



# EZRA INTERNATIONAL

RESCUE ✧ RETURN ✧ RESTORE

*Celebrating 25 Years*





## EZRA INTERNATIONAL

We **Thank You** for  
Your Support of 25  
Years of Aliyah!

Many, O LORD my God,  
are Your wonderful  
works which You have  
done!

Psalms 40:5



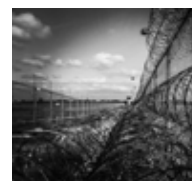
ever ascending

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Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the ends of the earth.  
Jeremiah 31:8

## THE BEGINNINGS: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Christians were praying for them.

By 1989, an estimated three million Jewish people were trapped behind the Iron Curtain and many of these, gravely persecuted. Cut-off from their people Israel, unable to come and go, capriciously arrested and swallowed alive by the Gulag, this was the isolation and fear under which Jewish people in the former Soviet Union lived, from the Communist Revolution until *Perestroika*.

communist party in East Berlin made the startling announcement that his citizens were free to cross the border into the West.



And Christians were praying for them. They prayed for those in the north country.

### Pick Axes & Hammers

"Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

Most of us remember these famous words of US President Ronald Reagan as he stood in front of the Brandenburg Gate in West Berlin on June 12, 1987. For some people, Reagan's statement seemed naïve, even laughable. Two years later, however, on 9 November 1989, the leader of the

That night, the wall was inundated with euphoric young people. By midnight, the checkpoints had been breached: two million from the Communist East had poured into the Democratic West. The wall – quite literally – began to come down. Hammers and pick axes were used to chunk the wall away before the cranes and bulldozers were

brought in. Berlin was united for the first time since 1945. Germany followed in October 1990. Like dominos, other communist regimes in East Europe collapsed as well. By Christmas Day, 1991, Soviet President Mickael Gorbachev resigned.

The USSR was no more. Christians were praying.

These events may have taken the world by surprise but they did not surprise the Lord. Christian intercessory groups had been diligently seeking this outcome for years. The prayers continued.



## What Did It Mean For the Jewish People?

In a word: *Aliyah*.

The collapse of the USSR marked a new era for the Jewish people. The political events along with world leaders – Reagan, Thatcher, Walesa, Pope John Paul and Gorbachev – made the headlines.

But if we were to look behind the headlines, we would find that Christians from all over the world were on their knees in prayer closets and prayer circles. God heard them, and, they heard from God concerning the fate of these millions and what He was about to do to fulfill thousands-year-old prophecies.

## Ezra International

Though the logo has changed over the last 25 years, the mission has remained the same: Ezra International is a Christian non-profit organization that helps the poorest among the Jewish people make *Aliyah*. Rescue, return and restore. This is what Ezra does.

Our God is a long-term planner. He sets things in motion, speaks to His people and amazing things happen. As we look back over the 25-year history of Ezra International, we will present a small portion of how incredible events and people came together. This is by no means the whole story but with thanksgiving, we present you with the highlights. Christian leaders such as Mel Hoelzle, Michael Utterback, Becky Brimmer and Patricia Frame had been praying for Soviet Jewry, had heard from God and had seen visions about what God was about to do. When the Wall fell, they were already putting systems in place for the rescue effort of the Jewish people.

## Wall Of Poverty

Though the Iron Curtain was pulled back, the Berlin Wall torn down and the wall of communism lay in a collective heap, there remained another wall that prohibited the Jewish people from returning home to Israel: the Wall of Poverty.

This is the call of Ezra International. We help the poorest of God's people return to Israel.

The former Soviet Union and Iron Curtain countries are many in number. Ezra began in these places. It would not be long, however, for rescue efforts to expand. Ezra now serves Jewish families on the four continents of Asia, Europe, South America and North America.

## Timeline & Testimonies

We invite you to celebrate the last 25 years with us! Scan the events on the historical timeline that begins on page 6 and savor the written testimonies you will find here. Praise God with us for His plan, purpose and provision. And while you do, we at Ezra International are praising God for you, who hear from God, read His Word, intercede and give so generously to this wonderful work that is ever ascending!



I will say to the  
north, 'Give  
them up!'  
Isaiah 43:6

# EZRA LOGO

## and the Three-Fold Vision



Ezra's logo is distinct. We recognize the flat-surfaced globe that provides a perspective of the four corners of the earth (Isaiah 11:12). We also see a golden Star of David marking Israel's place as the center of nations (Ezekiel 5:5). But what is hovering in the blue expanse above the earth? And what are the other lights and beams?

### Profound Vision



God entrusts Mel Hoelzle, Founder and President of Ezra International, with profound spiritual experiences. One of the most significant was a vision that came to him in three parts, a

decade before the work of *Aliyah* officially began which proved the vision true.

### First

The Lord showed Mel a large wheel high above the earth. This large wheel had lights in it. Streams of light emanated from it down to the edges of the earth. The large wheel had an outer wheel. There were small lights between the inner and outer wheels. These little lights seemed confused. They rotated without rhythm or purpose. Off to the side were planes, ships, trains and busses.

### Second

Again, God showed Mel the large wheel with its outer wheel high above the expanse of the earth. This time, there were two groups of people in the vision, one large and one small.

### Third

The third time the Lord revealed the vision to Mel, the large wheel with its outer wheel was still above the earth. There was a hub inside it and in the center of the hub was the Lord. There were spokes that connected the inner hub to the large outer wheel. These spokes allowed most of the little lights to travel in harmony with each other. Some of the little lights would fly off, then go dark.

### Questions & Answers

Mel asked the Lord, *What is this?*

He heard from the Lord, *This is an end-time work that you will be involved in. The large group of people is your Jewish brothers and sisters. The smaller group is the remnant Church. A day will come when you will be called to help the Jewish group go to Israel.*

Then Mel asked, *What are the lights?*

The Lord said, *They are individuals and organizations I will use for this work. The lights that go dark are those who will try to use this for their glory or financial gain. But for now, help the poor and needy.*

### Vision Becomes Reality

By 1990, Mel founded Sozo, a humanitarian organization that shipped aid all over the world by planes, ships, trains and trucks. By 1996, Ezra International was officially engaged in *Aliyah*. And then, in 2012, an artist designed the now familiar image from the three-fold vision the Lord had given to Mel Hoelzle that was borne-out. May God bless the vision and the work, for His glory and the glory of Israel and the Church.

# A Timeline History of Ezra\*

25 YEARS: 1996-2021



{1987}



The Lord gave Mel Hoelzle a vision: a day will come when you and the remnant church will be called to help your Jewish brothers and sisters go to Israel.



{1995}

Viktor and Lena Mikhailov, Kiev, Ukraine, are called to work with Mel Hoelzle. Read more in the article that begins on page 28.



{1995}

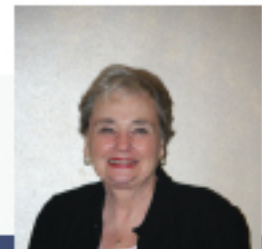
The time is now. The Lord gives Mel Hoelzle a vision: read Isaiah 17:1, you will see this happen, now it's time to go to the FSU to help Jewish people make their final exodus to Israel. Read more in the article that begins on page 22.

{1990}



Mel Hoelzle begins sending humanitarian aid to East Europe and elsewhere by planes, ships, trains and trucks. Read more in the article that begins on page 22.

{1995}



Joanne Hoelzle is called to help found Ezra International with her husband, Mel, to serve as Secretary/Treasurer.

## \*A TESTIMONY TO THE PROMISES OF GOD

With praise and admiration to the Holy One of Israel, this timeline was created to the best of our recollection and as such is not a legal document. Rather, it is a testament that, "not one of the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass." Joshua 21:45

# A Timeline History of Ezra



1996

It is official: Ezra International registers in Ukraine as a Humanitarian Organization to help the Jewish people – especially the poorest of the poor – make **Aliyah\***.

1996



Mel Hoelzle visits street kids living underground in Kiev; on flight home, Mel asked the Lord what He was going to do about these children. The Lord's response was, "What are you going to do, Mel?" This begins Ezra's work with street children. Read more in the article that begins on page 34.



1997

First **Olim+** from Ukraine arrive in Israel with help from Ezra International.

1997

**BRIDGES**  
FOR peace

Bridges for Peace presents an offering to Ezra International. The valuable partnership begins between the two organizations.



1999

Michael Utterback. On a trip together in Siberia, Rev Michael Utterback and Mel Hoelzle decide to join their ministries together in a partnership. Read more in the articles that begin on page 22 and also page 36.

\***Aliyah** is Hebrew for "Go Up" or "Ascend". When Jewish people return to Israel, they call it **Aliyah**.

+**Olim** are those who have made **Aliyah**.



# A Timeline History of Ezra



1999

Orphans: Ezra International provides meals for street children in Kiev then opens a room in a government shelter.



1999

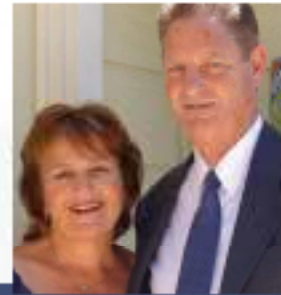
Rev Barry and Linda Wagner are called to Ezra International as Vice President and Donor Relations, respectively. Read more in the article that begins on page 30.



2000

First **Olim** from Georgia arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.

1999



Americans Bruce and Anne Elliott are called to minister to the street children in Kiev with Ezra International. Read more in the article that begins on page 34.

2000



First **Olim** from Armenia arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



# A Timeline History of Ezra



2000

Street kids: Ezra International begins work in the government shelter for homeless children in Kiev. Read more in the article that begins on page 34.



2000

Elderly: Project Hope. Ezra International, Bridges for Peace and local churches feed the elderly of a Siberian synagogue.



2001

First **Olim** from Russia arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.

2000



Ezra ships 25 humanitarian aid containers to Ukraine.

2001



First **Olim** from Azerbaijan arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.

