

# OIM UPDATE

July 2016

During the first week of this month, Margaret, John and I traveled to Grantham, PA, where the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA) has their annual conference, Messiah 2016, during the week of the Fourth of July. For Margaret and me, there had been a twenty years hiatus since 1996, when we first attended the national conference in our attempt to understand where the Holy Spirit had led us after our tour of Israel with the Zola Levitt Ministry in 1994. At that time as evangelical Christians, we pondered, why had the Lord directed our walk with Him to join a Messianic Jewish congregation? In 1996 as serious seekers of the Most High, we were extremely curious about Messianic Judaism, and so Margaret and I attended both the MJAA and UMJC national conferences, in an effort to evaluate what we had gotten involved with.

Certainly, as we look back at those exploratory stops on what we have referred to as our “spiritual scavenger hunt,” we have fond memories of our journey. During those score of years, our Heavenly Father called and commissioned us to found Outreach Israel Ministries, and with the addition of John McKee in 2003, what is now his Messianic Apologetics division. In our ministerial capacity, we have endeavored to collectively cross-examine, principally in writing, what the Holy Scriptures have declared to those who call upon the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

This July, our ministry was able to have two tables in the Cultural Marketplace, to display and exhibit our books and publications to a broad selection of people in the Messianic Jewish community. Providentially, the day before arriving at the conference, two unsolicited e-mail messages from highly respected Messianic Jewish rabbis, posted laudatory comments about J.K. McKee’s exhaustive work and commentaries to an e-mail forum of hundreds of their fellow rabbis. Needless to say, Margaret, John, and I are very appreciative of the great favor being bestowed upon us, along with the blessings I am personally receiving from coordinating a significant shipment of medical equipment and supplies to the Joseph Project in Israel, a ministry of the MJAA.

While at Messiah 2016, I was able to attend a number of breakout teaching sessions where various leaders and teachers shared their thoughts on a variety of Biblical and Messianic Jewish topics. From my notes, there were some very encouraging messages from two wise and seasoned leaders, which have prompted me to write this month’s lead

article entitled, “A Messianic Vision.” For most assuredly from what I gleaned at the conference, the patience and perseverance we all need to maintain—as the Holy One is indeed reconstituting the “one new man” in Yeshua (Ephesians 2:15), and is implementing the prophesied Messianic restoration of all things (Acts 3:19-21)—is just a matter of His time, and not ours.

We want to graciously thank those of you who have given generously to our **OIM Technology Fund**! This Summer, we are in the process of upgrading all of our office computers, as the need to multi-task—particularly with the editing of new video and audio podcasts—has been growing in intensity. The first stage of this involves relegating our three main machines to a secondary working capacity. One of the three new computers we need has already been acquired. Once the remaining two computers we need are acquired, then we will be able to evaluate what additional hardware we might need, including moving beyond just having computers which employ the Windows operating system. We want to be able to have a very efficient and streamlined setup, as we continue to add new teachings to our two websites, and we reach out via social media venues such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and most especially YouTube!

*“The LORD bless you, and keep you; the LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace” (Numbers 6:24-25).*

Advancing His Kingdom, until the restoration of all things...  
Mark Huey

# A MESSIANIC VISION

*by Mark Huey*

Over the course of a lifetime in pursuit of the Holy One of Israel, one's knowledge and understanding of Him and His ways can grow, mature, and even change, as more revelation comes into focus. Certainly evidence of that is found in the Acts of the Apostles, as some of the earliest followers of Yeshua the Messiah first endeavored to take the Great Commission to the distant corners of Planet Earth, as led by the Holy Spirit. We also see various issues and topics diversify, in writings such as the epistles of Paul, as Paul aged and his understanding of God demonstrated in Galatians surely deepened when compared to what he wrote to his disciple Timothy in his last letter. If nothing else, the emphasis of what Paul communicated addressed the divisive issues at hand in Galatia, can be slightly contrasted to his heartfelt desire to give some final instructions to a younger man who was going to carry on the work of the Kingdom. But without question, there is some consistency in Paul's vision toward those he wrote, when you compare the two closing salutations:

"The grace of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah be with your spirit, brethren. Amen" (Galatians 6:18).

