

# Testimony of Christa Behr

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## How the Lord got me involved with Israel:

I was born after the “Second World war” as the third child of a family of vegetable farmers. We grew up in a little village “Rosenweide” near Hamburg. As with most of the people who live in the north of Germany, my family church background is Lutheran. There I heard the gospel for the first time. As a child I loved to read the children's Bible and it spoke to my heart. We were five children and I have an older sister, brother and two younger brothers. As I look back, I can see more clearly how the Lord deepened my relationship to Israel and got me more involved. I remember that as a teenager I was not willing to learn the national hymn of Germany. I thought that nationalism was misleading our whole nation, and therefore it was better not to be involved. After I had finished my 3-year education as a gardener of vegetables and fruit trees in June 1972 I continued to work in my profession in Munich. In this city I got to know the Lord in a personal way on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 1972 during an evangelization with Pastor David Wilkerson from New York. A few months later I attended a Bible school for two years in Salzburg-Austria. I was trained as a Lutheran Bible teacher for children in the public primary and high school. From September 1974 until May 1980, I worked for 6 years in Haid- Ansfelden (near Linz) in Austria as a Bible

teacher for children in public schools. I got involved in the Lutheran Church in a total pioneering situation, because there was no pastor at that time and real church life was missing. Coming from the North of Germany I never really met any Roman Catholics. In Haid there was a Catholic Chaplain called Kurt Waldhoer, who made it easy for me to get a positive impression of the Catholic Church. He was very open and even followed my invitation to visit a typical evangelical evangelization in Linz in November 1976. Two years later he started a prayer group in the Catholic Church in Haid and I participated regularly. In the coming years we experienced something like a little revival. Many young people accepted Jesus as their personal savior. As Austria is mainly Catholic, it was easier for me as a Lutheran Bible teacher to invite the Catholics I met to a prayer meeting in their own Church. Out of this prayer group developed the “Rhema Fellowship” in St. Marien, near Linz, which is founded and led by Jacob and Grete Kraemer. Now they have their service in Linz.

After being in Austria for 13 years I felt that the Lord wanted me to get Austrian citizenship, which I received in September 1985 in Salzburg.

Coming to my relationship to Israel I heard in the year 1978 a tape from my counselor at that time, Otto Siegfried von Bibra, about Israel’s past, present and future. He also spoke about the great guilt of Germany towards the God of Israel and the Jewish people. He quoted the scripture from Zechariah 2, 8 ***“for he who touches you my people (Israel) touches the apple of His eye.”*** As I listened, I understood that we as Germans have touched God at the most sensitive place, at the apple of His eye. He also urged us as believers from Germany to repent for the sin of our nation. Pastor Bibra was convinced that great judgment would come on the Austrian and German nation if we refused to repent. I felt a deep pain in my heart and wept, because I understood more about the great guilt of my people towards the God of Israel and the Jewish people. I also realized that I was a German if I liked it or not and that I had to face this fact. I wished with all my heart to do something about it, like Corry ten Boom did at the

time of the Second World War. She and her family helped the Jewish people in Holland as they had been persecuted and killed. I listened again to the tape, wrote it down and started to teach about it. In February 1977, I was able to visit Israel for the first time with the Catholic Bible society. I had been led, in May 1980, to move to Salzburg and work there with the youth and students in the Lutheran Church. There I also had the opportunity to share about Israel with students. Some Jewish physicians from Tel Aviv, who had just visited Salzburg, came to this lecture about Israel because of an advertisement in the University and their reaction was very positive. After the first visit to Israel I just wished to go back one day with good friends to spend more time in prayer at some places in Israel. In May 1981 I was able to come back with a group of friends. During this journey I received a call to move to Israel and understood that it would have something to do with building bridges between Israel and the Church in the nations. What puzzled me was that I had just moved to Salzburg, because of a clear leading from the Lord. So, I shared this impression with a sister on this journey. She said: "Give it back to the Lord and if it is from Him it will come back in His time." I really gave it back and even forgot about it. I worked hard with the youth and students in Salzburg and experienced the Lord's blessing. After 4 years I had a burnout, and Pastor Larry Christenson from USA, a dear friend and he was the leader in the Lutheran Charismatic Renewal, helped me to visit some lively Lutheran churches in America for two months. At the end of this time in the USA I felt refreshed in my relationship to the Lord and understood that I should leave Salzburg and move closer to Vienna. Before I had even unpacked my suitcases and boxes in the new apartment in Gloggnitz, a German couple from Hamburg visited me. Their call was to help Russian Jews on their way back home to Israel. They gave me a book from Steven Lightle "Exodus II". He was a messianic Jew from USA. His book talks about a vision he had. He saw that Jewish people would leave Russia at one point and we as Christians in Europe would have a second opportunity and the call to help them on their way back to Israel and stand with the Jewish people. This time we could do better as Christians than we did during the Second World War. The Lord opened

a door for me to help the Jewish people, who all came, at that time, from Russia and Ukraine, through Vienna on their way to Israel or the USA.

My apartment was near the Hungarian border and since 1986, every month I started to visit a meeting of reformed pastors in Hungary. Because Hungary was still under Communism and there was not a lot of connection with western countries among the believers, I tried to help them in many practical ways. At that time, I also visited the Czech Republic, Romania, and East Germany. Especially in Romania the people suffered from poverty, hunger and oppression. In September 1986 I stopped being employed by the Lutheran Church in Gloggnitz and my financial support came now only from some friends in Austria and Germany. This worried me, and I did not tell my parents about it, but I did get a word from the Lord from Matthew 8, 20 "***And Jesus said to him: Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.***" I realized that this was not even required from me because I still had my apartment.

I still had an uneasy feeling from not receiving a regular income, and in a prayer time in November 1986 I felt that I was supposed to meet Steven Lightle. I did not have any clue how to make this happen and just waited and prayed. Two weeks later Roland Smith, a pastor from California came to my house in Gloggnitz near Vienna. He asked me if I could help him to prepare a prayer meeting in Budapest, because he heard that I had contacts to pastors in Hungary. This prayer meeting would take place in May 1987 in seven capital cities in Europe. He informed me that Steven Lightle would be part of this prayer team. Now I understood that I would be able to get to know him in a few months and the intercessory-prayer movement, which he was a part of. I could take part in the prayer meetings in Rome, Budapest and Bonn. In May 1988 he invited me to join his intercessor prayer journey to Israel. Also, in 1988, just before this journey, I got to know several messianic believers from Israel. I met them at an intercessory prayer conference in Berlin to remember the Evian Conference of 1938. Fifty years ago, all the nations had sent their

delegates to Evian to discuss what to do with the Jewish people. It was already clear that Hitler wanted to kill them, but only Denmark the Dominican Republic and a few small countries were willing to take them in. Hitler had his spies at this meeting in Evian and they came back and told him, "You can do anything to the Jewish people, because the whole world does not care about them." We drove from Berlin with a bus to Evian and prayed in the Hotel where 50 years before this meeting has taken place. We asked God for forgiveness for the guilt of our nations because they had turned their back against Israel and left the Jewish people alone in their hour of need.

