

# Messianic Rabbi: The Hardest Thing About Being a Bible Believer

One of the blessings of being a rabbi is participating in weddings. Right now, at our synagogue, we have five different couples engaged to be married.

As I write this today, one of these couples has 13 days before their wedding, and a second has 41 days before their marriage. I know this because, for some time now, I receive an almost daily update of the countdown.

As I watch these young people bounce between eager anticipation and impatience, I am reminded that I used to think that the worst part of being a believer in the Bible was waiting.

Just think about all of the waiting that we read about in the Bible. Noah built the ark for 120 years, knowing that it was going to rain and flood the earth. G-D sent Moses to deliver the Israelites from Egypt, but they had to wait through 10 plagues before they were delivered.

The children of Israel waited 40 years to enter the promised land. King David was anointed king 15 years before he assumed the throne. Daniel prophesied the coming Messiah 483 years before Yeshua was born.

I said above that I used to think that waiting was the worst part of being a believer. I was reminded about this last night as I counted the Omer. For those unfamiliar with counting the Omer, we are commanded to count 50 days between the day after the First Day of Unleavened Bread and Shavuot (Pentecost).

These days represent the time between the Exodus from Egypt

and the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, which, in Judaism, is viewed as the wedding between Israel and G-D. Just as these young couples are in-between their betrothal and marriage, Israel was living in the wilderness between the time of redemption from slavery and their entrance into covenant relationship with G-D.

If you think young couples get anxious as they have to wait until the big day, just think about 2.5 million people standing around a mountain waiting to hear from a G-D who just destroyed the most powerful nation of the day. It is interesting that many years ago, 120 people were praying in an upper room as instructed by Yeshua, waiting for the promise. This group of people were waiting in Jerusalem for their promise during the exact same days that Israel waited around Mount Sinai for their promise.

However, there was a big difference between those waiting around the mountain and the 120 waiting in the upper room. This difference was approximately 1,500 years that passed between the two times. That 1,500 years was filled with examples of G-D doing exactly what He said He would do. G-D's people had countless experiences in which G-D fulfilled His promises.

One of those promises was the birth of Yeshua the Messiah, and His birth was promised or prophesied more than 300 different times in the Tanakh (Old Testament). Knowing the history of G-D's faithfulness made it abundantly easier for the 120 in the upper room to wait for their promise.

However, the truth is that it wasn't just the years of history that helped the disciples wait patiently on G-D. It was that the disciples had learned that they really were not waiting on G-D at all, but rather G-D was waiting on them. I know that statement may seem confusing, but it really isn't once believers come to terms with the fact that we are never waiting on G-D to do something; He is always waiting on us.

To help you understand the above statement, think about this verse of Scripture:

“All who dwell on the earth shall worship him—everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the Book of Life of the Lamb who was slain” (Rev. 13:8, TLV).

Yeshua was slain from before the foundation of the world. So, when He was crucified in Jerusalem on that Passover Day, our world finally caught up to an event that took place before the world was even created.

This is why I said above we never wait on G-D. The truth is that when the Bible says, “In the beginning G-D created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1a), G-D created the entirety of all that will ever be. When He spoke the words that brought about creation, those words began and completed all creation for all time.

The Bible does not provide a history of people waiting on G-D’s promises; it provides a history of G-D’s people arriving at G-D’s promises that already existed. In other words, the answer to your prayers is already ahead of you; G-D is just waiting for you to arrive at the place where your promises already exist.

The hardest thing about being a Bible believer is realizing that we really never wait for anything. {eoa}

**Eric Tokajer** *is the author of* *Overcoming Fearlessness, What If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?, With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians and Galatians in Context.*

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# Craig and Colette Toach: Are You Growing in the Prophetic?

Do you want to be equipped in how to prophesy? Are you growing in the prophetic or want to grow in it?

The answers to these questions stem from intimacy and time spent with Jesus.

I recently talked about prophecy and how to grow and be activated in it with my friends Craig and Colette Toach. Colette said, "Every day is a new adventure. God's reviving in us a hunger for worship. Prophets are naturally worshippers and need to get 'lost' in worship."

At the start of our conversation Craig said, "I just had a vision of a riverbed. A riverbed has so much potential, but the whole point of the riverbed is to have water in it. What use is a dry riverbed? The whole point is that it should be full of water, and through that, it influences so much around it. It waters trees and fosters growth. Sometimes we let our (spiritual) riverbeds get dried up. But no, we must get the water back in there and keep it full so that we can keep the goodness going."

