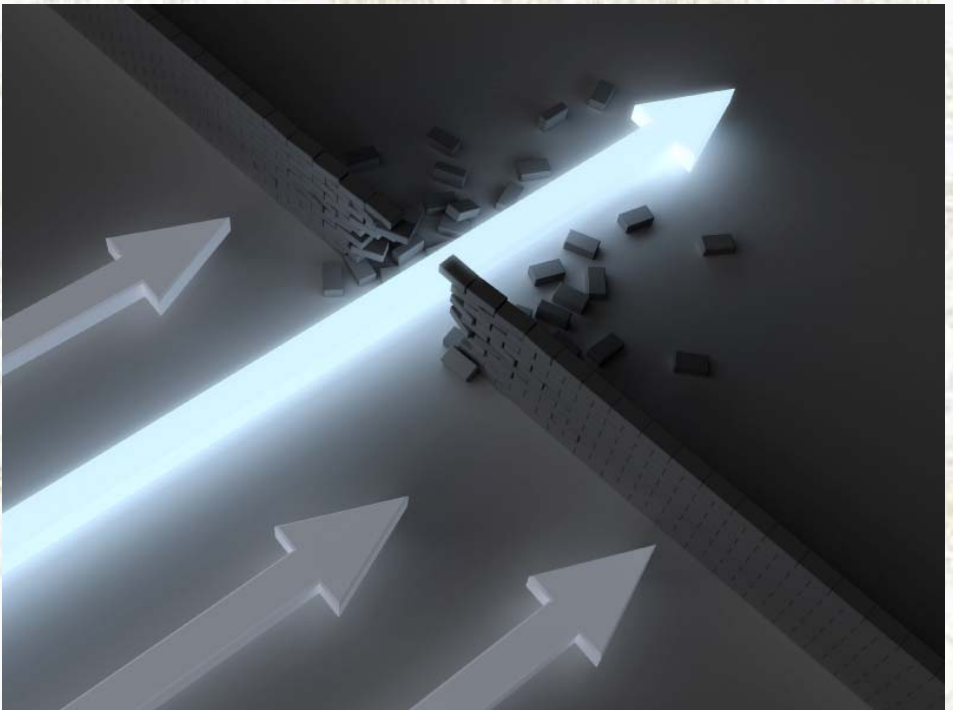


# OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS



November 2007



THE JOURNEY AHEAD  
FIFTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

*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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#### STATEMENT OF BELIEF

There is One Almighty Creator God of the Universe, who has revealed Himself to us in the manifestations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) came in fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies of the Scriptures and is fully God. It is mandatory for us to believe in a Divine Redeemer to be saved. Salvation is a free gift of God to all who receive Messiah Yeshua into their lives and confess of their sins. Those who reject Messiah will be consigned to eternal punishment.

The Holy Scriptures, Genesis-Revelation, are the inspired, infallible Word of God as revealed in the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts.

There is only one assembly of chosen ones/elect, the people of Israel, of which all Believers in Messiah are a part. God does not have two groups of elect: Israel and "the Church."

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

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

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

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

# OIM Update

## November 2007

by Mark Huey

This month commemorates the fifth anniversary since the beginning of Outreach Israel Ministries. We praise the Lord for His faithfulness to us as He has not only guided us along the way, but has been instrumental through promptings by the

Holy Spirit to get us to where we are today. We particularly want to thank each and every one of you, who through your intercessory prayers and financial support, have contributed to our efforts during the past five years. We know that without the combination of our faith and your faithful support, that all of the different things that we do would not be possible. For the sake of “memorializing” our journey to this point in time, I would like to share with you some of our past that has brought us to our current place, along with a few thoughts about where we anticipate we will be in the future.

