



OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS

REACH TEACH ENCOURAGE DISCIPLE

AUGUST 2009
IN AWE OF
the God We Trust

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STATEMENT OF BELIEF

Outreach Israel Ministries and TNN Online

There is One Almighty Creator God of the Universe, who has revealed Himself to us in the manifestations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) came in fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies of the Scriptures and is fully God. It is mandatory for us to believe in a Divine Redeemer to be saved. Salvation is a free gift of God to all who receive Messiah Yeshua into their lives and confess of their sins. Those who reject Messiah will be consigned to eternal punishment.

The Holy Scriptures, Genesis-Revelation, are the inspired, infallible Word of God as revealed in the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts.

There is only one assembly of chosen ones/elect, the people of Israel, of which all Believers in Messiah are a part. God does not have two groups of elect: Israel and "the Church."

The Torah (Genesis-Deuteronomy) is the foundation of all Scripture, was followed by our Messiah Yeshua, and is to still be followed and studied by Believers today.

Yeshua the Messiah is coming to gather the saints after the Tribulation period.

OIM is an *agapē* ministry, freely and benevolently giving the vast majority of its teachings and resources, without charge, to those who desire to be spiritually nourished.

For a fuller Statement of Faith, consult the OIM website

Outreach Israel News is the monthly newsletter of Outreach Israel Ministries, a non-profit organization with an emphasis on reaching, teaching, and encouraging the Messianic community. Subscription to **Outreach Israel News** is without cost and supported only by donation.

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OIM UPDATE

August 2009

For years as a teaching ministry, we have witnessed that the long, hot, days of Summer seem to tempt some Messianic Believers to wander away from the sound Biblical moorings of the faith, as first preached by the Apostles (Ephesians 3:3-7). For whatever reasons, it generally appears that from *Shavuot* to *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah*, or roughly June, July, and August, that various seekers “**desire something more exciting**” in their pursuit of the Holy One of Israel.

After the steady and fulfilling Spring march, from Passover through the Omer Count to *Shavuot*, perhaps many conclude that there is more knowledge of God to be had outside of the prayer, study, and worship patterns traditionally established down through the ages. While Spring transitions into Summer, with only the constraints of the increasingly mundane weekly Torah study dominating many groups—the tendency is for many to look elsewhere for some new and sensational teaching, or insights to understand and know the Lord better. Although fervently wanting a more vibrant relationship with our Heavenly Father is a wonderful thing that is highly recommended, recklessly pursuing **questionable “ear tickling” teaching** (2 Timothy 4:3) can be spiritually debilitating for the less discerning.

Pondering this seasonal dilemma prompted me to write this month’s lead article, entitled, “**In Awe of the God We Trust.**” I have been trying to analyze why certain groups of people seem to readily fall into the trap of wanting “sizzling” teachings. As you will discover, I concluded that modern-day Messianics—non-Jewish Messianics in particular—can learn much from the traditional patterns established by our Jewish forebearers in faith, who have perhaps noted similar wandering tendencies in previous generations.

This issue of OIM News also includes a recent McHuey Blog, “**A Dilemma for the Israel of God,**” discussing the recent remembrance of the Ninth of Av. Perhaps in the future, if you have never fasted on the Ninth of Av before, this will prompt you to consider it.

Finally, we appreciate your continued financial support of our efforts of the ongoing TNN Press Book Fund. Over the years we have written over twenty balanced, loving, and scholarly publications that are ready to be printed for more efficient distribution. We believe that these materials will contribute significantly to maintaining some of the balance that will make the Messianic community of faith a more effective witness in the marketplace of ideas. Our goal is to make about two titles ready every two months, and we cannot do this without your help. So we thank you in advance for your partnering with us in this endeavor!

Until the restoration of all things...

Mark Huey

JOIN THE TNN PRESS BOOK FUND

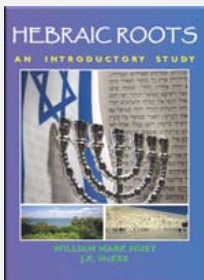


Would you like to see high quality, scholastic, and loving Messianic books like *Hebraic Roots*, *Introduction to Things Messianic*, *Torah In the Balance*, and *When Will the Messiah Return?* available from major booksellers? Do you want your friends to be able to purchase these books without the “fear” of having to contact a Messianic ministry? Join the ongoing **TNN Press Book Fund** today and make this a reality!

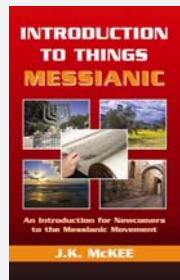
The TNN Press Book Fund is the most ambitious project ever embarked upon by our ministry. For over five years, we have been on the cutting edge preparing materials for the long-term future of the Messianic movement, ranging from introductory books to home study guides to commentaries on various books of the Bible. These publications *now* need to be able to have a wider distribution than *just* our ministry. They need to be out there to counterbalance some of the unfair and unloving materials that bring discredit to the Messianic community. They need to promote a Messianic movement that is going to be an influence of positive change in the world. TNN Press offers some of the most well-researched and theologically stable Messianic materials on the market, and it is time to see that our publications are professionally printed.

