

The Eulogy of
Robert H. Evans
(April 9, 1948—August 17, 2011)

Grace Doctrine Church
1821 South River Road
St. Charles, Missouri 63303

Tuesday, 23 August 2011

We have gathered here together today to celebrate the transfer of Bob Evans's soul and spirit from time into eternity.

I use the word "celebrate" because this is the attitude that Bob would wish for us to have. Make no mistake; this is indeed a time of sorrow. But sorrow is a human emotion that is natural for those who are left behind by a loved one's departure to be with the Lord. It is the result of a sudden realization that there can never again be a time for earthly fellowship, companionship, or rapport.

Yet, although sorrow and grief are normal and legitimate emotions, they do not overwhelm those who have placed their trust in Christ. Stronger than these emotions is the clear testimony of biblical truth that applies to Bob's death and these principles provide for his family and friends a source of great joy and thanksgiving.

Bob was an enigma. He was highly intelligent. Not surprising since he was a racial Jew who believed Jesus, or *Yeshua* as he is known to the Jews, was the promised Messiah and, as a result, Bob was a Messianic Jew. He believed *Yeshua* is the Son of God. The realization that Jesus is the Messiah, or *Yeshua ha Mashia*, means that the messianic Jew finds no contradiction between the Old and New Testaments regarding the identity of the Savior.

Bob confirmed to me that he was a racial Jew but not much is known about his parents. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in April 1948, Bob was given away to an orphanage shortly after his birth since his father did not want any children. He lived at the orphanage until the age of six when he was adopted by the Evans family. He had no siblings.

His undergraduate education included studies at Indian River Community College in Fort Pierce, Florida, Reynolds Community College in Richmond, Virginia, and Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

His first wife, Sandy, was not approved of by his step-parents who disowned him after his marriage. He nevertheless remained married to Sandy until her death in the year 2000.

It is not known when Bob believed in *Yeshua ha Mashiah* but at some point he did. While living in Dallas, Texas, he joined the messianic synagogue Baruch HaShem which translated from the Hebrew means “Blessed is His name.”

Messianic followers of Jesus use His Hebrew name *Yeshua* and are committed to preserving their Jewish identity. They celebrate the Jewish feasts, meet on the Sabbath, teach from the Torah, celebrate Bar Mitzvahs, and engage in other Jewish customs.

Messianic Judaism, and Baruch HaShem in particular, is a syncretism of Judaism and Christianity. The Dallas synagogue’s doctrinal statement reflects the biblical doctrine of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone. Its doctrinal statement reads, in part, as follows:

We believe ... that in the fullness of time the Divine Son, the eternal Word and Wisdom of God, became a human being, *Yeshua* the Messiah, a true and perfect Israelite and a fitting representative and one-man embodiment of the entire nation, born of a Jewish virgin, Miriam of Nazareth. We believe that He lived as the consummate holy *tzaddik* (*tsathiq*: righteous man), fulfilling without blemish the *mitzvot* (*mitzvah*: commandments) of the Torah and bringing to perfection the human expression of the Divine image. We believe that He died in atonement for the sins of Israel and of the entire world, was raised bodily from the dead, and ascended to heaven; and that He will return in glory at the end of the age to judge the world, to save [or deliver] those who belong to Him, and to accomplish the final *Tikkun Olam* (the mending of the world).

We believe ... that forgiveness of sins, spiritual renewal, union with Messiah, the empowering and sanctifying presence of the indwelling Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit), and the confident hope of eternal life and a glorious resurrection are now available to all, Jew and Gentile, who put their faith in Yeshua, the Risen Lord of Glory, and in obedience to His word are joined to Him and His Body through Messianic *Tevilah* (Immersion [i.e., water baptism]). He is the Mediator between God and all creation, and no one can come to the Father except through Him.