# A Timeline History of Ezra



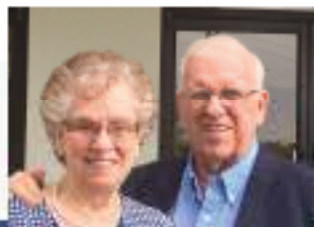
2001

Humanitarian aid: Ezra ships 20 containers with medical supplies, clothing, food blankets and toys to Ukraine, Georgia and Siberia.



2002

First **Olim** from Uzbekistan arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2002

Rev Richard and Joan Wagner called as Field Support with Ezra International. Read more in the article that begins on page 30.

2001



Father's House opens in Kiev for 35 homeless kids with Dr. Roman Korniko directing the work. Read more in the article that begins on page 34.

2002



Meetings begin in Argentina to discuss **Aliyah** from South America.

# A Timeline History of Ezra



2002

10,000 **Olim** in Israel with the help of Ezra International.



2003

First **Olim** from Kazakhstan arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2005

Rev Janet LeBlanc called to serve Ezra International as Management and Information Analyst.

2003



The first annual Fishing Trip to Ukraine to meet Jewish families in the process of Aliyah takes place, with Rev Barry Wagner. Read more in the article that begins on page 32.

2004



First **Olim** from Moldova arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



# A Timeline History of Ezra



2005

Rev Barry Wagner creates the first TV program, **The Final Exodus**, about the work of Ezra International.



2007

Ezra International establishes an international prayer network.



2009

Pat Frame, Scotland, called as Field Director of Ezra International and leader of Ezra UK. Read more in the article that begins on page 41.

2006



**20,000 Olim** in Israel with the help of Ezra International.

2008



Rev Barry Wagner publishes his biography, **And Still They Come – Israel's Final Return: God's End Time Plan for Israel, the Jewish People and the Church.** [It is available online here.](#)

# A Timeline History of Ezra



2009

Roy and Mariette Trepanier are called to direct Ezra Canada.



2010

First **Olim** from Chile arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2011

Rev Barry Wagner creates the TV program, **Out of Exile – Into the Promised Land**, about the work of Ezra International.

2010



First **Olim** from Argentina arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International; prior to that, Ezra had worked with returnees from Argentina. Read more in the article that begins on page 38.

2010



First **Olim** from Uruguay arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.

# A Timeline History of Ezra



2011

Ezra Child Rescue Mobile Unit begins operating 24/7 in Kiev to help abused and neglected children in families.



2012

**Olim** in Israel who were originally from Peru receive aid through a joint project with Ezra International and Ministry to Israel. Read more in the article that begins on page 40.



2013

First **Olim** from Hungary arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.

2012



Ezra International unveils the new logo that depicts the 3-part vision God gave to Mel Hoelzle. Read more in the article that begins on page 5.

2012



Pat Frame authors her book, **Intercession and Aliyah: Intercession for the Return of the Jewish People**. [It is available online here.](#)



# A Timeline History of Ezra



2013

First **Olim** from Poland arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2014

War: Russian separatists take over Ukrainian government buildings; Jews older than 16 living in the territory of Donetsk, Ukraine must register. Anti-Semitic campaign against "Yids."



2015

With the help of Jack van der Tang and Max Veenstra, containers begin to arrive to support centers of Ministry to Israel on a regular basis from Holland, UK and US.

2014



Rev Gary Cristofaro is called to Ezra International as Director of Development after serving several years as a Representative. Read more in the article that begins on page 46.

2014



**40,000 Olim** in Israel with the help of Ezra International.

# A Timeline History of Ezra



2015

Ezra International and other organizations work together to house, feed and clothe Jewish war refugees from war-zone in east Ukraine.



2015

Father's House in Kiev becomes a refuge for children and adults who flee the fighting in the east.



2016

**50,000 Olim** in Israel with help of Ezra International.

2015



Ezra Representative in Lugansk, Ukraine is taken prisoner; prayer network engaged; all prisoners beaten except him; he was released. Read more in the article on page 33.

2015



First **Olim** from Brazil arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International

# A Timeline History of Ezra



2017

Carrie Burns, PhD is called to serve as International Liaison for both Ezra International and Ministry to Israel.



2017

**60,000 Olim** in Israel with help of Ezra International



2019

Ezra International registers in Holland as an important support country.

2017



Rev Barry Wagner creates the TV program, **Hope Beyond the War**, about Ezra International's work to rescue Jewish families in war zone in Crimea, Ukraine.

2018



Ezra UK ships first container of aid to Israel with one to two each year after.



# A Timeline History of Ezra



2019

Darlene Cristofaro with her daughter, Dominique, called to volunteer with Ezra International. Read more in the article that begins on page 46.

2019



First **Olim** from France arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2019

First **Olim** from Bulgaria arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.

2019



First **Olim** from Germany arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2019

First **Olim** from UK arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.

# A Timeline History of Ezra



2019

First **Olim** from Columbia arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2019

First **Olim** from Ecuador arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2019

First **Olim** from Belarus arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2019

**70,000 Olim** in Israel with help of Ezra International.



2020

Jack van der Tang, The Netherlands, becomes speaker for Ezra International.

# A Timeline History of Ezra



2020

Ezra International publishes small group Bible study course written by Pat Frame, **Aliyah: Understanding the Return of the Jewish People to Israel**. [Click here to purchase.](#)



2020

Rev Gary Cristofaro hosts a multi-episode 30-minute TV program in collaboration with Israel TV Network, **It's All About Aliyah**. [Click here to view.](#)



2021

First **Olim** from Mexico arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



2020

Ezra International offers 8-week Zoom course with Pat Frame's curriculum on **Aliyah** facilitated by Dr Carrie Burns with Rev Gary Cristofaro; 50 participants from 4 countries.



2021

First **Olim** from Costa Rica arrive in Israel with the help from Ezra International.



# A Timeline History of Ezra



2021

Rev Gary Cristofaro and Dr Rik Wadge host 30-minute TV program, **Gather Them!** on Israel TV Network. [Click here to view.](#)



2021

Ezra International celebrates 25 years of serving God and the Jewish people with **Aliyah: Rescue – Return – Restore!**



2021-The Future!

Ezra International: Rescue, Return, Restore.

2021



**82,000 Olim** in Israel from **30 countries** (there are some countries which we cannot mention) with the help of Ezra International.

1996-2021



Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in their arms, And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. -Isaiah 49:22

# YOU HAVE SEEN WELL

## Mel's Call

A tribute to Mel Hoelzle as told by his staff

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There's nothing small about him.



*Mel Hoelzle, Founder & President*

Mel Hoelzle is a big guy. His rebellious years as a teenager were big. As a lineman in college, he helped push Boise JC through to the National Football Championship. He was big in business and big at making money. An A-type (Mel called himself a TRIPLE-A-TYPE) he was competitive, driven and successful.

### **Empty & Then: Not Dead**

Mel had everything, but he was empty. Unexpected disruptions and personal set-backs plagued him for seven long years until

he had had enough. He took his boat, loaded it with booze and drugs, and set out into the Pacific to do himself in. Trouble was, he woke up the next day. He was not dead. What else was there to do? He navigated the boat safely back into the harbor, then essentially locked himself in a room for nine months with his Bible. Defeated in ending it all, instead, he gained eternal victory by giving himself completely to God's Son, Jesus Christ, who became his Savior and Lord. The year was 1987.

### **Look & Listen**

The transformation that followed was, in a word, big.

When God gives much, much is expected (Luke 12:48). God gave Mel much, therefore He expected much. He studied his Bible and prayed fervently to lay hold of God's plan and to follow it. When Mel prays, he does not do all the talking. He pauses to listen so he can hear from God. He is also able to see what God shows him in dreams and visions.

If clarification is needed, Mel asks God specific questions and usually gets his answers. He keeps a spiral-bound notebook in his desk drawer in which he writes what the Lord shows and tells him. When the vision or word comes to pass, he writes it down. This notebook is sacred, well-worn and full.

Within seven years of his new-found relationship with the Lord, God gave Mel one of the most significant visions he has had, which has come to pass and is still unfolding. God showed him, through a series of three profound visions, that He would help direct the gathering of the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth to restore them to Israel.

God gave Mel this three-fold vision in 1987, two years before the fall of the Iron Curtain. Nine years later, he founded Ezra International to rescue, return and restore the Jewish people to Israel. And now, thirty-four years later, Mel Hoelzle has supervised the rescue of over 82,000- and these, the poorest of the poor.

There is nothing small about Mel Hoelzle.

## **Humanitarian Aid & A Night Vision in Albania**

As previously mentioned, in 1990 Mel founded a non-profit organization called Sozo by which he shipped humanitarian aid all over the world. Based in the Seattle area, aid was sent by ships, planes, trains and trucks. For several years, Sozo sent aid

mainly to Eastern Europe. This included Albania. While there one night in 1995, when Mel was ministering to the people and helping with aid relief, he was awakened at two in the morning with a very specific message from the Lord:

*“Read Isaiah 17:1. You will see this happen. Now it is time to go to the former Soviet Union and begin to help the Jewish people make their final exodus to Israel.”*

Mel knew he had heard from the Lord, but he also knew that he did not know a soul in the former Soviet Union. By this time, he had enough experience with God's ways that he trusted all would unfold as it should. The Final Exodus of the Jewish people to Israel became his focus and remains so to this day.

## **Ministry Partners Foretold**

In that same illuminating night in Albania, the Lord told Mel names of specific people and organizations with which he would work: Bridges for Peace and International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ). This word came to pass.

On a trip to Israel in 1996, Mel visited with Becky Brimmer and officials for Bridges for Peace. A lifelong ministry partnership was established.

And, through a later meeting with the then leadership of ICEJ, a great personal friendship and partnership developed

with Michael Utterback, and subsequently with Ministry to Israel, the organization Michael founded and leads. Mel and Michael have traveled together to China, Russia, Georgia and to Argentina, as well as other nations. In addition to the practical partnership, Michael's organization, Ministry to Israel, is also a major sponsor of the *Aliyah* work with Ezra International. Michael also serves as International Director for Ezra International.

