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## Getting to know the Jewish Jesus

*Scholar, bestselling Christian author team up to explore Jesus' own religion - Judaism*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.** – Matzah. Yom Kippur. Hanakkuh. Classic trappings of the Jewish faith, and the Jewish faith only, correct? Well, yes and no. If you're a Christian, these customs are a part of your faith, too. That's because Jesus was Jewish, versed in ancient Hebrew texts, observant of traditional Jewish holidays and feasts, and devoted to Jewish prayers. Why is this so important? Because as a first-century Jew, Jesus' own worldview and culture holds startling insights for today's faith community – and Christians especially.

In their new book, *Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus: How the Jewishness of Jesus Can Transform Your Faith* (Zondervan | March 2009 | 978-0-310-28422-2 | \$21.99 | Hardcover) bestselling Christian author Ann Spangler and scholar Lois Tverberg explore the Jewish roots of the Christian faith. As more Christians seek a richer historical understanding of their faith, and the revolutionary figure who started it, the Jewishness of Jesus cannot be ignored.

"As Christians we can never forget that the Bible is essentially a Jewish document," say Spangler and Tverberg. "Once we begin to read it from a Jewish perspective, our experience will be transformed, as though we have just swapped an old black-and-white TV with its scratchy image for the latest flat screen, high-definition set. Suddenly the Bible takes on new depth and color as we read the familiar stories once again, this time from the perspective of its original audience."

By examining the Jewish culture and customs that shaped Jesus' daily life, *Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus* offers readers fresh insights into his teachings. The book also includes sidebars that explain Hebrew words and traditions, as well as questions and suggestions to help Christians incorporate what they are learning in a way that respects their own spiritual journey.

"It's not hard to become fascinated with Judaism for its own sake simply because of the antiquity of its traditions and because many of its practices are wise and biblical," say Spangler and Tverberg. "We believe that all of us can understand Jesus better by retuning our hearing and thinking. That is exactly what happened to us the moment we began studying Jesus' Jewish culture – passages that had previously left us cold or puzzled suddenly came to life. Lights turned on, and the mist began to clear."

In an interview, Spangler and Tverberg are available to discuss:

- How Jesus' Jewish upbringing shaped his life and ministry
- Christianity, with a side of challah: The meaning behind Jewish prayers and blessings
- Key Hebrew words that clarify and deepen Scriptural readings
- Rabbi Jesus: How Jesus taught his disciples to pray
- The political tensions and spiritual fervor of the first century

Ann Spangler is the author of numerous bestselling Christian books, which have sold a total of 2.5 million copies. These include *Women of the Bible*, *Praying the Names of God*, and *Praying the Names of Jesus*. Lois Tverberg, Ph.D., is the cofounder of the En-Gedi Resource Center, an educational ministry designed to deepen Christian understanding of the Bible through teaching its Jewish context. For more information, visit [www.ourrabbijesus.com](http://www.ourrabbijesus.com).

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To request a review copy of *Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus* or to set up an interview with Ann Spangler and Lois Tverberg, please contact Tolly Moseley at (512) 478-2028 ext. 213 or [tmoseley@phenixpublicity.com](mailto:tmoseley@phenixpublicity.com).