

**MEN AND WOMEN  
IN THE BODY OF  
MESSIAH**

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confronting issues series

# MEN AND WOMEN IN THE BODY OF MESSIAH

Answering Crucial Questions

J.K. McKee



# MEN AND WOMEN IN THE BODY OF MESSIAH

## Answering Crucial Questions

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## abbreviation chart and special terms

The following is a chart of abbreviations for reference works and special terms that are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

Special terms that may be used have been provided in this chart:

ABD: <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>	understand what a Biblical text means on its own
AMG: <i>Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament</i>	EXP: <i>Expositor's Bible Commentary</i>
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)	Ger: German
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament	GNT: Greek New Testament
Ara: Aramaic	Grk: Greek
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)	<i>halachah</i> : lit. "the way to walk," how the Torah is lived out in an individual's life or faith community
b. Babylonian Talmud ( <i>Talmud Bavli</i> )	HALOT: <i>Hebrew &amp; Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Koehler and Baumgartner)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.	HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004)
BDAG: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)	Heb: Hebrew
BDB: <i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>	HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
BECNT: <i>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i>	ICC: <i>International Critical Commentary</i>
BKCNT: <i>Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament</i>	IDB: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.	IDBSup: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement</i>
CEV: Contemporary English Version (1995)	ISBE: <i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i>
CGEDNT: <i>Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words</i> (Barclay M. Newman)	IVPBBC: <i>IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old &amp; New Testament)</i>
CHALOT: <i>Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>	Jastrow: <i>Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Ba'ali, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature</i> (Marcus Jastrow)
CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)	JBK: New Jerusalem Bible-Koren (2000)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition	JETS: <i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls	KJV: King James Version
ECB: <i>Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible</i>	Lattimore: <i>The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore</i> (1996)
EDB: <i>Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible</i>	LITV: <i>Literal Translation of the Holy Bible</i> by Jay P. Green (1986)
eisegesis: "reading meaning into," or interjecting a preconceived or foreign meaning into a Biblical text	LS: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Liddell & Scott)
EJ: <i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>	LXE: <i>Septuagint with Apocrypha</i> by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
ESV: English Standard Version (2001)	
exegesis: "drawing meaning out of," or the process of trying to	

LXX: Septuagint  
m. Mishnah  
MT: Masoretic Text  
NASB: New American Standard Bible (1977)  
NASU: New American Standard Update (1995)  
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*  
NEB: New English Bible (1970)  
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*  
NETS: New English Translation of the Septuagint (2007)  
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*  
NIGTC: *New International Greek Testament Commentary*  
NICNT: *New International Commentary on the New Testament*  
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*  
NIV: New International Version (1984)  
NJB: New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic (1985)  
NJPS: Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures (1999)  
NKJV: New King James Version (1982)  
NRSV: New Revised Standard Version (1989)  
NLT: New Living Translation (1996)  
NT: New Testament  
orthopraxy: lit. "the right action," how the Bible or one's theology is lived out in the world

OT: Old Testament  
PreachC: *The Preacher's Commentary*  
REB: Revised English Bible (1989)  
RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)  
t. Tosefta  
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament  
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*  
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*  
TEV: Today's English Version (1976)  
TLV: Tree of Life Messianic Family Bible—New Covenant (2011)  
TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)  
TNTC: *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*  
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*  
UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition  
v(s). verse(s)  
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*  
Vul: Latin Vulgate  
WBC: *Word Biblical Commentary*  
Yid: Yiddish  
YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)

# Introduction

One of the things that I have highly regarded from the broad Jewish tradition, is that people are encouraged to ask questions. A significant virtue of the Jewish people, is that people not only talk, but they are encouraged to speak their minds and develop opinions about both God and the issues of the day. Being raised in an evangelical Protestant family, it was emphasized that each Believer can read the Bible for himself or herself, going to God with one's concerns. I was also raised where if there were any important topics facing us, our extended family, our local church, or society as a whole—such issues **were openly discussed**. It is witnessed in both Judaism and Protestantism, that issues facing one's community should not go unaddressed indefinitely, especially if inaction or avoidance of something could lead to generational harm.

People in today's broad Messianic movement, in a similar vein, tend to be open-minded when it comes to a variety of theological issues, particularly as it involves the centrality of Israel and the Jewish people in God's plan, the ongoing validity and relevance of the Torah for the post-resurrection era, and more generally the Hebraic and Jewish Roots of the faith. If you attend any Messianic congregation, Torah study, Bible study, home fellowship group, etc., you will certainly see a wide array of issues and topics addressed—which would be scarcely be touched in your average evangelical Protestant church, to be sure. I have widely appreciated the openness of many people in today's Messianic movement, from both Jewish and Protestant backgrounds, to not only discuss various "inconvenient" issues, but to demonstrate an open-mindedness to (re)evaluate previously held beliefs and theologies, putting them to the touchstone of Holy Scripture.

