



The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.
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Jesus Celebrates Hanukkah

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Wait a second Rabbi Joe, don't you mean, Jesus celebrated Hanukkah? No, I really mean Jesus celebrates Hanukkah. "***Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings,***" ***Hebrews 13:8-9***. Hanukkah is derived from an intertestamental historical event. That means, the event took place in the time between the Old Testament and the New Testament and is recorded in the book of Maccabees which is part of the Apocrypha. Furthermore its only Biblical reference is in the New Testament: "***At that time Hanukkah (The Feast of Dedication) took place at Jerusalem; It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon,***" ***John 10:22***. Jesus didn't walk some seventy five miles to Jerusalem in wintertime for His health. He traveled to the Temple to celebrate Hanukkah! Hanukkah is not just Israel's winter holiday, it's also Jesus' holiday, and no wonder because it is very much about Him personally. Friends, the only winter holiday recorded in the New Testament that Jesus celebrated is Hanukkah or the Feast of Dedication. Jesus celebrates Hanukkah yesterday, today, and forever! Do you want to be like Jesus?

Why did Jesus celebrate Hanukkah? There are many reasons, but I'll offer a couple here: 1. The New Testament tells us He did (John 10:22). 2. The Hanukkah story is really all about preparing Israel for the advent of the Messiah and is prophetic of the Gentiles being grafted into the Olive Tree of Israel (Romans 11). On Friday, December 19th at 7:00 PM and Saturday, December 20th at 10:30 AM, we will hold two community Hanukkah services. Christians and seekers are welcome to attend these services. Rabbi Joe will teach about the story of Hanukkah, its importance today, why it's important to Jesus, and how Hanukkah was

replaced with Christmas!

Can't make one of the services? We'll gladly send you a two CD teaching and companion Hanukkah teachings for your suggested love gift of \$25 or more. Just complete the response card included along with your information and write "Hanukkah CDs" on the form.

Come and enjoy the miracle of Hanukkah with us. There will be traditional foods and games for children.

Hope to see you there!

Joe and Dawn

Ministry Update:

Dear friends,

Shalom! For those of you who celebrate Christmas we say "Merry Christmas" to you! And for those of you who celebrate Hanukkah, we wish you a "Happy Hanukkah!"

Dawn and I are in our sixteenth year here at "***For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.***" The ministry name comes from Isaiah 62:1, which is the name God placed on our hearts when the Lord revealed the vision for this ministry. He has been faithful to uphold our witness for Israel and the Jewish people in the Mountain Empire and beyond. He has been faithful through many hard times such as when I had cancer three years ago, and through many wonderful times such as the birth of our two sons, numerous Passover and other celebrations, concerts and more!

Last winter we had three devastating floods in our synagogue. The insurance company denied several of the claims and paid only about one third of the cost of repairs. In addition, we had many critical repairs to

make to our 80 year old synagogue and fellowship hall. We found ourselves with a financial deficit of \$24,000 last year! But after tightening our belts and with the help of many of you, we have been able to bring that deficit down to \$13,000 in just one year! **Thank you, thank you, thank you!**

Last summer Joe had some heart trouble. There was a threat of him needing open heart surgery, but praise the Lord it's all been worked out and no surgery is required. Joe's heart has received a clean bill of health. The last physical challenge he faces is his back. He still suffers from residual back pain left over from the cancer in his bones. Please continue to pray for healing in that area. Otherwise God is using us mightily. We have seen many saved and many deliverances in the past several months. Joe's teachings continue to go forth; in fact, his Blood Red Moon teaching sold second only to Jonathan Cahn's message at last summer's international Messianic conference!

Friends, God called us here to begin the first and only authentic Messianic Jewish Ministry in the Tri-Cities sixteen years ago. I was born to a religious Jewish family and accepted Jesus as my Lord, Savior and Messiah in 1996. The whole point of Messianic Judaism is to bring Jew and Gentile together in Christ as it was in the book of Acts and throughout the New Testament. It was never meant for Christians to split off from their believing Jewish brothers and sisters. What's nice about celebrating Shabbat, Passover or Hanukkah is doing it together; Jew and Gentile, one in the Messiah! That is the will of God. We did not come here to teach Christians to practice Jewish holidays and customs so they could go practice them on their own, but so



that they could join with us in accordance with Numbers 15:14-17, Isaiah 14:1, Isaiah 56:2-9, Zechariah 14:16 and many other verses!

Messianic Judaism is for all people, and we are your local connection to Messianic Israel!

The Importance of a Local Messianic Jewish Ministry:

Many of you know the Scriptures such as Genesis 12:3 where God told Abraham, ***“I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”*** And again, ***“How lovely are your tents, O Jacob, your dwellings, O Israel!... Blessed is everyone who blesses you, and cursed is everyone who curses you,”*** Numbers 24:5-9. Every country in history that has persecuted the Jewish people has either been destroyed, invaded or suffered terrible wars and hardships. Take for instance Spain, who perpetrated the Spanish Inquisition. The great Spanish armada and the Spanish empire was defeated by the English. Germany, who is known for the Holocaust, one of the most devastating anti-Semitic horrors in history, was defeated twice in World War I and World War II. England, who expelled the Jews twice, has lost its empire and seen many wars. Where are the Roman, the Babylonian, the Greek, and the Persian empires today? All these civilizations persecuted Jewish people.

Why did Jewish persecution start?

Why did Jewish persecution start? The simple answer is that men didn't fear God, and began to persecute Jews in the communities where they lived and interacted with them. When evil descended upon those societies (see the book of Esther), those who had not stood firm with the Jewish community had no empathy for their plight in the face of extreme danger. I have heard many testimonies of people living with the ugly regret of inaction and fear. Friends, don't think this could not come here one day. I say if God will bless the nation who blesses the nation of Israel, then God will also bless the individuals who bless the local Jewish community. Galatians 6:10 says, ***“Let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”*** *We Messianic Jews are of the household of the faith*, so it is good to bless the local Jewish community and it's even better to bless the believing Jewish community, the Messianic Jews. Without lo-

For Zion's Sake Ministries Presents
2014 Hanukkah Celebration
Friday, December 19th
7:00 pm



Hanukkah teaching for all and a fun party for the kids ...
with dreidel games and treats

The Tri-Cities Messianic Center

1128 New Hampshire Ave

Bristol VA 24201

(276) 644-1678

Coffee and traditional Hanukkah treats will be served afterwards

cal Messianic Jewish communities there can be no national or international Messianic influence around the world and in Israel. There would be no Messianic/Christian partnerships such as “The Joseph Project” in Israel bringing humanitarian aid, comfort, and salvation to thousands of Jewish people. The work of The Joseph Project is bringing the important message to the state of Israel that believing in Jesus is the most Jewish thing a Jew can do, and being Messianic brings blessing to the land of the Jews. That’s why it’s critical to stand not only with Israel the nation, but with the Jewish people in your community and especially those who are of the household of the faith, the Messianic Jews. Will you stand with us as we work to build up Israel and establish a testimony of the Messiah in our region? Some of you already partner with us on a monthly basis, and some of you are gracious one-time donors, and we thank you all. If you are looking to bless Israel and looking for a Jewish ministry to partner with, consider partnering locally with For Zion’s Sake Ministries where blessing the Jewish people begins. We are your local Messianic Jewish connection to Israel!

In Yeshua’s Love
Joe and Dawn Bell