## **Ukraine: Turning Point**

Three years after the 2 am message in Albania, the Lord stopped Mel mid-sentence to reveal someone who would become Mel's right hand in ministry.

Not knowing anyone in the former Soviet Union (fSU), Mel remembered that he had once helped Steve Lightle raise money for the first sailing for Ebenezer Emergency Fund (now called Ebenezer Operation Exodus).



# For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. 2 Corinthians 1:20

Mel made a quick call to Lightle and before he knew it, he was invited to Odessa to volunteer. At that time, Ebenezer had a base in Odessa. Jewish families from that area of the world would meet in this Ukrainian port city, then sail from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and on to Israel. A camp was set up there for the people as they waited for ships to arrive to take them to the Promised Land.

Mel volunteered, first in the camp and then on the ship. One evening, he was asked to give a message to the other Christian workers.

*"As I spoke," recalls Mel, "the Lord stopped me. He told me to tell the young man at the back of the room that a time would come when he would have an important position with Aliyah and that he would meet his soulmate."*

In the presence of all, Mel paused his message to tell the young man exactly that.

The volunteer in the back of the room was Viktor Mikhailov, who had just been transformed by God and found himself in

Odessa to help with *Aliyah*. The year was 1993. Viktor did indeed meet his soulmate, Lena, and they continue to work with Ezra International. Viktor directs *Aliyah* efforts in the former Soviet Union countries and Lena assists with reaching out to Jewish families and document searches.



The visit to Odessa, Ukraine was a significant turning point for Mel, Viktor, Ezra International and the Jewish people of the fSU. With Viktor on board, the new *Aliyah* organization of Ezra International was officially registered in Ukraine, twenty-five years ago, in 1996. Thus marks the official beginning of Ezra International.

## Siberia

When God says the Jewish people are in the four corners of the earth, He means it. During the upheavals of the Communist Revolution and the Nazi Holocaust, hundreds of thousands of Jewish people were banished to Siberia and

sentenced to the Gulag. A few generations later, their ancestors in arctic Russia yearn for their homeland.

Michael Utterback was on his way to Siberia to investigate the situation of Jewish families there. The year was 1999. Mel learned about Michael's trip and asked him if he could join him. It was

in Siberia that Mel and Michael developed their close friendship; it was in that far remote land that the two directors decided to join their ministries together along with Bridges for Peace, to bring the dispersed Jews of Siberia home, to Israel. They opened a central office in Novosibirsk and worked through churches

in Irkutsk, Omsk and other cities in the region.

Ezra International could not do what it does, if not for the support of Bridges for Peace, Ministry to Israel and all the other organizations and individuals that provide funds to help the poorest of the poor Jewish people emigrate to Israel. When they arrive they are not left on their own. Ezra and partners continue to help the people when they are in the land. Loving Christians are with them from the start of the *Aliyah* process and in Israel for as long as they wish.





**“  
The Lord said,  
‘This is the person  
I’ve sent.’**

### **This Is The Person**

The work of Ezra had begun in earnest: Jewish families were going home. Yet, there was a big need for speakers to take the word about this work to American churches.

A few years after Ezra was founded, the board met in the home of Mel and his wife, Joanne. It was December, 1999. The board knew all too well that something had to give. Ezra needed someone to speak in the US to raise funds, prayer support and awareness of God’s plan to return the Jewish people to Israel.

*“We had had someone doing a little of that,” Mel says, “but it wasn’t working out. I was asking, ‘Lord what are we going to do?’ The Lord said, ‘Don’t worry – I have someone.’”*

*The phone rang in the middle of the board meeting. It was a pastor named Barry Wagner.*

*Mel recalls, “The Lord said, ‘This is the person I’ve sent.’”*

A few months prior to that now-famous phone call, Barry too had gone to Odessa, seen the poverty and desperation of the Jewish people, then gave his life to the Lord to help with *Aliyah*. Barry recalls that he didn’t even know Ezra existed. One day, Barry and his wife, Linda, had spoken about *Aliyah* to a group near Orlando. A young man approached him to tell him that he should contact someone. He put Mel’s card in Barry’s hand. Barry made the cold-call to Mel during the board’s discussion of the need for a man like him. He was the person the Lord sent. Once again, the Lord confirmed His word to Mel.

### **Indigenous Christians & Their Lights**

The work to rescue, return and restore the Jewish people to Israel continued. By 2000, Mel and Barry teamed-up with Viktor and their interpreter, Ira, to travel throughout Ukraine. Their goal was to raise an army of local Christian volunteers and representatives to help Jewish

families make *Aliyah*. Mel said,

*“The Lord had told us to go. The Lord said to us, ‘I’ll give you every place you put your feet.’”*

*Mel asked the Lord how they would know where to go and who will help. The Lord replied, “Don’t worry about it. I know who they are.”*

Mel recalls that they didn’t know where they were going. “We just went,” he said. Viktor and Ira had a general idea, but not Mel or Barry. Once in a church, Mel would begin to speak as Ira interpreted and God worked. As Mel spoke to the people, he recalled,

*“I saw little lights over people’s heads. I knew they would be the ones who would come and say that they had had dreams about helping Jewish people.”*



After these church services, clusters of Ukrainian Christians gathered around Mel, Viktor and Barry, telling them through their interpreter, Ira, just that- that each had already been called to help the Jewish people and now they understood how it was to happen. This phenomenon occurred in many places. This is how Ezra grew.

## The Spirit Directs

The Holy Spirit directed Mel and his growing team from day one. Divine “coincidences” arose frequently, especially in the early days, to guide and confirm the work.

There’s the story of Pastor Padun, from Donetsk, in far eastern Ukraine. This man of God had planted over 200 churches. When Mel met him, he told Pastor Padun that Ezra needed a representative in Donetsk. The pastor’s secretary, Sveta, was sitting across the room crying, listening to the conversation. Pastor Padun looked at Mel

and said, “She’s your Rep.” The pastor may have lost his secretary in that moment, but the Jewish people who wanted to make *Aliyah* gained a devoted friend and servant. Sveta remained with Ezra for quite a few years.

On the same trip, Mel and his team found Vladimir, a truck driver at that time. Vladimir had had a dream that businessmen would give him money to help with *Aliyah*! Vladimir served with Ezra for many years in those early days. Mel marvels: how would anyone other than God put all of us together?

Through Pastor Padun, Ezra organized a conference for pastors and Christians who wanted to be Fishermen (see Jeremiah 16:16). Amazingly, around 400 people attended to hear Mel, Barry, Pat and others speak about the opportunities to serve God through *Aliyah*.

The network of indigenous Christian volunteers and

representatives throughout the fSU grew. More Christian workers increased the number of Jewish families who could emigrate to Israel.

## Other Continents

Jewish people are scattered throughout the world. Many Christians who have never stopped to consider this are surprised to learn that Jewish families live in South and Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

While the work of Ezra International was growing in the fSU and Eastern Europe, Mel felt prompted by the Lord to go to Argentina. This was toward the end of 2001. He didn’t understand it initially. At the time, Argentina was prosperous and there was little interest among the Jewish people for *Aliyah*. However, Mel followed the Lord’s leading and went there in February 2002. The country had just collapsed and the Jewish people desperately wanted out.



The country  
had just  
collapsed ...

## You Will Direct

The Lord had given Mel the three-fold vision in 1987, revealing to him that he would help direct the gathering of the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth. Soon after Mel started the work, God impressed upon him to focus on rescuing the very poorest. The Lord says in His word, "As in the days when you came out from the land of Egypt, I will show you miracles" (Micah 7:15). The miracle today is greater than the exodus of one people from one nation, Egypt. Today, the people are scattered all over the earth and are going home one, by one, by one.

The numbers Ezra International has rescued under the leadership of Mel Hoelzle speak for themselves. Note the surge between 2019-2021:

2002	10,000
2006	20,000
2014	40,000
2016	50,000
2017	60,000
2019	70,000
2021	82,000

Ezra International has rescued Jewish families from 30 nations including those below, beginning with Ukraine in 1997:

1997	Ukraine
2000	Armenia
2000	Georgia
2001	Azerbaijan
2001	Russia
2002	Uzbekistan
2002	Argentina
2003	Kazakhstan
2004	Moldova
2010	Chile
2010	Uruguay
2012	Peru
2013	Hungary
2013	Poland
2016	Brazil
2017	Serbia
2019	France
2019	Bulgaria
2019	Germany
2019	UK
2019	Columbia
2019	Ecuador
2019	Belarus
2021	Costa Rica
2021	Mexico



*Mel Hoelzle, Founder & President  
Joanne Hoelzle, Secretary*

## You Have Seen Well

As God leads, Mel Hoelzle continues to impact the world.

Migration patterns have changed because of him. The lives of God's people – both the Jewish people and the Church – have been transformed because of his obedience to the Lord. An octogenarian, he continues to shoulder the weight of *Aliyah* for one of the largest and longest-standing Christian organizations of its kind.

Praise God that there's nothing small about him. Praise God that he has seen well.



"Then the LORD said to me, 'You have seen well, for I am watching over My Word to perform it.'"

Jeremiah 1:12



# NOT A REGULAR JOB VIKTOR'S CALL

Viktor is Mel Hoelzle's righthand man. Had Mel met this young man a few years prior however, the match might never have taken place.

## God Transforms

Viktor was always in trouble. A bad apple, he created problems wherever he went. As a kid, he was suspended from school for a week for beating up a boy- a Jewish boy. A professional liar and full of pride, he roamed the streets of Kiev to con someone. This is how Viktor describes himself before he surrendered it all to the Lord.

God had His eye on this young man. One day, near the end of 1993, God did what only He can do. Viktor repented. He lifted up his hands and said to God, "I'm Yours. Do with me whatever you want to do with me. I'm Yours." The transformation was startling. Viktor had done a 180 for the Lord.

