



# The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.  
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## Is Your Name Inscribed In the Book of Life?

Is your name inscribed in "The Book of Life?" The Jewish High Holidays are coming upon us very soon this fall. During that time it is customary for Jewish people to send each other greeting cards wishing each other a sweet New Year (Jewish New Year is celebrated in the fall on the Feast of Rosh Ha Shana). Many such greeting cards will begin with the expression, "May your Name be inscribed In The Book of Life." This is because Jews are taught by the rabbis that The Book of Life is opened in heaven on Rosh Ha Shana, and that it is closed and sealed ten days later on the feast of Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). According to rabbinical tradition, in order to have our name inscribed in God's Book of Life, our good deeds must outweigh our evil deeds. So during the Days of Awe, (the ten day period between Rosh Ha Shana and Yom Kippur), many Jewish people will give Tzedaka (charity) to help the poor or the sick. Some will give money to colleges and universities. The idea is that by doing good deeds (Mitzvoth) a Jewish person can atone for prior evil deeds and get their name written into the Book of Life for the coming year. Along with good deeds Jews are told to confess our sins and to repent. It is this combination of charity, good works and repentance that the rabbis believe will help us to have our name inscribed in the Book of Life. Is this really what you need to do to get your name inscribed in The Book of Life?



I celebrated Rosh Ha Shana and Yom Kippur for thirty years before I became Messianic, but I was never certain if my name was inscribed in God's Book of Life for the coming year. Incidentally, the rabbis teach that we have to have our names inscribed every year and that it's not a onetime event.

What does the Bible have to say about the Book of Life? Are good deeds, charity and repentance really the way to get our names written in the Book of Life? Is it really necessary to have our names inscribed in the Book of Life every year or is it a onetime occurrence? How can you know for certain that your name is inscribed in the Book of Life forever?

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*"On Rosh Ha Shana it is written and on Yom Kippur it is sealed [in the book of life]."* It is even more fascinating to

me that The Book of Life is only referred to twice in the Tanach (Old Testament). Perhaps the clearest reference is seen in Daniel 12: *"Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. And many of those who sleep in*

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the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. But as for you, Daniel, seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase, Daniel 12:1-4. We can discern some interesting things about “The Book of Life” from this text. First, everyone whose name is written in the Book will be raised from the dead to everlasting life! Those people whose name is not in the book will raise from the dead to everlasting contempt and shame. Why? What did these people do wrong that they must experience eternal disgrace and contempt while those people whose name was found in the book are raised to eternal life and super-stardom? Secondly, it seems that the difference between the two groups has to do with “having insight, and leading the many to righteousness. In the Bible righteousness is synonym for a sinless state, or being right with God. So people who have insight into how to be sinless and who lead others to be right with God will have their names written in the Book of Life! Thirdly, Daniel was told to seal up the Book; this means that everyone’s name that was ever to be written in the Book was already in the book when Daniel sealed it. The only time the book will be opened again is at the “end of time.” This throws a big monkey wrench in the rabbi’s teaching that “The Book of Life” is opened every year on Rosh Ha Shana and sealed on Yom Kippur. It also throws a big monkey wrench in the rabbi’s teaching that people can get their name written in the book on a yearly basis according to what good deeds, charity and repentance is done before the book is sealed. The truth is, The Book of Life was opened and closed for the prophet Daniel, and it will next be opened on the Day of Judgment. It is not opened every year, nor is it closed every year. However, there is benefit in the High Holidays (Fall Feasts of the Lord) in that they deal with the issue of sin and judgment and sort of rehearse the coming judgment of the world! I think that it is a subject worthy of learning about. The question that remains is how does one become righteous (sinless) and how do we lead others to righteousness? The Hebrew prophet Isaiah wrote, “Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid-

*How does one become righteous (sinless) and how do we lead others to righteousness?*

den His face from you so that he does not hear,” Isaiah 59:2. Isaiah goes on to say, “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment,” Isaiah 64:6. God’s Word says that no amount of good deeds (i.e. mitzvot, charity, prayer or confession of sin, religiousness, etc.) will get you in “The Book of Life”. So how do we get our names in the book? Isaiah gives us the answer: “By His knowledge, the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; Yet he Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors,” Isaiah 53:11-12. Who is “He” that will bear our iniquities and who bore our sins? His name is Yeshua (Jesus of Nazareth). Isaiah wrote, “Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows he carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed...” Isaiah 53:4-5. So, my friends, it’s not a good deed we can do, and it’s nothing we can earn by being a “good” person; it’s His righteousness (sinlessness) appropriated to us by faith in what He did for us on the execution stake (Cross). When you put your faith in Yeshua (Jesus) and accept that you are stuck in your sins and only He can set you free, then He will call you righteous and you will know that your name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life!

“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is The Book of Life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in The Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire... Revelation 20:11-15.

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## Conclusion

Is your name inscribed in **The Book of Life**? It's a good question to ask yourself as Rosh Ha Shana and Yom Kippur approach. Why not pray to God and invite Yeshua (Jesus) into your heart and to forgive your sins? Then you can have

a Sweet New Year knowing that your name is inscribed in "The Book of Life!"

Shalom,

Rabbi Joe ☆

## 7/14 Prayer: One More Chance in 2012

On Saturday, July 14, 2012 (7/14) we held a day of prayer and fasting for America and for Israel based on **2 Chronicles 7:14**. 2Chronicles 7:14 says, "**If My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.**" Two other churches joined us and held days of prayer in solidarity with us on that day: Christ Fellowship in Kingsport, TN and Euclid Avenue Baptist Church in Bristol, VA. In case you, your church or congregation or your prayer group missed it, it's not too late to join us on 7/14 for prayer once again next month. Next month you say? Rabbi Joe you must have your dates mixed up... 7/14 was last month, not next month? I'm talking about 7/14 on the Biblical calendar. You see the seventh month of the Bible (Leviticus 23:24) is known as the month of Tishrei, and it begins on September 17, 2012. Therefore the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Tishrei (The seventh month on God's calendar) falls on Sunday, September 30<sup>th</sup> this year.

### One More Chance:

So if you are concerned about the way things are going in America, Israel or your own life. If you are concerned about the upcoming election, the largest drought in America since the Great Depression, healthcare or the economic troubles of our nation; you have another opportunity to join with us at **For Zion's Sake Ministries and Lion of Judah Messianic Congregation** and spend some time on September 30, 2012 in prayer and fasting for this critical time in World history.

We will gather on that day at our synagogue for prayer and worship, at 3:30 PM, then we will break the fast at 6:30 PM with a meal. You are welcome to join us in person, or gather with your group in solidarity with us at the place of your choosing.

There has never been a more critical time for America and for Israel. If you agree, then we hope you'll plan to join us on 7/14 (September 30<sup>th</sup>). For more information about the 7/14 Day of Prayer, or for a list of prayer points, please contact our office at 423-652-1188, or 276-644-1678. Or e-mail us at [4zn-sake1@earthlink.net](mailto:4zn-sake1@earthlink.net)

According to God's Word, He has put the fate of our nation in our hands. Will you pray with us?

Shalom,  
Rabbi Joe ☆