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Bless Israel
Ministries



Last Saturday morning, September 13th, Bless Israel joined with Iranian Pastor Khadijeh Baratzadeh-Askari, her husband Mohammed and about 100 other followers of Jesus to pray for unity among the body of Christ, for a breakdown of walls between Jews, Gentiles and Arabs, and for peace in our land and in the Middle East. The top picture shows a group of former Muslims who participated, who have turned from the darkness of Islam and put their faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior! The second and third pictures shows Joshua Rubenstein, the leader of Beth Yeshua Messianic Congregation in Sacramento, Khadijeh Baratzadeh-Askari, and a



Palestinian woman from Khadijeh's church embracing after the two women prayed for forgiveness for how their people have treated the Jewish people and acknowledged their relationship as "cousins" both with the same father Abraham. They prayed blessing on Joshua and his family, and the nation of Israel. It was powerful,

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Prayer

Pray for a teaching opportunity coming up in October that is brewing, an "Israel 101 class" that will be offered to help folks who want to better understand God's unique plan for Israel in Scripture. Pray for the speakers in addition to myself including Joshua Rubenstein and Khadijeh (left).

Pray for Susan Michael, the USA Coordinator for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) who will be coming to speak at a ½ day conference at William Jessup University on November 8, called "Discerning the Times." Mark your calendars!

Praise

So thankful for opportunities be invited to visit a few local groups heading to Israel this fall, to teach about Israel prior to their trip!

Praising God too for openness among church leaders in our region to come together in unity with Beth Yeshua/the believing Jewish community as the body of Christ.

Bless Israel is now a prayer partner with ICEJ and their Isaiah 62 Prayer Initiative. <http://int.icej.org/isaiah-62-prayer-map>.

What We've Been Up To...

A wonderful group of about 40 folks (a mix of people with both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds) met all summer long to study the Appointments (Feasts) of the LORD in Jeff and Lorri James' backyard (thank you thank you Jeff and Lorri)! We had an amazing time of learning and fellowship. One treat! God orchestrated for our friends Sean and Jessica Cole from Nazareth, Israel to pop in for a visit, and educate us on the spiritual condition of Nazareth and the ministry God has called this sweet, newly married couple to!



How fun, to teach while we all sat in 103- degree weather with our feet in the pool!



Praying with partners in ministry Sean and Jessica Cole, missionaries in Nazareth, Israel (above). Taylor, Jeff and Lorri James, Sean and Jessica Cole, and me and Brandon (below)



The past few months have been busy with opportunities to come alongside our friends at Beth Yeshua (Heb. "House of Jesus"), which has been hosting beautiful Friday evening events with the intention of reaching out to not-yet-believing Jews and Gentiles alike (above).

Understanding Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah

Next week, September 24 & 25, marks the beginning of the fall feast season for the Jewish people. These feasts include Yom Teruah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot, a period of time marked by reflection of sin and repentance. Below is an article to help us understand what this first fall feast “Yom Teruah” is all about (you may have heard it called “Rosh Hashanah), and the significance for believers today.

The Bible does not refer to the holiday as Rosh Hashanah but instead uses various other designations for the celebration. In the listing of the major biblical feasts, the Torah refers to the day as *zikron teruah*, “a memorial of blowing of the trumpets” (Lev. 23:24). Later, the Torah refers to the holiday simply as Yom Teruah, “the day of blowing of trumpets” (Num. 29:1). The Torah does not explicitly explain the reason for the holiday, but simply tells us that it is a day of “rest,” set aside for various sacrifices (Lev. 23:23-25).

“Teruah” in Hebrew (Strong’s dictionary #8643) means: alarm, signal, shout (as if splitting the ears) or blast of war, alarm or joy. This day is a day of an ear-splitting shout or alarm, the blasting sound of the shofar. Numbers 29:1 commands the trumpet to be sounded this day. “*On the first day of the seventh month hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. It is a day for you to sound the trumpets*” (Numbers 29:1).

Since Yom Teruah falls on the new moon in the seventh Hebrew month of Tishri, a *shofar* is blown: “*Sound the ram’s horn at the New Moon, and when the moon is full, on the day of our festival; this is a decree for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob*” (Psalm 81:3-4). The implication was that one only needed to *hear* the shofar, not blow it. The picture here is that one day in the future an ear-splitting *shofar* blast will be sounded on this day and *all the earth will hear it.*

This feast (Heb. *moed*, or “appointed time”) is the only feast on the Hebrew calendar that begins with the sighting of the new moon in Jerusalem. Because one never really knew when the new moon would show in biblical times, it became known within Jewish tradition as “*The Day That No Man Knows*” or “*The Hidden Day.*” Later, Jewish tradition added other various names to the holiday: Yom HaZikaron (Day of Remembrance); Yom HaDin (Day of Judgment); Yom HaKeshet (Day of Concealment for Sins) and Rosh Hashanah (Head of the Year).



Blowing the *shofar* (ram’s horn) is still one of the main features of Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah. Micah 7:18-20 tells us the blowing of the *shofar* can call the nation to repentance (*teshuvah*, Heb). In Psalm 81:1-4, blowing the *shofar* signifies overwhelming joy during worship. It also represents the hope for the arrival of the Messiah (Zech. 9:14). Although Judaism also made use of silver trumpets for military purposes and in temple rituals (Num. 10), the *shofar* plays the central role in the events of Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

According to Jewish tradition, God opens up the Book of Life (*Sefer HaChaim*) on Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah, and closes it on Yom Kippur, ten days later, thus determining the fate of each person once the book is closed. This is why it is customary to pray during these ten days, “*Inscribe us in the Book of Life.*” The tradition likely developed from the account of Moses’ intercession on Israel’s behalf, when he asked God to forgive Israel’s sin. If God refused to forgive Israel, then Moses asked God to blot out his name from “*the*

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GIVING

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Book” He had written (Ex. 32:32).

