



OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS

REACH TEACH ENCOURAGE DISCIPLE



DECEMBER 2012
MESSIANIC CONTRADICTIONS
confusion or convergence?

A compass rose is visible in the top left corner. The background features the words 'OUTREACH ISRAEL' and 'NEWS' in large, stylized letters, with 'NEWS' being significantly larger. There are also some faint numbers and letters scattered in the background.

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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 congregation 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

December 2012

In the journey of the Ancient Israelites from their bondage in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land, there were forty-two encampments when they were required to pack up their belongings, disassemble the Tabernacle, and follow the cloud and pillar of fire to their next destination. For our family living by faith, while we have not had as many stops along the way, after fourteen years of sojourning following His lead, we have finally made the 1,100 mile trek back from Florida to Texas, finding ourselves relocated to a leased house back in the same zip code area where Margaret and I first began our marriage in 1994. Thankfully with the modern convenience of rental trucks, interstate highways, and some willing co-laborers in Kissimmee and Dallas, our Heavenly Father has allowed us to resettle among many like-minded brethren, more proximate to immediate family, with a reinvigorated mandate for ministry opportunities for Outreach Israel Ministries and TNN Online. Our collective prayers have been answered in His timing, as we are extremely grateful for those of you who have supported us with your prayers and offerings. As we have always discovered in our Spirit-led walk with Him, His provision remains sufficient to meet our needs. Hence with humbled and thankful hearts, we want to give the Holy One of Israel all praise and glory for His constant faithfulness to us, and the mission He has given us to advance His Kingdom until the Messianic restoration of all things!

In discerning why the Father has allowed us to return to this part of the United States, after a variety of meaningful conversations with Messianic and Christian friends and acquaintances from years past, coupled with some of the recent antics in sectors of the Messianic community of faith and the cultural reality check from last month's election—I have been prompted to write this month's lead article entitled, **"Messianic Contradictions: Confusion or Convergence?"** This attempts to synthesize a flood of thoughts about why those who claim allegiance and fealty to Yeshua (Jesus), seem to be having such a difficult time unifying around Him. For clearly, some of the final words of Yeshua to His Disciples during the Last Supper (John 17:11-26) unmistakably articulated what His heart was for His followers. Yet, the unity, which the Lord desires for His own, continues to be plagued with inconsistencies, despite this prophetic declaration regarding the followers of the Messiah who believe in Him even today:

"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me" (John 17:20-21).

Obviously, the oneness offered has not been achieved. Perhaps, if we better understand some of the challenges of contending with the world, the flesh, and the Adversary—our tumultuous times will be used by the Lord to motivate His children to more fully and lovingly represent Him in unity, to yet another wicked and perverse generation.

Hopefully, when our new home is organized after the dust finally settles and

the New Year arrives next month, I will be able to formulate some of what we believe the Father is doing with Outreach Israel in this new season of our journey. In the meanwhile, your continued support of the **Theological Defense Trust**, our **Prison Outreach** ministry, and **General Fund** is greatly appreciated, as we arrive at the final days of 2012 and look into 2013. For most assuredly, your faithful partnership in buttressing our efforts to bring clarity and unity to the Body of the Messiah has borne much fruit, with around thirty books produced—and many more on the way—which we believe will be used by the Lord to accelerate the theological education of many seekers of truth, who will be entering into a knowledge and appreciation of the Hebraic Roots of their faith in the forthcoming years.

May you and yours be blessed mightily this month, as we encourage all to celebrate the Festival of Lights and rededicate ourselves to wholly serving Him, who is Life Eternal, in whatever capacity He has chosen for each of us!

“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 6:24-26).

Mark Huey

2013: PREVIEW REPORT

**EXCLUSIVE INFO TO THIS ISSUE OF
OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS!**



In the year 2013, the broad Messianic movement is going to go through some rather significant theological and spiritual changes. Some of these will not be so good, and because of this, TNN Press is going to be working as hard as ever, so as to provide a fair-minded alternative to the posturing, maneuvering, and outright manipulation that will be encountered.

