

KNOCKING AT OUR DOOR

by Philip Berg • Shevet Achim Jerusalem Coordinator

I have been reflecting lately on what it is that tends to touch my heart the most about our work here at Shevet Achim. There are day-in and day-out logistics of getting the job done. Every week, anywhere from three to seven families from Gaza are profoundly touched by the intervention of their neighbors to the north as their child is given a new lease on life. But the stories that pop most readily to my mind are the ones that involve Iraqis.

Why is this? I am beginning to see more powerfully than ever before that there is no substitute for relationship.

When we bring a child from Iraq we are much more “hands-on” involved in their lives than we are with the Gaza children. This is necessarily so since the Iraqi patients are far from home and have no one else to look out for them. Prior to surgery, the Iraqi patient and escort stay in our home here in Jerusalem. Also, after surgery there is a period of time that the patient and escort stay in our home as they wait for further checkups and a final OK to return to Iraq.

It is at these times that a very special bonding takes place. The opportunity to exercise the hospitality factor makes all the difference in deepening this bond. Preparing a quiet, cozy bedroom, sharing meals together and taking walks around the streets of Jerusalem—these are the memories that are etched into my mind much more than standing alongside a hospital bed.

“Home is where the heart is.” I think all of us are looking for a home. Being a third-culture kid myself and having traveled the world for many years, there were times when I was not sure where home was. I remember being invited into people’s homes on occasion and experiencing a place of refuge.

Of course, we have a new home being prepared for us by our Lord. But in the meantime, perhaps the best expression of heaven that we have on this planet is a home where the Lord rules and where peace and comfort and refuge are offered to anyone who may come knocking at your door.

I am so glad that the Iraqi families come “knocking at our door.” My wife and I and our children are so much richer for having had these gracious guests in our home. ❁



Shevet Achim CONTACT INFORMATION

How COULD I HELP?

- Write info@shevet.org to join the email list for updates on children and volunteer opportunities.
- Secure, on-line giving is available at www.shevet.org, or donations may be sent to:

US Office:

Shevet Achim
POB 1006
Rocky Face, GA 30740
Tel. 1-706-313-8507
donna@shevet.org
Donations are tax-deductible in the US

Jerusalem Office:

Shevet Achim
POB 32296
Jerusalem 91000
Israel
Tel. 972-2-6245053
bergs@shevet.org

UK contributions payable to CFI at:

PO Box 2687
Eastbourne, E. Sussex
BN22 7LZ
Tel. 01323-410810
info@cfi.org.uk
Gift aid applies to eligible donors.

*Tracy with
Mohammed and
His Father*



How Could I Help?

by Tracy Kirscher • Denver, Colorado

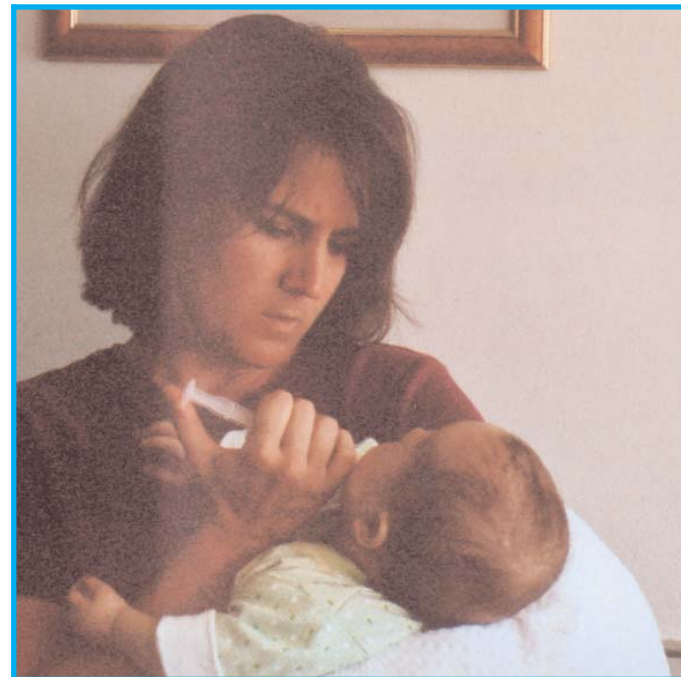
It was one of those days I will never forget. I had been visiting Israel from America and found myself and two companions walking through Wolfson Medical Center in Tel Aviv. This was our opportunity to learn about the Shevet Achim ministry and to see what happens to the Arab children and their families once transported to the Israeli hospitals. Being a nurse, I felt at home walking through the halls of Wolfson and I asked the Lord, *What do you have planned here for today?*

