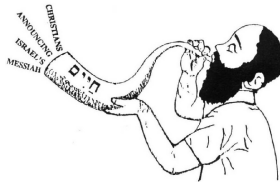


CHAIM TIMES

The Newsletter of CHAIM, "CHristians Announcing Israel's Messiah"

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Sukkot, 70 + 1 Bulls, And the Gentiles

If you live in a religious Jewish community at this time of year, or you are a student on a college campus where there are a significant number of Jewish students, you will see strange booths going up in back yards, balconies, or at the Hillel Center on campus. These booths may be made out of cloth, canvas, wood, or even blue polypropylene tarps. They will have branches or a bamboo mat for a roof. Often they will be decorated, and there will be a table and chairs inside. What is going on? This is the Feast of Booths, or Sukkot in Hebrew. It is a reminder of the wilderness wandering and dependence on God to provide. What a lot of our Jewish friends do not know is that Sukkot once involved many animal sacrifices.

In the book of Numbers, chapter 29, a description of the sacrifices and burnt offerings made during this feast is provided. On the first day, in addition to the regular temple offerings, 13 bullocks were sacrificed along with two rams, 14 male lambs and a goat for a sin offering. The number of bullocks diminished by one each day until a total of 70 had been sacrificed by the seventh day. On the eighth day only one bullock was sacrificed. The Talmudic rabbis concluded that the seventy bullocks correspond to the number of gentile nations on earth, and the final one was for Israel. The sacrifices were for the atonement of all nations so that all would receive next year's rainfall. (Bab. Talmud Sukkah 55b).

The need for a sacrificial atonement is universal and we all need a sacrifice for more than making sure we get our crops watered! We need a sacrifice for sin. Messiah Jesus came and "tabernacled" among us for the very purpose of making a final once-for-all sin sacrifice for people of all nations. Once we're cleansed from sin, he pours out on us the life-giving water of the Holy Spirit so that we may produce spiritual fruit.

A Few Thoughts on Eschatology...

With all the craziness going on in the world –Covid, Afghanistan, China threatening Taiwan– we again see a rise in end times speculation. But this is nothing new. I have a book describing Mussolini as the antichrist, and many at the time also believed Hitler was the one. Later, Saddam Hussein was suggested. Some earlier had seen the League of Nations as a prophesied one world government. Of course we all remember the folly of Harold Camping calculating the end wrong –twice! Even all of this had precedent.

People went absolutely bonkers at the turn of the first millennium. Accounts of the new year of 1,000 AD are quite shocking. "As the last day of 999 approached, 'the old basilica of St. Peter's at Rome was thronged with a mass of weeping and trembling worshipers awaiting the end of the world' believing that they were on the eve of the millennium...This mistaken application of biblical prophecy happened again in 1100, 1200, and 1245. Prophetic speculation continued. 'In 1531, Melchoir Hofmann announced that the second coming would take place in the year 1533....Nicholas Cusa held that the world would not last past 1734.' Martin Luther 'frequently expressed the idea that the end was near, though he felt it unwise to predict the exact date.'" (Last Days Madness, by Gary DeMar, pp. 12-13)

Someone will eventually be right, but those who have been so sure and so wrong have been an embarrassment to the gospel. We should live lives of repentance every day and be eager to share the good news with Jew and gentile alike, regardless of when Messiah Jesus will return. This is our calling, not calculating the end. May God give us grace in these difficult times to be a light in a dark world.

–Director Fred Klett

Find more on Jewish Holidays at www.chaim.org

CHAIN UPDATES

During Independence week most of the usual festivities were shut down again, but there was activity at the National Constitution Center. While there our missionary Rick Anderson led a young woman named Rahnyshia to new faith in Christ. She stayed behind to talk though her friends wanted her to go with them, yet a few listened. Rick referred her to a local church for follow-up. On the same day he shared the gospel with Chris, a tough-looking guy who looked like a south-of-boarder gang member. He is about 34 years old and told Rick "I don't deserve heaven." Rick spoke at length with him. Chris wanted to hear the Gospel and thanked him. Pray for Chris.



At Philadelphia's Independence Visitor Center Rick witnessed to "Yossi" and "Mendel" (Lubavitcher Hasidic Jews) and he recited Isaiah 53 to them. Yossi replied "That description sounds like my life as well."



The team also gave a gospel tract to Governor Tom Wolf and shared the gospel with him! Also that week a young mother named Amira made new profession of faith through Rick. He also spoke to Addis, a Christian, but also an Ethiopian Jew by background, and to Barbara, a devout Catholic who was not clear about the grace of God. Her mother and ex-husband are Jewish.

All told during the summer five people professed faith through Rick's ministry as he went out with a team from local churches. Pray for these great contacts and for those who professed faith.

WE ARE VERY THANKFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT DURING THESE UNUSUAL TIMES! PLEASE KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS! YOU CAN FIND INFO ON JEWISH HOLIDAYS ON OUR WEBSITE AND ALSO DONATE THERE.

Israel Receives Baptism!

Jewish ministry requires patience and persistence. Our Rock of Israel PCA congregation plant needs to be seen as an outreach and discipleship outpost with the long-term goal of establishing a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating particular congregation. Among immigrants that takes a great deal of time. We have several other similar church plants in our presbytery—among Chinese, Arab, and Albanian immigrants—and we all compare notes. To get to the point of having our own elders takes a long time. We are so encouraged to have a new family coming and a new individual, so we are slowly growing and continuing in outreach.



Our most exciting development is a dear Jewish friend, Israel, asked to be baptized, and he publicly professed his faith in Jesus as Messiah and Lord. Izzy has been a regular attendee for many years and recently surprised us when he expressed his desire to be baptized. This is a huge step for someone from a Jewish background. Please pray for him to grow in his faith and gain deeper and deeper understanding of our salvation. We love you brother Izzy!



This summer we have had several congregational picnics at the Kletts' home, and we always have non-believers in attendance. This is a great way to get to know new friends and acquaint them with our faith. At our last one we had several friends present who are not-yet believers. Some Jewish and some not. We had a jam session which was fun for all. Fred sang some gospel blues!

ON 9/19 (RAIN DATE 9/26) WE WILL BE GIVING OUT BIBLES AND OTHER GOSPEL MATERIALS IN RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH AT OUR LOCAL RUSSIAN-SPEAKING IMMIGRANT FESTIVAL "MATRYOSHKA." PLEASE PRAY FOR THIS OUTREACH! WE WILL GIVE A REPORT ON THIS IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.