

# OIM UPDATE

May 2016

Now that followers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have commemorated the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, many are involved with the fifty days of Counting the Omer to the Feast of Weeks or *Shavuot* celebrated around the sixth of Sivan. During my early years as a Messianic Believer, I was perplexed about what the following command required of me in my pursuit of the Holy One of Israel:

**“You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths. You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the LORD”** (Leviticus 23:15-16).

In my desire to please Him, I researched the subject in a number of Jewish resources, and discovered that the Lord could use this discipline to enhance my walk with the Messiah, *if* I took the time to focus on what He commands His people to do. Consequently, I wrote a devotional book which gives other seekers an opportunity to spend some time in prayer and meditation during this season of the year, in anticipation of the outpouring of the Spirit on *Shavuot*, more commonly called Pentecost. The resource ***Counting of the Omer: A Daily Devotional Toward Shavuot*** follows the Jewish tradition of reading and reflecting upon Psalm 67 when the prescribed offerings would be made:

“For the choir director; with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song. God be gracious to us and bless us, *and* cause His face to shine upon us—Selah. That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth. Selah. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us. God blesses us, that all the ends of the earth may fear Him” (Psalm 67:1-7).

In this Psalm, there is a repetition of the theme that Israel is called to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:6), and be a light to the nations (Isaiah 49:6), in order to declare of God’s character to the world. In so doing, the peoples and nations would eventually demonstrate a holy reverence for the Almighty. As I have pondered this unique responsibility for us today, in lieu of these turbulent times, I was briefly reminded of what I wrote for the January 2016 edition of OIM News, “**A Synergistic Convergence,**” highlighting the loss of the culture war in America. This came to mind be-

cause of an article published in federalist.com by author Mytheos Holt, which reconfirmed from a secular viewpoint some of my conclusions. Hence this month's article, entitled "A Messianic Worldview," is my attempt to explain why we need to maintain our faith and perspective to share the Light of the world, Messiah Yeshua, with this wicked and perverse generation:

"Then Yeshua again spoke to them, saying, **I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life**" (John 8:12).

Finally, your support of our mission is greatly appreciated, as we have established the **Theological Defense Trust** and the **Prison Ministry Free Book Fund** to write and disseminate our materials to those seeking balanced, scholarly, and loving perspectives on what we believe the Holy Scriptures describe is happening in this hour of restoration. Thank you for your prayers and financial partnership in our efforts to produce sound teaching that we believe, in His time, will be critical for the emergence of the "one new humanity" (Ephesians 2:15) our Heavenly Father is bringing together!

*"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 WORLDVIEW

by Mark Huey

For those who profess faith in the sacrificial work of Yeshua the Messiah, and seek to follow the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, **these are troubling times**. Divergent, heartfelt opinions reign among those who claim to be adherents of a Judeo-Christian perspective which has absolutely influenced Western Civilization since the First Century C.E. This is totally understandable, given the multitude of interpretations of the Holy Scriptures which have waxed and waned over the past two millennia. Without revisiting the historical ramifications of the positive and negative factors of what have been traditionally labeled the institutions of the Jewish Synagogue and the Christian Church, suffice it to say that in many respects, the incessant war for the spiritual and cultural soul of the United States of America, the greatest proponent of God's Word in relatively modern times, has been lost.

*This disheartening realization for most is difficult to swallow.* But the undeniable facts of a society turned over to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are impossible to ignore. Humanity's tendency to navigate toward the ungodly things of the world is not simply a modern phenomenon, but something warned about centuries ago by figures such as the Apostle John:

"Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, **the love of the Father is not in him**. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; **but the one who does the will of God lives forever**" (1 John 2:15-17).

In these concise terms, the beloved Apostle John, an eyewitness of the resurrected Yeshua, who lived in his own tumultuous times during the dominance of the pagan Roman Empire, states the obvious. Every follower of the Holy One of Israel should **not** love the world or the things of the world, because if one does, then the love of the Heavenly Father is **not** present. This is quite an indictment to those who live today and are being heavily influenced by the things of the world—which include the unseen rulers, powers, and world forces of darkness in the Heavenly places. As the Apostle Paul would reference,

"**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*" (Ephesians 6:12).

The reality of what John and Paul related to their peers in the First Century applies to everyone alive today. We should take encouragement how when John wrote two millennia ago, he recognized that the world and its lusts were passing away, with the positive reminder that the one who does the will of God lives forever! What a great promise to those sincerely seeking the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! But as witnessed down through the centuries—especially in many misinterpretations and misapplications of God's Word—*precisely what the will of God truly is*, has been distorted, altered, and reconfigured to advance different understandings of the Holy Writ. Still, every godly person who understands the spiritual warfare that is indefatigably persisting since the fall of humanity should not be surprised. After all, division, strife, and confusion among the faithful are all attempts by the enemy of our souls to keep the children of God divided and less effective in every generation.

