



OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS

REACH TEACH ENCOURAGE DISCIPLE

Future

NEXT EXIT 

NOVEMBER 2009
OUR MESSIANIC FUTURE



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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

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OIM UPDATE

November 2009

This November marks the seventh anniversary of Outreach Israel Ministries, as the first seven-year cycle of our efforts, is now behind us. Many associate an eighth year as a kind of “new beginning,” perhaps not unlike how *Shemini Atzeret* occurs immediately after *Sukkot*. Correspondingly, when the Feast of Tabernacles does come to a close, the observant traditionally offer prayers for the Fall and Winter rains to physically begin to replenish the lakes, ponds, rivers, and water table of the Land of Israel. With some of this in mind, it is my prayer that the Lord will be pleased to inaugurate a new season of pouring out His spiritual blessings through the work He has given us to do. For not only will we be entering into our eighth year, but we will also soon be entering into a new decade.

We are less than two months away from the second decade of the Twenty-First Century, and with it we should certainly be thinking about much of what has taken place in the current decade. All of us at Outreach Israel Ministries have been meditating on many things that we have witnessed in the Messianic world in the past ten years—some good, and some not so good. Consequently, a cluster of thoughts coalesced in my contemplations, which I have compiled into this month’s lead article, “**Our Messianic Future.**” Since forecasting “the future” has never been one of our ministry emphases, it was simply intriguing to focus on the present while peering beyond the moment, to review where Margaret and I have been, and where we think we are going. Since we have chosen to serve and place our total trust in the Holy One of Israel, our worries about tomorrow have been minimized. Great comfort comes from serving Him, and seeking first His Kingdom and righteousness, just as Yeshua taught in His Sermon on the Mount:

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matthew 6:24-34).

Still, with ministry comes a great number of unique experiences and encounters—and because of these things we have a responsibility to teach the truth as the Holy Spirit has convicted us. Being Messianic since 1995, and having first hand interactions with a great number of people and leaders, we have seen how some patterns are repeating themselves. If the Messianic movement is something truly of God, then our faith community will have no choice but to get beyond some of the negative things that have dragged us down—as He steadily molds us into a force to be reckoned with in the decades ahead, being much more spiritually and theologically mature.

Additionally, this past month a number of thoughts came together in a McHuey Blog post entitled, “**Suffering Pain**,” based on some recent service I have been offering to my extended family. Hopefully, reproducing it in this month’s newsletter will remind and encourage each of us to reach out to the lost, and to testify of Yeshua’s salvation via acts of kindness.

Finally, we continue to move ahead with the TNN Press Book Printing project. *Torah In the Balance, Volume I* and the new commentary *Colossians and Philemon for the Practical Messianic* get readied for submission to the printers this month. Your consistent support is greatly appreciated! Our ministry would not be where it is if we did not have a work ethic that always gets us to move ahead.

Until the restoration of all things...

Mark Huey



ACTS 15 BIBLE STUDY

COMING IN NOVEMBER



There is some shifting going on in today’s Messianic world as it concerns the unity that Jewish and non-Jewish Believers are to experience in Messiah Yeshua, and whether or not non-Jewish Believers are really called to obey God’s Torah. Much of this controversy is not based in an objective, historically conscious reading of the Scriptures—but instead in shifting ministerial alliances and religious politicking. The answer is not going to be found in evaluating who-said-what, but will be found in going to the Biblical text and in accurately evaluating what the trajectory of God’s Word is.

Around two decades after the ascension of Yeshua into Heaven, the message of salvation began being spread to the Mediterranean world outside the Land of Israel, and many from the nations eagerly embraced it. Was this just a bi-product of the message going to the Jewish people in the Diaspora, or was it the Father’s Divine plan? What was to take place with the new, non-Jewish Believers? Did they have to be circumcised and become Jewish proselytes? Or were *all* of the Believers, regardless of their ethnicity, to come together in a new environment rooted in the completed work of God’s Son? The Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 assembled to consider these issues, and fairly ruled on what was to be done.

Too many of today’s Messianics refer to Acts 15 without a great deal of consideration for the context of the events as they took place in the First Century C.E. We often assume things that we should not assume, and we overlook things that we should not be overlooking. This study will critically examine Acts 15 in detail, be engaged with current Acts scholarship, and will also try to properly compare and contrast the ancient setting of the Jerusalem Council with some of what we see going on in the emerging Messianic movement today and how we can learn from these things.

Be sure to be subscribed to our e-mail updates to receive this study!