At the time of this conversion, Viktor was looking for a job. He recalls,

*"I clearly heard God say that He had something for me and that it was not a regular job."*

A few months later, a team from the *Aliyah* organization Ebenezer Emergency Fund (now called Ebenezer Operation Exodus) spoke in Viktor's church. They sang songs and talked about the prophecies concerning Israel and *Aliyah*. This was all new to him – a new door had been opened for his life. As they started to sing, Viktor says, "I somehow understood that this was from

God and this this was God's something for me." They were looking for volunteers. Viktor signed up.



Viktor Mikhailov  
Director of the former Soviet Union

## Director of the fSU

Viktor was with Mel from the very beginning. He helped establish Ezra International in Ukraine, and now serves Ezra International as the Director of the former Soviet Union.





## Singled Out

By 1995, Viktor headed to the Black Sea port of Odessa to volunteer. It went so well he was quickly hired as part of the staff. Every morning and evening the staff and volunteers met for prayer and worship. Then one day, Mel Hoelzle showed up and spoke at one of these meetings. Suddenly, Mel stopped speaking. He looked directly at Viktor and said, "You will have an important position with *Aliyah*. You will also meet your soulmate."

## Calling and A Wife

Right there in a word— a calling and a wife.

Viktor knew this was from God. The last ship of 1995 sailed from Odessa in November, so once the Jewish families were safely on their way, Viktor headed back to Kiev to help register Ezra International as a humanitarian organization in Ukraine.

Viktor recalls, "We began to understand that many people couldn't even start their *Aliyah* process. They had big needs, big debts for utilities and many complex problems that needed to be solved. People were just waiting because of the impossibility of it all. We started to help, little by little. We also began to help people gather the documents they needed for *Aliyah*."

## Connections

A few years later, Mel Hoelzle and Rev Barry Wagner joined Viktor in Ukraine. The three of them traveled around the country to Word of Life Churches. God had prepared the congregations of these churches in advance. Through the teaching of Ukrainian Pastor Padun they understood the biblical teaching about Israel. They had been praying for the Jewish people and they had the vision to help. By the time the Ezra team spoke in these churches the people were already willing to get involved with *Aliyah*; they were simply waiting for their assignment.

## Full Circle

This is the work of God in a man's life. Viktor, who had once beat up a Jewish boy, is now called to help Jewish boys and girls, moms and dads, and grandmothers and grandfathers move home to the Land of Promise, Israel.

The word Mel Hoelzle spoke over Viktor came to pass. He does indeed have an important position with *Aliyah* and he did indeed meet his soulmate. Lena, Viktor's wife, not only serves with Ezra International, she is a singer, song writer and yes, Viktor's soulmate.

One last thing. After working for Ezra International for about a year, a miracle occurred. Viktor was in the Metro in Kiev and saw the Jewish guy he had beat up when they were kids. Viktor approached him to ask forgiveness. The man forgave him even though he did not remember the incident. "No problem!" he said. "I already forgot!" This is the work of God, and this our Director for the Countries in the former Soviet Union, Viktor Mikhailov.



Appreciative Words:  
Jewish Family Assisted by Ezra

I am grateful to you for this very big help. You helped us solve difficulties and supported us financially and morally in this difficult work.

Kamran, Azerbaijan  
*Aliyah*, 2011

# THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL

## AND A LITTLE ONE WITH HOLES IN HIS SOCKS

BECKY'S HEART AND BRIDGES FOR PEACE  
Partners from the Beginning

**He has given freely to the poor.**  
**Psalms 112:9**

### Little Things

It's the little things that can sometimes serve as a catalyst for a work of God so significant that it fulfills prominent prophecies foretold thousands of years ago. Most likely, no one else noticed. Becky did.

The home of the Ukrainian Jewish mother and her four children was clean, but it was poor and sorely ramshackle. The children too were clean, but their clothes were mismatched and out-grown. And, wearing the very best that he had for their visitors, the socks of the youngest boy gripped her: they were full of holes. Those socks spoke volumes to Becky's heart and underscored for her the importance of serving God's

people, especially the impoverished.

### Suffering of the Refuseniks

A decade earlier, in the 1980s, Becky Lewis (now Brimmer) and her father were outraged over the terrible treatment and suffering of the Jewish people in the then Soviet Union. She and her dad were active in bringing the injustices to the attention of US officials by demonstrating on behalf of the *Refuseniks*. Becky remembers wearing the Refusenik prisoner of conscience necklaces that were available then to show support for the cause.

*Refuseniks* were Soviet Jews whose requests to leave the



Soviet Union were not only refused, but who were then identified, seized, arrested and thrown in the Gulag for such offenses as learning Hebrew, discussing Israel and other similar "violations". That's all it took in the anti-Semitic climate of the day for a life to be ruined. With her father's encouragement and support, Becky acted on her understanding and belief in God's Word. She recalls her late father's paraphrase of faith without works is dead (James 2:20). He often said, *Belief without action is deception. If we really believe, will our actions not reflect that belief and determine behavior?*

### Building Bridges, 1996

Serving as executive secretary for Bridges for Peace, Becky swung her car by to pick him up on the streets of Jerusalem. It was 1996. There was Mel

**BRIDGES<sup>®</sup>**  
**FOR peace**



Hoelzle, standing on the corner waiting for her. He had gone up to the Holy City in response to the vision he had had in the middle of the night a few months earlier while in Albania delivering humanitarian aid. In the vision, the Lord made it clear that he would work with two organizations, Bridges for Peace and International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ), both based in Jerusalem.

Becky was very interested in what Mel had to say about the vision God had given him earlier for Ezra International- to help the Jewish people home to Israel from the lands of the North, especially the poorest of the poor. She loved the idea of what Ezra was doing. Further, the mission of Bridges for Peace fit with the vision God gave to Mel: [Christians supporting Israel and building relationships between Christians and Jews in Israel and around the world](#). That day in Jerusalem, a bridge was forged between two Christians and two organizations that would benefit thousands upon thousands of Jewish people around the world.

## The Surprise

After that initial meeting, the team at Bridges for Peace talked and prayed, then decided to send a letter to their supporters to share this initiative of helping the poorest Jewish families emigrate to Israel.

The response astonished everyone. Donors were incredibly generous, to the tune of almost half a million dollars. This is a principle Becky speaks about: *God's people will give to what's in the Bible, to what's*



Rev Rebecca Brimmer  
International President and CEO,  
Bridges for Peace, Israel/Global

*on God's heart.* Gathering the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth to return them to Israel is mentioned hundreds of times in the Bible. It is on the heart of the God of Israel. So too are the poor.

## Let's Work Together

Becky, who is now Rev Rebecca Brimmer, International President and CEO of Bridges for Peace, Israel/Global, says Bridges is blessed that Mel came into the office and said, *Let's work together.* No one knew at the time how long the partnership of Bridges for Peace and Ezra International would last, which started with that first meeting and letter and continues to the present day.

Becky was to travel with Mel into Ukraine often, especially in the early days. It was on a trip to Lvov that they visited the family whose little boy had socks with holes in them.

When Ezra was just getting established in Ukraine, Becky and her colleagues from Bridges for Peace went to Kiev to work with Mel, Viktor and others to lay the groundwork and infrastructure for reporting and teaching. Project Rescue grew out of these meetings and Bridges committed to help Ezra rescue the poorest Jewish families from Ukraine and other countries in the Diaspora.

***"God's people will  
give to what's in the  
Bible, to what's on  
God's heart."  
- Becky Brimmer***





## Bridges for Peace

Bridges for Peace, Jerusalem. The building was built in the early 1900s by a royal Ethiopian family.

### Bridges for Peace Projects

Through a variety of programs in Israel and worldwide, Bridges for Peace gives Christians the opportunity to express their biblical responsibility before God, Israel and the Jewish community in tangible ways. In addition to Project Rescue, Bridges provides food to 25,000 people every month. A large percentage of the recipients are new immigrants who have just made *Aliyah*.

It takes time for new *Olim* to get on their feet and assimilate into Israeli society so Bridges for Peace has helped thousands of them through the transition with their Adoption Program. Donors can sponsor a Jewish person or family in Israel for a year to help them through a critical time in their lives. Along with emotional support, these adopted families receive food packages, bus tickets and financial assistance to help them make it in their new country. [Click here to see the many projects of Bridges for Peace.](#)

### God's Heart & the State of Israel

Ezra International and Bridges for Peace put their beliefs into practice, just as Becky's father had taught her to do all those years ago. The acts of kindness with which both ministries are engaged are changing the relationship between Christians and Jews and breaking down barriers of distrust. Together, they partner for a cause that is close to God's heart and important to the State of Israel. Rescuing Jews – even little ones with holes in their socks – is, after all, says Becky, the *raison d'être* for the existence of the State.



I will vindicate the holiness of  
My great Name.

Ezekiel 36:23



# THIS IS THE PERSON BARRY'S CALL

Barry and Linda were home at the parsonage. Barry knew the Lord was speaking to him.

The doorbell rang.

Barry and Linda were home at the parsonage. Barry peered through the glass panel to see a couple that he and his wife Linda had met in Israel a few years earlier. Reba had just returned from an emotional trip to Ukraine. She had been aboard a ship in Odessa with Jewish families headed to Haifa, Israel. As Reba spoke, something was happening in Barry's spirit. With each picture he saw, the feeling grew more intense and his eyes began to well-up. "Tell me everything," he told her. "Don't leave anything out." Barry knew the Lord was speaking to him.

## God Is Calling

Before Reba and her husband left that night, Barry was sure to get the contact information for the Christian operators of the ship in Britain, Ebenezer Emergency Fund (now called

Ebenezer Operation Exodus). He made the long-distance call and learned that he could volunteer on that same ship that made two voyages a month. He filled out the forms, sent them in, waited for the reply, was accepted and then, when he approached the board of the church he was pastoring, the last hurdle was cleared:

*"If we do not release you to do what you know God is calling you to do, we will not be fighting against Pastor Wagner. We would be fighting against God. Go with our blessings."*

## They Are So Poor

Barry volunteered with Ebenezer for three months in the summer of 1998. He saw extreme poverty. He saw families with next to nothing boarding the ship to go home to Israel. The



experience gripped his heart.

