

*“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)*

From the moment the Lord began speaking to me about this particular ATOR project until the morning we boarded our planes for Tel Aviv the planning and prayer that went into this took almost 2 years. It was the single most challenging project I have ever done. I am not an administrative-type person, but there was a ton of administration to attend to and persevere through. At one point the Lord spoke to my heart about the gift of tenacity. Not exactly listed among those mentioned in the book of Corinthians, but a serious necessity when God calls you to a mission somewhere no human has invited you to go (which was the case for Israel). I cannot tell you how many people, in subtle—and not so subtle ways—suggested that I might be mistaken about timing, location—about going at all. But at a certain point it became solely a matter of obedience. When I was convinced God was calling, I realized the issue was whether or not I was going to obey, despite what seemed pretty impossible at the time. The result was something only God could accomplish—in us and through us—for His glory!!!

It was really quite wonderful that the Northern and Southern CA teams could meet up in Toronto and travel from there to Tel Aviv together. That was a real blessing!! Karen made all her transfers on time, which was a miracle in itself. Mazzen and Magda also made it safely to Tel Aviv, although they held Magda’s radio/video equipment for almost a week at El Al in Tel Aviv. That was after they thoroughly interrogated Magda about why and where she was going. They even went through her emails, including how we planned to visit Bethlehem, etc. Thankfully, there were no problems beyond that.

The roses also arrived pretty much on time. This first delivery came from a retail florist, Dahlia’s Flowers. They are the oldest flower shop in all Israel—since 1936 (something like that). I couldn’t believe they were willing to compete with the grower’s price. Unlike previous trips we did not attend to the roses right away, beyond getting them cut and into water. Instead we enjoyed a nice dinner and then a special time of prayer. I believe it helped unify us as a team.

The next morning we began working on the roses in a small room the hotel was kind enough to let us use. And I realize that working on the roses

together and getting to know each other in the process is also an integral part of every ATOR. Since we had both Hebrew and Arabic rose cards, we had to determine which to give out whenever we decided to go out on the street. Here are some literary “snapshots” in roughly chronological order with comments in-between.

### **3/17/2016**

The first day we were out briefly (and I mean--VERY) on the streets of the Old City in Jerusalem giving out the roses with Arabic cards on them. It was maybe 200-300 roses and they were gone in about 20 minutes or 3 songs. Many smiles and questions. What I loved best was the moment when a young Jewish man brought over his friends to look at the back of David’s t-shirt and comment positively. I heard some people cried and were very touched. There was a very sweet spirit amongst all the team, lots of sharing stories and a tender fellowship. As always, I am amazed at how God makes the impossible possible.

**Mazzen:** I said to one of them (about) his flower, “what does it look like?” He said it looks beautiful. And I said, “this is how God sees you, as beautiful as this flower and he wants to fill you up with his love. We are all from America and we want to bring a message to the Palestinian people that we love you.”

**Jurgen:** I was asked, " Do you love Palestinians?" I said yes. And he was so happy and smiling. I told him that we were from America and Europe and that we love Palestinians. It was such a great experience to see the smile.

### **Khalida:**

Walid, the owner of our hotel had been so wonderful I asked if I could honour him and give him the first rose. Sally said yes, so I took a rose, and there were 2 men in the office with him. He asked if he could have roses for his friends. I got the 2 roses with Hebrew cards. They were so touched. It turned out they were his media guys, and they were going to put it online.

**Sheilah:** a Nordic couple came up to us for a rose, they were vacationing here, they were believers, and they were so touched by what we were doing, they began crying. They prayed over us and

blessed us. We were handing roses to a couple of men and they brought us to their restaurant and asked us to bring them to their customers, their Israeli customers! So they could share them together.

**Magda:**

I gave the roses to 2 Greek orthodox women all dressed in black robes, I tell them, this is for you because God loves you and she took the roses and gave me a very touching hug. For me it was amazing to see the reactions of people, the Jewish and Arabic was the same. For a few minutes they were not Jewish or Arab but just a person full of joy that someone wanted to give them something. It was like a child's reaction, uninhibited joy, over the top.

**Sam:**

I went and gave a rose to a shop owner who was watching me. He asked why I was giving the roses, I said we were here to say we love the people here, the Arabs and Jews, and we are a team of Jews, Arabs, Europeans, Americans. We are here to say we just love the people here. He said this was wonderful, if there were more people doing this then we would have peace.

**Karen:**

I was with Jurgen. We had a shopkeeper ask why we were doing this and Jurgen told him it was to show love to both Jews and Arabs. He gave Jurgen a big hug, and said thank you this war is so hard for all of us. No one wins at wartime.

**3/18/2016**

When the Lord impressed me to do this project during Purim I had no idea Purim 2016 was during Easter week, let alone there would be a marathon with 25,000 people running, 1800 security officers, and it would be themed, "Tikkun Olam" (Healing the World). On top of that it turned out that we would arrive in Bethlehem just in time to celebrate Arabic Mother's Day. God's timing is always amazing!!!

**Sam:**

We began handing out roses, and one of the police called us over.

He said, "Why are you here? What group are you with? Who told you to do this?"

"We are here to say God loves, and we are here to say we love the people of Israel." He said, "Let me see the card." So he read the card, and got a big smile on his face and he said, "Thank you very much sir." He shook my hand, then radioed the rest of the police that our group was ok. So we were granted favor!

**Mallory:**

We came back for the last of the roses and there were some of us at the railing, and this flood of runners started coming by and began taking roses from us, one right after another. So we watched the roses go out across Jerusalem with the runners.

**Gayle:**

A woman came and Jurgen gave her a rose. When I got to her, I was explaining to her about the rose and why we were here. And she gave me a great big hug. And as we were speaking back and forth to each other, she was so impressed and overwhelmed about what we were doing she gave me another hug. She encouraged us to continue doing what we were doing.

Later, towards the Mamillia mall, a young woman was standing in the doorway of her shop, and I only had one rose left. She said, "I do not really believe in Jesus, but can I receive the rose?" And I explained to her that that was who we were giving the roses to. So it opened the door for me to minister to her. She was very open to receive.

I saw one of the runners cut clear over to the gated fence, and he was standing there...waiting for a rose. Finally someone gave him a rose, and he took off and continued running. The Lord spoke to me, "See there, the runners want the roses too." So I went and stood at the fence, and stretched my arm out with a rose, and the runners started taking roses from me. It wasn't long till I was out of roses. There were 2 or 3 other team members with armloads of roses, watching the runners go by. I told them to hold out a rose. They began doing that, and were out of roses in no time.