OUR MESSIANIC FUTURE

by Mark Huey

As many of you are already aware, I have spent the past few months attending to a personal family health crisis. This gave me—during the thirty days of Elul, the Ten Days of Awe and *Yom Kippur*, and the Feast of Tabernacles—a considerable amount of time to ponder not only eternal issues associated with the life and possible death of a loved one, but also on personal spiritual decisions I have made over the past thirty years. Certainly, numerous conversations with searching family members, coupled with multiple exchanges with concerned brothers and sisters in the Messiah, challenged me. I had to more carefully consider the circumstances in which I found myself, but I also had to think about the past—and how choices I have made have brought our family to where we are today serving the Messianic community. It just so happens that this month is the seventh anniversary of the birth of Outreach Israel Ministries. A confluence of various memories has prompted in me a desire to contemplate not only where we presently are as a ministry, but more strategically, where our ministry efforts are headed, with the second decade of the Twenty-First Century less than two months away.

A Personal Historical Perspective

Before we consider some of the things on our future horizon, I think our personal historical perspective needs a little reviewing. It was over fifteen years ago (June 1994) when the Lord allowed Margaret and me to marry, after the end of two marriages—one by the premature death of Margaret's first husband, and my unwarranted and unwanted divorce—that we started this journey. Needless to say, when we were brought together, after a twenty-one year hiatus since our only date in 1972, we were convinced that the Lord was giving us a chance to be useful in His Kingdom's work. Within a few weeks of our marriage, the strong impression that our life together was going to revolve around Isaiah 43, was received separately by us both. At the time, with our limited spiritual understanding, we could not comprehend just what the Holy Spirit was communicating when we read and reread passages like this:

"But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel, 'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place. Since you are precious in My sight, *since* you are honored and I love you, I will give *other* men in your place and *other* peoples in exchange for your life. Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, "Give *them* up!" And to the south, "Do not hold *them* back." Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by My name, and

whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made." (Isaiah 43:1-7).

When we first had to consider this passage in the Fall of 1994—we heard that the Lord was pouring out His Spirit on the Earth, and so many were flocking to see (purported) outpourings in Toronto. *But, we were prompted instead to go to Jerusalem.* In December 1994, Margaret and I joined a tour to Israel led by Zola Levitt Ministries. We did not fully understand what the Lord was revealing to us on the tour, but while we were at Masada, we vocally responded by loudly declaring the entire text of Ezekiel 37 to the valley to the north.

Returning to the U.S., the two of us knew by supernatural revelation that the Lord wanted us to pursue the Hebraic Roots of our faith, and in particular, celebrate the Biblical feasts. Within a number of months of our tour to the Holy Land, we were led to a Messianic Jewish Congregation, Baruch HaShem, in Dallas. After several weeks, we realized that this was where we were being fed spiritually. By the Fall of 1995, we were learning Hebrew and were enrolled in a new member's class, marveling at His obvious hand upon our walk.

We were extremely excited about learning about the Jewish Roots of our faith, as we readily embraced honoring *Shabbat*, celebrating the feasts, and adopting a kosher diet. Naturally, we believed that any true seeker of God would get *just as excited* about these concealed truths, and return to the ancient paths (Jeremiah 6:16) just as we had. Within several years of these changes, the prophecies of Isaiah 43 and Ezekiel 37 began to take on more of a focus, and made considerably more sense. The restoration of all Israel—from our new perspective—appeared to be on the near horizon. However in retrospect, it is not until we look back upon this revelatory time that we realize that God moves at *His pace* and not ours! **Change nor the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy happen overnight.**

For the balance of the 1990s and until 2002—what we might consider to be the first seven year cycle of our Messianic walk (1995-2002)—the Lord allowed Margaret and me to work in a consulting capacity with a number of Messianic ministries. It was during this time that we got to interact with many of the teachers who were not only a part of Messianic Judaism, but also many who were involved with the growing branch of independent Messianics. We thought that the uncompleted work of the Reformation was in the process of being completed, and that the prophesied "restoration of all things" (Acts 3:19-21) was moving along at an extremely accelerated pace. It was quite unique to witness thousands of Jewish people come to faith in Messiah Yeshua, but also many non-Jewish Believers beginning to study and embrace the relevance of God's Torah for their spiritual instruction. For the first time since the First Century, it appeared that a group of people were coalescing who shared the two common denominators of what might be described as end-time saints: those who believed in Yeshua and who consciously kept God's commandments (Revelation 12:17; 14:12). Since the early Believers in the Messiah held these two characteristics and radically changed the Mediterranean world, would today's Messianic movement be able to do the same?

