



## Newsletter 1/2013

### "A man's heart plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps." Proverbs 16:9.

Dear friends,

It is hard for us to grasp that already half a year has passed since we wrote our last newsletter... On the one hand many unexpected things have happened, but on the other hand issues that we had hoped would be in process are taking their time....

The verse we have chosen to head this letter expresses what we want to convey – no matter what our plans are or what we would expect tomorrow to bring, our days and plans are in His hands and He determines the **number** of our days and guides **our steps** in the days He gives us.

Little did John Rocha imagine he would be going home to be with the Lord so soon after his friend Alex Schnabel had passed away. Alex went to be with his Savior on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January and John joined him on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April.

John and Alex had long been good friends, and both entered the Home in 2010, John at the beginning of the year and Alex near the end of the year.

**John** was an unmarried, Jewish believer who was born in England in 1927 into a believing Christian family. He gave his life to Jesus as a child and later became a teacher in a Christian boarding school. The Lord used circumstances in his life to call him to Israel, and in 1977 he came for the first time. John worked with Operation Mobilization in Haifa for many years, and being an evangelist at heart he loved going out with Bibles, books and tracts to share the good news. He was also an active member of the local congregation. In the early 90's the Lord called John to establish and pastor a congregation in Nazareth Ilit where he lived and for many years, shared his apartment with Alex Schnabel.

John continued to be a faithful friend to Alex after Alex joined him in the Ebenezer Home, and particularly in Alex's last months, John would read to him from the Scriptures to encourage his spirit.

During John's last year in the Home he was able to write his autobiography, and the story of John's life is a testimony of the Lord's grace.

**Alex** was a Jewish believer who was born in Vienna in 1926. After the Nazi's invaded Austria his family managed to flee to Bolivia and then to Chile, where he eventually married. Alex's family was a secular Jewish family, but he only heard about the Lord Jesus after immigrating to Israel with his wife and daughter.

A Dutch nurse in the English hospital in Nazareth, where his wife was hospitalized in serious condition, gave him a tract and told him to pray. In his despair he did pray, his prayers were answered and his wife was miraculously healed. This stirred in him a godly sorrow and a hunger for the word of God so that he opened his heart to the Savior!

Even though Alex's wife saw the change in Alex and admitted her recovery was a miracle, she was very hostile to the Gospel and his new found faith. Eventually Alex was forced to leave his home. After this devastating experience the Lord provided a home for him with John Rocha. Alex never stopped loving his wife and prayed daily for her salvation.

In the last newsletter we shared about Henni who went to be with the Lord at the end of the year. A month after her death (a day before her 89<sup>th</sup> birthday), while we were having our workers' morning break, we heard a crash from the yard and realized that a tree had fallen down. It was not just any tree, it was **Henni's tree!** This tree was right outside her room window and for many years it was her 'tree of life'. Lying in bed, its beauty and its birds gave her daily joy.



At the beginning of June we had our annual residents' trip. This year we planned it as a **'Smell and Taste'** trip.

We took the residents to a flower nursery in a Kibbutz not far from Haifa. We enjoyed the flowers, a coffee break in a corner of the nursery, and the residents enjoyed a little shopping for plants before we continued to Beit Lehem Haglilit, the area where Hans Meir (one of our residents) grew up. Here there is a spice farm where they grow and sell spices and medicinal plants. The residents enjoyed the



wonderful smells and colors as well as some more shopping.

We ended our time there with a tasty lunch.

On our way home we drove into Alonei Abba (which was once Waldheim, where Hans grew up) and his wife Esther gave us a little sightseeing tour around the community and explained some of the history of the place. It was a wonderful day!

Earlier, In March, we took our volunteers for a trip to the south, to Ein-Gedi in the Dead Sea area. We started out at 04:00 A.M. in order to make the most of the day and we enjoyed good fellowship and beautiful scenery as we hiked together. Our volunteers, ages ranging from 19 to 60, are women from Australia, Finland, Germany, the Czech Republic and one local Israeli volunteer. We thank the Lord for sending us wonderful volunteers who are so faithful, love the residents and are such devoted workers!



**Taste and See - it is salty!**



On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May in the afternoon, we held an open **'Mini Bazaar'**, selling the resident's hand work as well as baked goods and opened a cafeteria for all to enjoy. This time we didn't have second hand articles and clothing for sale as we normally do. Instead, we asked a few gifted believers from different local congregations to come and sell their arts and crafts. The Cafeteria was a success as well and we truly thank all those who contributed of their time and love as they baked and helped us sell the goods. We thank the Lord that Ebenezer is His Home and it has so many caring friends! Thanks to Debbie Hemstreet, who edited John Rocha's autobiography and personally undertook for the printing of it when John suddenly became ill, we were also able to have his book available for sale at our Bazaar .

In February, Sophia joined the Ebenezer Home family. **Sophia** was the last external flat resident to enter the Home. For practical and legal reasons we decided not to continue renting out external flats for the elderly. At the moment these flats are being used for renting out to local believers.

As mentioned in the beginning there are issues that are taking their time and bureaucracy contributes to this matter. We are still in the process of applying for a **building license** for the reinforcement of the building against earthquakes and for the addition of another floor. Please remember this matter in prayer, that all these proceedings will take place in His good and prefect time.

Thank you for remembering us in your prayers!

**In the love of the Lord, Johnny and Shoshana Khoury**