**Elaine:**

A woman took a rose and smiled at her companion and said look at this and they said what is this for. I said this is an expression of the love of G-d to you today. She said thank you. I went to offer it to her companion, but he said they would share the rose. She then said, "You do not know what this means to us," so I told her to please tell me. She said, "We just lost someone very dear to us." So I stopped and gave my full attention, I asked who they had lost. And she told me about the family member. I asked if I could pray for them, which surprised them, but they said ok. So I prayed for God's comfort, for Him to come down and surround them. When I went to leave, the man, who had been mostly quiet, got up, opened his arms to me and hugged me. The woman said, "You just don't know how much this means to us, you will never know." I don't think they had experienced this (before), but were very aware that this was a God moment.

**Dave:**

Last night at the concert (Succat Hallel a place of 24/7 prayer and worship), when we arrived the Korean church was already there and in worship. One of the members came out for water and invited us to worship with them. As we sat and listened to the worship in Korean, it was profound to know they were worshipping and we could worship with them. When their service ended, we expressed our appreciation to the piano player. And she received it and told us that she loved us from her heart. We reciprocated the love.

When Sally began the concert, the first song she did was in Hebrew , Kaddish. The sanctuary is set up with the stage to the right and the seats facing Jerusalem, and you pray and worship towards Jerusalem. I got it! I understood that He loves His people, that He loves all of them, Jew and Arab. And the word, brothers, was impressed on me and I felt I could truly pray for the peace of Jerusalem. And my heart broke like it never has for a people group, and it was something special.

**3/19/2016**

**Heather:**

We took the last of our roses out tonight, at the end of Shabbat. It was good. It was hard. On one hand we had Orthodox Jews approach us for roses, seek us out and ask questions. We also had an ending to the night with anti-missionary combatives. They argued, videotaped us, his friend on a bike purposefully ran into members of the team, jabbing with his elbows. While the majority of tonight was very good, it was a downer ending, and Daniel and Sally gathered us to pray and rally our spirits.

**Mazzen:**

As soon as I went out the door of the hotel, I gave a rose to a Spanish woman from Mexico and her Israeli boyfriend. The girl asked me, "Do you speak Spanish?" She asked in Spanish, "Why are you doing this?"

"It is because we want to express the love of God to the people." She was from Mexico and is Catholic. I began to share with her about how Jesus died on the cross and shed his blood for her so that she would not perish. She gave me a big hug. I talked to her boyfriend. He was from Israel. I said, "I am a Palestinian from Ramallah and I just want to say that I love you." He gave me a hug and shook my hand. It was apparent on his face how moved he was.

Magda and I saw 2 women sitting down, I said to her, let's go check them out." I was talking with them. They had already received flowers from someone else. They were Arab Muslim Palestinians. She asked me a question, "What does 'the blood' mean?" I said, "The blood means that when Jesus died on the cross for all Mankind the blood he shed washes away all sin." I told her Jesus came in the form of a man. Right in front of me was Khalida, so I said to her that I wanted her to meet these Palestinian people. The woman wanted to know if we were Jehovah Witnesses or Mormons. We said no. Then she asked, "What are you guys?" I said evangelical believers. She asked what the difference was between Catholic and Evangelical. Khalida began to explain the difference and tell them how she was a former Muslim and now is a Christian, how Jesus encountered her in a dream and told her to follow Him. Her life was

broken and she would go to the mosque but once she received Jesus, He changed her life, gave her hope, joy. After Khalida, finished talking the women hugged her and even the little girls.

**Nic:**

Safta Ludmila

We were handing out roses near Jaffa Gate. We were on the opposite side of the street because the Orthodox Jews were walking on that side while the tourists were on the other side. We had cards in Hebrew so we were purposefully reaching out to them. At some point I turned and became aware of a figure behind me, somewhat obscured. I felt drawn to this person. All I could really see was an end of a bouquet of flowers was sticking out from her lap. I approached her and gave her a rose to complete her bouquet. As it turned out she was a believer from Prague named Ludmilla. She was just sitting there, out of the way, unnoticed, blessing everyone who passed by praying for them. She was the sweetest old woman. Her face shone with God's kindness and warmth. She shared some of her story. She has lead over 50 groups to Israel.

**Magda:**

Tonight I am very touched by Khalida and it is amazing that she is with us. When I came for this ATOR I didn't know it would be for both the Arabic people with roses like for the Jews. And when we start to give roses to the Arabic people, I was scared. "We must do it, ok," I thought. But it wasn't from my heart. Even if today had been all nice and we gave the roses to the Arabic people, I was still not trusting, keeping myself guarded. But it is important that Khalida and Mazzen are with us, it is a new experience to be with people who were Muslim. And I can now see the people. Khalida is a very special person for me. I can see her heart and how much love she has for people. When we prayed at Sukkot Hallel and looked at Jerusalem, Khalida prayed for the salvation of the Palestinian people and it very much touched me, because the salvation of my people is important to me, and I saw she has the same desire for her people. I saw how people need Jesus and need the True God. And now I try not to see Muslim or Arabic. I try to see just the people. Although when I came here, I was open--I was also scared. And through this time God has shown me new things.

**Bibi:**

I gave the roses to young Jewish girls around 18 years old. They were very glad to receive it and they asked where I was from. I said from Poland and they asked me why I gave the roses. So I said, to remind you that God loves you. And they said that you are telling us that you came from Poland to tell us God loves us? I said yes. I love Israel and I pray for you guys and I pray for IDF. They said this is amazing. They were so touched and shocked in a positive way and they said thank you so much. I also offered roses to other Jewish people, even Orthodox men. They receive it, some with smiles.

**3/20/2016**

Palm Sunday morning we hung out with the Palestinian church in Jerusalem, pastored by Steven Khoury of Holy Land Missions. Khalida was kind enough to translate for me between songs and I was able to share with the people some of my testimony. From there we returned to the hotel and gathered up our luggage to cross over into Bethlehem to stay at the lovely Holy Land Hotel. They were extremely generous with us, giving us a wonderful room for the roses where we could work on them at no extra charge. Early in the planning I thought we should stay on the Jerusalem side because I thought it would be safer. But my friend, Mary, really got to me--and I know now it was God--that it was not enough to go and minister in Bethlehem, but stay in Jerusalem. I knew it was the smallness of my heart and fear that kept me from seeing how big our God is and how much He wanted to pour out in and through us.

**Heather:**

We went to church in the morning. A beautiful concert by Sally with delightful, animated translation by Khalida. The people wanted more and more of Sally's story. But we had a time crunch with the roses being delivered at 1pm--which in reality became 2:15pm.

