

ROCK OF ISRAEL

Update

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Spring 2003

THE PASSOVER FEAST (Pesach)

*(Excerpted from book of same title by
Ruth Specter Lascelle)*

*"In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's
Passover" (Leviticus 23:5).*

*"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months..."
(Exodus 12:2).*

*"And this day shall be unto you for a memo-
rial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord
throughout your generations; ye shall keep it
a feast by an ordinance forever" (Exodus
12:14).*

According to God's commandment, the first month of the Jewish calendar should be Nisan which occurs in the spring and begins in either March or April. It was in the month Nisan when the children of Israel were delivered from Egyptian bondage, marking the beginning of their national life.

The Passover, observed continuously for three thousand years, is still one of the three great festivals in the calendar year of orthodox Jews and the favorite holiday in their homes. It is a joyous feast to them, recalling their emancipation from slavery to Pharaoh. In the synagogue, psalms of thanksgiving and glorification are read including the biblical scroll "Song of Songs" which, Rabbis say, teaches the espousal of Israel, the beloved, and God, the Lover, which took place at the time of the first Passover!

The "beginning of months" to those of us who are of the family of God began on that memorable day when we accepted our purchased deliverance from a bondage worse than that of Egypt and a slavery more terrible than that of Pharaoh! It was then we began to really live when we recognized the Messiah (Christ) as our Passover Who saved us from the bondage and slavery of the Evil One. How we can

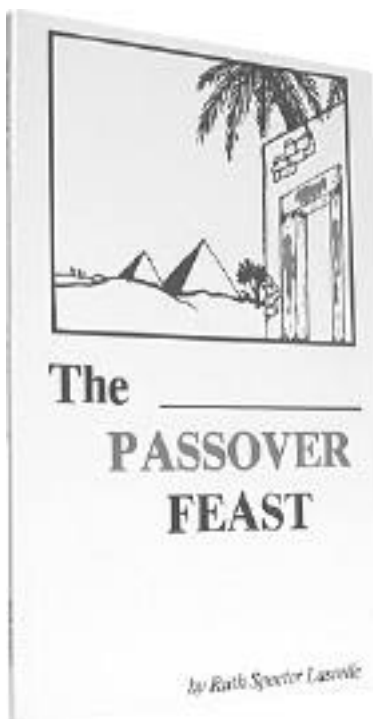
rejoice now in song and testimony not only in the house of the Lord once a year, but in all places at all times when we remember that we are the espoused Bride of the Heavenly Bridegroom who is coming some day to take us to be with Him forever!

Of all the feasts of the Jews, the Feast of the Passover emphasized the separation between Israel and every other people in the world, for no outsider could take any part in it whatsoever. Only the children of Israel could enjoy the privileges of the Paschal Feast for it was the Lord's Passover and only those who knew Him, obeyed His commandments, and kept His Covenants, were permitted in its celebration.

The Hebrew word for this holiday is "Pesach" and has been pointed out to be a feminine word, the English equivalent to "pause over to protect" as a hen would pause over her chicks to protect them from harm and danger. This is exactly what God did in that ancient time. When He saw the blood upon the door, He "paused over" to protect them from the decree of death which was pronounced upon all believers. God does exactly the same for those today who have the "blood of God's Lamb" applied to their heart's door in faith. He pauses over to protect from any form of sin which leads to eternal death!

The word "Pesach" is taken from another Hebrew word which means "to hop", i.e. (fig.), skip over (or spare); by implication to hesitate; also (lit.) to limp, to dance, to leap, to pause over or pass-over. When God saw the blood of the lamb on the doorposts, He hesitated there, leaped with joy at the obedience of His people in offering the perfect, sacrificial lamb for their deliverance!

The Emancipation Story is read from the



Letter From The President



by *Robert Specter*

Greetings to our brothers and sisters in Messiah our Lord.

I wanted to update you on several of our current and future projects and to thank you for your involvement in Jewish Ministry. As some have said, Jewish revival is the end time event that precedes the coming of the Lord.