***Hebraic Roots: An Introductory Study* and *Introduction to Things Messianic* are now available in paperback!**

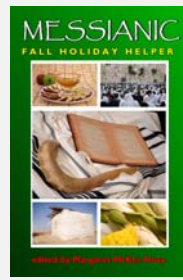
***The Messianic Fall Holiday Helper* is due back from the printers this month!**



AVAILABLE



AVAILABLE



AUGUST



LATE FALL

IN AWE OF the God We Trust

by Mark Huey

The study of God's Word is not only a blessing to all who desire a closer walk with Him, but it is also a critical requirement in order to understand His ways and know Him in a more profound way. While independent study of various parts of Holy Writ is always advisable and highly recommended, it is vital to maintain a consistent pattern of study that inculcates the weightier aspects of God's eternal instructions for humanity (Matthew 23:23). If you are like me, since discovering a Messianic perspective, it has probably been beneficial for you to follow the study patterns of the Torah, Haftarah, and other liturgical tools developed down through the centuries by the Jewish Sages. After all, these pursuers had a respectful awe of the God in whom they trusted, and they took His Word very seriously. Our Jewish forebearers in faith have taken admonitions, like the following passage from Deuteronomy, to heart in searching for the best ways to pass on their knowledge and insight to future generations:

“See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. So keep and do *them*, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him? Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons” (Deuteronomy 4:5-9).

The ancient Sages and Rabbis of Judaism knew that in order for Israel to be the great nation that the Lord God selected them to be, they would have to develop methods for studying the Torah in a systematic way. This eventually led to dividing the first five books of Scripture into 54 *parashot* or portions/readings for weekly study. Due to persecutions forbidding the study of the Torah in parts of the Diaspora, complimentary Haftarah readings from the Prophets were added to enhance the weekly exploration into the Word of God.

In a like manner, with the whole TaNaKh—*Torah* (Law), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), *Ketuvim* (Writings)—as a resource, the Jewish community has developed a complex Scriptural liturgical expression for most everything from the morning, afternoon, and evening services, to all of the milestones of life from birth, circumcision, *bar mitzvah*, marriage, and death. Prayers have also been compiled for all the seasons, festivals, and fasts of the year. If you take the time to review a modern-day Jewish prayer book or *siddur*, you might be overwhelmed with the amount of Biblically-based instruction that is available to those pursuing God in the traditional Synagogue.¹

Today's Messianic community has an abundant, edifying Jewish spiritual

heritage from which it can greatly benefit. In his letter to the Believers at Rome (which was a group suffering from a problem of many of the non-Jews thinking that God might have finished with the Jews), the Apostle Paul is clear that the Jewish people have been responsible for maintenance of the oracles of God, handling them with great reverence and trustworthiness:

“Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man *be found* a liar, as it is written, ‘THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED’ [Psalm 116:11; 51:4]” (Romans 3:1-4).

Perish the thought that God is finished with the Jewish people! Paul later reminds his readers that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:29). This requires any non-Jewish Believer, who has placed his or her trust in the Jewish Messiah, to give the Jewish people proper honor and respect. For someone such as myself, who is not Jewish, there is a great appreciation for what my Jewish predecessors in faith have preserved for me, in my study and reflection on the Scriptures.

The main result for many of today’s non-Jewish Messianics, embracing their Hebraic and Jewish Roots, is choosing to follow the annual pattern of studying the weekly Torah portions. Most individuals and growing congregations take the annual cycle through the Torah (a few choose the triennial pattern stretching the study to three years). Not infrequently, the complimentary Haftarah selections are considered, along with suggested passages from the Apostolic Writings. The goal of any Torah teacher or student should be to concentrate on the weightier things of the Torah, as required by the Lord Yeshua (Matthew 23:23).

I believe that there is *more* to be learned from our Jewish spiritual heritage than just a consistent, annual study of the Torah. In the Deuteronomy 4 passage I quoted earlier, Moses admonished Ancient Israel to embrace its responsibility as the great nation or *ha'goy ha'gadol* (הַגּוֹי הַגָּדוֹל) selected by the Holy One for His Divine service. The text lists certain expectations that when incorporated into Israel’s cultural and societal mores, are designed to maintain their status as a special and sacred community:

“Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons” (Deuteronomy 4:9).

