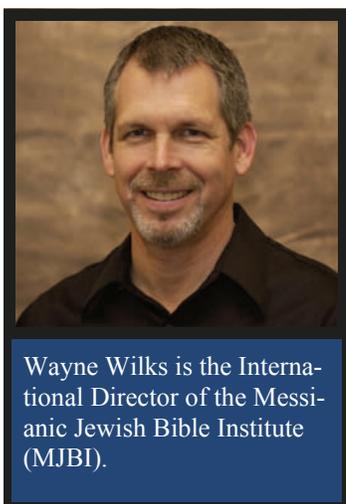


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SET YOUR FACE TOWARD JERUSALEM

By Wayne Wilks



Wayne Wilks is the International Director of the Messianic Jewish Bible Institute (MJBI).

In our TJCII executive meeting in Israel last fall, God emphasized the centrality of Jerusalem to our movement. While continuing to pray and work out the practical aspects of our structure internationally, we believe the Holy Spirit has our attention on what it means to go up to Jerusalem.

“Many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths: for out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” (Micah 4:2 & Is. 2:3, NKJV)

This year the Lord allowed my family to spend more time in Jerusalem while continuing to serve the ministry to which I am called. While still based in the USA for half the year, we have enjoyed our season in Jerusalem connecting to Israeli society, the Body of Messiah in Israel, and studying the language and geography of the Land. This is not a Zionist-call for all of us to move to Israel. But I do believe it is a time in history to focus on what God has said, and is saying, about Jerusalem.

God has chosen Jerusalem. It is the city where God is said to have a unique dwelling (Ps. 132:13-14). Matthew calls it the “holy city” (4:5). Jesus referred to it as “the city of the Great King” (Mt. 5:35). Jerusalem is first mentioned in Gen. 14:18-20 with the reference to Melchizedek, whose name means “King of Righteousness.” He was the king of Salem, i.e. of Jerusalem. Here we see a picture of Yeshua who is destined to be its king.

Jerusalem is mentioned over 800 times in the Bible. It is the only city for whose peace we are commanded to pray (Ps. 122:6). God has placed His name here forever (2 Chron. 6:6). There is a heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22), but no heavenly Dallas, Moscow, or London. That is significant!

*“Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that **He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem**, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.” Luke 9: 51-53, NKJV.*

Why did Yeshua set his face to Jerusalem? Because He knew it was the city of His destiny. He knew it was the city of God where one day He will rule – but first suffering and death awaited Him. Some did not receive Him along the way, but His way to Jerusalem was a prerequisite for living in the Glory. Yeshua was not just “going” to Jerusalem, but was earnestly fixed on walking this way no matter the cost.

Many Christians are asleep to the role and significance of Jerusalem today. I believe it is time for us, like Yeshua, to face Jerusalem. Are you willing to face Jerusalem? Are you willing to walk this way? Surely, the way will have opposition and difficulties. Some will not receive you. But living in the Glory is the ultimate aim.

May God help us to face Jerusalem in our own journey of faith, and each do our small part in God’s much bigger plan.

Are Christian Feasts Pagan?

Part 1 of An Article Seeking Mutual Understanding and Unity

By Dan Juster

Christians seeking to recover the Jewish roots of their faith often claim that the Church celebrations are on the wrong dates. It is then said that the Church dates are pagan. They call for a return to “God’s appointed feasts.” (Lev 23) I find that Messianic Jews do not make these assertions as much as Christians who attach themselves to Messianic congregations. The message is that most Christians are compromised by paganism! Easter and Pentecost are the wrong dates due to paganism, and Christmas is wholly rooted in paganism. This claim is so divisive that we had better be sure that it is really grounded in the evidence.

