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# Bible Explorations Newsletter

**October, 2009 Issue**

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### What is This?



John did not see how we could be ready for the Feast of Tabernacles this coming Oct 4 – 11 and also provide a place and program for the Feast of Trumpets last week. But as most things were readied for Tabernacles, and a

few folk were requesting the opportunity of gathering together on Trumpets, it was decided, four days before the event, to invite a few folk, folk we knew to be feast keepers and who enjoy our beliefs, and live within 50 miles of us, to enjoy the Feast of Trumpets here in Terra Bella last Sunday. Sandy counted that 29 precious folk came to honor our Messiah. If you would like to be on a special mailing list of folk who would travel to Terra Bella to participate in some of the one-day feasts such as Pentecost in early summer, and Trumpets in the fall, let us know by phone, or by reply in the pink envelopes, and we will keep you informed.



Abel Camacho recorded the four sermon/Bible studies on DVD. They include 13 commands by the Creator God that go beyond the normal Sabbath keeping folk's interpretation of the health laws by John VanDenburgh. The audience was asked if this sermon was too radical or too descriptive of overlooked statutes, to share with you all at the coming Feast of Tabernacles. Several attendees replied as though it is my duty to share these facts with

you all at Tabernacles. The problem is the schedule of speakers is already overflowing for the coming feast. There are three alternatives: 1. If an unexpected opening should become available. 2. To share the lecture next spring during Unleavened Bread. 3. Thanks to Abel, it is available on DVD. It is listed on the order sheet as "Beyond Clean and Unclean."



Dave Clark doubled his workload. First, he provided a great sermon on what "Faith" is really all about. The title of his message came directly from Scripture: Will He Find Faith?" Second, he opened up our Feast of Trumpets to the internet via live streaming so viewers enjoyed the services from the U.S. and Canada. We were thrilled to find that our friends, the Dingmans in Canada, had a group of 23 precious folk in their home enjoying the Feast of Trumpets with us.



Ken Wyss presented Biblical ideas about various "Trumpet Patterns" and Al Silva presented a fun and homey presentation on "Trumpet Blasts." He stressed the idea that "Yom Terua" does not just mean Day of the Horn, but day of the noisy trumpet and shouting. I am sorry I did not get a picture of Al, but we will see him behind the pulpit at Tabernacles.

If you live close enough, or can afford to fly in for any of these one-day festivals, let us know and we will add your name to this special little mailing list.

## **Back to the Coming Feast**

I want to catch you up on the coming Tabernacle Feast here in Terra Bella. You will find a new bulletin enclosed with more lecture titles. Two of the speakers have requested more time, and knowing what these folk have to offer I will try to accommodate, but the schedule is already tight.

And then too, we may have a "mystery guest" that will be travelling from the other side of the U.S. This guest just has too many valuable lessons and stories from the mission field not to share some of them with us. If this "guest" does come to bless us we will add some time either during lunch or in the evening. After you are here I will either let you know who this guest might have been, or else introduce this truth teaching missionary when it becomes time for this person to speak.

### **Early Arrival**

Since Tabernacles begins on Sunday this year we anticipate that many of you will show up toward the end of the previous week and therefore we are providing three services for you on the 7<sup>th</sup>-day Sabbath of the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Walls, Tables, and Chairs**

The walls will be put on the sides of the tents, and the chairs and tables will be set in them this Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup>. This will be the first time that our little "Torah Tots" will have their own tent. Previously they have met in the carport, or in one quarter of the big tent, or wherever they could find a spot. Since we have secured the new youth tent, the tent the youth have been using is now available to the cradle roll-primary group. These little ones that I refer to as "Torah Tots" are under the guidance of Lisa Silva.

Department directions: the little ones' tent is furthest north on the camp ground. Then, south of them, on the other side of the walk is the new youth tent. It is easy to spot because it is sooo new. South of the youth is the junior tent situated right next to the walk way. It is where it has always been and especially enjoys the shade of the Eucalyptus trees.

The adults will meet in the chapel (barn) and the main tent will be where it has always been.