We walked onto the floor where the screening for surgical candidates is done and then I saw them: a middle-aged, husky man with dark leathery skin holding a three to four month old Down Syndrome baby. The baby was crying weakly and squirming in the man's arms. We found out that this father was able to cross the border with his son but his wife was not as fortunate. The breastfed, hungry baby had not eaten since earlier in the

morning from his mother and was now refusing the foreign bottle his father was desperately trying to give him. Once the father was able to communicate this to us, he broke down crying with such a release of frustration his whole body shook.

I remember looking into the weeping eyes of this big burly man and being so touched. The Lord spoke to me of how broken we all are and that brokenness crosses all cultural barriers and we must help each other in time of need and this was a time of need. But how could I help here when I was just a visitor?

Immediately I said, “Syringe! Let's find a syringe to feed the baby.” Once a syringe was found my nursing instincts kicked in and I boldly took the baby and attempted to feed him. I squirted one ml. of formula into baby Mohammed's mouth and waited



Continued on the next page.



(How Could I help, Continued)

and waited. After about a minute, he swallowed and we all cheered and I saw relief in the father's eyes. I kept feeding the baby this way slowly and I found myself assessing his tiny frame. He was so pale and fragile; his soft broken cry witnessed to how weak he was. Oh how the Lord impressed upon me to pray with such fervor for this child. I can't

express the urgency in these prayers but I know that when the Lord impresses upon you with such force to pray He is up to some miraculous things.

Later, I found out that Mohammed's father was so relieved to have his son eat and be taken care of that he said I and my companions were an answer to prayer. Wow! I don't know how things transpired for baby Mohammed and his family but I do know that the Lord orchestrated this scenario and He blessed me by allowing me to be a part of it. How many little scenarios like this go on through this ministry Shevet Achim, how many urgent prayers are sent up to the throne room of God Almighty for these children and their families? Can we fathom the work of God in all this? When we see our Lord face to face He will let us see ALL the fruit of this ministry and I know it will blow us away. 🌸



LOOK INTO THEIR EYES

*Jonathan Miles,
International
Coordinator*

I'm sure that like me, you were moved by reading Tracy's story above. And her

experience is so true! If any of us visited the hospitals in Iraq, Gaza, or Israel, and looked into the eyes of a parent or their child—eyes pleading for that child's very life—we would be transformed, resolved with God's help to do everything possible.

Yet the spirit of the age conspires to keep us from seeing those eyes. We're too busy, too distracted, too burdened or too tired to notice what's happening with our neighbors. I know—when I'm back in the United States with my family it happens to me.

I'm praying that it is God's own Spirit that has brought this letter into your hands. For here, if we won't turn away, are the eyes of Iraqi children who need someone to love them in Jesus' name. Each of the children pictured at right has a congenital heart defect that is fully repairable. The paper each one holds gives his or her name, the father's name, and the grandfather's name. With surgery these children can have a normal life, grow up and marry and have children of their own. Without surgery they are expected to die.

But how could I help? We can be the bridge that gets these children into caring hands. There are centers in Israel and elsewhere where respect for life and love for neighbor overcome all barriers. It is a joy to see past enemies uniting around the life of a child; for this reason the name of our work is drawn from Psalm 133:1—*Behold how good and how pleasant for brothers to dwell together in unity.*

The reward of rescuing even one of the least of these is sufficient in itself. But we have the added joy of telling these families that it is Jesus who has changed our hearts and caused us to care for them. We are able to visibly share the love of God with those who've heard only that God wants us to hate and kill our enemies.

(Continued on the next page)

So please look with me now into the eyes of these children, and listen to what the Spirit says. Shevet Achim volunteers stand ready to link us with a child in need. We can help one right now, from our own homes and fellow-

ships, through prayer and giving. And any who can are invited to travel to the region and meet with their child personally.

Tracy's right. One day we'll be eternally grateful that we did. 🌟

So please look with me now into the eyes of these children...

