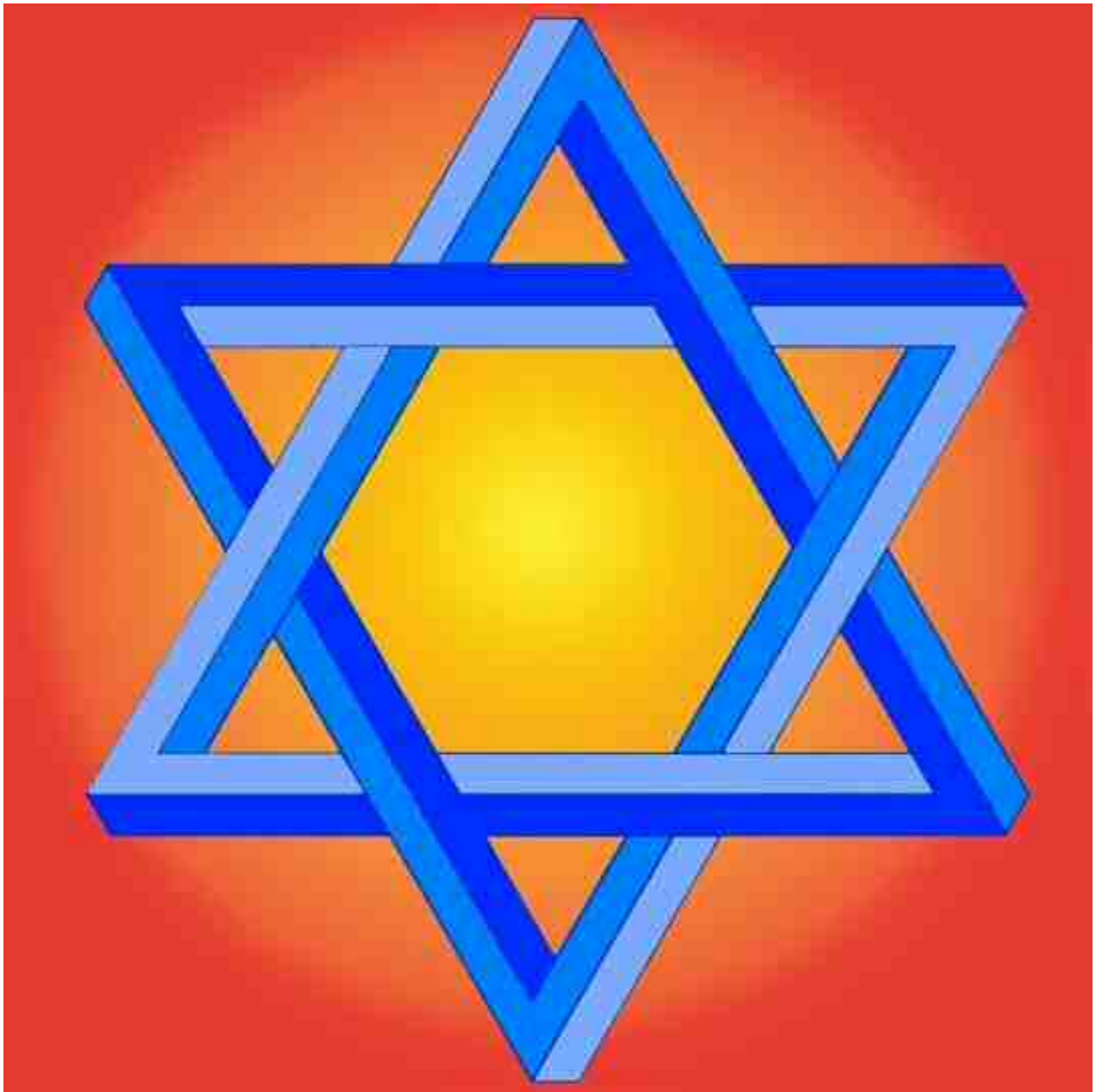


“Yisrael’- ‘Leh-hah-ah-ZEEN’”

A “New Covenant” Outreach Ministry to the Jewish People

Training- Equipping- Encouraging

Gentile Christians to Reach Out to the Jewish People with the
Message of the “New Covenant”



Another Impacting Ministry of the Good Mood Foundation

Ten Week “Two Hour” Class

“Our” Ministry Purpose is Threefold

We want Gentile Christians to:

1. Pray that God gives them Jewish friends and for opportunities to bless and love them.
2. Ask God to create circumstances and opportunities where Jewish friends would be open to talking about spiritual things. When God makes that happen, to present their Jewish friends with a “Nice” Study Bible.
3. Show that Jeremiah said, a “New Covenant” was coming for Israel to replace the “Old Covenant” and what it means. Also, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is “first” for the Jew and then explain what it means.

Our Ministry’s Name –

Our ministry name is based upon the “Shema,” which is the most important aspect of a Jewish person’s prayer life, as it is repeated once in the morning and once in the evening. Here is the first part of the Shema. **“Hear, O Israel:** The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” Deuteronomy 6:4–9

Jesus referred to the Shema many times in His ministry. Jesus answers the question, “Which is the most important commandment?” and begins His answer with **“Hear, O Israel”** (the Shema).

- “One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: **‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’** The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one, and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, **“You are not far from the kingdom of God.”** And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.” Mark 12:28–34

Therefore the name of our ministry was derived from the beginning of the Shema, “Hear, O Israel.” Our name, “Yisrael’- ‘Leh-hah-ah-ZEEN” means **“Israel- Hear.”**

Why Have a Ministry to the Jewish People?

- 1. The Jewish people are NOT reached,** and most Gentile Christians will never have a “meaningful” relationship with a Jewish person. That’s because the Gentile population in the DFW area is over 7 million people, and the Jewish population is less than 100,000. In fact, the Gentile population of the world is over 7 BILLION people, and the world Jewish population is only about 13 million or less than .02%. Nevertheless, I believe that all Gentile Churches should have “some” ministry to the Jewish people. A good starting point is for the “Church” to support Jewish Missions and “projects” that bless “Israel” and the Jewish people living in Israel. Maybe, at a later time, the “Church” can also start an “outreach” to the Jewish people. Therefore, unless Gentile Christians and Gentile Churches are “intentional” about reaching out to the Jewish People, the Jewish people are not going to be reached.
- 2. The Jewish people still live UNDER the “Old Covenant”** that God gave the Nation of Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai. The Law consists of 613 laws, and the Jews have added hundreds of laws since then. But NO ONE can keep all of the Law- no matter how hard they try. Therefore, the Jewish People obey what they can-some more and some less. Nevertheless, all Jews are “under” the law. And if you broke even “one law,” you were effectively breaking all the laws. It’s a paradox and revolving door of “obedience and disobedience” and being under the Law with no hope of getting out from under the Laws’ HEAVY weight.

That said, to this day, the Jews live out the “Shema” by putting God’s Word on their hearts and on their minds via the Tefillin. Tefillin are two small boxes with leather straps attached to them. Inside of each box is the “Shema.” One box is placed on the upper part of the left arm, and the leather strap is wrapped around the arm. This box is, therefore, “closest” to the heart. The other box is strapped on the forehead and is consequently also “closest” to the mind. The Jews also put the “Shema,” (which is written in Hebrew and rolled up like a scroll) inside of a “Mezuzah.” The Mezuzah is then placed on the upper right-hand corner of their door. And before entering the house, a person puts their fingers to their mouth and “kisses” the Mezuzah by placing their “kissed” fingers on the Mezuzah: effectively kissing GOD and His WORD.

- 3. The Jewish people do NOT know Jeremiah announced a “New Covenant” was coming for Israel.** God sent Jeremiah, the Prophet, to tell His People that an 8th Covenant-the “New Covenant” was coming for them. This is an unconditional covenant made between God and with BOTH the “Northern Kingdom” and the “Southern Kingdom” (“ISRAEL”) and is still in effect today.
 - *“The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD, ‘because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,’ declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” Jeremiah 31:31-34*
- 4. The Jewish people do NOT know why a “New Covenant” was even necessary,** so to understand, we must go back to the “beginning.” In the Garden of Eden, “Adam” sinned, and because he sinned -ALL are born into sin. Therefore, God set up a system for dealing with “ongoing sin,” which He revealed in the “Old Covenant.” God’s “system” required a blood sacrifice to “cover” sin.

- *“For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life. Leviticus 17:11*

God gave Moses “specific instructions on how to construct a “Tabernacle.” And He required that every time a Jewish person sinned, they would have to come with an animal (like a sheep) and sacrifice it. But this sacrificial system was never-ending because everyone continued sinning. Therefore, God had it in mind to replace this “Temporary System” (“Old Covenant”) with a Permanent Solution-the “New Covenant.” In the “New Covenant,” the ongoing sacrifice of animals is no longer needed. Instead, God supplied a “Once and For All Sacrifice.” God’s provision for all sin was His “One and Only Son”-the “Spotless Passover Lamb”-Jesus Christ. The message of the “New Covenant” is that God took “ALL” sin (Past, Present, and Future) and put it ALL on Jesus. But God does have ONE “requirement” to receive full and total forgiveness of all sin. **“Belief”** in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, in the “Old Covenant,” the Jews obeyed the Shema, and placed God’s Word “externally” ON “their” minds and ON “their” hearts and ON “their” doors. But in the “New Covenant,” God’s Word is literally placed “internally” IN your mind and ON your heart. **That’s “Good News!”** Worthy of our efforts to tell and explain to our Jewish friends.