"The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you" (2 Timothy 4:22).

In each of these final statements, Paul's concern was for God's grace to be evident, as the indwelling Ruach HaKodesh ministered to the spirit of those to whom he was writing. With this in mind, by God's grace and instruction from the Holy Spirit-inspired Word, I want to share an enhanced understanding about how I see various ancient prophecies unfolding and coming together at this point in world history, as notably asserted via some messages from older Messianic Jewish leaders, who have spent decades studying the prophecies about the restoration of Israel and the Jewish people. In so doing, the Messianic Vision our ministry has written about and emphasized, on what we are convicted the Almighty is doing among His people to fulfill ancient prophecies in the Tanakh and the teachings of the Apostles, has been upgraded.

Admittedly, it has not always been easy to be a non-Jewish family, initially led into the Messianic Jewish movement over twenty-one years ago. Back then, when the advent of global communication was expanded exponentially by the Internet, we were made aware of untold thousands of non-Jewish Believers around the world who were experiencing the same unction by the Holy Spirit to join Messianic Jewish congregations, the same as we were. For God's purposes, during the mid-1990s, the Holy Spirit was activating a virtual hoard of non-Jews to seek out the ancient Hebraic and Jewish

Roots of their Christian faith. However, due to the centuries of anti-Semitic abuse by those claiming to be Christians from Constantine, to the Crusaders, to the Inquisition, to the Pogroms, to the Holocaust—some residual pain and memories of affliction made many of the Messianic Jewish congregational leaders suspicious of non-Jews coming into assemblies which had been formed mainly for Jewish outreach and as a safe space for Jewish Believers. Some Messianic Jewish rabbis apprehensively concluded that some of the non-Jews, who were actually joining their communities, were in some respects demonstrating a rather clever form of “replacement theology.” Others, however, led by the Spirit of God, understood that an influx of non-Jewish Believers to Messianic Jewish synagogues was actually a preliminary fulfillment of this ancient prophecy from Zechariah:

“Thus says the LORD of hosts, *‘It will yet be that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities. The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, “Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go.” So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.’* Thus says the LORD of hosts, *‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you”’*” (Zechariah 8:20-23).

After all, when one surveys most Messianic Jewish congregations which exist today in the Diaspora—especially as the third decade of the Twenty-First Century approaches—the number of non-Jewish congregants can often depict the ratio seen in Zechariah’s prophecy. Clearly, this is indicative of the Spirit of God drawing those from the nations to assemblies where the ancient practices and dynamics of the First Century Believers are being modeled and observed. We as a family concluded years ago, when we first began attending a Messianic Jewish congregation, that if the Holy Spirit was going to conform us to the image of the Messiah Yeshua (Romans 8:29), that process would accelerate if we adhered to the same format of worship and lifestyle demonstrated by Yeshua and His first followers. For us, this meant a dramatic alteration from our Protestant Christian upbringing, especially in regard to Torah practices such as the seventh-day Sabbath or *Shabbat*, the appointed times or *moedim* of Leviticus 23, and the kosher dietary laws. Our main conclusion was simply this: the popular Christian acronym *What Would Jesus Do?* asks us to necessarily evaluate what it means to *Do What Yeshua Did*. Once we understood how the Messiah would have conducted Himself, the things that we needed to take serious note of, from the Scriptures, quickly came into focus.