At this present point in time, the schemes of the Adversary (Ephesians 6:11) and his nefarious ways are visibly apparent, because the Holy One continues to turn people over

to their fleshly inclinations. *The debauchery, licentiousness, and lasciviousness are not even being cleverly concealed in our present day.* A blatant disregard for righteousness, holiness, and following even the most “liberal” interpretation of God’s will to do good rather than evil, was evident to the Apostle Paul, when he detailed the depravity of the First Century. In many respects, Paul’s summation describes the lost estate of humanity at large, and could be found in the leading newspapers or blogosphere without much editing of how the world appears in the Twenty-First Century:

“For the **wrath of God** is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of **men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness**, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, **being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.** For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, **but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.** Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. **Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.** For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen” (Romans 1:18-25).

As Qohelet stated it around three millennia ago: *there is nothing new under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:9)!*

What does “in your face” fleshly worship of the creature, rather than humble adoration of the Creator, mean to those who have been drawn into the Messianic community of faith since the 1970s? Is it possible that the End of the Age is steadily drawing closer to us, and the end-time saints who will have a testimony of Yeshua and obey His commands (Revelation 12:17; 14:12) are emerging and coalescing on the scene? Certainly in these modern times, the arrival of countless Jewish people who have come to saving faith in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua, and non-Jewish Believers embracing their Hebraic and Jewish Roots—as **witnessed in most Messianic congregations**—is a unique move of the Spirit! One of the final prophecies of the Tanakh, issued by Malachi, is arguably in the process of occurring:

“Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet **before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.** He will restore the hearts of the fathers to *their* children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse” (Malachi 4:5-6).

This ancient prophecy decrees that Elijah the Prophet will be sent “before the coming of the great and awesome day of HASHEM” (ATS). Such an ultimate return of Elijah, I believe, should not be confused with the earlier appearance of Yeshua’s cousin John, who came to declare of His arrival. It is noted how John the Immerser or Baptist came in the spirit of Elijah, as his father Zacharias attested:

“And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. **It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN** [Malachi 4:6], and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:16-17).

As the End of the Age approaches, is it possible that the spirit of Elijah is once again resonating in the hearts of true followers of the Messiah, who anticipate His return to rule and reign from Jerusalem? Certainly in recent years, many Messianic-oriented songs have been written that exemplify a return to the ancient paths, like these stanzas referencing Elijah, Moses, Ezekiel, and David, from a song you are doubtlessly familiar

with, entitled “Days of Elijah” written by Robin Mark in 1994:

*“These are the days of Elijah,  
Declaring the word of the Lord  
And these are the days of Your servant Moses,  
Righteousness being restored.  
And though these are days of great trial,  
Of famine and darkness and sword,  
Still, we are the voice in the desert crying  
“Prepare ye the way of the Lord!”  
Behold He comes riding on the clouds,  
Shining like the sun at the trumpet call,  
Lift your voice, it's the year of jubilee,  
And out of Zion's hill salvation comes.  
These are the days of Ezekiel,  
The dry bones becoming as flesh,  
And these are the days of Your servant David,  
Rebuilding a temple of praise.  
These are the days of the harvest,  
The fields are as white in Your world,  
And we are the labourers in Your vineyard,  
Declaring the word of the Lord!”*

Many of us are of the firm conviction that the Spirit of God is moving in the hearts of untold thousands, as the Messianic community of faith grows around the globe in numbers *and* in revelation about what the Father is doing among His children. For decades now, the maturation of the Messianic movement—which is most certainly a work in progress—is an indication that the Holy One is preparing a unique people to welcome back the Messiah at His Second Coming. But as I have often said and written, those who have migrated to a Messianic lifestyle and worldview, find themselves being led by the Spirit of God into this unique community, *primarily because* of the failings of the predominant religious or ecclesiastical systems from which they have come. Both Judaism and Christianity, in their own ways, have not just various human limitations *but even have some structural flaws*. It is hardly a surprise that as we get closer to the Lord's return, that various systemic problems are going to cause various explosions, implosions, collapses, and crashes.

Anyone, who has ever built a building or a structure like a tower, should understands how critical it is to make sure that as builders they have everything from construction drawings, to site preparation, to the materials needed to finish the job. Yeshua uses a construction analogy when He describes the cost to follow Him:

“For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? **Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, “This man began to build and was not able to finish”**” (Luke 14:28-30).