An Observant Adversary

As many people have been forced to witness, the Adversary was definitely watching what was transpiring as the Messianic community began to rapidly multiply in the late 1990s. With the great potential to once again be a strong spiritual force of redeemed people—led by the Holy Spirit and emphasizing our faith's forgotten foundations in the Torah—the fledgling Messianic movement became a ripe target for the schemes of the Devil. Not enough people made the effort to truly consider how we are involved in a supernatural fight against forces of darkness. In fact, some people were even led to believe that the “armor of God” listed by Paul in Ephesians, was not even to be like the weapons of a soldier, but just the garments of a priest, and that they had been deceived by Christianity to think otherwise. Sadly, many of the “Hebrew Roots” teachers out there cannot easily discern when quotations from the Tanach are used by the Apostles to make an important point, such as when Paul appropriates themes from Isaiah, where the Lord is described as a warrior dressed for battle:

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:10-17; cf. Isaiah 11:1-5; 59:14-18; and Wisdom 5:17-20).

Lamentably, the full armor of God that is to enable His people to fight properly, was under utilized, opening the way for some deviant teaching to take root. Consequently, for much of the past decade (1999-2009), the Messianic movement has been beleaguered by strife, controversies, conflict, and utter foolishness. Have you ever heard the disparaging term Messy-antics be used? Probably. The enemy of our souls, coupled with the immaturity of unqualified individuals who have positioned themselves as “teachers” and “leaders,” have used a variety of subjects to get people diverted from the goals and mission that we believe the Lord has sovereignly gifted the Messianic community.

In many regards, a number of modern-day Messianic Believers are repeating some of the same errors that plagued those in the First Century. Of course, due to an unbalanced over-emphasis upon “Torah” that we see in many quarters, why would we even know about these things, when we often do not really read the Apostolic Scriptures in any detail? Consider the various admonitions the Apostle Paul gave his students **that are quite applicable for Messianics living today**. When it comes to so-called “Israelite identity,” take this rebuke to heart, as Paul instructs Titus on Crete:

“But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about

the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless" (Titus 3:9).

How many tertiary or quaternary issues were there on Crete, related to genealogies and the Torah, that would get the Believers Titus was responsible for off course? Our primary identity as Believers is to be focused around who Yeshua is for us and how He has saved us from sin.

On the other hand, when some leaders attempt to misconstrue and hijack the Torah, in order to make it a means to control their followers—or introduce strange mystical doctrines—listen to how Paul warned his student Timothy:

"As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than *furthering* the administration of God which is by faith. But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions. But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made [laid down, RSV] for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted" (1 Timothy 1:3-11).

Here, Paul affirms how the Torah can be used properly, as its principal purpose is to identify and condemn sin, being the high standard of holiness God has given to His people. Yet in much of the "Torah movement," as it calls itself, the Torah's function in condemning sin—and in showing why we need a Redeemer (Galatians 3:24)—is not as emphasized as much as it should be. In fact, love for the Lawgiver is too frequently overtaken by love for the Law.

Of course, one of the most insidious attempts is seen when Jewish anti-missionaries—Jewish groups that oppose Yeshua and the gospel—are invited into the Messianic camp. Too frequently, these Orthodox and ultra Orthodox Jewish sects have more influence on Messianic Believers, than Messianic Believers have on them. I would think that Paul's further instruction to Timothy should be embraced by all of us without reservation:

"If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain" (1 Timothy 6:3-5).

The fact that false teachers will come into the midst of the faithful is to be expected, so we should not be too surprised. Both Yeshua and Peter describe how the multiplication of false prophets is a sign that humanity is nearing the End of the Age:

“Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come...Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Messiah,’ or ‘There *He is*,’ do not believe *him*. For false Messiahs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance” (Matthew 24:11-14, 23-25).

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in *their* greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep” (2 Peter 2:1-3).

Based on these, and many other warnings, it is not surprising that something as potentially transformational as the Messianic movement could be hijacked by those influenced by the Adversary: those with a strong carnal inclination, those who seek financial gain, those who desire to influence others by their strong personalities, or those who desire to control others with a firm fist of presumed authority.

What are we to do about all this? Is there any hope?

Present Messianic Challenges

Some of the controversial issues that have caused much division and strife over the past decade, which are quite *and* currently debilitating the Messianic movement, include, but are not limited to, the following things. I have placed them in the order that has disturbed me the most:

1. End of the Age paranoia and constant fear of the start of the Great Tribulation
2. The Sacred Name Only agenda which derides using terms like God, Lord, and Jesus as being “pagan,” and then invents its own forms of the Hebrew names of the Father and Son
3. Those who claim that it is illegitimate to use the traditional Jewish calendar, often altering dates of the appointed times in order to predict the end-times, infuriating both Jews and mainline Messianic Jews
4. Pseudo-histories associated with so-called Israelite identity, taking our attention away from the Biblical promises of Israel's restoration
5. Ear-tickling mystical teachings derived from Kaballah or Medieval Jewish mystery texts, from a millennia or more after the time of the Apostles
6. A Messianic movement that deliberately excludes non-Jewish Believers, and claims that the Torah is to only be followed by Jews, perhaps relegating non-Jewish Believers to the status of some kind