**FIFTH  
ANNIVERSARY**  
*praise report*

Our journey into the Messianic community began in 1994 when Margaret and I went on a tour to Israel with a Messianic Jewish ministry headed by the late Zola Levitt. This visit to the Holy Land was a definite turning point in our lives, as the Lord had shown us in the months that preceded that Isaiah 43 was going to be an instrumental passage of Scripture for our life together. As you may or may not have experienced, when the Holy Spirit gives you a prompting from the Bible and then miraculously confirms it, your attention becomes riveted in trying to understand just what is being communicated. At that time as we pondered the words of Isaiah, we did not necessarily comprehend all that was being stated, but we certainly had our spiritual eyes and ears tuned in for further instructions.

During this visit to Israel, we definitely sensed the leading of the Holy Spirit throughout the emotion-laden time. Just arriving at the airport in Tel Aviv gave Margaret and me a sensation that we had “come home.” Coupling this with actually seeing the mountains, touching the soil, smelling the air, and walking on the paths where many of our spiritual forebearers had trodden was very special. To comprehend that Yeshua Himself had actually walked, talked, and ministered in these surroundings, ultimately completing His task of redemption at Golgotha (Calvary), was truly inspirational beyond words.

One particularly poignant experience took place during our visit to Masada, where the Lord inspirationally led me to proclaim—out loud—to the valley on the north the entire chapter of Ezekiel 37. I did not fully understand the words about the dry bones being resurrected, and the unification of the whole House of Israel. Looking back on that encounter today, we know that this was simply one of the signposts along our journey to confirm that the Father had some work for

us to perform at some future time.

By the time we were finishing our tour, Margaret and I both knew that we were being drawn into a much closer relationship with Israel—we just did not know how to walk it out. We returned home with a definite impression that we should somehow stay connected to Israel through the Feasts of the Lord, even though they were not being taught by our tour guide or tour hosts. As many of you might relate, as you have been drawn into the Messianic community, we simply started imploring God to show us the way. We wanted to be obedient to what we believe He had shown us, and so we appealed to Him for more guidance along the path. We simply wanted to follow Him, and like the Israelites of old, we started looking for any movement of the pillar of fire and the cloud.

Thankfully, by the Fall of 1995 we were introduced to several Messianic congregations in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex. After attending a *Rosh HaShanah* service at one, we were led to a *Sukkot* gathering at another. It was at this Messianic Jewish Congregation where the Lord really allowed us to feel not only comfortable, but we found ourselves being spiritually nourished beyond our expectations. The Messianic music using the Hebrew Scriptures, the Davidic dancing, the accoutrements of a typical synagogue with a bema and Torah scroll, and certainly respect for the Word of God, were evident. Even though we were not Jewish, we definitely felt the love of God, and within a month of attendance realized that this was where He wanted us to be. We stopped attending the other church we were going to, and entered into a new members class. We found ourselves participating at this assembly throughout the week, often attending *Erev Shabbat* services on Friday, *Shabbat* services on Saturday, and other gatherings.

The spiritual enrichment was incredible. Margaret and I took some Hebrew classes and began to understand and appreciate the annual Torah cycle. We decided in 1996 to attend the MJAA and UMJC annual conferences in order to more fully understand the move of God that we had been drawn into. By the grace of God, our children were “along for the ride,” and although they were somewhat befuddled by our spiritual direction at first, they each began to understand different aspects of what God was teaching us all—be it theological correctness, music appreciation, or dancing with joy to the Lord.

Life was good and we were prospering in our spirits and souls, but by 1997 **the test of our faith** that completely launched us on the journey to where we are today presented itself. By the Fall of that year, we were living in a lovely 4,000 square foot home on a three-and-a-half acre horse farm outside of Dallas. I had helped in producing some prophecy conferences, attempting to understand a few of the things that connected Israel to America and some current events. Things of the Lord outweighed my business interests in commercial real estate. When an opportunity to step out by faith, as the cloud was moving us away from Dallas to an opportunity to establish a Christian radio outreach station in Honduras, I began to seek considerable counsel.