It has been an amazing journey and a privilege to be commissioned to help many others—particularly those who have a similar story to our family—to understand how to conduct themselves when they are also drawn by the Spirit of God into a Messianic lifestyle. After all, as Zechariah states, a part of the ingathering of the Jewish people to the Promised Land, includes the recognition that those from the nations will proclaim, “Please let us walk

with you, for we have heard that God is with you” (Zechariah 8:23, NLT). The realization that the Holy One of Israel has a very unique role for the Jewish people at the End of the Age is supported by substantial Scriptural references seen throughout the Prophets of the Tanakh. Notably, while non-Jewish Believers in Israel’s Messiah are reckoned as being grafted-in to Israel’s olive tree, there is an insightful warning from the Apostle Paul to those in Rome, which many non-Jewish Believers today must be reminded of when studying or analyzing ancient prophecies of Israel’s restoration. The wise caution has to do with a potential jealousy that harbors in the hearts of many from the nations about the Jewish people, which might turn into arrogance against the Jews:

“I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! **But by their transgression salvation *has come* to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.** Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! **But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them.** For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will *their* acceptance be but life from the dead? If the first piece of *dough* is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too. **But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, *remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.*** You will say then, ‘Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.’ Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. **Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either”** (Romans 11:11-21).

With these warnings from Paul recognized—to perhaps guard hearts and minds against any potential jealousy or arrogance—I want to share some encouraging words from some seasoned Jewish leaders in the Messianic movement that draw primarily upon the prophecies issued specifically to Israel proper, which are being fulfilled at this very time in world history. As a life-long student of world history and the Bible since I was saved, it has always been an amazing joy to read and observe how the Almighty One has sovereignly orchestrated global events down through the millennia to achieve His purposes for humanity. In fact, the Lord initially used a book written by Francis Schaeffer, entitled *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, that opened up my mind and heart to the reality that world history revolved around the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ. Upon reading this historical treatise, I was drawn to a Bible church. It was there in 1978, where the gospel was proclaimed, and within a few weeks I was convicted of my lost estate, and I confessed and repented of my sin, being born from above. Hallelujah!

Now fast forward to 2016, and our recent attendance and participation at the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA) annual conference—where for the first time Outreach Israel Ministries actually had a marketplace presence at a major world Messianic conference. It was there at a series of breakout session lectures, where I listened to a cogent and comprehensive historical and Scriptural presentation from a Jewish attorney, who has been involved in leadership in the Messianic Jewish community for over forty years. This was followed an hour later by an additional message from an elderly Jewish businessman, who likewise, has been an instrumental leader in the Messianic Jewish movement for nearly fifty years. Needless to say, with two witnesses from different perspectives coming to similar conclusions, my attention was riveted! For unbeknownst to them, the Spirit of God was helping me more fully understand, from His perspective, just how absolutely vital the return of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel truly is in His plans for the End of the Age.

Of course, what was most confirming to my spirit in these presentations, was the nearly exclusive use of the ancient Scriptural prophecies tied together, in order to describe what the different Prophets decreed millennia ago, and how such words are coming together right before our eyes. As I sat there taking notes, I imagined what it would have been like to be a prophet and receive a vision or word from the Lord, and then try and communicate it to others. Clearly the images seen or the words heard by such human vessels, had to be interpreted and restated from their life experiences, which were each unique. In addition, the Lord chose to use multiple human instruments to communicate what He was doing and going to do in the future, and did not give any single person all the information. Yet, followers of the Messiah today do indeed have the indwelling presence of the Ruach HaKodesh or Holy Spirit in a heart of flesh, to be not only their Comforter, but also their Teacher and Helper (John 14:26). As such, Believers can look back over the past few thousand years, and in particular the last century or so, and should recognize the Almighty's handiwork and sovereign will in motion.

In the initial lecture, there was a Psalm referenced which reinforced the Scriptural reality that Jerusalem or Mount Zion is indeed the critical place on the globe, not only where the Lord will place His name (1 Kings 11:36; Nehemiah 1:9), but ultimately where the Messiah will rule and reign for a thousand years. While Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2 both declare, "For the law will go forth from Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem," a fuller appreciation of what Zion and Jerusalem mean to the Lord comes from Psalm 87:

"A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A Song. **His foundation is in the holy mountains. The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the *other* dwelling places of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. Selah. I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me; behold, Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia: 'This one was born there.' But of Zion it shall be said, 'This one and that one were born in her'; and the Most High Him-**

self will establish her. The LORD will count when He registers the peoples, 'This one was born there.' Selah. Then those who sing as well as those who play the flutes *shall say*, 'All my springs of joy are in you'" (Psalm 87:1-7).