From time to time there do arise various issues where those within today's broad Messianic movement, tend to be very close-minded, and even a bit rigid and controlling, when alternative points of view are mentioned. One of the biggest issues which has started to significantly stir—beneath the surface for sure—involves **men and women in the Body of Messiah**.

It is no secret that in both Conservative and Reform Judaism, as well as in many evangelical Protestant denominations, that both men and women can be ordained as either rabbis or pastors. For certain, both men and women can serve side-by-side within the leadership structure of various local synagogues and churches, as both facilitators and teachers. In stark contrast to this, most Messianic congregations are led entirely by males, few females serve within the leadership structure of the assembly, and almost no females would be expected to give a teaching on *Shabbat*. This is then widely reflected in the marriages of many Messianic men and women, where the husband is the leader of the family, and the wife is expected to follow and defer to him. In terms of congregational and familial leadership, the broad Messianic movement is a virtual carbon copy of complementarian Protestantism, where male leadership and authority is upheld as the ideal.

Anyone who has closely followed my teachings for the past decade (2007-2017), knows that I have taken a huge risk by openly identifying myself as an egalitarian. I believe that in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were created as co-equal partners, to be tending Creation together (Genesis 2:23), and that as a result of the Fall, a battle of the sexes erupted (Genesis 3:16). I believe that salvation history has been steadily returning humanity to what was lost in Eden, and that with the arrival of Yeshua the Messiah and His sacrifice, the equality of the sexes has been restored (Galatians 3:28). *Men and women are to serve as co-leaders of the assembly, and husbands and wives are to serve as co-leaders of the family—in mutual submission to each other as equal partners (Ephesians 5:21)*. Instruction in either the Tanach or Apostolic Writings, which appears to be restrictive toward women (i.e., 1 Timothy 2:11-15), needs to be reevaluated for what it communicated to its ancient audience first *before* we begin deducing Twenty-First Century applications. And perhaps most important to consider, is that there are scores of intelligent and capable women in today's Messianic community—far more capable than many men—who are dismissed as potential leaders, teachers, and facilitators, precisely because of their gender. There are also many Messianic marriages, where there is little love and respect, precisely because the husband has been encouraged to be an autocrat, and not approach his wife as an equal.

This publication, *Men and Women in the Body of Messiah: Answering Crucial Questions*, has been a long time coming for me. Up to this point, the bulk of my thoughts and conclusions on men and women have been constrained to passing remarks made in various articles, as well as detailed analyses in various commentary volumes in Messianic

*Apologetics' for the Practical Messianic* series (1 Corinthians, Ephesians, the Pastoral Epistles). Through a series of circumstances during this past year (2017), I got the distinct impression that now was the time to put onto paper many of my egalitarian ideas—especially given the overwhelming and unbalanced representation of complementarianism in the Messianic movement. I know in my many ministry interactions over the years, that the Messianic community is hardly one-hundred percent complementarian. There are many people who attend male-led and male-directed Messianic assemblies, who keep their opinions to themselves. More frequently than not, those who are egalitarian leaning, are younger people. When such young men and young women ask legitimate questions from the Holy Scriptures, they are often patronized, ignored, and silenced. A refusal to address the concerns of what is commonly labeled the “Millennial generation,” could very well lead to seeing many young people in today’s Messianic movement leave at a later time.

I want to see generational tensions significantly defused, but at the same time—as fairly as possible—present some points of view that you are not too likely to hear anytime soon, from that many leaders and teachers within the Messianic movement. I want to see each and every one of us, Jewish and non-Jewish, male and female, be encouraged to employ all of our gifts, talents, and skills in the Lord. I want an environment where men are encouraged to look at women with respect as their equals, and where women do not have to be in fear of being treated as second-class or inferior any longer.

*J.K. McKee, Editor  
Messianic Apologetics*



# Men and Women: Answering 50 Crucial Questions

Anyone who receives a broad-based theological education today, will quickly find that there are a number of issues upon which scholars, congregational leaders, and laypersons not only disagree about—but will starkly divide over. One of the biggest, divisive issues in contemporary evangelical Protestant theology, involves **women in ministry**. There are Christian denominations which support females serving alongside of males as co-leaders of the assembly, ordained as pastors, and there are other Christian denominations which strongly oppose females serving in such a capacity. When it comes to marital relationships, there are those who support marriages where husband and wife are co-leaders of the family, and there are others who believe that a husband leads the family while the wife follows.

More books, articles, analyses, refutations, counter-refutations, blogs, and op-ed pieces, have been composed on men and women in the Body of Messiah, than one frequently knows what to do with! Over the years, I have gathered and collected many pieces of information on debates over women in ministry, husbands and wives in marriage, and the differing and complex *feelings* of people involved—which have certainly overwhelmed me at times. As someone who likes to be well-informed and logically sort through the different perspectives involving a debate like how males and females should relate to one another in the community of God—I have had to definitely *pace myself* and choose my words carefully. Like many on both sides of the discussion, I have been affected by emotionalism, and cannot say that I have never been offended by some of the positions I have seen represented or opinions expressed.