Last quarter we shared with you that we wanted to bless the handicapped children of Alyn Hospital. There was a little over \$1,500 that came in designated for this project. I am sure it will be greatly appreciated by the staff and children of the Hospital. I just pray that God heals bodies and spirits in that hospital in Jerusalem. In addition to the Hospital we just sent a financial gift to the American Red Magen David for Israel (Israel's "Red Cross", we put on the donation "in Honor of Yeshua, The Messiah"), a gift to the Bible College in Israel, and a gift to a ministry in Haifa which employs Jewish believers. With such economic pressures in Israel, this is a real blessing to all of them.

This quarter we want to put up a bill board in a Jewish area during Passover (more about this in the enclosed letter.) This will cost us about \$5,000 but will be seen by thousands of people.

We also must begin to recruit volunteers and raise funds for our big five city Summer Evangelism. We need about \$5,000 for each city. This includes finances for staff travel, accommodations and supplies. We need 50 Volunteers, 10 for each city. I just got word that two of our faithful volunteers, Ed & Carolyn Strong will not be able to join us this year. Ed just had a major operation and will be in recovery for some time (Please keep him in prayer, and Carolyn too as she cares for his needs.) We will need others to take their place. We need sponsors who will pay the \$300 for a volunteer to join the teams. Some would volunteer if they had the money but can't afford to take time off and to pay the \$300. So if we had Churches or individuals who would sponsor, we could invite those who are willing to come but don't have enough finances.

By the way we could always use volunteers in the office if you are in the area. We need data entry, library, filing, mailing, phones, and other secretarial help. Many thanks to the ladies of Montgomery Assembly of God who have helped in our office.

This month we were blessed to find out that two Jewish people came to know their Messiah through the ministry of Rock of Israel. This may seem a small number to some people but not to those of us in Jewish Ministry. Each person represents much seed sown. Each person represents a life that had to cross many barriers to see Yeshua (Jesus) as someone the Jewish people could accept as Messiah. Each person represents a thorn in the Adversary's side (he who works continually to destroy God's chosen people). So rejoice with us in the news that these two Jewish people have overcome and now know their Jewish Messiah, Jesus.

Please continue to pray for Rock of Israel Ministries, for our staff, for our projects, for more people to volunteer and or support this end time ministry.

Yours for the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel,
Robert & Carrie Specter and Staff ❖



Billboard off Interstate

Passover Continued

"Haggadah" at the first night's service or "Seder". Every Jewish child, from the time he is old enough to understand, knows the story of the Exodus and is never allowed to forget it since it is repeated every year in his home.

The greatest story ever told is of a greater Deliverer than Moses. Yeshua haMashiach (Jesus, the Christ) is the Great Emancipator of all time, and the great deliverance He performed should never be forgotten. Always at the Feast (The Communion),

the Redeemed of the Lord should "remember His death 'til He come" and not only at the communion table, but every moment of their lives should the story of love be recounted and the Lover of souls remembered. Like as the Israelites were commanded to keep the Passover in remembrance of their escape from Egyptian bondage, so are Christians required to keep the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in memory of their deliverance from the yoke of sin. ❖



God's Timing



Warren & Cathy Frankel

As I look back on the years of my walk with God, I can plainly see His perfect timing in our lives. If we are sensitive and open, God will surely direct our paths. Eccl.3:1-8 speaks about the seasons in our lives. Thank God for His perfect timing and the fact that He knows what we need and when we need it.

About twenty years ago, I met Hyman Specter, the founder of the Rock of Israel. We met through some mutual friends. We became good friends and eventually Hyman asked us to come on staff at the Rock of Israel full time. We did so and that was seventeen years ago. For the first seven and one half years, we traveled and were on the road for three to four months at a time. We spent very little time at home. It was a marvelous way to minister and see this beautiful country at the same time.

The ministry was growing and they needed office help. God showed me that we could be even more effective if Cathy went to work in the office. We ministered close enough to home so as to be gone only on weekends and she could be in the office during the week.

In 1993, due to a number of reasons including God's direction for the ministry and the extreme high cost of living in Southern California, the whole ministry moved to Fairfield, Ohio. It was a difficult move, because I really do not like cold and snow. However, it was God's will for us and here we have been for almost nine years. Cathy became the office manager and we continued to minister on weekends. (Christie Lewis has taken over managing the office for the last two years.)

