

Church of God in Peace & Truth

"Growing in Truth and Harmony among God's People"

Messianic

Christian

February 13, 2010

Allow me to briefly introduce myself to you in this open letter. I am a Messianic pastor and teacher from southern Oregon. The term Messianic means follower of Messiah, just as Christian means follower of Christ. As one internalizes the truth that the word Christ is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew word Messiah – and both words mean the Savior of all mankind – the mental wall of division (Eph 2:14-16) comes down. That wall sometimes separates the two groups of believers associated with these equivalent terms. Both groups are Yeshua's - Jesus'- disciples. Without a wall of separation, the love of God and His glorious truths can better be shared. That is my goal and calling: to reach out to all of God's people and share a, perhaps, fuller picture of God's loving plan of salvation for all. With that goal in mind, I ask you to consider the following.

How many realize the significance of Paul's reference to God's Holy Days as foreshadowing or picturing things to come?

Col 2:16-17 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. (KJV)

The God's Word translation correctly emphasizes that it is the very body of Messiah that casts a prefiguring shadow that is God's Holy Festivals. Notice:

Col 2:17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the body *that casts the shadow* belongs to Christ.

Peter's shadow passing over the sick healed them (Acts 5). How much more will shadows from the presence of Messiah – the Son of God – heal our minds to a more complete understanding of His plan of salvation for all (1 Pet 2:24-25)? The book of Hebrews also refers to the Tabernacle, and the things done therein, as being *shadows* and *copies of the very things Christ built in heaven*. These *shadows* are *copies* given to prefigure and portray an advance glimpse of our hope and future (Heb 8:2, 5)! Nowhere is God's plan of salvation more prefigured than by the Passover. Passover is truly the beginning of salvation's path! Perhaps that is why Paul taught the gentile believers the meaning of Passover and how to keep it properly (1 Cor 5:8, 1 Cor 10:16-17, 1 Cor 11). Would you like to experience, on a deeper level, the many pictorial aspects of salvation revealed by keeping the Passover, like Messiah and His disciples and early church did? Fellow teachers: Would you like to be able to share the richness and meaning of the Passover with your congregations? Eating the Passover Seder is like eating a dish of hope and understanding.

When Passover is understood, one no longer wonders why Paul said it was a reflection or shadow of our Lord's Body – for Yeshua gave His Body to be our Passover sacrifice as the Lamb of God (Rev 5:6)! Christ and His apostles kept Passover (Matt 26:17-19, 1 Cor 5:7). Indeed, Christ is the Passover Lamb, given by God, that redeems our souls by His life blood (John 1:29, Rev 5:6). The unleavened bread eaten at Passover represents the sinless Body of our Lord broken for us, and the wine, Jesus said, represents His blood that He shed for us all (Luke 22:19-20). Part of the first Passover included being

loosed from religious and physical bondage in Egypt and given freedom within God's law of love – just as Jesus does for all mankind who when believing, come to Him today! Through the blood of the Lamb our Passover, we are freed from the bondage of sin and religious confusion in this world. This is the most basic of truths!

It's not that keeping God's Holy Days saves us. It's that they help us, because they portray so much hope and understanding. Each of God's Festivals lifts us up spiritually, as keeping them reveals rich and meaningful lessons of salvation. Each of God's Holy Feasts is like a gold coin which buys our freedom from dark obscurity into His lighted path – and this path of Salvation begins with Christ our Passover and hope!

Yeshua (Jesus) eagerly ate the Passover with His disciples (Luke 22:15). The ceremonial meaning of each element of the Passover Seder beautifully pictures the life and sacrifice of the Lamb of God, slain for the sins of mankind. Each element of the Passover meal (and the accompanying telling of the Passover and its fulfillment known as the Messianic Haggadah), all portray God's ancient plan of salvation for us all. Passover is unparalleled as an inspirational teaching tool.

"Eating the Passover is like eating a dish of hope and understanding."

As the author of the book *PASSOVER: The Price, the Path*, and as one who has authored numerous articles and books on the New Testament meaning and application of God's Holy Days as kept by the early Church – and as a pastor who has been keeping the Passover for 34 years now – I invite my fellow pastors, teachers, and members alike to come join me in a presentation on how to Keep Passover as Messiah and the early Church did. It will be my joy to share these precious truths with you so that you can conduct the Passover Seder for your congregations and be better able to share these meaningful truths with others. If the LORD has put it into your heart to know more about the Passover, as He has for a growing number of members and church leaders around the world, let us know and we can share the time and location with you of this fast approaching seminar.

For those who prefer to learn by experience, we'd love to invite you to join us for a Messianic Passover Seder in the Rogue Valley, which this year falls on the evening of Sunday March 28th 2010 at dusk. The meal count is critical, so advance reservations and seating is a must. Please RSVP your intention to join us for Passover by email and include the number of your party, and we'll get back to you with the details. Come be inspired with us!

May God bless, guide and keep you with the grace of His truth,

Don E. Haney
Pastor / Teacher

Passover – it can rekindle your walk with God!

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