Three projects on our immediate list for 2013, which we are quickly working through, include:

- **Confronting Critical Issues** compiles a variety of articles and analyses that directly confront negative teachings and trends that have been witnessed in the broad Messianic community in the past decade
- **Are Non-Jewish Believers Really a Part of Israel?** This addition to the *Confronting Issues* mini-book series will address some of the issues of ecclesiology present in the broad Messianic community, the growing acceptance of a bilateral ecclesiology of the Jewish people and Christian Church composing “the Commonwealth of Israel,” and what the Scriptures really say about the people of God. This publication will weigh the options as to whether or not God (1) has two groups of elect, Israel and “the Church,” or (2) whether God recognizes all of His own as composing an enlarged Kingdom realm of Israel.
- **Israel In Future Prophecy** addresses some of the controversies and problems that have been caused, by what is commonly known as the Two-House movement/sub-movement. This book attempts to sort through much of the religious politics and abuse that one commonly encounters when poignant questions are asked about what is happening in today’s Messianic community, being honest about a variety of Tanach prophecies (i.e., Isaiah 11:12-16; Jeremiah 31:6-10; Ezekiel 37:15-28; Zechariah 10:6-10). It intends to provide some preliminary resolution to the issues which are Biblically-rooted, and is engaged with contemporary Jewish and Christian scholarship.

MESSIANIC CONTRADICTIONS

confusion or convergence?

by Mark Huey

Over the past several decades, since the liberation of the Old City of Jerusalem on June 7, 1967, the Spirit of the Most High has been accelerating the “restoration of all things” as foretold by the Prophets of Israel, and articulated by the Apostle Peter just days after the Holy Spirit was poured out at *Shavuot*/Pentecost:

“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Yeshua, the Messiah appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until *the* period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. Moses said, ‘THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED [Deuteronomy 18:15-16] to everything He says to you. And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’ **And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and *his* successors onward, also announced these days.** It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED [Genesis 22:18; 26:4].’ For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one *of you* from your wicked ways” (Acts 3:19-26).

During the past forty-five years or so, the Holy One has been decisively pouring out His Spirit upon many Jewish people, who, for the first time in increasing numbers not seen since the First Century, are being born from above and are more fully embracing Yeshua as the Messiah of Israel and His atoning sacrifice. They are, more and more, recognizing Him as the Prophet foreseen and declared by Moses:

“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.’ The LORD said to me, ‘They have spoken well. **I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require *it* of him”** (Deuteronomy 18:15-19).

Concurrently, and to a greater numerical extent over the past twenty years, the prophesied restoration has also been impacting non-Jewish Believers, who have been seeking the Lord God with all their hearts, resulting in a revival of interest in the Hebraic/Jewish Roots of their faith. Hence, what is commonly referred to as the Messianic (Jewish) movement has grown exponentially with increasing momentum, as the Holy One continues to fulfill His will for those called into a more complete knowledge of His ways, found in the entire Holy Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. However, despite the evidence noted by the expanding formation of Messianic Jewish and various independent Messianic congregations and fellow-

ships, diverse Torah Bible studies, Passover *seder* presentations, increased celebration of the feasts of the Lord, more concentrated support for the Jewish people and the State of Israel, and general interest in the Hebraic/Jewish Roots of the faith by a wide breadth of evangelical Christians—there are some glaring contradictions which exist, that continue to foment confusion to the faithful, rather than the convergence of like-minded brethren that the Holy One desires. There continues to exist in the hearts and minds of many, a wall of partition, preventing the emergence of the one new humanity (Ephesians 2:15).

This is a serious concern, especially in light of Moses' admonition that the words of the Greater Prophet, Yeshua, must be heeded—or else the consequences will be detrimental, if not devastating. A further warning should be considered from the author of Hebrews issued to those who claim the atonement obtainable via the blood of Yeshua the Messiah:

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and [congregation] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, **and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Yeshua, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.** See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned *them* on earth, much less *will* we *escape* who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven. And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, ‘YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN [Exodus 19:18; Judges 5:4; Psalm 68:8; Haggai 2:6].’ This *expression*, ‘Yet once more,’ denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. **Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire**” (Hebrews 12:22-29).

So why all the confusion, rather than an anticipated convergence of Jewish and non-Jewish Believers, working together in relative unity and harmony, in the Body of Messiah? Such a phenomenon should, through further revelation and a maturing understanding of the whole counsel of God, be resulting in a definite emergence of greatly transformed sons and daughters of God! When Paul wrote to the Romans, he noted how this is, in fact, something that the very Creation groans for:

“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*. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. **For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, **in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of**

God” (Romans 8:14-21).

There are many reasons for the confusion and consternation found throughout the present Messianic movement. However, one of the most disconcerting of these reasons is the absolute requirement that those walking according to the Spirit of God must adhere to the words of the Greater Prophet, Yeshua, or suffer consequences like the shaking of the Earth as specified by Hebrews 12:25-28 (cf. Exodus 19:18; Haggai 2:6).