- of associate “God-fearers”
7. Deviant teachings about sexuality and gender roles, deliberately designed to denigrate females
 8. A general hatred toward anything Jewish or Christian as just being vain “traditions of men,” without any careful consideration for history or reasonable dialogue

These are just some of the more controversial topics, used to divide and create strife among Messianics—or at least create a great deal of confusion—seen in the past decade. Sadly, any new person investigating Messianic things could take just one of these negative issues, and use it not only as a legitimate reason to leave the Messianic movement, **but also attack us as being a deceptive move of the Adversary**, even though they are not by any means shared by all people. The issue of equality for all of God’s people alone (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11) is something that we know for sure has to change in the near future!

We have the capacity to be a faith community that can make a significant difference in the world in which we live, by returning people to a firm rooting in all of the Scriptures, and setting others on a life of steady holiness. But how can we do this when we ourselves do not have such a firm rooting? How can we be all of the things we are called to be, if we are constantly stymied by false teaching and a general lack of discernment?

As we prepare to enter the second decade of the Twenty-First Century, the ability to admit our inadequacies and address our mistakes, **can possibly make the coming ten years far more productive in terms of representing the Messiah Yeshua to this wicked and perverse generation.**

Our Messianic Future

When turning to consider our Messianic future, I am quite humbled by the realization that I am speaking about just a relative minute microcosm of what the Father is doing with His people. It is critical for all of us to acknowledge that the Holy One is ultimately in charge of the restoration of all things, *He is much bigger than we are*, and as I have witnessed, **He is going to accomplish His will according to His timetable and certainly not ours.** If things were according to our timing, some of us might be well on the way to living in Israel and participating in the feasts in Jerusalem three times a year. At the same time, we might be on the verge of denying faith in Messiah Yeshua in order to fit in with the Jewish population—or alternatively, given the difficulties of living in Israel, we might be shortly entering into bankruptcy. When humans take total control of things, they have a strong tendency to completely ruin what the Father has decreed from eternity past.

While I might have some personal experiences and opinions about the Messianic community of faith, where we have been planted for the past fifteen years, it is unwise for me to venture beyond what the Father has given our family ministry to do. For me to conjecture just where God is going with His “restoration project,” would be nothing more than a guess derived from some experiential knowledge, combined with a sense of historical patterns. I would probably also

be leaving many things out of the picture, considering the complexities of people. I do not at all consider myself to be a “prophet,” but I would like to recollect some of the things that the Lord has called Outreach Israel Ministries to do, especially as we prepare to enter into a new decade and a new season of ministry.

As affirmed in our mission statement: **OIM has been commissioned to reach, teach, encourage, and disciple the Israel of God to return wholly to Him in spirit, soul, and body in order to better serve in the work of His Kingdom.** In order to accomplish this, we have disciplined ourselves to produce written and recorded teachings that are balanced, loving, scholarly—but also quite relevant to our emerging Messianic movement. Since we *freely* send out our various teachings—articles, newsletters, blogs, and Bible studies—we find that many around the world are being positively influenced by our unique approach. Yet, to be perfectly honest, this walk of faith requiring us to freely give what we have received (Matthew 8:10), has had its “moments.” Like all people who strive to serve the Lord, we have wondered if our hard work and dedication are really worth it at times, and if we really are making a difference.

If we have ever doubted, it has never been because of who Yeshua is in our lives, nor of our need to commit ourselves to a Biblical lifestyle. On the contrary, it is quite easy when you are doing the right thing to be frustrated with all of the superfluous and sub-standard teaching floating around the Messianic world, which is counterproductive to advancing God’s Kingdom. Too much of our attention is spent addressing things that we have no particular desire to address, but if we do not, then who else will? At times, we have addressed much of the deviant teaching in various articles and FAQ entries. But at other times, poor teaching has prompted the need for the production of resources like the *Hebrews for the Practical Messianic* commentary, or the upcoming Acts 15 Bible Study. It has been our preferred ministry policy to address the teachings rather than the teachers, allowing us to maintain objectivity and deal with the subject matter which needs to be addressed. And, it is much better to let God in His infinite wisdom handle those who might recklessly abuse His people. The Lord can certainly deal with those who are mishandling the great responsibility to teach (James 3:1).

So our biggest question, considering some of the negative trends of the 2000s, is: **Will the 2010s be any better?** I believe they have to be, because our ministry affirms that the Messianic movement has been something predestined from eternity past by the Almighty Creator to perform some critical work in the end-times. We might have put a list or two together about bad and heretical teachings floating around our midst, but they should not drag us down and make us give up and quit. Rather, they present opportunities for us to learn, expand our reading of the Scriptures, and demonstrate that we have hearts and minds changed by the Lord as we fulfill His purposes! Every time there has been a “crisis,” our ministry strives to analyze what is occurring with the discernment He has given us, and how we can provide an answer for people not only in the short term, but also long after such a crisis has past. The Bible certainly has many areas of difficulty to navigate, and in embracing a long-term perspective, it has been our goal to provide teachings and materials that are not significantly marked with a “timestamp.”