I asked the Toaches what they would like to tell people who are curious about prophecy or wondering if they are prophetic. Colette stated, "I would ask them a question. All of us prophets have this one thing in common. I would ask them, 'If there is anything that you can do for the Lord, what would you do?' Someone who is prophetic would answer saying, 'I want to heal the brokenhearted; I want to see justice for those who have been torn down, and I want people to know Jesus in an intimate way.'"

Craig said, "When you have the heart of a prophet, when the calling is on your life, no matter where your spiritual maturity is and no matter how young or old you are in the Lord, the heart of the prophet is what solidifies you as a prophet. As you mature you become good in what you do. The heart is the starting point that begins this call in. And then it's your duty to grow and become the best possible prophet you can be from the Lord."

Craig and Colette Toach gave a few keys for you to grow in prophecy:

1. Worship God daily. You need to have a deep hunger to worship and get in God's presence and experience Him.
2. Understand the heart of prophecy. Colette said, "Being a prophet is not about your gifts, but the heart that the gifts are expressed through." The heart of prophecy is listening to Jesus' heartbeat and keeping your heart pure before Him in order to minister His love to others (John 13:23).
3. Study the Word of God. Know how to study the Scripture, memorize it and meditate on it (Ps. 1).
4. Journal, writing down what God tells you. Many prophetic words come from the whisper of God (1 Kings 19:12).

Listen to this episode of *Adventures in the Spirit with Jared Laskey* titled *Craig and Colette Toach Equipping You to Prophecy*. It's an amazing conversation that will encourage you.

Prophecy is also modeled and activated when you listen to *Adventures in the Spirit with Jared Laskey* podcast. Subscribe and find this episode on Apple, Spotify, Google, Charisma Podcast Network, YouTube or anywhere you listen to podcasts.  
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## **Are You Ready to Move Into Your Promised Land?**

After wandering in the wilderness for some 40 years, the Israelites were undoubtedly ready to move on and enter the promised land. Their time had been hard, but they had learned some important lessons along the way.

Therefore, when Joshua sent spies into Jericho, they knew not to make the mistake of giving a negative report, like the previous 10 spies who had paid with their lives. This new generation of spies came back to Joshua with a faith-filled report that God was giving them the Land, and they were ready to go in and possess it.

When it was time to start moving, Joshua instructed the

Levites to take up the ark of the covenant and go on ahead of the people. God was leading the way—not through a pillar of fire or a cloud but through the ark of the covenant, which now housed His presence.

When they arrived at the Jordan River, it was flooded, and the muddy waters were deep. But the priests were told to step into the water with the ark. God was going into the waters first!

Are you standing at the edge of your own flooded and scary Jordan River? Is there a difficulty or obstacle keeping you from entering the promised land and experiencing the promises of God for your life?

The lesson here is to step into the waters because God has already gone in ahead of you. He is preparing the way before you, but you must step out in faith. Are you ready?

To learn how God prepared the Israelites to step out in faith, join me for this week's *Out of Zion* podcast episode, *Are You Ready?*, on the Charisma Podcast Network. *Walk Thru the Bible* with me each week by downloading our Bible reading plan, and get started reading right away! Invite your friends and family to join us! I can't wait to *Walk Thru the Bible* with you!  
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# Christian Culture, Kingdom Values Help Bring Baylor First National Championship

When Scott Drew took over as the Baylor University men's basketball coach in 2003, he knew the team's attitude needed to change. As a lifelong Christian, Drew wanted to implement his faith into his players and make sure they put Jesus first in their lives.

After Drew took over for Dave Bliss, who compiled a 14-14 record in his final season at Baylor in 2002-2003, Drew instilled a culture he called "JOY," which stands for "Jesus, Others, Yourself." Baylor is a Baptist University in Waco, Texas.

On Monday night, Drew and his players reaped the benefit of their faith and their hard work, giving Baylor its first national championship with an 86-70 victory over top-ranked Gonzaga and denying the Zags their first title and the first undefeated season by any men's basketball team since Indiana in 1976.

"A culture of JOY is Jesus, Others, and then Yourself, so it's a hierarchy way of thinking," Jared Butler, who scored 22 points and had seven assists against Gonzaga, said on Baylor's athletic website.