In Israel in May 1988 I met other messianic Jewish believers and developed personal relationships. From 1988 until the end of October 1990 I visited Israel a few more times because I wanted to find out if the Lord would confirm my calling to move there. My friends in Austria, Germany, Hungary and Israel prayed with me and they encouraged me to go to Israel. Especially my friends from Hungary Imre and Eva Szabo received some messages for me, which encouraged me very much to go. Through the meeting with Johannes Facius, Kjell Sjöberg from Sweden and Steven Lightle, God opened the door to "International Intercessors", a worldwide prayer movement. Our meetings with these brothers in April 1989 in Vienna and every part of Austria, was the beginning for the group "Intercessors for Austria".

Because the Lord used me to start these meetings I was now faced with the question, 'can a woman be called in a pioneer situation, and give lectures?' For myself I got an answer from the Lord by reading Jeremiah 1, 7: ***"But the Lord said to me: Do not say, I am a youth, for you shall go to all to whom I send you and whatever I command you, you shall speak."*** For me the answer was: "Don't say I'm a woman, for you shall go where I send you and speak what I tell you to speak."

Because I wanted to find out more why I should move to Israel I met some people in Jerusalem to pray and share with them. To get more clarity I stayed in an apartment for a week and asked the Lord for direction. The strongest word which spoke to me was from John 11, 51-52: ***“Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.”***

Until now I did not realize that Jesus died not only for our sins but also for the unity between Jews and Gentiles. If He was willing to die for this unity, then it must be something very important for the Lord. Later on, I read in Ephesians 2, 12-16 another scripture which speaks about the importance of this unity: ***“Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.”***

The unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ is a creative work of our Lord Jesus. It needs the supernatural power of Yeshua to unite what has been separated for such a long time.

I wanted to come to Israel on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 1991 but unfortunately this was the exact date of the beginning of the Gulf War. The apartment I had rented was not prepared for a war situation and therefore I needed to wait in Austria. There was neither furniture nor a sealed room in the apartment which was required because of this war. It was not equipped for an expected gas attack. Before I left Austria, Manfred Riss, a Lutheran pastor, had a dream that he should buy me a gas mask. After waiting for a few weeks, I felt I must move to Jerusalem even though the war had not yet ended. I asked for two things to happen: Firstly, that I would have the money for the flight and secondly that

during the war a family would be willing to take me into their home. Both things happened on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 1991 and I got a flight for the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 1991. Arriving at the airport in Israel I needed to take out my gas mask to have it ready in the taxi if any alarm should take place during the taxi ride to Jerusalem. I arrived one week before the end of the war. During this week we needed to go three times to the sealed room because Scud Missiles were falling on Israel. Exactly one week later, on the feast of Purim, the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1991, the war ended. Our congregation in Jerusalem had a wedding exactly on that date. We were joyful and able to participate at the wedding feast without our gas masks.

Five months later I needed to leave my apartment that I had rented from a member of the congregation. I had renovated the whole apartment and invested quite a lot of money and work. Therefore, I asked myself the question: Did I come to Israel to repair apartments? One day I read in Isaiah 56, 21-22: ***“They shall build houses and inhabit them, they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat.”***

Reading this verse, I knew that the Lord was speaking to me and that I would not move again. I asked people how can a foreigner live for a longer time in one place? They told me ‘only if you buy’. A little later I read another scripture from Matthew 19, 29: ***“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.”***

This word has, of course, been in the Bible all the time, but I never noticed that there was a promise for receiving houses if you leave your family for the Lord’s sake! In the hope that I would receive the money for the house and also find the house, I rented, together with a sister from Switzerland and a family from Russia, a house in Jerusalem Malha.

In my newsletter I mentioned that I believe I will receive a house in Jerusalem. A short time later a good friend of mine, Marie-Agnes

Gräfin von Clary und Aldringen from Salzburg had a dream that she was to buy a house in Jerusalem. Asking for a confirmation she opened the Bible and read Jeremiah 32, 15: ***"Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land."*** The next day she called me and said: "If you find the house, I will pay for it, because I received 280,000\$ for selling a meadow to the police headquarter in Salzburg. Immediately I started to search for a house in Jerusalem with the help of a real estate agent. I was looking for a house with a big living room to accommodate meetings. Because I didn't find such a house I decided to wait, for I had rented the house I was living in for eleven months anyhow. In October I had a very special guest from Russia. Ivan was a Bishop of all "Non-registered Pentecostal Churches" in the former USSR. He received a word for me concerning the house from Acts 12, 12: ***"... he (Peter) came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying."***

Half a year later my lawyer informed me that the house I was already renting was for sale. Somehow, I knew it would be the house I was already living in. The problem was I was still lacking another 100,000\$. We tried to get the money as a loan without interest, but it didn't work out. One day my friend Marie-Agnes called me and said: "I have sold my last apartment in Kitzbühl/Austria and I will pay for the whole house including the tax". She visited me twice before she went to be with the Lord on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2009. One year later I put a plate of remembrance on painted tiles in the house, with the word from Psalm 103, 2: ***"Bless the Lord, o my soul and forget not all His benefits."***

This experience was a wonderful confirmation for me because even in Jerusalem this does not happen every day! Now there was still the question how I could get a visa and stay in Israel? Probst (a bishop of the Lutheran Church) Karl-Heinz Ronecker was ready to apply for a visa for me if my bishop in Austria, Dieter Knall would write a letter of recommendation. He did, and I am so thankful that I have been able to stay in the Land of Israel for the last 29 years. Six years ago, I received temporary residence and an Israeli ID Number.

Since I moved to Israel my understanding for the need of repentance, reconciliation and restoration for Germans and Austrians towards Israel deepened.

Scriptures like 2 Samuel 21, 1-3 made it clear to me, that Germany and Austria would miss out on a spiritual blessing if they, as believers, do not take responsibility and identify with the sins of our forefathers. 2 Samuel 21, 1-3 ***“Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, “It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites.” So, the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn protection to them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah. Therefore, David said to the Gibeonites, “What shall I do for you? And with what shall I make atonement, that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD?”***

If the famine in Israel was not to continue, David needed to repent for the sin of the former king Saul. In that time God called priests and today He is also calling them. These are the people who stand in the gap for the sin of their nation. To respond is still a decision of our free will. As we read in Isaiah 6, 8: ***“Who shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said: “Here am I! Send me.”*** The prophet Isaiah recognizes that he has unclean lips and that he dwells among people with unclean lips.

