



June 2010

**Dear supporters,**

We are so grateful to see how God is opening doors for us, and how he is touching and transforming lives. Thank you for carrying both us in the Machaseh team and the dear families and individuals we work with, with your prayers. We thank God for every one of you!

As this semester comes to an end, we would like to give you an overview of our most important projects. As you know it is our vision to give help to anyone who needs it, without regard to religious or cultural background. As the number of people seeking help is growing, we see that our focus needs to be primarily on the ones with the most urgent needs. As we see it now this is women who are victims of trafficking, abused women, refugees and Holocaust survivors. In the following we will share about our work amongst these groups.

**Holocaust survivors**

Just before winter in 2009, a 76 year old woman came to us together with her 96 year old mother, to ask us for help so that they could pay for heating their apartment. We were touched by them in a deep way, and they opened our eyes to the needs of the s Holocaust survivors. They had survived a concentration camp by a miracle, and had after that endured a hard life in the Soviet Union. They migrated to Israel, to an even more difficult life here. They are both lonely and sick, and spend most of the time in hospital. They receive a very small governmental support, but all of their money goes to medicine, which leaves nothing for other costs. They now receive help through Machaseh, and they opened our eyes to the hardships of other survivors. Within a few years there will not be any Holocaust survivors left, and it is our prayer that we can bring blessing and love into their lives while they are still amongst us. It might also be the only chance many of them have to ever hear about Yeshua. From meeting this first family, we are now in contact with the Zionist forum department that works with the survivors, and have started cooperating with them. We have had several concerts to raise money to meet their needs, and also to bless them. At our last concert 15 survivors came to listen, and all felt very blessed. They all want to come back.



**Refugees**

The family in the picture is an Ethiopian-Eritrean refugee family. B, the husband is Ethiopian, and worked for many years as an evangelist in Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt. As a young boy he experienced his father being killed by the communist regime, because of his faith and service as an evangelist. His mother and father's life and testimony were of great importance to him. In Egypt, besides being an evangelist he started a prison ministry. He found that many Ethiopians,

Eritreans and Sudanese refugees were arrested after crossing the border illegally. In Egypt he also met and married an Eritrean young woman. They now have four children together, the youngest of which is only a few weeks old. Due to the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea it is impossible for the family to go back to either Eritrea or Ethiopia. B.'s ministry involvement in Egypt has put him on a blacklist in Egypt, already causing him to get arrested there once. The family eventually received UN refugee status, and came to Israel over the Egyptian border. In Israel however they are not receiving any kind of status or visa. The only opportunity they have to stay in the country is to convert to Judaism, something they do not want to do because they don't want to deny Yeshua. This means that when their refugee status runs out, they are left without any status, without work permit in the country, and at the same time without opportunity to go back to their home countries. Machaseh is now working with our lawyer to find an opportunity for them to seek asylum in another country. The family is in a very stressful and uncertain situation. Please pray for this precious family and the process of finding a solution for them. After giving birth to their youngest child the mother was very ill, and it was very difficult for her to care for the children. At the same time a Danish volunteer contacted us, wanting to volunteer at Machaseh. She is now an answer to prayer and a great blessing to this family. Giving birth at Hadassah the family were requested to pay 10,000 shekel for the birth certificate, money they did not have. By a miracle they were given the certificate for free.

#### **Abused women**

T., a mother of two babies, ages two months and 1, 5 years, was living in a very abusive marriage. Her husband abused her, and did not want to take care of their children. They often went hungry, because he did not give her money for food. For a long while T. was suffering in silence. She is not Jewish, and is dependent on her husband in order to get a visa in Israel. He threatened her that he would get her sent out of the country, without her children, if she tried to complain. At one point he tried pushing her out of a window in their apartment, with one of the babies in her arms. After this episode she finally escaped with the children, and came to Machaseh. After we contacted the police her husband was arrested. Even if T. is now safe in our shelter, her situation is still very much dependent on her husband. He is not willing to give permission for T. to leave the country to go back to Ukraine with her children, but is also not willing to go with her to the Ministry of Interior so that she can get her visa extended. This leaves her in an impossible situation. What she really wants now is to be able to move back to her home country. Our lawyer is now working to achieve this. Please pray for the help needed and for a good outcome for T. and her children.

A. is another woman that receives help through Machaseh. She is an Iraqi Muslim woman who attained the right to immigrate to Israel. This in itself is a complicated story. She has been in an extremely abusive marriage, with a man who is addicted to drugs and abused their four children. Her oldest son is now in prison because of drugs, and one of the younger daughters has attempted to commit suicide. One day her husband told her "divorce" three times, and left the family. According to Sharia law this meant they were now divorced. A. was left on her own with the three children to care for, paying rent for their apartment and dealing with an existing debt the family had. When she went to the social department to ask for help she was rejected. The lawyer assigned to her for the divorce case first told her that he did not want her case, and later that she would not receive any of the things she was entitled to. Through a Christian friend, A. got in touch with Machaseh. We have found ourselves fighting for her basic rights in this case, and finally she received what she should have had from the start; a lawyer for the divorce case, a social worker to help her, and support for the apartment. And even more important; she now has hope for the future. Please pray for this family and their situation. Through our

experience with this family we realized that we really are a human rights organization. We have dealt with issues like this before, but this case showed in a very clear way the importance of not only giving counseling and practical and economic help, but also helping people who cannot defend themselves and sometimes do not know what their rights are, to gain their rights. Without our lawyer the fight for A.'s rights would have been impossible. The lawyer is a reform Jew, with important contacts and a lot of experience as a lawyer. She is a crucial help to us in many cases. Please pray for God's blessing over her, and that she will herself see Yeshua through our work.