Rather than getting a fleet of taxis for roses, baggage and the team, Pastor Mazen (not to be confused with ATOR Team Member Mazzen) and Daniel shlepped us over the border crossing with NO incident as we went the back way. Apparently, no one really cares about who is going into the West Bank as much as who is coming out. We arrived safely at the hotel and were all sent to various floors



to find our rooms. We have amazing views of the Judean Hills. Also, we are grateful for HOT water and showers that do not leak!

We were blessed to attend the evening service here in Bethlehem where Khalida shared her story and Sally shared a song. About half the team slept soundly during the service out of sheer exhaustion.

### **3/21/2016**

Last night was a bit difficult on a personal level because I expected to share my testimony with the church but that clearly wasn't happening. Khalida shared her testimony and the women were blessed and it was very powerful. But as a Jew I felt at a distance from the people of the congregation and it was hard to connect. I thought Lord, why did you put it on my heart that it is important to sing and share here? In processing it with Khalida and others on the team, it helped me get a more whole perspective of what I felt was going on, and realize again their rejection issues trigger my rejection issues.

This morning was very different. There were many women at the Mother's Day brunch. At first I felt rather unsure about what I was supposed to do and who was supposed to speak--me or Khalida. It seemed they wanted only the songs. But as the main message was given, the Lord began to speak to my heart and I realized I needed to step forward. They were not asking me, but I needed to step forward anyway. This was the moment, especially since there was no other concert scheduled. The main speaker, Elvira, Pastor Nain's wife, was speaking of family and the mother's place, and I realized that I had a place to stand as a mom, one who has dealt with conflict, misunderstanding, because of the issues of autism with our kids. The Lord also put on my heart to go up with Khalida as a sister, holding her hand, as a symbol and picture of what I wanted to say. So I took her hand in mine, and we shared the microphone as she translated for me.

There were Palestinian Christians as well as some Muslim women who had come to the meeting. Khalida said good morning in Arabic and I said good morning in Hebrew. I identified us as Jew and Palestinian, this being Khalida's place of birth. I said, some of you may have reacted when I said that I was Jewish, but God has made us one. I also identified myself as a mom with 3 children who all struggle with some form of autism. One woman immediately identified with that, stood up and started speaking. She had a child that, she confessed sometimes, she wished was dead,

which lead to me sharing some of my struggle with Bonnie and Shannon. One woman asked how do you handle that. I said I can only handle it by abiding in the love of God. My children changed me, softened my heart, brought me compassion that I didn't have and didn't even want. They taught me to see differently. I spoke about how the girls had similar problems but also were very different. And I said that this was true of us as Jews and Arabs. I then talked about when we become believers God wants us to see differently, but with his heart.

There were many other things I said before singing and inviting them to take roses, but for myself, something broke in me being able to talk to them so directly. Some women received it, some were very moved, but others were agitated. But the Lord gave me the strength, courage, and conviction for why we were here.

### **Heather:**

After a quick lunch, we divided into 2 groups. 1 group hit the streets of Bethlehem. The other went with the scouts group from the Bethlehem church (like boy and girl scouts combined) to the hospitals in Beit Jala. (Neighboring town). This meant we had to travel through some of the more volatile areas to get there. There had been demonstrations earlier. Tear gas kinda hung in the air. The hospitals were soooooo open. Free range through the wards. It was mostly Muslim. There was one man sitting on a bench in the hallway. He was dressed in traditional Palestinian clothing and headscarf. Daniel was unsure if he would receive a rose from a woman, or of his response, so he handed the rose and they walked down the hall to other rooms. I sat with the bucket of roses, and replenished the team as needed. This meant I was 10 ft from the man as he read and reread his card. He stood up and approached me. Motioned for a 2nd rose, so I gave it to him. He then took the 2 roses into the room and gave them to his family. He returned for 1 more rose for himself and returned to his bench. He sat there staring at the card for a long time. This is how things have been going. What we perceive as a hard or closed door, every one has been open! It is really amazing.

The 2nd hospital was for those who lost limbs or had some form of

paralysis. At this hospital we were even able to give roses to the Palestinian police, security forces, along with CDs.

The group from the streets also encountered such openness and favor. So far have heard of only 1 sort of harsh response, which we have seen before in other countries, of ripping the card off. Also the man who received the lord this morning, went out with the group to spread his newly found joy. He was a Muslim and openly came out, no fear, to give hope to his people!!!!!!!

A Croatian priest invited our group to join them for worship tonight. Which lead to them asking how ATOR started and specifics of Sally's testimony AND how could they also be healed from their wounds. The whole thing was crazy. Croatian translated to German, translated to English. And the answers translated in reverse order.

### **Jurgen**

We walked in teams, it was our first street outreach. We were really surprised and blessed going with the team for our first distribution of roses along the street. I was very surprised at the openness of men and women. The cars stopped on roads to receive roses. We walked into stores, and we receive smiles from the people in the stores and their kind gestures.

With the Catholic group from Croatia, we connected with their priest who was in love with Jesus. He was leading a Croatian-speaking group on a tour. He asked to meet with Sally and the team and if we could give the group roses. We all met in the chapel/rose room. The priest asked Sally to sing a song and share her testimony. We were sharing in 3 languages. We were all touched. And Jesus united us in love. After Sally's testimony, there was a time of questions. One was "how can OUR wounds get healed?" Sally and several others from the team shared their experiences with healing. Once again for me it was so beautiful to see how God united, in this case, Catholic believers with us and made us one in his spirit.

They (the Croatian group) continued through our remaining time to greet us at breakfast and dinner with a lot of genuine warmth and hugs.

## **Yara**

The biggest thing that has impacted me so far is the way you hand someone a rose and their whole face changes, especially when we were in the shuk (marketplace) in Jerusalem. Being able to hand them a rose and when they ask why, being able to tell them God loves them, is so beautiful. They change and say thank you. They go from suspicious to quizzical to joy. This is my favourite part of handing roses, how one simple gift has an impact.

## **Sheilah:**

Today was amazing. There is such a hunger for the gift of love here. We barely made it out of the front doors of the hotel and all of our roses were handed out. We literally stopped traffic on both sides of the road. Cars were lined up in both directions as we ran to hand each person a rose. Many smiles and thanks were a blessing to our hearts. Just prior to handing out roses a Muslim man prayed to receive Yeshua and he joined us in handing out roses. I have to say the biggest smile I saw today was on his face!

