

July 2008



Dear Family of Faith,

All About Rabbis

Rabbis appear to be on God's heart this month! We had planned to write on this topic and, therefore, were not surprised to read in a recent letter from Sid Roth's Messianic Vision a report that 70 Orthodox rabbis have recently accepted Yeshua as their Messiah. Surely, we are drawing close to the time of Messiah's return! The hour has come to believe God for the salvation of Jewish rabbis around the globe, and to bless them with *b'rakhot* (blessings) similar to the ones we personally are pronouncing:

"We bless the rabbi from West Palm Beach, Florida, who 'happened' to be alone with us in the elevator at the airport as we returned from one of our Mercy Missions to Israel. May he continue to watch Jewish Jewels on television! May the blessing key chain we gave him, with its promise of angelic protection and peace, be realized in his life. We bless this rabbi with a revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach before he leaves this world."

"We bless the rabbi from Coral Springs, Florida, who told us at a Bless Israel meeting that he really enjoys watching us on T.V. **We** were very blessed when he said: 'Do you know what I love about your program? I see a genuine relationship between the two of you—integrity—love. It's real. You teach, educate, and I like that.' We bless Rabbi G. with the courage to embrace the truth and the reality of Yeshua as Messiah of Israel."

"We bless Rabbi A. of Miami who accepted our invitation to dinner at our home after knowing us for quite a while through the **Jewish Jewels** program. This precious rabbi appeared at our front door with a bouquet of pink roses (he really **does** watch the program!), and stayed until 10:00 PM. We bless him with a supernatural revelation from the Holy Scriptures which he studies daily! We bless him with a conviction solid enough to withstand all opposition and persecution as he embraces the truth, as well as a revelation of God's great love for him."

Do you know a traditional Jewish rabbi? Begin today to bless him or her. You have the authority to do that since as a believer in the Messiah Yeshua, you are part of the New Covenant priesthood. (1 Peter 2:9). You will be following in the footsteps of the Levites in the Torah who received their commission from the Lord: "*At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister to Him and to bless in His name, to this day*" (Deuteronomy 10:8).

The Roots of The Rabbis

The **Blackwell Dictionary of Judaica** defines "rabbi" as meaning "my master." The term is derived from the Hebrew word *rav* which in biblical Hebrew meant 'much, numerous, many or great'! The title rabbi was originally used during the 1st century to refer to ordained members of the Sanhedrin. Later, the title "rabbi" was used for Jews distinguished in learning, and for the spiritual heads of Jewish communities. After the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., there was a power shift within Judaism from the priests to the rabbis. The rabbis' decisions eventually became binding upon the Jewish world. They were as authoritative

as the commandments of the Torah, even superseding Torah law in certain cases. During this time period, a Jewish legal scholar became a rabbi through a special ceremony of ordination called *s'michah*. This ritual included the rabbi's teacher laying hands on the student's head, thus making him a rabbi. Today, there are rabbinical seminaries which train rabbis. These began in the late 1800's in Europe.

Rabbis today have pastoral, social and educational responsibilities. They organize services, supervise religious education programs, visit the sick and bereaved, and preside over life-cycle events. Rabbinic Judaism today assumes that the rabbis have the authority to explain Jewish law...both Oral and Written (Torah). They see themselves as the explainers of Divine Law given at Mount Sinai. Therefore, most Jewish people see reading the Torah themselves and understanding it without help as a totally foreign concept.

The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem ended the sacrificial system and created a dilemma for the Jewish people. David E. Cahn-Lipman in **The Book of Jewish Knowledge** wrote: "One of the revolutionary accomplishments of the rabbis was their emphasis that with the destruction of the Temple, God accepted temporary substitutes for the sacrifices: study and prayer."

Were the rabbis right? Did God change His mind? Was atonement now possible without blood, as commanded in the Torah (Leviticus 17:11)? Or, had God already sent the final sacrifice for sin **before** the destruction of the Temple, and they had missed it?

The *Brit Hadashah* gives us a glimpse of one of the rabbis who did not miss it. His name was Nicodemus. *"This man came to Yeshua (Jesus) by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him!' Yeshua answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.'"* (John 3:2-3) This rabbi believed. He was the one who brought the spices to pour upon God's final sacrifice for sin—the crucified body of the Son of God. (See John 19:39-40.)

Unfortunately, most of the rabbis were not like Nicodemus. The leading rabbi in the transition period from sacrifices to prayer and study was Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai. He helped establish synagogues and scholars' academies (*yeshivot*), the most important of which he began at Yavneh. We have read of Rabbi ben Zakkai's final words to his disciples in a number of books. The following quote is from **Raisins and Almonds** by The Lederer Foundation:

"Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai was lying on his death bed. His disciples came to visit him. When he saw them, tears filled his eyes and he cried bitterly. 'Rabbi,' exclaimed the astonished disciples, 'dost thou cry! Thou, the light of Israel, the right-hand pillar of the Temple, the mighty analyzer of the Law?"