In these instructions, Moses delivers individual and corporate responsibilities for the people of Israel, in order for them to best fulfill their obligations to the Most High. It is imperative that individuals “take utmost care and watch” (NJPS) over themselves. In life today, we find that we are each individually responsible, and will be held accountable, for our actions, words, and even thoughts. *We* need

¹ For a further review, simply consult J.H. Hertz, ed., *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, revised (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1960); and for a more modern view, Jules Harlow, ed., *Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals* (New York: Rabbinical Assembly, 2007).

to take Moses' instruction to heart, as *we* implement that severe admonition to properly preserve ourselves via God's Teaching.

This is critical because the second component in Moses' instruction requires us to note that humans have a major tendency to forget the things that they have seen. For that same matter, people will often also forget things that they have been told or have heard repeated to them. This is why Moses says to not "let them slip from your heart as long as you live" (NIV), because people naturally tend to wander away from the things of the Lord. A consequence of forgetting God's ways is the possibility that the things you have encountered—either seen, heard, or read—about Him and the relationship you are supposed to have with Him, just might depart from your heart. If and when the words of the Lord are forgotten and have departed from you, then wandering is the obvious consequence we will witness.

This departure results in the inability to complete the final requirement to teach or make known the words of the Lord, and hence the responsibilities of His "great nation," to future generations. It is this duty to preserve the words and ways of the Almighty for future generations, that motivated the Sages and Rabbis to not only conceive and develop systematic study methods for the Tanach, but also prodded them to discuss and develop *halachah* on how to properly walk according to agreed-upon interpretations of the commandments. Consequently, because the Jewish recipients of the oracles of God have been faithful to the instruction to teach future generations, many of their customs and traditions have not only been generally adhered to throughout the millennia, but have indeed made them a distinct and separate people down to the modern era. *Hallelujah for His faithfulness to His Word!*

There is much that can be learned from a systematic Jewish approach to studying God's Torah. Yet keep in mind that the Sages and Rabbis have also thoughtfully and deliberately weaved in appropriate seasonal teachings throughout the calendar year, in order to prepare hearts for remembering significant events that have occurred during the long history of Israel. **The challenge to inculcate a reverential fear of the Lord in hearts of people has always been a prime intention of this.** God's faithful children will hopefully take their personal responsibilities seriously, in order to not forget and depart from Him. Hopefully, each generation will not relinquish its duty to teach its descendents by encouraging some daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly reminders which have been incorporated into the annual teaching cycle.

Two of the most significant events that today's Jewish and Messianic Jewish communities commemorate are the festivals of *Purim* and *Chanukah*, both marking important events in Jewish history where God has had to miraculously deliver His people. About one month before Passover, the salvation of the Jews in Persia via the faithfulness of Esther and Mordecai is recalled, as the Jewish people faced extermination (Book of Esther). Additionally, during the Winter and beginning on the 25th of Kislev, the remembrance of *Chanukah* forces us to recall the sacrifice of the Maccabees who opposed the Seleucid-Greek oppressors of Judea, who had defamed God's Temple and forced religious and cultural assimilation.

While celebrating the victories of Israel over its opponents is instructional,

and serves as a means to remind people about their heritage and God's faithfulness, there are also a number of days when observant Jews traditionally fast in order to remember tragedies that have befallen both them, and Jerusalem in particular. These fasts include: the commencement of the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem on the 10th of Tevet (2 Kings 25:1-4), the breach of the wall around Jerusalem by the Romans on the 17th of Tammuz, the murder of Gedaliah on the 3rd of Tishri (Jeremiah 41:1-2), and the burning of the First and Second Temples on the Ninth of Av (cf. m.*Ta'anit* 4:6). These fasts, along with the fast traditionally preceding *Purim*, last from sundown to sunset, except the fast on the Ninth of Av that lasts for just over twenty-four hours.

It is important to note that over the centuries, as the Torah and Haftarah readings have been studied and chosen for reflection, the Sages and Rabbis have concluded that it is entirely appropriate to let the annual cycle through the Torah be complimented by various teachings for these special times of commemoration. When any of the *moedim* or appointed times are being remembered, there are often special readings that are intended to be discussed for the respective holidays (Passover, Unleavened Bread, *Shavuot*, *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah*, *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot*, *Shemini Atzeret*). Most significant for our present discussion, when these mentioned fasts are conducted, certain Scripture readings are intended to be considered. During the fast of the Ninth of Av, the Book of Lamentations is considered, traditionally viewed as being the heartfelt expression of the Prophet Jeremiah's grief—an eyewitness to the destruction of the First Temple.

Our ministry has encouraged people over the years—largely new, non-Jewish Messianics—to consider the spiritually edifying traditions of Judaism during the various festal seasons of the year, as best evidenced in our Virtual Series of teachings (Passover, *Shavuot*, Fall High Holidays, *Sukkot*, *Chanukah*, *Purim*). We have also encouraged people to read the weekly Torah portions, in an effort to have a secure foundation for their Biblical faith. In fact, it was during a recent consideration of the weekly Torah and Haftarah readings, as we approached the period between the 17th of Tammuz and the Ninth of Av, that I was prompted to write this article.