## **3/22/2016**

At the refugee camp, the first responders were children. The roses were kind of amazing to them at first. But then a certain level of greediness and desperation took over, and there was no sharing among them. At the same time there seemed to be a genuine curiosity about the singing and they seemed somewhat drawn. Pastor Steve kept shooing them away after they got roses, but they kept coming back. So we eventually moved to the main street. He had me set up my keyboard and stand in a memorial spot where several Palestinians were shot and killed. I was singing and about 25-30 kids and some young adults gathered. And I remembered a word given to me before we left, that what we were doing was not about this generation so much but about the children. As I sang I looked into their faces and they were like little flowers, soaking up sun, soaking up love, in a very dry and thirsty place. And I realized I had an opportunity to say something to them especially since Pastor Khoury was not afraid to translate for me that I am Jewish. So I told them I am Jewish, that my heart had once been very hard but then God touched my heart and changed it, and filled me with his love. We came there to share that love with them through the roses and the songs, because God loves them and He loves us too. And although it is very hard

between us Jews and Palestinians God wants us to love each other. One young woman in the back, in the head covering (hijab) shouted back "I love you, too!" And then the kids clapped.

**Jurgen:**

Today I expected a lot worse, but it wasn't that way. We were at the refugee camp (Dheisheh). We walked into the camp and Sally began to worship with her keyboard. The team openly supported her with groups of roses. The children were all over us. Soon they had handfuls of roses they hid and wanted more. One youth kicked me twice from behind, who had wanted a rose, I wanted to turn and look him in the eye and deliberately hand him the rose, but could not identify him.

**Randy:**

Today, we went up into Dheisheh walking up the street there was a carpenter, working on his building, doing form work. And I handed him a rose. Walking up into the streets I found it mostly frustrating with the little kids just being greedy and collecting the roses. But on the way back when I walked by the same building, I waved to the carpenter, he looked at me, and threw me a kiss and said "habibi," which is the only Arabic word I know, which means love.

**Mazzen:**

In the refugee camp, as we gave out flowers, I saw smiles, and joy and hope in the people. I felt no fear. I felt joy at the Palestinian people welcoming us in with being fearful, without being attacked, and I was blessed.

During our first moments at Manger Square in Bethlehem, while worshiping and praying through the area 3 young women were drawn to our team. Elaine sat down with them, and later Khalida, and hearts were softened and changed by the Lord's kindness and love.

**Heather:**

6 Muslims in 3 days have joined the family. Can you believe this?!

We did not take roses out tonight, instead we decided to prayer walk Manger Square. This turned out to be exactly what was needed. As Sally sang in an archway, the team walked the square and prayed. Teams also engaged with those in the square. 3 women heard a voice singing and it called to them. They were compelled to come closer. Brenda, Elaine, and Khalida were able to speak with them and as the Muslim call to prayer sounded overhead, they prayed to the living God for salvation.

The next mind-boggling moment was Sam and I stood with Khalida as she spoke with about 5 men. They were accusing Christians of idolatry. She proceeded to explain the trinity. A Palestinian daughter of the Most High living God quoted the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4) in Hebrew to Muslim men while standing in front of the Church of the Nativity. Only God can orchestrate this.

On the ride back, Jurgen, Khalida, Sam and I hopped in a taxi. The man had a similar orphan story to Khalida and the doors were open and the spirit was sweet and gentle. Jurgen went to get the driver a rose. Khalida was privileged to pray with him. Sam and I just sat there and cried. Grateful for being witness to what God was doing.

**3/23/2016**

**Khalida:**

By the time I came the team had already given out 3 buckets of roses, so I was talking to people. I started talking with 2 guys, it grew to 4, 6, then 10. As I spoke with them a few left, I wound up talking with the main group about hatred, wanting peace. One man was engaged, i told him congratulations, and as we talked I asked if he wanted this kind of life for his future children. He said he did not want his children to be full of hatred and mad at the Jewish people. So I shared with them about the Lord and Jesus removing hatred. They said, oh we get it, we know what you are saying and want God to remove our hatred. I prayed with all 6 to receive the Lord. Halleljuah!

Near the end of the day, I was talking with these 2 boys, one was an orphan and told me his story. I shared my story about being an

orphan and that I was from Bethlehem. I was able to pray with them both to receive the Lord. There was an old man, who wandered around listening to me. He finally talked with me and said he was a Christian and was so proud of what God was doing, that he was praying for me while I was talking to them. He didn't have that boldness, but he was so blessed. He had such a wonderful prayer life and the Lord had removed his hatred for the Jews. He asked us to come back.

**Randy:**

One bus full of girls coming g from school, just handing them roses was delightful. There had to be about 8 or 10 of them. I will always remember their smiles. It was so delightful.

**Sheilah:**

When we were walking in Manger Square we spoke with a Greek Orthodox man. He was upset we do not honor Mary. We said we did not want to argue but focus on having belief in Jesus in common. He said his house was sold to Muslims. They were resisting leaving and both he and another family member had spent 8 days in jail. They asked for prayers they would have a home and God would intervene. It was their grandmother's home. They had lived there over 30 years, and she sold it. Now they have no place to go. We promised to pray for them. There were children who we saw last night and throughout the morning. When our lunch was delivered, several of us shared our lunch with them. And they were so blown away that we would give it to them.

**Heather:**

So today in Manger Square i gave a rose to a small 6-year-old girl. She got halfway round the block and came back. She first said in Arabic "two?" I held up 1 finger, only 1 rose. So she tried in English a tiny "two sound. Again I said 1. She gave me big eyes and a pouty lip, "two?" I caved, but only so far... I took all the half-sized broken stemmed roses off the top of Sally's keyboard--about 4-5 pretty roses, but not ones we could pass out--and gave her all of those. Her response was so unexpected, these big huge eyes and a look of surprise. All she wanted was two and now she had so many. Her

sweet spirit and gratitude melted my heart. I wanted to give her EVERYTHING.

**Sally:**

When I started playing this morning, as the team was handing out roses, this one woman from one of the shops was listening to every song. When I took a break, she came out and gave Sam her rose and said, "Here, for peace."

I felt like I should follow up with her. So when the roses were all gone. I went into her shop and I said, "So I guess you figured out what we are doing."

And she said, "I knew what you were doing from the beginning." Her face seemed rather hard.

I said, "Well, I am Jewish and I believe in Jesus and I came here to share that love with you."

She said, "You want to share that love with me? Why don't you take down the walls and stop killing my family,"

I said, "I have no power to do that but we do the things we can do which is to come here and share His love."

I talked about visiting men in prison who had life sentences, and some of them were bound by the physical cage and some of them were free even though they were bound by that physical cage. And she said, "Why not take the roses to them (Israelis), they need it."

I said, "We did, but now we are bringing them to you, you can have all these external events going on and have peace. He can take the hurt from you heart, that is what the wounds are for, for Jesus to heal you."

And her face during the conversation became much softer and different.

