



OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS

REACH TEACH ENCOURAGE DISCIPLE



JULY 2011

REACHING OUT TO THE LEAST

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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.

Members of the Board:

Mark Huey
Margaret McKee Huey
Russ and Lynda Kroeker
Grant and Julie Richards
Mark and Lynn Davis
J.K. McKee

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OIM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit
educational ministry

Mark Huey
director

Margaret McKee Huey
office manager

J.K. McKee
TNN Press

Jane McKee and Maggie McKee-Huey
youth ministries

Outreach Israel Ministries
1492 Regal Court
Kissimmee, FL 34744

Phone: (407) 933-2002
Fax: (407) 870-8986
Web: www.outreachisrael.net
www.tnnonline.net
E-mail: info@outreachisrael.net

OIM UPDATE

July 2011

The Summer months between the Spring Feasts and the Fall Feasts tend to be long, hot, and drawn out, with different tasks to simply maintain the environment in which we live. With the anticipated sale of our family house in Central Florida and relocation to the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex a looming priority, keeping our home in pristine shape for viewings is definitely keeping us busy. Please continue to pray that the Lord will send a buyer, so that our ultimate move can commence. *Being separated, with two halves of our family in two different locations, has been taking its toll on our morale.*

Nevertheless, the work of the ministry continues, with various research projects taking on more urgency, as we survey the current theological and spiritual condition of the Messianic community we serve. As you are undoubtedly aware, over the years Outreach Israel and TNN Online have devoted an inordinate amount of time, resources, and energy to the job of producing various articles, books, and commentaries to encourage and educate Messianic Believers. *We do directly address the pressing issues of the day.* Our tenacity and hard labor have borne much fruit. From multiple testimonies across the globe, the Lord has used these tools to help bring Messianic understanding to the curious newcomer, as well as dedicated teachers and leaders. And as always, more is underway as circumstances change.

With this in mind, we would like you to be aware of one often overlooked area of ministry, where we have been reaching out more and more to those desiring a greater understanding of the Messianic lifestyle and approach to following the Scriptures. Over the years, we have made the effort to freely send upon request, various materials to those incarcerated in the U.S. prison system. These are largely men and women, who, for whatever reasons, are in prison and are searching God for answers to life's questions. When they ask for something, we give it to them free of charge. Our outreach to help these people has allowed them to let the authorities review our books, so that they are not accused of following some kind of a subversive "cult." Mercifully, the feedback from various individuals has been extremely positive. We have often been reminded of Yeshua's admonition to care for those in the prison, who are seeking the Heavenly Father:

"Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; **I was in prison, and you came to Me.** Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, '**Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even**

the least of them, you did it to Me” (Matthew 25:34-40).

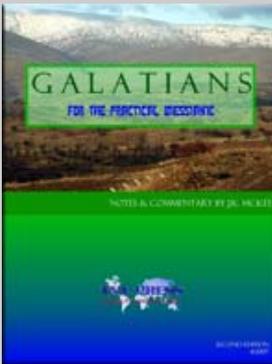
While we do not know these people in prison and will likely never meet them this side of eternity, we are encouraged that in providing for their needs and blessing them with our ministry materials, we serve these truth-seekers and are able to bless the Lord. This issue of OIM News includes a review of our **Prison Ministry** outreach, “**Reaching Out to the Least**,” which has grown steadily over the past year, with more and more prisoners and prison chaplains requesting Messianic teaching materials.

This month, my lead article is entitled, “**Last Supper Instructions**,” and takes a look at some of the final words and exhortations given by Yeshua to His closest Disciples. After three years of following their Teacher, these proper instructions convey much encouragement to His successors, which are vital that modern-day Believers take to heart. Hopefully, we will all be inspired to not only remember the Lord’s promises, but most importantly, follow them as we each seek to represent the Messiah in the world today.

May you be blessed and encouraged in your walk with the Messiah!

