

House of Covenant NEWSLETTER

June 2024



INTRODUCTION

Shalom,

Welcome to the House of Covenant newsletter! The purpose of this newsletter is to provide further connections to our community. It will be published once every two months and will include:

Appreciation: This section will express our deep, heartfelt gratitude to all our generous congregants who selflessly offer their time and effort to serve.

Getting to Know You: In this section a member of the community will be highlighted to give their testimony, background, and journey with God. This is a wonderful way for us to connect to our community on a personal level.

Chai with the Rabbi: This is a section that will provide insights into Hebrew words, Torah portions or current teachings.

Upcoming Events: Everything from Feasts, Men's or Women's groups, classes, annual picnic, etc.

APPRECIATION

How often is it that a gifted deep-sea fisherman in love with the Lord approaches Shabbat School staff and asks if he can do a special craft project with the class? Meet Matt Gage, HOC sound booth assistant and fisherman extraordinaire. Matt began with his history and love of fishing from the age of 4. We had so much fun as he led the kids in making genuine gyotaku (traditional, Japanese fish printing) prints of ocean fish he caught and froze in his freezer. Matt even provided all of the special paper, ink, and brushes. This project made our closing day of the week of Unleavened Bread extra special for our kids. Thank you Matt, for providing such an engaging project.



Jeb and Taylor Anderson

Written by Kyle Suenaga

While Jeb was called by the Lord at a youth camp at around the age of eight, Taylor's faith came a little later, but both of them reflect the love and grace of God in deeply authentic ways.

About a year into their marriage they experienced what Taylor calls a "collision of life and circumstance and challenge and drama." It was around that time that the Lord brought Taylor to the end of herself. She recalls: "We sat on the bed and Jeb led me through the sinner's prayer. It was a redirect for our family, for our lives. I just knew it was His mercy, His goodness, and His choosing on my life."

From there it was a step-by-step process of transformation: "What does this look like in our marriage? What does this look like with our friends? What does this look like with our extracurriculars? With family? Our purpose changed."

Jeb always knew God had called him to a pastoral role, specifically in Bend, yet their faith journey took them from a small congregation here to the mission field in Tanzania, Africa: "We were learning to hear the Lord as mature believers. His timing is not our timing," reflects Jeb.

They spent four-and-a-half years in Tanzania. Jeb recounts: "We had less than \$2,000 to our names when we got on the plane." But they responded with obedience to the financial shortfalls and God faithfully made a way every time. Since there was nobody raising funds back home to support the mission, they learned a whole lot about living by faith: "We never once went hungry. We never once went without provision," Jeb says. Taylor echoes: "We ate a lot of beans and rice! But that is provision."

Re-entry from Tanzania was challenging. The burn-out was real, and Jeb really didn't want to get involved in ministry again. Life was busy, and all the changes to Bend in their absence were a little overwhelming. They got pregnant with little Ruthie shortly after their return, and they were pretty focused on preparing for her arrival. Despite the challenges, God continued to provide for them, opening doors and making a way, but they both agree we all have these kinds of stories. Taylor says: "It's really easy to look at what others have and forget the goodness that He has given to you. He lavishes on each of us with abundance." Jeb agrees: "God's provision is specific to each of us. It's so easy in our culture to make someone else's story your story. But His gifts are specific to you. He knows you personally."

Ultimately, it was Taylor who gently encouraged their initial attendance at House of Covenant, but once they walked in, they both immediately felt they had found their home. Jeb remembers their first morning: "I sat in the back. I hadn't sat in a congregation in a long time, since I was a kid; I was usually preparing to share something, and that's different than just sitting and waiting to be taught or fed. That morning the Lord said: 'I'm gonna feed you.' And I had no idea how much I needed that. And He did. He fed us, and fed us, and fed us."

According to Taylor, part of what makes House of Covenant so special is the leadership: "The teaching, the instruction, the guidance – it's so life-giving, so healing. It's not just super-spiritual concepts; it's life, it's nitty-gritty, it's relationships, it's application. You can tangibly take what Rabbi says and apply it. And I have never met a group of women like the women I have met there. It is so uncommon."

Eventually they were ready to get involved again. That process began with stage set-up and over time led to accepting the invitation to become congregational elders, which they prayerfully and faithfully accepted. Jeb and Taylor's journey is rich with physical, emotional, and spiritual maturation as they walk out a deep desire to seek God and reflect humbly on their own lives.



Welcome to Chai with the Rabbi, where we introduce biblical insights from a Hebraic perspective that draw us closer in covenant relationship with God.

Years ago, myself, John Klein and Oscar Richardson wrote a monthly, biblical research journal called The Ten-Foot Pole. We covered controversial topics in the bible that many wouldn't "touch with a ten-foot pole." Each month we would receive questions concerning some of the subjects we highlighted and beyond.

Here is one of those topics:

Question: If Yeshua promised to send us the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, then why do so many Spirit-filled believers have conflicting truths?

Answer: To answer this question accurately, we must research the original context and language of the scripture.