The Lord met with him again when he returned to the States. On the floor in prayer, he told the Lord that he understood that it was His will for the Jewish people to go home to Israel. But how could they possibly do it when they are so poor? God directed him to Isaiah:

"Thus says the Lord God:

'Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders.'

Isaiah 49:22



*Linda Wagner, Donor Relations & Barry Wagner, Vice President*

Yes! They shall bring them! They shall carry them! The “they” is us, the nations, the non-Jewish people, the Christians! We will help them overcome their impoverished circumstances and rescue them!

That was the moment Barry knew he had to give the rest of his life to this. He and Linda had pastored churches for 25 years. He didn’t know Ezra existed but he knew God had impressed upon him to take the message to the Church. He and Linda didn’t know where they’d go or how, so they just started in. One Monday night, he spoke at a meeting in the Orlando area. A young man

came up to him and told him that there’s someone he needed to contact. He pressed a business card in Barry’s hand. The card belonged to Mel Hoelzle with Ezra International.

### **Perfect Timing**

Wasting no time, Barry made the call. It was November, 1998. The board of Ezra International was meeting at Mel and Joanne Hoelzle’s home. They had just discussed the need for someone to go into American churches to speak, raise awareness, funds and prayer support.

The Lord had told Mel that He

had someone for the job. The phone rang in the middle of that board meeting. It was Barry. The Lord told Mel,

*“This is the person I have sent.”*

Mel got on a plane to Florida to meet Barry and Linda where God confirmed what He had said. Barry recalls, “After the call with Mel, we had direction. After meeting with him and the Board it just seemed like the path had been laid out and we were on our way.” Indeed, they were well on their way with their official start on December 30, 1998.

### **Changing Lives**

From that time on Barry has spoken in 20–25 church services or conferences a year with Linda at his side. He’s traveled to 49 countries, been to Israel over 50 times, and led 18 Fishing Trip groups to Ukraine. Read more about his story in his book, *And Still They Come: Israel’s Final Return – God’s End Time Plan for Israel, the Jewish People and the Church*, which you can order online in our [Ezra Store](#). Barry and Linda continue to work with Ezra International as Vice President and Donor Relations, respectively.



### **Appreciative Words from an Ezra Donor**

I can hardly write without many tears but I feel honored to be able to give as our God has declared in His word. I sure have a desire to help our Jewish friends get home to Israel.

Billy Jo, Finley, Oklahoma



## Wagner Family

Rev Barry Wagner isn't the only preacher in the family. His brother, Richard, is too. A few years after Barry and Linda signed on with Ezra, Barry recommended that Richard and his wife, Joan, join the team. Richard was no longer pastoring a church so the timing was right. In 2002, Richard and Joan began to travel the highways and byways of southeastern United States to represent Ezra International in churches. They speak in 30-40 churches a year and return annually to many of these churches.

## American Churches

Almost every weekend, pastors and churches host speakers, such as Barry and Richard. Congregations are eager to hear End Time stories of the situation for the Jewish people. They are glued to our speakers' every word about the nature of Jewish life in the nations and how God is – right now – rescuing and restoring them to Israel and to Himself. God sees this love. He sees the generosity of their giving and He hears the fervent prayers of these congregations. When the heart of God is touched like this, He responds with more than we could ever dream or imagine. Blessings flow for all – for the Church and for the Jewish people!

## Fishing Trips: Ukraine

Jewish families who want to make *Aliyah* are visited every year by Rev Barry Wagner and Christians who want to learn more about how God is gathering His people home to Israel. These trips are significant: our Jewish friends are touched by the love of Christians. Likewise, group members are deeply moved to help, pray, give and get involved with the prophetic work.

Here are some of the most notable outcomes:

- ◆ Volunteer representatives for Ezra have been appointed as a result of these trips.
- ◆ Church pastors who have visited these families return to rally their congregations to give.
- ◆ After his trip, Rev Roy Trepanier started Ezra Canada.
- ◆ After his trip, Rev Gary Cristofaro began volunteering and now works full-time with Ezra.

## Fishing Trip Participant Quotes

"I cannot get these precious Jewish families out of my mind. I have experienced what very few will ever experience."  
Rhonda Rardin, North Carolina

"The body of Christ must understand what God is doing with Israel and the Jewish people in this re-gathering."  
Rev. Ted Dyer, Ohio



*Fishing Trip Participants with Rev Barry Wagner, Ukraine*

"I will send for many fishers ..."  
Jeremiah 16:16



# Ezra Man Taken **PRISONER**

Where Jewish families live, most likely Ezra is there, even in war.



Jewish families live in the part of Ukraine where there has been war and fighting since 2014. In the last seven years, thousands have been killed, hundreds captured and millions have become refugees; these numbers include Jewish people.

## **The Unthinkable**

In 2015, Mel Hoelzle received a call that no one wants to get: Gennady, one of our Ezra Representatives in Ukraine, was taken prisoner by Russian separatists. His whereabouts and condition were not known. Immediately, Mel got word to Ezra's prayer coordinator. Within minutes, the urgent prayer request was sent around the world: pray for his safety and release. There was no news for three long days.

## **Released & Touched**

Then, miraculously, word came of his release. Rev Barry Wagner arrived in Ukraine from the US soon after to spend time with Gennady. It was then Ezra learned that several other men were arrested with

him and all had been interrogated and severely beaten. All that is, except for Ezra's man, Gennady. The captors never touched him.

Our Jewish friends live in dangerous places and we must get them to Israel. Ezra's teams are dedicated to their evacuation even in high-risk situations. Ezra turns to God for help. He hears and answers. In this case it was a miracle for Ezra's man Gennady, who is of course, a man who serves the God of Israel with all his heart no matter where He might call him to go.

**Some trust in chariots, and some  
in horses; but we trust in the  
name of the Lord our God.**

**Psalm 20:7**



*Cleaned up, cared for and off the streets.*

## HEARING GOD'S VOICE: THE CHILDREN

It all becomes a matter of listening to God.

Twenty-five years ago, Mel Hoelzle went deep into the most poverty-stricken underbelly of Kiev to understand how the new aid organization, Ezra International, could help rescue the poorest among the Jewish people and restore them to Israel.

### Street Children of Kiev

While investigating avenues of *Aliyah*, Mel encountered something else rather unexpected: in the squalor of the underground, there were untold numbers of Ukrainian children in rags, hiding, grubbing around for food, rootless, aimless, fending for themselves and utterly without adult care.

On the flight back to the US, Mel was quick to express gratitude

to God for the plan of *Aliyah* that was set in motion. And yet he prayed: "Lord, what are you going to do about these street children?" Immediately he grasped the Lord's response.

*"What are **YOU** going to do, Mel?"*

### Help Them

And so began Ezra's involvement in helping the street children of Kiev. First: feed them. While focusing on *Aliyah* efforts, Ezra was able to help feed these children and provide for other needs where possible. In 1999, the Lord brought Bruce and Anne Elliott to work alongside local Christians in order to provide more aid to the abused, orphaned and homeless kids.



*Anne and Bruce Elliott*

... Ukrainian children in rags, hiding, grubbing around for food...





### Dr. Roman Korniiiko

Meanwhile, Dr. Roman Korniiiko, a Christian physician in Kiev, had an experience similar to Mel's. God sent him to the streets for an overnight to see what conditions were like for the children. That frightening night changed his life. Even with appropriate clothing, Roman was cold while the children were freezing, in tatters. He was hungry but he could go home to eat breakfast, while the children would have to scavenge in the garbage or steal. He felt dirty but a hot shower was waiting for him, while the children had no way to remove layers of filth. And, he was a man with strength, resources and abilities. These were abused and neglected little mites. God

changed Roman that night, who in turn dedicated his life to change the lives of the least of these.

### Help For The Children

The work grew quickly. With help from Ezra, Dr. Roman founded the orphanage called Father's House. The work with at-risk children has grown exponentially with other services, staffed by Ezra workers, coming alongside to help vulnerable families and children (see below). Bruce Elliott and Viktor Mikhailov, both of Ezra International, serve on the Board of Father's House.

- ◆ 2000 Father's House Opens – First of Its Kind in Kiev – Dr. Roman Korniiiko
- ◆ 2001 Child Mobile Rescue Unit in Operation, Kiev
- ◆ 2003 House of Mercy Opens in Ukraine
- ◆ 2013 After School Programs Begin in Kiev
- ◆ 2015 Rehab Programs for Abusive, Addicted Parents Launched in Kiev

### One Man's Question To God

Twenty-five years ago, God sent Mel to the poorest streets of Kiev to learn how to best rescue the Jewish people to get them home to Israel. As so often happens with the Lord, there was more to the mission. God showed Mel the situation with the children, Mel asked God what HE was going to do about them, and God promptly turned the question back on Mel. Thus, help for these kids – Jewish and non-Jewish – began and is now flourishing. Flourishing indeed. So are the children who have been rescued.



# TWO MINISTRIES ONE HEART

## MICHAEL'S CALL

What we have here is the camaraderie of a former diver for the US Navy and a former Lineman for then US football champions, Boise JC.



*Rev J Michael Utterback, International Director of Ezra International  
Mel Hoelzle, Founder & President outside the Jerusalem Support Center*

Both Michael Utterback and Mel Hoelzle in their youth did not know the Lord. Now the two belong to the Lord and have devoted themselves to rescuing the Jewish people, returning them to Israel and restoring them with the things they need.

### Ministry to Israel

For over three decades, Michael has been a voice to the nations, speaking all over the world in churches and conferences about God's unique love and plan for Israel. In 1985, long before the Iron Curtain collapsed in 1991/1992, Michael had heard from the Lord that he would be

involved in the great ingathering of the Jewish people back to their ancient homeland. He was with the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) which had teamed-up with Good News Travels to begin the Exobus Project. The first ventures transported the Jewish people by bus out of Kiev, to Warsaw where there was an airport with connections in Israel. In 1988, Michael established Concern for Israel which was re-named Ministry to Israel (MTI) in 1994.