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

Mark Huey



GALATIANS

FOR THE PRACTICAL MESSIANIC

Paul's Epistle to the Galatians is easily the most difficult to understand text for Messianic Believers today. Galatians has been historically interpreted by Christianity as delivering Believers a choice between God's Law and God's grace. Those who choose any obedience to the Law, according to this view of Paul, are unfaithful to the Messiah and the saving power of the gospel. Supposedly, Paul was desperately concerned for anyone who was trying to keep the Torah of Moses. Consequently, Galatians is a frequently-quoted text to today's Messianic Believers, most of whom are trying to live a life of holiness by obeying God's Torah in accordance with the

example of obedience modeled to us by Yeshua.

Understanding Galatians in its original context, for its original audience, and for the original issues that it addressed is a severe challenge. Was the issue that the Galatians faced forced circumcision, followed by salvation—or was the issue ritual proselyte conversion for inclusion among God's people? Likewise, who were the people errantly influencing the Galatians? Were they authorized members of the assembly, or misguided outsiders with a definitive agenda?

In the commentary *Galatians for the Practical Messianic*, TNN Online editor J.K. McKee takes a direct look at the issues of Paul's letter as he rebukes the Galatians for errors that have crept into their congregations. Engaging with contemporary Christian scholarship on Galatians, critical questions regarding common conclusions of Paul's words are asked. Are Paul and Yeshua truly at odds when it comes to the Torah? Were the Jerusalem leaders and Paul at constant odds with one another? What does the term "works of law" really mean? These are only a few of the questions that are considered.

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REACHING OUT TO THE LEAST

by J.K. McKee

There are many things that go on behind the scenes at Outreach Israel Ministries and TNN Online, that few of you will ever be aware of. One of the biggest things that goes on is all of the preparation work for various books, articles, and Bible studies. This involves us acquiring a wide variety of resources, for ourselves to read and digest, to make sure that we have adequately researched an issue before addressing it. We also stay in contact with people all around the world, who contact us with questions facing their corner of the Messianic community, and who desire well-reasoned answers to the matters that they face. As you can imagine, we get a huge number of ideas on new topics to address and new challenges to respond to, by our interactions with people. (Not to mention the new issues which are presented to us in our various research projects.)

Over the past year, a distinct group of people, which is commonly forgotten and overlooked, has been contacting us more and more for aid and materials: **those in prison.** These are men and women, who for whatever reasons, have been incarcerated in a U.S. state penitentiary. Given the amount of time they have to reflect on their crimes, they have thankfully turned to God and to the Bible for answers. Many of the prisoners who contact us have likely been given a copy of OIM News, or themselves have been personally reached by someone teaching Hebraic Roots in a jail. Ours is a ministry that various prison chaplains and Messianics conducting prison ministry have recommended that those they help contact us, for answers and additional guidance.

We are, of course, extremely generous when any prisoner contacts us, who usually asks for two or three of our books, which is allowed for them at a time. In His teaching on the judgment of the nations, Yeshua certainly said, “...I was in prison, and you came to Me...” (Matthew 25:34). We are able to go to the men and women in jail with our printed words, the same as we are able to do so for anyone else following our ministry efforts.

Every month, we receive a few distinct notes from people who have been blessed by our ministry work. Because of the attention we give to detail, but most importantly our commitment to excellence, it is easily seen that ministry followers can tell that we take our charge from the Lord very seriously. *The work of ministry will never end*, and today’s emerging Messianic movement will always dish up something new and “interesting” for us.

While I especially like hearing from people half-way across the world, appreciating that they would ask me questions about God and the Bible, and even like hearing about them *personally*—when you hear these things from a prisoner, it has a special impact. These are not people who can sit at a computer, and do a search for an answer to a theological topic. They do not have Internet access, and nor do they have a Messianic congregation to attend. They found out about their Hebraic Roots through some other means. Like many non-Jewish Believers who have been led into the Messianic movement, some of these means have been good, and some others not so good. Thankfully, the appeal and wooing of the Holy Spirit were strong enough, so that these men and women could see the sig-

nificance of the Messianic lifestyle and our emphasis on Torah obedience. These are people who know that they need a code of conduct to follow, because they have *broken the law*.

