

OIM UPDATE

December 2016

Now that the American electoral season has come to a conclusion, many (but not all) in the evangelical and Messianic community of faith have experienced a collective sigh of relief. Personally, as I indicated in last month's article, our prayerful pleas and heartfelt supplications have shifted from seeking mercy for our national direction, to protecting those who have been elected to lead our nation. There is substantial encouragement from statements made by parties involved with the incoming administration, that the U.S. Executive Branch will have a strong relationship with the leadership of the State of Israel. This probability in and of itself brings great joy to our hearts, because we know from Biblical and historical evidence, that the Almighty favors individuals and nations which bless Abram/Abraham and his chosen descendants:

"Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed'" (Genesis 12:1-3).

I have personally talked to people who have heard directly from reliable sources, and read some articles, indicating that the incoming President-elect is very favorable to relocating the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. While this potential move would validate the Jewish State and its right to exist in the Promised Land, it would in and of itself be extremely controversial among the powers which continually war against the children of Israel (Psalm 83). But thankfully, controversy is not something the new administration is unaccustomed to, but rather extremely adept at handling. As followers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who believe in the accomplished work of the Messiah Yeshua at Golgotha (Calvary), we need to redouble our prayers, with occasional Hallelujah pauses, as we literally witness prophecy unfold right before our eyes!

This month of December 2016 arrives at a very unique season for the growth and development of the Messianic community of faith. As anyone involved with Messianic things is astutely aware, December brings challenges to people, as they involve the holiday of Christmas on December 25, and the commemoration of the Feast of Dedication or *Chanukah*. Our ministry does have a book available, entitled the *Messianic Winter Holiday Helper*, which has been compiled to provide teaching, as well as sound advice, on how to handle some of the inevitable conversations which will arise during this time of year. We encourage you to get a copy for your personal use, or to give as a gift to help others.

Since relocating back to North Texas four years ago, we have seen our family and our ministry steadily welcomed not just into a local Messianic Jewish congregation, but this past November, John was a featured speaker as the MJAA Heartland regional conference. While we are entirely supportive and promoting of an inclusive and welcoming Messianic community, as Jew and non-Jew are brought together as "one new man" (Ephesians 2:15), there has been a noticeable gap building between Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics—and the mainly non-Jewish Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement. While we will interact with all sorts of individual

people, who label themselves by many different things, there have been developments in the independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement in the past few years which we are very disturbed by.

The Lord is definitely doing something very important in this hour, as non-Jewish Believers are embracing their faith heritage in Israel's Scriptures in a very profound and significant way. *Our own family's involvement in the Messianic movement since 1995 is a testimony to this.* As it is very clearly foretold in Micah 4:1-3 and Isaiah 2:2-4, the nations will come to Zion in the Last Days to be taught God's Torah. And, per the thrust of the Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:25-27 New Covenant, this is to be a work of the Holy Spirit for all of His people. **But**, the welcomed participation of the nations within the Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-13) or Israel of God (Galatians 6:16), is hardly supposed to take place to the exclusion of the salvation of the Jewish people. We are finding that more and more people in the independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement, are not too concerned with the issues of Jewish outreach, Jewish evangelism, and Israel solidarity. They are keen to embrace their Hebrew Roots in the Torah and Tanach, but not too interested in embracing their Jewish Roots in the Second Temple religion of Yeshua and His Apostles.