Some of the final instructional words of Yeshua to His Disciples, gathered at the Last Supper and in the time immediately following, are recorded in John chs. 13-17. These include some of the most insightful and meaningful words regarding the unity of His followers, in some of His concluding declarations:

“I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, *the name* which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We *are*. While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled. But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil *one*. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:11-26).

Here, one discovers that when Yeshua left His Disciples in the world to contend with it and all of its distractions, they were to not only be sanctified by the truth revealed in, by, and through Him—but because of the indwelling Holy Spirit, they were to also be perfected in unity. The Father was in the Son, the Son was in the Father, and those born from above are to be in Them. It was by the love they were to have for one another, which was to characterize their unity, identifying the Disciples as the Messiah’s followers to all in the world:

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

Nevertheless as noted by Yeshua, it was not just the disciples seated at the

meal who were to evidence the unity and oneness desired—but also all of those future disciples who would believe in Yeshua through the words and testimonies of His original disciples. As the Gospel accounts and Apostolic letters have been preserved down through the ages, it is incumbent upon each successive generation of saints to exhibit and maintain this goal of unity and oneness in the Messiah Yeshua. Lamentably, this has not often been the case down through the millennia, as the worthy adversaries of the world, the flesh (the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life), and the Evil One continually war—against not only those who know and are known by the Messiah, but even some usurpers surreptitiously sown into the camps of the faithful to knowingly or unknowingly incite strife, division, and acrimonious debate resulting in disunity. This invasion into the very intimate gatherings of those claiming to follow the Messiah (note Judas Iscariot at the Last Supper), be they Messianic Believers or even Christians, is a serious problem that must be understood and contended with, in love and wisdom from above. However, if one is naïve or blind to this reality, the damage will manifest, affecting people who are striving to better understand the grace of the Messiah, as well as diverting the work of advancing His Kingdom here on Earth.

Consider just some of the strategies of the Adversary, who has from the very Garden of Eden attempted to prevent, pervert, and now prolong the will of God—because he was a murderer and a liar from the beginning (John 8:44), and like a thief who comes to steal, kill, and destroy, he wants to keep humanity from living life abundantly (John 10:10). One must understand that Satan and his minions are fully aware of what the Holy Scriptures declare about God (James 2:19), and even the Devil attempted to use the very words of Scripture in attempting to have Yeshua succumb to his wiles during the desert temptation (Matthew 4; Luke 4). The Evil One is not only fully conversant on the entire Bible, but he can be used by God to test and refine those called into His family for Divine purposes. The greatest comprehensive example of this is the testimony of Job, where Satan was ultimately used, among other voices, to deal with the spiritual pride of Job:

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.’ The LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.’ Then Satan answered the LORD, ‘Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.’ **Then the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.’** So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD” (Job 1:6-12).

Additionally, the Apostle Peter referred to the Devil as an Adversary, who is constantly on the prowl like a lion to devour those who are not sober and alert. He described how there will be some suffering, but that eventually, there will be perfection, confirmation, strengthening, and ultimately establishing of the faithful before God:

“Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. **Your adversary, the devil, prowls around**

like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Messiah, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you” (1 Peter 5:8-10).

Thankfully, faithful Believers in Yeshua the Messiah, do have an Advocate who is seated at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19). He is ever-interceding for His own (Romans 8:34), but fully expecting His disciples who abide in Him, to walk in the same manner He walked. As the Apostle John describes,

“My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. **And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Yeshua Messiah the righteous;** and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of* the whole world. By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: **the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked**” (1 John 2:1-6).

As the Apostle Paul would also state, to the Believers in Rome (mentioned earlier), the ability to be led by the Spirit of God ultimately results in the revealing of the sons and daughters of God. These are the ones, who in essence, become God’s instruments to proclaim the good news of His salvation available through the sacrifice of Yeshua to the world. This can take place through their words, writings, and good deeds—despite the sufferings that will be inevitably endured:

“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘*Abba, Father.*’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. **I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed**” (Romans 8:14-19, TNIV).

