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Thursday, August 09, 2007



Foursquare Church comes to Jerusalem, embraces local Messianics

The worldwide Foursquare denomination holds its annual conference in Jerusalem and bucks the trend of locally-based Christian ministries by openly embracing Messianic Jewish leaders.

By Sara Fischer

More than 3,000 delegates from the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel gathered for the first time in Jerusalem for the annual Foursquare Convention. With the theme, "On Earth as It Is in Heaven," the international conference on worship, prayer and global witness embraced a vision for Israel.

"My prayer was for there to be enlightenment of God's grace in the hour for Israel and that is happening," Pastor Jack Hayford told **Israel Today**. "It's not happening through education, but through revelation."

Hayford is founder of Church on the Way in the Los Angeles area and president of the Foursquare denomination. There are Foursquare churches in 145 countries.

Hayford, who has fostered relations with Jews in his hometown in California's San Fernando Valley for more than 30 years—some of whom have come to faith in Yeshua—prominently featured Messianic Jews at the conference. Many Christian organizations in Israel tend to be overly cautious in their relationship with Messianic Jews to avoid offending their Israeli hosts, but Hayford said the Foursquare Church stands unashamed with Israel's Jewish believers and featured several Messianic leaders as key speakers.

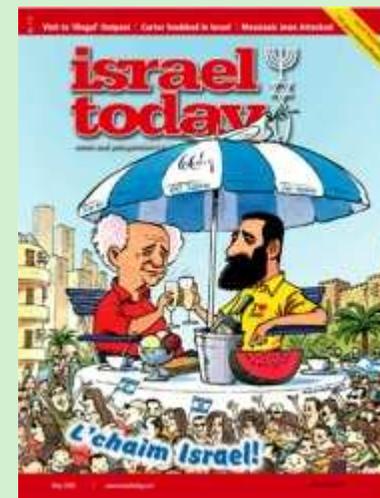
"We realize there's caution, but there's no reason to be cautious," Hayford said. "We need to have a sense of boldness to stand with the Church in Israel today. The Messiah calls us



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to stand.”

Members of Foursquare churches caught for the first time, or fostered the vision they already had, to support and stand with Israel.

“My heart is now more for supporting ministry to help Jews fall in love with Yeshua,” said Elena Galbraith, a member of Northwest Church in Washington state. “I don’t feel equipped to minister, but in this Land the ministries are powerful.”

Galbraith’s husband, Jeremy, added that the trip to the Holy Land was “wonderful and illuminating and allowed the Bible to become three-dimensional.”

Ken Medema led worship at the conference. Though blind, Medema’s prophetic vision for bringing the Word to life through his music ministry has enabled him to impact lives worldwide, including participants at the International Convention Center in Jerusalem.

Early morning worship and prayer services were led by Robert Stearns, founder of Eagles Wings ministry. Delegates arose early to spend time in prayer for the nation of Israel.

Conference speakers included Ari Sorko-Ram, leader of a Messianic congregation in Tel Aviv and founder of Maoz ministries; and pastors Asher Intrater and Wayne Hilsden.

Foursquare members from America traveled with Sar-El Tours, founded by Shmuel Smadja, a Messianic Jew who spoke at the conference about the obstacles Jews encounter believing in Yeshua (Jesus) as their Savior.

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