Then in 1996, Mel Hoelzle made a pivotal trip to Jerusalem. He stopped in to meet Michael. That meeting would prove to change

the lives of Jewish people all over the world- thousands upon thousands of them.

### In Siberia

"Before I met Mel in 1996," Michael says, "I had already been involved in *Aliyah* for a number of years. In 1997 I felt impressed by the Lord to first visit Kaifeng, China and then go to Siberia to help bring Jewish people home to Israel from there. When Mel learned of my plans, he asked if he could go along. It was during that trip we decided to join our ministries together to bring the dispersed Jews from Siberia, home to Israel."





Together, Michael and Mel opened a central office in Novosibirsk and worked through churches in Irkutsk, Omsk and other cities in the region. From that time on, MTI has partnered in two major ways: first, they raise funds for *Aliyah* to give to the work of Ezra in the nations around the world. Then, after Ezra has helped the Jewish people arrive in Israel, MTI takes it from there to encourage, support and provide them with humanitarian aid. Typically, these centers help about 16,000 people a year.

## Hand-In-Glove

From the partnership that was established in Siberia, Ministry to Israel and Ezra International have worked hand-in-glove. Mel and Michael have traveled together to other parts of Russia, Georgia and later to Argentina. In addition, Michael sits on the Ezra International Board as International Director and Mel serves on the MTI Board. The Ezra-MTI team is now helping Jewish people make *Aliyah* from around the world, including

Two are better  
than one, because  
they have a good  
reward for their  
labor.

Ecclesiastes 4:9

the former Soviet Union and South America. Once the new immigrants reach Israel's soil, they are provided for by Support Centers – MTI runs four of them – with dozens of Christian staff and volunteers. Michael states,

*"The partnership between Ezra and MTI is undoubtedly the most well-rounded ministry of its kind."*

## God's Hand

Mel Hoelzle states with great affection, "I see God's hand at work as the ministries serve the Jewish people together. I want to thank Michael Utterback as Director of MTI for their years

of support and partnership with Ezra in the work of *Aliyah* and this partnership in The Land."

As for Michael, he says he is "looking forward to expanding the relationship and cooperation between the two organizations. For many years we have had very similar visions and have supported each other wholeheartedly. It is only fitting that we continue to work together jointly to establish a network of help and support."

Rev J Michael Utterback received the 2019 *Nehemiah Award for a Lifetime of Support for Israel and the Jewish People*, presented by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. Stop by [Ministry to Israel](#) to learn more.



# Go to ARGENTINA

He didn't understand it. Why would God prompt him to go to Argentina?

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At the end of 2001, Argentina was a prosperous country and among the Jewish people there was little interest in *Aliyah*. Mel Hoelzle, however, was listening to the Lord. Though it seemed counter to the type of work with which Ezra is normally engaged (Ezra serves the most poverty-stricken families who want to emigrate to Israel), Mel yielded to God's prompting. He invited Michael Utterback and Pat Frame to meet him in Buenos Aires.

## Collapse

By the time the three ministry leaders arrived a few months later, the economy of Argentina had already collapsed. The nation could not pay back its debts, the *peso* lost most of its value, unemployment was out of control and over half the people in Argentina suddenly found themselves living below the poverty line. It was shocking for the trio to see anger and despair that was so acute



that people were pelting bank buildings with rocks. It was equally distressing to see once prosperous people dressed in their designer clothes digging in the garbage for scraps of food.

## Such A Big *Aliyah*

Jewish families needed out immediately. Jewish officials in Argentina were unaccustomed to such "big *Aliyah*". Mel connected with Eli Itzaaki from the Jewish Agency, who had experience in "big *Aliyah*" in Ukraine and was now in Argentina. During their initial meeting, Itzaaki advised the Ezra-MTI team to focus on getting Argentinian Returnees back to Israel.





## Returnees

Who are the Returnees? A Returnee is a Jewish person or family who has already made *Aliyah* (in this case, from Argentina) and have returned to the land of their origin for a time, such as for a family emergency. Returnees have Israeli passports. Why not hop on a plane and fly back to Israel when you are ready? Not possible. Not in the chaos of that time, not when your *peso* has lost most its value. The Jewish Agency could not help Returnees with their flights. Ezra-MTI could, and did.

## Get Them Home To Safety

One case was particularly serious. A man and a woman had met and married in Israel. He had made *Aliyah* from

Argentina, she from Romania. They both went to Argentina with their daughter and while there, the husband was so violent that the wife feared for her life. Michael Utterback, with MTI, was able to buy tickets to Israel for her and her daughter so that within days, they escaped danger and headed for safety, in Israel. Michael was there to greet them when they arrived in their Promised Land.

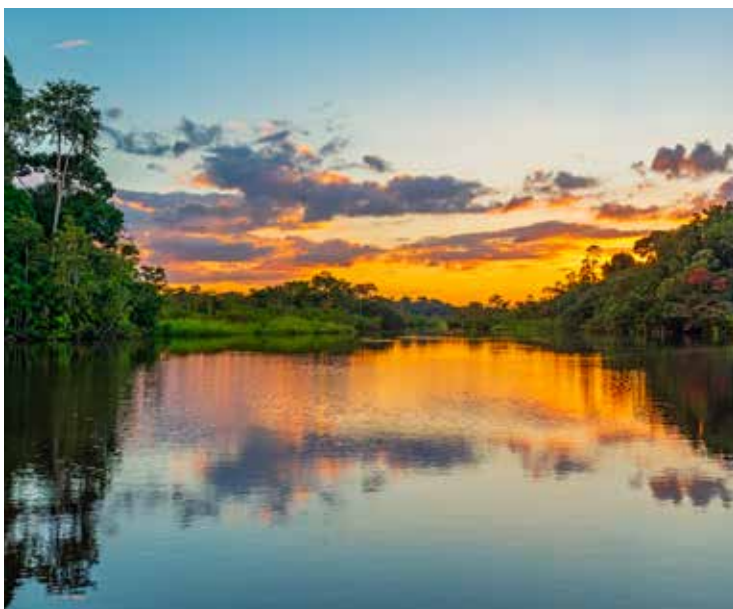
## Partnership

Ezra and MTI continue *Aliyah* efforts from Argentina. Words from God accomplish the purpose for which He sends them even when they seem to make no sense at the time.



*Melanie, from Argentina.  
Ezra helped her make Aliyah.*





# Jews In The AMAZON JUNGLE

What is the story of the Jewish people in this jungle?

Look to the ends of the earth and you will find Jewish families.

You will find them in Siberia, in Shanghai and in even in Iquitos (pronounced uh-kee-towz), one of the most remote cities on earth. Iquitos can be found deep within the rain forest of Peru. You can't drive or walk there. You can only get to Iquitos by boat or prop plane. What is the story of the Jewish people in this jungle?

## Jewish Immigration

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Moroccan Jewish men joined with others to seek their fortunes in the booming rubber trade of the Amazon jungle. Many settled in northeastern Brazil, close to the Atlantic. But others pressed further into the density, paddling down the Amazon to create communities in the heart of the Peruvian jungle.

## Jewish Identity Retained

Descendants of these early immigrants retain and nurture

their Jewish identities. They celebrate Passover and other biblical feasts. They keep their Jewish surnames, such as Cohen and Levy, and revere the Torah. In the early 1900s, Jewish families terrorized by anti-Semitism fled Eastern Europe and settled just about as far away as one could go, in Iquitos.

## Jewish Yearning For Israel

By the 1920s, rubber plantations elsewhere outproduced the Amazon. The heyday was soon over, the city grew poorer with each decade and people started leaving. The Jewish families of Iquitos began yearning for their real homeland, Israel.

## Ezra: Rescue, Return & Restore

To the ends of the earth, even to remote, impoverished, mosquito-infested Iquitos, Ezra helped Jewish families there make *Aliyah*. This unique rescue effort took place in 2012.

Ezra was not alone for a mission of this complexity. Together with Ministry to Israel (MTI) and Bridges for Peace, the ministries' combined efforts to rescue these families. Because the airstrip in Iquitos can accommodate only small planes, transporting groups and luggage is a challenge. Each person is allowed only one bag. Imagine fitting your whole life in one suitcase! Bridges, MTI and Ezra not only helped with expenses but also provided these families with basic household furniture, appliances and other necessities once they arrived in Israel.

## From The Ends Of The Earth

The Jewish people of rainy Iquitos, at the very end of the earth, are not forgotten by God. He promised to get them home and He is doing it. Through Ezra, Bridges for Peace and Ministry to Israel, He is performing His Word.





## Scottish Spy (for the Lord) Behind the Iron Curtain

# PAT'S CALL

Almost 40 years ago in the mediaeval Scottish capital of Edinburgh, a book was put into the hands of a young Pat Frame.

Almost 40 years ago in the mediaeval Scottish capital of Edinburgh, a book was put into the hands of a young Pat Frame. This volume, *Exodus II: Let My People Go*, foretold the fall of the Soviet Union and the Jewish exodus that would follow. It was written by Steve Lightle. The book had an impact on Pat and she told the Lord,

*"If this is true, show me from Your word. If this is true, show me what You want to do."*

She read her Bible with new eyes and saw that the return of the Jewish people to Israel was woven throughout scripture. When Lightle came to Edinburgh

to speak, Pat Frame was in the audience. The woman who organized the event organized a prayer and action group. Pat joined the fifty to sixty Scottish prayer warriors who met every three months to pray and campaign for the Jewish people and the Christians in the Soviet Union. These prayer warriors were in tune to what was going on. They kept up with the reports coming from believers and Jewish Refuseniks. The Refuseniks' situation was untenable: if

Jewish people applied to leave the USSR, they were fired from their jobs, money was confiscated, and if they were found teaching Hebrew or holding meetings about Israel, many were sent to the Gulag.