Right from the time of my arrival in Jerusalem I attended a messianic Jewish congregation and the German Lutheran Redeemer Church in the Old City of Jerusalem. Our pastors Benjamin and Reuven Berger belong to the second generation of Holocaust survivors and their lives have been deeply affected by the suffering of their family. Their father was a Jew from Leipzig (Germany) and their mother was born in Deutschkreuz (Austria). A big part of Benjamin and Reuven’s family from the mother’s side perished in the Holocaust. Being born in Germany and having Austrian citizenship it touched my heart to meet families who had suffered in Germany and in Austria. Many people in Austria are not

conscious that most Austrians were not victims, but played a major, active role in the destruction of the Jewish people. Hitler was born in Upper Austria, as well as Adolph Eichmann, Franz Stangl and other Nazis, who committed terrible crimes. Too many people had welcomed Hitler during the “Anschluss” in 1938.

For many years I have traveled with Jewish brethren throughout Germany and Austria visiting different churches and calling for repentance. In 1993 I prepared, for the first time, a repentance service in the former concentration camp in Bergen-Belsen, near Hanover. During our prayer time some pastors and leaders started to weep and were able to ask God for forgiveness for our terrible sin towards the God of Israel and his covenant people. We confessed especially our sin of passivity as a church in a time where the church should have stood up and stood with the Jewish people. Benjamin was very moved because it was the first time he saw Germans weeping over the guilt of Germany towards the Jews. In February 1994 I was able to organize a prayer journey to the former concentration camp in Auschwitz, Poland. Just a few months before, I had visited the camp together with Reuven Berger for the very first time. I was shocked to see this enormous area, which had been prepared only to kill people systematically. A short time later, I visited a pastor in Germany. Friedrich Aschoff was the chairman of the Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in Germany at that time. He had on his heart to visit all the countries, which had suffered under the Germans during the Second World War and ask them for forgiveness. He asked me where to begin. Coming from Auschwitz I recommended to start there, because it is the darkest place on earth and the place where Jewish people have suffered the most under the Germans and Austrians. We met at the beginning of December 1993 and in February 1994 we were able to visit a group of 50 people from the former Concentration Camp in Auschwitz.

Benjamin Berger, Ilan Zamir and myself stood in front of the Gypsum Model in Auschwitz 1, which shows how the victims were forced to go into the undressing room and then into the gas chambers.

Benjamin said: 'If we could only weep over all that happened here', thinking also about his grand-parents, uncle and aunty with her children who had been murdered there. We went behind the model and wanted to pray. Fürst Castell saw us standing there and he came and grabbed Benjamin and Ilan, and wept. He told us later that, as a German, he was so ashamed after seeing what happened here, that he did not weep for 20 years. For him this was an important personal experience and the beginning of a new active role in calling for repentance in Germany.

From May 1994 till 1995 we remembered the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Second World War. In the Bible the fiftieth year is the Year of Jubilee, but changes and deliverance are not happening automatically. We read in the book of Daniel, that he paid attention to the prophecy from Jeremiah, that after 70 years the captivity in Babylon would be finished. Daniel 10, 12: ***"Do not be afraid, Daniel, since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard and I have come in response to them."***

Every promise needs the response of a person or a group of believers. Through the book of Daniel, I understood that we must repent on behalf of our families, our churches and our people. Daniel made himself available to stand in the gap as a priest although he was not from a priestly tribe, but from a family of kings. He understood that someone needed to respond to the prophecy and made himself available in confession, prayer and fasting. He humbled himself before the Lord and we read that the Lord sent his angel Gabriel to him.

In the whole Bible the angel Gabriel is only sent to three people: to Mary, Daniel and Zacharias. Only Mary and Daniel received a very encouraging word.

Daniel 10, 12: ***"Daniel, you who are highly esteemed."***

And to Mary: Luke 1, 28: ***"Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."***

To Zacharias he said: Luke 1, 20 ***"And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time."***

Later, I wrote down the thoughts about Daniel's repentance in a little booklet. It is amazing that the Lord did inform Daniel only about the future and did not mention anything about the guilt of Israel from the past. Daniel did not hide the sins of Israel before the Lord. We see through the life of Daniel: If repentance takes place about the sins of the past, the Lord will release revelation about His redemptive purposes for the future. He will not reveal real prophecy if we don't bring the sins of our people in a priestly way before Him. Some people are afraid that we are only looking backwards if we confess the sins of our people, but the opposite is true. We will be released for the future if we confess the sins of the past. This is a danger especially in some free churches, because they often miss an historical understanding of church history and just relate to the beginning of "their" church. They think: 'there was Jesus and his disciples, then there was a long time of nothing, and now we are there'. The truth is that we are in a spiritual chain of continuous blessings, but also in a chain of spiritual guilt, and God is looking for people who take responsibility in a spiritual way.

We read in the book of Revelation 1, 6: "***...and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father- to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen***". We are all called to be priests before our Lord. He wants us to be concerned and involved in His Kingdom purposes.

In 1994 I prepared repentance services in all the former concentration camps in Germany and Austria. Daniel Yahav, a son of a Holocaust survivor from Auschwitz, came with me to all the meetings in West Germany. We had a prayer meeting for repentance in the former concentration camp Neuengamme near Hamburg, in Bergen- Belsen near Hanover, in Flössenburg near Regensburg and in Dachau, where Pastor Aschoff led the meeting. Daniel also visited Auschwitz with me, and it was his first time in the camp. His father had suffered there. Benjamin Berger came with me to all the former camps in East Germany and Austria, which are Ravensbrück, Sachsenhausen in Berlin, Dora-Mittelbau near Nordhausen, Buchenwald near Weimar, and Mauthausen

in Upper Austria. Many people confessed that even though they had been living close to these former concentration camps they had never visited these places or asked for forgiveness.

