This week's Audio, Video, and Teaching Notes are posted here.

Two Conversations (Two Conversations; Feedback – Listen and be Approachable; Feedback #1 – Positive Feedback; Feedback #2 – My Faith Has Become a Struggle; Experiencing Joy and Deep Concern; Different Views – Christianity, Jesus and Paul, and Judaism; The Sabbath, The Sacred Name Movement; and the Calendar; Faith is a Journey – How are You Holding Up; A Response to Comments)

July 24, 2021 – Ross Nichols

Two Conversations

Audio/Video Links:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YiPnwU0yXwA https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/two-conversations/ Teaching Notes Link: https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021.7.24-Two-Conversations.pdf

TODAY'S INTRODUCTION

- -Welcome to United Israel World Union, this is our Sabbath morning scripture study coming to you live from the United Israel Center in Saint Francisville, Louisiana. Thank you for joining us.
- -I want to remind everyone that we have our lovely new Jewish Calendars for UIWU for calendar year 5782. According to the Jewish Calendar, most of you know it begins in the month of September roughly, running from September 2021 to September 2022. These will be packaged up over the next several weeks and in the mail headed to you. It's a beautiful calendar, each page has a gorgeous picture, Gregorian calendar with the Hebrew calendar dates, the weekly Torah readings, the candle lighting times. Every year we pick a verse to go on the calendar and this year we selected the following:
- -Jer 17: 14 Heal me O YHVH and I shall be healed, save me and I shall be saved for thou art my praise.
- -We, United Israel feels that the world needs healing in more ways than one. Some people are concerned about the spiritual aspects of our nation, or whatever nation you are from, and others are concerned about COVID, so Heal Me O YHVH is appropriate. If you didn't receive a calendar last year, then you were not on our mailing list. If you want to receive this calendar email me at rossknichols@me.com, with a heading of "Calendar Request", and put your address in the body of the email so I'll know who to send it to.
 -We are considering a Sukkot gathering here in St. Francisville, LA on September 24-26, 2021, Friday evening through Sunday afternoon. We plan to have conferences and fellowship time together. If this is going to take place, I will announce that very soon.
 -Several people have written me and asked about the Dialogue, because a lot of people miss this? We still have a few technical issues to work through but hope to have this up and running in the near future, because I realize that people enjoy the interaction.

TEACHING NOTES

-Today, I want to do something that I have never tried before, and I want to tell you what I'm doing and why I'm doing it. Why is this day different than any other day? I'm going to utilize the technology that we have to try something. If this doesn't work, I probably won't do it again. Last night as I was preparing my class for today, I had a heaviness on my mind, and I threw away ten pages of notes. I had two conversations on Wednesday this week that hit me in a way that only now I've been able to express. I would like to take our time today to talk about what's going on with what happened on Wednesday. I want to share what I learned in two interactions and then I want to spend the remainder of the time interacting with you. I'm going to open with a monologue to describe these two interactions I had this week and then field some questions and interact with you. After we go offline, I will read through all of the comments.

-I get feed back quite often in the way of text messages, phone calls, emails, and handwritten notes. I learned from my time in the military that feedback is free, but you have to listen to it and be approachable. When people tell you something, a lot of times they're giving you their heart and that happened to me this week in two very pointed examples. If today works well, I may do it again on a periodic basis to ask for and receive your feedback. Starting with the dialogue and the two examples. In the days of radio, a personality would go on air, and they would talk, and people would listen, and the only feedback received was maybe a letter that came into the radio station, typically through a delay. I know now that we're not using technology to the fullest, because as I'm speaking, I'm receiving feedback. I want to engage you today.

-Feedback #1: I get a note Wednesday from someone who tells me in glowing and kind language, how much they appreciate my classes. Telling me that I have a careful eye for details that others miss or mindlessly skim over, and I enjoyed their comments. They told me their whole family has been involved in church their whole life and their father's a preacher and that over the past seven or so years this person has worked themselves into a different place spiritually and they're happy with it. It hasn't been easy, and the family had some very difficult days. Everything we know is in that world, what do we do? Some in that family are still in that place. Overall, this is a positive piece of feedback. Thank you, Ross, your teachings have enriched my life.