We believe ... that the Hebrew Scriptures and the Apostolic Writings are divinely inspired and are of supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and life. We also believe that Rabbinic Judaism is the living link that ties contemporary Jews with their biblical past, and that Messianic Judaism can and must draw upon the wealth of that tradition in developing its way of life and thought. Furthermore, we affirm the riches of insight into the mystery of Messiah and His will found in the Christian theological tradition, and acknowledge the need for the Messianic Jewish Synagogue to draw also upon this wealth.¹

In 2004, Bob married Diane, their ceremony held at Baruch HaShem synagogue. Diane's son Dennis sent her tapes from Grace Doctrine Church and both Diane and Bob decided I was their right pastor which motivated them to move from Dallas to St. Louis.

Bob was a loyal member of our congregation. He volunteered to be among the men who pray on Sunday mornings and he consistently offered excellent prayers to the Throne Room. He continued in this duty until his prayers became fractured indicating something was amiss. It was discovered that he was near blind and could not read the notes he carefully prepared for his prayers.

The Board of Deacons volunteered to underwrite an eye examination and the purchase of new glasses for Bob which solved the problem until other difficulties arose.

Bob's advancing diabetes and near blindness affected his ability to hold his job. In addition, Bob began suffering from serious mental conditions including alternating episodes of depression and mania known as bipolar disorder. The behavior patterns that accompanied this condition eventually became dangerous to Diane and he was eventually admitted to a facility where he could receive professional observation and care.

¹ Mark Kinser, "Who We Are" (Dallas: Baruch HaShem, 2011), www.baruchhashemsynagogue.org. Accessed August 23, 2011.

These exigencies put maximum stress on the household, and since Bob was not old enough to qualify for Medicare, appeal was made for assistance from Medicaid. Diane, who was employed by Macy's, was their lone source of income, but the government said that she would have to pay for Bob's care since she allegedly "made too much money." Yet the amount required by the institution left her without enough money to meet her own monthly expenses. Going in the hole financially, the only way she could survive was to reluctantly file for divorce which she successfully did.

Recently, Bob decided that he no longer wanted to remain in the medical facility and in January of this year he moved out on his own. His manic-depressive state made it dangerous for Diane to live with him. So Bob lived by himself until Wednesday, 17 August, when he suffered a stroke which led to his death. He died alone in his apartment at age 63.

Bob is now absent from the body and face to face with *Yeshua* his Savior, where "there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

For the past several years, Diane has been struggling to deal with these very difficult issues that required heart-wrenching decisions. Yet, she remained loyal to her duty to grow in grace and rarely missed a Bible class which means she was a consistent member of the midweek seventeen.

Diane, our sympathy is extended to you, but the doctrine you possess in your soul comforts you with the knowledge that Bob is far better off where he is now and that you will be reunited with a fully recovered man in the sweet by and by.

Somewhere along the way, Bob made the most important decision of his life: he believed that Jesus – *Yeshua* – was the Messiah – *ha Mashiah*.

There are millions of Jews today who have made this discovery and as a result they often find themselves caught in between two major religions: Judaism and Christianity. Yet through faith alone in Christ alone they have realized that the Man we in English refer to as Jesus is their Messiah prophesied in Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, and Daniel 9.

The way of salvation is the same in every period of human history: faith alone in Christ alone. This is exemplified in the Old Testament where Abraham becomes the model for every dispensation:

Genesis 15:6 - Abraham believed in Jehovah and God reckoned it to him as righteousness. (NASB)

Those who have become messianic Jews are surely saved having believed in Christ through faith alone. However, their theological statements reveal that they still hold fast to the rituals commanded in the Torah and as such they are missing the power of the sophisticated spiritual life.

There is no ritual in the Church Age with the lone exception of the Eucharist. Yet, messianic Jews still follow the mandates of the Old Testament including the ritual of circumcision. It may be properly stated as an illustration that many of the Judaizers in the first century were in essence messianic Jews. They believed in Jesus as Savior. But many insisted that Gentiles adopt Jewish customs as a condition of salvation:

Acts 15:1 - Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

Such men were confused. Paul's argument against this heresy among the Judaizers in Galatia was to give Abraham as an example by quoting Genesis 15:6 in:

Galatians 3:6 - Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to Him as righteousness.