We felt that something was moving but also that we needed to get deeper. Therefore, in May 1995 I prepared a prayer and fasting week in the city of Oswiecim (Auschwitz). For many of us this was a most profound experience---being together for nine days at this place of death and destruction. We had no program prepared and spent much time in prayer. When you see the tremendous size of this killing ground in Auschwitz, you are shocked. Sometimes it is hard to pray, and the question will arise: How could this have happened and where was God during that time? We were speechless, and therefore met in small groups to share how the Holy Spirit could lead us on. The Lord granted us many prayers of repentance with tears, as we remembered the tragedy that had happened there. 72 people came to fast and pray with us for a week and another 60 people joined us for the last three days. In the Jewish block 27 in Auschwitz 1, was an inscription ***"The blood of your brother Abel is crying out from the earth."*** (Gen 4) In Auschwitz you feel that the innocent blood is crying out from the earth. We read from the letter to the Hebrews 12 Verse 24: ***"But you have come ... to JESUS the mediator of a new covenant and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel."***

The blood of Jesus speaks louder and better and calls for mercy, when we repent. During this week in May 1995 we also met a group of 700 young Israelis. As they saw the expedition in Auschwitz 1 many of them fell and had an emotional breakdown. Some of our group had the courage to go over to them and ask for forgiveness. Much later we heard by accident that a young girl shared in Israel: "We met in Auschwitz some Christians from Germany who asked for forgiveness. Now we have hope again for the future of Israel and Germany." We understood that many people need to visit the former Concentration Camp in Auschwitz and receive there a spirit of repentance and deliverance from a humanistic worldview. In the end of this prayer and fasting week the Lord showed

me that we should continue with those weeks of prayer and fasting in Israel, the land of resurrection for the Jewish state and where the beginning of the early church had taken place. We met several times a year for prayer and fasting days and in 1997 I prepared a week of prayer and fasting in Rome. It was in our heart to pray, in Rome, that the glory of the Lord would return to Jerusalem. In the 70<sup>th</sup> year after Christ, it was not only the menorah that was brought from Jerusalem to Rome, but also the way in which the 'church from the nations' related to Peter, Paul and Mary, giving the impression that they were not Jews, but now belonged to 'the church from the nations'. We also prayed for the restoration of the church to her Jewish roots and to Jerusalem. We can only encourage having times of prayer and to fasting in a group together, because of the clear leading of the Holy Spirit, as we see it in Acts 13 Verse 2: ***"While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."***

In Acts, this little group of five people prayed together, serving the Lord without any pre-prepared program. They simply wanted to serve the Lord. Therefore, the Holy Spirit was free to confirm a calling He had already given to Paul. It is not important to whom the Holy Spirit spoke, but that it was recognized clearly as a word of God. Today you find almost no conference where the program and speakers have not been planned. If we are dealing with very settled and old manifestations in our church and society, we can come to a breakthrough if a group is dedicated to pray and to fast. Many people also receive a clear calling in times of prayer and fasting.

Sadly, the relationship today between the 'Churches in the nations' and Israel has been already distorted in the very early church history. If we study Romans 11, we understand that Paul is warning the believers from the nations not to get into a proud attitude towards Israel. He is asking: Romans 11: Verse 1: ***"Did God reject his people? By no means!" (Verse 1) Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world,***

*and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! (Verse 11+12) For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?" (Verse 1 )*

Romans 11, 18 *"Do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you."* Verse 20 *"Do not be arrogant but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either."*

If we disconnect from our spiritual roots, which is the people of Israel, we also lose our real identity and develop a pseudo Christian culture, which is founded in the Greek thinking instead of the Hebrew. After Jerusalem was destroyed in the year 70 A.D., the Church of the Nations felt that now God had confirmed the rejection of the Jewish people and they started to teach that the church in the nations had replaced Israel. In addition, the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Council, decided in the year 90 A.D. in Yavne, that a Jew, who confessed Jesus as the Messiah, was not recognized as Jew any longer. Until that time the messianic Jews had still taken part of the Jewish services in the synagogues. The growing Church among the Gentiles also took a step that a Jew, who confessed Jesus, needed to be disconnected from his Jewish heritage. All of this brought the messianic Jews into a very difficult situation so that they lost their Jewish identity. The church from the nations passed on a wrong understanding about God's covenant relationship and his character of faithfulness. It was thought that God had divorced Israel and entered into a new covenant; which was the church and the nations. This is an opposite statement of the word of God. Romans **11 Verse 28: "but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable."** In 2 Timothy 2, 12 Paul also says: *"If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself"*.

Because of the teaching from the Gentile church of replacement theology, the sickness of continuous separation entered. The first Gentile church separated themselves from the Jews, and later the Orthodox Church from the Catholics. It continued as the Protestant church returned to the simple Gospel of justification by faith. But it did not stop there because then came the Baptist Church and the Pentecostal church

and every new revival separated from the previous church. Anti-Semitism and racism entered the church and opened the door for centuries of murder and war even among so-called Christian nations. The first Church fathers Johannes Chrysostom's and Augustin's were already teaching that Synagogues were a dwelling place for demons and that it would be good to burn the Jewish prayer books.

Because church history is still influencing the situation today, we are called to repent and to stand with the Jewish people.

Shalom!

Christa

## Testimony of Christa Behr, Part II

My thoughts are not written in a chronological order, but assigned to different topics.

As I shared already in Part I, I prepared a first service of repentance in 1993, in a former concentration camp in Bergen Belsen near Hannover. One year later for the first time I visited the camp in Auschwitz together with one of our pastors, Reuven Berger, from Jerusalem. We were speechless because of this unbelievable crime, and I felt like frozen in all my emotions. I wanted to cry, but I was not able to do so. Shortly after this I visited Pastor Friedrich Aschoff who at that time was a pastor in Kaufering near the former concentration camp Dachau. He had been very impressed by a time of repentance at a KZ-cemetery in 1989. Victims from the former camp in Dachau near Munich were buried there. He thought about how to bring this spirit of repentance and reconciliation into the Nations that had been suffering so much under the Nazi Regime from Germany during the Second World War. He asked me where to begin with our repentance? Since I had just come from Auschwitz and was totally occupied by these impressions, I said: "Auschwitz - because we have sinned the most against the Jewish people and Auschwitz is the darkest place on earth". Today maybe I would say that the darkest place for me is the extermination camp in Treblinka. Pastor Aschoff was immediately ready for us to prepare together the first trip to Auschwitz in February 1994. Ilan Zamir and Benjamin Berger were the first Messianic Jews that accompanied us during this prayer tour. Ilan Zamir was the leader of the Bible School in Jerusalem and I had come in contact with him through Pastor Gleiss from Bendorf in Germany. Many years before, in Germany, Pastor Gleiss had collected money for a kidney transplant Ilan had to undergo. Ilan had a genetic disease that only appears among Sephardic Jews: "Familiar Mediterranean Fever". This disease destroys the blood vessels and also the kidneys. In a miraculous way God had given Ilan another 15 years, after he was, for a few minutes, clinically

dead. For many people, and also for me, Ilan was a very special example of a very precious brother in the Lord. I never felt a condescending attitude towards me as a German or as a woman, because he lived in the spirit of reconciliation.

Through him I got to know John Dawson and his ministry of reconciliation. After this I got to know the beginnings of the ministry, which is now known under the name of TJCII.