Over the past four to five years, our ministry has been seriously concerned for the spirituality of the still-maturing Messianic movement. We are deeply troubled by the perceived susceptibility of many Messianic Believers—particularly new, non-Jewish Messianic Believers—to be distracted, *if not deceived*, by various erroneous, sensationalistic teachings that tend to permeate congregations and fellowships through the Summer months. Because of this common occurrence, I really began to wonder if something is being overlooked during the time period between *Shavuot* and *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah*, which would account for a tendency for many to get swept up in superfluous teachings that usually invade during June, July, and August.

As I was writing a few of my recent Haftarah Exhortations, it dawned on me that the Rabbis and Sages of Judaism were perhaps also concerned about a possible tendency for people to wander during the Summer months. I realized that in order to combat this penchant for following other teachings, or simply taking the months off from a diligent study of the Word, the ancient Sages thought it pru-

dent to focus people on some of the sober history of Ancient Israel. Just look at their selections of the Haftarah readings for the time period between the Seventeenth of Tammuz through the Ninth of Av, and then all the way to *Yom Kippur*.

The 17th of Tammuz actually falls forty days after the remembrance of *Shavuot*, widely recalling the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. Yet the giving of the Law to Israel ironically ends with Moses smashing the tablets of the Ten Commandments, written by the very finger of God, when he discovers the people worshipping a golden calf. Centuries later, the walls of Jerusalem were breached by the Romans in 70 C.E., just three weeks before they destroyed the Second Temple on the Ninth of Av, the same exact day that the Babylonians had destroyed the First Temple in 586 B.C.E. The Ninth of Av is also noted as the day that the twelve Israelite spies came back from surveying Canaan, with ten of the spies convincing the Israelites that the giants were too difficult to overcome, thereby dissuading the fledgling nation from trusting in the Lord and immediately entering the Promised Land.

The accepted historical accounts of many of the tragedies that befell Ancient Israel and the Jewish people down through the centuries, have intriguing links to the period between the 17th of Tammuz and the Ninth of Av. The Sages and Rabbis, noting the providential “coincidences,” chose distinct Haftarah readings to be considered during this time, connected to recalling these terrible incidents. The three weeks of retribution between the 17th of Tammuz and the Ninth of Av became known as *bein ha'mitzarim* (בֵּין הַמִּצָּרִים), or “between the breaches,” taken from Lamentations 1:3:

“Judah has gone into exile under affliction and under harsh servitude; She dwells among the nations, *but* she has found no rest; All her pursuers have overtaken her in the midst of distress [*bein ha'mitzarim*].”

The Prophet Jeremiah was an eyewitness to the destruction of Jerusalem and the First Temple, and so tradition ascribes authorship of the Book of Lamentations to him (b.*Bava Batra* 15a).² Lamentations serves as a sorrowful ode, mourning over the ruin that came to the Southern Kingdom as a result of their disobedience and idolatry. The Book of Lamentations is commonly read and considered during the fast of the Ninth of Av. Additionally, during the three Sabbaths between the 17th of Tammuz and the Ninth of Av, the Haftarah selections come from the opening chapters of Jeremiah and Isaiah (Jeremiah 1:1-2:3; 2:4-3:4; Isaiah 1:1-27). Both of these prophets were noted for declaring warnings that if God's people did not confess and repent of their wicked ways, then His judgment would fall upon them. **By studying and reflecting upon these passages, the hope is that God's people today will maintain a reverential attitude in their approach toward Him.**

Finally, in order to get people to pay attention, the Sabbath prior to the Ninth of Av is traditionally considered to be *Shabbat Chazon*, or the “Sabbath of Vision,” drawing complete attention to the soon coming fast. This is followed by the seven Sabbaths of consolation, beginning with *Shabbat Nachamu* or the

² Do note, however, that the Book of Lamentations itself is strictly anonymous, claiming no definite author. A reliable interpretation of Lamentations should not insist on Jeremianic authorship, as there are some stylistic differences between the Books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. This may come as a result of his scribe Baruch being the actual author, or a later editor as the text reached its final form.

“Sabbath of Consolation,” following the Ninth of Av, with its Haftarah selection being Isaiah 40:1-26. The next six Sabbaths of consolation following, also take their Haftarah selection from the prophet Isaiah, and include: (2) Isaiah 49:14-51:3; (3) Isaiah 54:11-55:5; (4) Isaiah 51:12-52:12; (5) Isaiah 54:1-10; (6) Isaiah 60:1-22; and (7) Isaiah 61:10-63:9. After the three weeks of retribution and the seven weeks of consolation, the Torah cycle then remembers the blowing of the *shofar* and start of the Civil New Year on *Rosh HaShanah*.