"I'm not trying to preach a prosperity gospel, but our Lord and Savior; I say it all the time. He gets us through everything. Jesus Christ, man, He's the truth, and He was with us tonight. He's with us wherever we go, and He just sustained us. He brought us together. He brought the team together."

Drew's faith has made a huge impact on the team, which finished the season 28-2. Gonzaga, which spent the entire

season at No. 1 in the polls, finished 31-1.

“One thing a lot of people have said when they watch our team play is that you can tell there’s genuine love for one another. You can’t fake that,” Drew says. “The love and joy they have for each other is definitely a key to our success.

“We want to thank God for blessing us with the opportunity tonight. I thought we were on a mission to make the most of it. As a coach, you never know when you’re going to be able to get to a Final Four, a national championship, so you want to take advantage of those opportunities. ... Really blessed that we were able to get to a Final Four and win a national championship, because they’re hard to do.”

Baylor jumped out to a 9-0 lead after the first two and a half minutes and favored Gonzaga never recovered.

The men’s championship follows Baylor’s women’s basketball championship in 2019. The Lady Bears also won titles in 2005 and 2012.

Butler was named the Final Four’s Most Valuable Player. {eoa}

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# **Messianic Rabbi: When the**

# Father Says, 'No, You Do It'

As a result of damage caused by Hurricane Sally, over the past eight months I have had the pleasure of my two youngest grandchildren living in my home. They are wonderful, intelligent and energetic children filled with curiosity.

The youngest is learning to dress himself and at times has difficulty putting his socks on so they are not bunched up or twisted. However, the dressing task that he finds most challenging is removing a pull-over shirt. So, nearly every night he comes up to me and asks me to remove his shirt.

The first few times I helped him to take the shirt off, but after showing him that he could do it himself several times, when he asks me to take his shirt off now, I say, "No, you do it."

I know that you may be reading this and wondering, "What does this have to do with me?" After all, if you are reading this today, chances are you are already able to dress yourself. Please stick with me because while this article isn't being written so that the readers will learn to dress themselves, it is being written because I believe that G-D is saying the words, "No, you can do it" to many of us in the body of Messiah. But we are not hearing Him, and because we are not hearing Him, we become just as frustrated as my grandson does when I won't help him with his shirt.

To demonstrate my point, let's look at a few verses from Exodus 14:10-12 (TLV):

*When Pharaoh drew near, Bnei-Yisrael lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them! So they were terrified, and Bnei-Yisrael cried out to Adonai.*

*They said to Moses, "Have you taken us away to die in the wilderness because there were no graves in Egypt? Why have*

*you dealt this way with us, to bring us out of Egypt? Did we not say to you in Egypt, 'Let us alone, so that we may serve the Egyptians?' It was better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness!"*

To set the stage for these verses, here is what is happening. The children of Israel are leaving Egypt. This is the morning after the Passover; the final plague has taken place. The Israelites have packed up their homes and are marching out of Egypt when suddenly they look up to see the Egyptian army following them.

The children of Israel are extremely young in their faith in G-D, so they turn to Moses in the same way my grandson would turn to me in a moment of difficulty or personal crisis. They were terrified and wanted to go back to the way things were in Egypt.

In Exodus 14:13-14, we read Moses' response to the people:

But Moses said to the people, "Don't be afraid! Stand still, and see the salvation of Adonai, which He will perform for you today. You have seen the Egyptians today, but you will never see them again, ever! Adonai will fight for you, while you hold your peace."

Look at those words. They seem so full of faith. Don't be afraid, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Adonai will fight for you. Moses isn't cowering in fear, and he doesn't want to run back to Egypt. But, Moses also doesn't want to do anything himself.

Moses isn't an immature believer in G-D. Moses had spent more than 40 years in a personal relationship with the G-D of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That is why G-D chose Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. Yet, even with all of his experience in faith through all of the plagues of Egypt, when difficulty arose, Moses told the people, "Let's all stand here

and watch G-D do something.”

The next words in Exodus sounds exactly like what I say to my grandson when he asks me to do something that he can do himself.

Exodus 14:15 says, “Then Adonai said to Moses, ‘Why are you crying to Me? Tell Bnei-Yisrael to go forward. Lift up your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it. Then Bnei-Yisrael will go into the midst of the sea on dry ground.’”

