



Jay Drawing in Carros



Meridel Rawlings



Carros, Chateau by Jay Rawlings



Jay & Meridel in Carros

Dear Precious Friends and Partners:

### Israeli Elections

*The heart of the King is in the hand of the Lord and He turns it whichever way He desires...Proverbs 21:1*

*"With the help of God I will now stand and form a government for the people of Israel"  
...Benjamin Netanyahu, 11 February 2009 on the outcome of the Israel National Elections.*

It is almost impossible to form a government in Israel with ten small parties vying for a total of one hundred twenty Knesset seats. However, it is likely that only Benjamin Netanyahu with only twenty-seven seats can form a government because he can work either with the small right wing parties, or he may choose to form a national unity government with the Kadima (twenty-eight seats) party led by Tzippi Livni, his principle rival. Please pray that it will not be a marriage of convenience that could mean concessions to the Gaza terror group Hamas. Hamas is definitely not a peace partner.

David, Daniel and I went to Gaza to film there and in the nearby town of Sderot that has been hit by hundreds of rockets launched randomly into the civilian center by Hamas terrorists in Gaza. We interviewed Israelis' whose houses were destroyed. Over the last eight years 10,046 rockets have been shot into southern Israel, effectually holding 750,000 Israeli men, women and children hostage--day and night, with twenty-eight killed and over one thousand wounded. Finally in late December, while Hamas sent more rockets in Israel, the Israeli Defence Force went into action to stop this madness.

### **IRAN HAS PLANS**

Almost immediately world leaders and the world press started condemning Israel for use of force. Where was the world for these last eight years? Israel in good faith exited Gaza in 2006, unilaterally, and what did she get? Nothing but more terror. Instead of using the billions of dollars worth of farm infrastructure that Israel had build up to make their part in Gaza a thriving "agriculture miracle"; the terrorists took over the green houses and used them as launch pads for their insane war to destroy the nation of Israel. They refuse to recognize Israel's existence. Backed by millions of dollars worth of arms from Iran, smuggled into Gaza via tunnels from Egypt, Hamas has become the surrogate military force of Iran in the south while Hezbollah is its counterpart over the Lebanese border to the north.

### **VISIT TO THE FRONT LINES**

Then near nightfall we interviewed the deputy mayor of Sderot along with Earl Cox, whose *Israel Always* organization has supplied fifty armored bomb shelters in the city. "Your bomb shelters have given our people strength and courage. Now the kids can play outside near a bomb shelter and feel safe." Then we went right to the border of Gaza to film the supply of thirty-five pizzas and cakes ordered by Earl, to an armored engineering corp of soldiers. They were so grateful for this love gift. One soldier said, "we are very much strengthened by your show of support to us here on the front lines, Thank you, Thank you."

One other young soldier in full army gear said, "God Bless you". I went back to him and gave him my business card and pointing to our website, [www.israelvision.tv](http://www.israelvision.tv) I said, "when you get home on leave please check out our website and you will be able to see yourself. What he said next disarmed me... **"Thanks, but maybe I won't get home, I might be killed."** "Oh no" I said, "God will watch over you. You--You will not be killed." Then he said **"From your mouth to Gods ear"**. (a Hebrew expression meaning "May God answer your prayers")

Please go to our website, to view these encounters: [www.israelvision.tv](http://www.israelvision.tv)

What challenging times we are living in. I am convinced that not only are God's thoughts not our thoughts, neither are His ways our ways! That is cause for joy in spite of the down turn in the world economy. Man says, "Times are tough, hang on to all you have tightly so you don't lose it." God says, "You will never lose what you give in My love."

I believe every one of us is found somewhere between those two opposing views. I have had to repent for my worry in the face of great obstacles these last days. The observant faithful in Israel pray repentance prayers everyday. I believe the Lord is now beginning to get the attention He deserves. Here is an excerpt from my memoirs, which continues to speak to us especially today. I trust our experience in tough financial times will encourage your hearts. I quote from my unpublished manuscript **"God's Secret Among the Nations." Volume I.**

"We saw God's Word work dramatically in France. The Lord sent us to one of the wealthiest and most sophisticated places on earth; the French Riviera. We went there to continue our work of speaking to European Jewish communities about coming home to live in Israel. We had spent three years in South America reaching the communities there and we now headed for Europe. I will never forget that balmy September of 1974 when we arrived in Nice.