Now we are both 65 and feel a new season com-

ing in our lives. As of May 1, 2003 we have not booked any services and we are putting our home up for sale. Just as soon as it sells we will be moving to our property in Anderson, SC.

We have approximately 1.5 acres out in the country and will put a double wide manufactured home on the lot. We are not retiring from ministry, but just entering another phase. A wonderful opportunity has opened up for us to teach at a church in Anderson. We will still do some teaching in other churches periodically, but it will be close to home.

We covet your prayers and say a heartfelt thanks to all of you pastors that have allowed us to minister at your church. Those of you that support the ministry, please continue to do so and God will bless you according to His word. When we move and settle in, we can keep you posted through the Rock of Israel newsletter. May the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob bless you abundantly.❖



The Ripple Effect Of Summer Evangelism



By Robert Specter

Every Summer, since 1995, we have taken the Gospel to the Streets. Over the years we have been to many cities, handed out more than a million tracts and spoken to thousands of people.

There have been many times when God has orchestrated events far beyond our control or plans. For instance, I met a lady in Philadelphia who, when I handed her a tract she said “weren’t you in Washington DC? You tried to give me a flyer there too!” I am sure the Lord had purpose in her meeting me in two different metropolitan cities. Only He knows her heart and what she needs to draw her to Himself. One year during training our volunteers were role playing witnessing to people on the street. A hotel worker listened, prayed for forgiveness of sin and accepted Jesus as Lord.

In one city a Jewish lady took a tract and a cassette tape from one of our volunteers (She later accepted the Lord), in another city several hundred miles away her relative took a tract from another one of our volunteers. Through the Jewish lady’s testimony (a new believer), the volunteer’s witness, and a tract, last month the relative came to the Lord. Praise His Name!

No, we can’t take credit for arranging or orchestrating people’s lives. We can only make ourselves and volunteers available to be used of God in some very special ways. Often we never even hear or know about the effect we have on other people. We may touch one life who then touches another and is multiplied many times over.

Take into consideration these ripple effects:

1) Our ministry is “to the Jew first” as according to Romans 1:16. But in the ripple effect- We share with thousands of Gentiles on the street and more Gentiles come to the Lord than do the Jewish people. This stands to reason because, of course, there are more Gentiles, and the Gospel is for everyone. We pray that the Jewish people will become jealous of the Gentile believers as Paul says in Rom. 11:11

2) The cities where we go are metropolitan cities with a large Jewish population- I pray for God to direct me in choosing the four or five cities each year. **The ripple effect-** Two years ago I had chosen Northern NJ as the area we would go to, but church leaders told us that another evangelism group had made plans to be in the area at the same time. They asked that we change our dates. Since many plans were already made around the dates, we went across the Hudson River and had our week of evangelism in Manhattan and the other boroughs of New York City. Only God knew that 40 days after our teams were in the subway station under the World Trade Centers that on 9/11 the Trade Centers would come down and many who passed by our teams would not be living.

3) The many volunteers trained- Each year we pray, we recruit and encourage people to come with us to one of four (or five) cities. (Volunteers have come from Washington, Oregon, California, Colorado, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Tennessee, Georgia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Virginia, Washington DC, Canada and Mexico City, Mexico.) We arrange their hotel lodging and meals for the week. We plan the days and the sites where we will stand on street corners to distribute gospel tracts and interact with people (businessmen, tourists and street people.) We spend a day in lectures and practical training sessions. We have chapels for testimony, encouragement, refreshing and prayer. Michael LaPoff has led many of our chapels with worship and communion. We take pictures of the volunteers in action so that they can share with family and those who made it possible for them to be missionaries to another city. **The ripple effect-** they in turn teach others from their churches how to witness, some also do evangelism in their own home towns or nearby cities. Some come back the next year to do it all over again. I have heard on several occasions that the week of street evangelism was the best week of their lives. When you are dedicating 100 % of your week

New York skyline



to the Lord and to promoting His Kingdom, you get a sense of accomplishment and joy that nothing compares.