So for Yeshua, the Son of David, a Jewish child born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), which is a nearby suburb of Jerusalem, one finds in the Biblical record that many of the critical things surrounding His ministry happened in Jerusalem. Of course, the most important of these was His sacrificial atonement for the sin of humanity, even though days earlier He lamented over Jerusalem and its inhabitants:

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD [Psalm 118:26]!'" (Matthew 23:37-39).

Notice that in Yeshua's words, the people of Jerusalem will not see His return and hence look upon Him, until God has poured out the Spirit of grace and supplication upon its inhabitants—and only perhaps after the horrific battle to take place on the plains of Megiddo or Armageddon (cf. Revelation 16:16):

"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo" (Zechariah 12:10-11).

However, before Yeshua's return occurs, there are a bevy of Scriptures which must be fulfilled—and at this hour in the modern State of Israel, those with the eyes to see and ears to hear, are recognizing the implementation of many prophecies from the likes of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Consider, for example, the following declaration from Isaiah and how it is in the process of happening at this very hour:

"Then in that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious. Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:10-12).

In relatively recent times over the past century or so, culminating in the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948, the regathering of the dispersed of Israel and the Jewish people from the four corners of the Earth continues to accelerate at increasing speed—for a "second time" after the return from Bab-

ylonian exile. In the following statements from Isaiah, one can tangibly note that what Isaiah saw some 2,700 years ago, has been taking place in the past half-century, and is just a matter of time before such things are completely fulfilled:

“When the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and again choose Israel, **and settle them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob.** The peoples will take them along and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them as an inheritance in the land of the LORD as male servants and female servants; **and they will take their captors captive and will rule over their oppressors**” (Isaiah 14:1-2).

Since the late Nineteenth Century, with the formation of the First Zionist Congress in 1897, the immigration of Jews from Europe, beginning as a trickle, has now become almost a flood—as the nearly ubiquitous threats of anti-Semitism continue to foment and build in the Twenty-First Century. The oppression of Jews in the countries where they have been scattered, as prophesied as far back as Moses’ statements in Deuteronomy 30:1-8, has been used by the Lord to prompt many to return to the Land of Israel, the only Jewish state in the world. We should note the return of those from the east, west, north, and south:

“Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, “Give *them* up!” And to the south, “Do not hold *them* back.” Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 43:5-6).

Certainly, if one considers the first return of the exiles from Babylon to the East; from the West when in 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain banned Jews from the Iberian Peninsula, followed by the Portuguese in 1497; from the North not only after the pogroms of Russia, but most importantly the Holocaust of Nazi Germany and the collapse of the Soviet Union; and from the South, with the relatively recent migration of Ethiopian Jews, **this prophecy has and is happening now.** In addition, Isaiah further declared that various nations will be assisting with this return to the Promised Land:

“Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I will lift up My hand to the nations and set up My standard to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in *their* bosom, and your daughters will be carried on *their* shoulders’” (Isaiah 49:22).

This reality is ever-present, as many godly people, prompted by the Holy Spirit, have been supplying some of the resources necessary for the return of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. In many respects, the love of many Christians for the Jewish people, as they are brought close to the bosom, has resulted in literal airlifts and fleets of ships, such as the notable SS *Exodus* carrying the Jews on their metaphorical shoulders.

“Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes round about and see; **they all gather together, they**



come to you. Your sons will come from afar, and your daughters will be carried in the arms. Then you will see and be radiant, and your heart will thrill and rejoice; because the abundance of the sea will be turned to you, the wealth of the nations will come to you” (Isaiah 60:3-5).

