



Amir Tsarfati
The Anchor Podcast with Maayan Tsarfati

<https://youtu.be/ZIVQgMTV8rg?feature=shared>



AMIR: Hey Shalom everyone, I'm Amir Tsarfati. We're here at CONNECT in Galilee and this is one more episode of our *Anchor Podcast*. The hope that we have that comes from our faith, which is an anchor to our soul. And that is why these podcasts

are so important. They aim to bring hope to people that will be an anchor to their souls. A few weeks ago, we hosted Paul Valerio, a Gentile-American who came to faith while he was a student in America. And then God called him to Israel to serve the Jewish people in Israel and the local body of Christ here in the country. And now we have quite the exact mirror to that case. We've got an Israeli whom God called to go to the Gentiles, or at least to the Gentile world and there not only to serve the locals, but also her own people that are traveling after their military service. Today with us is the one and only, my one and only daughter, Maayan Tsarfati. Hi Maayan.

MAAYAN: Hi.

AMIR: Quite an introduction.

MAAYAN: Your one and only!

AMIR: The one and only. You're the only daughter we have. [MAAYAN: That's true.] And so you will always be the one and only. And today I'm going to start with a prayer. And then we're going to dive into an interesting chapter of your life that probably came to an end—at least temporarily—just a few weeks ago. But it is a very significant chapter of your life. So let's start with a prayer and then we'll dive into that.

Lord, I thank You so much for all that You're doing in our lives. You prepare our steps ahead of time. You put the desire in our hearts to follow You and to serve You in ways that we could have never even thought. And Lord, I thank You for Maayan and for the amazing grace and favor You had upon her life so far in doing things that I personally wouldn't dare to do. But yet You gave her courage, stamina, health, and a lot of drive to even go to the uttermost parts of the world to share Your word with her own people. So Lord, I thank You now for this podcast. We ask that You will bless the technical part of it, You will bless the content. And above all, we hope



that this podcast will bless the heart and encourage many to walk in Your ways and to follow Your footsteps. And we pray in the name of the Holy One of Israel, Yeshua. Amen. So Shalom, Maayan.

MAAYAN: Hi.

AMIR: You just arrived in Israel a few weeks ago at the tail end of a long journey that actually, in a way, began a few years ago, before your military service.

MAAYAN: That's true. Yeah.

AMIR: So you finished high school at the age of almost 18. And what happened then?

MAAYAN: And then before high school, I went to a pre-military program called *Hetzim*, arrows in English, which was the first program for messianic Jews for pre-military. There's a lot of, like, for all the Israelis, but not specifically for messianic with a lot of, like, Christian content inside. And in that program, it was two months, I got to know a lot of my friends that I knew before. And with three of them, we found out that all of us go to the military in April, which means we have a lot of time to spare, like, before.

AMIR: You got at least six months to...

MAAYAN: ... even more. Yeah. And we talked about, I don't know how we got to talk about that. We each had a dream to travel to Africa to like, volunteer there. We didn't know when, where, in what program, if it's going to be in a program or something. And then we thought, maybe we can do it [as just] us. It was me, another friend. And we were two guys and two girls. And we decided, wow, we have all this time. We want to serve, not just only go and travel. We want to serve before our military service.

AMIR: So before you are drafted by the country to serve, you felt the urge to serve in your own way in a different capacity somewhere else.

MAAYAN: Exactly, yeah. And specifically because we have all this time and it's a time in our life that we don't have to do anything. We don't have responsibilities because we're just waiting for military service.

AMIR: Well, I know that in your age, a lot of girls will say, yes, let's go [to a] pool party. Let's go to Greece. And let's just go to the disco. So I mean, not...

MAAYAN: ...It's not disco now.

AMIR: No, no, I'm just—Okay, you're right, clubbing. That's what I meant. You can tell how old I am. But what I'm trying to say is that not every teenager before he's even or she's even 18, has on her heart to go and serve, rather than just have a good time. So for you guys, it was: "We want to serve, and we have on our heart the continent of Africa."

MAAYAN: Yeah. And for me, I had a personal example from my aunts and two of them went to Africa to serve. And from a young age, I really thought about that. I don't know what the other volunteers like my friends had in their life to affect that moment that they want to serve specifically in Africa, specifically to orphans. But for me, I know it because of my aunts, because they did it. And I always as a child look up to them for doing that. So for me, when they told me that, I was

like, “Sure, that’s my dream. I always wanted to do that.” And one of them, [in our group] his sister and sister in foster home, did it for the first time in like a medical company, you can say, that



sends medication to children that have HIV in Africa. And she, like his sister, said, why only send meds? They need also emotional support. So she was the first one. That’s why we knew about this

company. And we thought we should go there, too.