-Feedback #2: This person basically said, they're struggling spiritually and in a difficult place. They listen to the same classes and hears the same message and sees me point out things that other people miss. When this person left Christianity, they felt like Judaism had all the answers and thought about converting, but then they met me. They let me know that partly because of my teaching they've arrived in a difficult place. Their decision to leave Christianity was based on textural difficulties in the New Testament and now they learn that there are some textural difficulties in the Hebrew Bible as well. That the Hebrew Bible is not as they believed, what they thought it was. Faith has become a struggle. My intent was that we've discovered some great things in the Bible and that people would be right there with me. My faith is strengthened. They said, it's not your fault, it's all my doing, "I couldn't leave well enough alone". When I read that I was floored, this is not what we're supposed to do here. I felt it. This person went on to say, I moved too fast and now I can't go back.

-Imagine if you're me and you get these two pieces of feedback and you come up on Friday and you think, let's put a class together about Moses. How many of you can relate

to one or the other of the feedback that I just gave? Has anyone ever said regarding this path that you are now on; I have found the truth and the truth has set me free? I'm no longer in that group that I was in. I've made progress and now know some wonderful things. How many of you have said at any point in your walk, I'm scared, I'm concerned, have I gone too far? Have any of you been in either of these positions, please let me know. This is truly something that people have experienced.

-It hit me really hard that both of these people, that gave me this good valuable feedback, are listening to the same class. Since becoming an adult and making the decision to commit myself to a biblical faith, it's been 30 years. There have been times when I was overjoyed and times in my journey that I was deeply concerned. Even today, 30 years in, I still experience both. I've asked what do we know that we know that we know and also asked, have I missed this, or have I missed that? It's a pursuit.

-Many of us began in one form of fundamental Christianity or another? Is there anyone listening to me today who didn't begin this journey in fundamental Christianity of some form? We all got here from a unique path to some degree, but a lot of our paths look pretty similar. I hear more often than not, someone is a Christian, and they realize that Jesus was Jewish, they decide to pursue that and begin to wonder what does that mean? They begin to notice that the New Testament contains references that cause them to really want to learn more about the Judaic or Hebraic aspects of their faith. Some begin to orient themselves towards the Jewish / Hebrew Bible. Many then realized that the Sabbath was not done away with or maybe it was the festivals that got them started on this path? The sacred name was what got some people started on this path. When they realized that God had a name and they joined this or that sacred name movement. Have you at any time ascribed to a particular name for God and if somebody didn't say it right, they weren't right? For some, it was the calendar that oriented them to this path and all the debates that happened from that.

-For some, the problems began when they began to look at the differences between the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of Paul. For some, they struggle with views of the New Testament being divinely inspired, but you have to look at it with Hebrew eyes. For some, they accept the Canonical gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John but struggle with some of the other literature. For some, they accept the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke but struggle with John because it's too mystical. For some, Yeshua is deity, part of a trinity, some believe he's deity but lower than the father. Some believe he's the Messiah but not divine. For some, Jesus of Nazareth was, is, or will be the Messiah but only for the people of Ephraim. For some, Yeshua still has a role to play prophetically, that there are texts written in the Hebrew Bible among the Hebrew prophets which speak of a future and relevant role for Jesus of Nazareth. For some, Jesus of Nazareth is a negative person in God's plan. He was a test to see if Ephraim would be obedient. Some believe that Jesus never existed.