Before leaving North America the Lord said, **"Some people will say that you have been abandoned, but I say you have been planted."** This was a strange word. We weren't able to understand it's meaning until some weeks passed. Meanwhile we found a small apartment in an old 11th century village, called Carros le Vieux (Old Carros) about twenty-five kilometers north of Nice. Carros le Vieux is situated on the top of a small mountain and the Chateau or castle was located on the highest point affording magnificent views out over the Var River valley all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. All around the old fortress like building were protective walls and into these supporting walls, pillars and towers were built the houses of the former peasants who in medieval times worked the nearby sloping fields. In the 1980s the entire village was preserved as a Historic Heritage Site. Today the town has been renovated into very smart and trendy apartments and condos. At the time we inhabited a small apartment literally built into the walls. It was great in the summer as it was cool and pleasant; the winter was another story. When the cold winds blew down from the French Alps the windows fogged and often frosted over. The walls became damp, rivulets of water then ran down like tears on a woman's cheek, leaving small pools on the tiled cement floors, and a damp and musty smell.

### **WEANED FROM THE WORLD'S ECONOMIC SYSTEM**

We were only able to heat the kitchen by cooking our food on a two-burner gas stove; otherwise all of the rooms remained freezing. We would usually go outside when the sun was high in order to walk briskly and warm up as best we could. There was a small store in the center of the village where we could buy our basic needs and often Chris would go there early in the morning with a few centimes (pennys) and buy us a fresh baguette for breakfast. Our four year old quickly learned to say; *"pan s'il vous plait"* (bread please).

This idyllic life changed in an instant. Suddenly the postal system of France went on strike. This actually crippled the country to a very large extent. The settlement was long in coming; it took almost three months before the labor disputes ended. During this time our income was completely cut off. (It came from donors like yourselves.) In those days there was no internet or bank cards. For the first few weeks we managed by eating the few things we had in our cupboard. I started a 40 day fast. It was frightening to see the oatmeal disappear day by day. I was afraid we might starve. I even thought of setting up 'a tab' at the local store. But, Meridel pointed out this scripture to me:

***"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. And he delights in His way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down. For the Lord up holds him with His hand. I have been young and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread."..Psalm 37: 23-25.***

Day by day we called out the Lord's Prayer; my emphasis was on, "*give us this day our daily bread*". When we ran out of food the Lord spoke to me:

***"Give and it shall be given to you"...Luke 6:38a.***

But Abba, I said, "*I have nothing left to give.*" The Lord had a different idea. He spoke to my heart, "*Go out and draw!*" "Draw?" I queried. "But Lord I don't know how to draw?" Silence! Soon we scraped together our last coins and I went to the local 'tabac' or general store and bought several pencils, an eraser, a black ink pen and some white drawing paper. I found an old piece of thin plywood that I could rest on my knees, tack my paper to it and draw. I sat on a small folding wooden chair that our little boys sat on in our VW van. I then went out into the village, in various weather conditions and slowly started to sketch the stone walls, buildings and entrances. In the beginning I used the eraser frequently. Then gradually I settled down into 'drawing' in obedience to the Lord.

I showed Meridel the results and she encouraged me. Then just as I was completing a sketch of the first house the Lord began to give me a scripture verse as a specific word of encouragement for the family dwelling within. I then copied the scripture reference opposite my signature at the bottom of the sketch; writing out the entire verse in French on the back of the drawing.

"*Go ahead and give it to this family.*" He encouraged me. But I argued. "Its not good enough...they wouldn't like it." "**Give.**" His word was stern. So with fear and trepidation I went up to the first door and knocked lightly. A grim faced woman appeared guardedly and said in a raspy voice, "No, no, I don't want to buy anything!" She went to slam the door shut..."Oh, NO!" I responded in my best French, "This is a gift for you." She looked quizzically at me and opened the door a crack further and took my drawing, mumbling a perfunctory "merci" (thanks). The ancient lock in her heavy wooden door fell into place with the 'clunk' of finality. I felt very vulnerable, weak and alone. But, I knew I had done what the Lord said, and I made a conscious effort of trying to rest in that. Later He reminded me in a dream, "Your job is to be obedient, my job is to provide."

