

TZEDAKAH MINISTRIES
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SPECIAL NOTE TO ARTICLE:

THIS IS AN EDITED
VERSION OF A
MARCH 2013 POST
FROM THE BLOG
“MYSTERY SOLVED
WITH MESSIAH
JESUS.” HOWEVER,
I WANTED TO
SHARE WITH YOU
AS IT RELATES TO
THIS PASSOVER
SEASON FOR THE
JEWISH PEOPLE.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

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The Frivolity of Passover...?

We are rapidly approaching the beginning of the Passover season. In the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox communities, Spring Cleaning has begun with earnest. Fairly soon, **Tzedakah Ministries** will soon begin to receive emails detailing what needs to be done in order for one's kitchen to be Kosher for Passover. The amount of cleaning is overwhelming! I am a clean person but I would be going insane right about now if I was overwhelmed by the cleaning minutiae involved with being an Ultra-Orthodox woman. **No wonder some Orthodox homes have two kitchens — one just for Passover!**



However, **Tzedakah Ministries** is more concerned about the growing frivolity I see surrounding this most holy of Jewish festivals ... and I think there is a reason for this irreverence (will explain later!). **First**, and to borrow from Tevye the Dairyman in *Fiddler on the Roof*, I believe that Passover has become more about tradition than real spiritual meaning. Many are going through the motions without really understanding what it represents and what it promises. In fact, there is a recent movie — *When Do We Eat?* — that best exemplifies this apathetic and lackadaisical concern over Passover. For many Jewish families, the festival of Passover truly has become a four-hour meal and not the reality of what Moses and Jesus meant it to be for God's Chosen People.

Second, Passover sadly has become somewhat of a holiday to mock and not hold in reverence. **Tzedakah Ministries** has received emails over the years about cartoons you can purchase that will keep the kids busy while someone is cleaning for Pesach. There is gourmet gefilte fish available for those who are turned off by this traditional side dish. There are tsotchkes (knick-knacks) galore for anyone who wants to “spice” up the Passover holiday — including a Moses action figure, a seder plate mouse pad, or nail decals illustrating the ten plagues. **Seriously!** The concept of God saving the people from the slavery they experienced in Egypt has lost its import. And the savoriness of Matzah Ball Soup is held with more reverence and esteem than God's redemptive plan for His Chosen Ones.

(article continued on page two)



Passover has lost its importance for the Jewish because we as believers in Jesus have forgotten to share with them that Jesus is the Passover Lamb.



The Frivolity of Passover (continued)

Third, Passover itself has become somewhat passé for many Jewish people and the traditional Haggadah (booklet which provides an order and structure to the meal) just does not excite anymore. **Tzedakah Ministries** has received emails from Kabbalists offering to sell me a Haggadah that “decodes” the hidden meaning of Passover as if the Hebrew Scriptures were not enough. There is even a website (www.haggadot.com) where you can jazz up the old story of Passover with a “Muppets parody” or a 30-minute Passover for those who are in a hurry and don’t have time to remember what God did for them almost 3500 years ago. The Orthodox have even entered the fray with a software program that allows anyone to “create your own Haggadah.”

Tzedakah Ministries believes that all three of the reasons given above are tied to the fact that 99% of all Jewish people do not know the end of the story. An end that began as Jesus lifted the matzah and said this is my body and lifted the third cup (of redemption) and said this is my blood. Passover has lost its importance for the Jewish because we as believers in Jesus have forgotten to share with them that Jesus is the Passover Lamb.

We have forgotten to show them that the prophecy of Malachi 4 stating that Elijah would come as a Messianic forerunner was fulfilled when John the Baptist in John 1 stated — “Behold, the Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world.” We who are Christians and churches have forgotten to tell them about a little used

verse of Hebrew Scripture that goes something like this ... **“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”** (Isaiah 53:5-6).

Is it not time that we brought a real and not frivolous Passover back to the Jewish people? A Passover that truly only has meaning through Jesus the Messiah ... our Passover Lamb. Shalom!

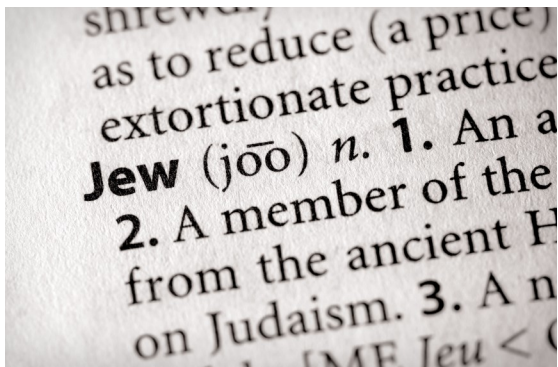
Acts 20:24,

Amy Downey (Director)



Learn. Think. Do ... Jewish?