G-D responds to Moses in the same way I tell my grandson to change his own shirt: “Why are you crying out to me? Lift your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it.” G-D had already taught Moses how to walk in faith and trust. G-D had already taught Moses how to walk in the miraculous. We often say G-D parted the Red Sea, but the Scripture says Moses did it.

When I read this narrative from Exodus, it causes me to wonder how many times G-D looks into my eyes in the same way I look into my grandson’s eyes and say, “No, do it yourself.” It also makes me wonder how often I tell those around me to stand and watch what G-D is going to do, while my Father is standing, waiting to see what I am going to do. {eoa}

**Rabbi Eric Tokajer** *is the author of* Overcoming Fearlessness, What If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?, With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians *and* Galatians in Context.

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# Prophetic Word: The Lord Says, 'A Deep Cleansing Is Taking Place'

The Lord spoke to me recently and said, "A deep cleansing is taking place. And I am cleansing from the foundations. Because My people who are called by My name are founded upon My rock, the rock of salvation.

"Salvation goes to the very core of your spiritual being. And My people have been standing on shaky ground, and I will not stand still and allow My people to sink upon the sands of this world.

"During this shaking, earthly things are falling apart. And during this shaking I say to you, hold on to the power of My Word. Have I not said to you from times of old, 'The grass withers and the flowers fade, but My Word lives forever.' My Word is eternal.

"And I say to you, 'Know that whatever can be shaken will be shaken. I will leave no stone untouched.'

"My Son is coming back for a bride who is without spot or wrinkle. And the church has many spots to be removed and deep wrinkles that need to be ironed out.

"I also speak peace into your inner being. I say to you, do not be afraid, and do not fret for I am faithful and true; I will be with you through it all.

"I remind you that this is a deep cleansing. And this deep cleansing is going to expose the intentions of the hearts of

man. And this heart exposure is going into all realms—spiritual exposure of the individual. I have said you will know them by their fruits, and no longer will I hide the spiritual fruit from the eyes of My people. And once you see, and you will see the heart condition of all around you, then you are held accountable to act accordingly.

“This season is troubling, and you will see more and more that will trouble you. But trust Me to lead you and guide you through it all. Know that I have given you all that you have need of to overcome the trouble of this earth—that serpent of old and his wicked bag of tricks.

“Beware of his bag of tricks that he will use against you to lead you astray in these last days. Know the signs of the times and the season that you are living in. Accept My challenges in My Word for these ultimate days: Be about My heavenly Father’s business and win the lost, bring them into the fold of My Father. Know the power that raised Me from the dead and that it lives and resides on the inside of you waiting for you to release His power by faith.

Recognize that the church is not about buildings and programs. It never was, and it never will be. The church is the people, those who love Me. Do you love me? Feed My sheep. Do you love Me? Tend to My lambs. Give out the spiritual food for My people to feast upon. Learn to feed yourselves on the Word of God that has been set before you.

“Oh, My people, have become weak because they have not fed their own faith. But I rebuke you out of a spirit of love—Myself that I have given freely to you. I say to you, you have forgotten your first love—Me. Remember Me and all that I delivered you from. Return to your first love and walk in the revelation of the grace that I gave to you.

“Be not afraid, be not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am not ashamed of you. I stand in the gap for you. I gave

them My back to stripe for your healing of spirit, soul and body. And I say to you, when you take a stand for Me, I stand for you.

“Oh My children, I have not forgotten you. I have not tossed you aside. But I carry you in the center of My heart. You are precious to Me, and My precious thoughts concerning you outnumber the sands of this earth. I say, do not run and hide from Me. I see your brokenness, and I sense your broken heart. But I say to you, arise in the power of boldness in this late hour. For during this late hour, I will release a great power that this earth has not seen since the day I rose again from the dead.

“I remember that day well. I was released from the powers of hell, and I possess its keys. And in Me you are free from the satanic power of that place.

“You may be small in number, but in the spirit realm, you are giant in the realm of faith. And your great faith is pleasing to me. And I have given you the power of My boldness, and I ask you to meet me at the throne of My grace and make your petitions known unto Me. Know that as I hear and record your prayers of faith that you will receive the good of the land, My land. And I will hold you up and not let go. Trust Me, and trust in My ways—even when you do not see My hand moving—know that it is moving on your behalf.