AMIR: So one of the guys had a foster sister. He was kind of in a foster home and the sister already did it a year before.

MAAYAN: Yeah, two, three years...

AMIR: ...two, three years before, so you knew more or less that there is a program originally aimed to supply medication to HIV-infected kids in which...?

MAAYAN: ...in Kenya. Kenya, Africa.

AMIR: And you went there for emotional, spiritual support.

MAAYAN: Exactly. We knew from that sister, which is she’s also Christian, that they are Christian in that home, which was really surprising for us. And they encourage to teach them about the Bible, about the New Testament to the children. They encourage that. So, we thought, that’s amazing. We can also go there and support them emotionally because they’re kids, like all other kids, emotionally, also, when we went there...

AMIR: How many children are in that place?

MAAYAN: 30, 30 something, maybe 31.

AMIR: And none of them has his parents there?

MAAYAN: No, they're all abandoned as a child or as a baby, or they were taken from the parents because the parents have like addiction issues.

AMIR: So how many local adults were taking care of them?

MAAYAN: So there were three, and then one of them went to like a medical procedure while we were there, so there were two at the end.



AMIR: Two over 30 kids and then four of you.

MAAYAN: Then four of us, yeah.

AMIR: So I guess they relied on you for emotional support for the adults, not only for the kids.

MAAYAN: Exactly. Also, they wanted us and also we wanted to help with all the chores that only those two grown women, one of them [had] her own child in that home growing up with the other children. So we help them also do all the laundry for 30 kids, and a lot of stuff and like cooking and stuff. And also their school, which was like, I don't know, 30 meters from the home, really close. I don't know if it's just their school, maybe for the whole village. They wanted us to come and teach them. Even like, we were like, what are we going to teach? We're 18. So we taught them English, sports outside. I taught them dancing, just made up some dances before. So that was really cool. They wanted us to also not just play with the kids and support them, also do other stuff that really supports and helps the teachers there. And it helps the other kids that are not orphans, but they also need a lot of help because they live in such a poor place.

AMIR: So you're almost 18 and instead of going to parties and all carnivals, festivals, clubbing and pools, you're traveling. First of all, you had to be vaccinated in how many vaccines? Like 15?

MAAYAN: I don't remember. No, less, less. I don't remember, but I just remember then I didn't have to do vaccination before the army.

AMIR: Yeah, because you already took it.

MAAYAN: We had everything. I had everything before.

AMIR: And so, you know, you risked your life. You took the precious time before a very, very trying time in the military. Military in Israel is not a stroll in a park. And then you were greatly rewarded by being there with those kids.

MAAYAN: Oh, definitely. It was amazing. I remember I described it—maybe it was like in the group chat for the family group chat or to my friends—while I was there that it's hell in heaven because it's hell physically because I was always sick. I was always coughing because there's a lot of bacteria that I never were exposed [to] or a lot of dust everywhere. So I remember I had a lot of physical things and dehydrated all the time, sick all the time. So it was hell physically, but



heaven emotionally because it was so amazing to be with those kids. I really like kids. And those kids treat me like I'm their mother, their big sister, and they don't even know me. Of course, it took a couple of days to warm up.

AMIR: Do you have anything to see from that place? Maybe you can show us.

MAAYAN: Oh, yeah, we have a lot of pictures of them. We have one if we can show us. Yeah, we were outside in the yard just playing with them. They obviously cows. That's the only source of milk.

AMIR: How old are these kids?

MAAYAN: So the oldest was 13. He's not here [in pictures]. And the youngest was a year old. She is not here also. Yeah, one day they wanted to do braids with my hair. And then I woke up



and my head was so sore because it was so tight. So I asked all the children to help me take it off.

AMIR: Look at them. [Laughter]

And what is this?

MAAYAN: So, at the last days at the orphanage, we decided to show them also that we are equal to them; we're all like sons and daughters of God. And because we are coming, maybe we have more money from a developed country. We're not different from them. And also it was really hard for them that we got to know them and then go away like all the other volunteers. But we're special. We're not like other volunteers. We believe in the same faith. So we washed their feet, all the children. And this is the mother that runs the whole place.

