



The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.
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The Synagogue of the City

Did you know there is a special blessing for those who support the Jewish people at the local level? **Numbers 24:5-9 says, "How lovely are your tents, O Jacob! Your dwellings, O Israel!.. Blessed is he who blesses you and cursed is he who curses you."** Scripture clearly confirms God's promise to bless those who bless Israel and the Jewish people. Luke chapter seven details a beautiful story of a man who had the greatest faith in all Israel who wasn't even a Jew! The Bible says that Moses was the most humble man in history (Numbers 12:3), we are told Solomon was the wisest man of all time (1 Kings 4:30), but it's the New Covenant scriptures that reveal the man with the greatest faith. Yeshua (Jesus) said of the Roman Centurion in **Luke 7:9 "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"** Yeshua, the Jewish Messiah, blessed the Roman Centurion and honored him with high praise! Why? Because he demonstrated his love in a tangible way to the local Jewish community in Galilee.

The Roman centurion loved the Jewish nation:

When the Roman Centurion heard that Yeshua had entered Capernaum, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant: **"And when they came to Yeshua, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue," Luke 7:4-5.**

How amazing this story is! Here is an officer in the Roman legion, one of the most brutal armies Israel and the world had ever seen, a man who had to have killed many people to become a leader, and yet the Jewish leaders of the town say of him, that **he loved the nation of Israel!** In what way did he love the Jewish people? Love is not the

feeling you get when the girl of your dreams agrees to be your prom date in high school. True love is revealed in the crucible of troubles, like when married couples stick it out through serious sickness, financial difficulties, personal disaster, or the death of a child or loved one. Love is caring for an aging parent through their later years. Love is giving up personal dreams and ambitions for your spouse, your family, and for God. **Love is about commitment, action, and sacrifice. Love means following**

the leading of God in giving of yourself and your resources even when it is uncomfortable. Love is not dictated by circumstances, it is dictated by faith.



The Roman Centurion expressed his love for the Jewish people by building them a synagogue in the little town of Capernaum. I have been to the beautiful ruins of that very synagogue perhaps ten times, and though it's a mere shell of its former glory, the synagogue in Capernaum today is a very impressive

place. In fact, the stone used to build that synagogue would no doubt cost more than a million dollars in today's currency. Undoubtedly, the Roman Centurion gave sacrificially of his resources, using the brightest of engineers to build the Jews in Capernaum their synagogue. Notice the scripture doesn't say he loved "the God of Israel" (although it is implied), but rather, he loved "the Jewish people". **Yeshua was blessed so much by this Roman's love for God's chosen people that he granted his request immediately, saying his faith was more than he had encountered in all of Israel!**

It is interesting to note that the Centurion did not invest in building or support the temple in Jerusalem, the center of Jewish activity and the zenith of spiritual & political power of the Jewish people. The Centurion built the local synagogue in a lonely fishing village in the northernmost region of Israel, where hardly anyone of importance ever visited. Today, thousands of people come to see this wonderful place each day. This place where Yeshua taught about the kingdom of God, where Peter's family lived and ran their small fishing business, and where we celebrate the life of the Messiah of Israel. It is one of the most precious sights in all of Israel today because we know, for a fact, that these things actually happened at this very place. This beautiful 'Synagogue of the City' was a blessing for ages to come because of the love of the Centurion for the Jewish people, and it blessed God.

The Messianic Jewish 'Synagogue of the City' in your town:

In modern context, I doubt if the Centurion would have invested himself in a national Jewish televangelist or a big Christian ministry standing with Israel.

I really believe he would have given to the local Messianic work, because he saw the Messianic vision, which even today is driven by the work of local congregations around the world and in Israel. The local Messianic synagogue is not just another "denomination" of faith in Yeshua; rather, each one is a unique testimony of the prophetic future of Israel. The Centurion saw with prophetic eyes that this little town of Capernaum was to be changed forever by the Messiah Himself, and he saw no greater work than to build an outward expression of the magnificence he saw in the Spirit of this unknown man in this seemingly insignificant town. That is why it is very important to support your local Messianic Jewish synagogue. Without the work of local Jewish ministries and synagogues, there would be no national or global Jewish ministry. Through this unusual story, Yeshua is stressing the importance of supporting our local synagogue. *Galatians 6:10* says, **"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."** It is good to give to Jewish causes, but it's even better to give to Messianic Jewish causes who are of the household of the faith! Look



at the Messianic Jewish synagogue in your town (if there is one). I believe the condition of that synagogue is reflective of the heart of the community around it toward the Jewish people, and is rooted in their understanding of the future of Israel. A community, who understands as the Roman Centurion did, will make sure **their Messianic synagogue** is a shining testimony to the God of Israel!

How to build a shining testimony: First of all, we should recognize who is authentic in representing Messianic Israel. A true Messianic Jewish synagogue is connected to either the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA), the International Association of Messianic Congregations and Synagogues (IAMCS), the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) or a few other smaller organizations which are recognized by these big three. Such a synagogue should only be led by a Jewish believer in Yeshua or a Gentile

who is ordained through one of the aforementioned Messianic organizations; otherwise, it is not authentic. Again, the leader should be ordained by one of the above organizations and should be operating under the authority of a board of directors or elders.

Beware, there are many pseudo-Messianic Jewish groups out there led by self-proclaimed leaders (usually not Jewish) with no authentic ordination and no real Jewish connection. Many such groups are actually Christians pretending to be Jews and claiming to be physical "Israelites" from the so called "lost tribes of the Northern Kingdom". According to Luke 2:36, Anna the prophetess, who blessed Yeshua at His dedication in the temple, was of the tribe of Asher, one of the supposed "lost tribes". This means that the "lost tribes" were never really "lost". The 12 tribal names have just been amalgamated into those of the tribe of Judah, which became known as Jews. There is only one Israel, and there is only one Jewish people in the world. Some of us believe in the Messiah while others simply do not.