The phrase “Book of Life” occurs only once in the Hebrew Bible, when the psalmist asks God to blot his enemies out of the “Book of Life,” so that they are not mentioned with the righteous (Psalm 69:28). (**Apocryphal Jewish literature speaks of the opening of various books during the time of judgment, including the “Book of Life” and the “Book of Death” in the Book of Jubilees 30:20-22 and 1 Enoch 36:10).*

Jewish belief concerning the books opening on Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah developed from the Talmud (commentary on the Torah), which states, *“three books are opened in heaven on Rosh Hashanah, one for the thoroughly wicked, one for the thoroughly righteous, and one for the intermediate. The thoroughly righteous are inscribed in the Book of Life, the thoroughly wicked in the Book of Death, while the fate of the intermediate is suspended until the Day of Atonement” (Rosh HaShanah 16b).*

On the day of Yom Teruah, Jews believe the gates of heaven are opened, the heavenly court convenes and the three books are opened. The prophet Daniel saw a vision of this: *“As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened” (Daniel 7:9-10).*

The Apostle John, one of the early Jewish followers of Jesus, reflects the Jewish language of God’s judgment when he repeatedly mentions the “Book of Life” throughout the Book of Revelation. John writes, *“I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things written in the books...And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast*

The opening of the various books for a time of judgment invited the nation of Israel to live in covenant fidelity with God, something God had called Israel to back in Deuteronomy. As the nation prepared to enter into the Promised Land, God gave Israel the opportunity to have a flourishing life if they chose to follow His instruction. He said, *“I set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life,*

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Upcoming Events/Opportunities



ICEJ (International Christian Embassy Jerusalem) "Discerning the Times Conference" Time TBA

November 8, 2014 • William Jessup University, Rocklin, CA

ICEJ USA Coordinator Susan Michael will be speaking at this ½ day seminar on the topics of: Your place in History, The Importance of Israel, What God is Doing in the Islamic World, the Plight of the Persecuted Church, and Miracles in the Middle East.

Susan is the Director of the US Branch of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem and a member of the Board of the ICEJ in Jerusalem. She was earning an MA in Judeo Christian Studies at the Jerusalem University College in Jerusalem when the ICEJ was formed in 1980 and has served in various capacities but as US Director since 1992. She is a frequent speaker to both Jewish and Christian audiences on Evangelical-Jewish relations, Islam and Middle Eastern affairs.

A Study of the Tabernacle: The Gospel According to Moses



Dr. Noreen Jacks

November 16, 2014, 12:45 - 5:30 pm

RTI Classroom 13405 Folsom Blvd, #150, Folsom, CA.

Noreen Jacks holds a Doctorate of Ministry in Biblical Studies and Theology from Trinity Southwest University (TSU) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her academic background and interests include: biblical archaeology, cultural anthropology, linguistics, Hebraic studies, and the history of the Bible lands and its inhabitants. Her numerous travels throughout the Middle East lay the background for much of her in depth teaching. She has been part of the teaching team of Bible Interact, producing books, Bible study guides, and television and radio programs since 2007. She is a visiting professor at TSU and has recently been named Dean of Social Anthropology of the Bible lands for the Bible Learning University, an online Bible College. Please email blessisraelministries@gmail.com to register for this class. *Space is limited.*

Israel 101: God's Unique Plan for Israel

October 26, 12:45-5:30 pm • Community Bible Church, 601 Natoma St, Folsom, CA. This ½ day seminar will help you to understand and answer the question: *What is so important about Israel?* It will give a Biblical foundation for God's purpose and plan for the nation of Israel and the Jewish people, a basic understanding of Replacement Theology, the importance of Jewish/Arab reconciliation, the "new" anti-Semitism, Messianic Judaism, Modern Israel and understanding Ezekiel's prophecy regarding Israel. Please email blessisraelministries@gmail.com to register.



*Prayer rally, continued from
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beyond words, and a beautiful picture of the mystery of the church, the “one new man” Paul speaks of in Ephesians 2 and 3:

“For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two...thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit....In reading this then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise of Christ Jesus.” – Eph. 2:11-18, 3:6

*Yom Teruah, continued from
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that both you and your descendants may live” (Deut. 30:19).

The apostle Paul spoke of the purpose of the appointed times, which would have included Yom Teruah, in Colossians 2:16-17: *“Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.”* Thus, the “shadow” of the Feast of Yom Teruah likely anticipates the reality of future events.

Today, Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah services include 100 piercing blasts of the *shofar*, the last blast known as the “Last Trump” or the “Great Shofar.” It is possible that Paul alludes to this Jewish tradition when he speaks of the last trumpet at the rapture: *“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:51-52).*

In his letter to the Thessalonians Paul also writes, *“For this we say to you by the word of the LORD, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the LOR will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the LORD Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thess. 1:15-16)*

Until then, we continue to pray “Bo, Yeshua!” Come, Jesus!

Sources: Chosen People Ministries, & www.thesevenappointmentsofthelord.com

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May those who love you prosper.” – Psalm 122:6