AMIR: They were shocked.



MAAYAN: They were shocked. They were crying like little children that was crying. They didn't know how to react to that because no one ever showed them those kind of stuff like, even love. They didn't have love from a lot of people, even

love from volunteers. They come for like a month and then they go. So how they can really love them.

AMIR: And how long were you there?

MAAYAN: I was there a month and a half also. They wanted us to stay more. They asked us to stay more. But then we said we all have to go to the military. We want to stay more, but we can't.



AMIR: And I remember the first thing you did when you came back home is, "Dad, we need to buy shoes to all of them."

MAAYAN: They were always taking our shoes. Of course, we're not the same size, but they were always taking our shoes. We had like sandals, like Israeli sandals, and they *loved* it. They always take it because also they don't have each one their own shoes. They have shoes and they all shared. Like also I remember giving them at the end like pictures. And that's the only position that they have that is just theirs. So they were hiding it under their blanket or under...

AMIR: The photo?

MAAYAN: Yeah, just a photo because they don't have things that they were just theirs. All the things in the orphanage are for everybody. So they were really excited to have shoes for their own.

AMIR: You went to choose the shoes for them, and we sent them via that medical organization a box filled with brand new shoes for them.

MAAYAN: Exactly, it was amazing.

AMIR: Did they love it?

MAAYAN: Wow, they sent us updates with the shoes. They really loved it. And it was really meaningful for them, not just because it's like new shoes that are not like torn up, because it's their own, their only belonging.

AMIR: Yeah. Wow, and then God did amazing things through and with you in the military. We're not at liberty to say where you were. I will just say you served in the Navy.

MAAYAN: Yeah.

AMIR: That's it, we won't say more.

MAAYAN: I really liked my military service.

AMIR: You had a very significant role and position. And the great thing is that just as God fulfilled the desires of your heart to go to Africa, He also fulfilled the desires of your heart for that specific position in the military, [MAAYAN: Exactly] which very, very, very few get to do.

MAAYAN: That's true. I really wanted that and prayed and everything.

AMIR: You wanted that, and you aimed very high, and you got it eventually. So you had a very meaningful military service. And so the Africa chapter was over that was serving them, serving the locals, serving the Gentiles in a far remote country. Then what's next?

MAAYAN: So it always sticks with me, like the thoughts about Africa going to a foreign country. Also specifically like a third world country. I felt very comfortable there. I felt like they need all that support. And I always continue thinking about that and that I had to do it more, I had to go to more places to serve and also just go and see the other places. Like I remember in Africa, it's a very, you know, pagan place, specifically Kenya. It's a Christian country. But there's a lot of demons and stuff.

AMIR: A lot of witchcraft and pagan worship.

MAAYAN: Yeah, it was a brand-new thing that opened for me, not like in a good way. But I felt like the strong need for God's presence there.

So I finished my military service. And then I went traveling a little bit with my friends. Then I came back to Israel [and] worked. And then I finished working in a certain place. I remember talking to my friend, like, "Today, I'm going to... it's my last day at work. I'm not going to work there anymore." And then she said, "Wait, if you're not going to work there anymore, why won't you join us to the mission trip to India?" And I'm like, oh, and before that, I said no because I worked. And I didn't think I need to go there. But then it was my last day. I'm like, oh, that's true. I can go there like nothing's stopping me from going there. So I figured out a few stuff. And it was through Jews for Jesus, this organization that sends a group of Israelis to India or to South America, which is places that all of Israelis go to travel after their military service. And it's also like a platform that the Christian Israelis can go and have also like a trip after the army and like travel together. We read together, we pray together, which is a thing that you don't have if you don't go with a group. And also, to share our beliefs with other Israelis that travel there.

AMIR: So God is taking you to the other side of the globe to minister to your own people.

MAAYAN: That's true. [AMIR: ... in a way.] Yeah.

AMIR: And sometimes it's the only way to get someone to be open and to really listen. Because when you are here, the troubles and the stress and the family around and all the worries of life, you know, it all falls on your shoulders here and you're less attentive to the things of God. But when you travel, you're softer, I guess, and you're more open to receiving. And so tell us a little bit about what happened to you in India. What were you doing there exactly?

MAAYAN: So in India...

AMIR: ...Which part of India?