4) *The thousands of tracts handed to people on the streets-* Doug Carmel is a gifted writer who with humor, entices the reader to read the whole message. We print a prayer on the back of each of our gospel tracts. We also have placed our address, toll free phone number, email address and our Web site on the tract. ***The ripple effect-*** A person may not read the tract right then and there. He may put it into his brief case or she may put it in her bag and find it later at home. After someone reads the tract they can look us up on the Web or email us for more information. In the privacy of their own home they can pray to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for revelation of the Messiah.

5) *During the weeks of evangelism there are people who pray with us and accept the Lord-* These people are sent a book to read. They are encouraged to fellowship with other believers. ***The ripple effect-*** Their lives will change. They have become a new creation. If they mature in the Lord, they will take the gospel to their family and friends. Who knows, maybe God will call them into full time evangelistic ministry.

6) *The other Jewish ministries that we have helped or encouraged in the cities we visit. The ripple effect-* We give them new believers or contacts to follow up. They appreciate the evangelism we do because they cannot afford advertising nor do they have enough volunteers to do everything they would like to do.

7) *The many Churches and individuals who financially*

support our summer evangelism and other evangelism projects, and who pray that God will use us to reach the Jewish people. The ripple effect- They are fulfilling God's heart, His mandate to take the Gospel to "the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel." God also promises to bless those who bless Israel (the Jewish people). Whether the churches or individuals know it or not, the reason they are blessed is because they are blessing the Jewish people. Also in Romans 11:15 it says that when Israel receives (Israel accepts the Messiah) there will be life from the Dead. In other words our partners helping us to reach Jewish people are helping to speed up the time before the Resurrection. In light of these many ripples could I ask you to be in prayer for Rock of Israel's Summer Evangelism in 2003. Pray that God will orchestrate events, that He will direct our plans, that He, by His spirit will draw many Jews and Gentiles into His Love by their recognizing Jesus (Yeshua) as Messiah, King and Lord!

Following are the dates for the Summer Evangelism Teams in 2003, If you know anyone who would like to join us, let us know. Pray that God will send us 10 volunteers for each city. We can actually accommodate more than 10 in Washington DC.

Chicago: June 29-July 5

Cleveland: June 29-July 5

Long Island: July 13-19

Washington DC: July 27-Aug 2

San Francisco: Aug 10-16

Jewish Holidays in 2003

Calendars



by Dale Cohen

Understanding the difference between the Jewish and Christian Calendars.

For many Christians understanding the Jewish calendar presents many challenges. Most people are unaware that the Jewish people have a different calendar than the traditional B.C./ A.D. calendar that everyone else is acquainted with. Those who do realize this are unsure of its origin or why the Jews have two calendars running at the same time.

The Jewish people have two calendars, one religious and one civil. At the beginning, the Jewish people only had the civil calendar which starts on the first day of Tishri, and corresponds to September and October on the Christian (Gregorian) calendar. This is derived from an interpretation of the first word in the Hebrew Bible (Tanach). If the letters forming the word “b’reshit” are rearranged, it spells the phrase “first of Tishri”. As a result the rabbis teach that the world was created on this day and it is the beginning of the calendar year. This is why we wish each other “Happy New Year” in September. Later in history when the Jewish people were delivered from Egypt, the Lord stated that the month in which Israel left Egypt should be the beginning of the year. Rather than create a new dating system and creating a new calendar, a second calendar was added to the one already existing. This enabled the people to keep the same dating system yet fulfilled the

order to make the month of Nisan the beginning of the year. The two calendars have the same months and days. For instance the first day of Tishri is the first month of the civil calendar however it is the seventh month of the religious calendar. The month of Nisan which is the beginning of the religious calendar is also the seventh month of the civil calendar.

The Jewish calendar is lunar and therefore consists of 354 days. Since it is lunar the date is determined by the phase of the moon. A new moon is the beginning of the month (Rosh Chodesh) while a full moon is the middle of the month. Every two- three years an extra month is added to compensate the difference between the solar and lunar calendars. This is done so that the festivals which are agricultural in nature occur at the prescribed time of harvest, ie, Passover (barley harvest), Pentecost (wheat harvest), Tabernacles (produce harvest).