If according to the testifying writings of the Apostles, the children/sons and daughters of God are to be led by the indwelling power of the Spirit of God—and have presumably been alive and functioning since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)—why after nearly two thousand years, with the emergence of the Messianic movement over the past several decades, *does there continue to be so many contradictions to what the Holy Scriptures indicate?* Why is there so much confusion among brothers and sisters, rather than a convergence of the one new humanity that was not only Yeshua’s desire, but articulated by Paul in Ephesians 2? Some basic answers to these questions can be found by simply reading Ephesians ch 4:

“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to pre-

serve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Messiah's gift. Therefore it says, 'WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN [Psalm 68:18].' (Now this *expression*, 'He ascended,' what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Messiah; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Messiah. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Messiah, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Messiah in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Yeshua, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE *of you* WITH HIS NEIGHBOR [Zechariah 8:16], for we are members of one another. BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN [Psalm 4:4]; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have *something* to share with one who has need. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need of *the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Messiah also has forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:1-32).

Realize that many of those in positions of influence, in the Messianic community of faith, are not often adhering to Paul's enlightened instructions. Instead, with flesh-driven personal agendas—or worse—the possibility that a variety of Messianic leaders may not even be born from above, as they cause disharmony and discord, *is not a comforting thought*. Yet, what many of us have seen and witnessed in our faith community—and with it an ongoing torrent of damage, confusion, and

certainly interruption to God's salvation history plans—should make us all pause and consider some of the trails of development witnessed within the contemporary Messianic movement.

If any one of the perceived or positional “leaders” or recognized “teachers,” within today's Messianic movement—those who tend to influence thousands of eager followers of the Messiah—actually read and adhered to Paul's instructions regarding how Believers are to be working among themselves, there would not be the amount of confusion that has seemingly gotten out of control. Instead, if there were a sincere desire to mutually submit one to another, in love, with the goal of unifying around the kingship and authority of Yeshua, perhaps the world would see a more proper manifestation of the children of God.

Returning to some of the words spoken by Yeshua at the Last Supper, directed specifically to the perplexed Peter, Thomas, and Phillip—as the Lord was discussing His imminent departure—note that Yeshua declared not only that He is the way, the truth, and the life, but that these soon to be “sons of God” indwelt by the Helper or Spirit of Truth, would perform even greater works than Yeshua did during His ministry:

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.’ Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?’ Yeshua said to him, ‘**I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.**’ Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ Yeshua said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. **Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; *that is* the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, *but* you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you”** (John 14:1-17).

However, as history has recorded, despite the empowerment and leading of the Holy Spirit by the first disciples, the one hundred and twenty in the upper room (Acts 1:15), about three thousand on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41), and the countless numbers since then—the progression of salvation history to our Twenty-First Century time has been plagued with challenges from within and attacks from without. After all, a vital part of the Father's plan from the very beginning for His children is to have them each overcome their fleshly instincts, worldly

influences, and the Devil and his minions. His intention is to allow the indwelling power of His Spirit to accomplish His will through heartfelt willing vessels, who, by faith in Him, have been given unmerited favor and grace, His required righteousness, and ultimately eternal life.

Finally, if one takes the time to just ponder all of the ways how people are individually challenged by their own fleshly inclinations, coupled with the constant ungodly persuasion and manipulation by the world system and/or the incredibly clever machinations of the Adversary—one should conclude that apart from abiding in Yeshua the Messiah and being led by the Holy Spirit, modern-day disciples might not be too able to bear good spiritual fruit:

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love” (John 15:1-10).

Despite Yeshua's admonition that His followers abide in love and keep His commandments, contradictions in our Messianic faith community will still continue, despite all of the positive developments which have been witnessed in recent decades. Confusion should not be the rule—but instead *a convergence of His people* as the restoration of all things proceeds according to His timing. So, if these words by Yeshua are any indication of what the Vinedresser has to do in order to have His remnant of Messianic Believers become the sons and daughters of God—in order to be a testimony to this wicked and perverse generation hurdling toward the End of the Age—perhaps it is time for some pruning by Him. Possibly some of the shaking foretold in Haggai 2:6 is about to erupt, manifesting in various fruitless or worthless branches falling to the ground.

Whatever the Lord has in store for His people is going to take place, regardless of what men or women throughout the broad Messianic community, Judaism, or Christianity—*limited mortals as they are*—might do. The mission for true Believers is simply this: love Him, seek Him, cling to Him, abide in Him, obey His commandments, and love our neighbors as ourselves. Anything different is a contradiction to His Word and brings confusion to His people, who in His perfect will and time, will bring all things together as described from Genesis to Revelation!

May we each be part of the convergence and avoid the confusion, by being led by His Spirit to advance His Kingdom until the restoration of all things...

