



The Smiling Maven

Grace for Grace (John 1:16)

חסד על חסד (יוחנן א'טו)

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The Smiling Maven Continues!!!!

This July issue of the *Smiling Maven* is two months late. Normally we publish a May but not a July issue (we have always skipped a July issue in the past). As the *Smiling Maven* finished the “sabbatical year” of 2009, numerous things began to change. My work with SMT Health Systems began to blossom. The first issue in over a year (March 2010) was published. Speaking opportunities arose from various places, and a wonderful relationship began with a precious woman named Deb (more about that on page 2). It has been a busy, full, enjoyable, positively challenging ride since late fall and early winter. I realized in April and May that there would be personal and ministry developments during late Spring that would be important to share with the *Smiling Maven* readership

and that it would be better not to wait until the September issue to share them, but it was too early to share them in a May issue. So May came and went, June came and went, and finally here in the middle of Summer, the *Smiling Maven* continues with an unusual but rather special issue.

God’s grace, his goodness is always greater than we imagine.

Jeremiah 33:9 Then it shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all nations of the earth, who shall hear all the good that I do to them; they shall fear and tremble for the goodness and all the prosperity that I provide to it.

There is tremendous pressure building against Israel in this day and hour in which we live, yet there is goodness, a mercy, a

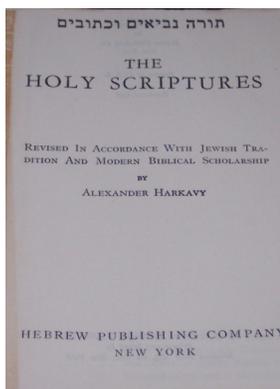
grace that is coming to Israel that has never been seen before. One of the important topics or focuses of the *Smiling Maven* is this coming “spiritual atomic bomb” of goodness to Israel. Here is a simple colloquial expression that speaks something about this incredible goodness – “we ain’t seen nothing yet.” We are quickly moving forward toward this goodness being poured out and fulfilled. It will not only affect Israel, but the entire world – in an absolutely wonderful and incredible way. The personal and ministry developments of the past eight months seem, maybe in a very small way, a taste, a beginning sampling of some of this goodness and mercy that is coming to Israel, and in turn, to all the world. Glory! Glory! Glory to God in the Highest!

What Do the Scriptures Say?

The message of God is in the Scriptures. Sometimes it is just a matter of reading His Word and allowing His message through. The Bible is a unique book, and there is no substitute for simply reading it, absorbing it, and asking God Himself to give understanding.

The first Bible that I ever read was one given to me by my Rabbi after my Bar Mitzvah and the completion of five years of Hebrew school. I remember having a unique interest or desire for the Bible itself. In my heart there was a sense that there was a real message from God in the Scriptures. There was a beckoning toward God Himself and not just religious tradition. There was no desire to stray from traditional Judaism, just a desire to hear God’s message – from God’s Word itself. There was simple faith that the Scriptures (Hebrew Scriptures) were true. Interestingly I did not read them immediately after receiving them. It was while in college that I began reading the Bible. I started with the Bible from my Rabbi. It was the Jewish Publication Society English Translation of the Bible, copyright 1936.

One of the other catalysts for my reading the Bible was the apparent confidence that Christians expressed concerning messianic prophecies in the “Old Testament” scriptures that allegedly promised the coming of Jesus as the Messiah. I did not believe in Jesus, but they were claiming that our scriptures – the Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures clearly predicted the one they called Y’shua or Jesus. In my heart I believed that teachers, ministers, rabbis on either side of the argument already had a pre-conceived position. The rabbis pre-conceived position was that Y’shua was not the Messiah so they would interpret the Scrip-



ture in a way to dispel passages that might sound like Y’shua. The Christians pre-conceived position was that Y’shua was the Messiah – so they would interpret the certain passages accordingly. This kept me from asking either side to show me any of these passages. My simple faith was that the God of the Bible, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – could and would guide me.

In the overleaf of the Bible, I kept notes concerning various topics.

One topic was “Pro Jesus.” These were page numbers where I read scriptures that sounded like the Jesus that the Christians talked about. I wrote down the page numbers rather than chapter and verse because – at the time – I did not know anything about quoting scripture according to chapter and verse. No one pointed out these passages to me. I was reading the scriptures on my own—asking God to guide. I have listed some of them in this article by the page numbers in the Jewish Publication Bible of 1936. I re-mention this version because it was not a translation done by “Christians,” but by Jewish “teachers” of the Word. Even now, twenty-five years later, these continue to speak loudly without any additional commentary.

P 590:

The people that walk in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them

hath the light shined.....For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor of the Mighty God, of the Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isaiah 9:1,5-6).