Just as with anyone investigating Messianic things, those in prison are more likely to encounter sensationalistic teaching materials *before* those which are fair-minded and well-researched. But when prisoners encounter a ministry like ours, they are most appreciative. We recently received a letter from an inmate who told us,

“Shalom and thank you so much for the literature you sent. We are engrossed in these teachings, and praising G-d that someone else cares. I myself have struggled to show...[others] sound Biblical truth and have been labeled a cultist and a kook. Now, with your teaching it has begun to open many eyes so that the Holy Spirit can begin to work on the hearts. Thank you!”

This is the testimony of someone who only needed the right Messianic materials, to not be perceived as a troublemaker. When a Christian pastor conducting prison ministry encounters inmates investigating Islam or Mormonism, he is necessarily disturbed. The same is true when an inmate may be investigating the Messianic movement with some of the populist materials “out there.” Yet, the materials of Outreach Israel and TNN Online have been used to show—even in the prisons—that there is indeed a better way!

We need to be able to continue to reach out to prisoners, as they ask for books and other materials. Remember that unlike most others, they cannot subscribe to the weekly e-mail updates we provide, or listen to the Wednesday Night MP3 podcast, or access the online articles and FAQ entries we have. Everything we provide for them has to be printed material: books, booklets, and various articles.

Beyond this, more prisoners are asking for other materials to enhance their Bible studies. Different English versions of the Bible are requested (notably David Stern’s Complete Jewish Bible), as are Hebrew and Greek language resources. Some prisoners are even asking for *tallits* and *siddurs*, to aid their daily prayer routines. For everyone else to ask about Bible study resources, the TNN Online website has a **Theological Resources** section, with a wide array of materials linked directly to Amazon.com. For the prisoner who does not have this luxury, we have to be able to give to them directly, providing him or her the best resource to enhance their personal studies.

My late father, Kimball McKee, was a part of the Kairos prison ministry, and every Sunday morning he would go declare the gospel to prisoners at the Boone County Jail in Northern Kentucky. The **Prison Ministry Outreach**, that we are called to perform, is simply providing materials and answers for those seeking God’s truth, the same as anyone else. This means not only providing for their requests, but taking a few extra moments and actually writing a printed letter, and not an e-mail. For us, it means helping people who you are likely to never meet in person, and will never receive a financial donation from.

Please join with us, so that we can meet the needs of some of the least of our brothers and sisters, and that we can make a difference where it is surely needed!

LAST SUPPER INSTRUCTIONS

by Mark Huey

Being a follower of the Messiah Yeshua (Christ Jesus) is an awesome privilege, but it is one which comes with certain prescribed responsibilities, if one is truly going to be like Him. Thankfully, because our Savior knew that it was going to require absolute dedication for people to totally surrender to His leading, He blessed His original Disciples with words that were captured, conveyed, and sovereignly preserved for us in writing down through the ages. Also critical to know is how the original Disciples of Yeshua would be especially filled up with the Holy Spirit or Ruach HaKodesh:

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you” (John 14:26).

Today, modern-day Messiah followers have imparted to them vivid testimonies from the Apostles, abounding with clear and profound instructions from Yeshua’s words on how to walk by faith, in a manner that is pleasing to the Heavenly Father. For those seeking to follow and obey the Messiah, inculcating and **doing** what He said is essential. When one reads the recorded words of the Messiah, special attention and consideration must be taken. The words spoken by Yeshua have insightful meaning, and by focusing upon them, we can each more adequately evaluate where our treasure is and how we will handle the storms of human life (cf. Luke 6:45-49).

The great majority of Yeshua’s spoken teachings are found in the Gospel accounts, and it is from these testimonies that one finds the breadth and depth of what He actually said to those intimately acquainted with Him. One of the major highlights of Yeshua’s teaching ministry is undeniably the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chs. 4-7), which is rightly to be considered a foundational series of instructions for what is truly required of all His disciples.