One conversation, in particular, with a Messianic Jewish friend really convicted me as I was being drawn into a faith-led walk with the Messiah of Israel. I can remember him quoting me this specific Scripture as if it were yesterday:

“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).

While my friend did not quote the entire passage, the last statement made by Yeshua would not leave my mind. For the next few days, as I pondered my decision to place my hand on the plow and walk by faith to another country, I knew that any commitment had to come with one-hundred percent resolve to keep my eyes focused on Yeshua and literally “not look back.” Obviously, according to Yeshua’s words, the consequences of just looking back were devastating. From my perspective, given my most intimate counsel with Margaret, we did not embark on this journey without recognizing the consequences of changing fields. I asked for the Lord’s confirmation of my decision, and over the next few months we sold many of our belongings except what we could “cram” into two shipping containers, sold our home, and prepared to begin the walk of faith that led us to where we are today in full time ministry.

Of course, we do not place ourselves in the league of Abraham, but we definitely saw some parallels, as we left the relative comfort of our culture, leaving behind family and friends, and ventured out to an unknown land where another language was spoken. Even though the ultimate plans for our radio venture did not materialize, looking back on this with ten years of perspective, we are able to see how the Lord used this test to strengthen our resolve to serve Him with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength. If nothing else, He certainly used this test to mold us and prepare us for the challenges we currently must address.

By the time Outreach Israel Ministries was launched in 2002, Margaret and I had become fully engrossed in the emerging Messianic movement, having served some other ministries in administrative capacities. We knew many of the people involved in various positions of leadership, teaching, and idealistically believed that we could be used as instruments to help bring people together for the common good of the Messianic movement. Some of our initial desires included being a conduit of information about what others were doing with various celebrations, and we even had a “yellow pages” on our website for a short season.

Our innate desires and spiritual gifts to exhort, encourage, evangelize, and educate caused us to develop differently than originally expected. As stated in my July 2007 article, “Refining Our Vision,” as the Lord led us to reevaluate our vision for the future, we improved our mission statement to include the following:

*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.*

We realized that as the Lord has led us these past five years in full time ministry that our family has become a vibrant testimony of what He can do if you fully commit yourself to His service. We understand that by utilizing the efficiency and affordability of the Internet, we can help and assist thousands of others—just like our family—who are entering into the Messianic community and

are facing the same issues that we have faced.

Over the past five years, the bulk of our energies have been spent producing articles, books, booklets, and audio messages/teaching series that are designed to help people become stable, secure, well-informed, and effective Messianic Believers. Our Virtual Series of teachings throughout the year, during the important holidays of *Purim*, Passover, the Omer Count to *Shavuot*, the Fall high holy days, *Sukkot*, and finally *Chanukah*, has been able to assist many people who are not only transitioning to a Messianic lifestyle, but also need to be focused on the important spiritual messages of these special times. We know that many individuals, couples, families, small groups of families, fellowships, and congregations are all using these teachings to enhance their relationship with God. A natural extension of these appointed times led to the production of the **Messianic Helper Series** of booklets, which has compiled important articles and resources for you to celebrate these times and commemorate them as holy.

Years ago, I understood the need for a good theological foundation that is enhanced by a cyclical study of the Torah. My weekly **TorahScope** commentaries are not only written, but now recorded. It was through a consistent study of the Torah that our family began to more fully comprehend the importance of understanding God's commandments and their relevancy for today. We have learned to fear Him and to cling to Him:

**"Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the LORD's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good? Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. Yet on your fathers did the LORD set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day. So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer. For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe. He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing. So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name. He is your praise and He is your God, who has done these great and awesome things for you which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons in all, and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven"** (Deuteronomy 10:12-22).

With the addition of J.K. McKee's many talents in 2003, and his scholastic approach to the Scriptures, we have been able to greatly expand our number of teaching titles, as well as the theological subjects that we are able to address. John is not only a prolific writer, but is also committed to (as of today) his two weekly podcast Bible studies. He is also continually involved with a number of projects, which notably include new commentaries in the **Practical Messianic** series. This month his article "The Journey Ahead" describes some of the places Outreach Israel will be going in the future.