'Ah, my children,' sobbed the dying sage, 'would I not weep if I were at this moment brought before an earthly king, who may be in his grave tomorrow; whose anger and the punishment he might inflict could not last forever, and who might be moved to pity by words of entreaty, or be pacified with a gift? You ask me why I weep, when I am about to be led into the presence of the King of Kings, who lives forever, who will not be moved to pity by words of entreaty or be pacified by the offer of a gift! There are two ways before me, one leading to Paradise, the other to Gehenna, and I know not whither I am going.'" (Berakoth 28b)

How sad—to not have assurance of eternal life, after devoting one's life to serving God! Yeshua said: *"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Yeshua Messiah whom You have sent"* (John 17:3).

Yeshua as Rabbi

Yeshua was called "Rabbi" by a broad spectrum of His contemporaries. His disciples used this as a term of respect, just as slaves at the time used "rabbi" when addressing their owners. Yeshua was

addressed as rabbi by a lawyer (Matthew 22:35-36), a rich man (Matthew 19:16), Pharisees (Luke 19:39), Sadducees (Luke 20:27-28) and many ordinary people (Luke 12:13, Luke 7:40).

Yeshua was an itinerant rabbi. Following the custom of first century Israel, He traveled from place to place throughout the Land, communicating His teachings. His disciples traveled with Him. It has been estimated that hundreds of teachers traveled in this way at that time. Most of them used the same style of teaching: the parable or *meshal*. Yeshua spent much time traveling throughout the Galilee, especially in the vicinity of the Sea. As Ray Vander Laan shows in his excellent DVD series, "In the Dust of the Rabbi," disciples in Yeshua's day followed their teachers so closely that they would be covered with the dust kicked up by the rabbi's feet. May we follow Yeshua, our rabbi, that closely!

A Rabbi's Son: Haym Salomon

As we celebrate the birth of our nation on July 4, 2008, there is a Jewish man, the son of a Polish rabbi, that we should remember and honor. His name was Haym Salomon (from the Hebrew words for life, *chaim* and peace, *shalom*), and he was born in 1740 in Lissa, Poland. Although he had little formal education, Haym learned to speak English, French, German, Italian, and Russian besides his native Polish. Gifted in the area of finance, Haym made significant connections during time spent in Europe, so that upon arriving in the U.S. in 1772, he became an immediate financial success. He lost most of his fortune, however, when the British imprisoned him for helping the American patriots and the cause of the Revolution. Haym used the gold coins that he had left to bribe his way out of prison, saving him from being executed.

Haym went from New York City to Philadelphia where he set up a brokerage business. His business prospered, and after touring the American army camps and seeing the pitiful conditions in which our soldiers lived, Haym began to contribute money to the American cause. In fact, he became **the principal financier** of the American Revolution. A fascinating little book about him called **The Forgotten Patriot** says: "Salomon was early America's most successful broker. He bought and sold financial papers and instruments to raise money for Robert Morris, Superintendent of Finance for the Continental Congress. The Continental Congress had no power to raise taxes, and the war effort was continually on the brink of disaster. Without Salomon, the war effort would have been lost. After the war was over, the new nation was bankrupt. Once again, Haym Salomon came to the financial aid of the U.S.A., rescuing our fledgling nation from bankruptcy and virtual extinction."

It has been documented that Haym Salomon gave away his personal fortune, dying sick and penniless on January 6, 1785 at the age of 45. May his memory be blessed.

Rabbis Who Found Messiah

Throughout the centuries, there have been rabbis who have come to believe in Yeshua as their Messiah. Two 19th century Hungarian rabbis stand out among them: Rabbi Isaac Lichtenstein and Rabbi Leopold Cohn. Rabbi Cohn was born in 1862 into an Orthodox family who knew nothing of Jesus Christ nor His teachings. Their exposure to "Christianity" included priests who hated Jews and incited peasants to attack them in every way possible. Leopold's parents both died when he was seven years old. He decided to become a rabbi at age thirteen, based on a desire to lead his people. This involved intense study of the Talmud, sixty books which contain all the Jewish civil canonical laws. It is still believed that studying the Talmud or oral law is rendering the greatest service to God. But Leopold longed to find the truths of the coming of Messiah, and he couldn't find it in the Talmud. He began to study the Prophets, even though the Talmud says a person is cursed who studies concerning the end of the age. But Leopold Cohn defied the curse, and began to study Daniel the Prophet. When he read Daniel 9:24, he realized that the Messiah must have come about four hundred years after Daniel was told by the angel about the seventy weeks. Rabbi Cohn found great discrepancies between the Talmud and the Word of God. When he voiced them, persecution began.

