

Making Disciples

Jan Whitmore and Mintie Nel
www.makingdisciples.co.uk

Encouragement in Israel
18 – 25 May 2014

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Travelling on Easyjet's no frills flight from Tel Aviv, Israel; we arrived home in the early hours of Monday morning, 26 May 2014. Not exactly an event-free travel experience; budget flights are definitely for the strong and able-bodied. Our aching bodies are crying out for mercy.

Our visit with Rita Kotze on Kibbutz Ashdot Yaakov, in the Jordan Valley, was special. Years of friendship in the Lord faithfully provides a strong foundation for rich times of sharing. How good to recount together God's faithfulness and to hear of what God is doing in the lives of those we love and care for in Israel. Rita doesn't drive so it was our joy to take her out and about to see friends and fulfil medical appointments.



Rita lost her husband Piet last year; they had served the Lord in Israel for the greater part of their lives. As Piet's mental health deteriorated, Rita contracted breast cancer. She was terminally ill but unable to seek medical help because of Piet's inability to cope. We visited them in 2012 to help, comfort, encourage and pray. Laying on hands and anointing with oil we wondered what God intended to do. Certainly, outside of Him there was no hope. Our heavenly Father called Piet home in April last year and fittingly he was buried on the Kibbutz among Israelis he had served. Rita, now in bereavement had breast surgery followed by chemotherapy. Prayer continued in earnest. Again, last year we visited to help practically and provide fellowship and care.

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us to return again at this time to be a present help. It was short period of time but somehow the week seemed to stretch as each day we accompanied Rita to various places. She is in excellent heart, strong in faith and growing ever stronger physically. A recent scan revealed a miracle of God's grace – there is no cancer anywhere else in her body. Jehovah Rapha – God our healer has performed His own work of power!

Whilst in the Galilee we also met with Ronnen and Svetlana Venter, Christian workers of many years. They are walking through very tough times trusting Him to sort out some very complex and stressful situations in regard to their housing. Their son, Raphaelli, recently diagnosed with Asperger's, is also struggling at school.

Ronnen writes:



Dear Mintie and Jan,

Svetlana and I would like to thank you both for obeying the Lord in coming to Israel this year. Not only do we appreciate the financial offering and the gifts for us and the children, but both of us felt that the Lord Himself came to our home again to encourage and to shepherd us with His Word.

Mintie, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you personally for your input into my life since 1973 when you came to Israel to assist not just Mom and Dad but also Grandma Anna Venter and others through many difficult times. I have so many childhood memories of you speaking a word of kindness or helping us in some way.

We thank the Lord that He put you both together as a team more than 20 years ago and that He is still using you to bless and touch many people's lives not just here in Israel but across the world.



Raphaelli
Venter with
Mintie



Shirea Venter
with Mintie

The fruit of your discipleship trainings and retreats have spread abroad the fragrance of Christ. Both of You are channels through whom the Lord can flow out and minister His love. That flowing is what Svetlana and I have experienced through your ministry and numerous visits to us throughout the years. Your yearly visits to us and the time you spent in shepherding us, counselling us and discipling us, stand out like beacons in the night and helped to carry us through the past 12 years of our married life. Words would fail to convey our heartfelt gratitude to you for your love, friendship, words of wisdom and faithfulness in living out and expressing Christ's person to us in such a way.

We want to thank you for taking time to hear from the Lord concerning our situation and the problems we are currently facing. You spoke a word to us that we are now bringing before the Lord in prayer and we know that the Lord will turn this situation into salvation for us by your continuous prayers and petitions on our behalf and by the abundant supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ - Phil 2:19

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God our Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you and keep you from every attack.



Corrie de Jong
with Mintie in
Jerusalem

*We love you dearly precious ones!
Ronnen and Svetlana Venter
Lower Galilee
Poriya Ollit
Israel*

After deciding we would not visit Jerusalem this time, we heard of two single Christian workers who have been through difficult times with their health. Prompted by the Spirit we routed our journey back to Tel Aviv airport via Jerusalem for one night,

allowing us to spend quality time with each. Significant sharing of hearts, and praying specifically for pressing personal needs, left us all feeling uplifted and strengthened.

We are joyfully weary, and our hearts are full of gratitude to the Lord for all He accomplished. We know that many committed to pray for us every day during our trip and this made the difference between mediocre and excellence, danger and safety, lack and provision. Even to the last day money was delivered to our doorstep to pass on to the saints in Israel. One couple in the USA gave \$150 to take Rita out and treat her. That was spent visiting the “new find” by the shores of the Galilee – the village of Magdala – the home of Mary Magdalene and one of the centres of Jesus’ ministry. The building of a hotel unearthed the town, complete with a 1st century Jewish synagogue with a mosaic floor! Jesus certainly would have taught in that synagogue. It is something to see. We have faithfully blessed others on your behalf and our personal needs were met too.



We are catching our breath and next week we begin to prepare the teaching materials for the discipleship weekend we are leading at St Johns Methodist, Conwy, North Wales at the end of June. We covet your prayers for our preparation.

Please also pray for the discipleship group we are still leading in London once a week. While we have been away we have heard wonderful news of a significant move of the Holy Spirit in each of their lives. We meet with them again next Thursday, 5 June 2014, when we will be discussing what, in the Parable of the Sower, Jesus meant by thorns in our lives. What power do thorns have? How do they kill, rob and destroy a believer’s faith? What gives permission for thorns to grow so rampantly? What are the telling signs of thorns in the Church today?

In partnership in the Gospel,
Our love

Jan & Mintie