The father of the Israelites is demonstrated to have believed in Messiah long before the Mosaic Law was instituted hundreds of years later.

It was God's desire that Abraham become the patriarchal and spiritual head of a new race called the Jew. His salvation occurred in his home city of Ur of the Chaldees where Abraham believed in Messiah for eternal life and God imputed to him His perfect righteousness.

Genesis 15:6 - And Abram had already been caused to believe [אָמַן 'aman: hiphil perfect which is causative²] in Jehovah in the past [while living in Ur of the Chaldees] with results that go on forever. And God kept on crediting to his account [חָשַׁב chashav: Qal imperfect denotes continuous action on the part of the subject on behalf of the object³] for righteousness.

² A. E. Cowley, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 2d ed., E. Kautzsch, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 144.

³ J. Weingreen, *A Practical Hebrew Grammar for Classical Hebrew*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 76.

There are only four words in the Hebrew of Genesis 15:6. First is the word that tells us Abram believed in Jesus Christ for eternal salvation:

אָמַן (aman) - The Hiphil perfect indicates that Abram had already believed prior to the time of Genesis 15. Thus, Abram believed in his home country of Ur and was then motivated by the Lord to leave his homeland and move out to a place God promised to reveal to him.

Genesis 12:1 - Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your country and from your relatives and from your father’s house to the land which I will show you.”

The second word in Genesis 15:6 is the proper noun for the Lord Jesus Christ:

יהוה (YHWH) - This is called the Tetragrammaton. It is translated from the Hebrew as *Yahweh* and transliterated into the English as “Jehovah.” However, the Jews would not verbalize the name of God, therefore, when they encountered the noun *Yahweh* in Scripture they would pronounce it *Adonai*, which means, “Lord” and in this case it refers to the second Person of the Godhead, *Yeshua*, or as the English language translates it: Jesus.

Next comes the key word of the four, the Qal stem of the verb:

חָשַׁב (chashav) - “to impute” “to make a judgment” “to account”

Chashav refers to a judicial imputation through which the sovereignty of God credits to the account of the believer His own perfect righteousness. Righteousness is only imputed to those whose pre-salvation sins are forgiven as a result of faith alone in Christ alone. Paul confirms this translation in:

Romans 4:3 - But what does the Scripture [the Old Testament] say? [**Genesis 15:6**] “Abraham believed the Lord and it was credited to his account [a judicial imputation] as righteousness.”

The final word in Genesis 15:6 means divine righteousness:

שָׂדָקָה (sathaqah) - Basic sense is not deviating from the standard.

When applied to God the word refers to divine righteousness, which is the ultimate standard for human conduct.

The Hebrew text of Genesis 15:6 contains just these four words, reading from right to left:

צָדָקָה	חָשַׁב	יְהוָה	אָמֵן
<i>sethaqah</i>	<i>chashav</i>	<i>YHWH</i>	<i>Aman</i>
to him	and He (God)	in the	He (Abram)
for +R.	imputed it	Lord	had believed

At the moment of salvation, Abraham received the judicial imputation of divine righteousness. In every age, all believers are also imputed divine righteousness at the moment they express their personal faith in Jesus Christ. At this same moment, they are also imputed numerous assets that enable them to advance in their knowledge of Jesus Christ by the study and retention of God's Word, the Holy Bible.

With these assets and under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, the believer is enabled to execute the Christian way of life by adhering to the divine standard revealed in Scripture.

There is only one ritual required of the believer in New Testament church and that is the observance of the Eucharist which consists of the consumption of unleavened bread and wine.