5. The Jewish people do NOT know the “connectedness” they have with Gentile Christians concerning the establishment of Israel and the ongoing support of Israel. In an article in the Jerusalem Post dated 12/24/2019, the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, said the following. *“We are proud of our Christian friends. The State of Israel would not have come into being if it weren’t for the avid support of Christians in the 19th century, in the 20th century, as well as in the 21 century. He also said that “Israel has no better friends around the world than its Christian friends.”*

Israel would not have been formed had it not been for the PRAYERS and SUPPORT of Gentiles and Gentile Christians. That is a historical fact! Nor would Israel be the economic powerhouse that Israel is today without the support of Gentile Christians who come to Israel each year to tour, explore, and vacation. In fact, tourism to Israel accounts for about half of Israel’s entire economy. Speaking of “economy,” God has set up “His Economy” so that the Jews would BLESS the Gentiles, and likewise, the Gentiles would BLESS the Jews. This truth is revealed in the Abrahamic Covenant (4th Covenant), which is still in effect. There’s no doubt the Jews are doing their job as “everything” you have and enjoy has a Jewish “mind” behind it. Jews also lead the world in “every” field of endeavor. No small feat considering that the Jews encompass only .02 % of the world population. Therefore, it is the Gentile Christians Biblical responsibility to bless the Jewish people. To bless is to “confer” a blessing and to “provide” a blessing.

6. The Jewish people do NOT know that Gentiles Christians LOVE Israel and the Jewish People. Over the last few years, anti-Semitism is not only on the rise, but it has also become an epidemic. There have been many shootings and stabbings against the Jewish people throughout the world and especially in the United States. Sadly, many students in our institutions of higher learning have joined the movement of anti-Semitism. And the “BDS” (boycott-divest-sanction) movement against Israel and Israeli companies continues to grow. Therefore, if there ever was a “time” when the Jewish people NEED to know that Gentile Christians STAND with them and with Israel—it is NOW! Being relational with Jewish friends is not just about “earning the right” to explain the “New Covenant,” and the Gospel of Jesus Christ-it is about LOVING our Jewish friends for no other reason than they are God’s Chosen people.

7. The Jewish people do NOT know that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is for the Jew-First –

- *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.” Romans 1:16*

I purposefully listed this point last because the “other” things I’ve listed have to happen before a Jewish person even considers hearing or considering the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But the Gospel of Jesus Christ is “First” for the Jew, which means the Jews MUST come first in our “outreach” ministries.

That said, granted, **many Gentiles** will and do believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ after reading a “trak,” attending a “church service,” and watching or listening to religious programming. Some even “believe” after viewing an outreach “testimonial” on YouTube or reading a “faith-filled” Christian book. But that **seldom** happens with the Jews. **Yet “we” continue down the same road of doing the above to reach out to the Jews, thinking that maybe the results of these efforts will change.** But if the above worked, then you would expect (at a minimum) thousands and perhaps tens of thousands of “new” Jewish believers each year from these efforts. Yet, there are still only several hundred thousand Hebrew Christians in the world today. And though every Jewish home **in** Israel and **in** the United States (with cable television) receives **religious** programming. Christianity is still “seen” as the religion of the Gentiles.

Please know that many Jews have spent years studying the Torah, Jewish writings, and attended Hebrew School and Synagogue. Many Jews know more about the New Testament than you or me. And many have been trained NOT to believe in Christianity. Therefore, many have already concluded that Jesus Christ is NOT the Jewish Messiah. So, trying to convince a Jewish person otherwise is fruitless. Also, keep in mind that unless the Holy Spirit does a “work” in a Jewish person’s (or Gentile’s) heart- NOTHING is going to happen. And it is my firm opinion (based upon personal experience and 40 years of “observation”) that Jews will only “consider believing” the Gospel of Jesus Christ after a careful and thorough personal study of the Bible and also **“counting the cost.” As, the loss of “Community,” “Reputation,” “Family,” “Financial Assistance,” and “Inheritance” is likely.** The **same** is true with some other people groups.

Gentile believers do a great disservice to Jewish (and Gentile) “unbelievers” by turning the Gospel of Jesus Christ into a “sales” presentation with a signing bonus given if you “witness” and get them to say “yes.” But getting someone to say, “Yes, to Jesus” is NOT a Biblical presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Nor is the Gospel of Jesus Christ a “deal” to be closed. It’s also unfortunate that Christendom has tragically strayed away from Biblically explaining the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, many offer “anyone” the opportunity to make a “decision for Christ,” “pray the sinner’s prayer,” or say, “Jesus, I make you the Lord of my life and come into my life.” Many people will jump at the opportunity to say “Yes” if you tell them that God loves them and has a wonderful plan for their life. All sound “Kosher” on the surface but are all Biblically lacking.

That said, Jewish people by design are “thinkers,” as they continue to use their God-given brains to accomplish great things for their people and the benefit of the Gentiles. After all, “brains” is the ONLY natural resource “Israel” possesses. Her neighbors are the ones with ALL the natural oil resources. Therefore, it’s spiritual and intellectual high treason, to NOT present the Gospel of Jesus Christ Biblically to a Jewish person. Along with “time” for them to study, ask questions, ponder the consequences, and come to their own conclusions at their own pace. **That’s how I came to my own conclusions. And that’s how (God Willing) your Jewish friends will do the same.**

When I was 18 years old, I flew to Waco, Texas, several times (long story), and met several “men.” I was so enamored with these men that I said to myself, “These guys have something I have to have. I want to be just like them.” I could not pinpoint what that “something” was. So, within the year, I got into my car and drove from New York City to Waco. I banged on the president’s door on a Saturday morning dressed in my suit, not sure what to expect but knew I wanted to work for this man. He came to the door, took down my

name, made a comment, and then “closed” the door. Undaunted, I went to the vice president’s home the following week. His wife answered and said, Gary was taking a nap. I explained myself to her, and she woke Gary up, who came to the door and invited me in.

Gary gave me what I wanted, a relationship, but he told me I had to drive back to NY, which I did. Gary and I talked on the phone several times a day. And everything he told me to do, I did because he had “something” I wanted.” I told him I was Jewish, and shortly after that, he told me to get a Bible, which I did. He told me to start reading Psalms and Proverbs. This relationship morphed into another relationship with a good friend of his who was a youth pastor in Dallas. And within the year, I moved to Texas. I began reading the New Testament, asking questions, and contemplating. Then I decided to believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

A **handful** of Christians at this (my “first” church home) were “more” than pleasant to me. They **blessed** me. This youth pastor soon became the senior pastor and was adamantly Pro-Israel. Yes, I’m skipping over many details, but the MAIN point is that evangelism, discipleship, and spiritual growth is **relational**. Years later, I was told that Gentile Christians (including those in the singles department) had been actively praying for me even before I moved to Dallas. And I know “first-hand” how some Gentile Christians blessed me and loved me for no other reason than I was Jewish. I have also lived long enough to “see” what happens when Gentile Churches put Israel first and what happens when they don’t. And of course, I have been “cursed” to my face by Gentile “unbelievers,” and yes, unfortunately as well by Gentile Christians who “obviously” have never read their Bible. FYI, Gary was the “best man” at my wedding and is a close, trusted “life-long friend.” And the President who took down my name? His name is Paul J. Meyer, and after reading my first manuscript (30 years later), “*My Pursuit of a Good Mood*” printed the book, gave us 10,000 copies to give away, and wrote the foreword. This book was a foundational resource we give away to thousands of people and also to thousands of patients in our “Hospital Ministry.”

8. God is going to do “SOMETHING” when Gentile Christians reach out to the Jewish people. – Generally speaking, it’s not a good idea to compare Pastors and Churches as each has been raised by God to accomplish specific Kingdom-building purposes. However, I firmly believe there is a “one” exception. Does “this or that” Church have an active ministry to the Jewish people? There is one church in the DFW area that publicly states their “explosive” growth was attributed because of “one factor” – when they first began, they make the decision to put the Jewish people “First” and to have a ministry to them first. I’m not saying that the growth they experienced is going to happen to every Church that follows the same “mandate.” What I am saying is that God will do something in the Church that puts the Jewish people first. That said, Many Gentile Christians believe that it is up to “Hebrew Christians” to reach out to the Jewish People. This is incorrect because, for the most part, Jews do NOT like Hebrew Christians. After all, they believe Hebrew Christians have defected from the Jewish faith and converted to Christianity. But this is not true as Christianity is the fulfillment of Judaism. Nevertheless, this is what Jews believe, and so they naturally reject those who are Hebrew Christians because they believe Hebrew Christian’s only motive is to proselytize them. So, for this and other reasons, it is NOT my job or the job of Hebrew Christians to actively reach out to the Jewish people. That’s not to say, God won’t put Jewish friends into my life. So, Biblically speaking, the responsibility of reaching out to the Jewish people rests on Gentile Christians. And when Gentile Christians are actively praying, blessing, and loving their Jewish friends, move over, God is going to do SOMETHING. Finally, this ministry is “rooted” in developing and maintaining personal relationships with the Jewish people God puts into our lives. So, without Gentile Christians first praying to God asking Him to provide them with Jewish friends and then blessing and loving them, the Jewish People are NOT going to be reached. Therefore, “everything” starts when “someone” (a Gentile Christian) has a personal relationship with a Jewish person. Thus, hopefully, that “someone” will be YOU!

Overview

Ten “Two Hour” Classes

Teaching Topics – I am of the firm opinion that the following three topics are necessary to understand for anyone desiring to reach out to their Jewish friends.

- 1) God’s “Eight Covenants”
- 2) God’s “Seven Feasts”
- 3) Book of Daniel

It’s no accident that “All” are found in the Old Testament, which is necessary because most Jews will accept the Old Testament as “theirs.” Therefore, any conversations with Jewish People must begin in the Old Testament. And each of these three topics also provides a basis for starting spiritual discussions and talking about the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Syllabus

Week One- Teaching- “God’s Eight Covenants”- Part One

Week Two - Teaching - “God’s Eight Covenants”- Part Two

Week Three –Off-Site -Prayer walk in Jewish neighborhoods. Then group breakfast at Cindy’s Restaurant.