“I love you My sons and My daughters,” says the Lord of Hosts to you this day. {eoa}

**Becky Dvorak** is the host of the dynamic teaching program, Empowered for Healing and Miracles, featured globally on the *It's Supernatural! Network on ISN*. Join her on Mondays at 8:30 AM and 8:30 PM Eastern. Click here to order a copy of Becky's latest book, *Conquering the Spirit of Death*.

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# Why Do You Keep Going Back to the Tomb?

It's the day after the most important day on the Christian calendar—Resurrection Sunday—and as a ministry leader, you're feeling a little let down. But don't worry, you're in good company.

Can you imagine what took place in Jerusalem the day after Jesus rose from the dead? What about the disciples? Did they simply go back to fishing? Did the carpenters go back to their woodworking duties? Did the agricultural workers go back to tending their fields?

Dr. Steve Greene says we must look at Luke 24 to find out.

"We know that the tombstone was rolled away by a couple of angels, and I want to report to you that, after Jesus' words, the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men," Greene said on an episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "The Scripture says, 'They returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the 11 and to all the rest, so those who were there saw the tomb was empty and went back and reported to the disciples.

"They didn't believe the women's story, but Peter rose and ran to the tomb. He wasn't gonna sit back. He was going to go find out for himself. He saw the linen clothes lying by themselves, and he departed wondering to himself what had happened. There wasn't a natural explanation. The Bible says even the Jews still talk about it. I think most people want to try to find some explanation for supernatural matter.

"What I want to know is what all of these people were doing,

those that believe Jesus was resurrected. ... What did the resurrection do for you? How did it change your Monday? How did it change the people that were in Jerusalem? ...

“Those who caught the spiritual meaning of the resurrection had to have a different life on Monday. We know that the disciples doubted it, and it might have taken a while of hanging out with Jesus to get it. But as leaders, we continue to work with our people to resurrect their thinking, to change their mindset. The question is, if Jesus has impacted your life, if the power of the Resurrection is in your soul and your spirit, then why do you continue to go back to the tomb? Why do you go where the dead are?”

For more of Dr. Greene’s thoughts on the post-resurrection world, listen to the entire podcast of *Greenelines*. Be sure to subscribe on your favorite podcast platform for more inspiring stories like these. {eoa}

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## **Spirit-Filled Pastor: On What Day Did Christ Really Die?**

This sinless Son of God came to seek and to save that which was lost, to reconcile sinful mankind with its Creator.

As the apostle Paul explained to the Corinthian believers, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them ... He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the

righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:19-21, NASB1995). In Old Testament imagery, He became our substitute lamb (see Gen. 22:1-13, Ex. 12:1-8).

The writer of the book of Hebrews explained that Jesus, "by the grace of God," would "taste death for everyone" (Heb. 2:9, NKJV). Though He is our Creator and Sustainer, it was God's gracious will that "the captain of [our] salvation" be made "perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10).

Thus, Jesus would suffer being arrested, mocked, bruised and beaten for us (Mark 15:16-32), "that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil ... [and] to make propitiation [a spiritual covering] for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2: 14,17).

### **From the Garden to the Cross**

The Passion of the Christ continued from intense intercession in the garden of Gethsemane to a long night of agony and cruelty as the ultimate sacrifice lamb. He was brutally beaten (John 19:1-3), maliciously mocked (Luke 22:63-65) and mercilessly flogged (Matt. 27:26-31) at the behest of those religious leaders and cowardly crowds who rejected Him, just days after magnanimously welcoming Him in a kingly fashion.

Finally, He was arrested, falsely accused and hurriedly tried in nighttime tribunals by religious and military leaders before being scourged and delivered to the cross (John 17-19). There, He was crucified between two criminals outside the northern gates of Jerusalem, on a hill called Calvary (Latin) or Golgotha (Aramaic). The names meant the Place of the Skull, either because of the appearance of the rock formation of the hill or that it was known as a place of crucifixion where skulls accumulated (John 19:17).

There, His hands were stretched out latterly and nailed to the cross-piece and his feet nailed together. Jesus later presented both his hands and his feet as evidence that He was

risen from the dead (John 20:20). The T-shaped cross was then dropped into the hole dug to hold the wooden implement of death upright.

It was 9:00 in the morning on the Passover's Day of Preparation (John 19:14)—the same time sheep were beginning to be ritually slaughtered in the temple for use in the Passover meals. He hung there through the morning hours until noon, when "darkness fell over the whole land" until mid-afternoon. He struggled to avoid asphyxiation, as His limp body slumped more and more. He would have tried to raise himself up, pushing on the metal spike through his feet, to allow himself to breathe.

