

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## A Protestant Converts to Judaism

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**A**n editor of the New York Times recently wrote of his conversion to Judaism. In the Religion section of the March 8 edition of the Houston Chronicle, Dana Jennings gives his reasons which are illuminating as to the current state of “faith” in America.

Mr. Jennings married a lady of the Jewish faith, and they raised their two children in Judaism. He did not convert until well into his 40’s when he began of ask serious questions and “became ravenous for wisdom and meaning”. He finally found “solace, refuge and a way of being in the Judaism of my wife, and my sons”. He “found a depth that had been missing from the religion of my childhood.”

Leaving the “religion” of one’s childhood is an experience of 28% of Americans today, according to a recent Pew survey (*US Religious Land Survey—Feb. 25, 2008*). According to Mr. Jennings’ article, he has found a faith “that fits,” and enjoys “peace” in “his choice of religion.”

One reason Mr. Jennings

converted to Judaism from the Protestant faith of his childhood was how he viewed the respective sacred writings. He was taught to read the New Testament “reverentially.” He says, “*the words were cast in stone; they didn’t resonate with the earthy energy that I find in Torah.*” Mr. Jennings saw the Torah, the second century collection of Jewish Rabbis discussing Jewish Law, as being alive. He says, “*What won me over to Judaism was the insistence that our sacred texts were still vivid, still alive, the idea that the Torah and the Talmad were meant to be wrestled with the way Jacob wrestled with the angel.*”

I do not know what Protestant taught Mr. Jennings, but New Testament believers know the word of Christ and the apostles is alive and works in believers. Peter speaks of the Gospel as “*the word of God, which liveth and abideth*” (*I Peter 1:23*). Paul commends the Thessalonians for not accepting the New Testament as the word of men, “*but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe*” (*I Thessalonians 2:13*). What seems practical to Mr. Jennings is to open the Torah and see categories of subjects discussed by revered

Rabbis, instead of the revealed word of God absent of man’s commentary.

God’s word gives us plenty of matters to struggle with each day. For example, dying to the old man and putting on the character of a new man is demanded of Christians, and made practical in the specificity of what to put off and what to put on (*Colossians 3:5-11, 12-17*). True believers read this with reverence, but how is this demand of the New Testament not practical or “earthy” enough for anyone. Try carrying out these divine matters and you will realize that a momentary wrestling with an angel might be easier than the life of wrestling one must do to live up to the character of the new man.

We are to “*take up the whole armor of God*” which is the word of truth coupled with prayer “*that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and done all to stand*” (*Ephesians 6:13*). How shall we keep 1 out of 4 of our young people from leaving the only faith that will save? Help them see by your example that the Word is not only to be read with reverence, but is alive and working in your daily life.