Week Four - Teaching - “God’s Seven Feasts” - Part One

Week Five - Teaching - “God’s Seven Feasts” - Part Two

Week Six – Off-Site to Attend a Local Messianic Congregation Service

Week Seven - Teaching - “Book of Daniel” - Part One

Week Eight - Teaching - “Book of Daniel” - Part Two

Week Nine - Teaching - “Book of Daniel” - Part Three

Week Ten – Summary of teaching points, what it means to be a friend to a Jewish person- “Send-Off.”

Class Outline

Introduction- 10 minutes.

- ✓ I will blow the Shofar to begin our time. Everyone will be “gifted” a Shofar, so they can bring it with them to class and sound it, too.
- ✓ We will Thank God for “America” who has and pray will continue to support Israel by affirming the “Pledge of Allegiance.” (US Flag will be in the room).
- ✓ We will thank God that He has restored the Land of “Israel” to the Jewish People, and we will ask Him to continue to protect and bless Israel by reciting the “Hatikva” the Hebrew “Pledge of Allegiance.” (Israeli Flag will be in the room).

Songs of Praise and Worship- 15 minutes.

Teaching 45 minutes

Sharing and Praying -20 minutes

- ✓ Briefly share how God brought Jewish people into our lives since the previous meeting.
- ✓ Stand, kneel, lay prostrate, or sit to pray to ask God to give everyone Jewish friends and pray for opportunities to BLESS (confer and provide blessings) to our Jewish friends.
- ✓ Sound the Shofar as we are dismissed.

“Everything” related to this class, including snacks, breakfast at Cindy’s, will be provided at “no cost.” Participants will also receive a workbook for each week’s lesson. Also, we will give a Shofar as a gift to each family or person if attending individually. We encourage participants to bring their Shofar and sound it each week. The class will be limited to 30 participants. **A ten-week commitment is required.**

Repeat

We’ll take a two-week break and then begin again with a new group of participants.

Other Churches

I also think that it’s possible after we conduct several of these ten-week classes, we should consider inviting participants from other churches to join us.

Teaching Topics

God’s Eight Covenants- It is impossible to understand the Bible without a good understanding of God’s Eight Covenants. Six of the Covenants are still in effect, and two of the Covenants are not. In summary, with “Man’s “Fall,” the Adamic Covenant is revealed along with a need for a “savior,” which God promises to provide. The Abrahamic Covenant reveals God’s Economy-Jews are to BLESS the Gentiles and Gentiles are to BLESS the Jews. Also, the Land Covenant reveals God’s intent for the Land of “Israel” to belong to the Jewish People, which was finally restored to them in 1948.

Most importantly, God unveils that a “New Covenant” was coming for Israel to replace the “Old Covenant,” which most Jews today still adhere too in some form or fashion. Unfortunately, most Jews are trapped in believing they must follow “The Law” when in fact, God said that a “New Covenant” of “grace” was coming to replace the “Old Covenant Law” for “Israel.”

God’s “Seven Feasts” - In the “Old Covenant,” God instructed the Jews to celebrate and observe Seven Feasts. They are:

1. Passover
2. Unleavened Bread
3. First Fruits
4. Pentecost
5. Trumpets
6. Day of Atonement
7. Tabernacles

Each of the Feasts provides an opportunity to discuss the various aspects of Jesus Christ, who, in fact, fulfilled the first four Feasts and will fulfill the final three.

1. Jesus was crucified on Passover.
2. He was buried the same evening on Unleavened Bread
3. He rose from the grave three days later on First Fruits.
4. After spending 40 days with His disciples, He ascended into Heaven, where He sits at the right hand of the Father and then sent down The Precious Holy Spirit on the” Day of Pentecost. 3,000 Jews were

‘saved’ that day, which began the Church Age as a Jewish Church.

5. The Church of Jesus Christ is waiting for the sound of the “Last ‘Shofar’ Trumpet” to be sounded, and we will be “gathered” to be with Jesus (Feast of Trumpets).
6. A 7-year Tribulation will begin culminating with a battle in the Valley of Megiddo (Armageddon), and “surviving Israel” will finally believe that Jesus Christ is indeed their Messiah, which has been God’s plan since the beginning. And what a “Day of Atonement” that will be, fulfilling that Feast.
7. God will create as “New Heaven,” “New Earth,” and a “New Jerusalem,” and ALL believers will return in “Glorified “bodies to rule and reign with Jesus for 1,000 years. We will live in “rooms” (Tabernacles) as we “tabernacle’ with Jesus fulfilling the seventh Feast.

Understanding the rituals and observances of each Feast and how Jesus fulfilled and will fulfill each one will prepare you to “join” your Jewish friends as they celebrate them, too. Knowing the Feasts is also the perfect opportunity to invite yourself to your Jewish friend's home (assuming you’ve built a relationship) and also to accompany them to their Synagogue to celebrate and observe.

The Jews have also added two more Feasts. They are Purim, which celebrated the story of Esther (book of Esther) and the ultimate demise of “Hamon,” the Jew-hater. ALL like “Haman” past, present, and future will meet their death, too. You CANNOT mess with the Jewish People because if you do, God will most undoubtedly intervene as He has since the beginning of time and into the future. Finally, the Feast of Hanukkah celebrated the re-lighting of the Menorah in the Temple and how God allowed one days supply of Holy Oil to last for eight days until a new supply could be produced. The Feast of Purim and Hanukkah “Frames” the Seven Feasts and this is no accident. All provide opportunities to have spiritual discussions and which points to the Messiah.

Book of Daniel- The book of Daniel is the MOST important book in the entire Bible concerning the Jewish People, Israel, and Jerusalem. Daniel's visions reveal and are fulfilled concerning the exact time that the rebuilding of the First Temple would take place. It also explains the precise date of Jesus’ Triumphal entry into Jerusalem (riding on a donkey) and future events concerning the Third Temple. In fact, all of Daniel's prophecies are so detailed, revealing the Messiah that many Bible scholars believe that if the “other” Bible prophecies were not recorded, Bible prophecy concerning the Messiah could stand on its own with Daniel's prophecies. Daniel also reveals what is in store for the Jewish people, Israel and Jerusalem, when the Third Temple is rebuilt. Messiah came the first time, the Tribulation is coming, and Jesus will return. It is hard to refute these events as they are revealed in the Old Testament book of Daniel, which many Jews are agreeable to read and study as it is one of “their” books. Remember that “blind eyes” and “hardened hearts” are ONLY opened by the work of the Holy Spirit. Our job is to LOVE and BLESS our Jewish friends, asking God to open the doors for spiritual discussions and to ultimately OPEN their eyes and their hearts.

Finally, this is NOT “my” ministry. “Yisrael’- ‘Leh-hah-ah-ZEEN’” is “our” ministry. As “we” work together – collectively - with each person sharing and having a part in the servant responsibilities of “our” ministry. In closing, to reach out to the Jewish People with the message of the “New Covenant,” Gentile Christians have to be **intentional, Biblically minded and relational** – which is what “Yisrael’- ‘Leh-hah-ah-ZEEN’”- (Israel-Hear) is about.

A Reminder of Israel and God's People

- The following, though not exhaustive, is a reminder that the Bible (from Genesis to Revelation) is, in fact, the story of God's "Redemptive Plan" for His People - the Jews. The entirety of the Bible (except for "maybe" two books) was written by Jewish authors. The Bible contains hundreds of prophecies concerning the "coming" of a Jewish Messiah who would come to "redeem" mankind from the effects of Adam's "Fall." Many of "these" Biblical prophecies have been fulfilled, and "others" we believe will be fulfilled, too. In fact, God's "Time Clock," concerning Bible prophecies, ticks away based upon ONLY One Nation – The Nation of Israel. The Bible provides extensive historical evidence concerning the Jewish People and the "Land" God "promised" to His People - "Israel."
- To understand the Bible is to "understand" God's "Eight Covenants." Beginning with the fourth Covenant (Abrahamic), all the rest of God's Covenants concern Israel and the Jewish People. God's fifth covenant is also known as the "Old Covenant" (Mosaic Law), which God gave Moses for the Jewish People. The heart of this covenant is that it provided a "temporary system" for dealing with the Jewish People's sin. The sinner brought an animal to the Temple and sacrificed the animal as the shedding of blood was necessary for the remission and forgiveness of sin. However, this system was never-ending as "sin" continued. Thankfully, God had it in mind to provide a "New Covenant" (Eighth Covenant) to deal with all "sin" once and for all. And through the prophet Jeremiah, God said this "New Covenant" was coming for His People- "Israel."
- Concerning God's "Eight Covenants," the Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenant are still in effect. And in the Abrahamic Covenant, God set up His "Economy" - Jews are to BLESS the Gentiles, and the Gentiles are to BLESS the Jews. As this covenant is still in effect, its mandate is, too. Therefore, faithful to His Word, though the Jewish people encompass only .02% of the Worlds' population, the Jewish People lead the World in every field of endeavor. The list of their accomplishments in every field is staggering. Suffice to say, everything we have and everything we enjoy has a Jewish "mind" behind it. Yet, the World media never reports anything good about the Jewish People or about Israel.
- To the Jews, God gave the "patriarchs" and the "prophets." The bloodline of the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, prophesied throughout the Old Testament (and detailed in the New Testament) came from a long list of Jewish ancestors. In fact, "some" in Messiah's bloodline were Gentiles, but they turned their heart towards the God of the Bible -the God of the Jewish People.
- The Jewish Messiah was born of Jewish parents in the Jewish town of Bethlehem. Jesus (The Christ) grew up to be a Jewish Rabbi and ministered to His People (the Jews) for three years, along with His 12 disciples who were all Jewish- descendants of the twelve Tribes of Israel. But Jesus was crucified on a cross (in Israel) for claiming to be "Israel's King." Thankfully, His death mediated and brought the "New Covenant" God had promised would come for His People. Jesus was taken down from the cross and buried, but hallelujah He rose from the dead three days later. After spending 40 days with His disciples proving He had been resurrected, He ascended into Heaven where He "sits" at the "right hand" of His Father. And after His ascension, Jesus sent down the Holy Spirit on the Jewish Feast called "Pentecost," and 3,000 Jews were "saved" that "day." This started what we know as the "Church Age." In fact, the Church was started as a Jewish Church.
- The heart of the "New Covenant" is that belief in the "Gospel of Jesus Christ" is what God requires for the forgiveness of sins as animal sacrifices are NO longer required. In fact, when Jesus took His last breath, He said, "It is Finished" and the four-inch-thick "Heavy Veil," which separated the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies in the Temple was torn from top to bottom, indicating God's work, not man's. The message of the New Covenant is that God took ALL sin and put in on Jesus. Therefore, anyone who "believes" that Jesus

Christ rose from the grave... receives total and absolute forgiveness of all sin and the promise of eternal life with God in Heaven. This "Gospel" was first proclaimed in Jerusalem, then in Judea and Samaria (all located in Israel) and then to the ends of the earth.