## Vendors

We are asking all those who sell books and all their wonderful health benefit products, etc., to set up their booths under the roof of the big tent. We charge no rent for any privilege of space, and we often appreciate what you bring to us, but we must keep the area clear at the front of the meeting hall.

## To All Campers

Those in tents or RVs will find lots of room and space to relax. We have irrigated the entire area making it greener and more peaceful than ever. There has never been a charge for camping at BE. However, we do still suggest you bring bottled water for drinking. Our county water is pretty good, but not guaranteed by the water company.

The Eucalyptus grove has been extended on the north side of the campgrounds for additional tents, and there is still plenty of room to the north of the main tent. There are two faucets in the campground that have filtered water. These two faucets have water especially recommended for drinking. Just ask where they are, any previous camper will show you.

Pets are welcome and no extra charge, in fact, we don't charge for anything but books and DVDs. But we do insist that dogs be kept on a leash at all times, and that owners follow them with a plastic zip-lock bag. Thanks for understanding. We enjoy you and any tame fuzzy four-legged creatures you bring with you.

## New Sound

Electronic speakers: Sound is always a problem in any auditorium, especially in an auditorium that isn't owned by a million-dollar organization – and we are not one of those. But we have been able to make a few changes since the last retreat. There are areas in the hall where the sound will be more intelligible. For the hard of hearing I would suggest sitting very near a speaker itself. Our new Bose speakers are smaller than what we have used before, but are much better at distributing sound.



Clara and I met Jose Marin when speaking at a convention of non-SDA Sabbath keeping torah observant Christians. After sharing good things with him he offered to help us here. Jose is a sound technician

who is called to many convention centers for his expertise. He offered to help us at a minimum (way below his usual and customary fee) if we ever needed him.

After a few years we did remember him, and he did come, and here you see him 14 feet in the air installing new speaker wires.

What he gave us is the ability to hear nearly equally well in every corner of the building, even under the sound booth! Now all we have to do is to learn how to adjust and use it. In Jose's words: "Although the speakers are smaller, they will sound somewhat clearer and louder." This is because they surround the audience with sound waves, and also because of the fact that they are physically closer to the audience. We cannot afford to go overboard with such improvements, but sometimes a little change can go a long way. What's the use of preaching the truth if a few areas in the auditorium cannot hear as well as they should?

## New Moons

The pre-timing of the new moon is not an easy thing for the novice to compute. It's easy when you can say "There it is" but not so easy to compute a year in advance. The way we compute it seems to be the most Biblical and scientific to us, however, not everyone always agrees. The first new moon after the vernal equinox is the way we determine the beginning of the holy year. Thus, the new year will always begin in the spring. Fourteen days later is Passover, and then it is a fairly easy thing to calculate the rest of the feasts. The problem from that point on relates to determining the exact time of its appearance from star programs on a computer. Other groups have different ways. Some consider the dark of the moon (that is when no part of the moon is seen from planet earth).. In a way they are right, but as near as we can tell the Bible uses the moon for a "sign." It's not much of a sign if you can't see it. Much of Jewish history shows they used the sighting of the new moon and so do we.

Looking on Orthodox Jewish websites I found that many of them believe that last Saturday, the 19<sup>th</sup>, was the new moon day, and so also did several Messianic groups.

AP Aron-Heller, Jerusalem: "Israelis celebrated the Jewish New Year Friday evening, grateful for the recent calm spell in the region, but skeptical that the coming year would see the achievement of ever-elusive peace

. Then I found a messianic Website, under "High Holy Days that says, "Welcome to High Holy Days on the Net. Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown September 18, Friday. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) are the most important of all Jewish holidays and the only holidays that are purely religious, as they are not related to any historical or natural event."

On the Web under When Is, I clicked on Rosh Hashanah. There I found another messianic site and

read: “When is Rosh HaShanah in 2009? Rosh HaShanah in 2009 will start on Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> of September and will continue for 2 days until Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> of September.” In other words in their thinking both Saturday and Sunday were involved.

Then, attending our feast in Terra Bella there was a gentleman we respect very highly. He is excellent in astronomy. He told us we were not a day late, but a day early. Wow! From one extreme to the other.