In the beginning many meetings were connected to the topic of repentance and reconciliation. Twice we had meetings in Switzerland. At one of these meetings the topic was repentance over the guilt of the Nazi Spirit. At this meeting David Demian from Canada received a clear calling to stand up for repentance towards Israel in Canada. He was able to bring changes into the Christian churches, and brought to their attention the episode of the St. Louis Ship, full with Holocaust survivors from Europe, which was also rejected by the Canadian government during the Second World War. The government of Canada responded in a deep way with a clear confession about this sad history, when they came to Israel, together with the Canadian Rabbis.

At the second meeting in Switzerland the topic of repentance and reconciliation was also related to Africa. At this meeting I asked if there had ever been a repentance meeting prepared about the so-called Berlin-Congo-Conference. Years before I had heard from Pastor Paul Gitwaza in Rwanda about the Berlin-Congo-Conference, where the whole continent of Africa had been divided like a cake among the colonial powers in 1884. The Berlin-Congo-Conference took place from November 1884 until February 1885, which means 4 months. Since I had been the only European at the conference I asked for forgiveness regarding Africa for this terrible guilt, which is still influencing the current wars between Rwanda and Congo. Some of the participants in Switzerland said: We know about it, but never prepared a repentance meeting about this historical sin of our Nations. Since the effects of these

lineal drawn borders in Berlin in 1884 are still there today, we have to deal with this sin. The tribes living together for hundreds of years were not respected and the wars between Rwanda and Congo are still connected to these decisions of the colonial powers. We sat together for the first time at the table and prepared a meeting in Berlin. No African was asked or consulted at this conference in Berlin 1884. Later on I will report more on the topic of Africa.

*Our prayer journeys with Ilan Zamir, who was at that time the chairman of the Toward Jerusalem Council II brought us also to Spain and Turkey. In Spain we asked for forgiveness for the terrible guilt of the Catholic Church towards the Jews in the time of the Spanish Inquisition.*

In the ruins of an old church in Nicaea, which is located in Turkey today, we asked for forgiveness for the attitude of the church from the Nations in the 7<sup>th</sup> century towards the biblical feasts of Israel, when they purposely separated themselves from their Jewish roots. Back then they decided that it would be unacceptable for the church from the Nations to celebrate their feasts according to the Jewish calendar. So, they developed a new, Gregorian church calendar, that follows the sun. Many steps in church history led to the deepening of the chasm between Israel and the Church.

Another prayer meeting took place in Yavne, Israel. In the year 90 A.D. the Sanhedrin had come to the decision that a Jew who believes in Jesus is not to be considered as a Jew anymore. In Yavne we also had a very good time of prayer for the restoration of the divine unity and reconciliation between men and women in the synagogue and the church. Perhaps many do not know that the Orthodox Jews say in their morning prayer: "Thank you Lord, that you have not created me as a woman." The woman however prays: "Thank you Lord that you have created me as I am." In the Middle East the woman has a very subordinate role, not only in Judaism, but also, and especially, in the Muslim culture. During this prayer trip the leading of the Holy Spirit was very profound and encouraging through prophetic words, prayers and a spirit of repentance.

There were many spontaneous contributions and impressions. Ilan Zamir was an important contact person for many Messianic Jews and churches from the nations.

Since Ilan agreed to accompany me during another prayer trip to Auschwitz, I wanted to visit him in February. During my visit I realized that he was very sick, and I had to call an ambulance on the very same day. Ilan spent the last two months of his life in the hospital. I had the privilege to be with him daily during those last two months of his life, together with his mother and his sister Anat. In his deep suffering you could recognize clearly the nature of our Messiah Yeshua. Some people questioned me about my commitment for him and regrettably I told him about it. He began to weep and said “people don’t understand, I have no one who cares for me on a daily base now.” From then on it was clear to me, that this assignment had priority for me at this time. One time I brought him worship music to the Hospital. He knew all the songs very well and started to sing along, and weeping he said: “Yeshua, I love you.” For me it was as if the Lord was standing right in front of him. During the last weeks in the intensive care unit, his blood vessels ruptured inwardly and outwardly. Ilan’s face looked like the face of Jesus in the movie “The Passion”. It was a deep experience for me to see that very well-known leaders can be alone in their last hours, as we also read this about Paul in **2. Timothy 4:16-17: “At my first defence, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength...”**

I am very thankful for his life and that I got to know this brother, Ilan Zamir.

*These weeks of prayer and fasting, which were started in Auschwitz in 1995, continued as smaller meetings in Israel. In 1997 we visited Rome with 54 people for a week of prayer and fasting. We prayed in Rome at the Arch of Titus, that the glory of God (Kavod) would come back to Jerusalem. It also was our concern that the church in the Nations would recognize the Jewish identity of the apostles Peter, Paul and Mary, the mother of Yeshua. After some difficulties we finally came to an agreement, that the church in heaven is already completed, yet the church on earth has sinned as we can easily recognize this in church*

*history. Therefore, we spent much time in repentance, and for the confession of sin towards the Jewish people in our tragic church history.*

In 1998 we had a very important prayer time in Kiriya Ha Yearim where about 60 participants came. In this week of prayer and fasting our concern was the unity of the church from the Nations, with the believers in Israel. We built an altar where Israel took a central place and where everyone added his stone for his Nation, while praying for the restoration of this relationship. Our time of worship in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem was unforgettable. Without any disturbance we could worship the Lord for one hour in the chapel of the cross. As we were on the way out the police came and asked us to stop singing, because spontaneous singing is forbidden there! During that week the Lord also put on our hearts the painful question: How can we celebrate the Lord's Supper together? This question was also our main concern in the coming years. At that time our small leadership team consisted of 4 people: Benjamin and Reuven Berger, Peter Hocken and myself.

In the following year, 1999, we prayed together in a catholic house for pilgrims in "Maison d' Abraham" in Ras-al- Amud, on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. We paid attention to the prophetic word from Ezekiel 37, the bringing together of the two sticks, one for Israel and one for Ephraim. **Ezekiel 37: 15-17: "Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions. Then take another stick and write on it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.' Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand."**

We had wonderful times of worship on top of the roof, waving flags and dancing with a view over the Temple Mount. In that year it was very painful, that we couldn't celebrate the Lord's Supper with each other, out of respect for the catholic understanding of the Lord's Supper. But now we asked our catholic brethren to fast from the Lords Supper, like we, as Messianic Jews and Protestants have already been doing for many

years. We felt it was better not to celebrate disunity concerning the Lords Supper, in a week of prayer and fasting for the unity of the church.

Finally, in the year 2000 it was possible for us to celebrate the Lord's Supper together at Christ Church in the Old City of Jerusalem. Messianic Jews led us in this service and we felt the deep longing of the Lord for this meal of unity with the Lord in His whole Body.

For Pentecost Sunday we chose a special place for our meeting at the cave of Zedekiah, also known as Solomon's quarry. Nowadays, the place is a worldwide centre of the Freemasons. This cave is located on the northern side of the Old City wall in Jerusalem near to the Damascus Gate. We read from Ezekiel Chapter 8 verses 3 to 17.