As we review the past five years of working by faith, we are very encouraged on the path that God has led us. We are extremely thankful of not only how He has led us, but also for all the various encouragers and supporters who have supplied the provision needed for us to dedicate our time and attention to various ministry activities. **As stated earlier, looking back is not an option!**

Looking ahead to the future, we all see that a substantial amount of work needs to be accomplished so people can continually be encouraged to keep their eyes focused on the Lord and serve Him in a unique Messianic way. We pray that our loving, balanced, and scholastic approach to sharing Messianic things will continue to bear fruit with those we have the privilege of touching with our newsletters, e-mails, and phone calls. In recent months, the Lord has allowed us to start ministering in the area of health and nutrition to compliment what He has already been doing with the Biblical instruction. This has been quite a blessing as it has given us the opportunity to have more personal interaction as we contribute to your human wholeness. We anticipate all of this to continue to expand as we seek to share not only with how the Lord has directed us spiritually, but how people can maintain healthy bodies in order to be as useful as possible in His service.

Allow me to close with some verses from the Apostle Paul, which have taken on more meaning over the years as we have moved forward in our Messianic faith with our eyes firmly fixed upon our Lord and Savior:

“So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.** Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, **among whom you appear as lights in the world,** holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Messiah I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain” (Philippians 2:12-16).

There is no doubt that we are living in a crooked and perverse generation, similar to every person who has placed trust in God at some time through the centuries. By the grace of God, we have been born from above with the opportunity to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is always our choice as to whom or what we will commit our time, talents, and resources. For our household, we have been led to serve the Holy One of Israel with all of our collective efforts. This great privilege is one that we do not take lightly, but rather with humility we understand the responsibility the Lord has given each of us.

It is our fervent prayer that we will continue to work, as unto Him, so that in the end we will appear as lights in a dark world to those who are perishing and need the words of life that come only from the Scriptures. I again would like to thank all of you for your continued prayers and support who have made our journey possible. **But ultimately, we give Him all of the praise for what He has done collectively through all of us!**

Until the restoration of all things...

William Mark Huey

# The Journey Ahead

by J.K. McKee

The journey one undertakes in a life of faith is frequently never easy. The choices that one makes and the experiences that one has are to mold a person into someone who can be useful for the service of God in the world. The Ancient Israelites in slavery in Egypt had to see the judgments of God upon their taskmasters, their deliverance via the Red Sea, and finally their arrival at Mount Sinai to be told by Him what to do. In Exodus 19:5, the call upon Israel was “if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine.” Ancient Israel was given a definite mission to not only obey the Lord, but that obedience among the nations would testify of His ownership of the planet. Israel was to be a missional community by which all would come to know of God’s supremacy and goodness.

This issue of OIM News commemorates our fifth anniversary of having been commissioned into the full time ministry service of our King. In November of 2002, after contemplating their future in the Messianic movement, my parents Mark and Margaret Huey began Outreach Israel Ministries in earnest. They cast as wide a net as possible, with “outreach” being the key word. They wanted to try everything from selling Judaica and hats and t-shirts, promoting mini-conferences and seminars, taking people on tours to Israel, and finally offering Messianic teachings to people who desired to listen. I “came along for the ride” after graduating from college in May 2003, and since then have seen the mission become more and more focused.