MAAYAN: It was the north of India, the Himalayan. A lot of villages there that a lot of Israelis go for decades there to travel there. So, it's a well-known place for Israelis. It's funny, like all cities that talk in Hebrew, Indians talk in Hebrew and like Hebrew signs. And we wanted to go there and talk with people because we know that after the military service, a lot of, all of the people need to choose what they're doing with their life, what direction they're going and they explore a lot of new stuff to know what they like, what they don't like. So it was a great opportunity to talk with all of them. Also, a lot of them went to hard times in the military and they just want to escape and run away from it. And [we] talk about them, about our beliefs, why we are here as Christians, why we believe it as Jewish and Israeli. That was the—we didn't like to go in the streets and say, "We are Christians, come in and ask us things about it." No, we were just living and traveling there, and they asked us how we know each other. And we said, "We're messianic Jews, we're Christians." And they're like, what is that? So all of them were interested about it because they don't know it even exists in Israel. Israelis, Jewish people that believe in Jesus? That's like a Gentile thing, you can't believe in Jesus if you're Jewish. That's weird, but they see us. I did the military service like them. I'm an Israeli. I went to school like them, but you're so—They'd say,

they told me, “You’re so normal, you’re so regular! How could you believe in such a foreign thing?”

So we had a lot of talks about that.

AMIR: So you could open the Bible with them and show them.

MAAYAN: Show them that it’s the most Jewish thing to believe in.

AMIR: Show them Isaiah and Jeremiah and Hosea and Micah...

MAAYAN: Exactly, yeah.

AMIR: Wow, what a—and did they listen?

MAAYAN: You know, some of them. Some of them were more interested to hear about it. Some of them not. A lot of them were in the Jewish really hardcore religion.

AMIR: They left religion, and they became a bit secular. But still, if it’s about any religious stuff, they would hold on to Orthodox Judaism.

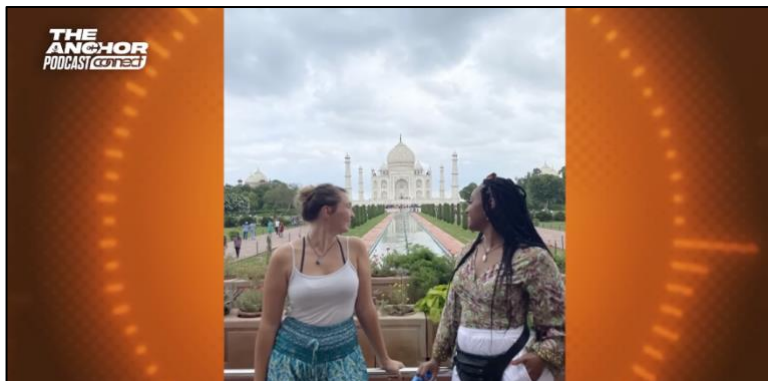
MAAYAN: Yeah, so it was really almost *unholy* that I’m talking about Jesus and holding the New Testament. So, they didn’t want to think about it. A lot of people [said], “Just leave me alone. I came here to have fun.” Maybe experiencing drugs and stuff so they don’t want to talk about serious stuff. And a lot of them were like, “We want to learn, we want to talk with you.”

AMIR: I guess we have some footage from India.

MAAYAN: Yeah, exactly.

AMIR: Let’s see, maybe a glimpse of what you guys went through over there. So maybe we can

put the first one.



MAAYAN: Yeah, we went with the whole group. So we started at the Taj Mahal. This is me and I’m one of my best friends, you know. She invited

me actually to this journey. So we went first to the Taj Mahal, seen a little bit of India. And then we went to the north to all day, you know, Israel, India, you can say. This is from actually...

AMIR: ... Some friends?

MAAYAN: Yeah, exactly. Some friends. [reference to picture taken with monkeys]. And we went to the north of India. At that time, there was a lot of like holidays, specifically that I remember sending it to my friends and saying, “There’s not like pagan works here. Don’t worry.” And then



I sent them this. Because in India, there’s...

AMIR: ...thousands of gods

MAAYAN: Everywhere, a lot of statues, a lot of pictures. It was crazy. Talking about Jesus there, I felt like [Gesture: deep breath in]

it’s hard even like just going there, walking there. Even if you don’t believe in anything, people that are atheist, they sell all of that. I’m like, whoa, that’s kind of creepy. And also beyond creepy, people actually believe and sacrifice their life for this, and a lot of gods, kind of ridiculous. I know they can say about my faith that it’s ridiculous. But see all this, like, I know that blue gods with six hands and like a monkey, which is a god, a lot of things like that. And they go and worship them.