This month's lead article, by J.K. McKee, notes how many non-Jewish Believers who have entered into the "broad Messianic movement," are not going to be remembering the Feast of Dedication or *Chanukah* this month. These are people who have largely left the confines of their previous Christian church, and they even regard themselves as being grafted-in to Israel's olive tree via their faith in Israel's Messiah (Romans 11:16-17), **but they have a very difficult time with understanding Judaism and the Jewish people.** They may understand the Apostles' question of Acts 1:6, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?", but only in part. While recognizing that there is more going on in the Messianic movement than just declaring the good news of Yeshua to Jewish people who need salvation, the article "**A Restoration of Israel—Without the Jews?**" is critical of some of the things presently being witnessed in the independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement. With many non-Jews claiming to have embraced their faith heritage in Israel's Kingdom, it is amazing to see how many of them *are not too concerned* with issues of Jewish outreach. Dismissing *Chanukah* as a vain human tradition, among many possible examples, is not going to aid the first and primary mission of the Messianic movement: to see the Messiah's Jewish brethren come to redemption.

Finally, it is the time when many of you are considering where to invest in God's work through others with a variety of year-end giving opportunities. Consider the specific work and calling of **Outreach Israel Ministries** and **Messianic Apologetics**. Our family is uniquely positioned to not only address the theological and spiritual issues which face many of today's Messianic people, but we are also working for resolution to some of the things which have divided or confused too many of us for too long. We are making able usage of all of the tools at our disposal, as we anticipate the Messianic restoration of all things!

"May the LORD bless you, and keep you; the LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26).

Thank you in advance for your partnership with us and your generous support of our endeavors!

Chag Samaech!

Mark Huey

A RESTORATION OF ISRAEL —WITHOUT THE JEWS?

by J.K. McKee

This month of December 2016, the Jewish and Messianic Jewish communities will be commemorating *Chanukah* or the Festival of Dedication. *Chanukah* is a very warm time for Jewish and Messianic Jewish families, mainly as they reflect back on different family memories, special times of fellowship, gift giving, and of course eating many specialty foods. In many Messianic congregations the world over, there will be dedicated times of reading from the Books of Maccabees, focusing on the ancient history of the Seleucid invasion of the Land of Israel, the resistance that opposed Hellenism and upheld God's Torah, and which assured not just a Jewish victory over evil but the very survival of the Jewish people. For those of us in Biblical Studies, the Maccabean crisis of the Second Century B.C.E. significantly impacted the Second Temple Jewish world of Yeshua of Nazareth, and in particular the attitudes of many within the Jewish community to their Greek and Roman neighbors. Many of the conflicts in the First Century *ekklesia* that took place, as Greeks and Romans began receiving the Messiah of Israel into their lives—and whether these people had to be circumcised as Jewish proselytes in order to truly be reckoned as God's own—can trace their way back to the effects of what we review during the season of *Chanukah*.

Ten to eleven years ago (2005-2006), in my family's Messianic quest, we fully embraced the remembrance of *Chanukah*. Up until this point, we had moved beyond Christmas on December 25, but were unsure of the Festival of Dedication. We certainly had no problem with joining in to various congregational activities which took place on *Shabbat*, in order to remember *Chanukah*, which mainly included various readings from 1&2 Maccabees and lighting the *chanukiah*. The significance of the Maccabean crisis really began to come into focus for us, as I started writing Messianic commentaries on various books of the New Testament, and found myself referencing not just the Maccabean revolt—but its psychological impact on later Jewish generations. **Without the victory of the Maccabees over the Seleucid Greeks, there would be no Jewish people into which the Messiah of Israel would be born.** *Chanukah* should be remembered by today's Messianic community, no different than how Americans celebrate the Fourth of July.

Today, if you are a part of a Messianic Jewish congregation, some significant remembrance of *Chanukah* is going to take place, likely including various teachings which compare the Maccabees' cleansing of the Temple to how we as Yeshua's followers need to be cleansed by Him. If you are part of some informal Messianic home group or Torah study, you may also have some kind of *Chanukah* remembrance. But, if you are part of the widely independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement—something mainly, if not exclusively, composed of non-Jews—then you will see variances in approach to *Chanukah*. Many people who identify as being a part of the Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement, think that the Festival of Dedication is something spiritually edifying and worthwhile for God's people to

remember (cf. Philippians 4:8). Many others, however, would consider *Chanukah* to be a hollow Jewish custom that the Messiah's followers should not be observing, and they think that when the Festival of Dedication is mentioned in John 10:22-23 that Yeshua was not commemorating it along with the rest of the Jewish community, but stood off to the side in disapproval.