-When it comes to Judaism, some believe in a Karite position, that it's scripture alone, the Hebrew Bible and only the texts and they are very fundamental in their views. In Orthodox Judaism and various branches of Judaism, they accept the Hebrew Bible plus Jewish tradition which the Karites do not accept. Some people are oriented towards Judaism in a sense but for non-Jews, called B'nai Noah. Some believe Judaism is a manmade religion and the doctrines of men, and a departure from the intended biblical faith

- -If that's not enough, you have someone like me that says, let's keep digging. One person commented, I don't want to be that person who's always learning and never coming to the truth. A lot of people decided to stop on their journey in one place or another. Some people reach a place where they throw in the towel. It doesn't mean they quit; they're getting off here because this is their stop. What's interesting about us is that we have people in all of these different groups who can sit together, and I try to be respectful of all those different views. But I am continually pushing further. I want people to have a meaningful relationship with God.
- -I believe that when people begin to reach out to God they are going to be drawn to more truth. Faith is a journey and not a destination. It's the journey. It's the quest. But I respect when people say, I'm getting off now. Some have given up all together on faith. Some have said, I don't know if I believe anything anymore. I don't want this! My faith is strong. My faith is sure. My faith is rooted and grounded in the word of God. I love the Hebrew Bible. By looking at it deeply doesn't mean that I throw any part of it out, but I know that some people have reached that place. This Saturday morning is an intervention. Some have embraced an agnostic view and they just love the quest regardless of where it takes them. Some have remained with us for an intellectual stimulation. Some might leave because they feel that it's only intellectual.
- -I know people that fall into all of these categories and some of you likely fit into one of the other. I want to learn in order to live my life in a way that's pleasing to God. The reason I want to get back to what did Moses actually say is because I think it's important and it's discernable. Some might say it doesn't matter. Perhaps if we reason together and engage in a dialogue it's going to be helpful? I want to know, how are you holding up? What are some of your thoughts on where this is going relative to a biblical quest? How are you? Are you ok? Let me know how you feel.
- <u>-Zoom Meetings:</u> Some like Zoom meetings because you can get all these people together and people can interact with one another. Ross believes this is a good idea and we have the technology to do this and intend to utilize tools like this in the future. In the future we can gather for festivals as we have in the past and also include Zoom connections for those who can't physically be present. Zoom is a good tool but can be difficult to work with because everybody wants to talk, but with effective dialogue you feel like you're in the same room. Maybe after the weekly teaching we could host a Zoom meeting / discussion? We would have to have some simple rules like being respectful of the views of others even when they don't agree with you.
- <u>-Putting God in a Box:</u> The difficulty for many is when they come to the realization that God can't be put into the box that they've tried to fit him into. How true is that? God created man and ever since we've been trying to create God in our image.
- <u>-Letting Go:</u> Letting go and allowing yourself to be molded and conformed into something else can be terrifying. This is one of the reasons why I'm trying to reach out to you today for. We have a network here. I'm ok with wherever you're at. I'm ok with you taking or leaving bits and pieces of what we share.
- <u>-It's Your Faith:</u> My faith is getting stronger. My faith in Hashem doesn't depend upon the historical accuracy of the bible. Some who are in the minimalist camp doesn't represent the whole. My faith is strong getting deeper as life carries me through the rapids. It's a journey and an adventure almost like looking for Horeb.