AMIR: Yes. Were you able to visit some local congregations there?

MAAYAN: Yeah, actually, this is amazing that there are even congregations in India.

AMIR: Like church.

MAAYAN: Yeah, such a pagan place. So yeah, we had...

AMIR: ... It's different than...?

MAAYAN: So different. Yeah, and we took a video from there.

AMIR: Okay, let's see. There's a video from the local Christian church there in India. We see that they're all barefoot, obviously.

MAAYAN: Yeah, we sit on the floor. [AMIR: You sit on the floor...] Because it's part of the culture. That's the thing. We believe in the same thing, but so different cultures. It was shocking. Women on the right and men on the left, we all sit on the floor. And they all dress like Indians, of course, like traditional, you can say. Which was, of course, like for me weird, because I thought the traditional is necessarily mean religious, but it's not, even like the thing here, the tilaka...

AMIR: I see. So how long was that journey?

MAAYAN: That was, I think, exactly a month we went there. Yeah.

AMIR: And so you got back from there, and what's next? How did you...?

MAAYAN: So I came back from there. And I remember I wanted to start a new job. And then there were issues, like where I'm going to work. And the progress went for a long time. So I was like, I'm not going to sit and wait.

AMIR: It was security clearance that you were waiting.

MAAYAN: Security clearance, exactly.

AMIR: Top secret security clearance that you were supposed to take.

MAAYAN: Yeah, so it took time. So I thought, what can I do like between? I don't know. Maybe I'll go find another job, whatever. And then a friend told me about this place in Brazil, which is like a hostel.

AMIR: A youth hostel?

MAAYAN: A hostel for backpackers. And from an organization called Chosen People in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. And they told me that it's like two Americans from the Chosen People, like a couple....

AMIR: ...So Chosen People Ministries that is based in America. There is a couple from that organization that moved to Brazil to Rio de Janeiro to open that specific place. So what do we see



here?

MAAYAN: So, this is a picture from the hostel. This is a lot of Israeli guests that came. We had a couple of international. And we cooked together. We did dinner

together.

AMIR: Friday evening, Shabbat dinner?

MAAYAN: Yeah, Shabbat dinner. And we just lived together and of course talked with them about our faith, who we are. And we offered for Israelis, for Israeli backpackers to stay free.

AMIR: Free? Wow. No wonder it was packed with people.

MAAYAN: Of course, we explained it as God blessed us so much, so we want to bless you. Like we raised donation. Like normally like the people that organize this place raise donation so people can stay there free and be blessed; because God blessed us so much we want to bless His people. That's like what we told them. Of course, for them, it was weird because it's like, "Okay, maybe American organization, Christian; okay, they love Israel." But I'm an Israeli who volunteered there. That was the weird part for them. So we went; me and my best friend.

AMIR: So both in India and in Brazil, they had a hard time figuring you out.

MAAYAN: Exactly. Like what are you doing with those people? You're different...

AMIR: You are one of us [MAAYAN: Exactly.] and yet you're one of them.

MAAYAN: Yeah, they didn't know how to understand that.

AMIR: And how long was that one?

MAAYAN: Brazil, a month and a half, maybe almost two months.

AMIR: Almost two months. And you met quite a few Israelis there.

MAAYAN: Yeah, actually there they just opened the hostel. So it wasn't like a working hostel. We didn't meet a lot of Israelis. We went a lot to Rio de Janeiro and told about this place because nobody knew this place. We went to the city. [AMIR: So, you did PR.] Yeah, it was less like hostel life. We went there and talked about this place, invited a lot of people for Shabbat dinner and stay with us. But nobody knew this place. At the end, I actually closed this place because the location was not good, and also the facilities. But they took an inspiration to open this place from another place that is like working for years with a lot of people going there, a lot of people know this place in Argentina.

AMIR: Okay. And that brings us to the last chapter of your international journey so far.

MAAYAN: Exactly.

AMIR: And that is Patagonia in...

MAAYAN: Bariloche, Patagonia

AMIR: Bariloche, Patagonia in the southernmost part of Argentina.

MAAYAN: Yeah. And like in the middle of Argentina, really close to Chile. So after I came back from Brazil, I started working for like a year at the company. The war started.

MAAYAN: You had quite an action in your reserve during the war. I mean, mostly it was northern Israel, but in a few locations. But then you, thankfully, right before the ceasefire, in fact, right before we started the big war in the north with Hezbollah, you then left to your...

