

Shall We Dance?

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By Joseph F. Dumond

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At the Feast this year, 2006, in Jerusalem, a number of unrelated events were combined by the Master Weaver on His Loom of life to have a very great impact on my view of life and upon me as well. Those involved will be pleased to read the following events and those that know me, will also be glad to read the conclusions drawn.

It is now the Eighth Day of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. October 16, 2006. Looking back over the past 10 days in this magnificent land is going to be difficult to put to words, especially after I was left speechless on two occasions. A rare event in deed. But the lessons learned will be valuable to others as well as myself, so I will share this with you all. It has been an extremely emotional roller coaster of a Feast for me. I certainly was not expecting that. On the contrary, I had a well-planned out Feast and was determined to achieve the two goals I had set for myself. The first goal was to locate the Crucifixion site and second was to spend half a day at Gomorrah exploring. I achieved the first goal by the 4th day and the second goal by the 8th day. The fact that I had such great success with the first goal so quickly was enough to send me home completely satisfied with having come to Israel this year. I would have been at peace with myself, with just having done this one thing.

Something else was already in the works that was far more important than anything I could find. Something that came at me from many sides simultaneously. This thing, was the greatest gift I have ever been given, and it was given to me in small amounts by various people. Friday was day one in Israel and Peggy asked me if I would escort two ladies back and forth from the YMCA Hotel where we were staying to the Maronite House where we were meeting. I was glad to help out. The two ladies were Lori and Elaine who attended service with Peggy back in Oregon. During our walks back and forth we got to know each other and enjoyed the conversations. They were honest and we covered many subjects as we talked. It was great to be able to talk to someone about religious subjects and not feel weird for doing so. On Monday Peggy came up to me with something important to say. She told me that in a dream or while praying Yahweh revealed to her that He was drawing me closer to Him, and to Keep going. She repeated it because I was not really listening. Even then I did not give it much credence as I do not really believe in dreams or visions. I have heard so many that were bogus. But because Peggy was a friend I politely thanked her and was off to find my first goal. Once I found that goal later that same day I thought maybe this was what Peggy was talking about. I felt at great peace having accomplished this.

Tuesday we walked through Hezekiah's tunnel. At the end of it, I and about 12 others were re-baptized in the living waters of the Gehone Spring which flows from beneath the Throne of Yahweh when the Temple was there.

I think it was Tuesday evening that Elaine and I began to have a very honest and sincere conversation. She asked for my opinion and appreciated my honesty. It was in this discussion that I ended up talking about my hidden past. Many of the abuses and deep seated hurts that have affected my family and shaped who we have become. It was an emotional conversation filled with tears on my part. The bottom line was for Manuel on how to forgive even those we hate so much that we could kill them. I have never related these stories to any one before and do not know why I was so willing to at this time. Especially to someone I had just met. Again the next night Elaine and I were talking and we were having a very serious and deep conversation. Again I opened up about other events in my past and shared them with her, again with tears showing a number of hurts that are still tender. Again I felt strange as I had never said these things to any one either. I had now just exposed all my secret sins and hurts and deepest guarded secrets. I could not believe I had done this. I felt very vulnerable and very sheepish. I should not have shared these things. They had been so well guarded for so long. But there it was in the open. It is a known fact that as long as you keep a sin a secret Satan has you in his grasp. But when you confess your sins you are freed from his authority. These two conversations were meant to help Elaine with her problems and not for me to confess my most secret and deepest darkest past to someone I barely knew. What was happening to me? Why was I sharing my greatest weakness to people I never knew just 5 day ago?

Lori too admired my candor and sincerity in our conversations and as we talked we were talking about her past marriage which sounded a lot like mine. (Lori was widowed 8 years before.) Only I was hearing it described from a woman's point of view. I was dumb founded at the things she was saying that I had no idea about. I thought and felt as her husband had, but never considered what my wife was thinking until Lori told me her thoughts when her husband did such and such. Each day we walked and talked more. I was being slain by this little woman. Cut down to size each and every day. It was not long before I knew I was the cause of many of the hurts my wife was feeling although I was not sure how I did it. Lori tried to explain but I was just not getting it. I could not understand, but I was eager to walk more and listen to her try and explain. Many a time during our talks I was speechless and many a time I could not express what I was trying to say or trying to understand. The communication links between the left and right side of the brain, have never been exercised enough to do that. But Lori was gracious enough to supply those words that I could not find. I was learning so much that as we arrived at the Hotel I hated it. I did not want these conversations to end. I would also become frustrated when someone else would interrupt or change the direction of the conversation. They were really a treasure trough of information I had never heard of before. I was learning how to love my wife as I had never done. No one has ever explained it to me as Lori did. I want to love my wife, but for men that often means having sex. To women that means becoming a prostitute many more times than being a lover.