Pat Frame, Field Operations  
Director for South America & Europe

## Russian

Faithful in prayer, a few years later (around 1987), Pat bought a newspaper, which she never did and still never does. In it, she saw an ad for a year-long intensive course on Russian, aimed for high-level diplomats. She recalls that her heart started thumping but that she dismissed it because it sounded too grand for her. The next day, her closest friend phoned to say that she had seen an ad for a Russian Language Class and that Pat should apply. It was, of course, the same ad. This was the Lord. Pat applied, was accepted, then devoted herself to the most difficult year of learning in her life. It was so tough that participants called it, “Our Gulag”. After the gruelling year was completed, Pat knew she needed a job with Russian or she would lose her hard-won knowledge immediately.

## Bible Smuggling

During her study of Russian in Glasgow, a local ministry held a seminar for Slavic language students. Pat went. The ministry’s task was to smuggle Bibles into Eastern bloc countries. Pat was the perfect candidate: she had administrative skills, knew Russian and loved the Word. Her job was to do the research prior to smuggling operations. She recalls, “This was a good introduction to life in the Soviet Union!”

Her work took her behind the Iron Curtain in Ukraine and Russia to collect information. She had to memorize everything.

No notes were permitted, it was too dangerous. She was a spy for the Lord! Other smugglers were going in and out and it was Pat’s job to brief and debrief them. She recalls that when the Berlin Wall came down, “these Christians dashed all over the place into these countries.”



## From Moving Bibles To Moving People

One of Pat’s connections put her in touch with an *Aliyah* organization and less than two years after the dismantling of the Soviet Union, she was fully engaged in *Aliyah* work. She began in Poland, then England, and then in Ukraine, where she was based for eleven years. She did not lose her Russian. She gained more of it.

On one of his first trips to Ukraine, Mel Hoelzle met with Pat and would meet her on almost every trip of his thereafter. Her group was good at transportation. Mel’s group, Ezra International, was good at gathering documents, so they collaborated. Pat recalls, “When our team had *Olim* who needed help with documents, we passed

them to Ezra and when Ezra *Olim* needed transport, they passed them to us. We knew each other’s work well.” Pat also traveled with Mel to a number of countries – mainly Russia and Argentina.

## Director And Author

Mel contacted Pat in 2009 to ask her if she would join the Ezra International staff full time. Her answer? Da! (Yes!)

Today, Pat resides in Glasgow, Scotland, and is the Field Operations Director for South America and Europe as well as on the International Board. She is the author of the 8-Week Bible study course, *Aliyah: The Return of the Jewish People to Israel*, as well as a book on prayer, *Intercession and Aliyah: Intercession for the Return of the Jewish People*. Both are available at our [Ezra Store](#). Her calling to serve the Jewish people began with prayer. Yours can too.



# SERVANTS AMONG THE NATIONS

# EZRA REPRESENTATIVES

More than the backbone,  
they are the HEART of  
all that is done for the  
Jewish people among  
the nations to help  
prepare them for *Aliyah*.



If Mel Hoelzle represents the shoulders of Ezra International, the backbone of our ministry in twelve nations on four continents is our representatives. More than the backbone, they are the HEART of all that is done for the Jewish people among the nations to help prepare them for *Aliyah*.

## Ezra Is 'Help' In Hebrew

Ezra עֶזְרָה is the Hebrew word for help. *Aliyah* is a long and difficult process fraught with strong

emotions, obstacles, setbacks and tedious document searches. This is the specialty of Ezra!

The love and sacrifice extended by indigenous Christians toward Jewish families who want to make *Aliyah* is extraordinary. It is often the first time such special care has ever been received by Jewish families who are routinely overlooked, shunned or persecuted. In addition, these local believers understand the language and culture of their home countries.

## Ezra Countries

- 12** Countries in which Ezra Representatives are located: Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Columbia, France, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan
- Olim* originate from: Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Columbia, **25\*** Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Moldova, Peru, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine, UK, Uruguay, and Uzbekistan (\*For security reasons some nations are not mentioned)
- 4** Ezra International countries of promotion: USA, UK, Canada and Holland



*Our Rep in Brazil with Jewish Agency Staff*

It pleased them indeed, and they  
are their debtors. For if the Gentiles  
have been partakers of their spiritual  
things, their duty is also to minister  
to them in material things.

Romans 15:27



*Above are just a few of our beloved Christian Ezra Representatives, the salt of the earth.*

## Servants Fulfilling God's Promises

Jesus became a servant to the Jewish people to confirm the promises God made to the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Romans 15:8).

Our representatives around the world are following in the footsteps of Jesus, serving the Jewish people and confirming God's promises. Many Jewish families are unaware of God's promises to the fathers. Many are also unaware that Israel's Law of Return extends an invitation for every Jewish person on earth with at least one Jewish grandparent to make *Aliyah*, an outcome of God's promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

Ezra Representatives – the fishermen of Jeremiah 16:16 – are often the first to inform Jewish families that they have a right to go home. Not only that but that Ezra International will help provide the means. This is good news. This is the Lord, confirming His promises!

## The Work Of Our Servants

Christian Representatives with Ezra International work on the front lines in nations all over the world to assist Jewish families as they prepare to make *Aliyah*. Here is a list of some of the work they do:

- ◆ Get the word out that Christians will help with preparations for *Aliyah*
- ◆ Hold Israel events
- ◆ Schedule appointments with families
- ◆ Meet with families
- ◆ Provide counsel for families regarding required documentation

- ◆ Comfort families in distress
- ◆ In special cases, help families with medical needs
- ◆ Schedule appointments with agencies
- ◆ Help solve complex emigration issues
- ◆ Help with paperwork and funding for passports for all family members
- ◆ Wait in line for documents
- ◆ Wait in line for more documents
- ◆ Provide transportation for families to agencies
- ◆ Provide transportation to airports
- ◆ Pay excess baggage fees when airline limits are very low
- ◆ Pray for families
- ◆ Keep records
- ◆ Maintain local offices
- ◆ Extend love, offer hope and encourage the weary

## Pray

Our representatives have budgets and need funds to do their work to help the Jewish people. But if you were to ask them what they want the most? It's prayer. The work they do is hard. They are often isolated and in Muslim countries. The evil one does not want them to succeed. Please pray for the heart and backbone of this ministry, our representatives, who serve the Lord with joy. Thank you and bless you!



# 82,000 ONE BY ONE

What is the process  
when a decision is made  
to make *Aliyah*?

It is easy to think it's as simple as buying a ticket to Israel and go. Ezra assures you that it is not. The process is lengthy, tedious, expensive, logistically complicated, fraught with obstacles and at times seems insurmountable. Nine months is the shortest amount of time it takes, but we've had cases that have taken years, and one that took fourteen.

Here are the basic steps for an uncomplicated case. Take these steps and multiply by 82,000 and you'll begin to understand the work, manhours and tenacity involved for our teams around the world.

## Knowledge

Many Jewish families in poverty-stricken and remote countries do not realize they have the right to return to Israel. Local Christians with Ezra find creative ways to get the word out.

## Passports

These families can hardly put food on the table, let alone buy passports for each person along with transportation. Ezra gives them the surprising news that we will help cover the costs. In the former Soviet Union, for example, passports can cost an average of two months' salary. Some families

are large and multi-generational, requiring many passports which they cannot afford.

## Documents

The documents each person needs are often housed in different cities or countries, spanning multiple time zones and borders. Ezra's network tracks them down and pays for them. Birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates, divorce decrees, parental permissions, military permissions and other permissions particular to each country are some of the documents required to prove Jewishness and ensure there's no extenuating circumstances.

## Appointments

Local Christian teams help arrange appointments with Israeli Consuls and Jewish Agencies. They often transport the families to these offices, sometimes involving long distances, overnight stays and multiple visits. It is often difficult to make appointments. Many times officials are not there on the scheduled day. Other times the set day arrives and is canceled for an undetermined amount of time.

## Airports

Christian teams help arrange or provide transportation to the airports for families. These families

often include the elderly, those with special needs, children and infants. Pets need crates and all of this is before we even load the luggage. It's hard to believe these families are packing up their lives and fitting them in a few pieces of luggage to start a new life.

## In Israel

Ezra's partners, Bridges for Peace and Ministry to Israel, provide material aid and comfort to families when they arrive in Israel. Situations are assessed and humanitarian aid is provided. Aid includes baby baskets, food vouchers, bus passes, clothing, help paying bills, etc. It's important that when our *Olim* arrive in Israel that relationships and help continue until they are on their feet.

## Prayer

All of these steps are covered in prayer – none of it would happen without God's help and intervention. Like the establishment of Israel, *Aliyah* is a work God ordained and thus will be opposed. When we pray, we remember these promises and we keep going:

*As a soothing aroma I will accept you when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered; and I will prove Myself holy among you in the site of the nations.*  
Ezekiel 20:41





# YOU WILL HELP THEM HOME GARY'S CALL

It all started long ago when God led a young boy to select a very important book.

Rev Gary Cristofaro, Director of Development for Ezra International, and his wife, Darlene, who volunteers behind-the-scenes with her wonderfully contagious energy and smiles (below right). This couple, along with their daughter, Dominique, have been an important part of the Ezra International family since Gary's involvement began in 2003. But it all started long before that when God led a young boy to select a very important book in the library.

## Book Report

Middle School: Gary was given the assignment to pick a book and write a report. This pre-teenaged boy perused the shelves of the library. He found a book and held it in his hands. The title said something about *Babi Yar*. He knew that this was the one, but he didn't know anything about *Babi Yar*. He

promptly checked it out of the library and started reading. He learned that a lady named Dina survived a massacre. He read further to learn that the Jewish people in Kiev were slaughtered during WW II in a ravine and that there were only a few survivors. Dina was one of them. This was the book that God placed in this youngster's hands! Gary was deeply impacted by what he learned. He was not alive during the war, nor was he old enough, nor was he near to the Jewish people to rescue them. But he is now. This book and its themes became a foreshadowing of the rescue work to which God would call Gary and his family.

## A Great Throng Returns

The Berlin Wall fell in November, 1989 and by late 1991, the Soviet Union had collapsed.