Some of the folk from Bakersfield said certain persons had reported seeing the new moon on Saturday night which would seem to verify us and our position.

We are careful in our calculations, and draw on the wisdom of others in setting our dates, but we do not claim perfection as some other groups do. The truth is nobody is perfect. We have invited the expertise of good knowledgeable people, and have now invited our friend the astronomer to work with us in the future, however he has not yet responded.

Most of the groups we know are keeping the same days we are, and have calculated them in what we believe to be the most Biblical manner. We will keep studying and looking at any new information that comes across the board. We are not so arrogant as to say that all others are wrong and only we are right. We humbly ask for the Spirit of God to guide us, and remain teachable, but not gullible.

### **News Behind the News**

Trumpets last year saw a crash of the stock market with 10 straight days of falling thereafter. This year we have high level meetings of both the U.N. and the G 20. It seems that IMF must expand its authority, and the UN must take action on dissident countries. Did you catch the fact that 90 religious leaders from 43 Christian communions attended the Third Annual Meeting of the “Christian Churches Together?” It is exciting to watch the increased escalation of religious forces. The end result is surely prophetic.

We look forward to seeing many of you for worship October 3<sup>rd</sup> here in Terra Bella. Let’s have a great one.

### **WALTER: The Waldensian Boy. Cont.**

Walter and his father had gone to see Cousin Brian, who wanted Walter to stay with him and attend the University of Bologna. He assured them that Walter would not have to give up his religion even if he should decide to become a great statesman. He knew many merchants and great men who were able to conceal their beliefs and continue their work during the time of the purge of heresy.

Walter’s father replied to Cousin Brian, “Walter needs a good education however he chooses to use his life. My son is no longer a child, and I do not wish to hold arbitrary control over his future.”

That same day Cousin Brian dressed Walter in fine clothing and took him to visit the bishop’s school. The

great shelves of books kept in the library dazzled him, but the students working at the long tables also surprised him. Although it was the bishop’s school, he heard no mention of Scripture. Some of the students were studying books that were written many centuries before by the church fathers, but most of them were studying canon law. As the teacher questioned him, Walter suddenly realized how little he knew about the church customs and traditions. At least he knew something of the old Roman law.

After returning to the great house where Cousin Brian lived, he asked Walter, “What is your decision? You know I will care for you like a son for your mother’s sake. I will also use all my influence to find a good position for you when you finish your training. With your intelligence there is no limit to what you might achieve.”

Walter paused a moment. A few weeks ago he had felt sure that it was the right thing to do. Now he wasn’t sure this was the right decision. In spite of his lack of higher schooling, he wanted to accept Cousin’s kind offer. “Let me have at least until autumn to share in father’s witnessing,” he said falteringly.

Cousin Brian shrugged in irritation, “I thought you were eager to begin your studies!”

Walter knew it was useless to try to explain to him how he felt just then, for Cousin Brian had never shared the excitement of bringing someone to Jesus Christ. He didn’t understand the thrill of working against the superstition and darkness they found everywhere. And he didn’t feel the lure of danger.

During the following weeks, Walter tried to understand what he really wanted. If he went back to the mountains, he would spend his whole life working in the soil as a farmer. He liked helping on the village farms but he didn’t want to do this the rest of his life. God had something more for him to do. He felt the urgency within himself.

He was having a hard time in deciding. He wanted to talk to his father, but he felt he had to make this decision himself without his father’s advice.

In the early autumn, leaders of the Brethren came together to make plans for the future if the Waldensian movement was to survive persecution. “We cannot separate ourselves completely from the world,” many of the men said. “If we do, we are disobeying Christ’s command. He said we were to be in the world but not a part of it. We must spread ourselves throughout the lands and witness. We must continue to grow, or we will die, and God will raise up someone else to take our place.”

“But where will we find ministers?” asked someone. An old Waldensian preacher from the mountains stood up slowly. “I believe we must begin by sending our young men to the university to learn more than we can teach them.” Walter heard several voices murmuring disagreement. “We cannot send our lambs out among wolves. *To be continued.*”