

A note from *Sandy's* Desk:

Over 2,600 years ago, the prophet Jeremiah cried out to the nation of Israel warning them to humble themselves and repent of their idolatry and the shedding of innocent blood. Babies were sacrificed to pagan gods on altars in places such as Meggido, Dan and the Ben Hinnom Valley. During our prayer conference we visited these ancient sites to pray, confess and ask God to turn the tide of abortion. We also visited "modern altars" where babies continue to be sacrificed to idols of convenience, pride and finances. We took Communion outside three hospitals in Jerusalem where abortions are routinely done (two Hadassah hospitals and Misgav Ladach). As we worshipped, we beseeched the Lord for His mercy on the people of Israel. On a separate trip to Rambam Hospital in Haifa, the outreach team prayed together at the site where the aborted babies are thrown into the trash.

This spirit of prayer and repentance continued throughout the conference when local Israelis joined the internationals during the weekend. It was a time of encouragement for many who work to save babies as we received more training, heard words of encouragement and testimonies of counselors from Israel and abroad.

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Life Gardens (Ganei Chaim)



trees ready for planting



Ribbon-cutting at the dedication



Hemda and Josh planting trees

On Thursday, March 4th, Ganei Chaim was dedicated to help women and their families find healing, forgiveness and restoration after an abortion. Women who suffered a natural miscarriage may also plant a tree here in memory of the baby lost in the womb. The first 135 trees were planted around the perimeter of the 17 dunam (4 acre) forest as part of a live fence. Many who planted prayed quietly as they remembered their unborn child.

One of those who planted a tree was Hemda. She had immigrated to Israel as a teenager and was drafted into the IDF in February of 1990. Because of health issues, she visited the hospital in December of that year for a blood test and discovered that she was 6 weeks pregnant. Hemda had been taking medication for her blood condition and doctors told her that the baby wouldn't survive or would be born handicapped. Social workers told her: "You're young. You won't have a life if you continue this pregnancy. It's not a baby. It's just a blood clot." Because she was alone and dealing with tremendous pressure from others, she had the abortion. Afterwards, she lay in bed at night crying. Soon after the abortion, she was discharged from the army for medical reasons. She left Israel, married and became pregnant again. This time, although doctors said that the baby would have deformities, Hemda continued her pregnancy and gave birth to a healthy, beautiful baby boy. Her strong, teenage son Josh was at the conference with us to plant a tree for his sibling.

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Ladies in Waiting

Shulamit's story:

Shulamit, only 18 years old and 7 weeks pregnant, came into our offices with her boyfriend, a married religious man with 5 children. She is a new immigrant from Ethiopia and very beautiful, quiet and shy. She barely spoke as this dominating boyfriend told her to keep her baby. We phoned new mother Tikva (see Rinat's story), also an Ethiopian, to help translate into Amharit (the language of Ethiopia) and to communicate more personally with Shulamit. The next day, the two ladies returned to the office during our weekly prayer meeting. Shulamit was vehement about having an abortion and would barely speak or look at us, relating only to Tikva, who had quickly become her friend. I stepped out to ask our prayer team to pray for a change of heart as it seemed that she had absolutely decided to abort. When I re-entered the room, Shulamit was weeping. She had decided that she couldn't abort but couldn't keep the baby and so would commit suicide. I asked if I could pray, but she was so upset that she stepped outside to wipe her face. As our team continued praying, our counselor stepped in to give more counsel. Only then would Shulamit allow me to pray. Shortly after, she began to smile, looked at the baby shoes displayed on our wall with joy, and her entire countenance changed. I have never seen such a radical softening of heart as her vehement choice to abort transformed into joy at the prospect of having a child. Our fervent prayer was so effective!

Shulamit still needs housing for the duration of the pregnancy so please continue to pray for the perfect living situation for her. She feels that it would be dangerous for her family to discover she is pregnant.

Miriam's story:

Miriam is almost 19 years old and from a large Ethiopian family. Her father died many years ago. When Miriam discovered she was pregnant, she went to her commanding officer who referred her to the social worker responsible for abortions. She was quickly approved for an abortion and an appointment was made. As she sat next to the door of the surgical room awaiting her turn, her heart was very troubled. When the doctor called her name, she stood up and said "I'm leaving. I can't do this." The doctor told her that she had no choice and that the army had already paid for the abortion. She left and was immediately discharged from the army. About a week later, she received our flier at the bus station in Jerusalem. When she arrived for her appointment with us, she was still very confused about whether to continue the pregnancy. We asked her some simple questions, "What does your heart want? When you walked out of that doctor's office, hadn't you already made your choice?" She shared her many fears and problems, and we were able to remove many of the obstacles to the birth by promising emotional and practical support. We enrolled her in the Operation Moses project which provides all that she'll need for her baby for the first year of his life. Miriam is now very excited about the baby whom she'll meet next fall.

Rinat's story:

Rinat is a very precious young woman who has had a very difficult life. When she was 8 years old and living in the States, she was removed from her parent's care because they were heroin addicts. Her relationship with her adoptive parents was difficult and she was sent to Israel when she was a teen. After several years, she met a Bedouin, also a heroin addict, and moved in with him and his family in their village. When she discovered that she was pregnant, she ran away from this abusive situation and stopped taking drugs. While living on the streets, one of our precious new mothers, Tikva (Dec. 2009 newsletter) found her and brought her to our office for help.

