

CHEVRA REPORT



Chevra means friendship. Our goal is to help our people in their time of need.

FEBRUARY 2011

HELPING IS EASY!

Please consider supporting Chevra with your donations.

Please note our new giving address in Worthington, OH, effective immediately.

ONLINE ▶ At our website: www.chevrahumanitarian.org
Visa, MasterCard or Paypal
If you have questions about online donating, please e-mail from the 'Contact us' page on our website.

MAIL ▶ Send checks to:
Chevra USA
P.O. Box 168
Worthington, OH 43085-0168
U.S.A.
Please, never send cash or currency!

CHEVRA USA

Chevra is the American entity for our international effort. Chevra's work is a way people can make a real difference in the lives of many people in need.

GIVING AT ITS WORST ▶

A friend on Facebook sent me the following Craigslist advertisement:

"I have an unused bag of corn meal mix that I am not using. Any needy or hungry person may come and get the bag of cornmeal IF you can prove to me that you are indigent and NEED this cornmeal. Do NOT apply if you are on food stamps, welfare, have section 8 housing OR if you are gainfully employed and can afford your own cornmeal. Also no one that has a Christmas meal with other types of bread available (i.e. rolls) no pot or cigarette smokers, no drinkers, no gamblers, no gays or lesbians or atheists OR if you have no oven to bake the cornbread in. Good luck, let the applications begin and I will decide who gets the corn meal mix by 6 p.m. buttermilk for mixing NOT included."

I was appalled at this ad because of the miserable attitude of its author. It makes you wonder why a person with that attitude would try to give anything to anyone at all. Whatever the motivation, it could not have been a genuine concern for the needy. Having an attitude like this embarrasses people in already humbled circumstances.

Unfortunately, it's not the first time I've seen this attitude in people. When I am out speaking on behalf of Chevra, I am invariably

quizzed by people who want every dime they give to go to a soup kitchen. While I would also like that, I am stuck with the realities of making this ministry work. We have to wire money every month to the soup kitchens and those who make up food parcels for distribution. The bank charges us to make international wires. The people who make up the food parcels and do the distribution, as well as the people who work in the soup kitchens have families to feed and bills to pay like everyone else. It is simply impossible to send 100% of donations and think there will be no expenses along the way.

I understand people want to be sure their donations don't get used wastefully, and I appreciate that. I hate waste when people are hungry. We try to keep our costs down so we can send as much as possible to the needy, but it still costs money to operate, as I mentioned above. The best we, or any organization, can say is that we seek to do as much as we can with what we receive, and that whatever doesn't go for costs of operation goes to feed the hungry. To honestly evaluate us or any charity, the best thing to do is look at the work we are doing and see if it's something you can get behind. In this economy, we are doing the best we can with the least amount of overhead. Paying a worker is part of the delivery system of feeding people. In a sense, it's all part of it. Without it, people would simply not get fed.

As for the attitude of the writer of the Craigslist ad, he made such an issue over who could get his measly bag of corn meal so that the "wrong" person wouldn't get it, that almost no one would have qualified, or those who would have qualified wouldn't bother. It reminds me of the story of a rabbi who was renowned for his kindness and generosity towards people. One day, his students, who thought he was foolish in his giving, followed the people he gave money to. At the end of the day, they confronted him saying he gave money to 50 people, and out of those people, only one was truly in need. They asked if he felt foolish for giving money to 49 people who probably didn't need it. He said, on the contrary, he was thankful that he didn't let 49 people who didn't really need help prevent him from giving to the one person who really needed it.

While we try hard to give to those who really need it, we try not to turn anyone away. Feeding people means having an attitude of generosity towards the people we help. I encourage everyone, in their giving, to be as generous as they can be. It helps others, and is good for your soul.

Sincerely,

Michael Schiffman,
Chevra USA



REPORT FROM UKRAINE

Our Soup kitchens operate Monday to Friday serving 13,000 meals per month, totaling about 145,000 meals per year.

Poor Jewish people attend, having a hot meal. Some are fully Jewish, while others have one parent who was Jewish. Because our funds are limited, we restrict our meals to Jewish people in need—and their spouses, whether or not they are Jewish—feeding those who are hungry. We also help those non-Jews who helped Jews to survive during the war, as they are what is called in Israel “The Righteous Among the Nations.”

We also feed gentile children from orphanages, teaching them the message from the Bible that the blessing comes through the Jewish people to the nations.

People express their gratitude for the good words and our supporting generations of Jews who went through war and communism and bears fruit of belief in the Messiah.

In Kiev in a Messianic conference we’ve reconnected with our friend and co-worker Dzhambul from Ossetia, who for many years was working in the Caucasus with the Jewish people, and was supported by us. There are many lonely, elderly, sick Jews there who need our help. Unfortunately, for several years, because of our funds have been low, we have

been unable to help his efforts anymore. We had asked two pastors from United States who came to a conference in Kiev to support Dzhambul’s work, and they decided to help him once: They bought for a poor old Jewish woman firewood for the winter which he bought for \$300. Seeing the difficult situation, we would like to seek support for Dzhambul and his work among the Jewish people of the Caucasus area. We hope that we will be able to make it happen. **(Photo 1)**

We visited the Jewish community of Korsun Szevchenkovskiy trying to help the poor people before winter comes. The leader of this community is Peter Rashkovskiy, for many years known to us and working with us like representative and a director. There are several projects that we want to do.

- First: A family of a mother and daughter with a psychological problem, to help with cleaning up the junk around the house and build a fence. **(Photo 2)**
- Second: Dmitryi and his wife live with their daughter who is disabled. They need help to fix their sewer and water supply and build a bathroom inside the house (because so far they must go outside).

Then we met a Jewish family; a mother, father, son and his wife **(Photo 3)**. She is not

Jewish, but she is proud to be in such a Jewish family, and their son. They subsist in severe living conditions in a small Ukrainian town where he does not work, etc. We helped them by giving money to buy medicine for his mother (she has an extremely weak immune system, and the father’s kidney probably will be removed because it does not work). We encouraged them to immigrate to Israel despite the fact that it is not so easy there; however, it is better there, compared to the state of Ukraine with its social assistance at such a low level. The health services are bad, and there is a lack of jobs and no future opportunities for change to improve the situation. The pension in Ukraine is about \$90 to \$100 and the prices are very high.

The next project is to clean up the Jewish cemetery: removal of trash, sweep the trees, grass, etc., fence repair. We want to take part in this group of Polish and German youth as they provide help for the Jewish people.

The last information is very sad: Regina who, after many experiences and severe childhood believed in Yeshua the promised Messiah of Israel, is very ill and it is suspected that she has cancer of the lymph nodes. Please pray for Regina and her father, Michael Margulis. **(Photo 4)** ■

JEWISH HERITAGE TOUR

If any of you would be interested in coming on a Jewish heritage trip this spring, we plan on setting up a small group tour to Poland, where we will visit historic Krakow, a 1,000-year-old city, where Copernicus, Mme. Curie, and others studied; Kaszimirz, the Jewish Quarter, where Schindler’s List was filmed; Schindler’s factory which is now a museum, and Auschwitz concentration camp. From there, we will travel to Ukraine and visit some of our soup kitchens, and you will have the opportunity to see our work first-hand.

A trip like this will give a sense of Jewish heritage and the Jewish world of Eastern Europe that has all but disappeared. We do not yet have definite dates, but are looking at early spring.

If you are interested, write or e-mail me at drschiffman@gmail.com.



PHOTO: NOA CAFRI, WIKIMEDIA