- Jesus said that "salvation" is of the Jews, and the Apostle Paul (a Hebrew Christian who wrote most of the New Testament) said that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is "First" for the Jew - the Jewish People. But they failed to obey. Therefore, the Jewish People's rejection of God's redemptive plan for them means "salvation" is available for Gentiles who believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Gentile Christians are, in fact, "grafted" into God's "Natural" Olive Tree." Gentile Christians enjoy many of the same BLESSINGS promised to His People with Jewish blood flowing through their veins.
- It's important to note that God did NOT replace Israel with the Church (called "Replacement Theology"), and it is a lie straight from the pit of hell. So, if God has no more need of "Israel," then why was "Israel" re-born, and why does the Bible clearly state that "One Day," "ALL," of Israel will be "saved?" In fact, instead of "replacing," God put "Israel" aside until the full "measure of the Gentiles" comes in. Therefore, when the "Last 'Shofar' Trumpet" is sounded, and the last Gentile has "believed," God will "gather" His "elect" to Himself. His elect is BOTH Jews and Gentiles who have believed the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- In 70 AD, the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Second Temple, and the Jewish People were exiled without a "Home" for over 2,000 years. And during this time, the Jewish People were persecuted in "foreign lands." The most notorious of these persecutions was the Holocaust, which took the lives of over 6,000,000 and MANY millions of other "people's" lives, too. But as a direct result of the Holocaust, an unprecedented miracle occurred on May 14, 1948. And the land of "Israel" was given back to the Jewish People. However, the geographical boundaries of "Israel" in 1948 are much different than Israel's borders 2,000 years ago. "Israel" was more significant! "Israel" is also much different today than it was in 1948. That's because to "keep the peace," the Jews have given away significant portions of God's Land – yet there is still no peace. Then again, by God's divine miracle, in 1967, during the Six-Day War, the Jews recaptured "Jerusalem," which the Bible states historically had always been their Capital and is now again their "Capital." In fact, Jerusalem, the Bibles state, is the "City of God" - where God has chosen to make His "earthly" abode. The Jews also captured significant portions of Land to include what is known Biblically as Judah and Samaria (known today as the "West Bank). That said, the "Law of War" indicates that Land won during a "conflict" is the "Victor's" Land. The Jews have annexed and continue to annex "Land" that they seized fair and square after they were attacked and had to defend themselves. Yet, the World (and sadly some Christians) are against them and want Israel to give "these" captured lands back. MANY want the Jews driven into the sea.
- God gave His People "Seven Feasts" to observe in the "Old Covenant." These Feasts also provide a prophetic picture of what has been fulfilled and what is to be fulfilled. In summary, Jesus was crucified on the Feast of Passover. Jesus was buried the same evening on the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Jesus rose from the grave three days later on the Feast of First Fruits. After spending 40 days with His disciples, He ascended into Heaven, where He sits at the right hand of the Father and then sent down The Precious Holy Spirit on the Feast of "Pentecost." The Church of Jesus Christ is waiting for the sound of the "Last 'Shofar' Trumpet" to be sounded, and we will be "gathered" with Jesus (Feast of Trumpets). This is IMPORTANT. Because who is going to sound the "Last" Shofar Trumpet? Will it be a YouTube video that the Church hears or God's Angel sound it from the throne room of heaven? I don't know. What I do believe is that the Church is beginning to enter into a season where the Shofar Trumpet is elevated to the status God meant it to be. And that the sounding of the Shofar Trumpet starts our Worship services, etc. One day "soon," so many Shofar Trumpets are being sounded that the "last" Shofar will be sounded, and the Church will be gathered to be with Jesus. A 7-year Tribulation will begin culminating with a battle in the Valley of Megiddo (Armageddon), and "surviving Israel" will finally believe that Jesus Christ is indeed their Messiah, which

has been God's plan since the beginning. And what a "Day of Atonement" that will be, fulfilling the "Day of Atonement" Feast, too. God will create a "New Heaven," "New Earth," and a "New Jerusalem," and ALL believers will return in "Glorified" bodies to rule and reign with Jesus for 1,000 years. We will live in "rooms" (Tabernacles) as we "tabernacle" with Jesus fulfilling the seventh Feast of "Tabernacles."

- You would think that after "Everything" the Jews have gone through, the World would cut them a break. Sadly, a resurgence of anti-Semitic behavior has resurfaced, unlike anything we've ever seen since 1939 when Hitler initiated his plan to exterminate the Jewish People. But Jewish extermination will NEVER happen as the Bible (and history) proves over and over again that God has and will ALWAYS be with and for His people. It is also unfortunate, but some "Christian" Churches and those who profess to be Christians do not like or want anything to do with "Israel" or the Jewish People. Why? Is it because they have a lack of Biblical understanding or is it because they aren't "Christian" to begin with. I don't know, but "all" is an indication of the enemy's foothold in our camp. That said, we thank God that we live in the United States of America that has ALWAYS been a "safe haven" for the Jewish People (and other people groups). I also thank God that the current administration of the United States is a staunch supporter economically and militarily of the State of Israel. Sadly, most of the World's media, including in the United States, is anti-Semitic. And, the BDS Movement (boycott, divest, sanction) against Israel and Israeli products and services continues to grow. What if anything are Christians and the Church going to do about that?
- Like, Jesus, Christians are to LOVE and welcome ALL Peoples and their representative Countries. But how does that look like? Does that mean the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not first to the Jews? Are "all" people groups and all countries "equal" in the eyes of God. Can there be Biblical inequality? These are tough questions. And what about Churches and Christians who've made a choice to put Israel and the Jewish People first, in their "Outreach" endeavors and "Missions" giving. Are they wrong in doing so? And what about God? Does He still bless those who bless His People? And then what about anti-Semitism and the BDS movement? Should Christians and the Church take a position or just do "nothing?"
- I write this document on January 28, 2020, the very day that President Donald Trump unveiled the first part of his "Deal of the Century" to Israel and the world. However, except for a brief "sound bite," the U.S. media did NOT report the details of the "Peace Proposal." But this is to be expected from an anti-Semitic press. For many years, I look at the Jerusalem Post APP MANY times each day. They report the facts about what is taking place IN Israel. I highly recommend anyone reading this to do the "same." So, will this "plan" bring about peace? Most likely for the short term. But in the book of Daniel, we know that there will be "another" who will broker a different "peace plan" that allows the Jews to have a Third Temple and for the sacrificial system to begin again. Based on Scripture, the "Church" will have already been "gathered" to be with Jesus. And God will leave 144,000 Hebrew Christians to evangelize everyone "left behind." In fact, Hebrew Christians have always been God's evangelists. That said, ultimately, this "person" will reveal himself to be the anti-Christ as the "final" abomination that causes desolation" is unleashed at the Third Temple, which Jesus prophesied in Matthew 24. This leads me to my final point. Understanding Scripture and wrestling through questions are necessary to build up our faith so we can "stand" when the world around us is falling apart. It also helps us to understand and navigate through the "times" we are living in- the "Last Days."
- Finally, every Christian, at some point in their spiritual journey, will have to contemplate the points mentioned in this brief and similar. They will either take the same position towards Israel and the Jewish People, an opposing view, or they will simply say and do nothing. Conflicting opinions can be debated, and with time, personal growth and the study of Scripture can change. Not everyone is in the same place spiritually, and it is God who opens hearts and eyes on His timetable- not ours. However, I am most concerned about those who choose to say and do-nothing regarding Israel and the Jewish People. Why? Because saying and doing nothing is, in fact, taking a position. "Something" to think about!

Sample Statement of Faith Regarding Israel and the Jewish People

The entirety of the Bible (except for “maybe” two books) was written by Jewish authors. And to the Jews, God gave the “patriarchs” and the “prophets.” The Bible contains hundreds of prophecies concerning the “coming” of a Jewish Messiah who would come to “redeem” mankind from the effects of Adam’s “Fall.” God’s “Time Clock,” concerning Bible prophecies, ticks away based upon ONLY One Nation – The Nation of Israel. The Bible also provides extensive historical evidence concerning the Jewish People and the “Land” God “promised” to His People - “Israel.” Our Savior and Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, came from a long line of Jewish ancestors. In fact, “some” in Messiah’s bloodline were Gentiles, who had turned their heart towards the God of the Bible -the God of the Jewish People.

