

HISTORY OF OUTREACH ISRAEL

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To have arrived where we are today, we quite naturally have a definite history and trail that has been faithfully chronicled by our family. We often refer to our journey as a “spiritual scavenger hunt” and for good reasons. We, as a family, would not be doing what we are doing unless we had the faith to follow the cloud of the Lord’s leading. From point A, where we then received instructions on where to find point B, then from point B where we learned what we were supposed to learn and receive instructions on how to find point C, the “walk of faith”—as exemplified by our spiritual forebearers—has been both a unique and awesome experience for our entire family. Before sharing some of the details of where God has led us, **I first would like to give Him all of the glory and honor for His mercy toward us, and His choice to consider using us as vessels in His Kingdom’s work.** Without question, our family can testify that our immediate history is simply one of many similar accounts, which confirm that He is able to use anyone who is willing to seek His face and discern His voice.

Two Become One

Without going into the minutia of our respective backgrounds, I firmly believe that the union of Mark and Margaret Huey was ordained by the Lord. The challenge, when looking at our personal history, was ultimately getting us together so that we may now fulfill His purposes for our lives. Even though we had one brief encounter at our alma mater, Vanderbilt University, in October 1972, the timing for a union was delayed until nearly twenty-one years later in 1993. In that process, two separate families emerged in the 1970’s that had different spouses. Thankfully during that time, Mark in 1978 and Margaret in 1983, both had personal repentant salvation experiences before the Living God. The departure from darkness into light has never been questioned by either of us.

During this interim period, I (Mark) married and fathered two daughters, and Margaret married and had a son and two daughters. But it was not until the early 1990’s, when divorce and death altered the marital landscape for both of us, that we would reunite. In an almost premeditated fashion, my marriage succumbed to the ravages of an unwanted, lengthy divorce. Margaret’s husband, the father of John, Jane and Maggie McKee, contracted a fatal case of malignant melanoma. Within five months of Maggie’s birth, Margaret was a nursing widow at the graveside of her then, eleven-year old son, nine-year old daughter, and infant daughter’s father. As a widow at thirty-nine with three young children, Margaret thought that her life was temporarily over as she called out to God for sustenance. He mercifully gave her “a word,” which came from the Prophet Jeremiah:

“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

She clung to this Scripture and the infant child—who to her represented new life—and simply sought the Lord for His guidance and comfort.

While this was happening, I struggled for almost three years to avoid the inevitability of separation and divorce that my first wife instigated and pursued. My strategy was to continue changing attorneys and use other stalling tactics, in the hope that our marriage could be salvaged. But after depleting my financial and emotional capital, and living apart from my daughters Danielle and Marielle for almost two years, resignation came. By the spring of 1993, capitulating to the demands of the court only required a final signature for the divorce decree to be final. During this grueling ordeal, I found solace in the Savior. The brokenness of rejection and disdain channeled me into the crucified life that was my only way to cope with the pain. In a similar fashion to Margaret, I found comfort in the Scriptures and the Lord gave me a verse from the Apostle Paul that gave me hope and understanding about this era of my life:

“[T]hat I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (Philippians 3:10).

In a providential way, the Holy One allowed these two broken souls to become reacquainted at a college reunion on May 28, 1993. It took over a year, but with Divine confirmations from a series of unique circumstances, our decision to marry was realized on June 10, 1994. The previous hiatus of over twenty years was soon forgotten, as the union forged ahead when Margaret and the children were relocated from Northern Kentucky to my domicile in Dallas, where I could maintain close contact with my daughters.

A Time of Refreshing

After Margaret and I were married, our journey to where we are today began in earnest. The **spiritual scavenger hunt**—as we now commonly call it—began with our new family concluding that we knew there was more to God than what I had received with my Bible Church background, and Margaret had received with her Methodist background. Since we had both been avid readers of modern Christian literature, and active leaders/participants in our respective church settings, we were simply hungry for more of what God had for us as a couple. When you have witnessed His hand upon a variety of circumstances that have ultimately led you into a marriage dedicated to His service, you are open to His leading. As you pursue Him with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, He reveals more and more of Himself. Yet as we discovered, in our relative blindness we are not always sure what His communications necessarily mean at the time of reception.

One prime example of this was when one day in hot pursuit of truth, the Lord impressed upon me some verses concerning the sons of Issachar (1 Chronicles 12:32). In this moment, I received in my mind’s eye an image of the valley of Megiddo from the heights of Mount Tabor. I was able to look at the Scriptures and understand many of the significant events that historically took place at this location, as well as the ones that are prophesied to occur. In an exuberant moment, I designed a silk screen image that was entitled “Issachar Warrior.” It was not until months later—when we were standing on the summit of Mount Tabor—that we were able to receive even more understanding as it related to the significance of Israel and what God is having us do today.

With seeking hearts, the Lord led us to a charismatic church in North Dallas to experience what was then being described as a “renewal” or “refreshing” (cf. Acts 3:19) in the Body of Christ. We were open to hearing His voice, but when the enthusiasm led to people making frequent treks to Toronto to “receive the blessing,” our spirits were admittedly troubled. It did not appear that all of the manifestations that we were witnessing were Biblically based.