As a Messianic Bible teacher, and not only as someone who has been a part of this movement since 1995—but who actively uses social media—I interact with people all across the spectrum, who identify with any number of different labels. While I am not always successful, I do try my best to be a consensus builder, being a firm believer that **what the Messiah of Israel has accomplished for us, in being sacrificed for our sins, is the most important thing.** If you are going to divide with someone, make sure that it is over something directly related to the Messiah's work. In my over twenty-one years of being involved in Messianic things, I have certainly witnessed my share of controversies, and I am astutely aware of the competing spiritual forces which can manifest across our faith community.

What we call “the Messianic movement” today is something that has its origins deeply rooted within Protestant evangelistic outreaches to the Jewish community, first in Europe and Britain, and later in North America, starting in the early Nineteenth Century. The Hebrew Christian movement, of the late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, was an association of Jewish Believers in Jesus, usually as a sub-sector of Protestantism, where various aspects of Torah could be observed as a part of Jewish culture, in parallel to conventional Protestant observances. The Messianic Jewish movement, which really entered onto the scene in the 1960s and 1970s, emphasized Jewish outreach and evangelism via congregations established on a synagogue model, and where various aspects of Torah—such as keeping *Shabbat*, the appointed times, or a kosher diet—were no longer just aspects of Jewish culture to be remembered, but were aspects of Jewish obedience to God via the expectations of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27). **The primary mission of the Messianic movement has always had a basis in Jewish outreach, Jewish evangelism, and Israel solidarity.** And this is the way it should be, as is declared so affluently in Romans 1:16: “For I am not ashamed of the Good News, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who trusts—to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (TLV).

Within the 1980s and 1990s, as the Messianic Jewish outreach widened, and new Messianic Jewish congregations and synagogues began being established—it is safe to say that something did take place, which was widely not anticipated by some of the early Messianic Jewish leaders. During this time, many evangelical Christians were being directed by the Lord to Messianic congregations, for a variety of reasons. **The primary reason that non-Jewish Believers are drawn to Messianic congregations, is to remember the significance of Yeshua the Messiah in the appointed times.** My own family was among those steadily drawn into their Jewish Roots throughout the 1908s, via studying “Jesus in the feasts.” Concurrent with this, many non-Jewish Believers drawn into Messianic congregations get quickly acclimated to the weekly study of the Torah portion, and in reconnecting with the Tanach or Old Testament in a very tangible way not witnessed in contemporary evangelicalism.

Today in 2016, if you asked many individual Messianic people, they would have to agree that there is a dual mission being achieved within the Messianic movement. First and foremost, the Messianic movement is here to see Jewish people come to saving faith in Israel's Messiah, in fulfillment of prophecy (cf. Romans 11:12, 26-27), and plugged-in to assemblies where Jewish Believers can remain in fidelity to their Jewish heritage—not finding themselves assimilated away into a Gentile Christianity, which might see that their grandchildren and great-grandchildren have no comprehension or knowledge of their Jewish ancestry. Secondly, the Messianic movement has witnessed many non-Jewish Believers take a tangible hold of their Hebraic Roots in the Tanach and Jewish Roots in Second Temple Judaism and the Synagogue, in fulfillment of the nations coming to Zion in the end-times to be taught God's Torah (Micah 4:1-3; Isaiah 2:2-4), recognizing that God is with His Jewish people (Zechariah 8:23).