The unleavened bread is a type for the impeccability of the true humanity of Jesus Christ and by application God's righteousness imputed to the believer at salvation.

In addition, the unleavened bread also speaks of the perfection of our Lord's resurrection body as well as the perfection of the promised resurrection bodies of believers in every dispensation.

Therefore, the typology of Unleavened Bread is two-fold in two areas. It teaches the impeccability of our Lord's human body and the perfection of His resurrection body.

Secondly, it refers to the imputation of divine righteousness to believers at salvation and the availability to them of the operational system of spiritual power in time and their resurrection bodies at the Rapture of the Church for all eternity.

The cup is emblematic of the sins of the entire human race imputed to Christ on the cross and their judgment by the justice of God. Since all sin has been judged, then those who believe in Christ – His person and His work – will have their sins forgiven and their soul saved.

Such was obviously the case for Abraham. He believed in Jehovah and was imputed God's righteousness at the moment of his salvation. There were no commandments for rituals to be performed at the time. It was strictly faith alone in Christ alone.

Bob Evans was born into Judaism but due to his unfortunate upbringing, the disownment by his adoptive family, and the sufferings associated with various physical ailments, he was able to avoid being indoctrinated into the rituals of Judaism and as a result when introduced to Jesus as *Yeshua ha Mashiah* there was no baggage to prevent him from responding to the message.

He did quite naturally associate himself with a local synagogue which professed faith alone in Christ alone although he was ignorant at first of its syncretism of Judaism with Christianity.

It was learning doctrine presented in a detailed, exegetical manner that convinced him that he should withdraw from Baruch HaShem, move to St. Louis, and, with Diane, join Grace Doctrine Church.

He was a loyal member until health prevented him from attending. He had an unfortunate last few years but in light of the turmoil he experienced from the moment of his birth it is evident that God knew of this man's positive volition and preserved him in time until he could come to the conclusion that his savior was *Yeshua ha Mashiah*: Jesus the Christ.

All is well that ends well. Although his journey through time was trying, his battles with various illnesses debilitating, and his ultimate demise pitiful, it is evident that through it all God had him clutched in his everlasting arms. What man and nature could do to him was not enough to trump what God had already done. The grace of God preserved a place for Bob in his eternal glory, a fact spoken of by our Lord when he said to His apostles in:

John 14:1 - "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

v. 2 - "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:3 - "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

v. 4 - "And you know the way where I am going."

v. 5 - Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"

v. 6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one come to the Father but through Me."

Thomas was a doubting one. His method of validating truth was what we refer to as empiricism, the practice of relying on observation or experience in order to confirm a thesis.

But the system that God insists that we use is faith which places one's confidence in the integrity of the object believed. This concept is replete throughout the Bible and especially in the New Testament and is expressed precisely in two passages of Scripture.

First, when Paul and Silas crossed the Dardanelles bringing the doctrines of New Testament theology into the West, their first stop was the Roman colony of Philippi where their preaching in the public square landed them in jail. Undaunted, these two men began evangelizing their fellow inmates when an earthquake hit the area causing the prison's doors to spring open. But no one tried to escape because they were riveted to the men's message. Having overheard the testimonies of Paul and Silas, the jailer asked them what he must do to be saved.

Now get this: it was Paul and Silas's responsibility to tell this man the correct answer, to not leave anything out, yet be brief. Here's what they told him:

Acts 16:31 - Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved ...

That's all they said to him regarding what he needed to do, because all that is required is faith alone in Christ alone.

When the Lord spoke to Nicodemus in John 3 he presented him with a choice that, if made, would have a purpose and a result. There is an important word in John 3:16, a small, simple word pronounced *hē'-nä*. It is generally translated into the English by the word "that." In the Greek it introduces both purpose and result. Let's take a look at the verse:

John 3:16 - “God loved the world so much He **gave** [this is grace, no gift can be a gift that requires something on the part of the recipient] His **uniquely-born Son**, so **that** [ἵνα, *hina*: introduces both purpose and result] **whoever believes in Him** [this is the necessary condition to achieve the purpose and the result] **shall not perish** [purpose of believing: Nicodemus would be delivered from the lake of fire when he dies] **but have eternal life** [result of believing: Nicodemus would be imputed eternal life and would go to heaven when he dies].