The difference between the Jewish and Christian calendars is 3760 years. To many Jews, January 1 is not a holiday (at least not in the religious sense) because it is a “Christian” calendar. The current B.C. / A.D. calendar was created in the sixth century after the death of Yeshua and was created by a monk named “Denny the Dwarf” also known as “Denny the Lesser”. The purpose of the calendar was to separate the Christian celebration of “Easter” from the Jewish Passover. Though Denny the Dwarf may have been a pious man his mathematical abilities left much to be desired. ❖

January	February	March Purim 18th	April Passover 17th-24th Yom Hashoah 29th (Holocaust Day Of Remembrance)	May Yom Haatzmaut 7th (Israel's Independence Day)	June Shavout 6th-7th (Pentecost)
July	August	September Rosh Hashana 27th-28th (New Year)	October Yom Kippur 6th (Day of Atonement) Sukkot 11th-19th (Feast of Tabernacles)	November	December Hanukkah 20th-27th (Feast of Dedication)

Vultures & Dinner



By Doug Carmel

As of this writing, the US is preparing to wage war against Iraq with the sole purpose of toppling the regime's leader Saddam Hussein.

It is no secret that when the U.S. led coalition fought against Iraq in 1991, Saddam responded by sending Scud missiles over into Tel Aviv and Haifa.

Although relatively few were injured by them, the current fear in Israel is that this time there may be chemical or biological weapons coming over from Iraq (or one of its other close neighbors) instead. Something that no nation desires to deal with.

However, the difference between 1991 and 2003 is that back then, the U.S. had a broad coalition of Western AND Arab states joining together with them to fight Saddam. This time it appears to be basically the U.S. and England standing alone.

This article is not meant to comment upon the pros and cons of such a war. I am not a political analyst. What I need to tell you is from scripture. It is simply this, that we should expect things like this to happen with the last of the "last days" quickly approaching. Jesus said something very cryptic, yet I believe very pertinent about Israel today.

"Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather... (Matt. 24:28)

In speaking about a time just prior to His return, Jesus makes this comment about a carcass (singular) and vultures (plural). What is He talking about?

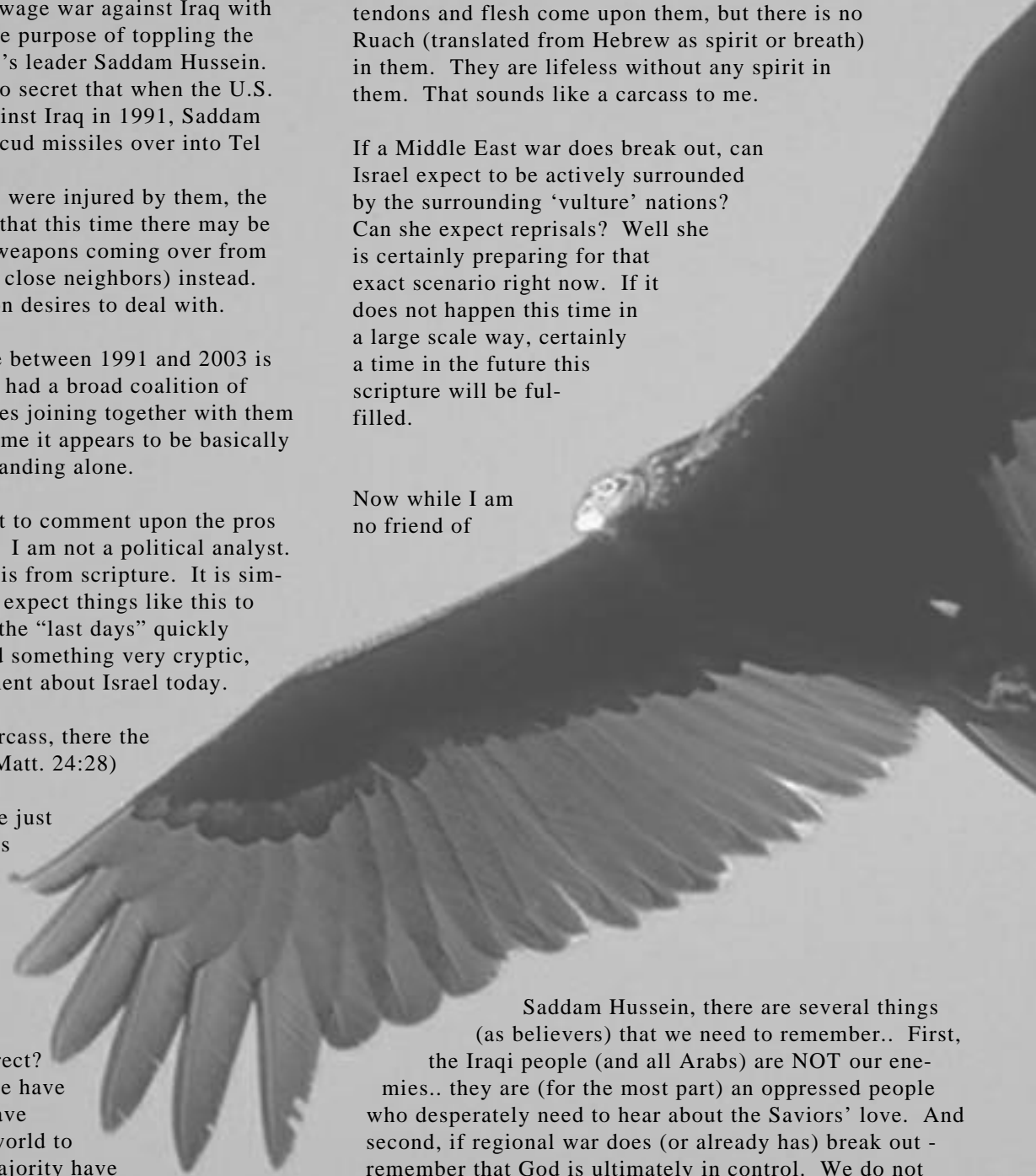
Well obviously a carcass is a body that contains no spirit in it, correct? Well, is that not what we have in Israel today? They have come from around the world to live in Israel, but the majority have not accepted Jesus as Messiah as of yet. The Spirit of God is not indwelling most Israelis today.