All of us, as God's children, should be willing and eager to learn from each other—particularly as there are many godly and edifying virtues from both Judaism and Protestantism, which can definitely be employed as we contemplate the final stages of history before the return of the Messiah. While Jewish and non-Jewish Believers are not exactly the same, and there are natural differences among God's people—namely that only Jewish Believers can expect to be given a tribal inheritance in the Promised Land, and that the Torah and Tanach composes not just their spiritual but also ethnic and cultural heritage—we **have far more in common than not**. If we focus on what we have in common, *first*, then our differences can be used to enrich and aid us in encountering the challenges of life—not encourage suspicion, division, and rivalry.

This December is a season when I get to join with my fellow Jewish brothers and sisters in Messiah Yeshua, and I get to celebrate *with them* in the triumph of their ancestors over the forces of Antiochus Epiphanes. I consider my commemoration of *Chanukah* to be no different than when we remember the birth of the State of Israel in 1948, or the retaking of the Old City of Jerusalem in 1967. ***Chanukah* is a celebration of victory**. And, in no uncertain terms, do I hide the fact that I think that everyone in the Messianic movement—if they are genuinely committed to the original mission of Jewish outreach, evangelism, and Israel solidarity—should remember the eight days of the Festival of Dedication as well. The Maccabees' resistance against pagan assimilation, as important as it was for past Jewish history, has much to teach each of us about the future end-times. For, just as Antiochus Epiphanes had demanded that people worship his image, so the coming antimessiah/antichrist will demand that people worship him, and reject the God of Israel and His ways (cf. Revelation 13:4-7).

Four years ago (2012), our family returned to the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex, where we got our original start in the Messianic movement back in 1995-1996. We not only reconnected with our old Messianic Jewish friends, and made some new Messianic Jewish friends, becoming part of a vibrant Messianic Jewish congregation—but we have even been welcomed into positions of leadership and teaching. The biggest “controversy” I have witnessed regarding *Chanukah* is over who is going to set up, and take down, the decorations in the sanctuary. While improvements can always be made regarding what lessons there are to learn from the Maccabean revolt, **I am thankful to report that there are no controversies**

whatsoever about whether or not we even need to learn from the Maccabean revolt.

Things get much more interesting, however, in my ministry service through Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics—because most of what we do actively involves online social media. In open forums, you encounter people from all sorts of religious persuasions, in particular as it involves the many, who in some form or another, associate themselves with the label “Messianic.” To be sure, the significant number of people with whom I interact are Jewish and non-Jewish Believers, who want unity and stability within the Messianic movement, and who want us all to get along, learning from one another. At the same time, when one moves into the more independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots persuasions, things can get very, very interesting. While I think many of us can understand—especially after the election cycle of 2016—much of the frustration that people have with “the establishment,” some people are so anti-establishment that they are of the mindset that neither Christianity nor Judaism have ever made any significant, positive contribution, of any kind, to human civilization.

The kind of person who has become particularly odious to me, over the past few years, is the non-Jewish “Believer” who claims to be a part of the polity of Israel, but wants little or nothing to do with the Jewish people or with mainline Jewish traditions and customs. Almost all of the non-Jewish Believers I interact with are of the conviction that, along with their fellow Jewish Believers, they are a part of the polity of Israel. They believe that they are a part of what Ephesians 2:11-13 calls the “Commonwealth of Israel,” the Galatians 6:16 “Israel of God,” the Romans 11:16-17 phenomenon of being wild olive branches “grafted-in” to Israel’s olive tree (cf. Jeremiah 11:16-17; Hosea 14:1-7), participants in Israel’s Kingdom restoration along with their fellow Jewish Believers, witnessing David’s Tabernacle being restored (Acts 15:15-18; Amos 9:11-12)—a part of an enlarged Kingdom realm of Israel, with a restored Twelve Tribes at its center, and its dominion welcoming in the righteous from the nations. Many of these people know the horrors resultant of Christian anti-Semitism and replacement theology, and so if they are claiming to be “fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise” (Ephesians 3:6), this better be joined with the thrust of Romans 12:10 in mind: “love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor” (NRSV).

