

# The JOSHUA FUND NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2011

VOLUME 10

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The Time is Short  
The Blessings are Eternal  
Will you join us?*



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## *With Poverty Rising in Israel, The Joshua Fund to Open Eighth Storefront*

*By Joel C. Rosenberg*


Most news in Israel these days concerns Iran, Hezbollah's takeover of Lebanon, and protest movements in Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan. But in January, two columns in Israeli newspapers caught my eye. One, written by the head of a liberal Jewish non-profit organization in Tel Aviv, was headlined: "Israel's greatest threat is not security, it's poverty." The second, written by Moshe Arens, a right-of-center former Israeli Minister of Defense and Minister of Foreign Affairs, was entitled, "Poverty amidst plenty: We should examine the causes of the growing economic inequality that characterizes Israeli society at this time."

Interestingly, both authors – despite vastly different backgrounds – agreed: Yes, Israel's economy is growing faster than any other country in the industrialized world, but not everyone is benefitting. Poverty in Israel is rising, yet with so much of the government's budget going towards national security, social welfare budgets are shrinking and many families are really struggling.

- Fully 25 percent of Israelis live under the poverty level (which is less than \$900 for a family of four per month), up from 23.7% in 2008.
- In 2009, 123,000 more Israelis fell into poverty, according to the most recent government statistics.
- Roughly 1-in-3 children live in poverty in Israel, up 66,700 since 2008.
- 70% of those who earn only minimum wage in Israel are women.
- Ultra-Orthodox and Arab families, on average, are also more likely than secular Jewish Israelis to live in poverty, mainly because they tend to have significantly more children.
- Of the 240,000 Holocaust Survivors who live in Israel today, 40 percent live in poverty.

Compounding the problem: food prices in Israel are rising significantly.

- Canola Oil prices rose 23% in January
- Sugar rose 40%
- Flour/Semolina rose 19%
- Buck Wheat shot up 106%
- Jam rose 15%
- Tuna rose 3.3%

In that context, then, I'm glad to announce that The Joshua Fund is helping establish the eighth food distribution center ("storefront") in Israel in the last 14 months. Lord willing, it will be open by April, allowing us to serve hundreds more needy Jews and Arabs. Several more storefronts are being planned. Because the work load is increasing, we're also glad to announce we've hired another full-time Israeli to work in our warehouse and deliver food throughout the country. Thanks so much for your prayers and generous investment in this important work. It's never been more important. 



COME HELP  
US BLESS

*Israel and her neighbors.*



## Wave of Persecution Hits Mideast: How to Pray

Followers of Jesus Christ in the Middle East are facing a dramatic surge of violence and persecution at the hands of religious and political extremists. In Iraq, Israel, Iran, and Egypt, Christians have been arrested, forced to flee, or have been killed in violent attacks during the last few months.

Jesus warned his followers that in the last days, “an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God” (John 16:2). The good news is that the Lord Jesus also promised that, “I will build My Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

The Joshua Fund stands with and strongly supports believers in the epicenter who are facing this surge of persecution. In recent years, we have provided prayer and practical support to families of murdered and persecuted Christians in Israel, Turkey, Gaza, and Mosul (Ninevah), Iraq. We have also mobilized prayer support around the world for persecuted believers in the Middle East. Please join with us by making a specific point of praying regularly for our brothers and sisters in the epicenter.



### PRAYER POINTS

1. Gather with other Christians to fast and pray for the needs of persecuted believers. “Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:10).
2. Pray for physical, spiritual and emotional healing of those wounded in these terrible attacks. Please also pray for the Lord to comfort the family and friends of those killed and wounded in these attacks with peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:6-7).
3. Pray that believers in the region will faithfully love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them, just as the Lord Jesus commanded, even though this is so difficult to do (Matthew 5:44).
4. Pray for believers to have courage. “And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your Word with all confidence while you extend Your hand to heal and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus” (Acts 4:29-30).
5. Pray for government leaders in the Mideast to publicly denounce these violent acts against Christians, and to aggressively and fairly prosecute and punish those who commit such crimes.

To stay current with developments needing prayer, please visit [www.joshuafund.net](http://www.joshuafund.net) and click Features\Prayer Requests. 

*The Joshua Fund is now on Facebook. Get regular updates about developments in the epicenter when you “Like” us and join a growing online community concerned about Israel and her neighbors.*





## *Christmas Outreach Blesses Needy Sudanese in Israel*

*Just before Christmas, two staff members of The Joshua Fund had the privilege of reaching out to 1,700 Muslim and nominal Christian Sudanese detainees in the Sabronim camp in southern Israel, just eight kilometers from the Egyptian border. Here's their report:*

Thousands of refugees fleeing from the Radical Islamic regime and extreme poverty in Sudan have tried to enter Israel illegally over the last several years. Those who get caught are sent to detention camps. Israeli authorities aren't prepared to let these non-Jewish refugees become citizens, but are also hesitant to send them back to the terrible conditions in Sudan. So the people wait until someone makes a decision on how to handle their cases.