By the time she came to us, Rinat had already met believing tourists who told her that if she'd give her to life to God and pray for His help, then everything would be okay. Rinat believed this simple truth, accepted God's love, and began to pray daily for God to help her. One month later, she sat in my office with Tikva, crying with joy and relief that she'd found help. She's now living with a very caring couple who have experience with situations like hers. Doctors had said that her baby might have handicaps, but ultrasound tests show that everything is fine. Please pray for renewal of her life and blessing as she awaits her child's birth in July.

Life Stories:



Miki's story:

Miki came into our office in her second trimester of pregnancy. She was frantic. Although ultra-orthodox, she and her husband live on so little money that she felt her only option was abortion. Typically, a Yeshiva student will be supported either by his wife or by his parents, but Miki is unemployed and unwell and so not able to work and her disapproving parents refuse to support them. Desperate, Miki decided on an abortion.

After hearing about Operation Moses, which would provide her with the baby's needs for an entire year, Miki was overjoyed and agreed to continue her pregnancy.

As well as helping with the costs of the new baby, we had the pleasure of providing her with a new coat, as the old one no longer fit. We also connected her with another humanitarian organization that paid for her hearing aid.

Miki gave birth to Ayala on February 22nd through Caesarian section. Her husband came to visit our office which is near the hospital and thanked us profusely. Miki phoned and said: "You are like a second mother to this child. Without you, this baby wouldn't have been born."

Updates:

Thank you so much for praying for several mothers who were in the December 2009 newsletter.

Mother Yonit gave birth on January 1st to beautiful Shy-El and her friend Fatima gave birth on January 3rd to Hagar. It was a very special joy and surprise for the two mothers to share a room in the hospital! Yonit has now returned to her mother's home where Shaiel has been embraced with love. Fatima moved to a city in the north of Israel, where she continues to elude her Moslem brothers. She has been able to renew her relationship with her mother who wept to see the new granddaughter. It is amazing to see God's goodness and grace in the lives of these two women and their new daughters.



Ahuva (see Dec. 2009 newsletter) gave birth on February 5th to a lovely daughter named Shelly, born with a stunning shock of jet black hair. Ahuva continues to live with her father and maintains a quiet and peaceful life. Just recently, as I spent time with her she said can't even remember her former lifestyle. It seems that person was someone else, long ago. Now she is a loving and caring mother, and God has graciously given her a very easy-going, tranquil daughter.

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Hemda planted a tree in memory of her son who was never born. She named him Doron ("gift"). She said: "Just as it is important to have Yad V'Shem as a memorial to those killed in the Holocaust, it is important to have the Ganei Chaim forest to remember babies who were never born."

If you'd like to plant a tree in memory and honor of your unborn child, please contact our office.

Trees for the unborn may be planted in person with prior coordination with our gardener, or can be planted on your behalf on request. Because 18 is the number of life in Hebrew (the letters in the word Chai add up to 18) we ask you to make a donation in your own currency of 18 units per tree.

Prayer Requests



New Babies!

We are blessed to report the many births in the months since our last newsletter .

December: Baby girls – Liel, Agam, Shir, and Rachel. Boys - Rani and Ahmed.

January : Baby girls – Shaiel, Hagar, twins Adie and Yahel, and Esther Rivka. Boy – Maxim

February: Baby girls – Shelly, Ayala, Talia, Eden, Eliya, and Alicia (twin sister to baby boy Nikita). Boys: Nikita and Oriel.

March : So far this month, two boys have been born. Daniel and one not named yet (traditional Jews won't give their baby a name until the circumcision ceremony on the 8th day).

We know that God loves every one of these children and we are thankful for our part in saving their lives from abortion.

Sandy's Note continued:

A representative from Taiwan shared a very short but powerful formula for effective ministry: Weakness +Willingness +His Grace = God's Destiny for our lives. In many ways, I believe that this summarized the experience of many who attended. We are all so willing to serve Him yet feel inadequate, but through His grace – His purposes will be and are being accomplished and His Kingdom will be established. Through His grace, we will see the shedding of innocent blood stopped.

Thank you for supporting us in prayer. Here are our current needs:

- Please pray for opportunities to speak about alternatives to abortion in the army and in schools.
- We continue to develop new relationships with social workers
- Please pray for blessing on these interactions as the number of clients grows. Awareness of our services has become more visible particularly in the Ethiopian community which has the highest percentage rate of abortions. May God give us the capability to help all those women both financially and with adequate counseling.
- Pray for us as we establish new offices in Tel Aviv, Nazareth and Ariel.
- Pray as we place articles in newspapers detailing just how abortion hurts women.
- Pray that adoption would become a viable alternative to abortion in Israel. Right now, very few babies are given up for adoption.
- Pray for legal optout for medical staff who want to refuse to do abortions. Pray that medical staff and social workers in our hospitals will be "life-minded".
- Pray for Knesset members to take a stand for life – Pray for laws regulating illegal, private abortions; laws restricting late-term abortions; and laws requiring full disclosure of the consequences and options to abortions before the approval of an abortion committee.
- Pray for protection of our staff and counselors
- Pray for repentant hearts. In Ezekiel's words: May God give His people hearts of flesh and take from us the hearts of stone.

We are deeply grateful for your prayers and support. May God richly bless you.

As we enter the Passover season, we remember the Lamb of God and His resurrection, and pray you might find joy and renewed strength in Him.

Blessings,

Sandy Shoshani
National Director
Be'ad Chaim