Certainly, if someone like me has a Biblical responsibility to outdo my fellow brothers and sisters in showing honor to them, then what it means is that I have to show an appropriate amount of respect to the spiritual and theological heritage that I have in the Jewish Synagogue. *That is, if I really do regard myself as a part of the Commonwealth of Israel.* There are things that I have to legitimately learn and appreciate from the Jewish experience with God. My writings to date bear witness to the fact that I have been spiritually and intellectually enriched by not just many of the Jewish writings of the Second Temple period and immediately thereafter, but I have learned immense things from the Jewish struggle the past two centuries, particularly as they involve the rise of Zionism, the Holocaust, and the creation of the State of Israel. I am learning new things all the time from the Jewish experience in history, that everybody needs to especially learn and integrate into their psyche, as we get closer and closer to the Messiah’s return.

As it involves living out a lifestyle of Torah obedience unto God, my writings to date also bear adequate witness that I am very philo-traditional when it comes to mainline Jewish traditions and customs. While I am hardly what one would consider to be “Orthodox,” I do not haphazardly dismiss some of the major traditions and customs practiced in Conservative and Reform Jewish settings. I do not eschew, for example, men wearing a *yarmulke* or *kippah* in worship services. I do not have any problem with the Hebrew liturgy at my Messianic congregation’s *Shabbat* service. I adhere to the longstanding convention since Second Temple times of not speaking the Divine Name YHWH/YHVH in public arenas. Whenever I encounter a Jewish tradition or custom that I do not understand, I expel some effort of investigating it first, before commenting on it, much less dismissing it. For certain, I will encounter Jewish perspectives or practices that I consider non-Biblical and in error—just as I have encountered Protestant perspectives or practices that are non-Biblical and in error. At the same time, the wide majority of Jewish perspectives and conventions I find to be genuinely edifying. Certainly for this December, remembering *Chanukah* or the Festival of Dedication would be an edifying Jewish practice.

Unfortunately, not everyone with whom I interact throughout the week, shares my commitment to fairness and equity. While I do believe, as someone from an evangelical Protestant background, that there are edifying virtues and perspectives from which today’s Messianic movement can benefit that originate from my Reformed and Wesleyan heritage—the fact is that as a non-Jewish Believer in Israel’s Messiah, I have cast my lot with the Jewish people and the restoration of Israel’s Kingdom. I do not just look to the return of the Messiah and His eventual reign from Jerusalem, but I pay attention to what is happening in modern Israel, and I oppose anti-Semitism when I encounter it. I cannot be arrogant or haughty in regard to the widespread Jewish dismissal of Yeshua, but I have to instead act as a vessel of grace and mercy, and be facilitating a widespread Jewish acceptance of Yeshua (Romans 11:30-31). I have to be very conscientious of the Apostle Paul’s warning, “for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either” (Romans 11:21).

What do you do with a non-Jewish Believer, who legitimately partakes of his or her spiritual heritage in the Scriptures of Israel, considering himself or herself a part of Israel’s Commonwealth or polity, and is looking for the return of the Messiah to Jerusalem—but then wants little or nothing to do with mainline Jewish traditions or customs? Perhaps more education in Second Temple Judaism and Jewish history would be in order. But what about those non-Jewish people who want to claim that they are a part of the community of Israel via their faith in Israel’s Messiah—but then take no interest in the original Messianic mission of Jewish outreach, evangelism, and Israel solidarity? Be aware that these people have made commitments to a live a life of Torah obedience, in emulation of Yeshua and His early followers. They keep *Shabbat*, the appointed times, and eat a kosher style of diet, among other things. They may even read the weekly Torah portions. *No one is saying that being a part of the Messianic movement is only a one-way street for them, as though they are only here to provide various forms of support for Jewish ministry;* such people should have their spiritual needs met and questions answered, just as Jewish Believers have their own spiritual needs and unique ques-

tions. Yet, while it is to be properly acknowledged and recognized that God has sovereignly drawn many non-Jewish Believers into the Messianic movement, we **have a serious problem on our hands if a number of them want little or nothing to do with their fellow Messianic Jewish Believers.**

