

## Ministry update - June 2023

### Maya\*'s story

Maya\* grew up in the Far North of Russia in a small village. Her father worked as an oil driller and was away from home for weeks. And when he did come home, he preferred going out with friends rather than spending time with his family. This continued throughout Maya\*'s childhood. When Maya\* was 17, her father left home one day and never returned. Sadly, Maya\* still does not know where he is or what happened to him.

Psychologists say that girls have a much greater need for fatherly love than boys, and the lack of it in their childhood often leads them to spend their whole lives looking for it. As I see it, this is exactly what happened to Maya\*.

Her story somehow reminds me that of the Samaritan woman from John 4, only Maya\* did not have six, but much more "husbands", because, apparently, none of them could quench her thirst for the father's love. It is important to note that Maya\* gives an impression of a very strong, intelligent and talented person. And yet, due to this acute lack of love and attention, all her men had a very powerful and, sadly, negative influence on her, which eventually destroyed her life.

Her first boyfriend made her leave the college she had dreamed of so much about. Her second boyfriend was the leader of a criminal gang, and as a result, Maya\* became a very active member of this gang - until the boyfriend was sent to prison. In the gang, Maya\* acquired a couple of new "professions": she became an expert in card games and various kinds of theft. Due to these activities, she could afford a lot, including drugs, since by that time Maya\* had already become a drug addict. If she had continued to abuse heavy drugs for more years than she did, then most likely she would have already been dead. But Maya\* fell in love again, this time with a guy who hated the fact that his girlfriend was a drug addict, so he helped her shift from drugs to alcohol.

Her next boyfriend was an alcoholic too. She gave birth to his child, married him and immigrated with him to Israel (he was Jewish), but soon divorced him, because, on top of everything else, he turned out to be a crook. He did not want to work, stole money from the family budget and regularly left his wife and son without any means of support. The next man Maya\* fell in love with turned out to be a psychopath and an abuser. Maya\* lived with him for eight years, suffered beatings and bullying, and as a result, her drinking problem got much worse. She gave birth to her second son, but at some point both he and the older one were taken away by social services. Then Maya\* met another guy with whom she moved to live in Beer Sheva. He turned out to be a drug addict and soon died...

One day, one of the volunteers of our Women's Shelter was walking down the street and saw Maya\*. Her condition was terrible, and our volunteer offered her rehabilitation in the Shelter. Maya\* agreed and came to us the same day – about 10 months ago.

Maya\*'s rehabilitation is going very well. She started solving her various problems and gradually draws closer to God. I understand that Jesus loves her very much, otherwise how can you explain that a person like her has lived with us for such a long time, leading a completely clean lifestyle, reading the Bible and attending church regularly? Of course, it is not easy for her, sometimes she strongly feels like drinking, sometimes she is tempted to steal something, and she is still looking for love from men. But Maya\* copes with these desires surprisingly well. Please pray that she would forgive her earthly father and would build a close, personal relationship with her Father in Heaven who loves her so much!

### Prayer requests:

Please pray for the manager of our rehab center Wilhelm and his family. This Shabbat he was ordained as co-pastor of our congregation Desert Flowers in Beersheva, after serving as its elder for a considerable

period of time. Please pray for Wilhelm to grow as a leader and for his ministry to bring much good fruit – both in the church and the rehab.

Please keep praying for our outreach in Tel Aviv. We see that people are coming to Aviv Center not just because of the food, but because it is run by believers. Recently a refugee came to the Center, and when we offered him a meal, he refused and just asked us to pray for him and his family, which he had left behind in his homeland. We prayed that the Lord would comfort and support him, and we were encouraged to see that for our visitors Aviv Center is not just a soup kitchen, but a place where the Lord comforts the weary and the burdened.

Please pray for Maya\* - for the health issues she is dealing with and for her attempts to restore relationship with her sons. Also please keep praying for Tami\* - that she would get to know the Lord truly and would overcome alcohol addiction with His help.

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

In Him,

Dov and Olga and Aviv Ministry team



Wilhelm at the Church



A street addict



Prayer in Aviv Center



A birthday celebration in the Shelter