One day as I was jogging and reflecting upon the concept of God pouring out His blessings on the world, I conversed with Him that led me to ask this question: “If God is pouring out His blessings all around the world, where in the world would you want to be to receive His blessings?” As I pondered that query, my response was almost levitating. I could not imagine a more perfect place to receive His blessings than in the streets of Jerusalem and in Israel. I concluded that God was indeed pouring out His Spirit for a time of refreshing, the city He has chosen as His own should be receiving an abundant

amount of His anointing. Israel was where we should go, if He was indeed pouring out His blessings upon the Earth!

When I got home to tell Margaret about this encounter on the jogging trail, she was elated. After all, we both had innate love the Jewish people and the Land of Israel. We were both familiar with much of the Old Testament, and Margaret herself was very familiar with the Hebraic Roots of the faith as her late husband Kim McKee conducted Passover *sedars* in various Methodist churches in Kentucky. We both appreciated the ministry of a Messianic Jew named Zola Levitt, who happened to be based in Dallas. So without any hesitation, we made reservations to join Zola on his next tour to Israel (1994).

On to Israel

When our Father gives you an invitation to visit Israel, I believe it is a special moment that all should cherish. We were only six months into our new marriage, and Margaret and I were euphoric. A few months earlier, during some deep prayer and meditation, the Lord had again given Margaret some Scriptures that she nurtured in her heart. She believed that these particular verses were going to be like a “roadmap” for our new life together. But there was one caveat: she could not be the one leading this, so I was going to have to confirm what was happening. To further complicate the matter, Margaret was not allowed to share with me the verses she was given. I also had to have the same powerful witness of the Spirit. I look back on this, and see that God was starting to teach us the necessity of having things confirmed by multiple witnesses.

You can imagine what a challenge this represented to two newlyweds. The pressure was on, and so I went to the Lord with what I thought was an impossible task. But in His inimitable way, the Spirit directed me to Isaiah 43 as the Scriptures for our new life together. When I described this to Margaret, she said, “Yes, did you get the first twenty-one verses?” At that point I said, “No, we have the whole chapter!”

Even though we both believed that Isaiah 43 spoke to our life circumstances and what was ahead for us, we did not know how to interpret what it meant. So, we simply treasured these words in our hearts and looked forward to more times of intimate communion with Him.

Our trip to Israel was a pivotal moment in our lives. From the moment we landed on the tarmac in Tel Aviv to the departure some twelve days later, we felt the physical presence of the Spirit of God wherever we went. At times, His presence was so intense that we wept in joyful recognition that we were in the Promised Land on a tour that He was personally guiding by His Spirit. We had confirmation after confirmation that we were “home.” But neither one of us were Jewish, we were only sincere Believers in the Messiah of Israel. We simply loved the Lord with all our hearts, and wanted to serve Him to the best of our abilities.

Many wonderful things occurred on our trip to Israel in 1994 that are too many to elaborate. But one very dramatic thing that is better understood today—in light of our current work with Outreach Israel Ministries—should be mentioned. This incident occurred during our tour visit to the ruins at the fortress of Masada. After our Israeli guide gave a very emotional description of how the surviving Jewish residents of Jerusalem had made their last stand at Masada, following the Roman destruction of the city in 70 A.D., we were given some time to wander around the ruins for about thirty minutes before leaving. As Margaret and I walked around, we were led to a small enclosure that was located on the northern wall of the ancient structure. Inside was a small plaque that indicated that this was the former synagogue of the compound, where archaeologists had discovered some parchments from Ezekiel 37, a passage of Scripture describing the dry bones of Israel and their resurrection.

In an attempt to more fully understand what happened in these ruins millennia ago, I opened my Bible to the Ezekiel passage and began to read it aloud to Margaret. There just happened to be a few open stone window casings that looked out to a rocky valley to the north, so I positioned myself in front of one of the windows and started reading. Then as I read the words of Ezekiel, the Spirit seemed to take over my elucidation. All of a sudden, I was reading the text loud enough for most in the small sanctuary to clearly hear me. I remember reading the entire chapter and then sheepishly closing my Bible, and almost apologizing if I had disturbed anyone during the reading. Little did we know at that time—and did not realize it until years later—that I was reading one of the many texts that today has affected the

growth and development of not just Outreach Israel Ministries, but also the Messianic community of faith.

Return to Reality

Prior to our return home, and even during the remaining days of our tour and the immediate days thereafter, we talked about how we could possibly make a trip to Israel every year. Certainly we believed we would have future opportunities to go back and experience more of the country. But then the reality of the responsibility for rearing five young children began to require our full attention. Prior to our marriage, I had been a successful commercial real estate broker with some residential development experience, consulting expertise in golf course and resort developments, and mergers and acquisitions of publicly traded corporations. Margaret had formed her own cross-stitch design business in 1985, and also had extensive business experience developing her accounting and marketing skills with various family-owned businesses. Since we were concerned about the future educational needs of our children, we decided that we would develop a business together that would allow us to work and spend time with one another, so we could recapture a part of the time we had lost during those twenty years apart.

