Y2K Jerusalem
By Bill Williamson

Where were you on Y2K, (year 2000)? We were in Jerusalem.

People in Jerusalem were scared, just like in the USA, and most parts of the world. They wondered what would happen when the computers around the world clicked over into the new century. It was believed that computers would not handle the change and our system as we know it would collapse.

Many saved water, stored canned goods, wondered about our electrical power, worried about attack, and wanted to retreat to the mountains far away from it all. Some of my friends did run into the mountains and hide. One friend in Jerusalem had a special room full of dried foods, water, and medical supplies. He assured us that we would be welcome should it be we needed any of these supplies. I wondered what the throngs without supplies would do in search of something to eat, or drink. Wouldn’t they be seeking out these homes with the supply rooms full?

Others wanted to go to far away lands because the USA would surely be alone in the Y2K blight, or at least the worst for it with our high-tech life style. From all the fear, came a huge distraction for the Body of Christ world wide. There seemed to be two camps of believers. The one was fearful, like most others who had no relationship with Christ. The other camp, which we are part of, felt we wanted to be at the center of whatever God is doing in the world. If He wanted us to minister the love of Christ in a full-blown crisis for lack of food and water, then that we would do.

‘Where would we run too, Lord?’ Peter asked, when Jesus ask the disciples if they were going to leave him too. There is no better place to be than coupled in a yoke with Jesus Christ, no matter what crisis hits this earth.

Maureen and I witnessed Y2K a full eight hours before the east coast of the U.S. We even talked by phone to our congregation in Nevada as they awaited the stroke of midnight and the start of Y2K. We had experienced the eight hours of the new year in Jerusalem without any threat or harm.

At the stroke of midnight New Year’s Eve, we sat fifteen feet from the opening of the tomb where the stone was rolled away, and Jesus rose again. We worshiped God as year 1999 slipped away, and Y2K came into existence. The worship was sweet in the Garden Tomb as two thousand of us gathered, and there was no thought, or fear, of the dreaded 2000. Maureen and I arrived late and there were no seats available, so we were ushered right into the center of things and given seats right next to the tomb opening, where the stone was rolled away. There was no one closer to where Jesus lay, than us. We felt privileged to sit there and worship our King who rose from there. The grave could not hold Jesus.
A week earlier, Christmas of 1999 was unique as we journeyed through the Israeli checkpoint into Bethlehem for the Christmas-Eve celebration. We gathered with a dozen others to hand out tracts, and sing God’s praises, in Manger Square where Jesus was said to have been born. Thousands from around the world gathered in the Arab community. We boldly proclaimed our Messiah to anyone who would listen, including Israeli TV, and ABC TV cameras. Our small band of devoted believers was seen across the US and Israel singing off key and praising God.

In the span of a week we had worshiped Jesus at Bethlehem, the place of his birth, and at the Garden Tomb, the place of his death. We continue to celebrate his birth, death on the cross, and his resurrection every year. And will until he returns again.

Our hope for this year is that we will again witness God throughout this special season, and the new year to come, Y2K1. And again in Y2K2 . . . And Y2K whatever . . .

It has been difficult in some years to enter, Bethlehem, because of the age-old bitterness between Arab and Jew. But can’t we all take a small stand, maybe even a large one, where we are? Let’s purpose to tell someone the real purpose for Christmas. So many don’t know . . . are we bold enough to try? They are waiting to hear!

Give a gift that will last throughout eternity this Christmas. It’s free and won’t stretch the budget, it won’t put pressure on anyone to feel they have to give something in return. It won’t create a competitiveness lasting through next Christmas, but will create love deep in someone’s heart and their next Christmas will be totally different, just like their lives.

Y2K turned out to be just like any other year. A good year to tell someone about the free gift of salvation Jesus offers everyone.