His final words were profound. Dr. Luke tells us that He cried out, in a loud voice, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" and breathed His last breath (Luke 23:46). John adds that when he had received some sour vinegar-like wine (fulfilling Ps. 69:21) He also said "It is finished," meaning the prophecies of mankind's redemption were completed, with the results extending continuously. Then He bowed his head and "gave up His spirit" (John 19:30).

After being confirmed as dead, by the Roman soldiers (John 19:31-37), and because Jewish law dictated that the dead bodies of criminals should be removed from sight before sunset (Deut. 21:23), Pilate allowed Jesus' body to be taken down by Joseph, a rich man from Arimathea, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, "who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus" (Matt. 27:57).

After being joined by Nicodemus (a Pharisee and also a secret disciple), who brought 100 pounds of mixed spices for Jesus' burial, they tightly wrapped the spices around the body with clean linen strips, as was customary (John 19:39-40). Then, as the Passover's evening events began at sundown, they secured the body in Joseph's own nearby and new garden-tomb, which he had hewn out of the rock (Matt. 27:57-61). Before leaving the

tomb, they rolled "a large stone against the door of the tomb."

But, that grave could not hold Him! Three nights and three days later, just as He prophesied in Matthew 12:40, Jesus had risen from the dead!

### **Did Jesus Really Die on "Good Friday"?**

The events of Holy Week all surround the annual Jewish remembrance of the Passover event found in Exodus 12. Jerusalem was crowded due to pilgrims coming to observe the Passover Week, as stipulated when the Passover was instituted (-36).

The seven days were to be "bookended" by a sabbath-like observance at the beginning of the week and again at the end of the holy week, which was to begin on the 14th day of the first month of the Hebrew calendar (Ex. 12:15-20). This perpetual memorial-observance was to be calendar-based and not confused with nor affected by the weekly sabbaths (Ex. 20:8-11) , which were and are observed on the seventh day of each week, modeled by God's rest after the work of Creation. However, these Passover sabbaths were distinguished as a "high day" or "high Sabbath" (John 19:31).

This included the seven-day festival of Unleavened Bread which commemorated the ancient Jews subsisting on meager foods while they fled from Pharaoh and his army. The disciples had asked Jesus, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" That meal became what we refer to as the "Last Supper" (Matt. 26:17-30).

John, alone among the four Gospel writers, explained that Jesus was taken down from the cross before sundown of what was the "Day of Preparation" for a special "high Sabbath" (John 19:14, 31), which was in conjunction with the Passover, not the weekly Sabbath (Friday sundown until Saturday sundown).

This second-Sabbath possibility can synchronize Jonah's recorded time in the great fish and the "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," which Jesus predicted for Himself, in Matthew 12:40.

Because of these biblical clues, I am among those who understand John's statements as suggesting that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday of that Holy Week and not on Friday. This understanding provides for the special "high day" Sabbath of Passover (John 19:14, 31) with its Day of Preparation on Wednesday and observance on Thursday, as well as the regular Saturday Sabbath, with its normal Day of Preparation on Friday.

Joseph of Arimathea would have removed Christ's body from the cross sometime before Wednesday's sundown when they put Him into the tomb, where He remained until Saturday's sundown (John 19:38-42). This aligns the Jonah/Jesus specifically-predicted three days and three nights and avoids awkwardly trying to explain the three-day entombment as including "partial days" on Friday night and Sunday morning.

A Wednesday afternoon crucifixion provides for the "three days and three nights" in the tomb and the resurrection as occurring sometime after Saturday's sundown but well before Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early the next morning before sunrise, while it was still dark (John 20:1-2).

Yes, Jesus died, was buried and rose again! He became our Passover lamb and has now "delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col. 1:13). {eoa}

**Gary Curtis** served in full-time ministry for 50 years, the last 27 years of which he was part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the Van Nuys' California Foursquare church. Now retired, Gary continues to write a weekly blog at and frequent articles for digital and print platforms.

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## Messianic Rabbi: Once Saved, Always Saved?

For most believers in Yeshua (Jesus), the third book in the Bible is named Leviticus, and when they open the pages of Leviticus, they see a long list of dry commandments.