The first one to two-and-a-half years of OIM were by far the most challenging for us. Some of the controversies that have hit the Messianic community in recent days had yet to be seen. We did not have as well-defined a mission as we do today, and in our naiveté the Lord wanted to teach us some firsthand lessons. We needed to witness some of the extremes that people can sway to when they first embrace a Messianic lifestyle and are undisciplined. We needed to witness what the Messianic movement was like in different areas of the world. We needed to feel the tempo of Messianic theology and the challenges that are ahead.<sup>1</sup>

Any of you who have chatted with me privately, know that I like to use a particular “buzz word” – that if I do not explain what I mean by using it – can be used to mean something *other than* what I mean: progressive. Over the past five years, and specially the past three years, the experiences that I have had as a part of OIM have forced me to become someone who believes it is absolutely essential that we look ahead toward the future, and that God requires anyone in His service to *make progress*. I believe that as I reflect on the past

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<sup>1</sup>Mark Huey addresses these, and other related issues, in his article “Refining Our Vision” in the July 2007 issue of OIM News.

five years we have a Divine imperative from Him to continue the journey and continue making progress.

In the past five years, OIM has moved from having a rather wide vision to narrowing our primary field to the area of Messianic education. We believe quite strongly that the Messianic movement has some excellent potential to be something that can make a serious difference in the lives of people. Many Believers today know that there is more to their faith than standard Sunday Church. They know that the Church is undergoing some severe crises as issues like homosexuality and liberalism erode the foundations of Scriptural authority. We have the opportunity to restore many Believers to a Biblical ethos and morality rooted deeply in the Torah by exposing them to their Hebraic Roots. But are we really ready to do this?

Today, a new phenomenon has arisen in evangelicalism known as the “emerging Church.” The emerging Church movement has many different strains, some of which range from an emphasis on being more contemporary in worship and teaching, to a focus on what has largely become known as “seeker friendly,” to some embracing truly experimental forms of post-modern Christian expression. It has ruffled quite a few feathers, but at the same time is being eagerly embraced by those who wish to bring new life into the Church. It is too soon to make any broad judgments on the emerging Church movement, but it is not something that can be ignored.

One of the most interesting aspects of some in the emerging Church movement is that social interaction at the congregational level is emphasized much, much more than at your average evangelical Church. Participating in regular events at the local church is promoted. Eating meals before and after services is designed for people to get to know one another. Going places as a church community to serve or simply to fellowship is also encouraged.

When I look at the emerging Church phenomenon, I can see how some might extrapolate it out as being a “counterfeit” to the Messianic movement. We emphasize regular events at the congregational level such as the *moedim* or appointed times. Food is always present at Messianic fellowships. And, almost all Messianic Believers I know interact with one another socially in some way outside of the congregation.

But is the emerging Church phenomenon really a “counterfeit,” or has today’s Messianic movement really not provided a viable option for emerging Church advocates to seriously consider?

One of the things that has become more than apparent to our ministry over the past few years, and certainly as we look back not only at the genesis of OIM in 2002, but to our first days in Messianic things in 1995—is that the Messianic movement **largely lacks a coherent theology**. Part of knowing one’s mission as the people of God is having a sound, secure, and well-reasoned theology. While the essentials of salvation and the basics of the gospel should be easy for any person to understand, our movement has yet to go

to the places where one would expect for something that has been around since the 1960s.

I believe the journey ahead for Outreach Israel Ministries and TNN Online is going to be a very critical one as Messianic theology progresses to adulthood. In the past five years while we have been able to interact with many of you who receive this newsletter, either through telephone, e-mail, or even personal interaction—we have also been able to interact with some asundry characters who are damaging our collective credibility. This is not to say that we too have not made some mistakes along the way, but we are certainly eager to rectify them to the best of our ability, as we are “only mortal.” Yet, from the very beginning of OIM in 2002, we have been firmly committed to an ideology geared toward human wholeness and with you not only knowing more about God, but actually knowing God more intimately.

In the past three years, we have seen Outreach Israel take on some very important responsibilities, some of which are the only ways (at least as of today) that the Messianic movement is going to be able to make the progress it has to make. Since our beginning, Mark Huey has been faithful to compile weekly **TorahScope** commentaries following the traditional annual cycle. In July 2005, these began being complimented with the **TorahScope Live** audio broadcast. In July 2005 I started my weekly **Wednesday Night Bible Study** podcast, and last Summer began complimenting this with a **Bonus Study** posted on Friday. These regular, weekly venues, have enabled—indeed forced—us to be in the continual state of production and inquiring not only what today’s Messianic community needs to hear, but also how it needs to be challenged.