After three years of ministry to His People who rejected Him, Jesus was crucified on a cross. Thankfully, His death mediated and brought the “New Covenant,” God had promised would come for His People. No longer are animal sacrifices required for sin, which was the heart of the “Old Covenant.” Instead, God placed “ALL” sin on the Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ. Jesus was taken down from the cross and buried, and then He rose from the dead three days later. After spending 40 days with His disciples proving He had been resurrected, He ascended into Heaven where He “sits” at the “right hand” of His Father. After His ascension, Jesus sent down the Holy Spirit on the Jewish Feast, “Pentecost,” and 3,000 Jews were “saved” that day, starting the “Church Age,” which began as a Jewish Church.

Concerning God’s “Eight Covenants,” the Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenant are still in effect. And in the Abrahamic Covenant, God expressly indicated that the Jewish People would be a blessing to the world. Gentiles are, in turn, to bless the Jews. History has verified God’s mandate, as the Jewish People have blessed and enriched the lives of the “Gentiles” with their innovative and entrepreneurial contributions in all fields of endeavor. We also recognize that the most significant gift the Jews have given the Gentiles is God’s Word, which they penned as they were led by God’s Holy Spirit. In fact, the Bible states that the “New Covenant” (prophesied by Jeremiah) was given to the Jewish People- “first” and that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is “first” for the Jews.

That said, we emphatically believe that God did NOT replace Israel with the Church (Replacement Theology). Instead, we believe God put “Israel” aside for “a time” until the “full measure of the Gentiles comes in.” And “One Day” after the Church has been “gathered” to be with Jesus, God will leave 144,000 Hebrew Christians to evangelize those “left behind.” And that, “One Day, ALL of Israel will be saved.”

We LOVE all peoples, people groups, and their respective Countries, and ALL are welcome at Bent Tree. We do not selfishly take a position of favoritism towards one people group or one country over another. Instead, we choose to “position” ourselves with what the Bible says. Again, in the Abrahamic Covenant, God admonishes us with the following, “Those who BLESS the Jews will be BLESSED, and those who curse the Jews will be cursed.” Therefore, we choose to “align” ourselves with Scripture, and we will do everything we can to BLESS Israel and the Jewish People. We also applaud all effects to bring about peace in the “Middle East,” especially in Israel. And we support Israel’s right to defend Herself from Her enemies. To that end, we adamantly oppose the BDS Movement, which “boycotts” Israeli products and services, forces governments and institutions to “divest” themselves of Israeli “holdings” and intimidates “them” to “sanction” Israel with “tariffs” to cripple Israel’s economy.

We also abhor all anti-Semitic verbiage, behavior, and rhetoric against Israel and the Jewish People, which is again rearing its ugly and evil head in the United States and around the world.

We are reminded that Jesus said, “Salvation is of the Jews,” and we are thankful for salvation, which we receive when we “believe” the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This FREE gift of salvation is God’s greatest gift to all. We are also thankful that when Gentiles “believe” the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are “grafted” into God’s “Olive Tree” (Israel). Therefore, we are, in effect, “Spiritual Jews.” And since we as Gentile Christians are “interconnected” to the Jewish People spiritually, we believe that our Church body has a spiritual obligation to pray for, bless, and love the Jewish People who live in and around our “community.”

We are committed to actively praying for and supporting “Jewish Missions” locally and in Israel. It is also our prayer that God will give “everyone” in our church body, “Jewish” friends, and that God will “make a way” so that “all” can hear and consider the “New Covenant” and the “Good News” of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Next Steps

Our Prayer is that “some” of your Jewish friends will believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And with that comes the “discipleship” process as they grow from “spiritual baby” to spiritual maturity. Hopefully, you can be a part of that process with them. However, most Jewish people come from a different culture than Gentiles. So, whereas, it is much easier for a Gentile person to leave everything and everyone from their “past” behind. Jews are deeply rooted within their community, profession, and family. So, at the onset of “belief,” some Jews may not even feel comfortable telling their spouse or family. Perfectly, okay! But all Jewish (and Gentile) believers NEED to be a part of a “Local-Bible Believing Church.” So, if BT is nearby, we welcome ALL. But keep in mind that some Jewish believers may feel more comfortable being a part of a local Messianic Congregation where their Jewish “culture” and “traditions” are part of their worship and growth experience. Messianic Congregations often are led by a Jewish (Rabbi) who has believed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Some Jewish believers may want that person to be their spiritual leader and Pastor. ALL GOOD! The Church of Jesus Christ (whether Gentile or Messianic) should include **both** Jews and Gentiles.

“Our” Ministry Position is that we will NOT ask a new Jewish believer to leave their Jewish culture, community, and family behind. So, yes, new Jewish believers should stay in their Synagogue and their Jewish Community, etc. But they should also come to a local Bible Church or Messianic Congregation. And as a new Jewish believer grows, they can “pray” “bless” and “love” their Jewish family and community, and maybe “some” will also believe one day, too. Let me also add that our ministry takes a hard “position” to never argue about spiritual things with anyone (Jew or Gentile). All that is needed for “Eternal Change and Transformation” to take place is an “open” Bible” and an “open” heart to consider what the Bible says. Eternal change and transformation is God’s work, not ours. But if a Gentile Christian comes to this ministry class and is convinced moving forward to actively reach out to Jewish friends and then continue to pray, bless and love them, God will do “something.” However, no matter if our Jewish friends choose not to believe, we WILL continue to pray, bless, and love our Jewish friends because that is what this outreach ministry is all about.

We believe that Impact = Success because “everything else” is out of our control. Therefore, all Gentile Christians can have active participation in this outreach ministry. So, this ministry, by its depth and design, is for the entire Church of Bent Tree to consider. But an outreach ministry is a relationship-building process. And “maybe” at the right time, God may allow you to present your Jewish friends with a Bible as God speaks through His WORD. Many Jews will be open to reading the Old Testament, as most Jews consider the Old Testament to be “theirs.” So providing a Bible at the “right time” is also good because about 1/3 of the New Testament contains portions or makes direct references to the Old Testament.

The Holy Spirit is the “One” who does the work of stirring a Jewish or Gentile person’s heart and bringing them to believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Nothing we say will ever convince anyone Jew or Gentile of anything. Our job is to Pray, Bless, and Love. It is up to God to “create circumstances” where the possibility of talking about spiritual things is brought up, and a Bible can be presented to read and discuss. However, the Jewish people as a whole will not believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is only a small remnant who will believe. Again, we don’t know who that remnant is, so we must continue to pray, bless, and love all of our Jewish friends, as “eternal change and transformation” is up to God.

God Always Equips those whom He “calls.” Therefore, we (you and me) are stepping into “new territory.” I have never led an outreach ministry to the Jewish people before. And you most likely have never been involved in an active outreach ministry to the Jewish people. It’s okay to be scared and apprehensive. I know! I am! But I also know from years of ministerial experience that God always provides everything we

need as we each take the “next” step in our faith journey. And remember that the “biggest” changes you will see will be the changes God will make in your life as you pray, bless and love His people.

Shared Leadership – Leadership author John Maxwell brings up an important point. In paraphrase, he says that you can’t tell who your leaders are if they are working for a paycheck. As everyone will “perform” if you are paying them (well, almost everyone will). By the way, there is nothing wrong with working and receiving a paycheck for your efforts. However, those who work for “nothing” to accomplish a “rewarding endeavor” demonstrate their real heart intent. That means no amount of money can buy the efforts of Gentile Christians to actively reach out to their Jewish and to bless and love them. It WILL ONLY come from God, placing a desire in their hearts to reach out to the Jewish people. That said, reaching out to the Jewish People is NOT my idea. Scripture reveals God’s love for His People as He has desired from the “beginning” that His People would believe and turn to Him. God also wants the message of the “New Covenant” communicated to His People, too, as the “New Covenant” is for the Jewish People.

I Remain Thankful to the leadership of BT and the Mission’s Department, who LOVES Israel and the Jewish People, and is praying and providing for this active ministry to the Jewish people.

Let me also add that “Yisrael’- ‘Leh-hah-ah-ZEEN” is NOT going to morph into a Messianic Congregation. “Our” ministry is a para-Church ministry started as “another” ministry of the Good Mood Foundation. It will be prayerfully and financially supported by Bent Tree’s Missions Department and those who believe in what God is doing through this ministry.

Finally, I believe that an outreach ministry to the Jewish people should be led by Gentile Christians, So, I am happy and excited to “help” launch this endeavor and pray God will raise up the “right” Christian Gentile to take over. But again, I am open to whatever God has in store for “us.”

Please contact me if you are interested in participating at MichaelNAttar@aol.com. I can’t wait to see what God is going to do in our hearts and the hearts of the Jews He puts into our lives through this active ministry.

Hugs, Smiles, and Joy,

Michael (Ben) Attar

Trip to Israel

“Next Year in Jerusalem- is Now!” TM

I believe many who are a part of this ministry class will want to visit or re-visit Israel. Therefore, I will be “partnering” with a trusted tour operator to co-lead this annual trip. One of the major highlights will be for participants to sound their Shofar throughout the trip. Travel partner, cost, details, and dates of travel still to be determined based upon participant “interest.”

Brief Background of Michael

I am an Israeli (born in Haifa) and a Hebrew Christian for 40 years. All of my family (on my father's side) immigrated to Israel in 1956, still live in Israel, and have raised their families there.

Let me begin by answering the question, "What is Ministry?" Ministry is about bringing the water, getting the food, and picking up the garbage (or, it's equivalent). And no teaching or preaching ministry is possible without "preparation, "setting up" and "tearing down." Ministry is WORK! But "ministry" has very unique and fulfilling rewards. The highest of which is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ accurately and passionately and to see the various "results" of IMPACT.

Michelle and I have been members of two Churches. The first for 12 years where I was "saved," baptized and married. This was a unique church in many ways, including having a vibrant Biblically minded Sunday School program, singles, and young adult ministries, all of which I was a part of for 12 years.