### **Trafficked women**

I. was brought to Israel through Turkey as a 17 year old girl. She was brought to Tel Aviv, smuggled at the bottom of a ship, and there sold to a brothel. Already on the ship she was raped by the trafficker. In Tel Aviv all of her identification documents were taken from her, and she was forced into prostitution. After half a year there was a police raid at the brothel. I. chose to cooperate with the police and give her testimony against the men responsible. During her time at the brothel she had met an Arab man whom she married when she was freed. In the beginning this was a good enough situation, but after a while her husband started using drugs, was out of work and started to abuse her. Finally she left him. I. had two small children with him. The legal process of getting the necessary papers for this small family has been very long. I. and her children are now finally back in Ukraine, where her mother lives. They arrived two weeks ago and are so happy to be there. I. says she had forgotten how it is to feel like a human being, being treated like a worthless object for such a long time. Now her feeling of self-respect is beginning to come back.

I. was the fourth woman Machaseh has helped through the process of getting back to life after being a victim of trafficking and ending up in Israel. Now there are five new cases that we with heavy hearts, have had to turn down because there just are not enough resources to help them. Please pray with us that we will be able to establish an emergency foundation for this purpose. The process of getting new papers and helping these women back home is both time- and resource consuming, but we are sharing the pain of these women.

### **Sponsorship**

Our sponsorship program has now been running for two years. We see, even through great difficulties and struggles, that this program is a great blessing to families, and that it changes lives from darkness to light. We are helping men, women, and couples in different situations. They all have had tremendous struggles and hardships in their lives. Helping them without a long term commitment from our side would be impossible. We are always very careful about giving sponsorship to individuals, because these are complicated cases, but when we all agree that this is the only way to help someone, we commit to it. We want to share some of the stories of that we have been allowed to tell.

K. is a single mother with four children, two of which are autistic. She is now married to a wonderful man. This is of course not because of us, but because of his great love for her. But through Machaseh she was able to develop the ability to be loved, accepted and respected as a woman after years of suffering in a violent relationship.

S. came to us through the mental health services, with clinical depression and post traumatic stress disorder. She is now receiving government support and has got a government sponsored apartment in Dimona. She is also working as a caretaker for elderly, and now speaks Hebrew.

I. is working as a caretaker for elderly men and as a translator at Yad Vashem (the Holocaust memorial centre). He is not drinking any longer, and is able to rent an apartment for himself after living in our apartment for homeless men for some time.

O. who also lived in this apartment is now getting the government support he is entitled to, and is studying Hebrew.

M. has almost finished her studies, and has begun to work.

A. and her 14 year old son have gone through a personal transformation. From living in misery, they now lead a good and joyful life.

V. , a mother of three who underwent surgeries on her hands and of which we have shared in a previous letter, has finally received a government apartment in Jerusalem after waiting for three years for this. This is a miracle, as it should have been impossible, and it gives her great hope for the future. She now knows that she will no longer have to live on the streets, and that she will not go hungry any more.

S. has studied computers, hairdressing and cosmetics, and is now opening up her own business. Our lawyer has invited her to speak at a Jerusalem business club breakfast, as an example of how someone can transform their life!

Through the years we see that there are two avenues we can use to help people out of crisis and into a normal life. The first way is to help people to go through studies, recover from addictions, assist them in overcoming the trials of life, start working and help themselves. The other way is to work to get government support and apartments in the cases where people are entitled to this, for instance in cases of disability. This is a process that often takes years and a lot of patience. We see that we have to use both avenues in order to help all these families and individuals who are so dear to us, along the way sharing both their tears and their joys. Thank God for all of those who are now able to support themselves and live a dignified life, and please pray for the ones that are now receiving sponsorships.

### **Updates from our last newsletters**

In a previous letter we shared with you our vision to open a home for rehabilitating women who are addicted to drugs. This has not happened yet, but God seems to have opened another door for us. We are working with a centre in Italy that receives drug- and alcohol addicts. They have already received two of our clients for a rehabilitation program, and this autumn a young mother of two will also go there with her two children.

***Again thank you for praying for us and together with us!***

***We wish you all a wonderful summer!***

*To protect the families we do not use their full names, and whenever we share someone's story or picture, they have always agreed to this beforehand. Information may also have been changed to protect those we work with. In the most cases we cannot share specific information because of confidentiality.*