

The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry Inc.

# GLOBAL REPORT

Spring 2022

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## Taking the Gospel Down Under

*Learn the many ways the FOI Team in New Zealand is growing!*

With active volcanoes, ancient glaciers, snow-capped mountains, and endless rolling hills, the land of New Zealand earns acclaim as one of the most beautiful destinations in the world. But since the pandemic began in 2020, New Zealand has been placed under some of the tightest restrictions of any nation, and residents are learning to navigate life under these ever-changing rules.

New Zealand is known to be a highly secular country, suffering from a slow decline of religious beliefs nationwide. There has been a dramatic shift recently with more than half the population claiming no religious affiliation at all.

Today, Replacement Theology, Dominionism, and a general disregard for God's redemptive

plan for Israel has swept through the Bible colleges and churches to such an extent that there are few who care about the Jewish people. Terrifyingly, outward acts of anti-Semitism have been growing in New Zealand where thousands of Jewish people live and work.

Despite these challenges, God is using this season as an opportunity to bless FOI's work



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in New Zealand by expanding and growing our ministry and team. I'm excited to introduce our newest FOI representative, Paul Gray, who is spearheading our FOI NZ team. Paul officially began serving with FOI in New Zealand in January.

Paul is native to New Zealand and has spent much of his life in ministry. He and his wife Therese have been married for 25 years and have five children: Hannah (22), Simon (20), Joshua (18), Monique (15), and Isaac (12). Paul is incredibly passionate about sharing the life-changing power of the gospel as he makes disciples down under, and his faith is deeply rooted in biblical truth.

**As you get to know Paul, his story, and his new mission with FOI, would you prayerfully consider how you can help Paul with his ministry in New Zealand?**

### **PAUL'S UNLIKELY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY**

Paul grew up in a non-Christian home with no religious teaching. His biological father left the family when Paul was only two years

old. In Paul's early 20s, through a series of God-ordained events, he and his sister, Vivien, were introduced for the first time to their father's sister, Lorraine. From the moment Paul met his "Aunty Lorraine" he knew there was something different about her. Aunty Lorraine introduced them to their biological father and, ultimately, to their heavenly Father.

For two years, Lorraine prayed for Paul, invited him to church, and talked with him about Jesus. Against all odds, Paul finally agreed to attend an evening church service. Once there, he heard the gospel, felt convicted of his sin, and began to understand his need for a Savior. Yet, he wrestled with the decision to accept Jesus the Messiah. At the time, Paul and his friends were heavily involved in a social scene that revolved around alcohol.



Paul with a big catch



The Gray family

Paul with The Friends of Israel tour group



“Was I willing to give up my pleasure-seeking lifestyle? Was I willing to lose my friends and start all over? At the time I thought the cost was too great,” Paul recollects.

But just days later, Paul would return to church and hear the gospel once again. That night, Paul came to Yeshua in faith and accepted the gift of eternal salvation. From then on, Paul’s life was motivated by the declaration in Philippians 1:21; “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

### COMMITMENT TO SCRIPTURE

Immediately the Holy Spirit developed in Paul an insatiable hunger for the Word of God. He dove into one-on-one discipleship, regularly attended Bible studies, and eagerly sought out every opportunity to soak in the truth of God’s Word, eventually being called to Adelaide College of Ministries and Dallas Theological Seminary. As Paul’s study of theology deepened, he gained a greater appreciation of God’s plan and purpose for the nation of Israel.

It was through FOI representative, Dr. Deane Woods, that Paul learned about The Friends



of Israel Gospel Ministry and the impact we make every day all around the world.

### MINISTRY IN REAL TIME

Paul has been serving faithfully as a pastor in New Zealand for more than two decades. His experience has positioned him to step into his role at FOI in several significant ways. Paul fights Replacement Theology by teaching God’s truth in churches and at conferences, specifically sharing God’s plan for His Chosen People and the nation of Israel. He is replacing Simon Lawry who is transitioning to work for FOI in Australia. Simon described Paul joining the FOI team this way:

**“Paul’s role in leading the mission in New Zealand is pivotal to making the mission known among more believers, but it is also**

**critical in challenging the leaders and pastors to return to the fundamental principles of Bible interpretation.”**

Our mission is to teach biblical truth that resonates with the Lord’s unending love and draws people into an encounter with the God who always keeps His promises. Paul is uniquely equipped for the task, both theologically and interpersonally. His heart for the Jewish people is profoundly clear in that regard.

Paul says, “My love and concern for the Jewish people stem primarily from the Word of God and knowing the plans that God has for His people. Also knowing and seeing the hatred directed towards Jewish people throughout history stirs my concern, compassion, and love for His people.”

## **LOVE FOR ISRAEL**

Showing the love of Jesus to the Jewish people is not simply a matter of sharing the gospel with them; it’s standing in solidarity with them as they face growing animosity and hatred towards them. Paul is burdened by this situation, “If ever there was a time when Christians need the gospel truth shared and lived out, it’s now.” Paul’s leadership and passion for ministering to the Jewish community is vital for such a time as this.

Beyond his teaching ministry, Paul is deeply investing in relationships with rabbis, Jewish businesses, and neighbors. His main focal points are the Jewish communities in Auckland and Wellington in the North Island, and Christchurch in the South Island. Paul oversees our backpacking center ministry, Meet at

the Mountain, where we have the exciting opportunity to host Israeli backpackers who are hiking the scenic mountains of New Zealand, as tourism allows.

If that isn’t enough, Paul oversees the distribution of FOI literature and manages the FOI office in the Auckland area. We praise God that we are expanding, and that He’s led Paul to us as part of our growth. Please pray God will greatly bless the Gray family as they begin their ministry. Pray God will provide housing and community connections, as well as strength for their mission.

As we propel forward in 2022, we believe that God is going to continue to show His faithfulness and blessing in New Zealand, specifically through the ministry of Paul and his family. **Paul believes that, “Our world is in turmoil and Christians have the answer.”**

**You are a critical part of the answer in New Zealand!** With growth comes the need for your continued financial and prayer support. Our New Zealand “ground force” needs friends like you to advance the ministry that God has begun with Paul Gray and his family.

**Will you please consider giving what you can, today, to support the work of The Friends of Israel in New Zealand?**

*Mike Stallard*



**Mike Stallard**  
Director of International Ministries

If God has spoken to you about providing much-needed support for the ministry of Paul Gray, please send your gift to The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc, PO Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099, or visit [foi.org/global-report](http://foi.org/global-report) to donate online.