To further enhance the need for hearts to be prepared—especially for the very solemn and holy Day of Atonement or *Yom Kippur*—the month of Elul, following the month of Av, is traditionally dedicated to preparing people for the Fall high holidays. It is believed that this is the time when Moses took the second set of tablets up to Mount Sinai, bearing a repentant heart for Israel, in order to come back to the people, with the second set of Ten Commandments delivered on the 10th of Tishri, the actual Day of Atonement. Coupling the first ten days of Tishri or the Ten Days of Awe, with the thirty days of Elul, Moses had his forty additional days before he was able to return to the Israelites for the Day of Atonement.

It is during this time, from the 1st of Elul through the Ten Days of Awe, that every year a follower of the God of Israel has the opportunity to ask forgiveness from anyone he or she has offended during the course of the previous year. Rather than the “dog days” of Summer being dominated by revelry apart from God’s ways, the 17th of Tammuz to the 10th of Tishri should be occupied with solemn, repentant thoughts. **You should be able to see how faithful observers of these disciplines should not have the time or the inclination to get caught up in the distractions of deviant sins—or even deviant teachings.**

The more I have thought about remembering the sober historical events of the past, delving into the weekly Torah and Haftarah study cycles of the Summer, I have come to realize that the Jewish people **do indeed have a distinct advantage** over most new, non-Jewish Messianics. This is primarily because they are indisputably connected to the history of Israel, and can often personally identify with the challenges of previous generations going back thousands of years to the time of Moses. A modern-day Jew can vividly imagine the sieges of Jerusalem and the destruction of the two Temples. Through the various accounts provided in the Tanakh, and perhaps other historical writings, they envision their ancestors—or maybe even by extension, themselves—in those predicaments.

These are things remembered in the Synagogue every year, ingrained into the Jewish tradition, which not all of today’s Messianics have chosen to remember. This is principally because as non-Jews have swelled the demographics of our faith community, a desire to investigate and consider mainline Jewish traditions has not been a high priority. **Yet it is clear that these customs can certainly aid people in understanding the severity of sin and God’s holiness.** How can we learn to correct this, and *all* learn to empathize with the tragic history that has befallen Ancient Israel and the Jewish people? There are certainly important lessons to be learned during the Summer months, even if there are no real “feasts” to be celebrated.

One of the blessings of the Hebraic Roots movement over the past several

decades is in presenting a fuller understanding of the relationship that Christians have with the Jewish people. People in today's Church have learned much about how to appreciate Judaism, and the need to support Israel. They have also learned to appreciate how as new creatures in the Jewish Messiah Yeshua (2 Corinthians 5:17), they are to be considered the seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:26-29)—beneficiaries of the original promise that “I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing” (Genesis 12:2). Understanding this, and Christians further investigating the origins of our ancient faith, has helped see the Messianic movement grow in leaps and bounds in recent years.

But how many of us can overlook the critical factor in that receiving the blessings promised to Abraham, becoming an heir to the promise he received, that there is an absolute need for the Spirit of God to dwell *within all of us* in order to be considered a son or daughter of God? Consider what Paul also wrote the Romans:

“However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he does not belong to Him. If Messiah is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yeshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah Yeshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’ **The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Messiah**, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*” (Romans 8:9-17).

Notice in this passage that the emphasis is on the Spirit of God indwelling the Believer. **If someone does not have the Spirit of God, he or she does not belong to the Father and cannot be considered a child of God.** But on the other hand, if someone has the indwelling Spirit of God, then it is logical to conclude that the person **should have *even more* of an advantage in discerning truth**—than possibly the most ardent Jewish follower of the Most High who does not necessarily have the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

So if this axiom is really true, then why does it appear from our family's observations over the past fifteen years that Messianic non-Jews—presumably with the indwelling Spirit of God—**are more susceptible to follow erroneous Summer teachings** than Jewish people (probably) without the Spirit of God?

A valid answer to this perplexing question was difficult to discern, until I realized that many of the patterns established by the ancient Sages and Rabbis for the Jewish community down through the millennia, have been used to inculcate a genuine fear and awe of the Holy One in religious Jews. Consequently, many of today's Messianic Jews who grew up following these guidelines in the Synagogue

are not that attracted to the varied and diverse Summer sensations. For centuries, Jews who seriously followed the Torah and Haftarah study disciplines, benefited from having their hearts and minds focused on the Almighty and getting right with Him and others, during the time period between the 17th of Tammuz and *Yom Kippur*. Then and now, the inclination to get sidetracked by superfluous teaching during the Summer, is often not seen.