Even today, there is investment in modern Israel unlike in any time in recent history. The economic vitality of the Israeli economy has people from the world at large—despite the risks of stability in the Middle East—to invest in Israeli businesses, and when possible, Israeli endeavors and enterprises. *Some think that the Israeli technology sector is second only to Silicon Valley.* Clearly, a portion of the wealth of Planet Earth is making its way into the Promised Land, and in recent years, the abundance of the sea in the form of natural gas was discovered off the coast of Haifa, and has been labeled the “Leviathan gas field” because of its mammoth size. Further on, Isaiah sees what could be airplanes and ships carrying people laden with silver and gold, coming to Zion:

“Who are these who fly like a cloud and like the doves to their lattices? Surely the coastlands will wait for Me; and the ships of Tarshish *will come first*, to bring your sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, for the name of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel because He has glorified you. Foreigners will build up your walls, and their kings will minister to you; for in My wrath I struck you, and in My favor I have had compassion on you. Your gates will be open continually; they will not be closed day or night, so that *men* may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. For the nation and the kingdom which will not serve you will perish, and the nations will be utterly ruined” (Isaiah 60:8-12).

Interestingly, Isaiah also notes that those who do not serve Israel will perish and be utterly ruined. If one peruses world history, it can be noted that this has been the case multiple times. Consider, for example, the history of the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Ottoman Turks, the Russians, the Germans, and today Islamofascists—who have in different ways come against Israel and the Jewish people. In many instances, these societies wanted to destroy Israel and/or promotion of Israel’s God as the One True Creator. And yet, if one surveys societies which been friendly and empathetic toward the Jewish people—perhaps even believing it to be a required duty of their Christian faith—as has been seen in a fair amount of both British and American history for the past two centuries, there has been great favor and blessing bestowed upon them by God.

A final word from Isaiah mentions the rebuilding of the ancient ruins, cities, and the restoration of the Promised Land to one of milk and honey. Certainly, if one travels to Israel today, this is quite evident, because beyond simply the ancient ruins, the country is in an economic construction boom, as modern Israel in the midst of absorbing the tremendous influx of migrants

from around the globe:

**“Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, they will raise up the former devastations; and they will repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations. Strangers will stand and pasture your flocks, and foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers. But you will be called the priests of the LORD; you will be spoken of as ministers of our God. You will eat the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast. Instead of your shame *you will have a double portion*, and *instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion*. Therefore they will possess a double *portion* in their land, everlasting joy will be theirs”** (Isaiah 61:4-7).

In fact, when one surveys the people who are coming to help rebuild the country, although primarily Jews, there is an increasing number of those from the world at large who are also lending their resources and their efforts to rebuild. Most notable are those from former enemies like Germany and Russia. In addition, there are a great number of people from English speaking countries, who are literally helping plant, prune, and harvest grapes for wine in the hills of Judea and Samaria. There is no doubt that the prophesied double portion blessing on the Land is becoming more evident each and every day!

While Isaiah’s prophecies see the restoration of Israel in vivid ways, we should be prompted to consider how they might not have taken effect until some of the fundamental, transformative occurrences referenced by Jeremiah and Ezekiel, are also seen to be in process. Of particular importance would be the advent of the era of the New Covenant, which we know from the words of the Messiah Himself, were inaugurated by His sacrificial work and resurrection from the dead (Luke 22:20). As these two Prophets decreed,

**“Behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,’ declares the LORD. ‘But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people”** (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

**“For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you**

will be My people, and I will be your God. Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not bring a famine on you. I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, so that you will not receive again the disgrace of famine among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations. I am not doing *this* for your sake,' declares the Lord GOD, 'let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel!' Thus says the Lord GOD, 'On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt. **The desolate land will be cultivated instead of being a desolation in the sight of everyone who passes by. They will say, "This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste, desolate and ruined cities are fortified *and* inhabited."** Then the nations that are left round about you will know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places *and* planted that which was desolate; I, the LORD, have spoken and will do it.' Thus says the Lord GOD, 'This also I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them: I will increase their men like a flock. Like the flock for sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the waste cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they will know that I am the LORD'" (Ezekiel 36:24-38).