These revelations were astounding to me and I was always eager and anxious to walk with Lori so I could learn more.

These conversations went on the whole length of the Feast. But after Wednesday, I was increasingly frustrated at not finding the black and white answer I was looking for that would solve my marital woes. Lori knew this but could not find that simple answer. There is no silver bullet, or one simple answer.

My frustration at my inability to express myself was brought out in dramatic fashion after hearing the testimonials of the brethren Tuesday evening. One lady whom I had seen repeatedly staring at me in a store as I purchased a Rams Horn Shofar, the day before, had given her testimony. It was powerful and awesome and unbelievable and unimaginable and could not be true yet it was. I did not then, nor do I now, know how to describe what she said. It was so different from anything I had ever heard. That evening as I walked Lori back, we were both speechless and knew not what to say. We dared not to say anything against Angelique's testimony. It was that powerful and that unbelievable. I thought about all that Angelique had said the next day.

When I again met Angelique, Thursday, I felt she was looking at me again. I went up to her and thanked her for her testimony. I told her I did not understand her gift, that she had. I wanted to understand but at this time it did not make sense to me. She was very understanding and thanked me for my honesty. She then invited me to come to the dance and watch her as she praised Yahweh. I was not sure I would learn anything by watching someone dance. In fact I was not going to go to the dance at all, as I still felt it was weird. Something that some of the messianic movement did. And I was not going to get caught up in something that was not in scriptures. Absolutely no way. The other thing was that the dance was going to be done on the Friday evening. Shabbat. This just ain't right. It was not kosher, and I was not going to be involved. End of story!

Friday I had finally convinced 6 others to come with me and look at the crucifixion site I had found. They all went up as skeptics and I think they came back as believers. They even found a sepulcher that was almost exactly as described belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. I was now 100% sure this was the place. They all were now between 70 and 90% sure. It was exciting to see them all get excited. Again I felt at peace with the world and loved to stay in this place. But many were already late for other things they had planned to do.

Amanda was late for her practice lesson of the dance she was to also perform tonight. She tried to explain it to me as we walked, how it was praise. I was having none of it, as I had already formed my opinion. But she did talk me into going to watch. Mostly as a curtesy to her as a friend. I showered and put on my Sabbath wear because it was the Shabbat. Angelique came out in what appeared to be Priestly garments. They were white with a blue pull over and they had pomegranates and bells around the fringes. She also had and used a

tambourine. My opinion was being backed up. This was weird. But I would stay and see it through out of respect for these brethren many of whom I now had come to love.

Angelique's dance was powerful and strong in her presence. I was impressed. But I was bothered by the fact that she, a woman was wearing the high priest clothing. I was also bothered by the fact that she and all these other women were dancing so hard on SHABBAT. Then up got 7 men to do the dance. I have to admit I was impressed. It was not feminine but was very manly. Lastly they asked all of us to get up and dance. I was not going to do this. After all, I knew better. Amanda in her enthusiasm grabbed me by the hand and Herman too who was beside me, dragged me up and said get up and praise Yahweh. David danced before Yahweh, and I get to keep my clothes on. So get up. I did get up and I kept my back to audience so no one could see my embarrassment, and I did not dance with great enthusiasm so as not to break Shabbat.

It was obvious I did not get the purpose of this dance thing. The whole thing was just weird, and I in my righteousness knew it. But many of the things that Amanda had said and many of things Lori had said were going through my head. I was still trying to understand Angelique and all of this was on my mind even as I fell asleep that night. What was I missing? How come I did not see what these others all saw? These were the questions and the conversation I had with Yahweh that night. I did not get it.