In fact, the evidence for this claim is not clear. In the past, we have argued that Christians in this age are not responsible for the Jewish calendar, which is part of a covenant made with the Jewish people. (See Acts 15, Romans 14, Colossians 2, and Galatians). However, the Church has embraced a yearly calendar cycle of celebration. The less traditional celebrate weekly on Sundays and yearly at Christmas, Easter (Pasca) and Pentecost. Traditional churches build their year around events in the life of Yeshua: His birth, circumcision and dedication, His forty days fast, His entry into Jerusalem, the last supper, the crucifixion, His Ascension.

The problem with the Church days of celebration is not the dating, but that they are not anchored in their ancient roots. It is not our part to criticize the Church for its dating. Rather, a return to Jewish roots is a return to Jewish contexts for understanding, an embrace of Jewish believers who obey their calling to remain within and witness to the Jewish community, and an affirmation of Jewish life. Here are some reasons why I think that the claim that Church celebrations are pagan is wrong.

1. **For the Rabbis the dates of the Feasts are set by man; only the Sabbath is set by God.** What does this mean? We know the right day for the Sabbath; it is the seventh day week after week. However, we have a major problem with the annual biblical calendar. How can we reconcile the cycle of the moon with the annual cycle of the sun? 12 lunar months would be out of alignment by at least 5 days from the year of the sun, so that we would be celebrating the fall festivals in the winter! So the Jewish lunar calendar adds an extra month in seven years of each nineteen-year cycle, giving us a 13-month year in those “leap” years. Solar calendars add a day to five of the twelve months and then, more recently, add an extra day every four years. **The Bible does not tell us what to do about this reconciliation.** This is a human decision. In addition, being sure of the exact day of the new moon and full moon was by communal Rabbinic decision. The ancient Essenes, the Jewish ascetics from the first century, chose the solar calendar and made an annual reconciliation. Some argue that the calendar discrepancy can even be found in the Gospels. The Gospel of John can be read to suggest the celebration of Jesus before Passover compared with the Synoptics on the actual Passover date.

To be continued.

TJCI



Dr. Dan Juster has been involved in the leadership of the Messianic Jewish movement since 1971. He is the Senior Apostle and Director of **Tikkun International** ministries, a network of organizations dedicated to the restoration of Israel and the Church.

Forgiven

By Chief Kenny Blacksmith

Two years ago on June 11, 2008 Prime Minister Stephen Harper sincerely apologized for Canada's role in the Indian residential schools system, and asked the forgiveness of the aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly.

At that moment the onus was placed on our people as individuals to respond. We all know it is impossible that no offense should come in our relationships with one another. Offense is no respecter of persons. Forgiveness is not easy but we not only have the capacity to forgive but we must forgive.

Unforgiveness and offense imprisons and limits the freedom of all people. Forgiveness is not political; it cannot be legislated. It is not economic; it cannot be bought, sold or traded; forgiveness is spiritual; and it is borne of the unconditional love of our Creator God. We can either choose to hold on to a negative past, or embrace freedom, which is available through an act of unconditional forgiveness.

We set out across Canada to bring a healing message of forgiveness, hope and freedom to our people who have been affected by the negative legacy of the Indian Residential School system.

The *National Forgiven Summit* held on June 11-13, 2010 at the Ottawa Civic Centre brought a national coalition of some 4,500 individuals, and over 2,000 others via web streaming from over 20 nations worldwide to witness this historic Summit.

Our message was "Mr. Prime Minister, you have asked for forgiveness, we forgive!"

Dr. Billy Graham once said: *"The greatest moments of Native History may lie ahead of us if a great spiritual renewal and awakening should take place. The Native American has been a sleeping giant. He is awakening. The original Americans could become the evangelists who will help win America for Christ! Remember these forgotten people!"*

Our choice to forgive has broken the generational cycle of victimization and accusation, and forgiveness will release blessing on those who seek forgiveness and those who forgive.

The Lord our God has broken the bars of our yoke, and enabled us to walk with our heads held high. Canada is about to witness the greatest revival yet! Come with us, for the Lord has promised good things!

The arrow of the Lord will hit every mark!