Most of the refugees have fled the violence in Sudan in utter desperation, and have endured great hardship during their journey on foot across Egypt. There is a real danger of being shot or captured and abused by Egyptian patrols and bounty hunters. One young man recently rescued by Israeli guards needed to have five bullets removed from his body.

The Joshua Fund was welcomed into this challenging environment to be a blessing. When the camp gates were opened, we were taken aback by the hundreds of African men milling around an open courtyard, wearing state issued prison jumpsuits. We were humbled and deeply blessed to walk among them, being welcomed first by the men, then later by the women and children who are kept together in a separate area.

We had a fantastic opportunity to personally greet them, sing with and for them, and pray for them in groups. After leading them in song, we asked them if they would sing us a song in their native language, which they did with exuberance! They had no expectation that the day would hold blessing for them as the rest of the world celebrates and remembers the birth of Jesus, God's gift to us.


Though we were able to provide some small gifts and sweets for the holiday, we most valued the open door we were given for the ministry of the Word of God. Many spoke English and were able to hear the message directly from us. Others heard it through translators among the teams of local believers we brought with us. The good news of the arrival of a Savior was spoken with clarity,



*“For You have been a strength to the poor, A strength to the needy in his distress, A refuge from the storm, A shade from the heat; For the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.”*

*Isaiah 25:4 NKJV*

straight from the Scriptures. Before we left, Bibles were distributed to those who wanted one. What a joy it was to be able to reach out to these hurting souls with the love of Jesus and the truth of His Word.

Please continue to be in prayer for these dear, displaced people. We plan to visit them again early in 2011. Thanks! 



# Helping an Israeli Children’s Village Rebuild After Devastating Fires



In December, Israel experienced the worst fires in modern Israeli history, burning an estimated 9,900 acres, destroying five million trees, killing 44 people, and forcing the evacuation of thousands from several communities near the blaze. During that time, we learned that Yemin Orde – a village in northern Israel that houses, cares for and educates at-risk Jewish children, many of whom who don’t have any parents – was hit hard by the raging Carmel fires, and needed help. The more we learned, the more their story moved us.

Approximately 40 percent of the buildings in the village were damaged or destroyed. Homes of staff members (12 families, with 35 children) were burned to the ground, including the home of the high school principal, the village Rabbi, and a maintenance worker who was a former student and worked at the village for 40 years. Fortunately, the fire didn’t destroy the synagogue. But the village’s water system was damaged, including sprinklers, water tower pump, and sewage lines. The village’s electrical system was severely damaged. Offices and public buildings destroyed or damaged include the outreach offices (computers, multimedia, electrical appliances and furniture) and the library (books, multimedia center, central air conditioner system, piano, computers, and furniture).

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the Prophet Isaiah wrote, “Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow” (Isaiah 1:17). In the New Testament, the Apostle James wrote, “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world” (James 1:27).

With these Scriptures in mind, The Joshua Fund eagerly agreed to help.

In cooperation with several other Israeli organizations, we are providing funding to rebuild the educational resource center and buy supplies, including books, multimedia equipment, and classroom supplies. We are also helping renovate the homes of children who were affected by the fire by providing beds, desks, wardrobes, curtains, bath and bedroom fixtures, chairs, mirrors, and other items. We’ll keep you updated as the children’s village is restored. Please join us in praying that the work will go quickly and well and that both the children and the staff who run Yemin Orde will truly be blessed in the process.

If you would like to contribute to this project or other work that The Joshua Fund is doing, please go to [www.joshuafund.net](http://www.joshuafund.net) to make a secure online donation.

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### MEMBER OF THE ECFA

As a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) we follow high standards of Christian ethics in fund-raising, financial accounting and reporting.



### DESIGNATED GIVING

All contributions are tax deductible in the USA. If The Joshua Fund is successful in raising our financial goal for a specific project for which you have designated your donations, all excess funds for that project will be applied to related projects or to the general fund of TJE.

### NOTE TO OUR DONORS

This newsletter, as well as the design, have been provided free of charge to The Joshua Fund by Harvest Graphics. This has greatly helped us to maintain our commitment of keeping our overhead to a minimum. It has been an encouragement for us to work with other believers who have a heart for Israel and her neighbors and have entrusted their time, talents and treasures into His service.