The majority of you, even if you do listen to the weekly audio studies, probably best know all of us through our writings. Mark Huey’s by-line “**Hue and Cry**” has been with us since our founding, as pertinent messages have been provided on a great number of topics. I have the regular discipline of writing one lead article every month on a rotating schedule for the three TNN Online sub-websites (Theonews, Tribnews, Two-Housenews), and since 2005 have done by best to provide bi-weekly FAQ postings. And, I would be remiss not to mention our books. While some general Messianic books have been available since OIM’s founding, over time as needs for other materials became apparent we added the “**Messianic Helper**” series and later the “**for the Practical Messianic**” series of Bible commentaries, with new additions continuing to be made. This month, we are introducing a new line with the newly commissioned “**Confronting Issues**” series of booklets. These things will continue well beyond our fifth anniversary, *but* will begin to address many issues that as of today have largely been closed to Messianic audiences.

This past year, another important avenue opened up as Margaret Huey has started to send out regular **Health and Nutrition** updates. During our tenure in the Messianic community, we have interacted with many people

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<sup>2</sup>Consult this writer’s article “The Quest for Credibility.”

who have adopted some form of kosher observance. Yet, this has not often proven to be enough to restore someone to good health. We have encountered too many people who are highly reliant upon prescription drugs either due to stress or inappropriate habits. A critical part of being “restored” unto God is taking care of the bodies that He has given us, and our new health updates provide some practical tips and resources that we believe can aid you to go beyond spiritual wholeness and be concerned with physical wholeness as well.

Many of you know what has occurred during the past five years (2002-2007) in the Messianic movement. Messianic Judaism has become increasingly more hostile to the Two-House teaching of Judah and Ephraim, and is becoming largely antagonistic to non-Jews in their congregations. Various Messianic individuals continue to deny the Divinity and Messiahship of Yeshua. Many Messianic teachers do not know how to interpret Biblical books—particularly those of the Apostolic Scriptures—and join in to the larger theological “conversation.” And, when it comes to issues of cultural relativity and making a difference in our world—well, these issues are often shuffled aside. Some outsiders think that the Messianic movement is actually a dying movement, if it cannot figure out what its mission and purpose actually are.

When a person really sees this, it is not difficult for him or her to be negative. Yet, God does not want us to be negative, but instead be victorious and overcome the obstacles. The Apostle Paul says, “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Messiah Yeshua” (Philippians 3:14). One has to have faith and the tenacity to move forward, progressing ahead, and continuing the journey that the Lord has set. I personally believe that the Messianic community is presently closing one chapter of our development, and preparing to enter into a new one. We are about to enter into something new and necessary not just for our own survival, but for the *true empowerment* of all in the faith.

Where will Outreach Israel Ministries and TNN Online be when this new chapter opens? **We will be helping to lead the way.** We will be helping to lead the Messianic community in truly understanding the mission that is typified by the Exodus. While we all understand the Exodus as deliverance from Egypt, a prelude to one’s personal salvation; God also called Israel to His mountain to prepare them to be a missional community by which His objectives in the world could be achieved. God wanted Israel to be a light to the world, and He wanted His people to make a difference. He did not want them isolated from everyone else.

This past month, October 2007, I wrote what I believe is one of the most important articles (30 pages) ever produced by this ministry: “**Answering the ‘Frequently Avoided Questions’ About the Messiahship of Yeshua.**” This was an article that I believe was released at just the right time as our ministry continues the journey on which God has placed us. When we see a Messianic person deny saving faith in Yeshua, it should certainly rend our hearts. None

of us should become Messianic so we can later deny the Lord, but instead should become Messianic *to be more like the Lord*. There have certainly been many voices who have spoken against the claims delivered against Yeshua's Messiahship, but very few are willing to recognize the greater issues that are involved. Some who have denied Yeshua's Messiahship have later denied God and become atheists. What does this mean for us?