Particularly in the case of a tower or a tall structure, it is imperative to make sure that the cornerstone upon which the rest of the structure arises is properly positioned and laid in order to avoid structural problems, as the building ascends. *The leaning Tower of Pisa comes to mind!* In the case of much of modern-day Judaism, I would venture to say that the Psalmist foretells the principal problem which will result from the prophesied rejection of the chief corner stone. This is something which has been witnessed by many Jewish people in history, who have dismissed or rejected the Messianic claims of Yeshua of Nazareth:

“The right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. I

will not die, but live, and tell of the works of the LORD. The LORD has disciplined me severely, but He has not given me over to death. Open to me the gates of righteousness; I shall enter through them, I shall give thanks to the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous will enter through it. I shall give thanks to You, for You have answered me, and You have become my salvation. The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner *stone*. This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:16-24).

Here, the Psalmist declares that despite receiving discipline, Israel is not to be just turned over to death and obliteration. Instead, deliverance and salvation will be found in the Lord, and in particular in the chief cornerstone which will be recognized. In the Synoptic Gospels, Yeshua referenced Psalm 118 when talking about Himself, noting that He is the chief corner stone widely rejected by Israel corporate:

"Have you not even read this Scripture: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER *stone*; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES?' (Mark 12:10-11).

"Yeshua said to them, 'Did you never read in the Scriptures, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER *stone*; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES"?' (Matthew 21:42).

"But Yeshua looked at them and said, 'What then is this that is written: "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER *stone*"? Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust" (Luke 20:17-18).

The Apostle Peter quoted Psalm 118 at the Day of *Shavuot* or Pentecost, and in his first letter, connecting it to Yeshua the Messiah:

"He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, *but* WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER *stone*. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:11-12).

"This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER *stone*'" (1 Peter 2:7).

The Apostle Paul, also embedding Isaiah 28:16, made reference to Yeshua being the cornerstone, as he was deliberating over the widespread rejection of Yeshua by many of his Jewish contemporaries:

"Why? Because *they did not pursue it* by faith, but as though *it were* by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, just as it is written, 'BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED'" (Romans 9:32-33).

Speaking of the Body of Messiah, Paul also decrees how Yeshua the Messiah is the cornerstone of a building that has a foundation of both apostles and prophets:

"[H]aving been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Messiah Yeshua Himself being the corner *stone***" (Ephesians 2:20).

Within today's Messianic community, we correctly emphasize not only the vitality of the Jewish heritage of the Apostolic Scriptures or New Testament, but most especially the practices and customs of Yeshua, who lived and functioned within Second Temple Judaism. Even in the centuries following the destruction of the Second Temple, there are many writings and Jewish perspectives which we all, as not just Messiah followers but also Bible readers, genuinely benefit from. But, when we look at various Jew-

ish resources on the Torah or Tanakh, they are most probably going to originate from people who have dismissed Yeshua of Nazareth as the prophesied Messiah of Israel. So, Judaism as a human institution has a structural flaw we have to recognize. As noted earlier from Romans 9, there is a direct connection found in a prophecy issued by Isaiah, who foresaw the disturbance and turmoil evident when the tested corner stone laid in Zion is rejected:

“Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone *for the foundation*, firmly placed. He who believes *in it* will not be disturbed. I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the level; then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters will overflow the secret place” (Isaiah 28:16-17).

Judaism, in spite of its virtues, has lumbered along for the past two thousand years, too often and most lamentably missing not just a recognition of Yeshua as Israel’s Messiah, but the salvation provided for all who believe in His atoning work. Needless to say, by rejecting Yeshua as the corner stone, structurally speaking, Judaism on the whole and in its present form, cannot stand firm for too much longer!

Christianity also has some serious structural issues, which while not as severe as dismissing or rejecting the Messiah, are certainly serious as they regard the Holy Scriptures and the required behavior of God’s own. While among many Christians throughout the centuries, there has been an acknowledgment of the Torah, Prophets, and Writings as being Holy Scripture, there have been varied approaches to the ongoing validity, relevance, and authority of the Tanakh in an era when the prophesied Messiah has come. Do these Scriptures bear relevance for followers of the Messiah of Israel? Look at these different translations of Galatians 3:24:

“Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us to* Christ, so that we may be justified by faith” (NASU).

“So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith” (RSV).