This was a good plan, because as experienced entrepreneurs, we were both used to working for ourselves. Our financial obligations certainly gave us every incentive to work long and hard on the projects we developed. But one thing we learned along the road: our ways are not necessarily His ways. As the Prophet Isaiah puts it:

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts’” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Before long, our passion for truth and the experience of the tour to Israel got the better of us. By the time we were pushing into new business ventures, we were also eventually to a Messianic Jewish congregation in Dallas. By the Feast of Tabernacles in 1995, we were introduced to the Hebraic Roots of our faith on a weekly congregational level, and within a month we made the decision to drop our Sunday church attendance and become members of the synagogue. We took a new members course, studied introductory Hebrew, learned Davidic dances, and began singing the *Shema* and Messianic songs in Hebrew. This was coupled by us beginning a more consistent study of the Torah, we started to remember the weekly *Shabbat* (Sabbath), and we cleaned up our diet by eating kosher. We fully immersed our family in the culture that dominated the congregation. Once again, much like our experience when we traveled to Israel, we were very comfortable with the environment, the people we met, and the customs we began observing.

In our zeal for more knowledge, we even traveled the next summer (1996) to two Messianic Jewish conferences, representing the two major Messianic Jewish denominations (MJAA and UMJC). Like most non-Jewish Believers who have shared this experience, we were scouring over our ancestral trails to discover some Jewish Roots. And although not necessarily confirmable without a considerable amount of work, we realized that both of our backgrounds probably had some very limited Jewish ancestry. But in short order, as we continued to grow in our new Messianic faith, we were communicated the disparaging news that since we were not verifiably Jewish, then we were not allowed to be full-fledged members of either denomination. This did not make much sense to us, because after all, the words of a Jew named the Apostle Paul declared that because of one’s faith in Yeshua the Messiah, all are to be considered equal:

“[B]ecause as many of you as were immersed into the Messiah have clothed yourselves with the Messiah, in whom there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor freeman, neither male nor female; for in union with the Messiah Yeshua, you are all one” (Galatians 3:27-28, CJB).

Something was just not right with some of the claims that were made, limiting the participation of non-Jewish Believers in Messianic Judaism. But at the time we were very new to it to all, and we just kept quiet and continued searching for the answers to our questions.

“Follow Me”

It was not long into our initial time in Messianic Judaism that we were introduced to some individuals who were extremely conversant on end-time prophecy. They followed the geopolitical

atmosphere of the Middle East peace process and Oslo accords from 1993 very closely. Some of these individuals in their eagerness to follow current events were expecting some prophetic occurrences to take place. Being somewhat new to the Messianic community at the time—as well as being naïve—we seriously considered some of the things being proposed. Over a series of several months, I took some of my coordination gifts to begin producing and directing a variety of prophecy related conferences in Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. In due time, we were introduced to an even wider variety of teachers and preachers who claimed to have various bits and pieces of the “prophetic puzzle.”

By early 1997, we officially named our prophecy conference enterprise: The Remnant Exchange. Before long we were broadcasting a weekly radio program on shortwave under the name “The Remnant Report.” As I undertook these responsibilities, one of the “calls” to enter the ministry came without much notice. An opportunity arose to help with Christian shortwave radio. As I felt the Lord ask me one day: “Are you willing to uproot yourself from the comforts of America, and come follow Me to Central America?” After a long and agonizing period of prayer and deep reflection, the answer finally came when a Messianic Jewish brother from Hawaii asked me to seriously consider the cost. Then he reminded me of these critical verses that Yeshua stated when He declared, “Follow Me!” They will forever be lodged in my mind:

“And He said to another, ‘Follow Me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.’ But He said to him, ‘Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.’ Another also said, ‘I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home.’ But Yeshua said to him, ‘No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God’” (Luke 9:59-62).

By Fall 1997, I made the decision to put “my hand to the plow.” As the conferences wound down, I got involved in an attempt to build a shortwave radio station that was to be located in the central highlands of Honduras. Ironically, the location where the station was to be built was equidistant from the northernmost part of North America and the southernmost part of South America. If we had been successful, we would have been able to broadcast the gospel to the north in English and to the south in Spanish, covering the entire Western Hemisphere. But once we got to Honduras we found out that this enterprise was not to be. Having sold most of our assets in the U.S., we struggled for direction. **The Lord never told me that when I put the hand to the plow, that I would encounter some rocks and immovable roots that would bring the plow to a grinding halt.**

When we arrived in Honduras, we had shipped our belongings to the small island of Roatan, off the north coast. While there, having seen our initial commitments falter, we half-heartedly pursued some ministry, and even business options, in our desire to be productive. I certainly wondered if I had heard God accurately.

In retrospect, I saw the hand of our Father move through a variety of situations, which continue to confirm in my heart that I had indeed heard from Him on the move. But ironically, the most vivid memories we cherish from our stay in Honduras were not some relaxing or exuberant times we had on an exotic Caribbean island—but instead the family time when we gathered on *Shabbat* reading and studying the Torah. For whatever reasons, this discipline gave us a weekly activity of bonding and interspection.

As we came to the end of the hurricane season in 1998, the Lord demonstrated how He can protect anyone from whatever natural disasters may show themselves. Hurricane Mitch was a Class 5 storm that ripped in to the Caribbean Basin and devastated much of the island, being responsible for the deaths of over 10,000 Hondurans. While “marooned” on the island of Roatan, living in a sea level rental home during this massive storm, we and our belongings were never threatened by the 150+ mph winds or the surging seas. The promises of Isaiah 43, for God to be with us and protect us during torrential waters, flooding rivers, and even fires, confirmed in our hearts that His promises were without revocation:

“When you pass through water, I am with you; through rivers, they will not wash you away; when you walk through fire, you will not be singed, and no flame will burn you” (Isaiah 43:2).