What qualification does the Lord Himself stipulate for the acquisition of eternal life? Anyone who believes in Him! The word “believe” is the Greek verb **πιστεύω** (*pisteuō*). The noun form is **πίστις** (*pistis*) and is translated “faith.” The verb is transitive which places the merit of one’s belief on the object. The object is Jesus Christ. Belief in the Person and work of Christ results in salvation and the reception of eternal life.

The Philippian jailer understood this, Nicodemus understood it, and Bob Evans understood it, and as a result, all three men are presently in heaven.

All that is required to join them there is to express personal faith in the object of Jesus Christ. Here is a brief expression of the gospel of salvation to which any person is free to respond by their own free will:

“Jesus of Nazareth, Who is both perfect God and sinless Man, was sacrificed on the cross for the sins of the human race after which He died, was buried, and three days later was resurrected from the dead. The purpose of these things is so that anyone who believes them will be delivered from retribution in the lake of fire when he dies. The result of these things is that anyone who believes them has eternal life and will go to heaven when he dies.”

In you believe this then you are saved and you, too, have a reserved residence in heaven. Bob is presently enjoying his. Diane, you fought the good fight along with Bob. You are comforted by the knowledge that whatever sadness you presently experience will be soon diminished by the joyous expectation of the promised future reunion. May the grace of God and the power of His Word sustain you during the interim.

I'd like to close by quoting the lyric of a song:

"In the Shadow of Your Wings"

**Not a sparrow can fall from the heavens
If You won't allow it to be;
No man can fall from Your favor
If a man puts his trust in the One he can't see.**

**Oh I want to fly like a sparrow
Who fears not the days yet to come
And sings in the shadow of Your wings.**

**A sparrow won't try to deserve You,
He'll trust You to feed him again.
No man can gain Your approval
But by faith in the One who washed away my sins.**

**Oh I want to fly like a sparrow
Who fears not the wrath from Your hand;
He sings in the shadow of Your wings.**

**I want to walk in the shadow of Your wings.
I want to know You know what is best.
And when troubles come I'll be singing still,
"Let me rest in the shadow of Your wings."**

Let's pray.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we come to your throne of grace today, saddened by the death of a husband, a friend, and a fellow member of Your royal family. Yet we have learned from Your Word that such sorrow is only experienced by those who are left behind. And so we are encouraged by the knowledge that You rejoice in the death of Your saints and that Bob is happily in Your presence enjoying perfect eyesight, excellent health, and a clear mind.

Thus, it is our prayer that Your grace will comfort Diane who now find herself missing him. Shower upon her your gracious mercies which will bring tranquility to her soul.

Such tranquility springs from biblical principles which sustain, give strength, and provide the ability to endure. May the Holy Spirit empower her to draw from this biblical reservoir of confidence, enabling her to keep his eyes focused on the Source of all good and perfect gifts, our Lord Jesus Christ. Bob was indeed a good gift, now made perfect in Him.

There is no substitute for victory. There can be no victory without Christ, a victory that was won through His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross and made available to all through faith alone in Him.

Bob, Your child, is victorious. From his home on August 17, 2011, You ushered him into the realm of Your eternal glory about which we are confident and for which we are grateful.

And we lift our prayer in the name of Your uniquely-born Son, namely, Jesus Christ, Who is *Yahweh Sebaoth*, the Lord of the Armies. Amen.

Announcement:

Diane will be glad to greet you in the church cafeteria where light refreshments are now being served. If you have not done so already, please take time to sign the guest book located on the table in the foyer before leaving.

You are dismissed.