So why do Messianic non-Jews seem to be so susceptible? Are they just undisciplined? Do they just not know any better? It has been our experience that not having some of the disciplines employed in the traditional Synagogue, also employed in Messianic Jewish congregations and fellowships, unknowingly fosters a cavalier trust in God. *People naturally do not have a fervent fear of Him.* In Messianic congregations where the various traditions of Judaism are frowned upon, should we be that surprised by what we witness during the Summer? Increasingly in recent years, too many non-Jewish Messianics have tried to enhance their spirituality by taking the carefree Summer months, to indulge in all sorts of teaching provided by the multitude of seminars and conferences taking place. It is often at these circus gatherings that a wide and diverse variety of superfluous teachings gain a foothold.

Lamentably, some of the teaching and instruction are proclaimed “new revelation,” too frequently with ear-tickling theories that do not follow the Torah requirement for truth to be confirmed by two or three witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15). Unlike the time-tested Torah and Haftarah traditions that have been established and ratified by the Sages and Rabbis of Judaism down through the ages, and are often observed in Messianic Judaism—the mystical and end-time teachings heard and disseminated at many Summer conferences could be considered like eating spiritual junk food *at best*, and feeding on heresy at worst. When one hears comments like, “**We will just eat the meat of the teaching and spit out the bones of poor teaching,**” you realize that many people do not understand how overlooked bones can just slip right in, literally threatening one’s vitality. What is most disturbing is that false teachers with verifiable track records of speaking presumptuously, often about the end-times, *still attract* gullible audiences! **One wonders when the indwelling Spirit of God will warn naïve people that this Summer pattern needs to not be the long-term future of the Messianic movement.**

Is there anything wrong with taking the time between the 17th of Tammuz and *Yom Kippur* to get your heart right before God, and be at peace with others? I do not think any of us can honestly disagree. So if there is a spiritual benefit to this, why we do not hear more about being the holy and repentant people that He requires us to be? How can we learn to integrate this into our Messianic Summer experiences?

The patterns have been established, **and there is no better time than the present, to let awe and reverence of the Almighty motivate your doings this Summer.** In so doing, we can present a responsible style of spirituality to our immediate progeny and future generations. There are time-tested methods, established by our Jewish forebearers in faith, which can significantly help us be what our Heavenly Father wants us to be. Remember that fear of Him is the beginning of wisdom:

“Give *instruction* to a wise man and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man and he will increase *his* learning. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Proverbs 9:9-10).

Choose wisdom and understanding! Always be in awe of God!
Until the restoration of all things...



INTRODUCTION TO THINGS MESSIANIC

PAPERBACK EDITION

Are you new to the Messianic movement? Do you have questions about what the Messianic movement, lifestyle, and theologies are all about? Do you need answers on a wide variety of issues with some detailed information? If these are the questions you have been asking, then *Introduction to Things Messianic* is a book that will definitely benefit you.

Written to the new person investigating Messianic things, *Introduction to Things Messianic* is a compilation of articles that will inform the inquirer on a wide array of Messianic topics relevant to the current state and growth of our movement, including:

- Is “the Church” truly a new group of elect?
- Is the Torah or Law of Moses really relevant for Believers today?
- Who were the ancient Pharisees and what did they believe?
- What is this “Two-House teaching” that I hear so much about?
- Am I required to keep the Sabbath?
- What are the Biblical festivals?
- Am I required to eat kosher?
- Why do many Messianics use the proper name of God?
- What do Messianics think about the end-times?
- How do I properly grow in this new walk of faith?

These questions, and many more, are discussed and detailed in *Introduction to Things Messianic*. This book builds on the foundational material in *Hebraic Roots: An Introductory Study* in a much more thorough way for those wanting an in-depth view of these basic issues. *Introduction to Things Messianic* can be used for a single person or a group Bible study, as study questions follow each chapter. It can also be easily used along with the available lecture series companion by author J.K. McKee.

Available now! \$17.99 (shipping to be added)

A Dilemma for the Israel of God

by Mark Huey

29 July, 2009



One of the great joys for non-Jewish Believers like me, who discovers and embraces the Hebraic and Jewish Roots of our faith, is knowing how, via our faith in Israel's Messiah, we have been grafted into the olive tree of Israel (Romans 11), and gain full citizenship in the Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:12) or Israel of God (Galatians 6:16). Being adopted, as a son into the family of the Most High, is more fully understood as passages like Ephesians 1:3-12 give me confidence that our Heavenly Father has predestined not only my adoption at a predetermined time, but also the circumstances of life prior to what led up to this adoption.

With an adoption such as mine secured, because of belief in the atoning work of the Jewish Messiah Yeshua, how should I be conducting myself as part of the redeemed Israel of God? Should I follow the traditions and customs of many religious Jews, who undeniably represent physical Israel? Is it appropriate to join with them when it comes to commemorating tragic events from the lengthy history of Israel? These questions become extremely pertinent and timely this week, as the three weeks of remembrance or retribution from the 17th of Tammuz, culminate with the fast of the Ninth of Av (sundown Wednesday July 29 to sundown Thursday July 30).