And then Sam who was with me, said to her, "I want to say something, too, please forgive us for the hurt that we caused your people," and he was crying.

And she said, "You don't have to."

He said, "No, I am really sorry." And you could see it surprised and touched her, and her face softened even more.

**Mallory:**

We were passing roses out on the far part of the square and Brenda



offered a rose to a man named Mohammed. He refused. Later he came back and said, "Ma'am, please forgive me. I was wrong to reject the rose."

We were then able to share about the rose and how it represented God's love. He said he was a Muslim and shared about his wife being a Christian. He was there visiting his family.

We said, "Well one of your wife's prayers must be being answered today, because this is a divine appointment and it isn't a mistake that we are both here in the square today."

So we shared that we had more roses on the other side and would he like to come with us and get one. We gave him a rose and CD and introduced him to Sally. He listened to her. We also introduced him to Jurgen, and he had a good interaction with him. He would not leave. He engaged with several team members and watched the demonstration of God's love.

Khalida asked, "So, are you ready to accept Christ?"

He said he would think about it.

Brenda said, "Don't think too long about it, Yeshua is coming back."

There were many roses passed out to the kids and girls in hajibs, and I purposefully sought to make eye contact because Khalida said people come here and do not look in their eyes, or even talk to them. So I purposed to look in their eyes. By doing that I saw a softening.

### **Mazzen:**

Today as I entered Manger Square, someone told me to come talk to an older woman. As I approached the old woman I said, "God loves you and wants to fill you with His love." She grabbed me and hugged me and started kissing me. And the old lady began to weep. She began to bless me in her language, Arabic. She told me she lost all her family. And the Holy Spirit placed on my heart to do something for her, like she was in urgent need. And then she took off. As I got finished I looked the other way, and saw a young man...He said, "Do you know me? Don't you remember me? We met at Calvary Church with Eagles Wings ministry in New Jersey about 4-5 years ago."

I looked at him and said, “Yes, I remember you.” And we hugged and exchanged contact information.

Today at Holy Land Hotel I went out on the balcony, and a Palestinian man from America came out with his mother. We greeted each other and began to talk. I explained why we were here, and about the countries our group was from. We weren't here to convert anyone, but to bring hope. He opened up and said he was here in this land because there was some land the family sold. He was there to take them to court and had issues in the family. He was questioning Islam because he sees no love in Islam, and he had questions about the Bible. He asked why are there so many books in the Old and New Testaments in the Bible. So I explained the Bible and the Word of God, and how Jeremiah was a book, and each book has a name. How Paul used to persecute Christians and God encountered Paul on the way to Damascus. At the end I asked him "What do you think about this?" He said it was very beautiful. We parted.

### **3/24/2016**

Daniel was kind enough to “ferry” us through the checkpoint in 3 trips. Outside the checkpoint, on the Israeli side, we called one of our Palestinian cabbie friends to come and get us all. Once back in the Old City, we stashed our luggage at Christ Church Guesthouse and immediately set out for the Garden Tomb. There we had a time of reflection, worship and communion.

From the Garden Tomb we walked through a little bit of East Jerusalem across the street to Damascus Gate. This has been a location where several people have been attacked, and they have stopped all vendors from selling outside the gate (where we were). In fact, it looked pretty barren in some ways, all the color was gone with the vendors and their wares. But I felt the Lord laying on my heart a time of worship and prayer for us as a team there. I was amazed no one stopped me as I took out my keyboard on the steps, turned it on and began to worship with Nic on mandolin. It was, for me, an incredibly meaningful moment because we were sitting in a place of violence and loss, yet as we worshiped we could all feel His presence and peace in this place.

My friend, Robin, wasn't kidding when she said Purim night was more like Halloween. It was indeed. But God had already prepared us for "Halloween." We had a great time, some powerful conversations. As several of the team were feeling pretty sick only 12 of us went out Purim night to give out roses. A young woman at the desk where we were staying, Christ Church Guesthouse, also joined us. Her name was Irina. I gave her a t-shirt and we were off. She led us out to Ben Yehuda Street (about a 20 minute walk).

The thirteen of us gave out roses along both sides of the street up Ben Yehuda. A lot of people were open, even those Jewish people who seemed more religious and less celebratory. But on the way back we picked up a lot of cards broken off the roses and saw stems and heads of roses on the street. Maybe 30-40 cards and 20 roses, but we probably gave away 500 roses that night. For all the cards we picked up that were rejected I prayed for the people who read them and tore them off. One person read the card and threw it in Khalida's face. It was not easy to love some of the people tonight.

One man I gave a rose to asked why we were giving them out. I said, "Because God loves you.

And he said, "What God?"

I said, "The Maker of the Heavens and the Earth."

And he said he didn't believe in God. He believed in humanity and the ability of people to heal themselves. I said it was a limited ability. He said it was religion that causes all the trouble. I said it is not God who is causing the problem but how people interpret Him. I said I know Him to be Love. He said, "I am Jewish."

I said, "Me too. But I believe that Jesus, Yeshua, is the Messiah—the Promised One." And he said, so only people who believe in Him are going to be OK. And I said you can choose. He had been very hurt by religious people who condescended to him, but he was quick to say he didn't feel that from me. But he didn't believe in God either.

We talked awhile and the team was praying for us as we talked but his heart was very wounded. He had been in Hebron when two more people were stabbed and he said this is a crazy country—because of religion. And I said, "But that's not the same as God. And maybe one day you can ask God to show Himself to you. I did and He changed my heart. Not church—but God."

He offered me the rose back and I looked at him and say you can keep it.

And he held onto it His name is Frank. Please pray for him.

As we all walked back we ran into a group of young women who stopped us. The leader, Sarah, was asking what we were all about and I explained that we were giving out roses as a way of sharing God's love. She was good with what I was saying until I told her we had also given roses to the Palestinians in the West Bank. Then she was angry. She shared how she wanted the terrorists to all die. And I told her about the children that gathered around me as I stand on the corner to them and we gave out roses—and then I told them I was Jewish and how God wants us to love one another. She really listened and we really listened to her. In the end, Sarah and I hugged each other. Mazzen and Khalida each identified themselves as Palestinians who love her and her people. She seemed a little surprised by that. Khalida went so far as to apologize for the hurt she had suffered at the hands of her people. Again, I think Sarah was surprised. She and Khalida also hugged each other. Please pray for Sarah.

**Heather:**

Yara and I began walking last night with roses straight from our hotel. We handed out a few roses. We gave one to a man who stopped us, asking what organization we were with. We explained we were an international group sharing the love of God through roses. He said, "What God?"