When one reads these prophecies, it is obvious that the total fulfillment of them is not yet complete. But on the other hand, it is absolutely true that the Spirit of God has taken up residence in the hearts of men and women, turning hearts of stone to flesh, and indwelling them with His presence since the sacrifice and resurrection of the Messiah. Over the past two millennia, born again Believers the world over have been taking the good news or gospel to their fellow human beings, so that in the end, there will be representatives of every tongue and tribe serving and worshipping the Lord God of Heaven and His Son Yeshua (Revelation 5:9; 13:7; 14:6). I suppose I could go on for pages describing more and more of the prophecies which are being fulfilled—as recorded by Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Joel, Micah, Malachi, Hosea, and others. But that will have to come at another time...

While at Messiah 2016, the older Jewish leader I heard in the second lecture I attended, concluded something which bore some witness to me in my spirit. This gentleman was one of the Jewish leaders who were instrumental in rebranding what was founded in 1915 as the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, when it became the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America in 1975. At that time, the incredible resurgence of young and not-so-young Jewish people coming to faith in the Jewish Messiah, prompted the leadership to change the name of the organization, founded to give Jewish Believers a place to find fellowship among each other, with a different emphasis. With the genesis of Messianic Jewish congregations being formed primarily in North America, its leaders were led to consciously emphasize the Jewishness of its developing synagogues. They wanted their fellow Jews, from all

grounds and ideologies in Judaism, who were coming to faith in Yeshua, to be comfortable with their faith in Yeshua. After all, many were being disowned or even being considered dead by their relatives. They needed the comfort to know that it was perfectly legitimate to be a Believer in Yeshua as Messiah and remain Jewish.

The early pioneers of the Messianic Jewish movement had a major task to perform, as many in the 1960s and 1970s were struggling with what it meant to be a Jewish Believer in Israel's Messiah, remain Jewish, and not be assimilated into Christianity, with their children and grandchildren not being raised as Jewish. In the 1990s, some Messianic Jewish leaders believed—and many still advocate—that the Messianic Jewish movement would be recognized as a formal branch of Judaism, alongside of Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Judaism, among others. In the past four decades, for sure, the emphasis of Messianic Judaism has primarily been focused around Jewish evangelism and seeing that Jewish Believers have a safe space where they can express their faith in Yeshua being relegated into a Christian church setting that would broadly force them to give up their Jewish heritage. Yet, in the past two decades for certain, many non-Jewish Believers have been directed by the Holy Spirit to Messianic Jewish congregations, very much in line with the anticipation of Zechariah 8:23. The respected pioneer I heard at Messiah 2016, stated in his presentation, that he thought that 25% of the people in many Messianic Jewish synagogues were Jewish, with the remaining 75% being non-Jewish. *What he recognized is that the majority of people in Messianic Judaism were non-Jewish.*

Regardless of the actual percentages, what was most encouraging to me was the statement made in his conclusion, by this seasoned, influential Jewish leader with over fifty years of experience in the Messianic Jewish movement. Without hesitation, as he was summarizing his thoughts, he said in what I have to paraphrase from my notes, “Perhaps with the reality of all of these non-Jews in the congregations and synagogues, maybe it would be more accurate to call this move of the Spirit of God, simply the Messianic movement, and not include the term Jewish.” After all, he concluded, “The evidence that the prophecies are coming to pass is overwhelming, and as we approach the end of the age, it will be the concerted efforts of both believing Jews and Believers from the nations to welcome back the Messiah to the earth to rule and reign from Jerusalem!”

Naturally, when I heard these comments from this knowledgeable and godly Jewish man, who has dedicated his life to serving Yeshua among his fellow Jewish people, I was greatly surprised by his candor. For most assuredly, as a non-Jewish family who has been faithfully serving the Messianic community of faith for over two decades, this was personal confirmation that we also have been doing the Lord's work as the prophetic Word of God unfolds before our very eyes! We understand and have faithfully written and taught about the “one new man” referenced by the Apostle Paul, but we also understand that it has been the Accuser's objective to keep the Jewish people and

Believers from the nations divided and at enmity with one another:

“For He is our peace, who made both *groups* one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the *religious* Law of commandments in dogmas, that He might create in Himself the two into one new humanity, so making peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the enmity by it. And HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR OFF, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR [Isaiah 57:19; 52:7; Zechariah 9:10]; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Yeshua Himself being the corner *stone*, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:14-22, PME).