I began teaching part-time in our "Singles" Bible studies and then substitute teaching for Sunday School classes and other Bible study groups. At the age of 30, I was asked to shepherd a Sunday School Class. The Senior Pastor asked me what I wanted to teach, and I said, "The Book of Hebrews." Why? He asked. I responded because Hebrews is the hardest book in the Bible. I spent the next two years, working in my full-time job, and spending every free moment, studying and preparing each lesson. I taught Hebrews verse by verse, and it took two years to complete. During this time, I was elected and served as a deacon.

Michelle and I moved to Bent Tree (BT) in December of 1992 and have been members here for 27 years. We have always been in a Life Group, and eventually, we also led one. I was also a dedicated and regular attendee of the BT Monday night prayer meeting every Monday for five years. And being part of the "Worship Team" was another opportunity to minister, as I played my trumpet in Church Orchestra at my previous church for 8 years and then for over 12 years every Sunday at BT.

Throughout my spiritual journey, I pursued three men who eventually gave me what I wanted: a relationship. Each relationship lasted for five or more years, and I met with each man every week or every other week as they "poured" into me. Likewise, two men pursued me, and I had a multi-year relationship pouring into them.

I have served and volunteered in various capacities since believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ at the age of nineteen. But two serving opportunities still resonate in my mind. For five years (while serving on the Worship Team at BT playing my Trumpet), I prepared 4 pounds of "bacon" each week. The Worship singers loved because the bacon grease coats their vocal cords. I did the "math," and that comes to half a ton of bacon cooked over 5 years. But there is time, "stink" and a lot of residual "bacon grease" to contend with in preparing bacon. The second serving opportunity was volunteering for "Hope for the Heart Ministries" for four years, mostly "setting up" or "tearing down" tables and chairs. I did other things, including traveling with their team to four different conference events, but ministry by design includes the repetitive cycle of doing the same "seemingly" mundane tasks over and over. This repetitive of the above also came into play in a big way during our "Hospital Ministry" (following). Finally, "ministry" always begins with reading, thinking, writing, and praying. Though not necessarily in that order.

However, I believe what "speaks" more than anything else is that Michelle and I navigated through my serious illness (the brunt of it lasting for four years) and eventually came out the other side better for it. It

was this time of testing that led Michelle into volunteer activities leading to working part-time at Bent Tree, completing a master's degree at DTS, and eventually becoming a Pastor.

Public ministry is NOT a good goal to have for many reasons. And generally speaking, most ministries by design will remain small, obscure, and off the radar. But sometimes God will open doors leading to a public ministry. That happened to us, and we begin serving in a "Hospital Ministry" at Carrollton Springs Hospital (CSH) in February 2012 when they first opened.

CSH is a psychiatric and addiction facility located about two miles from BT. While in the hospital, patients received pharmacological and therapeutic treatment on their journey to getting well. Let me add that because many reading this or their loved ones struggle with mental health and addiction issues, I continue to believe that CSH is, in my opinion, one of the best facilities in the area. I would have no hesitation of being their patient if the need ever arose. Also, our many volunteers and I have so many wonderful memories of our time there ministering alongside the Staff. It was an honor and privilege to have been allowed to serve there.

And what started with one person grew to include dozens of volunteers and hundreds of "supporters" who gave of their encouragement, prayers, and finances. I taught the patients every Sunday until July 2019 (total of 7 ½ years) via a presentation we called "Engaging with God." Our "faith-based" ministry provided personal and Scriptural encouragement for "getting well and staying well" from a "living proof" patient's perspective. "Engaging with God" and "our" ministry was founded on three-bed rock principles, which helped me and countless others to get and stay well. They are:

1. Forgive those who have hurt you and seek forgiveness from those you have hurt.
2. Walk-in Step with the Spirit, which is only possible by having a personal relationship with Jesus.
3. Overcome negative thoughts and emotions by listening and singing to praise and worship music.

When I sat down to develop the "Engaging with God" presentation, I purposed to make the presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the centerpiece. So, to get "there," I began with personal stories of "Forgiving and being Forgiven." It's been my personal and ministerial experience that often times, issues related to "forgiveness" are at the center of those who are not well mentally and emotionally. So, I told the patients personal stories of how I forgave and how I was forgiven. This included explaining how the Nazis killed my mother's family in Poland during the Holocaust and my journey for 25 years to finally forgive the Germans. But "true" forgiveness is not possible without a relationship with the God of the Bible and "walking in step" with Him. And this transitioned into an explanation and creative delivery of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am convinced that God put me at CSH so I would "learn" how to rightly communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Spiritual fruit is God's doing -not man's. Therefore it was thrilling for our volunteers and me to see the transformative power the Gospel of Jesus Christ can have on a person. It's ALL God's doing as His Word is rightly communicated.

Two years into "Engaging with God," CSH asked us to offer another ministry opportunity, so we provided the patients with an hour for singing their hearts out to God via "Sing SOME of Your 'Blues' Away." Therefore, we also ministered in song and worship every Wednesday for 5 years. This aspect of ministry tied together with our belief that the "best" way to overcome negative thoughts and emotions is by listening and singing to worship music. Patients LOVED to sing despite their brokenness, pain, and issues. In fact, our team of volunteers and CSH Staff could see a visible change in the patient's countenance and "mood" upon leaving "Sing SOME of Your 'Blues' Away." It was common for patients to break down and cry as music often reminds us of a "better time" in our lives, and whenever a patient started crying, our volunteers would minister via a hug and personal prayer (with the patient's permission, of course). Also, one of our volunteers led another ministry (evening Bible study) for the patients called "Grace in Community."

Most patients stayed in the hospital for 5-7 days, so we were always ministering to a “new” group of patients each week. Therefore, I never deviated from the established presentation. I gave the “same” presentation week after week because the results were the “same.”

God’s Word will not return void, and because the Gospel of Jesus Christ was clearly presented, our team of volunteers saw MANY hundreds of patients “turn” their hardened hearts back to God. Many patients did so because they finally understood that He is the ONLY One who can truly make anyone well. We also saw many patients “believe” the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the first time.

However, “earning the right” to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the patients came with a price. So, our volunteers and supporters went above and beyond to serve and to underwrite the expenses for providing each patient who wanted with the following.

This included:

- ❖ A “Nice” Bible or study Bible.
- ❖ Three or four different Christian books.
- ❖ A writing journal for notetaking.
- ❖ A Christian coloring book to destress.
- ❖ Word Search and similar puzzle books.

My book, *“My Pursuit of a Good Mood,”* was well-loved and appreciated because it provides “hope” that the patient reading would and could get and stay well. We gave over 7,000 copies of my book during the 7 ½ years of ministry at CSH.

We also provided:

- ❖ A Snoopy card with envelope and stamp to those who wanted to write a “note” to a loved one, spouse, or children. We also gave their note to the CSH receptionist for mailing.
- ❖ “New” clothes to include shoes, socks, underwear, pants, and jacket to patients who came to the hospital with nothing. It’s amazing how much \$100-150 will buy at Walmart.
- ❖ We also provided every patient who came to “any” of our ministries with a “Personal Handwritten Note of Encouragement” the day after they attended. Our team of exceptional note writers poured themselves into praying and ministering to the patients via their encouraging “words,” and we know over 3,000 of these personal handwritten notes were written and distributed. Patients LOVED it!

Also, we provided CSH Staff with a large tray of cookies every week and “many” gifts to include; small notebooks, highlighters, and “any” of the gifts we provided the patients. Many Staff took Bibles for themselves and loved ones.

As you can imagine, providing “everything” to the patients in a hospital with a capacity of 75 beds was overwhelming at times. Our three-car garage was “home base” and the storage facility for everything required to minister to the patients. Even though everything was stored on shelving and dollies, there was so much, I could NOT put my car in the garage. But we did this to “provide” for the patients and to **demonstrate** the love of Jesus Christ with the hope the patient’s hearts would be moved to “come.” And when they came, they heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Word and song.

That said, our “secret sauce” that enabled us to “connect” and relate with the patients was that ONLY those who had been a patient in a psychiatric hospital, or were taking medications for the brain, or living (as a caregiver) with someone who had a mental illness or addiction issue were allowed to serve with me inside the “units” at CSH. We provided a “peer to peer” evangelistic Christian ministry. And if you’re interested, we recently posted hundreds of patient’s comments on our website so you can see the IMPACT our ministries

have made while at CSH. **However, because “our” ministries are Christian, Jews who were in the hospital didn’t come to “Engaging with God” or to “Sing SOME of Your ‘Blues’ Away.”**

Yet, I can vividly recall the faces of two Jewish patients who came to our groups. I know because they came up to me and told me they were Jewish. Both (one male and one female) sent me handwritten letters after they were discharged, indicating that they had believed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. **We ministered to well over 4,500 patients who “came” to our ministries, but why do these two Jews stand out in my mind?**

Because it is RARE for a Jewish person to believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“It was life-changing. Through Mike’s story, he gave me the courage and conviction to accept as a Jewish man, Jesus, as my Lord and Savior.”

Though I am not at liberty to share an excerpt from the Jewish female’s story, she did indicate she had been baptized and attending a local Bible Church. That said, the Bible indicates that we are living in the “Time of the Gentiles,” so there is only a small remnant of Jews who will believe during this “Church Age.” However, the Bible does tell us that after the Tribulation is over, ALL of “surviving Israel” will be “saved,” which has been God’s desire since the beginning. But Jews are hardhearted when it comes to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their spiritual eyes and hearts are “closed,” and there is nothing we can do to open them except to pray for the Jews, bless the Jews, and love the Jews.