-Learning more about God: Learn every day, things that we didn't know about God. I am so glad to be part of a group that is for God our creator. God doesn't need us to defend him and is perfectly able to defend himself. As we study these things, our goal is to draw closer to God as he intends us to be closer to him. What is the way, the path, the truth? -UIWU Classes: I'm thoroughly gleaning from your classes. I love the Servant Study and want to go back over it again and I'm definitely growing in my faith. I started listening to videos from the past because I didn't know what you said before. Is there anything we recently covered that shook your faith that you need help with because you're struggling with it? It's ok to post a note to me privately. If you don't want to share publicly, you can write Ross an email at rossknichols@me.com or on Facebook Messenger. -UIWU / Abrahamic Faith: We don't want to give you a list of articles that you have to ascribe to. To be part of United Israel you have to say, I believe in the creator and seek to live my life according to his ways. We are giving an opportunity to refine our faith according to the ways of God. We have people that are so diverse and yet they're so committed to a common cause. Our fundamental unity is a personal walk with the one God, the creator, and a participation, however that works out, in the Abrahamic plan. -UIWU Fellowship: That's what I like about UIWU, we can be who God created us to be, where he has us. I may not be where others are, but I'm on the same path everyone else is walking on. We are all walking it to the best of our ability, I love it here. When I gave the two examples, neither of the two people said they didn't care for me or that they didn't love United Israel. They both consider me a friend, but the take a-ways are so vastly different. Together we represent a group that's on the quest. We've come from different places, but we're on the same path. This diverse community is such a blessing. Some feel the weekly class is our fellowship, while others feel personal fellowship is lacking. This is so tough because we're scattered. We are trying to bring people together who are not only separated geographically but separated by theological differences. I'm ok with that. I want people to seek God and to feel welcome and I want others to have that same openness. How do we produce fellowship with this technology that we have? How do you bring people together? I want people to have a voice. I take the holy convocation part of it very serious and not having that big group in person is hard for me. There are a lot of people who feel alone. The idea that when people come together and seek to orient themselves to the faith of the one God, this passage comes to mind. ((Mal 3: 16 Then those who feared YHVH spoke with one another. YHVH paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared YHVH and esteemed his name.)) God takes note of that, our coming together is important in any way that we can. Some of our members are also not people persons. Connection is huge to make this more than an intellectual pursuit. A lot of people miss the face-to-face gatherings. In the future we can gather for festivals as we have in the past and also include Zoom connections for those who can't physically be present. David Horowitz in 1944 set up this idea that around the world there would be United Israel units. Churches sometimes call these cell groups where they have small groups of people. You could do this by inviting people over for Shabbat to watch the Saturday morning study. After it's over, you could have food and fellowship. I would like to see these units begin to flourish and it would meet the need to having this face-to-face fellowship. How do we meet the needs of people who are in different places?

<u>-Non-UIWU Fellowship:</u> There are groups that are not United Israel, that are all over the place. Some have family, extended family and friends which get together. Various small groups are starting in several locations.

<u>-The Truth:</u> I just want the truth. If truth doesn't agree with me, I have to change and I believe you Ross want the truth too. The quest is meaningful that so many people have come this far. We are all on the same quest. "The truth is like a lion, there's no need to defend it, let it loose and it will defend itself." (Quote from St. Augustine) When I find a truth, I follow that truth and leave behind what I thought was right. I love listening to your discussions that bring the truth, that's why I come to your teachings every Saturday morning. We all knew we were absolutely right about everything that we believed, when we believed it, until we figured out that we were wrong. I'm a lot less on the dogmatic side of things anymore. People often embrace a view only to find that that view was wrong. I'm about the quest for the purpose of learning but learning to live according to the truth. I invite all of you to join me on that quest.

<u>-The Ten Words:</u> The last of the ten words is an interesting study, though any of the answers seem to be part of the Torah for the most part. In Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 we have two versions of the ten words which don't agree word for word.

<u>-The Moses Scroll:</u> I'm a Moses man. The Moses man in Deuteronomy, not Leviticus. Others find overwhelming support for Leviticus being part of Moses original teaching. Both come across as being authoritative. Can you entertain a good discussion and answer some very tough questions about Leviticus? I'm asking everyone not to split over differences like this but stay in the same room and look at Leviticus for Leviticus's sake. Who wrote it? Did Moses write it? It's all written in third person and there's other difficulties when it comes to the sacrificial system. Was the sacrificial system originally part of God's plan or was it not?

-All I could think about this week was two pieces of feedback I got, and I couldn't put it away. One was very positive, thank you these classes are great. The other one was, my faith is now a struggle because of these classes. I know that there are people who are listening to me now, that have been in one or both of these places. I want to encourage you to stay with us. Wherever you're at, you're welcome to be part of what we're doing. If you believe that Leviticus is not Mosaic, you're welcome. If you have evidence and say that Leviticus is Mosaic, you're welcome. My view is to take a close look at these texts and say, what does the Bible say?

