



The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.
740 5th Street, Suite 12, Bristol, TN 37620
Phone: 423 652-1188

Phone: 423 652-1188 Fax: 423 652-2788 Email: 4znsake@earthlink.net Web: www.forzionsake.org

Passover Edition

Update on Rabbi Joe

Shalom Chaverim (Friends),

Dawn and I extend our most heartfelt love, thanks and blessings to all of you who have been praying for my healing and full recovery. As many of you know I was diagnosed in early January 2012 with "Hairy Cell Leukemia." Hairy Cell is an extremely rare form of Leukemia. Only about 500 people in the United States are diagnosed with it annually. The good news is that it is a slow growing cell and the success rate from chemotherapy is very high. Many people never need a second round of chemo because it can take 30 years for the cell to grow back; but we are believing for a complete healing anyway.

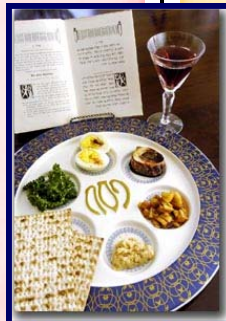
I took chemotherapy at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston Salem, NC during the last week of January and have been recovering since then. When I got home I developed a fissure in my bowel. The doctors told me it was a miracle that I lived through it since my immune system was virtually wiped out by the chemotherapy and the disease. But through it all I never developed an infection!

My blood counts have been rising since then, some to normal ranges and others to the low end of normal. The doctors have released me to resume a normal life. Hallelujah!

I go back in a few weeks for another bone marrow biopsy to check on the progress of things. Please pray for a good report and that they find no more cancer. Again, thanks to every one of you for standing with us and believing for my healing. Some even fasted for me. I am very touched. With love:

For Zion's Sake,
Rabbi Joe Bell and Dawn Bell

P.S. Due to my recovery time, we decided not to hold our annual community Passover Banquet this year. I will be teaching Passover in several churches throughout the region. We plan to be back with a special event for Shavuot (Pentecost), details to come. Sorry for the inconvenience.



Sharing Jesus With Our Jewish Friends (pt.2) ~The Passover Connection~

Dear Friends,

As I mentioned last month, people often ask me how to share Jesus with their Jewish friends or relatives. The best way I know is to tell them about the way people shared Jesus with me. When people first began to share the Gospel with me, they used Messianic prophecies from the Tenach (The Old Testament). They asked me questions such as, "**Do Jewish people have a covenant with God?**" and "**Are you aware that God made a New Covenant with the Jewish people through Jesus?**"

Such questions caused me to think and search my own copy of the Hebrew Scriptures that I received on the day I was made a Bar Mitzvah (Son of the Commandment) at age 13. As I said before, I thought I knew the Scriptures fairly well, so I was willing to look at the Messianic Prophecies with my Christian friends. What I discovered was eye-opening to say the least.

Moses or Jesus?

Growing up in the large Jewish community of Newton, Massachusetts, I was taught that we Jews followed Moses and that Christians followed Jesus. Moses was our main man, the main man in Judaism next to God Himself. They always taught me that we Jews were the Chosen People and that we had a covenant with God through Moses. Therefore, we didn't need Jesus. All we had to do was keep the 613 commandments in the Torah and we could be a Tzadik (righteous one). Sounded fine to me until the day I was twenty-nine and read the following verse from the Jewish prophet Jeremiah: "**Behold days are coming declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with**

Continued on page 2 →

the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, declares the Lord. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord, I will put My Torah (Law) within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.” Jeremiah 31:31-33. This verse came as a shock to me for a couple reasons: 1. Jeremiah said we broke God’s covenant through Moses. And, 2. God would make a New Covenant with the Jewish people sometime after we broke the first covenant. I had never seen or heard that we Jews had broken our covenant with God and I had never been told that God was going to make a New Covenant with us! I bet most of your Jewish friends have no idea that their Bible says they broke His covenant with them through Moses or that there even exists a New Covenant mentioned in the Jewish Bible, but you can ask them and find out for yourself. For those who want to read God’s indictment against the Jewish people for breaking their covenant with God, I suggest reading the first couple chapters of Jeremiah or Isaiah. Jeremiah 31:31 states it very clearly (see above).

So what is this New Covenant? If we Jews have not had a true covenant with God since the days of Jeremiah (some 575 years before Jesus was born), what does that mean for us as a people? It certainly explains why our Temple was destroyed and our sacrificial system ended. With no covenant why would we need a Temple, a priesthood or a sacrifice?