For the over three years of the Messiah’s ministry as witnessed in the Gospels, the Lord journeyed from the Galilee region to Jerusalem and places all in between in Judea. Whether answering direct questions, or making observations, or utilizing a parabolic method for teaching—the testimonies of Yeshua’s actions build upon one another. The different encounters and interactions we read about, provided the Savior distinct opportunities to address individuals or groups, in a variety of circumstances. Yeshua directly reached out to the disenfranchised of His generation, and demonstrated love and compassion to those who others would have despised.

One of the most valued sections of teaching from the Messiah is seen within John chs. 13-17. Many of the most frequently-quoted and valued Bible verses from the Apostolic Scriptures or New Testament, by today’s Believers, are actually taken from the conversation that took place during the Last Supper. With His execution rapidly approaching, Yeshua’s lengthy exhortative communication is filled with loving instructions, which summarize on many levels what He had been guiding His most cherished followers to do throughout their time with Him.

As this section of narrative records, Yeshua was aware that His destiny to be the Father's required sacrificial offering for humanity was imminent (John 13:33). The Messiah omnisciently knew that this was one final opportunity, to intimately share some meaningful and inspiring words to His beloved inner circle, fore-knowing that they would eventually be empowered by the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17) to carry out their responsibilities, and proclaim and spread His teachings to the world at large (Matthew 28:18-20). Modern-day Believers are doubtlessly challenged and encouraged by John chs. 13-17, to not only understand what was being communicated—but most importantly, to faithfully embrace and walk in the truths imparted by their Lord and Savior.

Disciples Who Are to Serve

As the Last Supper was about to commence—a Passover *seder* meal held between Yeshua and His Twelve Disciples¹—the instructional example of the Messiah physically washing His followers' feet, established an imperative tenor for the greater messages to be conveyed:

“Now before the Feast of the Passover, Yeshua knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon, to betray Him, *Yeshua*, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God, and was going back to God, rose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself about. **Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded**” (John 13:1-5).

Imagine being one of the original Disciples, who had reverently followed their Rabbi Yeshua for more than three years, participating in this unusual exercise. From the customs of the era, it would have been considered more appropriate that the Disciples actually wash the feet of their Teacher, when they arrived at various locations after traveling on dusty roads. But without any pretense, the Messiah humbled Himself, and demonstrated before the meal commences that He—the Master and Leader of the group—is going to serve His followers. From the inception of the gathering, Yeshua reiterated a profound principle about servant leadership that He had discussed with them at other times:

“And there arose also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them was regarded to be greatest. And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called “Benefactors.” But not so with you, **but let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant.** For who is greater, the one who reclines *at the table*, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines *at the table*? But I am among you as the one who serves” (Luke 22:24-27).

Even though the concept of the leader serving the followers was something that had been a vital part of Yeshua's instruction, there was some immediate con-

¹ Do note that there is debate as to whether or not the Last Supper was actually a Passover *seder* meal. For a discussion on this, and related issues, consult the article “The Last Seder and Yeshua's Passover Chronology” by J.K. McKee.

sternation expressed by Simon Peter. He not only questioned Yeshua, but demanded even more cleansing from Him:

“And so He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, ‘Lord, do You wash my feet?’ Yeshua answered and said to him, ‘What I do you do not realize now, but you shall understand hereafter.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Never shall You wash my feet!’ Yeshua answered him, ‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.’ Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.’ Yeshua said to him, ‘He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.’ For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, ‘Not all of you are clean.’ And so when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and reclined *at the table* again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for *so* I am. I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master; neither is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them” (John 13:6-17).

Peter had challenged the Messiah to wash not only his feet, but also his hands and head. Did Peter at all regard himself as unclean, or at least incomplete? While Peter was not going to betray Yeshua as Judas Iscariot would, he was going to deny Yeshua, as he is told at the conclusion of their exchange (John 13:38). Still, Yeshua has told Peter and the other Disciples that His true followers are “clean” because of their expressed trust in Him, and the fact that He has chosen them. From this exchange, what is being conveyed is a sense that one should not necessarily worry about pristine outward hygiene, but rather know that he or she is pure, whole, and complete in a relationship bond with the Messiah. He has served men and women, so that they may be rightly reckoned as clean. He is ever-present to cleanse those aspects of ourselves that get dirty, or are exposed to sin, through the daily affairs of life.