-This was so different for me to try today. If you have questions or concerns ore personal struggles in your faith you can write me by email at rossknichols@me.com or on Facebook Messenger. My intention next week is to get back into our study on Honest to Moses. This week I feel we needed to have this little bit of open dialogue. If our goal is to find the truth and we've come through a lot on our journey together we've got to continue. My goal is to keep pushing forward. Being with me doesn't mean that you agree 100% with everything that I believe, but are you open to consider?

-For the people who benefit from the classes and enjoy the newness of discovery in the text, thank you for your kind and encouraging words. For those of you that feel that I have negatively affected your faith and put too much on you, sincerely I apologize. My intention is never to hurt but to help only. Sometimes discovery is painful. Even though my views are different from when I was a little boy in 1973 and walked up to an altar in a Baptist Church, I still have that love. I still have that passion to follow the truth where it

leads me. I hope that you'll join me. I hope that you'll stay with us. I really do love you and I hope that you can join us again next Saturday. I will go back and read all of the comments from today's dialogue because I know I missed a lot. We tried it and I think we can get better at it. Next Saturday we'll be back here, that's our intention God willing.

Shabbat Shalom, Shavua Tov, see you next week.

THIS WEEK IN TORAH

JULY 24, 2021

This week's Torah Portion VaEtchannan: "And I Pleaded" (Deuteronomy 3:23 – 7:11) Moses prays again, Moses forbidden to enter the land, Moses commands obedience, Exile and return, Idolatry forbidden, YHVH alone is God, Setting aside Cities of Refuge, Introduction to the law, The Ten Commandments, The Shema – The greatest commandment, Not succumbing to prosperity, Further trust in God, A chosen people, Teaching the tradition to children. "Shavua Tov" and Have a Great Week! "This Week in Torah" FB Page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/571648826269105/

Moses' Greatest Sermon – Va – Etchannan (Deuteronomy 3:23 – 7:11) (The Sabbaths of Consolation; Basic Fundamentals of the Faith; The Shema; Hear O Israel; Statutes and Judgments; This Great Nation; This will be Our Righteousness; That it May Go Well with You; Israel's Eternal Possessions – The Land and The Torah; Moses sees the Promised Land; Guard Your Soul; Don't Turn to the Right or to the Left; Don't Add to or Take Away from the Word of God; Dwelling in God's Land with Conditions)

July 28, 2018 – Ross Nichols

Audio/Video Link: https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/moses-greatest-sermon-va-etchannan/

UIWU ANNOUNCEMENT:

The Moses Scroll book release date of 8 March 2021 was purposely chosen. Moses Shapira died on 8 March 1884, and as far as we know, the last public sighting of his scroll was 8 March 1889. It seemed apropos to share the scroll anew with the world on that same fateful day.



https://themosesscroll.com/

https://www.amazon.com/Moses-Scroll-Ross-K-Nichols/dp/1736613405/?pldnSite=1

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iud2k6HwTL4&t=16s

https://www.facebook.com/themosesscroll/videos/535074677630755

UPCOMING EVENTS

-Blossoming Rose Israel Tours (2021): https://blossomingrose.org/

-Walking the Ancient Paths – (2022): Tabor – Nichols Israel Tour March 4-15, 2022;

https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/israel-tours/; https://blossomingrose.org/2022-walking-the-ancient-paths/

-UNCC Mt. Zion Archaeological Project, Dig Mt. Zion (2022): June/July 2022;

https://digmountzion.uncc.edu/, https://www.facebook.com/groups/digmountzion/

-Accessible Adventure Israel Tour – (2022): Nichols – Young; October 17 – 27, 2022;

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyUGXC4fUvU &

https://blossomingrose.org/accessible-adventure-israel-tour-2022/

UNITED ISRAEL WORLD UNION (UIWU) WEBSITES

-UIWU Official Website / YouTube Website / Facebook Website:

https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/ (UIWU Main Website)

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq31WAlio9zC1eXDzrEVzlg (YouTube Videos)

https://www.facebook.com/groups/unitedisraelworldunion/ (UIWU Facebook)

<u>-UIWU Founder, United Nations Correspondent, Author, (1903 – 2003) David Horowitz:</u>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David Horowitz (author)

https://jamestabor.com/the-extraordinary-life-of-david-horowitz-documented-at-last/

https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/category/remembering-david-horowitz/