As a teaching ministry, whose primary audience tends to be non-Jewish people drawn into the Messianic movement as we were in the late 1990s, we are genuinely delighted that some of the older and wiser pioneers of the Messianic Jewish movement are recognizing that something more than just Jewish evangelism is taking place in their midst. We strongly believe that we are all a part of a great move of the Spirit, as God is preparing a remnant of people, both Jewish and non-Jewish, to welcome Yeshua the Messiah to Planet Earth to reign from Jerusalem!

Is it actually time for another renaming of what the Father is doing? Should the Messianic Jewish movement be simply rebranded the Messianic movement, in order to have acceptance on a wider scale? What we can recognize, for certain, is that a Messianic movement with a dual purpose of seeing Jewish people brought to faith in Yeshua as Israel's Messiah, and in welcoming non-Jewish Believers whom the Lord has directed to live as Israel's Messiah, is surely emerging in our day. We must understand and appreciate that the pioneers of Messianic Judaism had a certain skillset and anointing. But the builders following them have different gifts and anointing to build upon their foundation and do the work that the Father has foreordained until the time of the end.

Whatever we call ourselves—with terms like “the Messianic Jewish movement” and “the Messianic movement” probably to be used more interchangeably in the future—a proper Messianic vision, with the edification of all those within this unique and special faith community, and the return of Israel's Messiah to the Land of Israel in focus to reign on Planet Earth, **needs to steadfastly be in focus.**

My prayer is that we will each continue to have God's grace and God's Spirit guide us and work through us, as we each seek to advance His Kingdom here on Earth, until the Messianic restoration of all things. May this heartfelt objective continue to be every Believer's Messianic vision, until the Messiah returns...

# MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS UPDATE

July 2016

Dear Friends:

The past month has been unbelievably busy, tiring, and exhausting—and on top of it all I got a nasty sinus infection. But, this past month, with a noticeable change in our routine, was very important for both myself



and our ministry. Those of you who follow me on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are likely to have been aware of the many things that I was involved with from mid-June to mid-July.

The biggest thing that occurred in July is that our ministry, Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics, exhibited our books and resources at Messiah 2016 in Grantham, PA. We had already been exhibitors at two MJAA regional conferences here in Dallas, and knew that it would be very important to have a presence at what is the oldest and largest worldwide Messianic Jewish conference. Many doors in the past have been closed to us at similar events, to exhibit our publications and resources—so to be welcomed to the largest, and perhaps most significant Messianic conference, is very gratifying.

There were some noticeable differences in the types of people I interacted with at Messiah 2016, compared to those I tend to correspond with online via social media, and even at my local congregation. Being in the Northeastern U.S., I was geographically located in the center of some of the largest Jewish populations in North America. A number of conversations I had, needed to be prefaced with statements like, “In my/our experience...” Messianic congregations more South- and West-ward have a much more mixed demographic in terms of Jewish and non-Jewish Believers, and it does noticeably affect our spirituality and approach to theological issues. Yet, I found much more agreement on issues of Torah *halachah* and procedure, being around those in established Messianic Judaism—as I interact a great deal with non-Jewish people who identify more along the lines of Hebrew/Hebraic Roots, who are not always friendly to mainline Jewish traditions and customs. Even though I was out of my element geographically, and I did choose my words carefully in some conversations, I did feel rather welcome, and I continue to expect the Lord’s favor both personally and ministerially in this venue for the future.

Now that I am settled back in North Texas, I resume work on our ongoing 2 Corinthians Wednesday Night Bible Study, the massive resource *Salvation on the Line*, and the continual expansion of video and audio podcasts to our YouTube channel. I want to particularly thank those of you who have generously given to the Outreach Israel Technology Fund, as we are upgrading our office computers this Summer!

Until next month... J.K. McKee