The two differences of approach see the Torah as either (1) a strict schoolmaster which reveals the sin in people inevitably pointing them to the salvation available in the Messiah, or (2) as a code of conduct that the Jewish people had to follow only until the arrival of the Messiah. It is easy to recognize that the second viewpoint is what predominates a great deal of contemporary Christian thought. And it is also easy to recognize for those who recognize that the Torah, Prophets, and Writings are the foundation of Holy Scripture, that dismissing these texts has not at all aided today’s American evangelicalism for sure. I certainly believe that the Apostolic Writings, Matthew to Revelation, are the inspired words of God. **But these writings do not make up the entire Bible.** Contemporary Protestant Christianity has a widespread structural deficiency in its broad ignorance of the Tanakh. It is insufficient to simply claim that one has a high regard for the Tanakh, and that the only commandments which matter are those of love for God and neighbor (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; cf. Matthew 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8).

As important as it is to love God and neighbor, obedience to Him does not end there! Unfortunately, because too many (claiming) followers of Christ today have very little knowledge of the “rules of engagement” seen in the Tanakh, they are losing the spiritual war Believers are constantly fighting. When followers of the Messiah have little if no understanding of how the Adversary can use unintentional and intentional sin to thwart good intentions, he or she is at a serious disadvantage. Too frequently, those to

identify as “Christians” today have embraced a watered down, easy believism, a “simple faith” in Jesus, where the requirement to live holy unto God in obedience to His Instruction is not emphasized. More seriously and disconcerting, particularly in North America, is how there are mammoth Christian institutions—both denominational and educational—which because of their resources, can be very intimidating for people to fully break from. Certainly, our ministry has since its beginning stressed many of the positive and godly virtues found in evangelicalism, and recognizes how the God of Israel has legitimately used Christianity to declare the good news throughout the world. *And, many Christians of past generations had a high view of the Tanakh or Old Testament!* Yet, this does not include enough of the present generation.

At the End of the Age, just prior to the return of Yeshua the Messiah, the Prophet Jeremiah decrees that the time of Jacob's distress or trouble will occur. There are, to be sure, many parallels found with this in the Book of Revelation:

**“Alas! for that day is great, there is none like it; and it is the time of Jacob's distress, but he will be saved from it.** It shall come about on that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘that I will break his yoke from off their neck and will tear off their bonds; and strangers will no longer make them their slaves. But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. Fear not, O Jacob My servant,’ declares the LORD, ‘And do not be dismayed, O Israel; **for behold, I will save you from afar and your offspring from the land of their captivity.** And Jacob will return and will be quiet and at ease, and no one will make him afraid. For I am with you,’ declares the LORD, ‘to save you; for I will destroy completely all the nations where I have scattered you, only I will not destroy you completely. **But I will chasten you justly and will by no means leave you unpunished”** (Jeremiah 30:7-11).

Note in this passage from Jeremiah, how the prophet declares that the Lord will save the people of Israel from afar, even after many have returned to the Promised Land. But at the conclusion of this passage, there will be a just chastisement which includes some degree of punishment. Just what that reprimand is cannot be determined categorically, but it is clear that at that point in time, there will be the weeping recognition that the majority of the Jewish people rejected the cornerstone Yeshua, as explained in these verses from Zechariah:

**“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”** (Zechariah 12:10).

Now in turning to a prophecy written by the Apostle Paul to the Believers at Thessalonica, one discovers some sobering warnings to the children of God then, and one which applies to all today, two millennia later, who serve the Messiah. Here, Paul refers to **the apostasy** or great falling away, which is to take place in conjunction with the arrival of the antimessiah/antichrist. Just how and when this coincides with Jacob's distress has been conjectured by many in different ways, but the bottom line is that it will eventually happen at the End of the Age:

**“Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.* Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed.**



For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains *will do so* until he is taken out of the way. Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; ***that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.*** For this reason **God will send upon them a deluding influence** so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

When one reads this passage, in light of what is currently occurring in our world, as the Judeo-Christian worldview continues to deteriorate and lose influence, the fact that many will perish “because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved” should be a major wake up call to those who profess belief in Yeshua. To compound the problem, the apostle states that “**God will send upon them a deluding influence,**” in that many will believe the declarations of the lawless one because of the false signs and wonders he is able to perform. This sobering statement, to me at least, could be endemic of a coming collapse of various trusted Christian institutions, because there has been a lack of study and comprehension of the Tanakh or Old Testament Scriptures. When someone builds a structure by beginning on the second or third floor, disregarding the critical needs for a strong foundation and first floor, there is no way the building can withstand the troubling winds of change, unseen tremors of fear, and violent earthquakes of societal upheaval.

