



# OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS

monthly newsletter of Outreach Israel Ministries  
and MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS



JULY 2022

## ENCOUNTERING WOKISM

Slowing Down and Learning How to Listen to Those We Disagree With

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## STATEMENT OF BELIEF

*Outreach Israel Ministries  
and Messianic Apologetics*

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

All Believers in Israel's Messiah are to be regarded as a part of the Commonwealth of Israel. Jewish and non-Jewish Believers are to respect one another in mutual love as brothers and sisters, and are to work together for the salvation of the Jewish people and return of Israel's Messiah.

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

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

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

*For a fuller Statement of Faith, consult the OIM website*

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

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# OLM UPDATE

July 2022

J.K. McKee

The last two to three years have been a very difficult time for many of us. There are still many matters involving the geo-political situation, public health, and the economy, which are still playing out. I have said it many times, in teachings and broadcasts: **the last two to three years should have been a time when each of us pressed into God in**

**a new and significant way.** Regardless of any of the specifics of when we might be on the Last Days timeline, with periods of isolation, having to confront some new distanced realities, and with new and significant waves of controversy—each of us should have taken some specific time to resolve important spiritual business with our Creator, so that we can be more effective in His service in the days ahead. Each of us, when spending significant time in prayer, meditation, or Scripture study, has hopefully had some new spiritual gifts awakened within us!

There are things in the world that require our ongoing attention, *but not at the expense of Kingdom of God matters.* Today, there are many sincere Believers, who while genuinely being concerned about what is happening, spend more time and effort paying attention to current events and apparent “intel”—and almost little or no time in seeing their spiritual skills improved. While it is important for us to be aware of the signs of our times, what happens in the political realm is decisively on the side of the powers of this age. While various persons have been mesmerized, at times, with the powers of this age—huge social and religious developments have caught a great number of us, myself included, very much by surprise. Consider how among many of the (presumed) brothers and sisters in Messiah, who you know and have fellowshipped with, now have a completely different approach to a passage like Ephesians 5:14: “Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Messiah will shine on you” (2020 NASB). Concepts such as being awakened, moving from a condition of being in the darkness and coming into the light, have been co-opted from much of their original, Biblical intent, to now promote a very hyper-liberal agenda known as **Wokeism**. Many have been caught completely by surprise, because their attention has not been focused

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on internal matters within the community of faith.

A great number of us did not plan sufficiently to deal with Wokeism, and the hyper-progressive wave that is doubtlessly sweeping through Millennials and Generation-Z. While we can debate whether or not this is the culmination of what started in 2015, when homosexual marriage was legalized in America—what we cannot debate is that **we are all going to be directly affected by this, and we are likely going to have to change some of our ways.** The long term future of evangelical Protestantism is certainly in doubt. The majority of the Jewish community in America will also be affected by Wokeism. And, it is probably safe to say that people, within today's Messianic community, have extended families which are being affected by it.

Many of us, in seeing Wokeism, are going to immediately blame the world system, Satan, and the poor decisions that many others have made. But how many people, within our spiritual spheres of influence—our families, extended families, faith communities—have embraced Wokeism because their questions and concerns were not sufficiently addressed, and they found themselves silenced and outright dismissed? Rather than listening to their concerns carefully—being “quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger” (James 1:19, 2020 NASB)—how many have we summarily judged, and not only pushed away, but shoved into the enemy camp?

## Have you been living in a bubble?

If we are completely honest with ourselves, all of us are guilty of living in a bubble, which to various degrees closes itself off from influences that we do not like. There is nothing particularly wrong or immoral about this; the local congregation, fellowship, or Bible study groups that we are a part of, are indeed supposed to be “safe spaces” where we are in close communion with fellow Believers of like mind and values. These are the places where we are indeed supposed to be able to drop our guard, and be able to confide in other people with our confidential information. Your local assembly or group is to be a place where you can be in close association with brothers and sisters in the faith: those who will pray for you, stand by you in times of difficulty, and even be able to know a few of your secrets.

But placing oneself in a bubble, a safe space of sorts, where fellow Believers will only and exclusively be surrounded by those we share a common faith with, a common worldview with, and common values with, can be a problem. The *ekklesia* as the people of God is to have a mission to reach out to a hurt and lost world with the good news of Israel's Messiah, so that all might come to redemption. If all we do is associate with those of like mind—and most especially only concern ourselves with issues and matters that

concern us—how attuned are we to the purposes of God’s Kingdom in the Earth? None of us disagrees that we live in a world which is dominated by sin, ungodliness, information, misinformation, truth, lies, and half-truths. We live in a world full of people who are looking for meaning to the basic human questions of “Why am I here?” and “Is there a God?” While it is entirely proper and necessary that we associate internally with those Believers who can help us through our trials, concerns, and pains—**this cannot be done at the expense of not interacting externally with those with whom we disagree.** We cannot be so contained in a “safe space” of our own choosing—a “safe space” for those who affirm belief in the God of the Bible—that we forget how each of us was once on the outside, decidedly without Him or citizenship in His Kingdom.