In the year 2001 we met again in the Old City in Jerusalem. On May 1<sup>st</sup>, in the morning, I read a word from **Isaiah 7 verses 10 to 16**. ***"Moreover, the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!" Then he said, "Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. Curds and honey, He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings."***

I said to the group that by this word I was encouraged to ask for a sign today, and if we do not ask for it we just weary the Lord. On this morning we came into unusual depths of repentance and reconciliation and I cannot really describe it with a few words. The deep wounds of the past, especially from the Holocaust, came into the wonderful comforting light and love of God. The Lord gave the members from the church in the Nations among us, the grace of deep repentance, and we felt the pain of the Lord over the terrible history towards the Jewish people. In the afternoon at 3 p.m. unusual heavy rain fell, especially in the Old City of Jerusalem and Benjamin said: This is the sign Christa asked for. The next

morning, they announced in the news, that it hadn't rained like this on May 1<sup>st</sup> for the last 100 years.

## Reconciliation and TJCII

I have known some members of TJCII for many years, like Johannes Fichtenbauer, from the time when the international intercessory prayer movement started in Vienna, Austria. Peter Hocken was my guest in Jerusalem at his first visit in Israel. I got to know Brian Cox at a conference in Brighton 1991. A Lutheran pastor, Denis Peterson, introduced us with the words that we should be connected---since we had a similar calling in regards to reconciliation. I visited Brian in 1993 in Santa Barbara in California and shared in his church about Israel. He accepted my invitation for a meeting of repentance in the former concentration camp in Berlin-Sachsenhausen. The Lord touched him very deeply and Brian began to weep, and he also received a calling for a ministry of reconciliation between the Church and Israel.

Some years later Peter Hocken wrote a little booklet for "Towards Jerusalem Council II". While reading through, some points came to my mind and I wrote my thoughts down in 11 points. I am thankful for the changes which were made in the new edition and therefore I want to mention only that Point 3 referred to the acceptance of spiritual leaders from Jerusalem. Benjamin and Reuven Berger encouraged me at that time to give this point an important place. Since Ilan went to be with the Lord there was no pastor from Jerusalem anymore in the leadership team. Shortly after I sent out this E-mail, Ofer Amitai, Benjamin Berger and Marcel Rebai were invited to the meeting of TJCII. A few years ago, at a meeting of TJCII in Gnadental Germany, I felt that I could not continue as a part of TJCII, but I still have very good friends there, especially among the intercessors from Austria.

When I heard about the new vision of TJCII that Marty Waldman had received, some question came to me related to this vision. Over the years I got more clarity about my concerns. As far as I understood the vision of Marty and the executive committee from TJCII, a second Council will be prepared, where the Church from the Nations would accept, approve, release and bless the Messianic Jews in their specific Jewish identity. They see a connection to the First Council of the Apostles in Acts 15. That is the reason why they call it “Toward Jerusalem Counsel II”.

At that time, in Acts chapter 15, the Messianic Jews had written a letter and sent it to the churches in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia through Paul and Barnabas. But the first Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 was held after the Holy Spirit had given a clear spiritual breakthrough. In Acts 10 and 11 we read that Peter received a vision: he saw a cloth with unclean animals coming down from heaven. **Acts 11: 7- 9:** *“And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ But I said, ‘Not so, Lord! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.’ But the voice answered me again from heaven, ‘What God has cleansed you must not call common.’”*

This vision prepared Peter to respond positively to the invitation of the centurion Cornelius and to visit his home. Otherwise he would not have been ready to go there. Before Peter finished his speech, the Holy Spirit already fell on all who gathered in the house of Cornelius and they received the Holy Spirit in the same way as the Jews at Pentecost. **Acts 10:44- 48:** *“While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, ‘Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?’ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.”*

Because of this experience Peter and the Apostles made their statements at the Jerusalem Council in **Acts 15: 7-12:** *“And when there had*

*been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: 'Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So, God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.' Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles."*

This supernatural spiritual breakthrough was the foundation of the first Jerusalem Council and therefore no discussion was needed anymore. Therefore, the Apostles could write and address in their letter to the church in the Nations. **Acts 15:28: "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us..."** Although the Jewish believers that had come with Peter *were astonished* that the Holy Spirit had been poured out over them in the same way as to the Jews, there was no arguing anymore, because the supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit made it very clear.

I think that we should expect and pray for a supernatural breakthrough of the Holy Spirit regarding the relationship between Messianic Jews, and believers from the Nations. This expectation, and these prayers, turn our focus and hope to a supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit and would exclude any human manipulation or interpretation. We see in Acts chapter 15 at the first Council of the Apostles, that it was the Holy Spirit who brought forth such a change of mind and gave a new understanding to the leaders and the congregations. Such a breakthrough would release a worldwide revival of real unity from all believers in Yeshua in love and in the truth. It would be recognized and accepted from the whole body of Christ as a clear move of the Holy Spirit. Then we could expect the same reaction as in **Acts Chapter 15:31 "When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement."**

During the last 40 to 50 years more and more Jews have come to a living faith in Yeshua as their Messiah all over the world. It is a clear

move of the Holy Spirit, and the church from the Nations cannot ignore this fact any longer. The Lord Himself will continue to release and reveal their identity as Messianic Jews, as we pray and seek the Lord in this matter. It is very moving to hear some of their testimonies, how the Lord is bringing Jewish people in a wonderfully and supernatural way to the knowledge of Yeshua as their Messiah. Therefore, the Messianic Jewish movement is not dependent on acceptance, or approval, through a council of churches from the Nations, because it is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

The question for the church from the Nations is rather: To what extent can we hold on to our old denominational identity, in light of God's supernatural intervention, which brings forth the resurrection of the Messianic Jews own identity? Does our identity as the Church from the Nations, change through the acknowledgement of the existence of the Messianic-Jewish fellowships and their identity? We, as the Church from the Nations cannot any longer act as if there is no one to talk to as a partner. When a woman or a man gets married, she or he, is giving up their old identity. Both entered into a completely new and life-changing reality. A strong prayer movement could trigger a breakthrough in this Church relationship.

For the Lord Yeshua the right relation between Jews and Gentiles is so important, that he Himself went to the cross for it, to create in Himself the one new man. It is a creative act of Yeshua. Paul writes in *Ephesians 2: 13-22*: ***“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in***

***whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”***

The gospel went out from Jerusalem by the Messianic Jews. They were called to bring the good news to the Gentiles. Sadly, the Gentile church is not bringing back a pure gospel to Israel, because of her terrible history and her traditions which are mixed with the spirit of humanism. We are dealing with the Replacement Theology. I am very thankful for the pioneer work that TJCII has accomplished to confront the so-called Replacement Theology in the traditional denominations in Europe and also in Africa and I appreciate also all the intercessors who pray for TJCII, and that the Kingdom of God will be manifested through this ministry.