Historically speaking, the same sovereign God who predestined my adoption has also providentially allowed some ancient tragedies to (re)occur on similar dates, in order to magnify their significance. The 17th of Tammuz comes forty days after *Shavuot* or the Feast of Weeks, and is usually remembered for these significant incidents:

"Five events took place for our fathers on the seventeenth of Tammuz...On the seventeenth of Tammuz (1) the tablets [of the Torah] were broken, (2) the daily whole offering was cancelled, (3) the city wall was breached, (4) Apostemos burned the Torah, and (5) he set up an idol in the Temple" (m. *Ta'anit* 4:6).

Three weeks later after what has been labeled *bein ha'mitzarim* ("between the breaches"), the Ninth of Av is often remembered with a total 25 hour fast. This date remembers five horrific tragedies that befell the Jewish people:

"Five events took place for our fathers on the...ninth of Ab...On the ninth of Ab (1) the decree was made against our forefathers that they should not enter the land, (2) the first Temple and (3) the second [Temple] were destroyed, (4) Betar was taken, and (5) the city was plowed up [after the war of Hadrian]" (m. *Ta'anit* 4:6).

In more recent times, the Ninth of Av is also notorious for the expulsion of

Jews from England (1290) and Spain (1492). Even the removal of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to the concentration camps of Treblinka in 1942, is sometimes linked to this date. As you can see, both the 17th of Tammuz and the Ninth of Av are historically significant dates in the trials and tribulations of the Jewish people, from the fall of the Southern Kingdom to Babylon all the way to modern times.

So here is my dilemma. What is a non-Jewish Messianic Believer, like myself, to do when his Jewish brethren remember these days of memorial mourning—with fasts reflecting on the tragedies of the past? As a joint heir with the Messiah of Israel (Romans 8:16-17), am I to incorporate remembering the Ninth of Av into my spiritual experience with God?

What could be the benefit of remembering the Ninth of Av? Could non-Jewish Messianics like myself use this time to provoke Jews to jealousy for faith in the Jewish Messiah? Could we not take this time to fast and pray for those who presently do not believe in Him? Would the good Apostle Paul, the apostle to the nations, approve of actions that might move his Jewish people to jealousy? What would a Jewish man or woman think, witnessing or hearing about a non-Jew like myself genuinely participating in these commemorations? As Paul reminds us,

“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?” (Romans 11:11-15).

The more I pondered my choice of what to do with these commemorations and fasts, I wondered what the Messiah would do—or rather what He did—when it came to honoring the mainline traditions of First Century Judaism. I recalled that He was in Jerusalem during the Feast of Dedication or *Chanukah*, sharing some very profound truths about Himself and His mission at the Temple complex (John 10:22-30). While *Chanukah* was not originally prescribed in Leviticus 23, the Lord was obviously involved in honoring the sacrifice of the Maccabees in preserving the Jewish people. *Chanukah* is something worthy of remembrance, that our ministry certainly encourages every Messianic household to observe.

Considering this led me to Yeshua's parable of the talents, and some of the concluding remarks He makes contrasting the wicked and the righteous (Matthew 25:30-46). The Messiah's comment about how one treats the least of His brethren (Matthew 25:40)—meaning my Jewish brothers and sisters who worship HaShem just as I do—struck a serious chord.

Do you benefit from a special, Jewish spiritual heritage? *I know I do.* By my trust in Israel's Messiah, I have been adopted into the Israel of God—and what the Jewish people have experienced in history, I can learn important lessons

from. I can only speak for myself, **but I think that fasting on the Ninth of Av will be a significant exercise** that I can learn from this year, and in future years.

Perhaps a fast on the Ninth of Av may also have some significance in your life and walk with the Messiah Yeshua. When you fast on the Ninth of Av, do so with the intent to pray for not only the peace of Jerusalem, but also for the salvation of those who do not know Yeshua as Savior. Pray for all the Jewish hearts who are dealing with the tragedies and traumas of the past, recognizing the precarious nature of current affairs, and ask that the Holy One softens their hearts to be open to His gospel.

Finally, remember that Believers have some very specific instructions from the Messiah, when it comes to taking the time to fast, whether on designated days, or times of our own choosing. Recall that fasting was, and still is, considered a normal activity for those pursuing a closer relationship with our Father—yet it is to be something that only the person fasting and the Lord often know about:

“Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites *do*, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you” (Matthew 6:16-18).