A great throng of Jewish people were now returning home to

Israel. No longer trapped in the Land of the North behind the Iron Curtain, they arrived in Israel and needed homes. In 1992, the Israeli Prime Minister looked to the US for housing loans for these new immigrants.



*Darlene & Rev Gary Cristofaro  
Volunteer & Director of Development*



Enter Gary: he headed straight to Washington DC to lobby on behalf of Israel. While there, God implanted something new and big into his heart that has not lost its grip to this day. Suddenly, he knew that he was supposed to help the Jewish people get home to Israel. His new question to the Lord was, "How?" He then heard in his heart:

*"YOU will help them home."*

## Jerusalem

The call on Gary to help the Jewish people grew stronger year by year. In 1998, he was in Jerusalem to volunteer for the Feast of Tabernacles with the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ). He saw the Exobus parked outside the auditorium and thought to himself, "Maybe I'll be part of that!"

Well, almost. Inside the auditorium, in the exhibit area, Gary approached the Ezra International booth to investigate. Rev Barry Wagner manned the booth so the two struck up a conversation. It was meant to be. Mel Hoelzle happened to be standing there by Barry's side, listening. After the exchange, Mel told Barry:

*"That man will be working in Aliyah."*

Gary returned to the church he pastored in Melbourne, Florida. Sunday after Sunday, the congregation listened to the fire in their pastor's voice about the return of the Jewish people to Israel. The church soon began to donate to the work of Ezra International. Beginning in 2000,

Gary and his church invited Rev Barry Wagner to speak to them about *Aliyah* every year. The relationship with Ezra grew so that by 2003, Rev Barry invited Rev Gary to go with him on a Fishing Trip to Ukraine to observe the work of the *Aliyah* firsthand.

## Forever Changed

That trip," Gary recalls, "changed my life forever. I witnessed the poverty-stricken plight of the Jewish people, but I also watched the Ezra staff coming to their rescue!" Gary marveled:

*"Ezra International representatives are ordinary people doing extraordinary things."*



## Full Circle

The trip to Ukraine included a visit to the *Babi Yar* Holocaust Memorial in Kiev. Gary stood above the pit where 33,771 Jews were massacred. (*Babi Yar* bears the distinction of being the location of the largest mass killing during World War II.) Gary stood there in grief and righteous indignation, and as he stood there, the Lord brought back to his mind the book he had read for his school assignment all those years ago. This is the incredible sovereignty of God.

Mel Hoelzle was right. Shortly after the trip, Gary became a volunteer representative for Ezra International. He spoke in churches whenever he could. His passion for *Aliyah* grew so that by 2014, he was asked to join the staff full-time as Director of Development. He also began to serve on the Board of Directors and is featured on Israel TV Network with his program, [It's All About The Aliyah](#).

Darlene Cristofaro, Gary's wife, is deeply passionate about the work as well. For the last two years, she has dedicated twenty hours a week to running to the post office to get Ezra's mail and process donations. Her eyes are the first to see your checks and her hands are used to deposit these sacred offerings to the Lord in the bank.

Gary says for both, "With each passing day, we know that we are engaged in prophetic work. God is fulfilling the desire He placed in my heart long ago and has brought Darlene alongside to work together. With anti-Semitism on the rise all over the world, we firmly believe we must work every day to make Never Again a reality and not just a slogan. We know that when we stand before God on Judgment Day, we shall not be asked the question posed to Cain, 'Where were you when your brother's blood was crying out to God?'"

"You will help them home." These were God's words to Gary. Perhaps they are His words to you too.

# HOW “YOUR SHOULDERS” WILL CARRY THEM HOME (Isaiah 49:22)

Working hard to ensure that every Jewish soul who desires to return has the means and resources to make it possible. Even if it's ONE AT TIME.



## Two Million People

It's estimated that over 2M Jewish people remain in regions of the former Soviet Union alone. Many lack resources – whether it is money, transportation or ability to gather documents – to get home to Israel.

Ezra is working hard to ensure that every Jewish soul who desires to return to their biblical homeland has the means and resources to make it possible. This effort can only be done through the generosity of people who understand the significance of this end time work: people like you! Here are seven ways to help.

## One: Rescue One Person

One of the most meaningful things you can do for the Lord is to take care of the *Aliyah* needs for one Jewish man, woman or child. It averages \$360 a person. That's it; it's less than the cost of a cell phone.

Give all at once, or give \$30 per month to change the life of one of God's Chosen, forever. [To give, click here.](#)

Then, don't stop with one. Why not commit to one person each year?

## Two: Rescue A Family

Your Sunday school class, Bible study, prayer circle or congregation could take a

collection to rescue a family of four: \$1440 will do this. Pray for your family. Give to Ezra to help them. God will take care of the rest! [To give, click here.](#)

## Three: Rescue 150!

That's exactly what a corporation in Texas did a few years ago. Ezra provided the company with the first names, country of origin and date of *Aliyah* of 150 people, in real time, as flights were landing in Tel Aviv. Think big! Change the demographics of the earth and change the lives of God's people and His Land. In so doing, it will change you and your company as well. [To give, click here.](#)

## Four: Volunteer To Pray

Donating funds is not the only way to get involved. This work of God needs dedicated warriors devoted to intercession. A work of this significance needs protection that only the Almighty can give. We need an army to fervently call on the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for protection, help and courage.

If you are called to pray, each week, prayer requests for specific people, their needs and their countries are listed for each day that week. Not only is prayer needed, but the information is fascinating. You will get a glimpse of the nitty-gritty work involved. [To sign up, click here.](#)

Lastly, organize an *Aliyah* prayer group. Another fantastic resource for you is Pat Frame's book, "Intercession and Aliyah: Intercession for the Return of the Jewish People". [Click here to purchase.](#)

Let's get prayer groups in all 50 states! The work of *Aliyah* requires prayer and God's intervention.

## Five: Start A Bible Study Group

Host and facilitate our 8-week course, "*Aliyah*: Understanding the Return of the Jewish People to Israel". To teach this course, [order a Facilitator's Kit here](#) which includes a printed full-color 96-page workbook as well as 8 beautiful slide shows and informational handouts for 8 lessons.

This course starts with the basics then lays out God's glorious plan to return the Jewish people to Israel. We guarantee you will love it!

[Click here to view a short video](#) that is sure to get you excited to gather a group of people to learning.

## Six: Share Our Story

Spread the word about the work God is doing through Ezra International to fulfill His promises and bless His people!

We've made it easy for you to share our story on Facebook, across the internet, and at your church all with just a click on our website. Spread the word, forward emails and Prayer Points you receive from Ezra, post on Facebook and more

## Seven: Invite Ezra To Your Church

There are God-sized stories that will thrill you which, for safety reasons, we cannot tell in print, video or on the Internet. Almost every weekend, Ezra sends teams to speak to church congregations, potlucks, Sunday school classes and other gatherings about what's going on in the nations and Israel. The work matches the Word!

But, you say, we would love to hear the news from Ezra but we are a small church and cannot afford it. Yes, you can. If you want us, we'll find a way to get there! Call us at 1.352.394.4673 or toll free at 1.866.539.6829. Or if you prefer, get things started with an email at [info@ezrainternational.org](mailto:info@ezrainternational.org)

The return of Jewish people to Israel today is a fulfillment of God's promise made centuries ago. For 2,000 years, it seemed impossible. But now it's happening and scripture promises that you can be a part of it!

## Contact Ezra

P.O. Box 361757  
Melbourne, FL 32936-1757  
Tel: 352.394.4673  
Toll Free: 866.539.6829  
[info@ezrainternational.org](mailto:info@ezrainternational.org)







# WORDS OF APPRECIATION

## Grateful Jewish Families

Knowing I am blind and couldn't ask for help myself,  
your people came to me offering their help.  
I don't know how to show my gratefulness,  
but there is one thing I can do for sure:  
I will never forget the kind people of Ezra International.  
**Levpatova, Ukraine. Aliyah, 2000**

When people asked me,  
Aren't you afraid of going to Israel by yourself?  
I would always tell them,  
No, but I am afraid of staying here.  
For me, Israel is the way out.  
**Mykhail, Russia. Aliyah, Dec 30, 2004**

Our situation in this country is so terrible here  
that my husband hanged himself in this very room.  
He felt he was a failure as a husband and a father.  
How can we possibly thank you?  
**Sveta, Moldova. Aliyah, Summer 2006**

I am leaving with my mother who is  
92 years old and I deeply believe I will  
have a chance to work and to live  
without any more humiliations.  
**Vladimir, Ukraine. Aliyah, Fall 2006**

Thank you, Ezra for helping us financially,  
but also for your love and care.  
**Yuriy and family, Kazakhstan. Aliyah February 2011**

I am grateful to you for this very big help.  
You helped us solve difficulties and supported  
us financially and morally in this difficult work.  
**Kamran, Azerbaijan. Aliyah, 2011**

In Israel, no one approaches you to rob  
you randomly. Thank you, Ezra!  
**Fabie, Brazil. Aliyah, 2016**

## Ezra Donors

I very much want to help  
God's Chosen People  
go back to their land, Israel.  
**Kathy, Amarillo, Texas**

I have longed for a group that supports Israel,  
one that I could partner with to bless.  
Thank you for loving God,  
His Chosen People and His church.  
**Helen, Lubbock, Texas**

Thank you for letting me be a part of this  
wonderful ministry. I think what you are doing  
is fulfilling God's prophecy.  
**Dena, Otterville, Missouri**

I can hardly write without many tears  
but I feel honored to be able  
to give as our God has declared in His word.  
I sure have a desire to help  
our Jewish friends get home to Israel.  
**Billy Jo, Finley, Oklahoma**

Our prayer is that many more Christians  
will respond to help Jewish families  
return to Israel.  
We serve an awesome God.  
**John and Jackie, Clewiston, Florida**

Thank you for looking out for the Jewish people.  
When I saw on your television program and  
how badly they are being treated I cried.  
I just wanted to reach through the television  
and hug and kiss each one of them.  
**Colleen, Inwood, West Virginia**