Rabbi Cohn was told by another rabbi that he should go to America, for there he would meet plenty of people who would tell him about the Messiah. Leopold immediately set sail for America, leaving his family behind, determined to find the Messiah at any cost. He eventually did. Read how it happened in **To An Ancient People, The Autobiography of Rabbi Leopold Cohn**.

Rabbi Isaac Lichtenstein became a rabbi at age twenty. After leading congregations for 40 years, he read the New Testament for the first time. This happened at a time of crisis when the love of real Christians caused him to see for himself who their Jesus really was. In his own words: *"I had thought the New Testament to be impure, a source of pride, of hatred, and of the worst kind of violence, but as I opened it, I felt myself peculiarly and wonderfully taken possession of by a sudden glory, a light flashed through my soul. I looked for thorns, and gathered roses, I discovered pearls instead of pebbles; instead of hatred, love; instead of vengeance, forgiveness; instead of bondage, freedom; instead of pride, humility; instead of enmity, conciliation; instead of death, life, salvation, resurrection, heavenly treasure."* [From **Raisins and Almonds**, Lederer Foundation]

May the Lord reveal to thousands of rabbis in our day that the *Brit Hadashah* is not a "separate" book, but a continuation of the Tenach, the fulfillment of all that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has promised to His People Israel!

Following our Rabbi, Yeshua—



Special offers to inspire you this summer:

1. **Forgotten Patriot, The Story of Haym Salomon** by David Allen Lewis; 88 pgs; Learn about this great Jewish hero!
2. **To an Ancient People, The Autobiography of Rabbi Leopold Cohn**; 83 pgs; an inspiring story of his quest for truth
3. **Two DVD Debate Set**- Watch as Messianic Jewish scholar Dr. Michael Brown, and Orthodox Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, one of America's best-known rabbis, argue the topics of **Who Really Killed Jesus?** and **Did Jesus Die For Our Sins?**
4. **What the Rabbis Know About the Messiah** by Rachmiel Frydland; 146 pgs; a study of genealogy and prophecy in relation to the traditional understanding of the role of Messiah
5. **A Rabbi's Search for Messiah** by Rabbi Isidor Zwirn; 119 pgs; An Orthodox Jew using the methods of research taught to him in rabbinical school came to the decision that radically changed his life—Yeshua is the Jewish Messiah!
6. **Rabbis Who Found the Messiah**; 99 pgs; 13 testimonies from various Orthodox rabbis; perfect to share with Jewish people

P.S. The dates are set! Israel Mercy Mission and Bridal Tour, May 31-June 11, 2009—Start saving now!

Jewish Jewels Television Airtime Schedule - July 2008

LOCAL TV STATIONS

STATE:	CITY:	STATIONS:	AIRTIME:
AK	North Pole	KJNP TV 4	TUE 6:00 PM
CA	Sonora	PUBLIC ACCESS 8	MON 8:30 PM
FL	Tampa/St. Pete.	WCLF TV 22	SUN 2:30 PM
FL	Orlando/Cocoa	WTGL TV 45	SUN 1:30 PM
FL	Miami/Ft. Laud.	WHFT TV 45	THU 11:30 AM
FL	Tallahassee	WVUP TV 45	SUN 1:30 PM
FL	West Palm Beach	WFGC TV 61	SAT 10:30 PM
GA	Columbus	WYBU TV 16	SUN 2:30 PM
IA	Dubuque	KFXB TV 40	SUN 1:30 PM
IL	Peoria	FAITH ALIVE CH 20	FRI 6:00 PM
MO	New Bloomfield	KNLJ TV 25	SUN 1:30 PM
NJ/NY	NJ/New York	WMBC TV 63	SUN 4:00 PM
OH	Columbus	WSFJ TV 51	SUN 3:30 PM
OR	Portland	K26GJ TV 26	SUN 12:00 PM
OR	Salem	K21GX TV 21	SUN 12:00 PM
SC	Greenville	WGGS TV 16	FRI 10:30 AM

SATELLITE NETWORKS

DirecTV
 World Harvest TV (WHT) - SUN 3:00 PM (EST) [Ch. 367]
 Christian Television Network (CTN) - SUN 2:30 PM (EST) [Ch. 376]

God TV - The GOD Channel
 WED 4:30 AM (GMT) & 6:30 AM (Jerusalem)

Digital Satellite Receiver
 World Harvest TV (WHT) - C-Band - Galaxy 16 -
 Transponder 15 - 99° W - SUN 3:00 PM (EST)

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 WHT - SUN 3:00 PM (EST) [Ch. 130]