*So let’s break out of our bubbles a little bit by asking some important questions.* Over the past several years...

- What sorts of drama have you witnessed from your extended family, friends, or sphere of influence?
- What kinds of social media posts have you been seeing? Have they made you happy or upset?
- What family events or gatherings will some loved ones not attend?
- Are there any specific things or matters being performed, by people you know, to make a specific point? Does this encourage you or upset you?
- **Do you have any specific stories that can be legitimately labeled as “horror stories”?**

These sorts of questions, and the implications that they have for us as men and women of faith—are being asked by evangelical Protestants all over America right now, and they are indeed being asked by many people within today’s Messianic community. *Many people do not know what to do.* Many do not want to unnecessarily offend family, so they try to stay away from controversial issues. While that might work in the short term, just remaining isolated to oneself as a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven—with the full power of Heaven backing you, no less—is not enough!

Everyone of us, in the past two to three years, has probably had an incident or two that has left us severely shaken up. In looking to various spiritual leaders, we have seen some ignore the problems and challenges, and likely others enflame or compound them. While we all do need to be in our bubbles from time to time, as we patch up our wounds and seek healing, the long term solution is not for us to reinforce our bubbles from fiberglass to bullet-proof glass. Instead, what is necessary is for each of us to properly strate-

gize what some of the outside matters actually are—most especially among those we interact with the most—and to prayerfully and compassionately consider a better way forward.

## How Are People Leaving, or Going to Leave, Faith?

Less and less people in North America are believing in a Supreme Being or God, who created the universe, but with estimates of God-believers still being high at around eighty-percent. This is much higher than countries like the United Kingdom or Germany, the original heartlands of the Protestant Reformation. It is easy for us to just chalk up apostasy to end-time prophecies like 2 Thessalonians 2:3, and then be done with it. Yet, while we have no direct influence over much of the end-time scenario and Seventieth Week of Daniel, we each have direct influence as to whether or not any one of our fellow human beings has to die without knowing Yeshua as Savior.

Those of us in the Messianic community are innately aware of the patience required for Jewish outreach and evangelism. It is frequently not something that involves dynamic preaching, leading to one making some “decision for Messiah.” Instead, it more frequently involves getting to know a Jewish person over a long period of time, becoming their friend, earning their trust, and genuinely being seen as someone who can be relied upon. We often have to wait upon the Lord, for when they are ready to discuss matters of God, the Bible, and the person of Yeshua of Nazareth. Being involved in this kind of ministry service requires a great deal of longsuffering and even innovation. This is why it is stressed so much that non-Jewish Believers have to be specially called into the Messianic movement! This kind of work, for the Kingdom of God, is just not for everyone.

Those of us who have been involved with long term projects, such as investing many, many years into a person, who does eventually recognize Yeshua as Israel’s Messiah—should not find it too difficult to adapt to what will probably be necessary for the future. Just as much as many people we know have had significant objections to Yeshua being Israel’s Messiah, many more people are going to have significant objections to the existence of God, but more likely the veracity of the Bible. In presenting Yeshua to a Jewish non-Believer, you have likely encountered some hostility to the figure of Jesus, but many of you have likely also interacted with those who believed that He was a good teacher, rabbi, philosopher, but not the Messiah and certainly not God. And it was a few of those people, who were more open down the road to consider Him as the Redeemer.

The attacks that are going to come, to the veracity of the Bible, will be very big in the future, **at levels that we have never encountered.** I re-

member over seventeen years ago (2005), taking one of my first seminary classes, and encountering an instructor who said that most of the events in Scripture, prior to the apparent “return” of the Jews from Babylon, was largely manufactured to solicit support for a group of refugees in the Persian Empire. Admittedly, this was an extreme position! But, that there have been many parts of the Tanach or Old Testament that have been treated as fiction or quasi-fiction, in both Judaism and Christianity the past century-and-a-half, is well known. And if you combine some of this, with the problems that exist today with the media, movies, and especially science fiction—the discussions that are coming to us will be absolutely staggering, and I even believe some future matters will likely shake up the core faith of many strong Believers themselves.

Yes, at this point, we can all blame the powers of the age for the apostasy, and decide to retreat back into our bubbles. But is God going to provide supernatural protection and support for those who refuse to labor for Him and His Kingdom? God will only move in supernatural power, if we are willing to perform the work that He requires!