While the Messianic movement is broad and diverse, and there are certainly instances of various Messianic Jewish congregations being unwelcome toward non-Jewish Believers—today in 2016 many Messianic Jewish congregations welcome non-Jewish Believers, provided they are respectful and understanding of various Jewish sensibilities. I have Messianic Jewish friends who have no problem with my family living a life of Torah obedience in emulation of Yeshua the Messiah. Part of it, they understand, is being involved with the Messianic community. Another part of it, they understand, involves the prophecies of the nations coming to Zion to be taught God's Instruction (Micah 4:1-3; Isaiah 2:2-4). *They just want to make sure that we are doing this as a part of the Messianic Jewish experience, and not off on our own.* How are we helping see the Romans 11:25-26 trajectory of salvation history come to pass—"until the fullness of the nations has come in; and in this way all Israel will be saved" (PME)? Certainly, if such a mission is to be achieved, it will involve expelling the proper efforts to understand Judaism, accept Messianic Jewish Believers as one's fellow brothers and sisters, and help declare the Messiah to Jewish people who do not know Him!

How much concern does the widely non-Jewish, Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement really have for the Messianic Jewish movement which preceded it? While I do not want to be found broad-brushing any group of religious people, in the past several years—especially since our family relocated back to North Texas—legitimate concerns as they involve the original mission of the Messianic movement are not too important for Hebrew Roots aficionados. Recently this past Summer, a video documentary called *The Way* started circulating around social media, and by this time at the end of 2016, it has probably had hundreds of thousands of views. I have seen *The Way* several times, as its producers visited a number of Hebrew Roots related conferences, independent home fellowships, and interviewed a wide number of popular teachers, as well as individual people. As I have watched *The Way: A Documentary*, I have tried to practice a method I learned a long time ago as a political science undergraduate: *separate data from noise.*

There are many non-Jewish Believers whom the Lord is sincerely stirring to look into parts of the Bible which have remained closed to them. Many are partaking of the Sabbath and appointed times. Many are studying the Torah. Many have a genuine desire to want to live like their Savior, and they are willing to make the sacrifice to do it—which at times can include being spurned by their family, ostracized from their friends, and accused of being cultic from their former pastors and Sunday school teachers. Many non-Jewish Believers, who have been directed by the Holy Spirit to be Torah pursuant in their obedience to our Heavenly Father, have experienced some of the same rejection as Jewish Believers who have been ostracized from their families, considered crazy, and maybe even regarded as dead, for placing their trust in Yeshua of Nazareth. I am blessed to say that in my own family's experience of being a part of Messianic things, we have come together with our Jewish brothers and sisters in Yeshua, and in getting to

know one another—and join in common cause—we have been able to have a reciprocal recognition of the sacrifices we have made to walk this path.

Among the many individuals and couples interviewed in *The Way: A Documentary*, the common thread was that the Lord was moving on people to dig into the Bible like never before. Many of them were indeed cut off from their faith origins in the Old Testament. Many of them had a sincere desire to want to live like Yeshua. Even though many of these people were rough around the edges, particularly in the newness of their experiences, you could tell that these people were ready and willing—not unlike some of the people who in the early days of the Protestant Reformation, first encountered a Bible. One can tell from *The Way: A Documentary*, that the numbers of non-Jewish Believers awakening to their faith heritage in Israel's Scriptures, cannot be ignored or dismissed.