A few days ago, **Tzedakah Ministries** attended a Jewish Learning Fest in Dallas. These events are fascinating, insightful, and heartbreaking. To walk around and see so many Jewish people searching for answers to their spiritual questions and leave without THE TRUTH of Messiah Jesus exhausts me (**Tzedakah Ministries**) on so many levels — spiritual, emotional, etc. It takes a couple of days of processing and prayer before I can



begin to put all my thoughts together about what occurred.

However, the essence of the Jewish Learning Fest can be wrapped up into three core concepts which I will attempt to share with you in this brief article. **First**, there is not simply one definition of what it means to be Jewish. I went to several sessions led by a variety of rabbis from across the spectrum of Judaism (Reform to Orthodox and everything in between). All of them gave the audience a different definition of what it meant to be Jewish and what Judaism was.

For some it was a religious experience. For others, it was an ethnic idea. For one, it was a choice and a mixture of the two. One rabbi stated that you could be a good Jewish person and be an Atheist who doesn't believe in life after death. Another would disagree with that definition because one has to work at your "Jewishness." In other words, the bag

that I was given at the book sale with the words — "Learn Jewish. Think Jewish. Do Jewish" — means ultimately ... **WHAT?**

Second, Jewish people are desperately searching for spiritual answers to their life and death questions. The largest sessions that **Tzedakah Ministries** attended were the religious ones and, of course, the largest of all dealt with the question of Messiah Jesus. God instructed me to remain quiet and listen to the words coming from the mouths of the Jewish people. They are in pain ... spiritually, emotionally, and mentally. They have been told for generations that Jesus is not the Messiah but there is something in their heart that asks and asks and asks again ... "What if He is?" The rabbi's answers no longer make sense and we as churches and Christians **must be prepared with the TRUTH OF MESSIAH JESUS ... NOW!**

Third, and even though Jewish people cannot define themselves and are struggling with the issue of Jesus, the concept of the community is the dominant feature that holds the Jewish people together. One rabbi made the statement — **"Jews do not exist as individuals."** What this statement does is it inhibits many Jewish people from exploring their questions about Jesus. This statement creates a fear that if they do explore, that they will be abandoning their community and the Jewish people as a collective whole. This statement has prevented many Jewish people from coming to faith in Messiah Jesus. We must find a way around this concept and help them to realize that the **MOST JEWISH THING THEY CAN LEARN ... THINK ... & DO ... IS Jesus the JEWISH Messiah.**

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Passover Tract from Tzedakah

Tzedakah Ministries is excited to announce that a new Passover tract will be available for you to utilize this Passover/Resurrection season. The focus of the new evangelistic tract from **Tzedakah Ministries** deals with the truth of the resurrection of Jesus from a Jewish perspective (front of the card is to the right).

If you would like to receive copies of the tract, please contact **Tzedakah Ministries** and we will rush deliver the materials to you!

Did you know that there have been Jewish scholars who did not believe in Jesus as Messiah but believed in His Resurrection from the dead?

"The fact that this Resurrection had only a few witnesses is no obstacles but rather a further proof of its genuineness."
 Rabbi Pinchas Lapide

"If the prophet Elijah has ridden in a fiery chariot into heaven, why should not Jesus rise and go to heaven?"
 J. Carmel, Teacher in Israel

"Not the living but the dead AND risen Jesus is the founder of Christianity."
 Samuel Bergmann, Jewish Philosopher

Is it possible to believe in Jesus' Resurrection and the truth of Him being the Messiah?

The Value of Small Dents in the World

When I was in my student teaching days ... **A VERY LONG TIME AGO**, my teaching supervisor accused me of wanting to change the world. In fact, she gave me a card I still have with that very message enclosed. Mrs. Newman was wrong in 1991 because back then I just wanted to make a few, small dents in the world. For while I wanted to make the world "a better place," I had no idea on the trajectory that God would have in store (**Tzedakah Ministries**)!

Today, Tzedakah Ministries does want to change the world. Tzedakah Ministries also wants to make those small dents in the world. Tzedakah Ministries wants for one more Jewish soul to come to faith in Messiah Jesus before they pass into eternity without Him. Tzedakah Ministries wants for one more Christian and one more Church to catch the vision of being equipped to reach God's Chosen Ones with the Gospel Message.

Today, I do want to change the world, Mrs. Newman ... and WHY NOT! For as Elie Wiesel wrote, "Not to transmit an experience is to betray it." The experience I had as a child transformed my eternity. And I must transmit that experience to all who will listen and even to those who will not. The experience I had when I surrendered my life ... finally ... to Jewish missions transformed my world and I have to seek a few small dents in the Jewish world or I will betray Jesus the Jewish Messiah who gave life to **Tzedakah Ministries**.

So ... Mrs. Newman was right after all. Just not in any way that either of us expected. Let's go out and make a few small dents and change the world for Messiah Jesus and the Jewish people. Shalom!