P.592

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, who shall stand for an ensign of the peoples; to him shall the nations seek: and his resting-place shall be glorious (Isaiah 11:10).

P.640

Who would have believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?.....He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne griefs inflicted by us, and suffered sorrows we have caused; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded through our transgressions, bruised through our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his wounds we were healed (Isaiah 53:1-5).

P. 1022

Who hath ascended up into heaven, and descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell? (Proverbs 30:4).

Unbeknown to me at the time, these are some of the many messianic passages that do clearly point to the Messiahship of Y'shua. As my Hebrew has improved over the years, so has the confidence of the simple truth that these passages convey. I would encourage anyone, Jew or Gentile, to carefully read these passages and openly ask the God of the universe to help them understand His message in these passages. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has made His plan known through His word. Sometimes it is just a matter of reading His word and allowing His message through.



Deb!

Deb and I first met in Spring of 2006 when I did a Passover Seder at her church, Christian Assembly, here in Zion IL. Deb (who is the administrative assistant at the church) was quite involved in the preparation for the Seder, and though neither of us knew it at the time, this initial contact would eventually lead to a wonderful relationship. She began receiving the *Smiling Maven* and often sent a note expressing strong appreciation and support for this ministry. Additional contact between us was limited until late in 2009.

In October of 2009 Deb wrote me an e-mail asking if and when the *Smiling Maven* was going to resume. I sent her a response sharing some ministry concerns – including our outstanding bill for our attorney. After sending her the response, I realized that other people on the *Smiling Maven* mailing list were probably pondering some of the same questions. I decided to use my response to Deb as the framework for a bulk e-mailing that I sent out in November. That e-mailing brought in some extra support for Smiling Maven Ministries – and from that support we were able to start 2010 debt-free. The *Maven* was able to resume in March. Deb had been a catalyst for these things – and something in my heart was affected by this situation.



In February Christian Assembly was planning to do another Passover celebration and this afforded an opportunity for some personal contact between the two of us. Though I was rather reluctant to ask Deb out on a date – there was a prompting in my heart and a uniquely answered prayer that dramatically helped to push away that reluctance. Since that first date in February, we have been discovering an incredible agreement in our hearts concerning spiritual things, unique opportunities to minister and pray together, and just enjoy time with one another.

Initially the strongest characteristic that drew me to Deb was her faith. She is quite expressive in her faith and her prayer life, yet

Correction

In the March issue of the *Smiling Maven* this editor erroneously wrote the caption for one of the photos: "Caleb and 10-lb Brown Trout." It should have read Caleb and 13-lb Brown Trout. Fishermen will appreciate the seriousness of this error. We apologize for this mistake.

it is coupled with a strong understanding and testimony of God's incredible grace. She loves Israel and is excited about God's unfolding promises concerning Israel. We find it easy and enjoyable to talk about these topics and to pray together. Deb is a "high energy" person. She is quite involved in church, leading prayer meetings and bible studies, as well as keeping busy with her rather large family. Some of our other shared interests are camping, walking, bicycling, and astronomy.

Late in May I proposed to Deb, and she said, "Yes!" We have set a wedding date for March 5th. Watch for more details in upcoming issues of the *Smiling Maven*.

There are developing plans for a trip to Israel. "Stayed tuned" for information in upcoming issues. We are looking for opportunities to share about God's incredible grace, and His amazing plan of grace for Israel.

Speaking Opportunities
Sukkot/Fall Feasts Sunday night Series:
Christian Assembly, Zion IL, September
12th, 19th and 26th 7:00 P.M.

The Smiling Maven is a bi-monthly Jewish - flavored newsletter sharing God's incredible grace. There is coming a spiritual atomic bomb of that incredible grace. It is an imminent spiritual explosion soon to happen in Israel that will have an awesome effect in Israel and all the world.

Life is often hard. Suffering is a real part of life. Sometimes suffering enables us to see more clearly the reality that God loves us. He loves us unconditionally; it is not based on how we are doing. We may begin to understand the wonder of God's salvation through Messiah Y'shua. Grace might actually be breaking through into our lives. It is the experience of grace that can generate the most genuine smiles. "Maven" is a Yiddish word that means "a person with special knowledge or experience." Evidence of God's grace should be characterized by an ability to smile. *The Smiling Maven* newsletter is an encouragement for all of us to be smiling mavens, smiling people with special knowledge of God's amazing grace.

EditorArthur Weiner
Someone needing to Smile More

Copy Editor.....Peter Toeg
Making sure that our articles can produce smiles

Text Editor.....Valarie Dillenbeck
No frowns because of grammar or punctuation

Production Assistant.....Ruthe Weiner
Often producing more smiles than her dad

Quality Control.....Caleb Weiner
Smiling, especially while playing on the computer

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