A prayer movement that is connected to the revelation of the Apostle Paul could release a greater clarity about the God-given identity of Messianic Jews in relation to the Church from the Nations. ***Galatians 6: 15-16: “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.”***

We pray that our Messianic brethren will be able to lead us in the sharing of the Lord’s Supper. Prophetic people and meetings can go beyond our respected traditions and teachings, especially if our traditions are not in conformity with the word of God. Sometimes a small group is able to live in its biblical conviction, praying and hoping that one day the Lord will open a door for many.

I think it is important that all Israel-related initiatives take a clear stand concerning the actual life-threatening situation of the Jewish people in Israel. Our repentance of our sad church history has to bring forth fruits of repentance in our time. The current life-threatening hatred by Iran and Islamic fundamentalists towards Israel is very alarming. Sadly, many Christians cannot see the attacks on Israel, and on the whole

western world. As we hear the speech of Benjamin Netanyahu before the council of the UN, we can understand it is not in the first place a political matter, but a spiritual one that should concern us Christian. The hatred from Muslim-dominated governments towards Israel in the Middle East cannot be explained in a human way.

In the book of Daniel, we read about the enormous battles in the invisible realm. **Daniel 10: 13-14** says: *“But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”* We can make a connection to the request in the Lord’s Prayer **Matthew 6:10**: *“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”*.

Through prayer the church has a part in this spiritual battle. We also have many opportunities to put one-sided information about Israel right, in our society. To stand with Israel could also cost a lot again in the future. We also need a clear teaching about the Millennium, according to which Jesus will reign from Jerusalem over the whole world for one thousand years. The Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem have a special role in this time. How could we otherwise understand the great hatred against Israel, if we do not realize the work of the enemies of God, who attempt to destroy Israel and the plan of the Lord God, in the past and present? The church needs more revelation about God’s eternal plan of salvation, concerning the historical anti-Semitism and today’s hatred towards the people of Israel. In my booklet I wrote some bible studies about this issue, according to the book of Esther and the life of the apostle Paul. This hatred is still fed by the same demonic powers we saw at work in the time of the Second World War. These thoughts have moved my heart in the last years, and that is why I wanted to share them with you.

Christa Behr



# Testimony of Christa Behr, Part III

## *My call to Africa*

It is so wonderful that God never forgets any promise he has given. By 1976, I had already been a bible teacher for 2 years in public schools in Haid in Upper Austria. At this time, I believed that I had a call to Africa and told this to a Lutheran Pastor. I had forgotten it for almost twenty years, but after many years when I had been in Africa it came to my mind again. First, I visited Egypt and then Ethiopia together with Jean Knox from Canada and a Messianic-Jewish pastor from Ethiopia.

We were helping Ethiopian Jews to come out of prison through a financial gift from Austrians. They suffered under Anti-Semitism in villages near Gonda and had been in prison for some years without any possibility to defend themselves in a court case. During this journey I got to know Dr Shitayea who is until today a key person in helping poor Jewish families in the area of Gonda. She wrote a report about the terrible situation of some Ethiopian Jewish families, who actually were starving from hunger. Because of her letter, Yad Ruth (a group from Hamburg, Germany) started a food program and is feeding 400 poor families every month.

Pastor Luis, a Tutzi from Rwanda, visited us in 1995 in Jerusalem. He told us terrible things about the genocide, which just had taken place in 1994 in Rwanda. One year later I visited him in Rwanda and got to know Pastor Paul Gitwaza. He is now the senior pastor of Zion's Church in Kigali, the capital city of Rwanda. At that time, he was responsible for a national intercession-movement in Rwanda. Together with him I prepared prayer and fasting weeks in Kigali. Benjamin Berger and I came

two times for these weeks from Israel. We gave a testimony of reconciliation as a Jew and a German living in forgiveness and unity. During the first week of prayer and fasting we experienced an attack of the so-called “voodoo-cult”. Pastor Paul lost his first-born son in the middle of that prayer week, but he came right back after the funeral of his son to our meetings. In the last days we experienced a breakthrough in repentance and reconciliation between believers from the Hutu and Tutzi tribe. In December 2000 we could celebrate reconciliation between the different churches and tribes in the Football stadium of Kigali.

After these meetings in Rwanda, doors opened for me to share about Israel and the importance of reconciliation in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Congo, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa.

I want to share one experience in Tanzania with you. Gottfried Lema had invited me to speak about Israel at a conference near to the Mountain of Kilimanjaro. At this time there was a great drought in that area and the cows of the Massai tribe died on the fields. One could feel the enormous suffering of the people in Tanzania. During the conference I was invited to share at a school that is supported by a Pentecostal Church and led by a female pastor. 430 students between the ages 12 to 20 lived there and received education. They gathered to hear my testimony about repentance in Germany towards the Jewish people and reconciliation we had experienced with Israel. I told them about the opportunity to repent for the sins of our nations, even if we are young, as we can see it in the life of the prophet Daniel.

After my sharing a teacher stood up and said to the students: “In the year 1976 the former president took sides with Yasser Arafat so much that he called the people of Tanzania to go on the streets to demonstrate against Israel and to curse the Jews. Sadly, she had also participated in this demonstration, but now recognized that believers in Yeshua should bless Israel and repent for this historical sin in Tanzania. She also said that the economy of Tanzania went down the road from that time on.” After this

she invited all 430 students to ask the God of Israel, our Father in Jesus Christ for forgiveness. All the students stood up, turned their face towards the wall or knelt down and began loud prayers, crying out for forgiveness for the sin of Tanzania towards Israel. Never had I seen such a response before and I began to cry. Back at the conference, the conviction was growing in me that we should ask for rain before the end of our conference.

On the last day of our meetings around 3 o'clock it not only started to rain, but water was pouring down from heaven. They told me later that the rain lasted for some weeks and everybody knew that this was a response by the God of Israel to their repentance towards Israel. The blessing of rain was released for this area near to the Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

### ***Africa and the Berlin-Congo Conference***

Our first meeting regarding the Berlin-Congo conference was planned in Switzerland and took place in Berlin. At the same time, I wanted to prepare a prayer and repentance meeting at Wewelsburg near Paderborn in Germany, the spiritual centre of the former SS in Nazi-Germany. From there the Nazi SS wanted to rule the whole world in the so-called millennial empire. The plans were already prepared and the constructions should be finished in the year 1964. We thank God that these plans were not carried out because the end of the "Second World War" left a different reality. For this repentance meeting I invited my friend Pastor Langton Gatsi from Zimbabwe. He has a lot of experience in intercession and spiritual warfare. Because he would have been already in Germany at that time, I invited Langton also to join our preparation team for the repentance meetings related to the so-called Berlin-Congo Conference. If we had not invited an African brother to be with us, we would have repeated the same sin from 1884.