So what does all of this mean, in light of the emergence of the Messianic movement, and its worldview that is slowly presenting itself around the world at this time? If nothing else, it means that our Heavenly Father is totally in control of what is happening around the world, *if we trust in the veracity of His Holy Word from Genesis to Revelation*. For His Divine purposes He is allowing the Judeo-Christian perspective to come under attack from every direction—which while including atheists, secular humanists, Islamicists, and all who others call upon false gods—most notably include members of its own ranks who claim belief in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob *but do not truly worship Him or serve the interests of His Kingdom*.

***What are we who have a Messianic worldview to do?*** First, we need to pray for more faith and a greater measure of discernment, so we can more fully understand what is happening to our Western culture before our very eyes. Secondly, we need to stay strong in our convictions that the Holy One is indeed preparing a generation of Believers who will have a saving testimony of Yeshua, with the heartfelt conviction to obey His commands, as we await His return. Third, we should stay in community with other like-minded Messianic people, from Jewish and non-Jewish backgrounds, who share our unique Messianic perspective and want to bring others into the Messianic fold of Believers. Finally, and most importantly, we all need to cling to Yeshua and constantly ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His will for each of our individual lives. As servants of the Most High, we have a responsibility to be His loving representatives with a welcoming Messianic worldview, in yet another wicked and perverse generation. And do remember: the ultimate victory has already been won!

May we all continue to serve Him with all our hearts, mind, souls, and strength, until the Messianic restoration of all things...

# MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS UPDATE

May 2016

Dear Friends:

This past month, I was impacted when I saw the new trailer released for the upcoming movie *Independence Day: Resurgence*. Many of you saw the first *Independence Day* film in 1996, as I did when I was in high school. A poster for the sequel says, “We had twenty years to prepare—so did they.” Spring of 1996 was an important time for my family. *This was when we fully became Messianic.*



We stopped going to church, and instead exclusively attended the Messianic Jewish congregation. It is also true that with the year 2000, Y2k, and the new millennium on the scene, that we were also influenced by a great deal of end-time speculation, conspiracy theories, and guessing. But this was necessary, given what we do now. When the 2000s came, I was blessed to be able to go to college, I saw the beginnings of Outreach Israel Ministries, I was even more blessed to be able to go to seminary. And, many of us all witnessed the evitable explosion of the Messianic movement into sectors which its original pioneers were not able to fully see, as they exclusively saw this as a venue to declare Yeshua as Israel’s Messiah to the Jewish people.

Much of what we have been called to do, is to help individuals and families like ours, who have been called into the Messianic movement from their more customary evangelical Christian settings. We address issues and produce materials to help people getting acclimated to this still-new and emerging faith community. We do our best to stress mutual honor and respect toward Judaism and Christianity. We are honest about some of the errors and mistakes we have made in the past, specifically so that others do not have to make them. **We stress the work of the Holy Spirit and the centrality of the work of Messiah for all of us**, as at our present stage of development, we are not convinced that the Messianic movement is “for everyone.”

A future stage is coming when the Messianic movement is going to have a much broader appeal than it has ever had before. In 2016, I have been prompted to consider what I have done over the past twenty years. *My wide array of written materials serves as ample proof to having been very busy.* Others have not been so busy in striving to see the issues of the day addressed. While many of them have been involved in congregational ministry activities—which are hardly easy—others have just spent their time socializing with other ministry leaders, with not enough consideration for on-the-ground spiritual and theological issues among the people.

Like many of you, I am very concerned about the future, prompted by the fact that this is an election year for the American presidency. I do not know what is going to happen in the U.S. election, but I do know that social and spiritual dynamics are beginning to radically change. One day, although not today, I absolutely believe that Messiah followers are going to have to take a very low profile in society—with the Messiah’s return impending. In the time between now and then—especially if it is another twenty years—I have to continue to work at the pace I have been working, and be concerned for the needs of the people at large.

Since Passover of last year, I have been making the significant effort to employ more and more social media. I setup an author Facebook page at [facebook.com/JKMMessianic](https://facebook.com/JKMMessianic) and Twitter feed @JKMMessianic. This Fall and certainly this past Winter, I have been using the Messianic Apologetics YouTube channel at [youtube.com/c/messianicapologetics](https://youtube.com/c/messianicapologetics) more and more—and have just now started to archive not only video but also our audio teachings there as well. And, I am now on Instagram at [instagram.com/jkmmessianic](https://instagram.com/jkmmessianic)

One day, the powers that be are going to pull the plug on religious people using social media. I do not want to be in my mid-fifties to early sixties, in some kind of low profile, closed home fellowship setting, carrying around the personal guilt that I could have done more, and given out more—but did not because I was concerned about the sales of our ministry books. I want to instead carry the confidence of knowing that I did everything that I could to help others, with the tools available at my disposal for as long as they were available!

Until next month... J.K. McKee