Whether you are a Jewish Believer following the traditions of your people, or a non-Jewish Believer who sees great benefits in remembering the Ninth of Av—do so in order to please the Lord and intercede for others. Whatever you choose to do, remember that your choice should remain between you and our Heavenly Father, and you should not accept any outside pressure from anyone who may criticize you. It is His favor that you should seek, and not that of those who fail to recognize Messiah Yeshua—and most especially those who are insensitive to what the Ninth of Av commemorates!

It is my hope that prayer that the Ninth of Av can serve as a special time of introspection and intercession for you. May we each learn something that can reflect on who we all are as members of the Israel of God—those who compose the community of Israel redeemed by the Messiah of Israel.

Until the restoration of all things...

For more information, check out the *Alternative Survival Guide* coming soon!



**COMING SOON:
ALTERNATIVE
SURVIVAL GUIDE**

Are you in need of clarity about the end-times?
How do you maintain a sound heart and mind for what is up ahead?
Do you need to know more about the specific teachers you have been listening to?

SEE LARGER AD ON BACK COVER FOR MORE INFO

KOSHER YOUR PLATE

edited by Margaret McKee Huey

It is my intention to bring our Messianic cooks timely recipes of interest in each issue of the OIM News. In this issue, I have included two Summer favorites!

Beef Barbeque

2-3 pound beef brisket
1 bottle of your favorite barbeque sauce

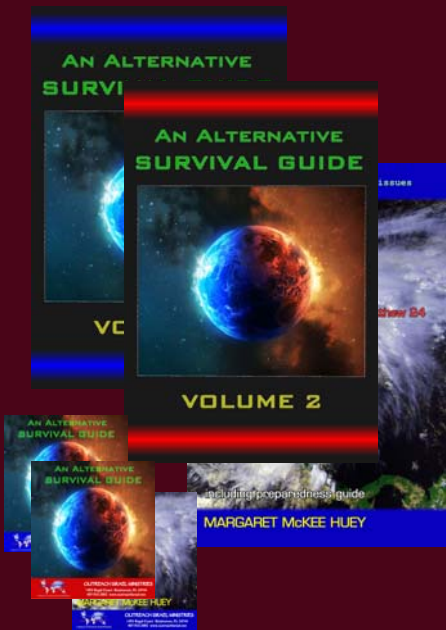
Prepare the beef brisket for cooking by soaking it in salt water so that all the blood is drained out. Cut off all the fat. Place the beef in a crock-pot and pour half of the barbeque sauce over the meat. Cover and cook on high for 1 hour, then turn the heat down to low for 6-8 hours. When it is finished, serve as your main dish, or serve the meat in buns for sandwiches. Use the rest of the barbeque sauce while eating!

Easy Cherry Sheet Cake

2 cans tart cherries (drain one can)
1 box yellow cake mix
1 stick melted butter
1 teaspoon almond extract

In a 9" x 12" pan, dump the cherries on the bottom and mix in the almond extract. Next, dump the dry cake mix on top of the cherries. Mix and blend all ingredients together. Drizzle butter on top on the cake mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes until the top begins to brown. Wonderful treat!

Please submit your recipes to Margaret Huey at the OIM office for inclusion in this column and our upcoming cookbook "Kosher Your Plate."



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It is not difficult to discern that many of today's Messianic Believers are of the conviction that we are living in the end-times. A great deal of the growth that the Messianic movement has experienced in the past ten years has been the result of people hearing various teachings about the rapture, the End of the Age, the Abomination of Desolation, the Great Tribulation, and some kind of "Greater Exodus." Messianic teachers have entered into various congregations and fellowships complete with their own timelines of the end, some of which have actually pin-pointed a Date X for the Second Coming.

Since entering into the Messianic movement in 1995, our family has by no means been immune to the speculation and date-setting present that is often associated with people who examine Bible prophecy. We heard predictions in the late 1990s that had the Abomination of Desolation occurring in 1997, followed by the return of the Messiah in 2000 with the Y2k Millennium bug. Later we heard new predictions about how the Tribulation was

to start in the Year 2000, and then end in 2007 with the Second Coming. As a ministry that has interacted with Messianic Believers all over the world, not a month goes by when we do not hear about the latest calculations. New dates now floating around the Messianic world place the start of the Great Tribulation 2013, 2017—and who knows what other dates will be conjectured?

The end-times certainly deserve our attention. But the end-times do not deserve our attention in such a way so as to promote fear or paranoia. How are we to have the proper framework for examining the end-times, not only for our physical well being, but most importantly for our spiritual well being? Who are some of the specific voices out there in the Messianic world of ideas who we need to not listen to anymore, because of failed end-time predictions they have made? How do we precede in truly being prepared for the return of the Messiah, but also in accomplishing the work that the Lord has given us for today?

\$25.00 plus shipping & handling for TOTAL PACKAGE
 the two *Alternative Survival Guide* booklets
 one copy of *Looking at the Signs of the Times* booklet (updated)
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