The experiences of our trek to Honduras prepared us for the next stop on our spiritual scavenger hunt. We learned what we needed to learn and met whom we needed to meet on our sojourn. We had our cross cultural experience. As the waters were receding from the battered mainland, I was off

to visit my daughters in Texas just before Thanksgiving. During the weeklong visit, I took a short day trip up to Oklahoma to visit with a Messianic Jewish friend who had a ministry that we had helped over the years.

After he heard my testimony about our recent experiences in Hurricane Mitch, he offered me a consulting job to return to the States and come work with his ministry. I told him that I would pray about the offer, and let him know after I had returned to Roatan and discussed and prayed about it with Margaret. Well, needless to say, when I mentioned the opportunity, the unanimous chorus coming from Margaret and the three children did not warrant a long drawn out prayer. Within a few weeks, we—and our two containers and two cars—were back on a freighter heading north to Tampa, Florida. Our business as “ministry consultants,” which had an inauspicious start, was now going to be paid a sorely needed monthly fee.

Back to the States

Once back in the United States, our family was able to return to a routine of life that was not typical on a small island. Our children, who had bounced from Christian schools to secular schools to home schooling while we followed the cloud, were now back into a regular routine in an environment that was comfortable for them. In spite of some of the educational challenges, none of the children missed a beat in their pursuit of academics. Our son, John McKee, one of Margaret’s the three children who I adopted in 1994, was accepted to the University of Oklahoma while we were living in Norman.

As I approached my new position, I knew in my heart that we would not be staying in this place for much longer than a year. Rather than looking to purchase a home, we simply signed a one-year lease on a small house in a nice neighborhood. The Year 2000, or Y2K, was on the horizon, and I believed that my ministry consulting skills were only needed for a one-year window of time. As it turned out, my premonition was correct. But during our tenure in Norman, we did begin networking with a variety of other Messianics who were experiencing a surge in the swelling numbers of non-Jewish Believers who were attracted to a Torah observant lifestyle. This was becoming a major issue for the Messianic community to deal with.

In June 1999, I helped coordinate a meeting of ministry leaders who came together in Norman to organize a conference that was to be held in Orlando over Labor Day weekend. Since I had extensive experience putting on conferences and seminars, and my client in Norman recognized this ability, he sent Margaret and me to Orlando in July 1999 to meet the local team of conference participants and see if we could be used in helping to facilitate some of the conference administration and coordination. This we did. After a very successful conference, it became apparent to me that our abilities to administer the growing needs of the emerging organization were a natural fit. When Y2K came and my services were no longer needed in Norman, I was offered a position as the administrator for an emerging group of Messianic congregations, fellowships, and ministries.

We then moved to Kissimmee, Florida and for three years worked diligently to build a harmonious group of Messianic Believers into a cohesive organization. But as a result of some differences of direction, opinions on how to operate the alliance, and some conflicts of theology, the owner of the alliance decided to terminate our position as consultants. By Fall 2002, we were challenged by our circumstances to once again ask the Lord what He would have us do.

I was already writing weekly Torah commentaries and Hue and Cry opinion articles. We had established ourselves as successful conference producers and directors. Our ability to network and connect with other Messianics was already proven. Margaret had used her business skills to handle all of the accounting and ordering needs for the organization, and her spiritual gifting and life experience was proving invaluable in ministering to the needs of the hurting, who were simply seeking love and acceptance in the Messianic community of faith. Our son John, a prolific writer and Messianic apologist, was in his last year at OU. We were already handling his book sales generated from the TNN Online website he had first developed in 1997.

As we prayed about our situation and implored the Father for direction, it became very clear that He had called us unto His service years earlier. Our slow, but steady desire to serve others was now being altered so that He could commission the work He now has for us with Outreach Israel Ministries.

Our Official Launch

In November 2002, we officially launched **Outreach Israel Ministries** and have never looked back. During our first full year (2003), our faith was tested in a variety of ways. There is no doubt that when you step out in faith to work in the Father's fields, just about everything you can imagine will work against you to thwart your Divine commissioning. But we were not swayed from the path we have been on. From our previous experiences, we learned what we needed to learn and met whom we needed to meet. Today, this has given us a confidence that His will is going to be accomplished for our lives and that we will make a difference in the lives of His people.

Throughout our experience, we had been exposed to a great deal among many in leadership positions throughout the Messianic movement. Having started out in full time ministry, none of us were operating in a vacuum of knowledge. Our experience and acquaintance with many in the movement was first hand, and in many cases involved close personal interaction. We understood through many of the trials we have had to endure that God is very concerned about the "restoration of all things" (Acts 3:19-24), a sizeable part of which is the development and maturation of the Messianic movement.

Spending only a handful of years in the Messianic community, it was plain to us that balanced and scholastic educational materials are critical for developing solid Messianics who would not be negatively influenced by every wind of doctrine that blew into the camp. In order to help out in this area, we continued in our work to produce written materials on a wide variety of issues.

I diligently and consistently produced weekly **TorahScope** commentaries that encouraged the Messianic community to return to the foundation of our Torah-based walk with the Lord. I likewise continued to write timely editorials under the **Hue and Cry** byline. Added to this in 2003 was the monthly publication **Outreach Israel News**.