MAAYAN: To travel.

AMIR: Yeah. To do your own thing. Traveling in different parts of Southeast Asia.

MAAYAN: Exactly.

AMIR: And this is where we met in the Philippines. Remember?

MAAYAN: Exactly, yeah.

AMIR: In between your Thailand and your Vietnam experience you stopped in the Philippines for a few days. And then from there, you joined us to the Caribbean cruise, where we taught Revelation and Daniel. And from there, when the cruise was over, you joined your friend, and you traveled to Argentina.

MAAYAN: Yeah. I met my friend for a few days, like just traveling in the United States. And then I went alone to Argentina to volunteer there.

AMIR: In another youth hostel.

MAAYAN: Yeah. So I was thinking that I was traveling for a lot of time in all different countries. Most of the time I didn't meet Christians. And then I wanted to meet up with a very good friend of mine that I met at the hostel in Brazil. She was another volunteer, but she's American. And I told her, "Oh, I'm going to finish the cruise. I'm going to be in the United States. We should meet." And then she told me, "Actually, I'm going to be in Argentina volunteering in a hostel." I'm like, "What? What hostel?" And then she told me about it and told her, "I'm going to come." I wanted to end this travel with Christian people. And specifically, she told me it's like a service to share the gospel. I'm like, "Wow, that's exactly what I want to do." And so I continued traveling. I talked

with her in Thailand, forgot about this whole thing. I actually went to the cruise. And then I went to Argentina without any expectation. I didn't know anything about this place.

AMIR: I know, we were kind of worried as parents.

MAAYAN: Yeah, because I didn't know what to say.

AMIR: Yeah, you're saying, "Well, I'm going to Argentina." And we're like, "Okay, what's next? And what's this time all about?" But we were quite amazed. I mean, you were quiet for a long time because you were so busy enjoying it.

MAAYAN: Exactly. It was an amazing experience. I didn't know what I'm going to go into. I just heard from a friend, and she's going to be there. I'm like, "Oh, I'm going to come."

AMIR: Which organization?

MAAYAN: It's Life of Messiah.

AMIR: Life of Messiah.

MAAYAN: Yeah. So I didn't know about this place. I know a lot of Christian Israelis like messianic Jews didn't know about this place. So I was surprised that Israelis go to this place. And when I went there, I was surprised, especially after the experience in Brazil, that we didn't go and tell about this place; Israelis came all the time. The hostel was packed. And it was the same concept as Brazil. They didn't have to pay for their nights there. And it was like the blessing. They want to bless the Israelis.

AMIR: So now you changed the food to good Argentinian. I think we have a photo of the...

MAAYAN: Yeah, we did an *asado outside*. [Barbeque]

AMIR: *Asado outside*, okay. I think we have one from the time in Argentina. Maybe we can... There you go [Slide below appears on screen].

MAAYAN: All of the behind is a lot of Israeli guests that came there. I remember it was my first days, I think, there. And then they made the *asado*. A beautiful place. The hostel is called Shelter by the Lake and it's literally, by the lake. Like the backyard is going to the lake. Amazing lake.



This is the backyard in front of this beautiful mountain. The most amazing place to stay there and live there for a month, and experience life there. Because this is the view I woke up [to] every day. The water is

so clean everywhere. I can drink. And actually I drank from this lake. So, so, wow—so clean there. Also, all Patagonia. I didn't travel after, but I knew from a lot of backpackers that came about Patagonia is amazing.

AMIR: And one of the things, the family that operates Shelter by the Lake is encouraging people to come is rock climbing.

MAAYAN: Exactly. The main thing of this place is rock climbing.

AMIR: I think we can see you there. [Picture not shown here].



MAAYAN: That's me. That's the first time I went rock climbing. Yeah. So, the big thing that a lot of Israelis hear about and then come, that this place has a lot of rock climbers and we have a lot of gear,

like the rock climbing, like the ropes and the stuff and the harnesses. So people came to do that, and we go together and do rock climbing.

AMIR: And did you have some meaningful time of sharing with them?

MAAYAN: Exactly. Definitely. Because they come, they come and they know, they're like; maybe they're Americans, they don't live with the same thing, they're Christian, but they like doing activities that they like. They go rock climbing and really the family that operates [it] love rock climbing. So they do it every day almost. So they went, we went rock climbing together. We come back to the shelter. We make food together. A lot of like it's a big thing like the Shabbat dinner.