-UIWU President, Biblical Scholar/Professor at UNCC, Tabor Blog, Dr. James D. Tabor:

https://jamestabor.com/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James Tabor

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=james+tabor

-UIWU Executive Vice-President, Historian, Researcher, Author, Ralph Buntyn:

https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/category/remembering-david-horowitz/

https://www.amazon.com/Book-David-Horowitz-Nations-Founder/dp/1630515833

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=ralph+buntyn

-UIWU Vice-President, Weekly Teaching and Study Sessions, Ross Nichols:

https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/author/rknichols/

https://rossknichols.com/about-ross-nichols/

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq31WAlio9zC1eXDzrEVzlg

-UIWU Vice-President, Temple Beth Shalom, Hickory, NC, Rabbi Dennis Jones:

https://www.hickoryjewishcenter.com/index.html

https://www.facebook.com/pages/Hickory-Jewish-CenterTemple-

Beth/125461817509689 & https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/faith-without-borders/

-UIWU Ministers/Board Directors, UI Center Northeast, Rome, NY, Dave & Patty Tyler:

https://www.facebook.com/UIWUNortheast

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BsCXrGttxo (The Song of Moses by Patricia Tyler)

-UIWU Historical Research Specialist, Weekly Teachings, Author, Jodell Onstott:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=jodell+onstott

https://www.amazon.com/YHWH-Exists-Jodell-Onstott/dp/0975337505

-UIWU Audio/Visual Technical Support, Weekly Teachings/Meals, Dave & Sherry Cole

-UIWU UI Minister, Weekly Teachings, UI Bulletin Contributor, Ronnie Fulcher

-UIWU Board Director, United Israel Bulletin Contributor, Betty Givin

-UIWU Music Minister, Weekly Teachings, Glenn Chatterton

-UIWU Scribe, Weekly Teaching Notes, This Week in Torah FB, John "Baruch" Perry

<u>-UIWU Teaching Notes Facebook Page:</u> https://www.facebook.com/UIWU-Teaching-Notes-103999335011360

-A 95 Page Summary of UI "Weekly Teaching Notes" (April 2007 to May 2020)

https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/a-summary-of-ui-teachings-by-john-baruch-perry/-This Week in Torah / Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/571648826269105/

FRIENDS OF UNITED ISRAEL WORLD UNION

-Blossoming Rose, Official Curator of UI Biblical Tamar Park, Dr. DeWayne Coxson:

https://blossomingrose.org/

https://www.facebook.com/groups/97078180601/?ref=group_browse

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLCdRzFRy90 (Biblical Tamar – 7 Periods)

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=biblical+tamar+park+israel

-Kol Yehuda, Facebook United 2 Restore, Israeli Tour Guide, Hanoch Young:

https://www.kolyehuda.com/

https://www.facebook.com/groups/470824226357829/

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=hanoch+young+israel

-Truth2U, Tanakh Tours, The Kingdom Chronicles, Talk Radio Host, Jono Vandor:

https://www.truth2u.org/author/admin/

https://truth2u.org/category/james-tabor/ (Gleanings from Genesis, with Tabor/Nichols)

https://truth2u.org/2021/01/15/the-moses-scroll-a-new-book-by-ross-k-nichols/

https://israelnewstalkradio.com/news-anchor-jono-vandor/

https://www.facebook.com/Truth2Uorg-116835708352238

-Film Director, Producer, Freelance Journalist, Author, Simcha Jacobovici:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/57979546982/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simcha Jacobovici

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_guery=Simcha+Jacobovici

-Archaeologist, Professor of Practice at UNCC, Dr. Shimon Gibson:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=shimon+gibson

https://history.uncc.edu/people/dr-shimon-gibson

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shimon Gibson

-Nehemia's Wall, Uncovering Ancient Hebrew Sources of Faith, Nehemia Gordan

https://www.nehemiaswall.com/;

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=nehemia+gordan