We said, "The God of Israel and Yeshua the Messiah." He would not make eye contact throughout. Then he began shouting at the top of his lungs while pointing at us: "These people are missionaries. They are going against Israeli law. These people are missionaries, etc.." We blessed him and kept walking. Then one of the vendors who knew us from our previous stay walked up to his face (literally) and said, "Why are you shouting? These people are giving us beautiful roses and spreading peace. We need this in Israel. Stop shouting like that "

While handing out roses a team member and I approached A Palestinian man sitting at an outdoor cafe in Jerusalem. He refused the rose but said, "I have a question for you." He asked, "How many roses are you distributing?" He said it costs a lot of money. "My question is why do you not bring bread and food to help the

people? Why not bring something they really need?"

We said, "Yes, we understand, but you see the faces of the people? They also need hope and joy, and we are trying to bring some of that."

He was still very contemplative but he took a rose.

Last night we went out to do roses near Ben Yehuda street.

We were met with immediate negative reactions, one from an Orthodox Jew screaming we were missionaries and one from a Palestinian shop owner who wanted to know why we were only going to the Jewish. We explained that we started with the Arabs.

At the gate Yara was also yelled at and called missionary.

Remember, this is a country where proselytizing is illegal. We were not there to proselytize. We just were there to give roses.

We were asked why a number of times about the roses. "We love Israel and want to show our love and support. We pray for Israel and for peace. God loves you." was about the gist of the response or a greeting of Chag Sameach (happy holiday, joyous holiday)

We had great responses and we had antagonistic responses.

One man took his rose apart petal by petal to get a response. I told him, "You act as if you are tearing apart MY rose. But that rose is yours. It was given to you. You are only tearing apart your own gift."

We had some lovely tearful responses. My conversational Hebrew is so limited. I told one girl "ani ohevet yisrael" (I love israel) and that I didn't speak much more Hebrew than that. She responded, "I think that is the most beautiful thing you can learn to say in Hebrew."

On the way to our hotel, feeling very weary, Rami who defended Sam from the Orthodox, gave me a present--a real one--not one that I had to pay for. We returned to speak with him today. We thanked him for showing us love on such a hard day. He is truly a man of peace. He protects the priests as they walk the street. He stands up for those attacked. We had tea with him. He showed us his family photos and prayed with us.

We did go deep into the Shuk before closing. I said something to one of our shopkeeper friends, about those crazy Americans and their roses. He said, "No, it is not crazy! It is a blessing, a blessing!"

He shared how the atmosphere in the Shuk changed with them. It has been 5 days? And they are still displaying the roses, even though they are a bit tired and wilting now.

**Sheilah:**

The people here are so broken and hungry for love and acceptance. They are not finding what they are looking for in Islam and they are ready for the Lord. The Lord knew that though and that is why the Lord has sent us. I want to say also that these people are so touched in their hearts that we have come from America to love them. They are touched that we see their trouble and that we come to love them.

**3/25/2016**

**Sam:**

We went to a park area on the other side of Jerusalem. While we were there we saw a guy and went to give him a rose. He was pulling rosehips off a rose bush in the park, and eating them as we offered him a rose. He seemed disheveled and barefoot, we thought maybe he was homeless. We began having a great conversation. He was from NY. At one point Paul said "you must be believers." We said yes, and then he said, "I also am a Jewish believer in Jesus." We gave him one of Sally's CDs and his face lit up, "Sally Klein O'Connor!!! I have been to one of her concerts before in NY!" Well she is here leading a team "she is HERE?!" He was so excited.

**Heather:**

We divided up into groups of 4-5 and went to several points around Jerusalem. My squad went to Jaffa gate. We had a really sweet time. A lot of Israeli teens gathered for the Purim concert, Ethiopian Jews, Haredi (a stream of Orthodox Judaism characterized by rejection of modern secular culture. Its members are often referred to as strictly Orthodox or ultra-Orthodox in English.) and many Muslims as well. We were asked why the roses, and we told them we support Israel and love her people and wanted to say we stand with them because God loves them. It was such a sweet time, unlike last night. They were touched that we would show love to Israel. Randy was asked about the rose by an Orthodox man. He shared about the love of God. He was able to share his story and the Gospel, the word of his

testimony. While there were no prayers, there was a deep time of listening and hearing each other.

Brenda from Holy Land Missions was so sweet and gently poured love into each rose she gave.

**Sally:**

It was hard today. I knew it might be because we decided to split the outreach into three different groups in 3 different areas. We chose to go to the Jewish Quarter, knowing we might have a harder time than the rest, yet still wishing to reach out to them. Daniel encouraged us to walk into the gate and the official area of the Jewish Quarter. I found a cool archway for me, the keyboard, and roses. Dave, Yara, Khalida and Sheilah all ventured further in as I stayed back with Bibi and Daniel flanking me on either side of the keyboard. It was a perfect spot to sing. As people walked by Jews and tourists, Bibi and Daniel offered roses and most people were receptive. A few would read the card and give back the rose, but they were gentle about it. Dave and the rest of the team returned for more roses in about a half hour or so. We only had a bucket left. Daniel suggested we move the keyboard again--deeper into the Jewish quarter. Just as I pulled up my keyboard and got ready to go an older Jewish man, clearly Orthodox, started talking at us, saying we should leave and go to the Christian Quarter and stay away from the Jewish people. He was angry and said he would call the police if we didn't leave, then walked away. I checked in with Daniel who felt he was bluffing and suggested we stay where we were. So I sat down again and began singing as the whole team spread out around me giving out roses. People were still celebrating Purim so there were many costumes, most of them lighthearted or beautiful. We gave out many roses. But within 15 to 20 minutes, with half a bucket to go, the old man returned and began screaming that we were missionaries and he took roses out of the hands of Jewish people who had received them. Snapped them in two and yelled at us to get out. Every Jewish person within earshot or eyesight of the old man was told we were missionaries and they shouldn't receive the rose, or he physically took the rose away from some people, not allowing them to make their own choices. Daniel said we needed to go because he was creating a scene. The old man disappeared after we cleared out of the Jewish Quarter, but our old "friend" with the video camera and

his buddy showed up suddenly and completely followed us quite a ways, laughing and saying all kinds of things in English and Hebrew to incite us. Our team remained fairly calm as we walked. Bibi tried to engage a couple of times but he didn't want a real conversation. As we got near where the van was parked, Daniel told us to wait for them to leave. Daniel finally walked over to the van while they were distracted by Khalida and Sheilah. They hung around and we realized we needed to get a taxi. So Daniel drove by without stopping. I tried to flag some cabbies down, but we were already part way down Mt. Zion and all the cabs were full. So Yara, Khalida, and Sheilah went back up the hill to get a cab. They eventually found a van-cab driven by an Arab who picked us up and took us back to the hotel. The driver knew the guy who was filming us and said he had watched many of his films. Said he did it to everyone who wasn't Jewish and the police were pretty sick of him already. Everyone else had a pretty successful time on the street near Jaffa Gate and out in the park. They prayed over our team and then we had a wonderful lunch together.