There are many reasons which will contribute to a mass apostasy in the future: secularism, progressivism, atheistic science, and sin. However, given the complexities of our universe, new discoveries that will take place regarding multiple dimensions of time and space, and new technologies that will reveal new things about the cosmos—I actually doubt that we will be seeing a mass apostasy on the level of people denying the existence of God, or completely disregarding the Holy Scriptures. At best, more and more people we know and care for, will come out and say that there is a God or Supreme Being, that Yeshua or Jesus is one way to God, and that the Bible is a good collection of stories and philosophies. The Bible, however, far from possessing some level of accuracy or inerrancy, is the product of limited, primitive humans trying to figure out the Ultimate Intelligence, and is subject to a wide degree of error. The Bible contains a good code of conduct and an inspirational message—perhaps the best message, among many on Planet Earth—but it is ultimately a human book prone to significant mistakes and understandings. *This is the better scenario...*

As I have sought the Lord regarding the type of apostasy that is due to come to humanity, I have been challenged to consider, and at least pencil in, a scenario that is far more insidious and deceptive than the standard “all paths lead to God” approach. Today, even though things seem rather bleak for some, **what would happen if there is a huge series of victories of light over darkness?** Roe v. Wade was just overturned in the United States of America, a huge victory for the pro-life movement! Other matters that

affirm personal liberty, the value of human beings, removal of corruption, and a restoration of lost morals—could come. A challenge that I have been asked to consider is what happens if, in the immediate future, we see a series of significant victories of Good over Evil—and in response, all the Enemy does is take off his red coat and put on a white coat? Do we honestly think that when the antimessiah/antichrist comes on the scene, he is going to present himself as this venomous reptile, with goat-headed servants? Or is he actually going to present himself as a bearer of light, and enlightenment?

Who is it often more difficult to communicate the good news of Yeshua's salvation to? Those who are involved in blatant sin, who know they are in error—or those who think that they are generally good and moral people, who will say that they love others and are full of light? If we see a widescale restoration of good in the world, and with it a kind-of libertarian tolerance where the main thing is that no one is advocating violence against someone else—we are likely also going to see an explosion of people who are good, who recognize that Yeshua or Jesus was also good, and who are connected to the Universal Consciousness. When technology begins to reveal new things about the cosmos, the various dimensions of being, and how positive vibrations can enact positive things—the emphasis becomes less and less on the fallenness of human beings, and instead on the elevation of self and the ascension of oneself into a higher plane of existence. And yes, in case you were wondering, I am being more and more convinced that the great apostasy is going to come from unconventional, yet to be realized, factors. Many of us have heard about Spiritism or the New Age. If in the coming years, we see obvious Good experience a victories over obvious Evil—note that Good does not necessarily mean Saved or Redeemed. Instead, we need to consider how many people who self-classify as Good, are actually closeted Evil.

## **Have we ever told someone to be quiet?**

Over the past eight to nine months, I have been significantly impressed that far too many contemporary Believers, who would certainly identify as “conservative” to various degrees—have little to no ability to actually engage with those who are theologically liberal or progressive. Today's Jewish community in the West is extremely progressive, but it is very small. Yet, the evangelical Protestant community is experiencing a radical shift toward a post-evangelical phase, where things like Wokeism, pro-choice, and LGBTQI absolutely abound—as blessed by Jesus, no less. Today, when many of the people I know think about these things, they emotionally shake and physically shudder. Too frequently, they know of good friends, family mem-

bers, or even their own children, who have gone down a path that they consider to be dangerous.

While there is always the likelihood that many of the younger generation have been influenced by their friends, the media, and by the education they received—how adequately were they prepared to encounter a diverse world by their parents and the faith community? When many of the young people we know, who have gone “Woke,” were growing up—and they asked difficult questions of the older people—how were these questions approached? Did they have a Bible thrown in their face? Were they possibly “ordered” to be silent, as they were doubting the apparent “Truth,” with a capital T? Or was some effort made to sort through the questions and enter into a conversation, legitimately sorting out issues of a salvation nature versus a reliability of the Bible? If young people were once told, growing up in a very conservative religious environment to “Be quiet!” when an inconvenient question was raised—why are we suddenly surprised that today, when their conservative parents might raise a question or an issue on social media, that they are now finding their accounts flagged and suspended? As difficult as it is to acknowledge, the challenges that we face today, have been influenced by both the Left and the Right.

Today’s Messianic community widely inherits significant virtues from both the Jewish Synagogue and evangelical Protestantism. I can think of nothing more anti-Jewish, than somebody being told that they cannot ask a question! Many Jewish people who have come to faith, did so, precisely because they asked that inconvenient question, “Why can I not read the teachings of Jesus?”, frequently finding out how Jewish He actually is. The main foundation, of Protestantism, is that we do not need the pope to tell us what to believe. God gave us brains, intellect, and reason—and with the presence of His Holy Spirit we should be able to work through difficult issues from the Scriptures, and whatever we encounter in life. There should be an openness and a transparency when dealing with whatever matters come our way.

