the Lord" in Swahili).

## Prayer Request from Denny & Mary as they travel this month to a country closed to Christianity

Denny & Mary are requesting prayers to open the hearts, souls, and minds of those they meet while traveling to a country which is closed to Christianity. They ask for protection for all the members of the team, and their families in April (until Good Friday) while they work and look for opportunities that God provides them to witness to university students. Please lift up in prayer that the materials they bring will not fall on hard or barren soil, but will plant the seeds for eternal life with Christ for them and their families and friends in this country that persecutes believers. Denny & Mary will be in this country for about 3 weeks. In late May and early June they will be working within another Muslim country and request the same petitions. May God bless you for your prayer support.

*"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26*

## Peacemaking

By Laurie Stewart

In March, I had the grand privilege of teaching two nights at my home church on Coping with Conflict. We covered an enormous amount of material in a short time--how to resolve conflict biblically. We talked about how believers can see conflict as an assignment from God--to glorify Him, to serve others and to become more like Christ. We covered the 4 G's, the Seven A's of Confession, the Four Promises of Forgiveness, and the progression of idols of the heart. The foundation for this teaching is biblical principles as practically explained and applied in *The Peace Maker* by Ken Sande.

If you missed this training, don't worry. I'm praying about offering a two half-day seminar at my home church for those who would like go deeper learning how to resolve conflict biblically. For a church to successfully build a culture of peace and sustain it, the leaders of the church must embrace peacemaking and lead the way by example. Learning the biblical principles is the easy part, putting them into practice in our every day lives, in our homes, our neighborhoods, our workplaces and our church takes focus, effort, and commitment.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is about reconciliation. God sent Jesus to sacrifice himself on a cross for our sins to reconcile us to God for those of us who believe. As believers who follow Jesus, we follow his example of laying down our lives for the sake of others. By breathing grace into their lives, we become living examples of the hope of the Gospel.

# Kenya-East Africa



As I write this, I am trying to make the mental transition from teaching believers who speak Hebrew or Russian to those who speak Swahili. From Israel to Africa, it is always exciting to have the privilege of communicating the truth of Scripture. One thing Laurie and I have come to know first-hand is that regardless of where in the world we go, the Spirit of the Living God transcends the barriers of language and culture, and those who name the Name of Yeshua Hamashiach (Hebrew) or Yesu Kristo (Swahili) are one with us who call Him Jesus Christ.

Laurie and I speak of Africa as our "second home," because we have come to love the people and the land, despite the many challenges that are unique to the continent. We are always blessed and humbled to see believers in Africa so rich in faith despite lacking so many of the material things we consider "necessities." Since we have already made four previous trips to Kenya, we have developed great friendships with pastors and church leaders, including dozens of pastors who have spent hours listening to my teachings at the Manna Bible Institute on the outskirts of Nairobi. Thus, our trips to Kenya, the "Light of East Africa," reminds me of Paul, in the Book of Acts, re-visiting churches he planted in order to further teach and encourage the saints.

This trip seems like a whirlwind, since we have not left time to "decompress" on either end of the trip. If our schedule permits, we prefer to spend a day or two acclimating to the time zone where we will be staying before we jump in to our teaching. Because we have been back less than a month from Israel, we decided there was not sufficient

time to acclimate. Thus, we will be flying straight through (with a three-hour layover in Dubai) to Nairobi, a total of around 22 hours in the air. On the return, we will leave Africa on Good Friday and be back in California in time for Easter Sunday (for the first time in five years our chance to spend Easter Sunday at our home church in Orange, California).

This year I will be teaching the Book of Romans and Apologetics (defense of the faith) at the Manna Bible Institute. I have prepared printed outlines (syllabi) for my students, and the outlines (55 pages for Apologetics, 43 for Romans) will take up an entire suitcase (35 copies of each). Those who may wonder why I don't take a master set of the outlines and copy them in Kenya have not heard the story of the time I tried that our first year in Kenya (hint: electrical brownout, and copy machines that do one copy every 20 seconds).



For those who would like more detail on our activities in Kenya so that you can pray for us more knowledgeably, I am teaching Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., and preaching on Sunday, April 10th and 17th. On April 17th I'll be speaking at the chapel service at Kabarak University, a school two hours from Nairobi that was founded by the former President of Kenya, Daniel Moi. President Moi and his university's Vice Chancellor have

invited us back. We met with President Moi last year at his home near Lake Nakuru, and we are honored to again be invited to meet with him. We have been told that members of Kenya's Parliament can't get an audience with President Moi, so we figure it is the Lord's doing that two lawyers from America have the opportunity for a second visit.



Laurie will be teaching a three-day women's seminar in Nairobi while I am teaching at Manna Bible Institute. Laurie is excited about bringing her Peacemaker teachings to East Africa. Every country and every church needs the biblical tools of conflict resolution, some more than others. This new facet to Laurie's teaching is a great compliment to her prayer seminars.

Please pray for effectiveness as we seek to efficiently use our opportunity in Kenya to instruct and inspire fellow-believers, many of whom are leaders in the church. Please also pray for safety and health. I look forward to bringing back to America word of the blessings we anticipate in Kenya. Your prayers and partnership are what makes our international ministry possible.

Bwana asifiwe!

## TEXT MESSAGES FROM GOD



By John Stewart

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*Text Messages From God* is the gripping story of Dave, a hard-driving, successful attorney, whose self-centered existence suddenly turns upside down by text messages he receives from a mysterious person claiming to be God. Dave, who likes to be in control and prides himself on being self sufficient, notices that the messages draw out another side of him, exposing that he is not an impenetrable fortress after all. Gradually Dave's skepticism gives way to curiosity and he plays along with captivating challenges from the message sender. As he cautiously begins to take the messages to heart, Dave is forced to deal with painful memories that he had blocked out for many years. Dave's tough shell finally begins to crack and he is faced with making a decision that could change his life forever.

## Search for Rolling Stone

## Ministries on

Many of our faithful supporters have asked us to create a fan page for RSM, so with the help of our teenager, it is finally up and running. Primarily it is designed to drive people to our website: [www.rollingstoneministries.org](http://www.rollingstoneministries.org) Our priority remains relating to people in person. In our age of ever-increasing technology with websites, blogs, Facebook, My Space, Twitter, online news, online games, web TV, email, text messages, and voicemail, nothing will ever replace face to face communication and live voice conversation.

So, if you are on Facebook, search for us and if you "like" us, click on the "Like" button.

*"I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete" (2 John 1:12).*

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