Most important and not to be overlooked is the foundational point made by Yeshua, **that one should seek to serve others in order to lead them.** The Lord categorically demonstrated this as He washed His followers’ feet, a rather mundane and common task that many leaders would not perform. Yeshua said that “I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him” (John 13:16, NIV). But, since Yeshua is the Son of God and has served His Disciples in great humility, how much more should His followers continue in His example of serving others? Right at the beginning of His Last Supper, Yeshua indicates to the Disciples what it truly means to serve others. He is preparing to do ***much more*** than wash a few feet, but He will lay down His life for those He loves!

Loving One Another

At the point in the preparation for the Disciples eating their meal, the actions regarding the betrayer Judas are poignantly described (John 13:21-22). John’s intimate location leaning on the breast of Yeshua (John 13:23, 25), gives us some

details about what was being quietly communicated. After the unclean Judas departed into the night (John 13:26-30), the Messiah then pointed out that through the actions about to take place, God will be glorified.

It is in this context that Yeshua told His Disciples that He was going somewhere that they could not go, an obvious reference to His later ascension to the Father in Heaven. The Disciples will have to continue on without their Teacher personally present. Peter was confused, and he did not understand what Yeshua was saying, but continued to ask questions and make bold statements displaying his ignorant confidence about the future:

“When therefore he had gone out, Yeshua said, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately. Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You shall seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, I now say to you also, **“Where I am going, you cannot come.”**’ 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.’ Simon Peter said to Him, **‘Lord, where are You going?’** Yeshua answered, **‘Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow later.’** Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.’ Yeshua answered, ‘Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a cock shall not crow, until you deny Me three times’” (John 13:31-38).

Yeshua stated directly that it was not time for Peter to follow Him, but that he would follow later. In response, Peter made an audacious claim that he would lay down his life for his Rabbi. Without seeming hesitation, Yeshua not only questioned Peter’s declaration, but instead, told him that he would deny Him three times before a rooster crows to signal the dawn.

In this memorable scene between Yeshua and Peter, with the other Disciples beginning to contemplate what they will do with Yeshua gone, Yeshua directed His Disciples to love one another. Here in the midst of dealing with a disloyal disciple ready to betray Him, and a zealous disciple wanting to display his loyalty—He interjects what He refers to as a “new commandment”:

“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).

Is Yeshua’s instruction to His Disciples to love one another, really “new”? Does not Leviticus 19:18 direct God’s people, “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, **but you shall love your neighbor as yourself**; I am the LORD”? Could Yeshua’s emphasis on “new,” be His taking the Torah’s command to love to a selfless sacrificial level?

It is probably worth noting how the term *kainos* (καινός) or “new,” appearing in John 13:34, can “**pert. to being not previously present, unknown, strange, remarkable**” (BDAG)² or simply “*unknown, unheard of*” (CGEDNT).³ Yeshua’s

² BDAG, 496.

³ Barclay M. Newman, Jr., *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* (Stuttgart: United Bible Societies/Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1971), 90.

reference to *entolēn kainēn* (Ἐντολὴν καινὴν) or “a new commandment” could very easily relate to how *properly embodying* the Torah command to love had gone out of favor, and how, in the view of J. Martin C. Scott, “‘love’ [is] an *active* engagement rather than a mere emotional response.”⁴

By highlighting the requirement for His followers to love one another—especially as an example to outsiders—was Yeshua informing His Disciples that, just like Himself, they too may have *to die*? The Messiah’s word in John 13:34 could certainly be taken as a reiteration and amplification of His earlier teaching, about the Good Shepherd and His sheep:

“I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock *with* one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves Me, **because I lay down My life** that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father” (John 10:14-18).

The ultimate way, to serve and display love for others, is when one is willing to sacrificially lay down his or her life. Yeshua stated later in the meal, “greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

Instead of speaking directly about giving up His life for others at this moment in the Last Supper, Yeshua began to calm down His Disciples, by revisiting the subject of His leaving, and exactly where He will be going. Their hearts are not to be troubled, because He would go somewhere which will have resonating effects into eternity:

“Let not 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. And 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’” (John 14:1-7).

