

Ministry Update: April-May 2020

Dear friends,

I can't thank you enough for the outpouring of love, prayers and support many of you have shown to keep this little Synagogue for Yeshua/Jesus going here in Bristol TN/VA. Maybe it's the prophetic teaching you enjoy, maybe it's knowing that we are the only true connection to the Messianic (believing Jewish world) here in this 120 square mile ve state area? Maybe you just know us and love us or wish to help me and my family as I deal with ten grueling years of Leukemia treatment and two relapses. Whatever it is we love you back!

Well on my fourth or fth visit to Mayo clinic in March, they had decided to put me in a clinical trial for a very promising new chemotherapy which is designed to destroy the cancer cells while preserving good cells. The cancer cells in my bone marrow had grown from 50% on September 27th to 80% by February 27th. 95 % of Hairy Cell Leukemia patients go into remission after taking the 1980s traditional draconian chemotherapy that kills both good and bad cells. I was one of the 5 % that did not respond, so they are running out of bullets. The doctor had planned for me to begin the new trial immediately on the last visit, but because I missed the criteria for entering the trial by .4 on a blood test they sent me home. As I write this letter, it is the third week of April, and I desperately need treatment. Nevertheless, I have been caught up in the giant Covid-19 tsunami situation that has shut down most hospitals, including the Mayo Clinic, to treat solely Covid-19 and ER patients. Apparently urgent chemotherapy cases don't make the list. Meanwhile I am waiting for them to open the trials again so I can be the world's poster boy for hairy cell leukemia with this new drug!



Honestly, if I hadn't led my Jewish hotel desk clerk to the Lord and shared and received the love of God (even from my doctor at Mayo), I might not know that getting treatment from the Mayo is God's plan for me, but there is a battle. I know I am going to be healed, but I must get to the Mayo. I'll be there for up to a month, living in a hotel plus nine days hospitalization alone for the treatment and observation. The cost has been overwhelming.

Now add to all that, it rained three inches in two hours last Friday night and our fellowship hall ooded for the fourth time in a year. We have spent at least \$15,000 to repair and mitigate the water problem including installing a french drain and waterproof ng the back wall. This week, foundation specialists inspected again to see what more must be done to solve this frustrating problem. The estimate is that it will cost another \$10,000 to install a drainage/ sump system with a lifetime guarantee. What choice do I have? These rains do not stop, but God is greater than the rain. (Revelation 12:14-17)



Miraculously we have received a generous matching gift challenge of \$20,000 until June 10th. Every ten, twenty, 50 or \$150 gift will be matched dollar for dollar during this period.

Friends, I love the story in Luke 7:1-10 of the Roman Centurion who built a beautiful synagogue in the little fishing village of Capernaum. This man could have made his philanthropic mark in a much larger city, but he knew there was something special about that town; well it was the home of the Messiah Yeshua/Jesus! When His servant became deathly ill, the leaders of the synagogue led that man to Yeshua who was not in the habit of helping Gentiles, but for this Roman, he left straight away to go to the man's home and heal his servant. Nevertheless, the Centurion protested **saying "no do not come! I am unworthy. Just say the word and it shall be done."** **Yeshua marveled and said, "Greater faith I have not seen in all Israel!" speaking of the Roman. And at that very moment the man's servant was healed!**



I believe that I have much work to do for the Lord, yet, our synagogue is shut down like everybody else's. We don't normally run 300- 400 people, rather more like twenty, mostly older, and on fixed income. Our primary congregation is on-line where we reach as many as sometimes over 5000 people. Why God put us in tiny Bristol a two state town of 45,000 people I'll know some day, but for now we are just obedient. We at *For Zion's Sake Ministries* and *Ari Yehudah Messianic Jewish Congregation* are your local connection to Israel. Maybe you live in Denver or Tucson, but on video we are your mish-pochah (family). My wife has been out of work since mid-February caring for me and our two teenaged boys who are out of school for the year. We trust God but are uncertain about her current job as a pilot. Meanwhile I am being given immunotherapy infusions to sustain me until I can get back to the Mayo Clinic and hopefully not be sent home again.

So thank you for whatever you can do. I believe that God will bless you for it as He so many times in His word promises to bless those who bless the Jewish people, and it begins locally like the Roman Centurion. People love to give to the big names on TV who bring in millions of dollars, but Jesus went out to the poor lost sheep of the House of Israel, lost Spiritually because in 1 Kings 12 they had been bamboozled by a phony King who led them away from David's kingdom until they were invaded by the Assyrians in 722 B.C. Though many were taken or killed, many were simply lost to the Jerusalem and the Davidic Kingdom, the true kingdom of God. Hezekiah brought many of them back to celebrate the Passover in his day and Yeshua went after them to bring them back to David's Son, the Messiah. That is the Kingdom we represent. Thank you for standing with us brothers and sisters.

Love,
Rabbi Joe and Dawn.



February 13, 2020 at the Lt. Gov's office praying for Tennessee