Suffice it to say, the easy answer to much of what we have faced in the past, is probably the hardest answer: **always making sure that we are functioning in the power of God's love.** Paul states in Romans 13:10, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of *the law*." The New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:25-27, while surely involving obedience to God's Torah, is enacted by the power of the Holy Spirit—which is to cause His people to love. How many bad things have taken place in the Messianic world because congregational communities have not been places where people have felt welcome, saturated in an environment where love and respect for others is encouraged above all else? The local assembly is to be a *safe place* where people are disciplined and encouraged by the love of Yeshua, and where they can grow at a steady pace among mature Believers who will not beat them with a "mean stick" if they do not change to their viewpoint immediately. They are not to be places where people have to be constantly on guard, worried about the next wave of heresy or nonsense that might hit. Sadly, many Messianic congregations prefer beating others and being places of anger and harsh condemnation, as opposed to letting their good works and God's love in their hearts be a testament of why the Torah remains relevant instruction (Matthew 5:16ff).

Messianic congregations and fellowships need to be places where everyone has a place, and where the gifts and talents of God's people are honored and respected—and we also recognize that we have more in common with our evangelical Christian brothers and sisters than we might think (Ephesians 4:1-4). **Until this changes in significant numbers, we will stay behind the curve and neutered from being effectual.** When it does change, though, we will be well on the way to accomplishing our full potential! As we look toward the 2010s, we believe that our involvement in helping to formulate solutions, fixing some of the problems of the 2000s, will definitely be able to be integrated. We really do desire to make a difference in the lives of Jewish people who need Messiah Yeshua, and Christians who need to return to the high standard of God in the Torah. We desire more respectful and constructive spiritual methodologies to be employed by Messianic congregations, fellowships, and individuals.

We want to encourage you that every born again Believer is gifted for some kind of service to our King. If you happen to understand and embrace your walk with the Messiah from a Messianic perspective, then be a beacon of His light and love to all you encounter. Demonstrate your Messianic faith in ways that bring honor and glory to Him, as we all strive to lay the final stepping stones on the path to His restored Kingdom! I know that it has been a privilege to be called into Messianic ministry, serving God's people, and encouraging them to be all that He has called them to be. I know that great things are coming not just in the long term future, but even in the short term!

Until the restoration of all things...

WHEN WILL THE MESSIAH RETURN?



J.K. McKEE

WHEN WILL THE MESSIAH RETURN?

paperback edition

For almost two millennia, multiplied millions of Believers in Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) have eagerly anticipated His return. Many theories, doctrines, and creeds have been produced concerning the Second Coming, as well as an entire score of books. In today's world, many Christians think that the Messiah can return at any moment in an event called the "pre-tribulation rapture." Even among those who do not believe in this imminent rapture are those who still think that the final days of humanity are upon us. Are they? Is everything in place for the Messiah to return in the next decade, or even in the next year? Or, is there anything in the Scriptures that might be overlooked, or is not being considered, regarding the Messiah's return?

Before Yeshua was taken 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, and guide the world back to the fullness that had once been experienced in the Garden of Eden. But much work still had to be accomplished, as Yeshua commissioned them to go out and make disciples. That work still has not been completed today, especially with the advent of the modern-day Messianic movement.

A major part of the work that needs to be accomplished is that most Believers in Yeshua do not understand who the Lord is actually returning for. They consider themselves part of a separate "Church," often with no connection to Israel. Because of this, it is concluded that the Messiah can imminently come for "the Church," to leave Israel behind to face the Tribulation and the antichrist. Is this a valid teaching? Are Israel and "the Church" separate entities? If they are not, how would this change our perception of the end-times? Furthermore, if a Believer is a part of the Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-12), how does it affect what we think will happen in the Last Days and when the beast system will arise?

When Will the Messiah Return? is a unique book addressing the end-times from a distinct Messianic perspective. The Messiah tells us plainly that He will 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 how instead all Believers in Messiah Yeshua get to participate in the end-time restoration of all Israel.