Shabbat was at the Maronite House and I forget what Lori said that morning as we walked over. I know she triggered something in me to cause me to ponder the events of last night.. At the Maronite House we were not having any service just testimonials. I was able to go second and I stated how I enjoyed watching the dance but did not get or understand the purpose of the dance. I also thanked Steve for his part in organizing the men and how I had enjoyed watching them. All the rest of the testimonials were about the dance and how it affected each one that spoke. Half way through I again got up, and stated why I would not dance. Some had already showed me that they were not dancing but were praising Yahweh, through Dance. They were giving Praise to Yahweh. The cracks in my armor were about to be revealed and I did not know it. As I spoke, I admitted to why I kept my back to the audience, it was my pride and vanity and conceit. I was more concerned with what they thought than with what Yahweh thought. I could not believe I was saying this in front of everyone. In the middle of this confession I looked at Lori and that lump, that huge lump that climbs up a man's throat and jokes off all intelligent words that would otherwise come out, had taken its place in my throat. Tears were in the corners of my eyes and I could not speak. In this moment of awkwardness, as I swallowed hard and agonized over the flood of thoughts that were now pouring into my mind, I could hear almost everything Lori had said to me this past week, about men and women, pride and vanity and conceit. Although we did not specifically talk about them, this was in effect what my problem was with my wife. My PRIDE, my VANITY, my CONCEIT, my unwillingness to humble myself.

I wouldn't even humble myself before Yahweh to give Him praise and honor by dancing for Him. I could see many were smiling at me as they started to see me realize many things. I sat

down and more statements were made concerning the dance. My mind was racing, Why did I just say what I just said publicly? Am I nuts? But it was the exact thing I had to say in order to realize who I was. I was proud and Vane, selfish and not loving. Yahweh hates the proud, He resist them. My Pride had been keeping me from getting closer to Him. My Pride was separating me from Yahweh! In order to get over pride you have to humble yourself. The Dance was about praising Yahweh. It was not about performing in front of an audience. I could feel that I was such an idiot.

But I was still not sure how to praise Yahweh. I again got up for the third time and asked Don if we could hear more sermons on how to praise our Father. In his response he said that praising Yahweh was how we would draw near to Him. Peggy got up right away and said that this is the third time that Yahweh has told Joe, me, that He, Yahweh, was drawing me closer to Him. (I don't recall the second time) I still did not see how this was taking place. Amanda then leaned over and said that Don did not answer the question. How Do we praise Yahweh? My walk with Lori was flooding in with my thoughts of this testimonial. My Pride and vanity and conceit and lack of humbleness kept me from Yahweh, but were also keeping from loving my wife. Truly loving her. It has been an awesome day.

At services again I felt like Angelique was staring at me and looking right through my outer appearance and cutting right into my soul. I went up to her after and asked her, or told her she had something else to tell me. She said that she did, and would meet me on the roof to tell me. I felt this was going to be the climax to this whole week, and waited for her to come and reveal to me what I was not able to grasp. She did not come.

At breakfast the following morning I was trying to explain all this to Silvia and Elaine both from Cypress. I had tried to tell them other things during the week and they wanted to hear the conclusion to these things as well. But I only had it half figured out. I could not at this time put it all into words, at least words that were intelligible.

As we toured this Sunday morning I had Lori and Elaine as well as Elaine from Cypress all sitting with me at the back of the bus. Sometime during the day I got Angelique to come to the back and join us. I asked her to tell me in plain language what it was that I was not getting and to tell me what she knew. She said to go to Psalm 148 and 150 and to read them out loud. I was excited to finally get the answer I was looking for. I was also still on that emotional roller coaster that had been set in motion while talking to Elaine and Lori, and was triggered again at the testimonials by my revelation of my pride and vanity. I was also just starting to realize that this was our second to last day and that I would soon be saying good bye to all these family members I had just now come to love.

I was a little dubious as to what I was about to read, but I only got as far as the second verse before I began to get that lump in my throat and could no longer read out loud. I read the rest with tears in my eyes and down my cheek as I finally was being told by Yahweh how to praise

Him and how I had prevented my being drawn closer due to my pride and vanity. I was now being humbled in front of my friends and it felt good.

Psalm 148: 1 Praise Yah! Praise Yahweh from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! 2 Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His host! 3 Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! 4 Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens! 5 **Let them praise the name of Yahweh**, For He commanded and they were created. 6 He also established them forever and ever; He made a decree which shall not pass away.

7 Praise Yahweh from the earth, You great sea creatures and all the depths; 8 Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word; 9 Mountains and all hills; Fruitful trees and all cedars; 10 Beasts and all cattle; Creeping things and flying fowl; 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples; Princes and all judges of the earth; 12 Both young men and maidens; Old men and children. 13 **Let them praise the name of Yahweh, For His name alone is exalted**; His glory is above the earth and heaven. 14 And He has exalted the horn of His people, The praise of all His saints— Of the children of Israel, A people near to Him. Praise Yah!