John 14:1-3 includes words which can commonly be heard at funerals, especially when it comes to one hearing about a departed loved one being in a “better place.” In actuality, the term *monai* (μοναί), “dwelling places” or “rooms” (ESV), are best compared to a temporary lodging where ancient travelers would rest on a journey.⁵ This would be a good attestation to a temporary disembodied exist-

⁴ J. Martin C. Scott, “John,” in James D.G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson, eds., *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1196.

⁵ The singular *monē* (μονή) means “a stopping place, station” (LS, 518).

In the view of N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 446,

“The ‘dwelling-places’ of this passages are thus best understood as safe places where those who have died may lodge and rest, like pilgrims in the Temple, not so much in the course of an onward pilgrimage within the life of a disembodied ‘heaven’, but while awaiting the resurrection which is still to come.”

tence with the Lord in Heaven after death, prior to the resurrection of the body. The actual “place” or *topos* (τόπος) Yeshua is in the process of readying for all of the redeemed, is to be likened to “a senator’s seat, a place at school, one’s place in the world” (*TDNT*),⁶ or a place of authority and reward when He returns for all of the saints: the deceased *and* the living (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:17).⁷

After saying that He was readying their places or positions in His future Kingdom, Yeshua responded to Thomas’ question with a description of how narrow a way it truly is to receive what He offers. Without equivocation or hesitation, Yeshua declared that **“I am the real and living way: no one comes to the Father except by means of me”** (John 14:6, Moffat New Testament). This was complimented by Yeshua’s assertion of truly being *the* Son of God, as He said, **“if you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him”** (John 14:7). These are powerful words which must be embraced by all who understand that Yeshua (Jesus) is the only means of any person being granted eternal life.

The Works of the Father

With Peter and Thomas trying desperately to follow what Yeshua was saying, it was now Philip’s turn to enter the conversation. Philip asked Yeshua to show them the Father. At this point, Yeshua directed them to how He is in the Father and the Father is in Him, a certain affirmation that He is the Divine Son of God:

“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 do 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 in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves.** Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go to the Father” (John 14:8-12).

Yeshua helped His Disciples to understand the overwhelming truth that He and the Father are one (cf. John 10:30). To top it all off, Yeshua declares that because of the works of miracles, deliverances, and healings that they had witnessed—these were absolute proofs that He had performed the works of the Father. Then in a summarizing statement, He declared that “he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father” (John 14:12).

How powerful is this to imagine? *Are you a bit confounded by it?* When one thinks about all of the incredible works that are recorded in the Scriptures that Yeshua did, and then finds out that by believing in Him—greater works are possible—is this something even fathomable? Such works are now possible following Yeshua’s resurrection and ascension into Heaven, with the full release of the Holy

⁶ H. Köster, “*τόπος*,” in *TDNT*, 1184.

⁷ For a further evaluation, consult the article “To Be Absent From the Body” by J.K. McKee.

Spirit. Even if a Believer in Yeshua is able to perform just a small number of the works Yeshua demonstrated, these should be viewed as words of encouragement that countless saints have used down through the ages, to bolster confidence in faith and dedication to performing the work of the Lord.

The Highest Authority

Before turning to discussing the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of His followers, Yeshua made some statements that gave great confidence to His Disciples, as they contemplated His departure from them. Yeshua told them,

“And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*” (John 14:13-14).

Consider what Yeshua was saying here: He was telling His disciples about the power and authority found in His name,⁸ and that asking to do things in His name had His blessing to accomplish things that would glorify the Father. This is something that would be significantly borne out in the many miracles witnessed in the Book of Acts, as the Apostles would go out and accomplish the Great Commission to all people (Matthew 28:16-20), testifying of the salvation available in the Messiah.