So today, we have to all encourage a level of not speaking at one another, but joining in conversation, listening to one another—**all the while praying that the truth of God will prevail**. It is not something that is going to be easy for us to consider, but it is not an impossibility, either.

## What are people debating? How are you reacting?

I cannot universally speak for all Messianic congregations and fellowships, but is your assembly presently experiencing growth? **I would hope yes**. But over the past several years, the overall reports that I receive would suggest that more congregations than not, are experiencing some form of

contraction. This especially involves the lack of young people showing up. Are they not our future? Do the questions and concerns that they have truly matter? Are the issues of the young people, our future, being addressed in congregational discussions? Are you, whether a congregational leader or member, actively engaged in talking to the younger people, seeing what their questions and concerns are? It is possible that many of you have not taken some of these things into consideration, although it is high time that we all do!

How do many of us respond to what might be regarded as “the typical scenario” regarding the young men and young women (at least as I encountered going back to the 2000s?):

1. A young man or woman leaves home for college.
2. Their religious faith is challenged in various classes, particularly science and history.
3. He or she returns home, and asks parents and/or spiritual leaders some difficult questions.
4. Either some kind of discussions begin, or the young person is convinced that the Bible and religion do not have the answer.

This is something that I certainly witnessed from members of my own extended family, being raised in some overly-conservative religious environments, being exposed to some ancient history or modern science in college, and then coming home to ask the local pastor what to do. I had a relative who was taking a Bible as literature class, who returned from college wanting to know whether or not it was true that there were pagan myths that somehow paralleled the Scriptures. How do we know for sure, whether or not the Biblical account of the Flood was not copied off of the Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh? There were a series of one-on-one meetings with the pastor, that at least helped my relative from not throwing out her Bible. Some time in listening to her questions, concerns, and planning for multiple weeks of going through various matters, was required.

Today in 2022, however, things have become even more complicated! Questions about the Scriptures, how certain things came to be, how certain things took place—will continue to abound. But now, new social questions will be asked by younger people. How do you know that God did not make that man or woman homosexual? Who are you to interfere on a person’s journey of self-discovery? *These questions have been asked for the past five to seven years.* One of the newer questions that has begun to circulate: How do you know for certain that God did not create intelligent life on other planets? These sorts of questions can admittedly make many of us uncomfortable, but in order to make sure that we do not lose young people, we have to slow down and listen...

## How do we slow down and listen better?

Because of human nature being what it is, there are many people we will encounter, who will be entirely uncooperative, who will not listen to reason, and will purposefully cause problems. *They need to be guarded against.* There are others who are the exact opposite: they are open minded, reasonable, and they will disagree in a respectful manner. And then there are those who sit in-between: they expect difficult questions and comments to be shunned and silenced, and they are looking for a reason to cut ties with your local congregation or fellowship of Believers. If a leader or teacher does not extend the effort to slow down, and listen to the concerns of such people, then such a leader or teacher might be guilty of pushing someone away. Among the many verses that could come to my mind, Yeshua's words of Matthew 18:14 jump out: "So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven for one of these little ones to perish" (2020 NASB).

As long as I can remember, one of the biggest controversies to hit the *ekkllesia* over multiple decades has been approaches to early Genesis. It is still debated today, with new proposals and perspectives being offered. Many people in congregations and assemblies do not know what to do. When I was in high school, I remember coming home from my local job, and telling my parents and some people I knew that I had a conversation with someone who believed that God used evolution to bring about human beings. I did not say that I believed in evolution; I said that someone else believed. Rather than being asked, "Why does this person believe this way?" the response I received was, "Does this person even believe in the Bible?" This then quickly became, "Are they saved?" Thankfully today, it is much easier to discuss the various factors present regarding early Genesis—assuming you correctly recognize that Genesis 1-11 involves reliability and not salvation issues. But there are still people, if you do not slow down and listen to their questions and talk *with* them and not *at* them, who will leave your sphere of influence over how you react to their opinions regarding early Genesis.

Slowing down and listening to those we may disagree with, is an art and a science that the Lord is going to have to impart to each and everyone of us, given the complexities of the days ahead. The bigger and bigger a congregation or a ministry may be, the less and less likely, I think, slowing down to take the time to hear people out, and engage them in conversation, will take place. Small groups, or specific studies at your local assembly, will probably be a better venue to see the kinds of discussions that need to take place in our future, and will come to pass. All of us know that the world in which we live is not getting any easier, and we have to be make sure that we are making a difference for the Kingdom of God in the lives of all we encounter!