**3/26/2016**

**Heather:**

This morning Sam went to go speak with the messianic pastor of the congregation who meets here at Christ Church. Even though it was last minute, they let us give roses to the congregation while Sally sang the new song she wrote. Afterwards, one of their leadership said how much they appreciated the humble approach we had. No one had ever come and done something just to bless them. The whole congregation was very touched. We were blessed to be able to worship with them.

In the afternoon we returned in our t-shirts with roses to Damascus Gate, but this time the IDF immediately stopped us and directed us to take everything in through the gate. We weren't allowed to linger, as we did the time before for almost an hour. We found a spot in the marketplace and the roses were gone in 10 minutes.

**Mallory:**

I have all these bands on my arm I was wearing. A man saw them and showed me his. He pointed to the white one I was wearing, I



said it says "love wins". I explained it to him about how love wins and about loving your enemies. He then asked about the black one. It had John 14:12 on it. I talked to him about Yeshua loving his enemies and how we are to do the same. He never took his eyes off me. So intently listening. Obviously I gave him both the bands.

**Khalida:**

We wound up talking to this Muslim shopkeeper. He asked us what it means to be a Christian. He was confused by all the denominations. But he has been reading about Christianity and has been seeing us, and he has been really touched by the Jewish and Arab being here living, eating, working together. He asked how God can have a son. His friend came in and started saying we worshipped many gods. He kicked his friend out of his store. "I don't want to hear you, I want to hear them!" He asked us to pray for him to have understanding.

**Sheilah:**

We just left another new Muslim believer. We were shopping in the shuk and the Lord told us to go into a particular store. Khalida spoke with the Muslim shopkeeper and after about 20 minutes she was praying with him. He said our group is very well-known in the shuk. He told us the shopkeepers see our love and joy and are very interested in what we have. This is an answer to prayer. We prayed the love of God would be a tangible presence and by their words it is. Thank you Yeshua!

**3/27/2016**

(Facebook post)

Today we worshiped at the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem as the day slowly broke over the city. There were 1500 people singing praises to God in the yawning hours of the morning. We gave out the last of our roses as people exited down the lane after the service at the Garden Tomb. Later, at the Jerusalem Alliance Church with Pastor Mazen. It was an amazing time of worship in this little Arabic church tucked away in one of the many little side-streets of the Old City. After lunch Randy, Mazzen, Dave & Yara Panther walked the many steps over to the Western Wall (or as I remember it, the Wailing Wall). It is the last standing wall of the Jewish Temple that was destroyed in 70 AD, as Jesus said it would be. For me, it has also been a

place of God's visitation in my life--the five times I have been in Jerusalem. It happened that our arrival at the Wall coincided with a beautiful bride preparing for her wedding, all in white, davening and praying there. It struck me as very symbolic of Messiah's bride, who, even through all her trials and tribulations worldwide, He is making ready for that special day when She will present herself spotless, without blemish before the Holy One. Touching the cold ancient stone and letting my heart call out to God--and listening... It was good. He is risen. He is risen indeed!!!

### **3/28 – 3/30/2016**

The next morning we all set out for Tel Aviv and landed at the Messianic hostel, Beit Emmanuel. After we got settled we found a wonderful falafel/shawarma stand and had a late lunch. Some of our crew went off to explore randomly, others to the beach, and others on a more “official” walking tour.

Our last day in Israel we rented a bus and visited the Sea of Galilee, taking a boat tour, Jordan river (Jardenit), and we finished up on what is a traditional site for the Mt. of Beatitudes. In each place we took time to worship, pray and reflect on our time together. It was good.

It is interesting to not that the Jerusalem Post 4/4 had this headline: *“IDF records drastic drop in Palestinian terrorism in March. March saw an overall number of 6 terrorism incidents (including shootings, stabbings, and vehicle rammings), compared to 56 in February, 45 in January, and 40 in December...”*

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What follows are some excerpts from a few of the team members’ personal reflections about the trip:

*The prayers of the saints did this:  
glide through customs, checkpoints, safety, favor with hotel staff & owners, everywhere we went it felt like we were given favor. The group testimony that was evident throughout - our unity and community brought many open ears to then hear what we had to say. (Elaine Stover)*

*Praise be to our God who has allowed us to be a sweet aroma for most of the people we met.*

*I am thanking my personal intercessors and the several hundreds of the team intercessors for walking with us to Israel in the Spirit of the most high as you daily lift us up. Our team community was very close and we loved each other, forgave each other and opened up to each other and confessed sins to each other.*

*Here are some of my short highlights of this trip.*

*The times in worship but also during conversations between team members when I felt a very strong presence of the Holy One with his love....and in doing so imparting into me more of his loving and broken heart.*

*Seeing both the Israelites and the Palestinians as beautiful people and by the grace of God not trying to take sides.*

*Connecting with my Polish sisters and especially with Magda I met the first time...telling her about my grandpa who was a soldier during the first weeks invasion in Poland...and she so graciously extending love and forgiveness to me.*

*Enjoying our Palestinian sister and brother on our team...seeing them walking up to the Israeli soldiers telling them as Palestinians that they love them and that they believe in Yeshua...and seeing the smiles and surprise on faces of the soldiers.*

*The sunrise service at the tomb Sunday morning...joining in worship from many nations...hearing the Holy Spirit within me crying out to Jesus to want him with all my heart...more than anything else...*

*Being on the boat on the Sea of Galilee...and worshipping Jesus together...*

*We also want to thank all of the ones who stayed behind and had parts in teaching and preparing us as a team and the people in the board who build a foundation of this outreach... also of course thanks to our dear editor of the prayer newsletter...who is doing such a wonderful job...and was willing to let his beautiful wife go and lead the team. (Jurgen Schmutz)*

*What a great and joyful gift! I have been praying for Israel for many years; for peace, salvation, protection, outpouring of Holy Spirit, for IDF, for Israeli government, for Arabs... and now I could be part of*

*sharing God's love with Jews and Arabs on the streets of Israel. What a privilege and precious gift from our Heavenly Father!*

*I am so grateful for the whole team, for our unity and love, for standing, praying and encouraging one another in spite of different difficulties and spiritual warfare.*

*The Lord was working in my heart during this mission and gave me deeper revelation, understanding and love for Jews and Arabs. He took away my fear of Muslims, now I can pray with more passion for them and look at them with love and smile.*