The great repute, that the name Yeshua (Jesus) possesses,⁹ was acknowledged very early on by the Body of Messiah, in what is commonly called the *Carmen Christi* hymn (Philippians 2:5-11). Within Philippians 2:9-11, in particular, a specific appeal is made to Isaiah 45:23, where the Divine Identity of the LORD God (YHWH) is applied to the Messiah:

“Declare and set forth *your case*; indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me. Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, **that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance***” (Isaiah 45:21-23).

“For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **so that at the name of Yeshua EVERY KNEE WILL BOW** [Isaiah 45:23], of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Yeshua the Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11).

Of course, if anyone appeals to performing activities in the name of Yeshua

⁸ It needs to be recognized that the Hebrew *shem* (שם) and Greek *onoma* (ὄνομα), fully regard the authority or repute of a person.

Cf. Walter C. Kaiser, “שם,” in *TWOT*, 2:934-935; H. Bietenhard, “*ónoma*,” in *TDNT*, pp 694-700.

⁹ The claim that is sometimes made in the Messianic community, that the name Jesus is pagan and derived from the name Zeus, is without linguistic support. *Iēsous* (Ἰησοῦς) and *Zeus* (Ζεὺς) have two totally different Greek spellings and pronunciations. Likewise, if the Greek name *Iēsous* were of pagan origin, and not a Jewish transliteration of the Hebrew name *Yeshua* (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ) to be employed among Greek speakers, then it would not have been used for the title of the Book of Joshua (appearing as Ἰησοῦς) in the Septuagint.

For more information and detail, consult the article “Sacred Name Concerns” by J.K. McKee.

or Jesus as the Messiah, it also requires that one diligently obey the Lord's will. The Lord will only genuinely move through disciples who are submitted to Him and His ways.

Love and Obedience

After claiming that His Disciples can call upon Him to accomplish mighty deeds, Yeshua issued His them an imperative they must follow:

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

Hearing these words, the Disciples would naturally reflect on the teachings of Yeshua, such as those of His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chs. 5-7), and how their Teacher bid them to uphold Moses' Teaching or the Torah. Moving forward to the more modern era, today's evangelical Christians are understandably a bit challenged with what the Lord says. Definitions and refinements on what *these commandments* truly are have been debated for centuries. Today's Messianics are sometimes a bit too quick to judge many Christians, who simply need more instruction and direction in the ways of obedience.

So, are you as a follower of the Messiah keen on obeying the Lord, or do you constantly look for ways to avoid keeping any kind of commandments or instructions?

It is easy for a person to say "I love God," but if there are no actions or good works present in his or her life reflective of such love, what does it mean for such a person's relationship with the Lord? While determining exactly what commandments of God's Law are to be kept *or* even can be kept in the post-resurrection era, can be confusing or frustrating, a proper obedience to the Lord necessarily begins with love for Him and neighbor.¹⁰ As the Lord steadily transforms one's heart and mind, and as we should each be submitted to a study of His Word, He should give us the discernment to be able to be convicted to know the good works that He surely wants us to follow.¹¹

Taking these final instructions from the Messiah to heart in John chs. 13-14, and doing them, in all likelihood required not only His original Disciples to change their lives and attitudes—but **will require us to change, on some spiritual level, as well.** Yeshua summarized the need to love Him, with the promise that in so doing, He would abide with those who follow His words:

"Yeshua answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you'" (John 14:23-25).

What an awesome statement to contemplate! By loving the Messiah and keeping His words, the love of the Father will not only be evident, but will come and actually take up residence in the hearts of born again Believers!

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ This topic is explored in far more detail in the *Messianic Torah Helper* by TNN Press (forthcoming). Consult especially the article "Addressing the Frequently Avoided Issues Messianics Encounter in the Torah" by J.K. McKee.

Contrary to this, without obedience evidencing the proper love, the love of the Father and the Messiah will not be manifest. Each of us needs to ask ourselves: **Am I loving the Holy One by keeping His commandments to love Him and others as myself?** Reflect upon this question for a while, and prayerfully consider where you stand with the Lord. Ask yourself if you are leading others by serving them, or the even harder question as to whether you are willing to lay down your life for others by displaying the ultimate love (John 15:13). In a contemplative moment, seek answers to these questions in order to confirm in your heart that you are truly His. Hopefully, you will discover that the Lord is truly abiding in your heart, and that you desire nothing more than to be useful in His Kingdom's work.