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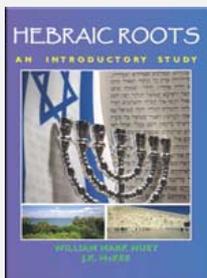


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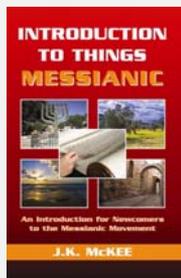
The TNN Press Book Fund is the most ambitious project ever embarked upon by our ministry. For over five years, we have been on the cutting edge preparing materials for the long-term future of the Messianic movement, ranging from introductory books to home study guides to commentaries on various books 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, *Introduction to Things Messianic*, *the Messianic Fall Holiday Helper*, *When Will the Messiah Return?*, and *the Messianic Winter Holiday Helper* (see back cover ad) are now available in paperback!

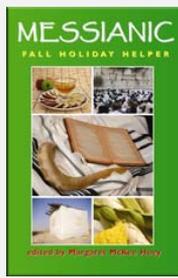
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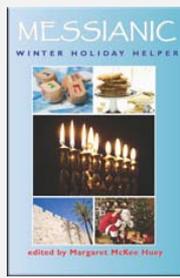
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Suffering Pain

by Mark Huey

When it comes to the vagaries of cancer and the treatment thereof, it is difficult to deal with physical pain and mental suffering—no matter what one believes. If one has faith in God, then he or she can turn to the trials of Job and knowingly repeat, “Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him” (Job 13:15). But did you notice the caveat that indicates how an ongoing argument or defense of oneself, will



ensue? Recently, due to my sister’s struggle with a recurrence of breast cancer, the opportunity to dig into the difference between suffering and pain presented itself. In fact, as a result of conducting some due diligence on one of the many oncologists recommended, a website quotation from a patient dying of ovarian cancer (who inspired the Dr. Salem quoted below to become a cancer specialist), was imbedded in my thoughts, as I ministered to my ailing sibling:

At that time, there was no treatment for ovarian cancer and physicians did not discuss openly and frankly with patients those issues relating to diagnosis and therapy; much less, issues relating to life and death. That woman was left in solitude to suffer alone with her pain. Physicians came to see her rarely, and when they did, they rushed out quickly before she had a chance to ask questions. They had no answers for her questions. Because cancer was a taboo, she was left alone. She made me read Tolstoy’s, The Death of Ivan Ilyich, and many times she enjoyed repeating this quotation: “Why hast Thou done all this? Why hast Thou brought me to this?” Why does Thou Torture me so? For what? He did not expect an answer, and he cried because there was no answer, and there could be none.”

A few days before she died, she squeezed my hand and said: “Very soon, I will be here no more. This whole ordeal will be over. Would you, however, promise me that you will do something about this disease in the future so others will not have the pain that I have had? And should you ever become a cancer physician, would you remember that the real agony is not the physical pain, it is the non-physical”. I promised, and I remembered. (emphasis mine)

“An Adventure With Cancer: The Joy and the Pain”
Dr. P.A. Salem, Houston, TX

For whatever reasons, when I read this testimony within a few of days of learning of my sister’s condition, I was struck by the final request of the inquiring woman who undoubtedly spent considerable time asking God “Why?” and perhaps dialoguing with Him like Job did. However, when her death was fast approaching, she requested one thing of the young physician considering a career serving cancer patients. She placed in his mind the indelible thought that it is the relentless mental reminder that one has cancer, which is more agonizing than the

physical pain. For this woman of faith, understanding at least Scripturally where she was ultimately destined, was one thing—but what about my sister who is still fighting off her illness? For weeks I pondered how mentally and emotionally excruciating it must be for someone to contemplate the possibility of physical death.

What came to mind was the movie “Groundhog Day” with Bill Murray, and the comparable incessant reality that every morning when my sister wakes up, she has the dreadful realization that some debilitating cancer cells are rapidly reproducing in her body. Just where they were in the body was a relative unknown. But the daily fact remained that unless one of the many cancer treatments or the healing result of many prayers succeeded, this disease was going to be present until the day she expires. Nevertheless, while the physical pain is being treated with a variety of pharmaceutical concoctions to ease the physical discomfort, the gnawing agony of knowing that the cancer is continuing to spread never leaves the conscious mind.

For weeks on end that I spent in Colorado, as I prayed for my sister's physical healing, I was amazed how she was resolutely and courageously handling her physical and mental trial. I patiently waited on the promptings of the Holy Spirit on how to communicate properly with not only her, but also my parents, brother-in-law, brother, and others. When one is sensitive to the Lord, one is able to say the right things at the right time, but also will enable one to be quiet at the right time. You are there simply to serve the needs of others, and do what the situation requires you to do.

Upon returning to Florida, my wife Margaret and I spent a previously scheduled weekend visiting family and attending a friend's birthday celebration up in Jacksonville. Naturally, after weeks of attending to my sister's needs, the subject of a few conversations during the visit was my sister's physical condition. However, it was not until I mentioned the contradistinction between the physical and mental pain to a former college roommate (who happens to be a clinical psychotherapist), that I heard him respond with some illuminating comments:

“Those two aspects of dealing with illness are the difference between suffering and pain. Suffering or agony was the mental side of traumatic illness, while the physical side was just a matter of temporal pain or hurt.”