The answer has been right before us in nearly every church, library, motel room or doctor’s office here in the South. It’s called The New Testament. A better name for the New Testament is the New Covenant because that’s really what it is all about, God’s New Covenant with Israel or New circumcision, the Circumcision of the heart! You see the word covenant is **Brit** in Hebrew and it also means circumcision. So in order for us to have a new covenant with God there must be a new circumcision. Jeremiah 4:4 says, **“Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and remove the foreskins of your heart...”** Men can perform the circumcision of Moses, but who can cut the foreskin of the heart? The answer is: only God Himself. The New Circumcision (Covenant) takes place when we put our trust in Yeshua (Jesus) and believe that He is the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of mankind. When we do this, He

circumcises our hearts! **“I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” Ezekiel 36:25-26**

The Passover Connection

In the New Testament, the New Covenant is first mentioned at a Passover meal. We read, **“And when the hour had come He (Jesus) reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. And when He had taken some bread (Matzo, more specifically the Afikomen) and given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten (The Cup of Redemption) saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.” Luke 22:14-20** It was at this Passover meal that Jesus took the Afikomen (the middle layer of the three pieces of matzo) broke it and distributed it among His disciples, just like we Jews do at every Passover meal. The only difference is, Jesus told us that the Afikomen (Greek for “that which comes later”) represented His body, given for us. He then took the third cup of Passover, the cup taken after the meal as the New Covenant tells us. We Jews call this cup the “Cup of Redemption.” We drink it at every Passover meal along with the Afikomen (broken piece of matzo). It was of this cup taken after the meal that Jesus said, **“This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.” Matthew 26:28.** By this Jesus was saying that His sacrifice on the Cross made atonement for sins for the Jewish nation and for all who would accept what He did and believe.



Recently, in synagogues all over the world, the Torah portion called “Va Yikra” was read. “Va Yikra” means “and He called.” Its name is taken from the first few words of the book of Leviticus and the portion read in synagogues that particular week begins in Leviticus 1:1 – 6:7. It’s all about the sacrificial system and the many offerings for guilt and for sin. It is very complicated.

The Good News is that Yeshua (Jesus) simplified the sacrificial system for all of us! The writer of the Book of Hebrews quotes Psalm 40:6, (Continued page on pg. 3) →

“Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you have not desired, nor have you taken pleasure in them.” Then He said, “Behold I have come to do your will.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second.” Hebrews 10:8-9. By this the writer is explaining that God did away with the Temple, the Levitical priesthood and the sacrificial system and replaced it with a new order, or a New Covenant! **“By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Messiah Jesus once and for all. Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He (Jesus), having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time sat down at the right hand of God. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.” Hebrews 10:10-14** God didn’t do away with Judaism; He just simplified it! God didn’t do away with the requirement of blood sacrifice for atonement either. The rabbis of the first century did that at the Council of Yavneh. But the Torah says, **“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement,” Leviticus 17:11.**

So, my dear Jewish friends, HaShem (God) never did away with the requirement of blood sacrifice for atonement, He changed the order of things and gave us a New Covenant, because we broke the first covenant thousands of years ago (see Jeremiah 31:31). Yeshua (Jesus) is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world! (John 1:29). He is our sacrifice, our atonement, our Brit Chadasha (New Covenant). His body was cut by 39 lashes so that God could cut the New Covenant with us! It is so much simpler to put your faith in Jesus and accept His one sacrifice than to wonder every year at Yom Kippur if you’ve done enough good deeds or given enough Tzedaka (charity) to get your name written in the book of life and never knowing if your name is really in the book. That’s why Jews differ on how much you have to do to be righteous. The truth is it’s not about what you do at all, it’s about what Yeshua did for you on Passover by dying for your sins. Those who believe in Him will have their names inscribed in the Lamb’s Book of Life (See Daniel 12:1-3, Revelation 21:27).

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 says, **“For Messiah our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”**

The Jewish Prophet Isaiah even made a Passover reference

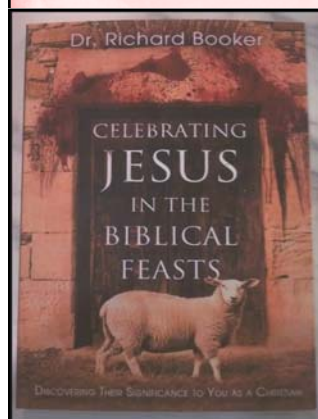
to Jesus: **“Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?” Isaiah 53:7-8.**

Conclusion:

So my Jewish brothers and my Christian friends who love them, Passover is the perfect time to share the truth about God’s New Covenant with the Jewish people and how Jesus not only fulfilled the sacrifice of the New Covenant, but He taught us about it at a Passover meal! What a wonderful opportunity to share Jesus with your Jewish friends. Just ask them what covenant they have with God. If they tell you Moses, ask them if they know God says the Jews broke the Mosaic Covenant a long, long time ago and if they are aware of God’s New Covenant with the Jewish people mentioned in Jeremiah...Happy Passover!

In Yeshua’s Love,
Rabbi Joe

**For your love gift of
\$30.00 or more:**



We will send you a copy of this insightful book by Dr. Booker which explains the prophetic significance of the Biblical Feasts in their portrayal of Yeshua (Jesus) and how even Christians can celebrate these feasts.

**Ask for offer code
*April Book Offer***