The addition of John McKee to our team in 1993 has been quite a blessing. After graduating from college, he brought his energy and writing skills to compliment what we were already doing. During our first year of operation, we were able to add his existing books, finish a few others through perseverance, and also produce some collaborative efforts. He started to head up the **TNN Press** division of Outreach Israel, and takes a theological approach that is quite unique compared to a variety of Messianic teachers.

Reaching Out

We all believe that Yeshua is the Head of the *ekklesia* and that the rest of us as His followers are simply body parts. In His governmental structure, He is at the bottom of the inverted pyramid holding all of us up by resting the apex of the pyramid on His shoulders. As His model suggests, the more you serve, the lower you descend on the pyramid. Thus, the primary goal of Outreach Israel Ministries is to serve you and encourage you in your Messianic walk of faith. It is our purpose to reach out and address the issues that face us day in and day out, and look ahead toward the future and the challenges that are awaiting us on the horizon.

Outreach Israel Ministries is constantly in a state of development. We are always going where few Messianic ministries or theological think tanks have been able to go. In following the Lord, we believe that He has given us a great Divine mandate, **and a sacred trust**, to reach out and proclaim the good news, being a blessing to others (Genesis 12:3; Deuteronomy 4:6; Galatians 3:8), encouraging others to obey God's commandments so they too can be a blessing. As our mission statement summarizes it:

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.

Until the restoration of all things...
William Mark Huey

Refining Our Vision

by Mark Huey

Excerpted from the July 2007 edition of OIM News

In order to place things in their proper context, especially when attempting to live by faith being led by the Spirit, it is appropriate and wise to review where one has been in order to understand where one is, so one can conceptualize the movement ahead. In that light, informed prayer is critical because as Paul says in Romans 8:26-31, unless directed by the Holy Spirit our prayers may lack the knowledge of why we should even be entreating God. Yet, he also says that the Spirit intercedes for us. I am convinced that if you are a born again Believer in Messiah Yeshua, that you are—at some level—called into the work of God’s Kingdom:

“In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His purpose*. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become conformed to the image of His Son*, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us?” (Romans 8:26-31).

Service unto the Lord on whatever level He places us is an exciting experience that I pray will be embraced by all who call upon Him and have experienced redemption through His Son’s atoning work at Golgotha (Calvary). I know that in our family’s specific case that pursuing the Lord with all of our hearts, minds, souls, and strength has become a cooperate exercise that continues to enrich us daily. We understand the sovereign principle that all things work together for good to those who love God and to those who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

In a nutshell, this means that even if we are looking through a glass darkly, and are not able to fully discern what it is God is trying to communicate to us through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit—at least we are seeking His will for our lives, knocking on His door, and imploring Him for answers to the questions we have about our service unto Him. Even if we misconstrued or overstated what our mission was in the past, God still continues to use all things for good and fine tune us for His work. While this can never be used as an excuse for deliberately doing something that is clearly one’s human will and not His, there is some comfort knowing that at the appropriate time the Lord will lead His followers to make the appropriate course corrections or modifications. For us as a ministry family, the series of events listed in my earlier update for this month summarizes the promptings we needed to address concerning where we have been and where we are going.

Originally as the Lord was birthing Outreach Israel Ministries in 2002, our overall mission statement was the following:

Outreach Israel Ministries (OIM) has been commissioned to minister, to educate, connect, and to reach out to people throughout the world, about all Israel, both the People and the Land, until the “restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21).

At the time of our commissioning, we knew that ministering, educating, connecting, and reaching the Israel of God around the world were all critical in order to share with Believers the reality of the long-prophesied restoration process. For the previous eight years (1995-2003), we had personally witnessed significant restoration as the Lord was calling Believers back to their Hebraic Roots. We envisioned that our interaction and relational contact with a wide variety of individuals and ministries had prepared us to be useful in connecting these diverse groups into some cohesive efforts. We were open to whatever opportunities the Lord had for us with Jewish Believers in the Land of Israel in terms



of supporting them or even selling their products. As we analyzed what our strengths and abilities were to serve the Lord in building His Kingdom, we were led to keep all possible doors open so that He would confirm where He specifically wanted us to target our efforts and energies. As noted in the following list of activities, a diverse array of efforts was undertaken:

<p>INTERNET</p> <p>OIM reaches out to the nations via the world wide web</p> <p>Websites Outreach Israel TNN Online E-mail Updates Torah Commentaries (weekly via e-mail) TorahScope by Mark Huey Editorials/Teachings (frequently) Hue and Cry by Mark Huey TNN Online Bible Study (Wednesday nights)</p>
<p>PUBLICATIONS</p> <p>OIM publishes a variety of resource materials</p> <p>Outreach Israel News (free monthly newsletter) Books and Articles TNN Press Messianic Topics</p>
<p>GATHERINGS</p> <p>Biblical Holidays Annual Shavuot Gathering in Orlando Conferences/Seminars Speaking Engagements Tours to Israel</p>
<p>OTHER</p> <p>Establish relationships with Messianics living in Israel:</p> <p>Products for sale Import Israeli Judaica, etc. Prayer and Resource Support Existing Believers in the Land Migrating Believers seeking residence in Israel</p>

As you can read from this extensive list of possible efforts, **in November 2002 we were not** going to limit God to an extremely narrow focus. Our wide contacts and interactions in the Messianic community of faith gave us legitimate belief that any or all of what we envisioned were possible, and perhaps are still possible given some time. If you review the list, you will note that most of what was foreseen has helped form Outreach Israel Ministries into what it has become today.