Though we had an IMPACTFUL ministry and were well-loved by the patients, as evidenced by their written evaluations, which senior CSH Staff read each week. Nothing is forever. I knew a few years ago that our “Hospital Ministry” would come to an end, I just didn’t know how or when. God was leading me in the direction of “God’s Trumpets” and “Israel.”

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Following, Paul, (a Hebrew Christian) who wrote most of the New Testament offers Biblical “arguments” that Jewish people (at the right time) will think about, ask questions, and consider. Enjoy!!!!

A Contrast of the “Old Covenant” and the “New Covenant”

The Bible, by design, is the story of God’s People and God’s plan for their **ultimate** redemption. Therefore, the Bible offers MANY convincing arguments for believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The following are several **excerpts** about the “New Covenant” and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All appropriate for your Jewish friends to study at the “right time.” Let’s begin with a **brilliant and often overlooked** passage in the New Testament, that **contrasts the “Old Covenant” and the “New Covenant.”** It was written by Paul, a Hebrew Christian, and author of most of the “New Testament.”

The following passage contrasts Abraham’s wife “Sarah” and her maidservant “Hagar.”

The background for this passage is that “so-called” Christians had come from Jerusalem and were approaching Christians in the Galatian Church. They told “these” Christians, *“You can’t be a Christian or have ‘salvation’ unless you also followed the Law.”*

- “Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way, but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a promise. These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written: “Be glad, O barren woman, who bears no children; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labor pains; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.” Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. At that time, the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. But what does the Scripture say? “Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son.” Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the freewoman. It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 4:21–5:1

This passage contrasts:

1. Two “Earthly” Mothers: Hagar and Sarah.
2. Two Destinies: Slave and Free.
3. Two Sons: Ishmael and Isaac.
4. Two Births: “Natural”-by the Ordinary Way and “Supernatural”-by God’s Promise,
5. Two Covenants: “Old Covenant” and “New Covenant.”
6. Two Mountains: Mount Sinai, and Mount Zion.
7. Two Jerusalem’s: “Earthly Jerusalem” and “Jerusalem from above.”
8. Two Ways to Live: No Life and Abundant LIFE.
9. Two Eras: Israel is “Led Away Captive,” and “Israel Returns.”
10. Two Brotherly Persecutions: Ishmael and Isaac.
11. Two On-Going Earthly Persecutions: The Middle Eastern People and the Jewish People.
12. Two On-Going Spiritual Persecutions: “Unbelievers” and Believers.”
13. Two “Spiritual” Mothers” Hagar or Sarah.

To begin, Paul addresses the Christians, who were considering going back to trying to obey The Law. Paul's concerns can be summarized with this question. Do you know what you are getting yourself into if you decide to live by the Law?

- “Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says?”

Paul reminds “these” Christians that Abraham had **two sons**; Ishmael and Isaac.

1. **Ishmael's mother** was Hagar, and she was a “**slave**” to Abraham and Sarah.
2. **Isaac's mother** was Sarah, Abraham's wife, and she was a “**free**” woman.

- “For it is written that Abraham had two sons. One by the slave woman and the other by the free woman.”

Next, Paul contrasts the “natural birth” of Ishmael and the “supernatural birth” of Isaac. You will recall that God had promised Sarah and Abraham a son even though both were beyond childbearing years. Eventually, Sarah felt the “son of promise” was not coming, so she insisted that Abraham sleep with their “Slave Woman” Hagar. In “Middle Eastern” culture, if a woman was not able to have a baby, there were devastating emotional and social consequences. So, it was common for another woman to be a surrogate. Abraham slept with Hagar, and she birthed a son, Ishmael. Ishmael came into this world, “In the Ordinary Way.” He came through “natural birth.”

In time, God fulfills His Promise, and Isaac, the “Son of Promise,” is born. Because Abraham and Sarah were beyond childbearing years. Isaac came into this world through “supernatural birth.”

- “His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way, but his son by the freewoman was born as the result of a promise.”

Later, we will see that Jesus also came into this world because of “God's Promise.” However, Jesus came from **both** “supernatural conception” and “supernatural birth.” That said, every person is born once in the “ordinary way” (natural birth). However, God provides an opportunity to be “born from above” or “born again.” This is “spiritual birth,” which takes place when anyone believes in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Believers are, in fact, “Sons’ of Promise.”

- **Jesus said**, “Truly, I tell you emphatically, unless a person is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3 (ISV)

Now, Paul uses Hagar and Sarah to contrast the “Old Covenant” with the “New Covenant.” Then Paul contrasts “Mount Sinai” and “Mount Zion.” And then, he contrasts the “Earthly Jerusalem” and the “Jerusalem from above.”

- “These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother.”

Before continuing, let's go to the book of Hebrews, where the writer contrasts “Mount Sinai” and “Mount Zion.”

Mount Sinai is in the desert.

- “You have not come to a mountain that can be touched, and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them because they could not bear what was commanded: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.” The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, “I am trembling with fear.”

Mount Zion is in the Heavenly Promised Land.

- “But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.” Hebrews 12:18–24

Therefore, Hagar, the “Slave” women,” represents the “Old Covenant,” which was given to God’s People on Mount Sinai in Arabia. This corresponds to those from the “Present City of Jerusalem”-Jews.

The “Old Covenant” was a Covenant of Fear and Death and can be summed up this way.

“You Shall, You Shall, You Shall, Or Else!”

Everyone who lives by The Law of the “Old Covenant” is Hagar’s Children.

However, Sarah, the “Free” woman, represents the “New Covenant.” Her children are from “The Jerusalem that is above.” This corresponds to those from “Heavenly Jerusalem” - Believers.

The “New Covenant” is a Covenant of Grace and Life and can be summed up this way.

“I WILL, I WILL, I WILL, I PROMISE!”

Everyone who lives by The Grace of the “New Covenant” is Sarah’s Children.

Continuing, Paul introduces a passage of Scripture from Isaiah 54:1.

- “For it is written: “Be glad, O barren woman, who bears no children; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labor pains; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.”

The background is that King Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem. He had taken the Jews captive back to Babylon (for 70 years). So, from the Jews' perspective, it appeared that “everything” was hopeless.

So, Isaiah offers them HOPE.

Isaiah says the “barren and desolate woman” (“Nation of Israel”) will “One Day” will return to their land and that Israel and the Jewish People will **flourish**. Isaiah’s prophesy has been fulfilled as the Jewish People are back in their Land, and for the first time (in 2018), more Jewish People are living in Israel than in any other country in the World. The People of God are flourishing in terms of population, and God’s People are also thriving economically

Next, Paul addresses “These Christians” who were considering going back to obeying The Law as “brothers” (believers in Jesus Christ). This is to remind them that, like Isaac, “**ALL**” believers are “Children of Promise.”

- “Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.”

Growing up, Ishmael persecuted his younger brother Isaac. But keep in mind that Ishmael was also the father of ALL the Arabic and Middle Eastern People. Therefore, today, some of the Middle Eastern People **are still** persecuting “Isaac”- God’s People, the Jews.

- “At that time, the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now.”

But not only that, Today, there is a “spiritual persecution” taking place between “unbelievers” and “believers.” It’s an ongoing Spiritual Battle that will continue to intensify until the very “END.”

Finally, Paul reminds these Christians who were thinking about going back to The Law with this admonition, “Get rid of the “Slave Women,” once and for all. Do Not go back to “The LAW.” Stand firm in your faith. Those who attempt to live by The Law are continually burdened by a “Yolk of Slavery.”

- “But what does the Scripture say? “Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son.” Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the freewoman. It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 4:21–5:1

In summary, notice the spiritual progression of both mothers.

Hager = The Slave Woman = Ishmael = Born in the Ordinary Way = Mount Sinai = **Old Covenant** = “You Shall-or ELSE” = Fear = Lost in Sins = Never Ending Animal Blood Sacrifices = Separated From God = The Present Jerusalem = Unbelievers = Self-Righteous = Man Puts God’s Law On their Hearts and Minds = The Works of the Flesh = Broken = No Hope = Lifting Up of Self = Slaves to The Law = Condemned = False Gospels = False Christs = Worth Based On Works = Worldly Mind = NO Life = Die = Great White Throne Judgement = Punishment = Eternity = Hell = Lake of Fire.

Sarah = The Free Woman = Isaac = Born of Promise = Mount Zion = **New Covenant** = “I WILL-I PROMISE” = Faith = Saved From Sins = ONE Blood Sacrifice of Jesus Christ = Reunited to God = The Heavenly Jerusalem = Believers = Declared Righteous = God Puts His Law In Man’s Hearts and Minds = The Fruits of The Spirit = Healing for Brokenness = Hope = Dependency Upon God = Freedom from the Law = Loved = True Gospel = Jesus Christ = Worth Based On Our Identity in Christ = Abundant LIFE = Mind of Christ = Die = Judgment Seat of Christ = Rewards = Eternity = Heaven = New Jerusalem.

Today, there are three groups of people (Jews, Muslims, and Christians) who claim Abraham as their Father. Yes, that is true. **But the question is, who is your “Spiritual Mother?”**

Understanding and Communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ

We “owe” it to our Jewish (and Gentile) friends to understand and to be able to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ “BIBLICALLY.” As “Yisrael”- ‘Leh-hah-ah-ZEEN’- (Israel-Hear) is a “New Covenant” ministry outreach to the Jewish people, we owe them the Gospel Message of the “New Covenant.” So, one of the main topics we will cover is, “What is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and how do we communicate it?”

*“Nowhere in the New Testament will you find that salvation is about ‘accepting’ Jesus. Nowhere are you called to ‘accept Jesus.’ Nowhere in the New Testament will you find that salvation is about ‘asking Jesus into your heart.’ Nowhere in the New Testament are you told to ‘ask Jesus into your heart.’ Nowhere, nowhere, nowhere. IT’S NOT THERE! What you ARE told again and again and again is to repent and **believe.**”*

-Voddie Baucham-

“You and I believed the Gospel, not because we were wiser or more righteous than anyone else, but because God graciously intervened, opening our hearts to heed, His word and believe.”