For Believers in the Messiah Yeshua, His final instructions seen in John chs. 13-14 are critical to wholeheartedly follow. Knowing beyond a doubt that these statements are true, will give great confidence to understanding that you have been chosen to represent the Almighty, among people on Planet Earth who desperately need to partake of His love and goodness. When you finally meet your Lord face to face, then perhaps you will receive the cherished blessing of hearing Him declare, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matthew 25:21) *Could you ask for any more?!*



Am Echad Israel Tour Shavuot-Pentecost May/June 2012

Join **Outreach Israel Ministries** Directors Mark and Margaret Huey, and TNN **Online** editor John McKee, for our Am Echad Israel Tour 2012 (May 22-June 4, 2012) featuring an Am Echad Shavuot in Jerusalem, as well as a traditional tour of the Land of Israel. Our tour guide will be native Israeli Rami Danielli (a Messianic Jewish Believer who lives in the Galilee area), who has years of guide experience coupled with a deep love for the Messiah Yeshua.

Based on current projections, the estimated cost is approximately \$3000-3500 per person for twelve hotel nights (which includes breakfast and dinner but not lunches, tips, etc.) **More information available at www.outreachisrael.net**

We will need to have a confirmation for the Shavuot 2012 plans to our tour guide by September 1. **Please confirm that you truly intend to join us on our excursion to Israel.**

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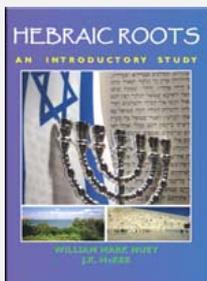


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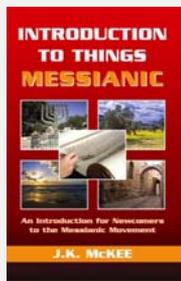
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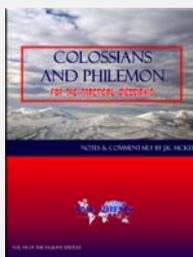
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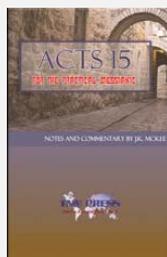
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KOSHER YOUR PLATE

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 a wonderful kosher recipe from my daughter Jane McKee, as well as a refreshing Summer salad recipe.

Israeli Salad

3 large cucumbers
6 Roma tomatoes
Greek salad dressing
fresh mint leaves
feta cheese

Peel and chop up the cucumbers. Chop the tomatoes. Mix both together and add 2 tablespoons of fresh chopped mint leaves. Mix with 3-4 tablespoons of Greek salad dressings to make a nice consistency. Add feta cheese to your taste on the top and throughout. Enjoy!

Yield: enough salad for 6 people as a side dish.

Janie's Famous Chicken Salad:

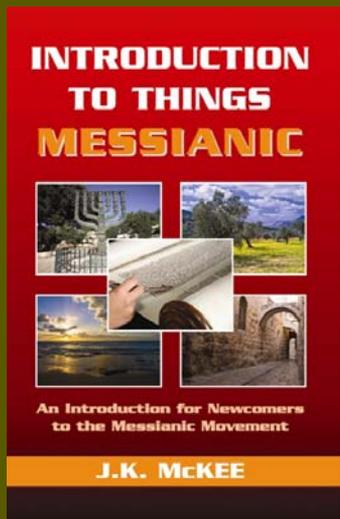
1 lb. chicken breasts skinned & cut into 1 inch pieces cooked in lime or lemon juice in a frying pan
¾ cup mayonnaise – to taste
lemon juice to taste
1 cup chopped celery

Mix the chicken in a bowl after cooking with about a cup of mayonnaise and a cup of chopped celery. Add more lemon juice to taste. Add salt & pepper to taste. You can add any of the extras below to make this salad truly special.

extras:

½ cup grapes (halved)
¼ cup onions
¼ cup pecans

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