In the past five years (2002-2007), it has become apparent that our ministerial efforts have been more finely tuned, as we target our shooting with a rifle rather than with a broad shotgun blast. During this time we have been joined by our son, John McKee, who has brought his own unique set of spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities into the ministry. This has nicely complimented the spiritual gifting and calling that the Lord has given Margaret and me. Thankfully, although there is some definite overlapping in terms of teaching ability, **the three of us have distinct and separate styles of communication and emphasis that do not conflict with one another.** This is a significant blessing to our ministry because we are each individually content on how the workload is addressed, shared, distributed, and completed. What John does, versus what Margaret or I do, is very different as the wide range of things that need to be accomplished and completed each week, month, and year are readily handled.

As we put our heads together to reconstitute our vision and mission statements for the website upgrade coming this Fall (2007), we believe that the following vision statement more accurately reflects

the current and future emphasis of Outreach Israel Ministries:

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.

I will embellish the vision statement with an amplification of Outreach Israel's mission later in this article, but first I would like to point out some circumstantial realities that influenced aspects of revising our mission statement—and actually creating what is termed a “vision statement” with attendant mission objectives.

In performing the retrospective and reflective analysis of where we were, where we are, and where we are going, we had to take into account the fact that during the life of our ministry we have been specifically recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational ministry. We chose to secure this legal status for the financial benefit of our supporters, plus the additional financial accountability that complying with the IRS requires and ensures. The IRS application process made us declare just what kind of “ministry” we were going to be labeled, and since education was the primary focus of our efforts, we were thus classified. This process also encouraged us to continue following the desire of our hearts regarding proclaiming the gospel and sharing what we have learned as Messianic Believers. We understood the principle that since we freely received our instruction from the Lord, we were inclined to freely give the studies that we undertook (Matthew 10:8), recognizing that in so doing, the Lord would be our Provider through those He moved upon by His Spirit. In fact, by the laws established by the ruling authorities that we are compelled to honor and recognize (Romans 13:1-2), most of our writings and teachings are distributed freely via e-mail or posted for free access online.

During the course of our twelve years in the Messianic community of faith (1995-2007), we have been privileged to meet and come to know on various levels a wide variety of people from around the world who are being led in a similar manner to us. This means that they have a testimony of Yeshua's saving grace and a desire to obey His commandments. We are twice reminded in the Book of Revelation that the end-time saints will have these two common denominators (Revelation 12:17; 14:12). While we might have some different opinions on what constitutes the end-times, or specifically when the return of Yeshua will occur, this has been extremely encouraging to us as His disciples as we have witnessed the move of the Holy Spirit around the globe. However, increasingly in recent years we have also become very concerned about not only the spiritual growth of our friends and acquaintances that receive our teachings and support our efforts, but also their physical well being. Coupling these concerns with our own aging realities as Margaret and I minister to our octogenarian parents, this has recently brought another emphasis into our outreach. Much of the inspiration to minister to the tripartite nature of men and women comes from Paul's words to the saints in Thessalonica:

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you *entirely*; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

We are convinced that everyone who is brought into the Israel of God has a unique call on their lives as a vessel or tabernacle of the Holy Spirit. We understand that to be whole or complete as Paul prays, each of us needs to seek wholeness in spirit, soul, and body. Since the Lord has given us an outreach platform and credibility through the ongoing teaching efforts of Outreach Israel on subjects regarding the spirit and the soul, we are expanding our vision to include teachings and exhortations that speak specifically to nutrition and the wholeness of the body—thus addressing all three aspects of our common humanity.

For whatever reasons, the Lord has chosen our household to be a living testimony and essentially a transparent witness of how we have made the transition from a traditional Christian lifestyle toward a Messianic lifestyle. We understand that in the world we inhabit, there is a prolonged spiritual conflict raging that does not necessarily announce and reveal its existence. This is, and has always been, a great part of the problem, as people are constantly being blindsided by their ignorance of how things happening in the spiritual realm have a definite impact of things occurring in the physical realm. Revelation indicates three of the crucial weapons of warfare that allow us to overcome the wiles of the

Devil, his darts, and his nefarious ways:

“And they overcame him because of [1] the blood of the Lamb and because of [2] the word of their testimony and [3] they did not love their life even when faced with death” (Revelation 12:11).

While the blood of the Lamb is an obvious reference to belief in the sacrificial atonement of Messiah Yeshua, the other two weapons are likewise instrumental in continuing the ongoing battle against authorities, powers, and principalities in high places (Colossians 1:16; 1 Corinthians 15:24). The words of our testimonies, regardless of what they entail, are things that can never be taken away from us. **The ability and willingness to share our testimonies so that others might be encouraged to persevere and wage the good fight of faith is something that the three of us do with great joy.** But the key is to recognize that we are dead to the fallen old nature that at times will crop up, to justify some fleshly actions that are opposed to the perfect will of God. Understanding and embracing the reality of the crucified life is something that the Apostle Paul so adroitly expresses:

“I have been crucified with Messiah; and it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me” (Galatians 2:17-20).