Allow me to inform you that now that we have seen some people "go the distance" and renounce God Himself—**all theological issues are now "game."** This does not just extend to the reliability of the Apostolic Scriptures or New Testament, but also the Tanach or Old Testament. All of those issues that you may have avoided at your weekly Torah study—if you even knew that they are present in the text—are going to be discussed. As I conclude in my article,

"The current...attitude that dominates much of Messianic Biblical examination will inevitably give way to one that will actually engage and dialogue with the issues, considering and discussing their (greater) significance. Our answer for the criticisms of the History Channel or Discovery Channel will no longer be turning off or throwing away the television, but will actually be spent considering the arguments, data, and indeed the motives of those involved....While we have a great deal of work ahead of ourselves, we actually have a great deal of things to look forward to, because we can really be used by God to not only see people come to faith—but live lives that experience His complete *shalom*."

In 2008, Outreach Israel Ministries and TNN Online **are going to begin leading the way** by addressing how relevant we truly are as Messianics to the world at large. How do we maintain a high regard for modern Israel, but also understand our Father's desire to see the world saved? How do our Torah studies become more than just a forum to discuss what the Church (supposedly) "does not teach," but where we can be empowered to be more effective for His service? How do we have the answers for the skeptics among us, testifying "for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15)? How do we know that we do not have to doubt who Yeshua is, and that there are reasonable solutions to all the problems that we face? These are just some of the things that will be addressed, as a more stable, reasonable, and indeed thorough Messianic theology begins to emerge.

The journey ahead is actually very exciting. We get to open our hearts to be transformed by the love of the Lord, and our minds to be expanded by the Lord. For those of you who choose to walk with us on this journey, you are going to not only be greatly blessed, you also get to fulfill the Divine mandate that God gave to Israel. This journey, however, is a long one, and we will not see the results instantaneously. It does require patience and steadfastness. Yet, the benefits of taking this journey—as the Messianic movement will finally begin to make some *serious progress*—will last into eternity!

## Are you plugged in?



Outreach Israel Ministries and TNN Online both offer a great deal of Internet based teachings and audio broadcasts. Starting with the Fall Holiday season, we send out a series of teachings on *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah*, *Yom Kippur*, the Ten Days of Awe, **Virtual Sukkot**, and associated traditions and reflections. This coming Winter we will once again have the eight-day teaching series **Virtual Chanukah**, to be followed by **Virtual Passover** and **Counting the Omer** in the Spring.

These special teaching series will all be available in addition to our standard weekly e-mail updates, including: bi-weekly FAQs on critical Messianic subjects, TorahScope commentaries on the weekly *parashah*, hard-hitting Hue and Cry reflections, and monthly articles by TNN Online on critical theological issues.

You are also encouraged to join TNN Online editor J.K. McKee every Wednesday night for our Bible Study podcast. We are preparing to begin a rather lengthy study of Paul's letter to the Galatians starting in late November. On top of this, TNN's Extended Learning program is completing a Summer-Fall examination of *When Will the Messiah Return?*, to be followed by several weeks of a supplementary study in *The Dangers of Pre-Tribulationism*.

You are especially encouraged to join us on Friday afternoons, when Mark Huey's TorahScope Live broadcast is posted. These timely weekly Torah teachings are filled with uplifting and encouraging words that will challenge you to have a closer walk with the Lord!

A great deal of free teaching—both written and audio—is available every week from OIM and TNN.

***Get plugged in today! Sign up for our e-mail outreach!***

# NEW FAQ ADDITIONS

*from TNN Online*

**Torah, Command not to “Add to”:** In Deuteronomy 4:2 we are told not to add commandments to those of the Torah, yet in Judaism, and in the Messianic movement today, we have many people who follow traditions of men that some claim are “commanded by God.” I am confused.