Psalm 149:1 Praise Yah! Sing to Yahweh a new song, And His praise in the assembly of saints. 2 Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. 3 **Let them praise His name with the dance; Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.** 4 For Yahweh takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the **humble** with salvation. 5 Let the saints be joyful in glory; Let them sing aloud on their beds.

6 Let the high praises of El be in their throats, And a two-edged sword in their hand, 7 To execute vengeance on the nations, And punishments on the peoples; 8 To bind their kings with chains, And their nobles with fetters of iron; 9 To execute on them the written judgment— This honor have all His saints. PraiseYah!

Psalm 150: 1 Praise Yah! Praise El in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! 2 Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! 3 **Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! 4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! 5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! 6 Let everything that has breath praise Yah. Praise Yah!**

Proverbs 8:1 Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice? 2 She takes her stand on the top of the high hill, Beside the way, where the paths meet. 3 She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, At the entrance of the doors: 4 “To you, O men, I call, And my voice is to the sons of men. 5 O you simple ones, understand prudence, And you fools, be of an understanding heart. 6 Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, And from the opening of my lips will come right things; 7 For my mouth will speak truth; Wickedness is an abomination to my lips. 8 All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; Nothing crooked or perverse is in them. 9 They are all plain to him who understands, And right to those who find knowledge. 10 Receive my instruction, and not silver, And knowledge rather than choice gold; 11 For wisdom is better than rubies, And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her. 12 “I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion. 13 **The fear of**

Yahweh is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate. 14 Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, I have strength. 15 By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice. 16 By me princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth. 17 I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me. 18 Riches and honor are with me, Enduring riches and righteousness. 19 My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver. 20 I traverse the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice, 21 That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, That I may fill their treasuries.

So the question again is Shall We Dance?. The answer is How could we not? I have learned so much this Sukkot it is hard to put it all into words. But my emotions and the love I have felt for some whom I have just met is real. My tears of sadness at saying good bye and my tears of joy learning new truths has been awesome indeed. The tears are outer expression of an inner revelation. Of being humbled on many fronts with the aid of many friends, being used by Yahweh.

This Sukkot has been the most powerful Sukkot I could have ever imagined. When I got home I had two CDs by Paul Wilbur waiting for me. I play them as I go to work and as I drive home, which is an hour driving time. I play them loud and I sing them loud, in order to give praise to my Father Yahweh. If I could dance as I drive I would dance with my whole soul and being as well.

I want to thank all those who allowed Yahweh to use them to teach me a valuable lesson. And for putting up with me all these years and during this Feast with someone full of pride and who could never see it.

Lastly I have to mention one more thing. Upon my arrival in Jerusalem I met Dave and Anita. They asked me what I needed to learn this Feast. In a smart quip I replied I needed wisdom as I already had Knowledge and understanding. But I lacked wisdom. They said they would pray for that. As I put this account of Sukkot together I came across the following verses.

Proverbs 11:2 **When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.** The next verse explains what has been going on in my marriage for years and where the trouble was really coming from. Although Lori had hinted at it, I did not or could not put my finger on it until just now.

Proverbs 13:10 **By pride comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised is wisdom.**

This next verse is pretty much a summary of this Feast for me. for I have been Humbled Proverbs 29:23 **A man's pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor.** In both James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5 it says that **"Yahweh resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."**

One other thing I want to point out. In psalm 149:4 it says He will beautify the **humble** with salvation and in Proverbs 29:23 The Humble in spirit will retain Honor. And again in Psalm 148

:14 And He has exalted the horn of His people, The praise of all His saints.

What I am seeing here is this. If we will humble ourselves and Praise Him, Praise His name, HE will exalt us, raising the horn of His people. In other words just by praising Him he will fight for us even when we do not know there is a battle. This is what Angelique was doing in Africa which I could not explain. This is what happened when I got home. All my marital problems were gone. It was a blessing to be home with my wife again. Not the huge fight I expected after having gone to Israel for the Feast. So I shall continue to praise The Name of Yahweh and to sing those songs as I drive to from work praising Him. And I will learn to dance, and play a stringed instrument, all to the glory of the one who has been so patient with this hard headed goat.

It has been a great Feast. An unbelievable Feast and even the greatest Feast I have ever had. I hope I have been able to convey to you how awesome this was to me, and I hope you too can learn from my stupidity and fast track your own life to get in line with Yahweh. May He richly Bless those who will humble themselves and Dance and Sing and give Praise to the Awesome name of YAHWEH our creator.