In order to have a more adequate testimony and witness of what has happened to you in your new life in Yeshua—versus the way you used to operate in the flesh—you **have to be willing to consider yourself dead to the sin that trapped or ruled you for your previous life apart from salvation.** You have to be willing to honestly and openly share with others knowing that the old nature that lived and operated in your body of flesh, in your spiritual blindness as your soul (mind, emotion and will), naturally gravitated toward the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life—**without any concern for the repercussions.** The willingness to confess previous sins and ungodly activities through our teachings is not necessarily a popular teaching style among many in the Messianic community of faith. But for us, we have discovered that it is a powerful weapon that can tear down strongholds as we employ the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-19).

With all this being stated, allow me to elaborate what we have been called to do as indicated in our vision statement. This includes the following four aspects that I will briefly discuss as they affect your spirit, soul, and body: **Reach, Teach, Encourage, and Disciple.**

Reach: Obviously, one of the principle things we are called to do as a ministry is reach the Israel of God. Embedded in the name of our ministry effort is the concept of **outreach** and how we are going to impact **Israel.** While these two words can have a variety of meanings and definitions, to us the concept of reaching entails three primary methods that the Lord has given us to reach His children who identify themselves as the Israel of God or connected to Israel in some way. The first and most efficient and economical means have always been through the Internet. God in His providential timing for our ministry has allowed the Internet to blossom. As a teenager, our son John became a webmaster and launched his TNN Online website in 1997. Having his skills with computers and the Internet has greatly reduced our costs associated with this method of reaching people all over the globe. The Internet has been instrumental from our inception in transmitting our teaching articles, editorial exhortations, Torah or Bible studies, or updates via our always expanding e-mail list. In the past few years, we have been led to publish and send a series of teaching articles and broadcasts that we call our “Virtual” series. These include: **Virtual Purim, Virtual Passover, Virtual Shavuot, Virtual Sukkot, and Virtual Chanukah**—not to overlook the annual **Counting of the Omer** series of devotionals.

Secondly, we have coordinated and co-hosted an **annual Shavuot convocation** in Orlando. It has always been our fervent desire to encourage Messianic Believers to joyfully participate in all the festivals of the Lord that are articulated throughout the Torah. By demonstrating one way to bring people together at this particular feast, we have exhorted those in attendance to continue the practice in their home fellowships or congregations if they cannot make it to Orlando. It has always been our prayer that at this unique celebration also known as Pentecost, that the Lord would be pleased to reach out through it to those who are still in the Church, but want to know more about the Hebraic Roots of their faith. Undoubtedly, He has already used this vehicle in a number of cases.

Finally, one of our favorite ways to reach people has been through **personal contact** as we travel not only around the world, but also through **tours to Israel.** In the past, we have ministered to a number of groups throughout North America and the U.K. We have enjoyed these excursions as we have had the

opportunity to get to meet and know some of our worldwide “congregation” up close and personal. However, we have discovered that being on the road and away from the office does take us away from the significant day-to-day routine of continuing and completing the many projects and workload that the Lord has given us. Likewise, the maintenance of our websites and sending out consistent e-mail updates does require regular attention. As you know, it is impossible to be in two places at the same time, so we will continue to choose our ministry visits strategically in order to keep the teaching e-mails flowing.

Teach: As stated earlier, OIM is an educational ministry and our primary focus of education is teaching those who subscribe to our e-mail groups or visit our websites. Teaching is clearly what we seek to do through the various Torah and Bible studies (both written and audio), the different articles designed to inform you about critical issues, and the variety of books, booklets, and audio CDs produced for acquisition. John manages the TNN Press division of OIM as the producer of our written publications and audio teachings. As of today (2007), we continue to self-publish on demand, recognizing that in the Father’s perfect timing the resources to print perfect bound books will present itself. Until then, we continue to edit, fine tune, and in a few cases even rewrite some things in the books that have already been released. It is amazing that over time you learn how to communicate things more accurately without some typing errors or obvious omissions. For the most part, we are very thankful that we do not have a warehouse full of printed materials, some of which today may not entirely reflect our current thoughts on some topics.

Over the years, I have been devoted to writing Torah commentaries under the **TorahScope** byline. Additionally, I have been led to write devotional books that have used the platform of the yearly Omer Count as a launching pad for reflections. I plan to continue writing devotional material, perhaps using Proverbs as inspiration. Currently, Margaret and I are working on a testimonial rendition of our lives and how we made the transition from traditional Christianity to the Messianic movement. Margaret herself has been the editor of the **Messianic Helper** series that is designed to help instruct those with challenges regarding Spring and Winter Feasts, the Sabbath, and other miscellaneous issues. She is presently engaged in finishing a *Kosher Your Plate* cookbook, per her intensive examination in the areas of health and nutrition.

