

## MINISTRY UPDATE – JULY/AUGUST 2023

*Dear Praying Friends, shalom!*

We are always happy when those former addicts who once visited Aviv Center and later went through successful rehabilitation eventually return to Tel Aviv to participate in our ministry. Here's the story of one of those guys.

### Samuel's\* story

Nobody chooses his or her parents... Samuel's\* mother was very good and caring, but his father was an alcoholic and, sadly, an aggressive one. Mom often had to take little Samuel\* to the neighbors to keep him safe and that he would not see all the horrors his father did. One day Samuel\* and his mother ran away and were hiding from his father for several months in an orphanage where she worked as a doctor.

Samuel's\* mother often turned to the police for help, but in Russia the police do not take domestic violence seriously. She was in complete despair, and this despair led her to church. She began attending the services, and Samuel\* went to the Sunday school. She kept hoping that her husband would change, but he did not, so she finally decided to divorce him and emigrate to Israel. Samuel\* was 12 years old then.

In Israel, like many immigrants, his mother had to work a lot, and Samuel\* spent much time on the street. Soon he and his friends started smoking light drugs, and later, when he got older, someone offered him cocaine. When Samuel\* tried it, he immediately felt so good! The fears and uncertainty, which apparently were the consequences of the traumas inflicted by his father, instantly disappeared, and Samuel\* felt he had finally found confidence and peace. As a result, he immersed himself into drugs deeper and deeper, and eventually ended up living on Tel Aviv streets. He did not want such a life, but he could not do anything about it, because by then the drugs had taken full control over him.

One day we were walking along the streets of Tel Aviv and met a drug addict. We invited him to Aviv Center, and he came. The next day he came again and brought his friends, one of whom was Samuel\*. When we started reading the Bible, Samuel\* remembered the church services he once attended, and agreed to go to a Christian rehab center. His complete recovery took several years, there were ups and downs, but today he is married, has got a beautiful baby, a good job, and whenever possible he participates in the work of Aviv Center and other Aviv Ministry projects.

We praise God for the miracle in Samuel's\* life and ask you to pray that more Aviv Center visitors would make this decision to leave the streets and change their lives!

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### News and prayer requests

1. The work **in Aviv outreach Center** continues. We have got two shifts six days a week and one shift on Sundays. Different shifts are led by teams from different cities and Messianic congregations in Israel, and recently new volunteers joined many of those teams. After the renovations on the second floor (a room with good soundproofing was made there), it became even easier to conduct personal conversations with our visitors, because not everyone is ready to open up in the presence of many strangers, talk about personal problems, pray, and even receive first medical aid. Also, we now can hold staff meetings on the second floor, share our thoughts, conduct practical and teaching sessions on medical care, etc., and the noise from the lower floor does not interfere with that.

2. In August **Tami\***, who had lived in our **Women's Shelter** for 5 months, left it and moved to a place the social services provided her, where she would be able to keep getting various kinds of help with her addiction and her debts. She was very grateful for all the love and care she received in the Shelter, and we are planning to keep in touch with her. While staying with us, she was very open to the Gospel and liked to attend the Messianic Shabbat services in Beersheva. Please keep praying for her.

We praise the Lord for the progress we see in the other three ladies who live in the Shelter. In August we also had two new ladies. One, 22-year-old **Miya\***, who was sexually abused by a relative in her

childhood and as a result became a drug addict and a prostitute, spent a week with us waiting for a place in a Christian rehab center (she had nowhere else to go during this period). The second lady was middle-aged **Inna\***, a victim of domestic abuse, who spend several days in the Shelter, but then decided to leave and move to her mother.

We also keep in touch with **Rebecca\*** (who lived in our Shelter last year), helping her with the legal fight against her rapist, as well as assist a needy single mother, **Lydia\***, a victim of domestic abuse, with her food expenses.

Sadly, the **long-term volunteer** who has lived in our Shelter for almost two years and whom our ladies loved and respected greatly, **was denied visa extension** and has to leave us in October. Now we need to find someone to replace her, and this is not going to be easy... **Please pray that the Lord would send us the right person for this important job.**

3. In our **Rehab for Men** we have currently got **9 rehabilitants**. Most of them are working already and have shown good progress. We also keep taking care of the addicts who live in Beersheva and attend our Shabbat services. At present, up to seven such people come each Shabbat. They are not ready to start a rehab program yet (some already tried and failed), but we keep in touch with them, trying to help them as much as we can. We see some positive change in their lives (some have found a place to live and even some kind of jobs), and they start looking better generally, but we **pray that they would truly get to know the Lord and make a serious decision to leave their addiction for good.**

Thank you for your care and prayers, and may God bless you and yours!

In His love,

*Dov and Olga and Aviv Ministry team*



Men's Rehab center



On the street, in front of Aviv Center

Bible study in the Women's Shelter



In Aviv Center