Because they see this long list of commandments in a book titled Leviticus, they have come to believe erroneously that this long list of dos and don'ts was the means in which Old Testament Jews worked their way to salvation. The false understanding that the Torah taught salvation based on works of obedience is the product of many things. One of those things is the very fact that the third book in the Torah is, in most Bibles, named Leviticus, when in the Jewish Bible, it is named וַיִּקְרָא *VaYikra* ("And Called" or "And He Called").

We don't always think about titles and headings, but these words or phrases are designed to instruct the reader how they are to interpret the information following the title or heading. For instance, in most Bibles, the event recorded in Matthew 26 and Luke 22 usually has the heading "The Last Supper," which in reality should be headed with the phrase "Yeshua's Last Passover Seder." By calling it The Last Supper,

the writers of the headings removed the biblical context and spiritual significance of the meal that Yeshua was eating with His disciples.

Likewise, when we read the title Leviticus, our minds immediately believe that the intended focus of the book is on the Levites, the tabernacle and the sacrificial system. However, the book's name, "And He Called," draws our attention to G-D's eternal calling of and to Israel.

At this point, you may be asking yourself, "What does this have to do with 'eternal security'?" I am glad you asked. If the book of Leviticus' focus is about the calling of Israel and not the priesthood and the sacrificial system, maybe it also isn't about how Israel was to "get saved" or "work their way to salvation." What if Leviticus was written to "an already-saved people" about the calling that G-D placed upon their lives so they would remain saved?

First, I believe that you would agree that there is no other way to be saved but through the atonement provided by the blood of Yeshua. In other words, we are saved by the blood of the Lamb.

However, being saved by the blood of the lamb is not a New Testament concept; it comes from the book of Exodus (also not named the book of Exodus in Hebrew, but rather the book's name is "Names," but that is another topic for the future). If we read in the book of Exodus, we find that G-D commands the children of Israel to paint the blood of the lamb on their doorposts so that death may pass over their houses.

Notice that G-D didn't require anything from them other than to put their trust in the blood of the lamb—no works of righteousness, no tabernacle or priesthood. They had no requirement beyond applying the blood to the doors in order to participate in the redemptive work that G-D provided. After they spent the night in their homes, G-D led them out of Egypt

through the Red Sea and into the wilderness.

This was the redemption, or salvation, of Israel, which had nothing to do with a long list of 613 commandments or working their way to salvation. Their redemption was completely based upon the blood. In other words, they were unqualified to be redeemed until the blood made them qualified.

However, because they were redeemed by G-D, G-d gave them a calling to be a "light to the nations." This calling is what we read about when we read the book "And He Called," or Leviticus. This book is not about how one became part of Israel; it is about how one remains part of Israel. The penalty for not obeying Torah was that your name would be blotted out of the Book. There isn't a place in Torah that says: "If you obey Torah, your names will be written down."

That is why we read verses like Romans 11:20-22 (TLV):

"True enough. They were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but fear— for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. Notice then the kindness and severity of God: severity toward those who fell; but God's kindness toward you, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise, you too will be cut off!"

Notice that these natural branches were a part of the tree (they were saved by the blood of the Lamb), but because of their unbelief, they were broken off of the tree. Likewise, the wild branches were grafted into the tree (saved by the blood of the Lamb), but if they do not continue in His kindness, (His calling, or *Vayikra*), they will also be cut off.

If we change the name of a book of the Bible, it will change what we perceive to be the focus of that book. In this case, "And He Called," which is about the calling of G-D given to His people, was changed to Leviticus, which diverted our attention from our calling to the works of our calling—away

from the blood of the Lamb to the works of the tabernacle, and away from the truth that from Genesis until Revelation, everyone was saved by faith to a calling. We read in Matthew 24:11-13:

“Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. Because lawlessness will multiply, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”{eoa}

**Eric Tokajer** *is the author of* *Overcoming Fearlessness, What If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?*, *With Me in Paradise*, *Transient Singularity*, *OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry*, *#ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians* *and* *Galatians in Context*.

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# **The 4 Phases of Intercession: How to Build an**

# Indestructible Prayer Wall

What is the difference between prayer and intercession?

Technically, saying "Hey, Jesus!" is prayer!

However, if you really want to get your hands dirty and work side by side next to Him, building the kingdom of heaven together, you are going to need to know these four phases of intercession.

Begin construction today in this episode of *Next Gen Prophets* with Apostle Colette Toach. {eoa}

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