*During one Friday, we went to Jewish Orthodox part of Jerusalem, where we faced strong opposition and rejection. It wasn't an easy experience but it was a very important lesson and it gave me the opportunity to see and understand more then before. This event gave me more compassion and desire to pray more for Orthodox Jews and ask the Lord to remove the veil from their eyes and hearts. May God's love touch and set them free!*

*I would like to say big THANK YOU to everybody who blessed and prayed for our trip! We couldn't do it without you! May the Lord bless you all richly! (Brygida (Bibi) Rusek)*

*What stood out for me the most is how open the heart of the Arab Palestinian is to love. As I was talking to many of them, they first started asking why we where there? After we give them roses, they told me they have never been loved that way. Their hearts were touched and changed because they could see and feel the love of God through us. It was amazing to see the change on their faces, the smiles and the soft hearts. When we where in Bethlehem and I was talking to three young ladies that were getting ready to pray to receive the Lord. One of them said to me, "I see a light in you. I want to kiss your face." And she did. I trust that in that moment she had seen the light of the Lord in me. That was amazing to be the light in the darkness. As a team, we were God's hands and feet to hurting and broken hearts. We brought love to people who had never been loved. The glory and honor belong to our God and King. (Khalida Wukawitz)*

*I loved the team, being in the country, just about everything, except the showers at the first hotel (there was a reason they had drains in the middle of the floor) and getting sick. But the following is really what it all boiled to for me:*

*Very quickly into the trip, I needed to repent of buying into the fear that the media has instilled in my heart that Muslims, particularly Muslim women who stood out because of some level of head covering, hated me and didn't want anything to do with me. I also had the fears that had been instilled due to the terrorism... As I started interacting with people, both men and women, I saw the hunger in their eyes as they would talk about their dreams of peace. I was especially touched by the many young women I talked with who were so touched that we would bring them a rose and just love them, both Palestinian and Jewish. All fear of rejection and hate broke off my heart. I already had a deep love for the Jewish people and many Jewish friends, so that wasn't an issue. So what has changed is a determination to deliberately interact with the Muslim women I meet on a daily basis, talk to them, and meet their eyes and accept them. Will everyone respond? Of course not. Does this push me out of my comfort zone? Yes, but not because they're Muslim, because I'm somewhat shy and initiating conversations with people is hard for me. Then we'll see where Jesus takes it. My job is to love on people, one at a time and push beyond my comfort zone with everyone. That's it. Words don't really convey the deep change in my heart. (Karen Wevick)*

*When I was growing up, my mother used to love to put together puzzles and I would often join her... We would spend time quietly examining the details of each piece until we saw connections between pieces and as we joined pieces together a bigger picture would emerge. This is where I am at with this tour.*

*...One of the pieces of this puzzle is the experience in Bethlehem with a Catholic priest and his tour group. Another piece is the scripture the Lord gave Sally, in this case specifically John 17:21,26 "that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in*

*you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me...I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them”.*

*The first time we met Pavo (the Catholic priest), he had the biggest smile on his face. I remember thinking that the joy of the Lord shone from his face. He had just finished leading his group in a time of worship in the chapel in the Holy Land Hotel in Bethlehem. I believe there were four from our group who went to the chapel to check on the roses, which were stored and worked on in the chapel. Pavo spoke very limited English so we struggled to outline a strategy for working on the roses that would not interfere with the worship time of his group. As we were trying to communicate, one person in our group, busted out singing “Nothing But The Blood of Jesus”. That big smile of joy I saw on Pavo’s face at first, returned as he sang along. When we finished singing, we all laughed and I didn’t know it yet, but the Lord was showing us that despite our differences, we are united through His blood. And when we are unified in love, He is what people see.*

*Pavo invited our group to join his group the next night for worship and we agreed. It was a sweet time of worship in unity and love. We spoke different languages, we came from different cultures and there were even some theological differences between us, but with our eyes on worshiping the one and only true God, none of it mattered. We clapped as they sang in Croatian and they clapped as we sang in English. Part way into our worship time together we realized some of the group from Croatia spoke German. Jurgen also spoke German, so we began a conversation, English to German, German to German, German to Croatian and back in reverse order. The first question Pavo asked was “Why are you here?”. Sally began her answer with the scripture the Lord put on her heart, John 17. As soon as Pavo heard John 17 he clapped his hands and said “Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit.” and many in his group had amazed looks on their faces. John 17 was also the scripture the Lord was speaking to them. We shared many things between us that night, including healing that the Lord was doing in our hearts, it was beautiful.*

*Over the next few days, every time we saw our Croatian brothers and sisters we would “greet one another with a holy kiss” and the love of the Lord. This love between people who were strangers to one another before meeting at the hotel, did not go unnoticed by the Muslim staff. Before our 3 days at the hotel were up, two of the muslim staff asked to receive Yeshua as Lord and Savior.*

*The world is starving for the love of God. It says in 1 John 4:16 “And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.” When we live in the perfect love and unity of God people notice. They notice because it’s so different than anything the world has to offer and people are drawn to it because it is a picture of HIM! (Sheilah Dabb)*

*I am so very grateful to be home, as I am sure all the rest of the Southern CA group are!! And the Northern CA "delegation," and our Polish friends...In the days and weeks to come flashes of moments of wonder will surface in the middle of our lives reminding us how amazing is our God, and what an honor it is to join Him where He is clearly working. We know we were not alone in this, but hundreds of hands and hearts were raised in prayer on our behalf for God's favor, anointing, protection and provision. The unity and love we experienced on this trip was like no other before, and this too, was the fruit of so many praying...*

*More than any other A Tour of Roses project before there were greater heights of beauty and deeper places of battle--within and without. All of us paid into this project, body, soul, and spirit, in ways I had no idea we would. But it seemed to me that it was, in fact, the places of our struggles that often knit us more closely together as we prayed for each other, encouraged each other, and took care of each other. Unity happened. I wondered if it would. But God is so faithful. More than any of us deserve. At the same time we were so incredibly blessed to participate in all the process--sowing to reaping. Who would think this band of ragamuffin souls, so unschooled in the protocols of political correctness in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, would catch such glimpses of God's glory, and be used by Him to bring*

*some hope and refreshment to so many wearied by this seemingly never-ending conflict. May the Lord water every seed sown and cause to fruit every tree growing even now. May the Lord continue to sow His mercies that are new every morning, on both sides of the wall, that hope would arise even in hearts that stopped seeking long ago. It's been a very long winter of the soul in the land where Jesus walked, but Spring is coming... One day the Prince of Peace--Sar Shalom--will return and bring the peace no man can. (Sally Klein O'Connor)*