

POB 269
22102 Nahariya Israel
20th January 2007

“I am the resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. (John 11: 25-26)

Dear friends all over the world,

Most of you will have heard already that our beloved husband and father, Albert, went home to be with the Lord just after 9 pm on 11th January. After two months of suffering following a knee replacement, (which was in itself successful), Albert passed peacefully into the presence of the Lord, surrounded by Ruth and the children. Thousands of people were praying for his full recovery, but in the will of God, it was not to be, and we can only trust that God has a plan in all of this. Our times are in His hands. The funeral was held in Haifa on Sunday 14th January, in the British cemetery, where so many believers are buried. There were about 300 or more people present, Jews, Messianic believers, Moslems and Druze . A number of our neighbours came, and expressed the fact that the funeral was very interesting and very touching, and that they had never experienced anything like this. Some of our neighbours were weeping unashamedly. Several said that all funerals ought to be conducted in this way, and one Moslem apologized for the fact that he had enjoyed the funeral.

While Albert was in the hospital, a Palestinian from Jenin was admitted to the next bed. (They are not exactly known for their love of Israel!) His brother was standing there looking totally lost, and speaking only a few words of Hebrew. We asked what was wrong, and with a few words, he explained that his brother had been shot. “Did we do it?” I asked... “No, we did it”, he replied. We asked if we could pray to God for his brother, and he agreed, so a friend and I prayed. Later we showed him how to speak to his unconscious brother, and how to touch him, so that he would know that someone was near him. It seemed almost as if a bond was springing up between us. We also arranged for an Israeli Arab Pastor to visit him, and this dear brother has really become like a friend to him. When the man from Jenin heard that Albert had died, he was very sad, and expressed a desire to come and condole with me. So the Arab Pastor is trying to arrange a visit. How wonderful are God’s ways and His compassion.

It has been a packed year, with Michael and Annie getting married last January, and we visiting so many of our friends who were getting older, to say “Goodbye”... We did not know then that it was Albert who would be leaving us so soon. Then in July /August, we went through the war in the North with the Hezbollah. After that the meetings were blossoming, with new people and unbelievers coming. We had many visitors, and then in November, Albert went for this very routine knee operation.

It is too soon to know what the future holds. Our preacher from Holland has also suffered much with his back, and needs a back operation, so our entire leadership is knocked out. But I believe that God is going to use this situation for the salvation of souls, both Moslems and Jews, (and maybe others!) I plan to carry on with the work of visitation and teaching, and gathering people in, and our home will be open for those who need it. Meanwhile, temporary preachers and teachers have been asked to fill in the gap until Maarten is restored to us, or the Lord sends someone else, preferably the former!

Pray for us as a family, for we all need to recover now, and are emotionally and physically exhausted. We thank all who have prayed for us, given, and written such loving and supportive letters, besides hundreds of phone calls. We have so much appreciated this.

Again, we thank you, and ask for prayer for our little congregation, who are feeling bereft and sorrowing with us, and also for God’s future guidance. Also for all our contacts, as we start visiting and returning to normal life, after Albert’s long illness and finally his home call. “Absent from the body, ... present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8)

May God grant us all a fruitful New Year in His service.

Ruth Nessim, on behalf of the family and congregation.