John is a prolific writer who diligently teaches with an expanding knowledge base, largely derived from his graduate studies at Asbury Theological Seminary. Margaret and I both are delighted that it is John who continues his theological education to learn the intricacies of Hebrew and Greek grammar, Biblical exegesis, and issues contemporary to modern theology. We both acknowledge that our ministry has benefited considerably from John’s graduate studies. While his list of titles continues to grow, the most significant publications he has been working on are the **Practical Messianic** series of commentaries. John feels a strong burden to write detailed, scholastically engaged, and thought provoking commentaries on books of the Bible from a distinct Messianic perspective. His lifetime goal is to write Messianic commentaries on all books of the Bible, but in the short term will be focusing on the Gospels, General Epistles, and Pauline Epistles. It is clear to him that there is a tremendous amount of work that needs to be accomplished in order for the Messianic movement to gain credibility in theological circles.

As teachers, the three of us are determined to help raise the level of scholarship that is presently seen in many Messianic publications. It has been and will continue to be our goal to focus our teachings with the goal of lifting up our Messiah Yeshua and His love for humanity, while balancing His teachings with a firm background in the Torah. Our mission must be to make disciples of those who believe in His atoning work and who look to the guidance of the Holy Spirit to be used in the tasks of God’s Kingdom.

Encourage: The ability to encourage or exhort followers of the Messiah of Israel is also an integral part of our vision. By making our lives a living sacrifice to His service, we are positioned to offer up testimonies that we pray will help others in their personal challenges to become Messianic—despite the ridicule of spouses, family, friends, acquaintances in previous assemblies, or even those who exerted some level of spiritual authority in times past. We know from our own personal experiences what many of the challenges are for those walking by faith in a Messianic lifestyle. We are available via the telephone (I have a “telephone anointing,” and Margaret has great gifting and ability to truly listen) and digitally via the Internet to offer you answers to your questions, or assist you with any problems and/or issues with which you need some guidance. **This desire to help has created the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

section of the TNN Online website as it addresses many of the issues and challenges that arise in adopting a Messianic lifestyle.

In many cases, we have become counselors, advisors, or simply friends to those we minister to in order to help them work through personal issues or fellowship/congregational issues. Since we have a wide variety of experiences in our respective walks of faith, we are able to address many issues with firsthand knowledge about solutions that can work to resolve conflict. We do recognize that it takes time to develop the trust required to share certain things. We are patient and do not impose ourselves on anyone, but when asked will gladly help if we can.

Disciple: This aspect of our ministerial efforts comes in obedience to one of the last things that Yeshua said prior to His Ascension into Heaven (Matthew 28:19-20). It would be remiss on our part to not follow His command to the best of our ability, **because the reaching, teaching, and encouraging that I have already described are all foundational aspects of making disciples.** We do have some lack of proximity constraints that can impede our ability to have some of needed one-on-one or two-on-two interactions that can be important for discipling people in the ways of Messiah Yeshua. Romans 8:29 indicates that we as Believers are all being conformed to His image. Having the ability to monitor what is going on in the life of one of His followers needs to be done on a consistent basis. Accountability is a large part of the equation. Not having frequent interaction can create challenges. However, over the years through many of the relationships that the Lord has allowed us to build, **we do have a large number of people whose discipleship we feel directly responsible for.** This is a tremendous blessing to us as we appreciate not only the friendships, but the opportunities to invest time with these people either via telephone, e-mail, through visits at their homes or localities, or other unique forms of interaction. Our prayer is that in the future the additions to this growing group of disciples will expand as the Lord's work continues.

At this juncture in our living history, the course for the direction of Outreach Israel Ministries is becoming more fixed toward achieving the objectives of: **reaching, teaching, encouraging, and discipling** the Israel of God. It is our strong desire to continue to be used in helping others drawn by the Holy Spirit into the Messianic community of faith to grow in their spiritual walks and be used according to the distinct calls that the Lord specifically has for their lives. **We believe that everyone who is called into today's emerging Messianic movement has some work to do in His Kingdom on Earth as the Holy Spirit continues to see it expand.** We also recognize that there is a tremendous amount of work to be done, but that the completion of that work will occur in the Father's perfect timing.

Having reviewed these things is a humbling reality, especially knowing that patience is one of the fruits of the Spirit that too many of us lack. We also know that as of this writing, God has the prerogative to alter or possibly change some of our plans as we lay them before Him as a written vision or mission objective statements. We are mindful that Proverbs clearly tells us that **"The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps"** (Proverbs 16:9).

These are poignant words that we must consider as we have sought the Holy Spirit for direction and have asked our intercessors to intercede on our behalf. We pray that what He has led us to commit to writing is indeed His will for our lives, and not just our minds deriving plans that make logical sense given our human abilities. Only time will tell how much of what we have considered in this article will be accomplished, and how much will be for someone else or another time. Perhaps this is why Proverbs also says **"Commit your works to the LORD and your plans will be established"** (Proverbs 16:3).

As we commit our works and the current future vision for OIM to the Lord—who is all knowing—we simply pray that if these plans are His plans for us, that they will all come to fruition in His perfect timing. Ultimately, whether any of this is accomplished, our prayer is that it is all of Him. When all is said and done—as either Margaret, John, or I enter into His presence—that each one of us would be able to individually or collectively hear these words above the din of joyful exuberance: **"Well, done good and faithful servant."**

Can you imagine hearing this greeting? It is certainly more comforting than the life terminating one I do not want to hear, which is simply: **"Done!"**

Until the restoration of all things...

Please pray for us that in all the things we attempt to do for Him, that it is done both faithfully and well, and especially, according to His will!