Over the next few weeks I did the same thing with many households. Slowly I could sense a change in the 'cold' spirit of the village. Now as people passed by me while I was drawing they would say, "Bon jour (good day). I responded warmly. Some of the folk were very old and feeble and I asked them if I could pray for them. They all had aches and pains of some sort. Reluctantly at first, they agreed. I would gently put my hand on their shoulder or head and pray in the best French I could muster. Then in a moment they shuffled off homeward bound, whispering, "Merci, merci," (thank you)

***USE WHAT IS IN YOUR HAND***

Every afternoon we would take the kids out for walks along the narrow country lanes. Chris (four), ran ahead of us while Josh (one), snuggled down into his stroller. No schools were available for our David, just seven, so we sent him to Meridel's parents in Canada. There he completed his grade two (Meridel had home schooled him in grade one). Along the way we were pleasantly surprised to find hundreds of wild rose bushes loaded down with 'rose hips' the bulb like fruit that ripens in the fall. Meridel always took a bag along with us and each day we would fill it with more rose hips. We also found wild apples and fig trees that had been abandoned for years. We picked their fruit and carried it home as treasure. Meridel cooked the rosehips and made a delicious syrup/jam by straining the seeds out of the rosehip soup through her nylon stockings. They were well washed! When hunger struck, we ate the apples and figs fresh. We also found broad-leafed weeds (Meridel insisted they were "greens") in the fields. When steamed they tasted like strong spinach. Meridel got us to drink the nutritious broth as well. Needless to say we were healthy, very trim and had red rosy cheeks. Often on our way home Monsier Chabrier a local farmer invited us into his yard so that the boys could stroke his guinea pigs. We found out later that they were considered a delicacy. He would fill the hoods of the boy's coats with walnuts from a nearby tree. He often gave us vegetables or fruit from his market garden.

Then one afternoon when we arrived home we found a lovely home-baked cake and enormous cabbage sitting on the crooked steps that led up to the door of our apartment. Another time there was a famous French quiche pie and powdered milk for the boys. It was all given anonymously. We thanked God that He does not lie. He kept His Word.

We were obedient to do what he said, "Draw and give what is in your hand."

The postal strike lasted until the 3rd week of December. My fast ended about the same time. Looking back, those were glorious days when we were weaned away from the world's economic system to learn about the principals of God in a new and practical way. We certainly hadn't been abandoned. We had been "planted" in Him!

Our situation today in Israel has the same feel of that special time in France. I said to Meridel the end of December 2008, "I just don't know how we are going to make it in January 2009." "But God"...as my dear friend Sheila Watt of Edinburgh Scotland exclaims. "He cannot fail".

### **A DREAM**

*Hello, this is Meridel writing.* I had a dream recently and Jay has asked me to share it with you. In this dream we were all comfortably seated in a slowly moving cable car up Massada mountain. We were suspended between arid Israeli desert and heaven. Strong cables were pulling us slowly but surely to the top of the mountain. I realized in this dream that we had been "set" into a perfect place by divine plan, and God was propelling us on to our destination. We were in the right place at the right time, no matter that we were isolated and suspended between heaven and earth. We were in the palm of God's mighty Hand! Daniel said that morning, "Mom, we Israelis are the most hated people on earth!" Maybe that's true! Thank you for your loving concern, prayers and support for us all over here. I see you as the engineers used by God, helping those cables to support us to the top of the mountain. See you there! This dream encouraged us, as we are isolated nationally.

*Jay again.* Jim Elliot, one of my heroes, was the amazingly brave Bible translator who gave his life in the late 1950's while making contact with the savage headhunter Auca Indians in the wild Amazon valley of Ecuador. He and four colleagues were shot to death by the Auca's poisoned arrows. Just days before his martyrdom he wrote the following by candlelight in his jungle tent. **"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep in order to gain what he cannot lose."** This is the 'Kingdom of God' in action. In some strange way today I feel very close to Jim Elliot. (We had the privilege of welcoming his widowed wife and daughter to visit our youth camp in Ecuador.) I don't think I am going to be dead in a few days but our situation in Israel today is very tough and tragic. Our team has gone to the Gaza border to film. As a family we have decided to give everything we have in order to get the Word of God out among the nations from Jerusalem. We often feel a little like David in the face of the giants of world media such as Al Jezeera, BBC, CBC, ABC, FOX, CNN and major European TV news networks. Your support helps us to give that which we cannot keep, (The Word) in order to give understanding to those who will seek out the truth (life). See [www.israelvision.tv](http://www.israelvision.tv)

### **PLEASE PRAY--PLEASE ACT!**

Thanks for standing with us. We need you to take a moment to pray and to make a commitment to this ministry for this year of 2009. We need solid backing. Otherwise our hands are tied. Post dated checks help us the most. You can donate online via PayPal with any major credit card. [www.israelvision.tv](http://www.israelvision.tv) or [www.jerusalemvistas.com](http://www.jerusalemvistas.com).

### **THANKS**

We consider the fact that we are still here after forty years and still working a miracle. God knows we are all willing to keep on being "planted".

Thanks in advance for your prayers and financial help!

In His love,

  
Jay and Meridel and team