John 16:13 declares, *"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you in all truth."*

The Hebrew word for truth in this verse is *emet*, which means: *"integrity, stability, strength of character, and justice."* These definitions are all traits that require action on our part. The interpretation of this verse by the western church is often used as justification for subjective doctrinal positions. One's definition of truth is often affected by denominational and cultural bias. However, rather than giving license to create new doctrine, this scripture should be understood as guidance for holy and righteous living. The verse could read as follows: *"But when He, the Spirit of integrity comes, He will guide you in all strength of character."* Instead of giving us the authority to mandate belief systems, this is a call to personal responsibility and faith.

A related root word to truth is the Hebrew word for faith, *emunah*, which literally is the word trust. Scriptures like, *"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see"* (Heb. 11:1) would read *"Now trust is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."* Also, Romans 10:17 would read, *"Now trust comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."* These words can be better understood in the context of a common Hebrew practice. When Torah was read, it was spoken or canted out-loud. Faith or trust, therefore, comes by hearing. Hearing and incorporating the words we hear from God's Word and putting them into practice, which leads us to grow in strength of character - truth.

So, truth being understood as a primary characteristic of God, provides greater insight into the following verses.

John 3:20, 21 states: *"Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth (integrity) comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."*

John 8:31,32 instructs, *"To the Jews who had believed him, Yeshua said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth [God's integrity and strength of character] and the truth will set you free.'"*

These verses explain that when we emulate the character of God, we walk in truth.

By learning the deeper understanding of *emet* an entire panorama of insight is opened to us. Now that we have clarified the word "truth," we should examine the definition of "Spirit" that brings us this truth.

The Hebrew word in John 16:13 for Spirit is *Ruach*, which means: *"life, breath [in reference to God breathing into Adam], blowing of the wind, will and counsel, intellect, the rational mind."* All these definitions are part of the concepts that describe God's Spirit. Knowing the definition of the Hebrew word *Ruach* makes it clear that any practice or activity which bypasses the intellect or rational mind also bypasses the Holy Spirit. God does not force us to live according to His principles. The old phrase: "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink" applies. Once God leads us to *emet*, it then becomes our personal responsibility to incorporate stability, strength of character, uprightness, justice, and integrity into our very souls.

As human beings we have limited understanding. The problem comes when we assume otherwise. The word for truth does not mean knowledge, understanding, or wisdom. It speaks of continual covenant-relationship with the Almighty, partnering with Him, and wrestling the very nature of truth into our character. As always, our first and best example is Yeshua. He said, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"* (John 14:6). His personal example of how to live is the ultimate expression of truth.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Shavuot *June 15, 6pm (Ice Cream Social)*

Shavuot is a Biblical holy day that commemorates the anniversary of when God gave the Torah to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai. Shavuot is the second of the Shalosh Regalim, the three Biblical pilgrimage festivals. It marks the conclusion of the Counting of the Omer. In the Brit Hadashah (New Testament), this was also known as the Day of Pentecost (Greek for 50) - the Day that God sent his Ruach (Spirit) to His disciples. We meet for an evening service and ice cream social on **June 15th at 6pm**.

Fast of Tammuz *July 23*

The Fast of Tammuz is a Jewish fast day commemorating the destruction of Jerusalem and the two Holy Temples. It falls on the 17th day of the 4th Hebrew month of Tammuz and marks the beginning of the three-week mourning period leading up to Tisha B'Av. We abstain from eating and drinking from morning until evening on **July 23rd**. Those who are sick, elderly, or pregnant are not required to participate.

Picnic *July 27th, 10:30am (Tumalo State Park, Site A)*

We meet at the park instead of the building for this Saturday. Join us during our annual picnic and Shabbat service at Tumalo State Park! Together we'll have a great day at the park, including a potluck and BBQ, volleyball, frisbee, and a piñata for the kids. Together as a congregation we witness those called to mikvah (baptize) in the Deschutes River with the guidance of House of Covenant leadership.

Women's Retreat *August 22-25*

This year our retreat will be at the Ingalls Creek Retreat Center in Washington. Cost for attendance will be \$100 per person. Sign-ups will be in the foyer after service from May 18th - June 29th. A \$50 deposit is required to hold your spot! Final payment is due on the last day to sign up, which is June 29th. Contact Teresa Tieben or Karren Spears for more information.

All upcoming events and services are listed on our online calendar at houseofcovenant.org.

CLASSES

Hebrew Class

Mondays, 6pm

Kevin Wells: 541-480-5424

Davidic Dance Class

Mondays, 7pm

Darla Estes: 541-550-6750

Isaiah Study Group

Thursdays, 6:30pm

Sherel Stosik: 808-778-1172

Grow or Die Gardening Class

Saturdays, 1pm

Sharon Cody: 541-647-1024

All events meet at 21300 Bear Creek Rd unless noted.

RESOURCES

To find a previous teaching, search for us on YouTube at [House Of Covenant In Bend Oregon](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBm11111111111111111111).

If you desire more in-depth study materials, visit lostintranslation.org.

WHERE TO FIND US

Phone: (458) 899-4922

Email: office.houseofcovenant@gmail.com

Website: www.houseofcovenant.org

We meet at:

21300 Bear Creek Rd.
Bend, OR 97701

Office hours:

Tuesday - Friday 10am - 6pm
Saturday 10am - 3pm
Sunday - Monday Closed

Mailing address:

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