Secondly, in order to build a shining testimony, people should get the vision to support Israel through their local synagogues. Many Messianic synagogues need help financially, and many do not even have a building. If you wish for Jewish people to know their Messiah, why not pray about helping the cause of the local Messianic synagogue? There are missions to China, Africa, Latin America, the Baltic States, Europe, etc.... Although Messianic Jews don't use the term "missions", because many find it to be a stumbling block,

should there not be a vision for outreach to the Jewish people as well? Paul says in Romans 1:16 that the priority in reaching the world for the Gospel should be "first to the Jew, and then for the Gentile".

Lastly, it's important to provide a place where Jewish believers, like me, can attend and connect with the Jewish community, where they can continue to raise their families with a Jewish identity, worshiping in the same tradition as the Messiah worshiped.

Luke 4:16 says, "He (Yeshua) went to Nazareth, where he had been brought



up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.

"Micah 5:7 says, 'The remnant of Jacob (Israel) will be in the midst of many peoples (nations) like dew from the Lord, like showers on the grass, which do not wait for man or linger for mankind..'" Without a Messianic community to provide Jewish believers a place to live a distinctive Jewish life, and be identified as Jewish, there is no "Remnant of Israel". The Messianic Jewish synagogue has been raised up for such a time as this, to be a place where Jewish believers can be Jewish, and Gentiles can be grafted into the family of Israel spiritually, worshiping Yeshua in unity, much the same way as they did in the book of Acts. I believe there are many who are called to join along side of us in unity just like the Roman Centurion, to help us build, bringing a message to the world about the Messianic kingdom to come. Those who answer the call will need to see as the Centurion did, a glorious work of the Spirit that is worthy of the most costly demonstrations of love.

Conclusion: The 'Synagogue of the City' here in Bristol has many needs at this time. Is God calling you to be a "Centurion" and help build the synagogue of our city? Together we can glorify Jesus who Himself worshiped in a small town synagogue. The synagogue of the city is a testimony of the heart of the people for the Jews. We believe God will honor any act of love that is given to help

in the cause of the Jewish people. First and foremost, as a small congregation, *Ari Yehudah (Lion of Judah) Messianic Congregation*, and *For Zion's Sake Ministries* needs your prayers and monthly support to maintain a presence in the community in helping Israel so the community may be blessed! We believe that Yeshua is the same yesterday, today, and forever, as such, we believe that He is still working and healing and moving among the Jewish people. When we speak of the needs of our "Synagogue of the City" we are believing that you are being offered a blessing that has been reserved for this very congregation. A blessing that has been offered by God and fortified by the Spirit.

Deuteronomy 29:29 says, "Things that are hidden belong to ADONAI our God. But the things that have been revealed belong to us and our children forever, so that we can observe all the words of the Torah (Law)" We believe God has revealed to us a blessing He has for those who will step out in great faith like the Centurion and support the Synagogue of the City in Bristol. (Romans 15:27)

Some of the needs of our 'Synagogue of the City' in Bristol:

- We owe about \$40,000 on our mortgage
- A new kitchen is needed with a cost of approximately \$15,000.
- We need a Sanctuary remodel including: carpet \$16,000, lighting \$3,000, painting \$1,000, reupholstered pews \$5,000 etc.
- \$4,000 - \$6,000 for Signage to replace temporary banner that has been hanging for years.
- \$40,000 to re-pave the parking lot & driveway
- \$15,000 for a new heat pump.
- Ongoing Maintenance expenses for Synagogue.

When Yeshua spoke of the man with more faith than Abraham, it was the Roman Centurion. That man received a special blessing from God. In fact, God has a special blessing for each person who chooses to stand with the Messianic Jews, and who will support the work of the Messiah at the

This month, for a gift of \$25.00 or more, We will send you a CD of Rabbi Joe Bell's 02/02/2023 Shabbat Message:

"How To Lead Someone To The Lord In Two Minutes Or Less & Why It Is Important"

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local level in the Synagogue of the City, so I encourage you to ask God **what your part is in blessing the Jewish people locally**. Don't harden your hearts against what seems insignificant and unfamiliar, rather stir up faith in the God of Israel's ways, and ask how you can be used for the ministry of the Messiah today as the Centurion was used nearly 2000 years ago. Would you prayerfully consider the call to become like the Centurion and be a supporter of The Synagogue of the City in Bristol? The Roman Centurion loved the People of God so much that he gave a great gift to the Jewish people of Israel. He built a beautiful synagogue in a small, seemingly insignificant shing town. Little did he know that his act of love and faith would last centuries and bring beautiful blessings to himself and others. Would you ask the Lord to lead you into a covenant promise to become like the Centurion by blessing the Messiah and supporting The Synagogue of the City in Bristol. A big thanks goes to those who have and continue to invest in Israel locally, and a thanks to those who choose to join us now in building the **Synagogue of the City in Bristol!**



In Yeshua's Love, Rabbi Joe and Dawn

Gift Pledge Levels:

Imperial Legate: \$10,000+ Commander of two or more legions. Served as governor where his legions were stationed.

Legatus: \$1,000+ Commanded a Legion, served as senator where his troops were stationed.

Centurion: \$100+ The backbone of the army, commanded a century (100 soldiers). There are about 60 in each legion.

Decurion: \$10+ Commanded a Calvary unit of 10-30 troops.

Imagin er: \$7+ Carries the standard that bears the image of the Emperor

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Ari Yehudah



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11:30 AM
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