But the producers of *The Way: A Documentary* made one, very critical mistake. They may have traveled across the United States, to Canada, to Costa Rica, and to the United Kingdom. (I was not expecting them to travel to Israel.) They interviewed many Hebrew Roots teachers, and individuals, couples, and families. They may have attended various Hebrew Roots conferences. But not only did the producers of *The Way: A Documentary* not bother to attend a single *Shabbat* service at a local Messianic Jewish congregation, and interview the rabbi—they **did not even mention the existence of the Messianic Jewish movement**. Even though no religious movement is without its challenges and growing pains and errors at times: there would be no move of non-Jewish Believers embracing their faith heritage in Israel, *without first* a modern Messianic Jewish movement with origins going back to at least the same time as the emergence of Zionism.

What does some of this say? Was this just an oversight of the producers of *The Way: A Documentary*? Or, is it reflective of the fact that many non-Jewish Believers who have embraced their Hebrew Roots in the Tanach Scriptures, are not too interested in embracing their Jewish Roots in the Second Temple religion of Yeshua the Messiah and His Jewish Apostles? Even more so, are there non-Jewish Believers—believing themselves to be a part of the Commonwealth of Israel, grafted into the olive tree by faith in Israel's Messiah—who think that Judaism and the Jewish experience have nothing to teach them about their relationship with the God of Israel, or even just the human experience of encountering and overcoming trials on Earth?

That there is more going on in the Messianic movement than just Jewish evangelism is clear enough. But, to forget and/or dismiss the original vision of Messianic Jewish outreach to Jewish people who need Yeshua the Messiah is a grave sin. The agony of Paul over the salvation of his countrymen needs to be heard: "I could wish myself actually under God's curse and separated from the Messiah, if it would help my brothers, my own flesh and blood" (Romans 9:3, CJB).

It might take a little more work, but one can be a part of a Messianic movement with a dual mission of Jewish outreach and evangelism *and* in equipping the non-Jewish Believers God has sovereignly drawn in to be a part of the restoration He is performing. Yet as obvious as it may be to some: **you cannot have an authentic restoration of Israel's Kingdom without the Jews**. I am afraid that many presently run the severe risk of being cut off (Romans 11:21).

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS UPDATE

December 2016

Dear Friends:

If you are like me, then the month of November was not the month that you expected it to be! The results of the U.S. Presidential Election were a signal to me, that we got the “line extension” of time that we need. Our religious freedoms and the ability for us to speak our minds, will remain in tact, for the foreseeable future. We will have to learn how to interact more in a pluralistic environment of ideas for sure, but people of faith—in the United States at least—do not have to take a low profile just yet.



Of course, the really difficult issue presented to me from the election, is recognizing that, in many ways, we are presently on “borrowed time.” Many religious leaders and people have no idea where we are in history, and they think that things will go along as they always have. 2 Peter 3:4 astutely reminds us how right before the Lord’s return, people will be saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.” For those of us paying attention, we just went through a major “fire drill” of sorts, and we cannot afford to drop our guard as we move into the future. I know that for myself, I am very disappointed in the lack of judgment on the part of many people that I consider to be spiritual, and especially various evangelical Christian leaders. It will take me a while to fairly sort through this...

Because of the unusual character of November, I found myself unable to easily concentrate on my normal work routine. However, I was able to conduct a great deal of busywork behind the scenes. Right after Thanksgiving, *all* of the articles and FAQ entries from the old Messianic Apologetics website were in draft mode for publishing on the new Messianic Apologetics website. So, I spent all day on Sunday, November 27, approving *all* of these drafts—wanting to go into the month of December with only new website assignments awaiting. *Praise God that the website transfer is now complete!*

By the end of this month, the new commentary *2 Corinthians for the Practical Messianic* should be available for release. I will then be focusing my writing attention almost exclusively on *Salvation on the Line*. A new feature that I have been employing, as a means to reach out several times a week, has been via Facebook Live. One of the my long term goals is to have audio and video teachings associated with each of the written teachings on the Messianic Apologetics website. 2016 has been a very critical year for employing social media, and I look forward to the new technical capabilities I will find in 2017!

Until next month...

J.K. McKee