Almost immediately upon hearing these statements, my mind focused beyond the current situation with my sister, and instead thought about the Messiah Yeshua and the long suffering and pain He endured for all of humanity. For unknown reasons, despite my sister's current challenges, the dying thoughts of an ovarian cancer patient, or even the suffering of Job, my thoughts instead went to what the Lord endured for us. The Messiah must have known for years how He was to receive not only the punishment for the transgressions of fallen humanity, but perhaps even more excruciating, a short separation from His own Father because of having to one day bear our sins. For a few moments, I wondered about the moment when He realized that He was going to be *the substitution sacrifice* to receive the righteous wrath of God. Was it as an infant child (Luke 2:40), when He was twelve discoursing at the Temple (Luke 2:42-52), or perhaps when

He was approaching John the Baptizer who declared from the Jordan that He was the Lamb of God (John 1:28-36)?

As I momentarily reflected on the length of the suffering thoughts that Yeshua endured, and then mentioned it to Margaret, her succinct reply that only God could handle the magnitude and severity of these things, temporarily satisfied my curiosity. However, when during a sermon the next morning, the gospel passage about becoming a servant and the Lord giving His life as a ransom for many was quoted, I was again reminded of the difference between suffering and pain:

“Calling them to Himself, Yeshua said to them, ‘You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. **For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many**’” (Mark 10:35-45).

After hearing this quoted and without much hesitation, the thought of the Suffering Servant came to mind, as memories of Isaiah 53 flashed. So I turned in my Bible and reread the following:

“Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted. Just as many were astonished at you, *My people*, so His appearance was marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of men. Thus He will sprinkle many nations, kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; for what had not been told them they will see, and what they had not heard they will understand. Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no *stately* form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. **Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.** All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due*? His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; if He would render Himself *as a guilt offering*, He will see *His* offspring, He will prolong *His* days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; by His knowledge the Right-

eous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors” (Isaiah 52:13-53:12).

I was reminded how this great passage of Scripture so eloquently describes Messiah Yeshua and all of the suffering He endured for sinful humanity. I then considered another passage that reflects on the ultimate service of Yeshua for us. Even though He pleaded before the Father, He still went through the necessary pain and suffering required to redeem us all from sin. As seen during His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane:

“And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and *began* to pray, saying, ‘**Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.**’ Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground” (Luke 22:41-44).

Apparently, the stress from this suffering agony was so intense that the author states it was like He sweated blood. No doubt, our Savior knew at this point He was *the Suffering Servant* of Isaiah 53. He knew how He had to freely offer up His sinless self, as the required ransom for the transgressions of humanity. Obviously, the similarity between someone suffering with the knowledge of an ongoing battle with cancer, is relatively insignificant when compared to the suffering of the Messiah. However, on a personal level, the individual pain could be as excruciating, especially for the one enduring the mental anguish.

As I contemplated the agony of the Messiah as contrasted with the rather limited suffering people today experience, I was reminded of a special passage of Scripture that years ago had a critical impact on my spiritual walk as I was seeking to know Him better. In the midst of some personally excruciating emotional suffering and pain—associated with an unwarranted, unwanted, and unexpected divorce from 1991-1993—the Lord was purging me of some of the fleshly inclinations that were present in my life, despite being a born again Believer. While being broken and vowing to the Lord by offering myself as a holy and living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2), I fully embraced the understanding that the Apostle Paul was communicating when he composed these words to the saints at Philippi:

“**More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Messiah Yeshua my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Messiah, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Messiah, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead**” (Philippians 3:8-11).

Paul explained that whatever suffering he experienced for the Messiah, is not that much compared to what his Lord accomplished via His sacrificial work at Golgotha (Calvary). In fact, it is the fellowship of His sufferings as we are being conformed to His death—or death to our own will—that actually allows us to get to know Him and the indwelling power of living the resurrected life. Of course, the ultimate blessing is being able to complete the circle, somehow participating in the resurrection in a similar manner that He did.

Additionally, as I perused some texts that further described the concept of suffering, I was impressed by the detailed explanation that Paul gave to the Romans. He explained the forgiveness and release from condemnation that come, as a result of one believing in the atoning work of Messiah Yeshua:

“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yeshua. For the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 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*. 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” (Romans 8:1-18).