According to Ezekiel 37, Israel is likened to a valley full of dried up bones. When Ezekiel preaches according to the Word of the Lord, bone comes together to bone, the tendons and flesh come upon them, but there is no Ruach (translated from Hebrew as spirit or breath) in them. They are lifeless without any spirit in them. That sounds like a carcass to me.

If a Middle East war does break out, can Israel expect to be actively surrounded by the surrounding 'vulture' nations? Can she expect reprisals? Well she is certainly preparing for that exact scenario right now. If it does not happen this time in a large scale way, certainly a time in the future this scripture will be fulfilled.

Now while I am
no friend of

Saddam Hussein, there are several things (as believers) that we need to remember.. First, the Iraqi people (and all Arabs) are NOT our enemies.. they are (for the most part) an oppressed people who desperately need to hear about the Saviors' love. And second, if regional war does (or already has) break out - remember that God is ultimately in control. We do not need to fear, but we do need to remember what Jesus said about His return, "Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door." (Matt 24:33)❖



Books on Sale

By Ruth Specter Lascelle:

Passover Feast \$5

A detailed account of the Passover Feast, exploring each element of the Seder ritual and explaining the traditional meaning as well as the foreshadowing of these elements in Messiah. Included are the order of service, blessings, menu (complete with traditional recipes!) and scriptural guidelines.

Global Harvest \$9

This book was written for anyone interested in going or praying for those who are called to the “mission field”.

Two Loaves \$10

This book is the last book that Rock of Israel published by Ruth Lascelle. It is a composition that describes the involvement of Jew and Gentile in the Church of the living God.

Special on all three books \$20 plus \$3 Shipping & Handling

By Warren Frankel:

Messianic Passover Haggadah \$5

The Haggadah is the actual order of service for the traditional Passover Seder, including the New Testament understanding of each prayer and ritual. Also listed are traditional recipes for an entire Passover meal! This spiral bound notebook (making for easy reading while participating in Seder) is our fifth edition.

Celebrating the Sabbath \$3

The blessings and rituals associated with the Sabbath Celebration, sharing the foreshadowing elements of the Lord’s rest.

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