A 15 YEAR REFLECTION

What is the difference between being an apologist and a Bible teacher?

J.K. McKee:

If you look at the TNN Online header on the website, you will see two principal descriptions: “Biblical News & Analysis” and “Messianic Apologetics.” The English theological term *apologist* is derived from the Greek *apologia*, which itself is often used to describe *a defense of something*. One of the most significant apologies seen in Holy Scripture is witnessed in Acts 7, in the defense that the martyr Stephen issued before the Sanhedrin for his Messiah faith. Throughout much of religious history since, those who are apologists have often been granted the specific task of defending the faith to various outside skeptics, internal troublemakers, but most especially the many laypeople who need a concentrated degree of help.

I have been specifically involved in Messianic apologetics since 1999, following an experience when I attended a certain Messianic conference and was handed some questionable literature (which I not only found disturbing, but also quite offensive). Over the past fourteen years since, the Lord has definitely had me on a proverbial “fast track,” in terms of the high volume of material He has had me write, to help a wide spectrum of Messianic people (and those who will be entering into our faith community in the future) to try to understand and consider the great spiritual power we actually possess. In this time, I have had various interactions, some personal, and others not so personal, with certain “leaders” of note within the Messianic world. A few of these have been positive, but not enough of them have been too positive. While there is an entire panoply of Messianic “teachers” out there, there are not enough true apologists: those who are genuinely interested in seeing the individual faith of Believers defended, strengthened, and prepared for what is foretold of the people of God in the period before the Messiah’s return.

It is rightly noted how *all apologists are Bible teachers, but not all Bible teachers are apologists*. This is especially true in our relatively small—and in some cases, far-too-small-for-its-own-good—Messianic community. There are an entire array of Messianic “teachers” out there, promoting one or two or three “messages” for general consumption, but who do not really have the courage (due to entangling religious-political alliances)—or perhaps even integrity—to clearly state what they think or believe, when an issue that is essential to a man or woman’s faith and salvation, presents itself. **The Bible teacher who classifies as an apologist has no such luxury.** The Bible teacher who classifies as an apologist has to take the difficult position, when necessary, incurring the ridicule or criticism for it—yet in the process be able to help people, who really do need to see their faith defended.

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WHEN WILL THE MESSIAH RETURN?

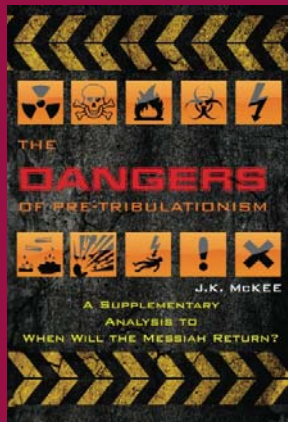


J.K. McKEE

Before Yeshua was taken up into Heaven, the Apostles asked Him, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the Kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). The Apostles were eagerly awaiting the Messiah to restore Israel, but much work still had to be accomplished, as Yeshua commissioned them to go out into the greater world, and make disciples among all nations. In our era, much more has notably happened, most especially with the salvation of many Jewish people coming to Yeshua, but also with many non-Jewish Believers entering into the Messianic movement, embracing God's Torah and their Hebraic Roots in a very tangible way. Something unique has undeniably started.

When Will the Messiah Return? is a unique book addressing the end-times from a Messianic perspective. The Messiah stated plainly that He would gather the saints "immediately after the tribulation of those days" (Matthew 24:29).

Discussed are common false understandings as they relate to "the Church" being taken to Heaven for the duration of the Tribulation period, and instead how all Believers in Messiah Yeshua get to participate in restoration of Israel's Kingdom via His return. Some overlooked elements regarding what has been prophesied in Scripture, may hold some of the insight for today's Believers evaluating why the Messiah has yet to return to Planet Earth.



This report is an expanded edition of one of TNN Online's most controversial articles. It answers the top reasons why people believe in the pre-tribulation rapture from a Messianic post-tribulation perspective. It considers whether or not various pre-tribulationists have employed tactics of fear and faithlessness, and whether or not their ideology of escapism can be supported by a fair reading of the Holy Scriptures. Are God's people able to be protected by Him--or not--during the end-times? Specifically considered and responded to are fifty reasons given in support of the pre-tribulation rapture by former Dallas Theological Seminary chancellor John F. Walvoord. Above all, a fairness that is not always given to post-tribulationists is demonstrated to pre-tribulationists.

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