The colonial powers made all their decisions about the whole continent of Africa, without consulting any African. In the end, Langton was able to come to our meeting in Berlin, but not to the prayer meeting at Wewelsburg. In this way Langton became our main contact person at this reconciliation meetings with Africa, and we are very thankful that we can work in reconciliation together.

8: At our second meeting in Berlin I brought some copies of an article from "The Jerusalem Post" with me about the situation in Israel. I wanted to give them to some members of our group, but this displeased some brothers from Europe. They said Israel should not be an issue in our reconciliation meetings about Africa. Although our African brothers and sisters had much revelation about Israel, it was not possible to give Israel the rightful place as the first Nation, because of disunity among the European participants. In my opinion this could be a spiritual problem concerning the ministry of reconciliation because Israel and the Nations are in a relationship as we read in Deuteronomy 32,8: ***"When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel."***

When we give Israel the right place, our nations are also receiving the right place and we as nations can enter into a reconciled relationship with one another.

We had a meeting in Berlin with representatives from different African countries and a few years later in Harare in Zimbabwe. The guilt towards Israel and Africa is so enormous that we can only ask for mercy and for opportunities to be a blessing for Israel and Africa. We pray as Europeans for grace to bring fruits of repentance. Taking over the entire continent of Africa was caused by our prideful attitude as colonial powers. We left tremendous wounds after us. We continue to pray for healing and restoration for the whole African continent.

I was invited to share about Israel two times at a prayer conference in Kinshasa/ Congo prepared by Pastor Samuel Dincajki. Since I was the

only white person from Europe, I humbled myself under the great guilt of King Leopold II from Belgium. His ancestors were Germans and he was responsible for the killing of millions of Congolese. Through the book “The Ghost of King Leopold the II” Congolese Christians got more information about this terrible time under French and Belgian occupation. We wept over the great suffering caused by the colonial powers. This was only a small beginning and I pray that the repentance and reconciliation with Congo and all the other African Nations will continue until we see a breakthrough.

### ***The call to stay unmarried for the Lord***

As I came to know the Lord, I understood from my councillors that if Yeshua is my Lord, He will also have a word for me regarding the questions to whom I would marry and in which county I should live in the future. Many believers do not even ask the question if there is a call for them to stay single for the Lord. Even so Jesus himself speaks very clearly about this call in Matthew 12: ***“There are men who from their birth have been disabled from marriage, others who have been so disabled by men, and others who have disabled themselves for the sake of the Kingdom of the Heavens. He who is able to receive (accept) this let him receive (accept) it.”***

Also, Paul speaks about this calling in connection with the times we live in. As I heard about it, I understood that there is a price to pay and I wept a little bit, but then I said yes to His ways. At my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday I asked the Lord to give me a clear answer about my calling, if I was supposed to stay single for the rest of my life. I was thinking about this issue since I became a believer at the age of 18 and I was open not to marry. But I did not want to make an early final decision, because I’ve met too many people in Austria, a Catholic country, where young believers made too early a vow not to get married but could not keep it. I saw their dilemma and I think it would have been better for them if they had waited a little longer to make the final decision. Whenever I had the opportunity

to get married with someone, I prayed over it and every time the Lord gave me a clear answer, which was no. Since my house in Jerusalem is too big for one person, I wanted to know at that time who was supposed to live with me there. The word of Jesus from the gospel of Matthew 19, 12 spoke to my heart especially: ***“He who is able to receive (accept) this let him receive (accept) it.”***

So, I was thinking about the question if I could accept to stay in this calling for the rest of my life. After having lived single for the Lord for the last 50 years it was not hard for me to answer with a yes. My answer to stay single was not related to join to an existing community. I did not enter into the other so-called Catholic vows, like obedience and poverty. Imre Szabo had a prophetic word for me that encouraged me to affirm this decision with a celebration. I prepared this celebration on the Mount Zion for my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and invited my friends from Israel and from abroad. After some questions from friends about the way and the timing of this celebration I asked the Lord again for a confirmation and I received a word from Psalm 116: 18-19: ***“I will pay my vows to the LORD now in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord’s house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Praise the LORD!”***

With these verses I felt myself encouraged to go ahead, because they confirmed to me the time and the place. I had already prepared the celebration in the midst of Jerusalem, on the Mount Zion and it would be in the presence of all His people, because I had invited my friends. On this day a word was given to me twice. Already in the morning Vera, a good friend of mine shared this word with me from Isaiah 54:1-2 and a couple from Austria during our celebration. ***“Sing, O barren woman, you who never bore a child; burst into song, shout for joy, you who were never in labour; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband,’ says the LORD. ‘Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes.’”*** This chapter is in the first place a promise to Jerusalem but I received it as something for myself personally. For me it is not a question of value how the Lord is calling us to be single or married, but of personal leading. Mary was married and also the first of the Apostles, Peter. Paul is warning us about the teaching not to get married, because it could be a

teaching of evil spirits. 1. Timothy 4, 3. It seems to me that there is a group of people who are looking for new ways for community life, fitting for our time and circumstances.

### ***Our meetings with Messianic Jews, Catholics and Protestant Christians***

In 1996 we started a monthly meeting with Messianic Jews, Catholics and Protestants. During winter-time we meet in my house, and during the summer in the garden of Benjamin and Ruben's garden. A friendship has developed among the participants and we appreciate this gathering so much. We have a time for sharing, and singing; we pray and listen to bible teaching. We finish with a meal and with a little time of fellowship.

### ***Our monthly meetings with the Messianic Jews, Arabs and brethren from the Nations***

Since about 1992 we have a monthly meeting together with Messianic Jews, Arab brothers and sisters, and Christians from the nations in Jerusalem. It is so pleasant to experience friendship and unity in prayer in our tensed political situation. Our identity in the Lord Jesus Christ is stronger than the political agenda.

### ***Guests***

In the last 20 years we could accommodate many guests. Some of them have found a connection to Israel in this way, and also they can relate better what the Lord is doing here in Israel. We experience how a visit to Israel imparts a deep understanding about the country and about the Jewish roots of many. Lately the number of visitors has been increased, because I have more space in the house through the help of our Israel Friends from Saxony. Literally, my tent has been extended in the last years.

## ***Holocaust survivors***

We are especially grateful for the friendships we have with local Holocaust survivors, who are able to live in friendship with us as Germans. With three of them (Esther Mannheim, her sister Yehudit Kriegel and Ruth Zaks) we could register an official trust.

*Christa Behr*