AMIR: And again, you were the hard thing to understand.

MAAYAN: Exactly. I was actually the first Israeli volunteer there, which surprised me also. I didn't know that. Like while I was there and I was asking and them, they say, "No, there's only American volunteers." So, the Israelis, like, always assume I'm just like a backpacker who went there and stayed to volunteer. They never guessed at the beginning that I'm like one of them, you can say the same belief. Although I talked about it, and it was always surprising to them. They always want to talk, especially with me more because I speak Hebrew, which is really convenient for them. And also why I believe it also. Like we understand why they believe it. Like they don't care to hear about it, but they're like it's a "foreign religion." Like, "they're Gentile. Makes sense. But why do you believe it? And you came here, and you talk with them, like you're part of them, but you're part of us. You're also a backpacker. You just finished backpacking in India, in Thailand, in places like we all go. So why do you do this? Like, why do you do it different?"

AMIR: And one of the reasons I believe is because they expect from *religious* [Gesture: Hand quotes] people to look different and be different. And it's hard for them to understand that you can

be a law abiding, serving in the military, paying taxes, working hard for your living, and at the same time, holding on to your beliefs in the Old and New Testaments. Which is really, really by itself is something very strange for Israelis. And you know, it breaks my heart that the Bible tells us in the Old Testament that the New Testament was actually given to Israel. And yet all of them are convinced it's not for them.

MAAYAN: Exactly, I have a lot of conversations about that. I remember one of them that was surprised that I believe in Jesus. He asked me about this faith. And I told them that God is still the God of Israel. [AMIR: Yes] And he told me, "But you know, most of the Israelis do not believe in your God or in any God. So how could it be?" And I told them that God doesn't change. It doesn't matter if the people of Israel still believe or not. It's not relevant. God made a promise, and the promise will be kept.

AMIR: Exactly. And I'm reading from Yirmiyahu, Jeremiah 31. It's very easy to remember. It's always **Jeremiah 31:31–34**. I'm reading and it says, "³¹ **Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant,...**" In the Hebrew: *B'rit HaChadashah*, New Testament, "³¹... **with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—** ³² **not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.** ³³ **But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts;...**"

In other words, God is saying I gave them the law of Moses to show them that they are unable to fulfill it. They broke it, but I'm going to give them another one that is a spiritual regeneration. It's not the written, I will write it in their minds, in their hearts. It's different. And then He says, "³⁴ ... **No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, "Know the**

LORD,” for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity,...’” In other words, the New Testament is a spiritual birth, and it evolves in forgiveness of sins.

And that is exactly what the prophet Isaiah also in the Old Testament said about the role of the Messiah, to come and to become the ultimate sacrifice for the people of Israel and for the world. So their iniquities and their sins will be upon Him. And by His bruises and wounds, we are healed. All of us have gone astray, each and every one of us has turned to his own way and the Lord put upon Him the chastisement of us all. So it’s quite amazing that it’s the Old Testament, it’s the Tanakh, it’s the book that every Israeli should at least know, and that talks about everything we believe. And yet they don’t know that. And it seems to them that you’re offering them something not Jewish, non-Biblical, something of someone else.

And so, wow, what a privilege it is to have a portion of your life dedicated to both help and serve HIV-infected children far in Africa, and if I may, I remember you also helped the adults there, not just the kids; but also then to see Israeli backpackers both in India, Brazil and Argentina, and to be able to share with them, your own people, about the Messiah and the atoning death and the hope, the way and the life that we can only get from Him. What an amazing thing. You had to go to the other side of the world, both sides, to find your own people and to share with them the truth. Thank you, Maayan, for being here with us. Thank you for listening to God and obeying His calling upon your life. We can’t wait for your next chapter.

And I hope that this podcast brought a lot of joy and encouragement to all of you that God has placed everyone in the right place for you to minister to your own people also, wherever you are, whether it’s your home, your school, workplace, your town, your state, your country, or maybe

even taking you to the other side of the globe. But still, it's the same message and it's the only hope. And it's the only faith that gives you hope, which is the anchor to our soul.

And so having said that, I want to thank you, Maayan, for being with us. Thank you for being with us all. Remember, in order to get this encouraging podcast out there, we need you to like, comment, subscribe, and share. Thank you. God bless you. And Shalom from Galilee, Israel.

* Scripture is taken from the New King James Version unless noted otherwise.

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