-John MacArthur-

“A BELIEVER will NEVER become an unbeliever because faith is a gift from God.”

-Steve Lawson-

“I do not preach DECISIONS, I preach regeneration.”

-Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones-

“This generation has forgotten that the Gospel Message does not clean up and shine the outside of a person. Rather, it bores into the very heart and soul of a person and radically changes that person from the inside forever.”

-A.W. Tozer-

“Do not go where it is all fine music and grand talk and beautiful architecture...Go where the Gospel is preached...and go often.”

-Spurgeon-

How can a Mortal be Righteous before God?

Now, let’s answer the most important question, anyone can ask.

- **“But how can a mortal be righteous before God?”** Job 9:2

The answer to this question is revealed in The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To begin, who is Jesus Christ?

1. Jesus Christ is God’s One and Only Son and the “Middle Person” of the Trinity.
2. Jesus came to the earth as a baby (God in the Flesh) born of a virgin.
3. Jesus lived a sinless life.
4. Jesus was crucified.
5. Jesus died as a “Sin Substitute.”

6. Jesus was buried.
7. Jesus rose from the grave on the “Third Day.”
8. Jesus gave us His LIFE. He “Lives” **in** the hearts of those who Believe in His Gospel.

What is The Gospel of Jesus Christ?

The term “Gospel” means “Good News.” But to appreciate the “Good News,” we first need to understand the “Bad News” and the “Old News.”

Bad News: After careful scrutiny into our own personal lives and a study of the Bible, we must come to the sobering conclusion that we are all born sinners. In more personal terms, the Bible declares that every person who is born (natural birth) is born programmed to follow the sin (fleshly) nature. Everyone is born with the “Adamic” nature. We all come from Adam. And because Adam sinned, we ALL sin. The Bible also declares that the wages of the sin (fleshly nature) is death. The term “death” *can* mean literal death. But it *always* means spiritual death. God describes the sinful (fleshly) nature in this way.

- “The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies.” Galatians 5:19-21

Old News: The Old News is the message of the “Old Covenant”-The LAW. Sin separated His people from God, so He required an animal to be sacrificed for every sin His people committed. Therefore, the sinner went to The Temple and took with him a spotless animal, like a sheep. At the Temple, he would place his hands on the animal and confess his sin. Through the shedding of blood, that person was restored back into fellowship with God. That is until they sinned again. This repetitive cycle of sin and sacrifice was never-ending. Thankfully, God, through the prophet, Jeremiah, said that a “New Covenant” was coming for His People.

Good News: The “Good News” is that God no longer requires the sacrifice of an animal for sins. Instead of putting your sins on an animal (Old News), God put ALL YOUR sin “Past, Present and Future” on His Son, Jesus Christ. Therefore, “Righteousness” (a Right Standing with God) which was unattainable in the “Old Covenant” (because NO ONE could obey all 613 Laws), is now obtainable in the “New Covenant” by placing your FAITH in what Jesus Christ did on the cross for you. That’s “Good News.”

The Apostle Paul, (a Hebrew Christian) and author of the book of Romans expounds (Romans 1-8) on the question, how can a person have a “Right Standing” (Righteous) with God?

Admit that you are a sinner and that you (NO ONE) can stand before a Holy God. Also, recognize that God in His mercy provided a “Way” for you to have a “right standing” with Him. This “Righteousness” is only obtained by faith in Jesus Christ.

- “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord... I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel, a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness since what may be known about God

is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse... Therefore, God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another... Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant, and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them... We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one... Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law, we become conscious of sin. But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe ... For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law..." Romans 1-3

Believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ and place ALL of your faith in Him and Him alone.

Here's an excellent example of what it means to place ALL of your faith in something.

To begin, consider that when you work for an employer, you are owed "wages" for the work you performed. In summary, if you work, you will receive a paycheck. However, the Bible is clear that we cannot "work" for our Salvation. There is **NOTHING we can do** to have a "right relationship" with God. Instead, we are all sinners, unworthy, and deserving of eternal death and punishment. But God in His Mercy, provided a "**Spotless Passover Lamb**" to be our "sin substitute." Jesus Christ took ALL sin and placed it on Himself. Therefore, like Abraham (father of the Jews and the Gentiles), "Righteousness"- right standing with God is obtained by believing. But belief must not be an intellectual understanding, as even the Devil believes (understands) that Jesus is the Son of God, Jesus rose from the grave on the third day, etc. Instead, you must believe and place ALL of your faith in the Truth of The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I'll use the illustration of a chair to make my point.

A chair was designed for a person to sit in and relax. A chair was designed for a person to put ALL of their weight and their "cares" in the chair.



However, in this image, the woman is placing only some of her faith in the chair. She is working. Only part of her body is sitting in the chair. She has also put some of her weight on one leg and has extended her arms to balance herself. But that's not what a chair was designed to do.



In this image, the man is comfortably relaxed, at peace, and has placed ALL of his weight and all of his faith in the chair.

- “What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven; whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him.” Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham’s faith was credited to him as righteousness. Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. And he is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value, and the promise is worthless because law brings wrath. And where there is no law, there is no transgression. Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.” He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were. Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.” Romans 4

Receive “Salvation” (a Gift from God) by believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, you NOW have a right standing with God- “Righteousness.”

To explain the “Gift” of salvation, let’s use the following example.

Let’s suppose you were dying of kidney failure because both of your kidneys were failing. The only thing that would “save” you would be if someone “gave” you the “gift” of a new kidney. In other words, a “loving person” would have to be found who would sacrificially allow a surgeon to remove one of their kidneys and give it to you. Therefore, would your spouse “gladly” give you one of their kidneys? Would a sibling or even your adult child be willing to provide you with a kidney? Most assuredly, YES! Why? Because they love you. Now, what are the chances that a random person walking on the street would be willing to provide you with one of their kidneys? The answer is obvious.

And what are the chances that your worst enemy would give you one of their kidneys? ZERO!

That said, from the moment you were born, you were an enemy of God. You were not righteous (in right standing) with God. Yet, though you were God’s enemy, He sent His One and Only Son to provide what

you needed so that you could “Live.” And not only that, God initiated a NEW and right relationship with Him. Therefore, instead of condemning you and giving you what you deserve, which is punishment and eternal separation from God. God provided a way for you to become “Righteous.” But God didn’t wait until you became righteous to “save” you, which is IMPOSSIBLE! Instead, Jesus died for you while you were still Un-Godly.

- “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand...You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! For if, when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way, death came to all men, because all sinned— for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man, the many will be made righteous. The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5

Shabbat- a “Day of Rest” for God’s People

God instructed His people to work for six days and then to rest on the seventh day. In Israel, everyone rests on the Sabbath (Saturday) except for essential services. Jews in Israel (and around the World) take the Sabbath seriously. The Sabbath begins at sunset on Friday evening and ends on Saturday night. The Sabbath is a remembrance that after God created the world—He rested from His labors” (Genesis 2:2).

Salvation- a “Sabbath Rest” for God’s People

God provided a “means” to deliver (“save”) His people from danger or suffering. After the Exodus, the Nation of Israel made it to the border of the Promised Land. Moses sends out twelve spies to scout out the Land (Israel). The twelve spies came back and reported that the Land was filled with milk and honey, but there were giants in the Land. Two of the twelve spies, Joshua and Caleb, believed that they could take the land promised to them by divine covenant with God. However, the other ten spies did not believe they could

take the Land. They said that they were like grasshoppers in comparison to the giants. The “unbelievers” spread a bad report about the Land and caused the Israelites to grumble and complain. So, God sent venomous snakes to punish them. However, God instructs Moses to put a bronze snake on a pole. Anyone who looked at the snake would be “saved” and not die.

- “They [The Jewish Nation] traveled...to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!” Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people, and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us.” So, Moses prayed for the people. The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” So, Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived.” Numbers 21:4-9



In the book of Genesis, you’ll recall that after the “Fall” of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, God curses SATAN-the serpent (**snake**). God also promises a “Redeemer” who will come to restore MAN and crush the “serpent’s” head. Following, Jesus, “The Redeemer,” refers to a bronze snake that Moses hung on a pole to Himself. He says that if you **believe** in faith, you will not die, but have everlasting life. You will be “saved.”

- Jesus said; “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” “How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely, he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So, it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked. “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things, and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man...Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through him. Whoever **believes** in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.” John 3:1-21

“TRUE REST” for the People of God

Jesus is the ONLY One who can provide TRUE “Rest.”

- **Jesus said**, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” Matthew 11:28–30
- “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God... God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached **to save those who believe.**” 1 Corinthians 1:18–2:5
- **Jesus said**, “When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me.” John 12:44–46

The writer of Hebrews says that a “Sabbath Rest” is still available for the people of God.

- “Since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. Now we who have **believed** enter that rest, just as God has said, “So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’” And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: “And on the seventh day God rested from all his work.” And again, in the passage above, he says, “They shall never enter my rest.” It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in because of their disobedience. Therefore, God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before: “Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. **There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest**, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.” Hebrews 4:1-1

Please remember that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not a free ticket from the trials and tribulations of this world. Instead, the Gospel promises that your sins—past, present, and future—are removed from the eyes of God, even as far as the east is from the west. The Gospel promises a personal relationship with God and eternal, everlasting life. The Gospel promises that one day in Heaven, those who know Him will have a new body—there will be no more death, no more sickness, and no more pain. Therefore, believing “The Gospel” of Jesus Christ for the “First-Time” is necessary for Salvation. In conclusion, “TRUE REST” is only found in a relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ.

**Believers
become
“Believers”
by BELIEVING
The Gospel of Jesus Christ**