TJCII

TJCII in Canada

By Arlene Stucki

After much prayer and longing for the LORD to raise up a Canadian representative, The TJCII North American Committee is pleased to welcome Chief Kenny Blacksmith of the First Nation Peoples of Canada as a member of this committee.

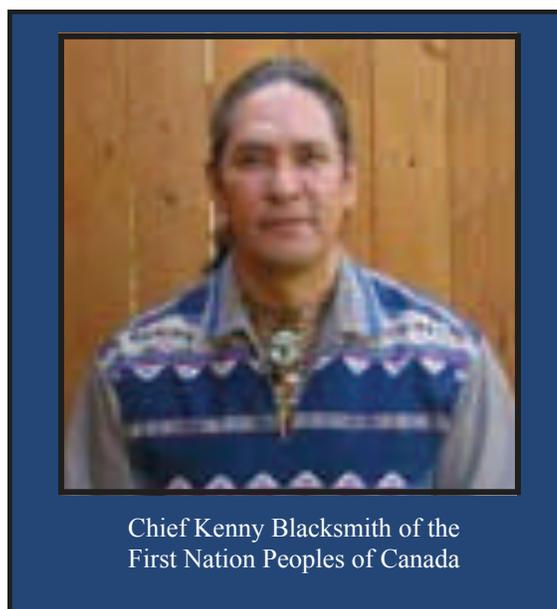
Chief Kenny is called to a ministry of forgiveness among the First Nation Peoples of Canada. We see strong correlation between the LORD's calling on his life and the vision of TJCII. In his own words: "The Jewish people hold the key to bringing the integrity of Yeshua back to our people."

To them in the past, the Gospel was the "White Man's Gospel," which caused most of their people to reject it.

The First Nation Peoples' suffering was similar to that of the Jews in the Holocaust. First Nation Peoples' population went from 70 million to 4 million as a result of the various acts against them."

We look forward to learning from this servant of the LORD, as we move deeper into our similar ministries of reconciliation.

TJCII



Chief Kenny Blacksmith of the First Nation Peoples of Canada

Update from Romania

By Fr. Peter Hocken

The fifth TJCII consultation between Messianic Jews and Christians from the Orthodox Church took place from July 6 to 9, 2010 at Brancoveanu, an historic monastery at Sambata de Sus in central Romania.

The attendance was a little lower than usual, with fewer Messianic Jews present than in previous years; nevertheless, some participants felt we went to a deeper level.

Teachings were given by three Orthodox priests: Fr. Vasile Mihoc (Sibiu); Fr. Adrian Murg (Arad); and Fr. Constantin Necula (Sibiu). Fr. Peter Hocken from Austria and Benjamin Berger from Jerusalem also addressed the conference.

The main theme was the faith of the Nicene Creed, particularly its Christology, with Benjamin Berger giving an important message on "Toward Jerusalem." Other participants from Israel and Germany also shared, along with Daniel Stanger from Romania, who has made aliyah to Israel and serves a work there in Nazareth-Illit. **TJCII**



The fifth TJCII consultation at Brancoveanu.



On July 10, Fr. Peter Hocken, Benjamin Berger, and Bro. Elija Beaver (left to right) spoke at the Shabbat service in Bucharest.

May we send you the TJCII Communiqué electronically? In this way you could help us at TJCII be even better stewards. As the cost of postage escalates, we feel compelled to use email wherever possible. Please send us your email address at egs@tjcii.org and thank you for your generosity.

TOWARD JERUSALEM COUNCIL II



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The Aims of TJCII Include:

- Make known the restoration of the Jewish segments of the Body of Messiah
- Foster repentance for the historic suppression of the corporate Messianic Jewish witness of Yeshua (Jesus), the Messiah
- Further the calling and election of Israel and the Messianic Jewish Community through intercessory prayer, teachings and diplomacy
- Foster reconciliation and unity between Christians and Messianic Jews