Note the distinctions between those whose minds are set on the things of the flesh, versus those who are set on the Spirit. Of course, as a result of becoming born from above by the Spirit of God, one actually has the Spirit indwelling these mortal bodies. In fact, according to Paul’s exhortation, those indwelt and being led by the Spirit of God are actually adopted of God with the privilege of crying out to Him with the intimacy of “Abba! Father!” As children of God, who are considered fellow heirs with the Messiah, we understand that whatever we

suffer—whether mentally, emotionally, or even physically—that ultimately we will be glorified with Him. Paul concludes with the statement that he considers that “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 6:18).

No matter what it is we have to suffer in this mortal life, nothing can compare to what we are going to be experiencing for all of eternity as redeemed children of the Most High. The challenge is embracing this reality and incorporating it into our walk with the Lord, when it comes to the mundane affairs of life. In the case of the ministering that all Believers are expected and required to do, it means being available to the promptings of the Spirit as God positions each one of us to represent Him in diverse circumstances. It means allowing the incomprehensible love of the Messiah to manifest itself in our thoughts, prayers, intercessions, actions, and if necessary, in the encouraging words He gives us to proclaim.

We need to remember that only about ten percent of communication is the spoken word. The body language coupled with inflection, tone, volume, empathy, eye contact, facial expressions, and a multitude of other manifestations communicate much more than simply words. This is not to say that preaching the gospel is not critical because it absolutely is. But when it comes to showing the love of the Messiah for the world or your family and friends, it could be the soft touch of a hand stroking a forehead, or the rubbing of feet and legs with body lotions, or simply holding a hand that communicates far more than all the words one could muster.

Suffering and pain are a part of the human experience. When we get the chance to experience it—whether as a Believer relinquishing our will to the will of the Father, or simply as a vessel to minister to those enduring one or the other—we should take it to heart that the Almighty has uniquely positioned us to handle the situation as His Spirit leads. We need to be mindful that those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8:8), but rather it is by faith that we please Him:

“And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

Finally, if you are presented with a trial, dealing with difficult diseases like cancer—whether personally or with a loved one or a friend—stand rest assured that the Holy One is using all of those circumstances to get the attention of those involved. God has always used suffering and pain to draw people unto Himself. Whether it is the ancient example of Job who chose to never curse God, or Abraham as he contemplated offering up Isaac, or David as he dealt with the sins of adultery and murder, or Paul remembering his persecution of the early saints—God eventually used each of these circumstances and a multitude of others to glorify Himself. Of course, the ultimate example of God using suffering and pain to bring glory to His purposes is magnified in the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of the Messiah Yeshua. Praise the Lord!

In a like manner, God will use contemporary challenges to receive the glory that only He deserves. May we each acknowledge this inevitable reality. May we

continue to offer ourselves up to His service, for the work of ministering to those who are yet to know Him—as He alone offers eternal life!

Perhaps in time as we understand Him and His ways more fully, we may praise Him for the difficult times we have undergone, recognizing that He was at work to accomplish His purposes. For even if we are slain, there is no other hope than in His plan for salvation. To Him be all the glory!

Until the restoration of all things...

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 where all the ingredients can be found in your pantry!

Easy Beef Chili

- 1 – 28 oz can of beef **
- 2 – tablespoons of dried onion flakes
- 2 – tablespoons of chili powder
- ½ teaspoon seasoned salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1- 10 oz condensed tomato soup
- 1- 14 oz can diced tomatoes (undrained)
- 1- 10 oz can mild diced tomatoes/green chiles (undrained)
- 1- 16 oz can chili beans (undrained)
- 1- 15 oz can black beans (drained)

Combine all the cans in a large pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cook 30 minutes to blend flavors. Feeds 8

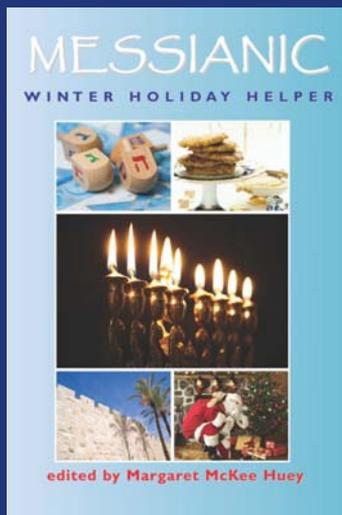
** You can substitute the can of beef for 1 ½ lb of ground beef. If so, place ground beef in pot first and brown with the chili powder, onion, salt and pepper before you add the cans, then cook as directed.

This recipe is an easy Pantry ready meal that can be made at any time, and it is especially good for emergency situations.

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WINTER HOLIDAY HELPER



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common traditions associated with it, and how this can be a blessed time of spiritually rededicating ourselves to God and to each other. Information on the time period of the Maccabees in Second Century B.C.E. Judea, the wars that they fought, and the long term impact they left on subsequent generations, has been provided. A few FAQs on the Winter holidays are offered, as are some delicious recipes, and liturgy you can recite for your *Chanukah* celebration.

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