Deuteronomy 4:2 does admonish us, “You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.” The primary emphasis of this commandment, more than anything else, is that God Himself is the only one who can tell the people of Israel what to do and not to do. However, if we were to hold to a strict interpretation of this, this means that when situations arise that require the religious community to make judgments on things that are not directly or indirectly addressed in the Torah, or any part of Scripture, that any decision could possibly be acceptable. In the independent Messianic community today this has led to many interpretations of the Torah that are foreign to mainline Judaism, and can be quite offensive to our Jewish brethren.

It can be irresponsible to strongly assert that traditions are not “commanded by God” when the Torah itself says that if a matter rises in Israel we are to follow the rulings of the priests and judges that the Lord sets over us:

“If any case is too difficult for you to decide, between one kind of homicide or another, between one kind of lawsuit or another, and between one kind of assault or another, being cases of dispute in your courts, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God chooses. So you shall come to the Levitical priest or the judge who is *in office* in those days, and you shall inquire *of them* and they will declare to you the verdict in the case. You shall do according to the terms of the verdict which they declare to you from that place which the LORD chooses; and you shall be careful to observe according to all that they teach you. According to the terms of the law which they teach you, and according to the verdict which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, to the right or the left” (Deuteronomy 17:8-11).

Some would make the argument that *every Rabbinical ruling* made in Orthodox Judaism today needs to be followed by the Messianic community. Certainly, we would not make that argument. But, neither would we make the argument that they *should be totally ignored*, either. The Messianic movement today should parallel the major *halachic* matters that bind the broad Jewish community together today (Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform). This would include when we celebrate the appointed times, including *Chanukah* and *Purim*, how we would dress in a congregational environment, how we generally eat kosher, and other traditions that are beneficial to our faith. Of course, there will be variance among Messianics, just as there is variance among Jewish sects

today. If a person in the independent Messianic movement has never been exposed to Messianic Judaism, or if someone is naturally predisposed to “do his own thing” and not respect order, then it should not be surprising to see a strong impetus to develop applications of the Torah that are foreign to Judaism.

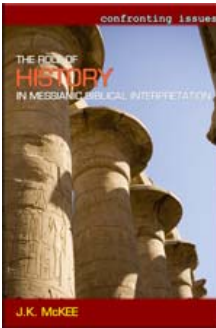
The commandment in Deuteronomy 17:11 is that we are to “Act according to the law they teach you and the decisions they give you. Do not turn aside from what they tell you, to the right or to the left” (NIV). We do not believe that what is implied here is a blind obedience to the rulings left by the Sages and Rabbis of Judaism, either. We have to judge their rulings against the Word of God, to see if something aligns with the spirit of the Word, as most major rulings relate to ethical value judgments that the Scriptures may not directly address. With all things, we have to see whether it parallels God’s written Word, and enhances our relationship and walk with Yeshua. There are clearly things that have come down through history that deter our walk with Him, but then there are many things that can enhance it.

What is perhaps most important more than anything else is that these rulings have to be made by recognized, qualified spiritual leaders of the community. The Torah is designed to be lived out in a community, as opposed to a “one-on-one” basis between oneself and God. A prime example of this is that when you see kosher-for-Passover food items that say “consult your rabbi” on the packaging. This indicates in some way that there is debate over whether or not an item is kosher for Passover, and that the ultimate determination should go to your local rabbi.

This can be a difficult concept for many who come from evangelical Christian backgrounds to accept, because we were often not used to our pastor making “rulings” on what we should do or not do concerning God’s commandments. Many of us were taught that our relationship with God was just between us and Him. While that is certainly true, we are also in covenant with other members of the faith community. Just like we probably went to a pastor for spiritual guidance, prayer, counseling, or just help regarding an issue, and took his advice and followed it, so do the rulings of the rabbis apply. Just as we would expect a pastor to be anointed by the Lord and for his words to carry authoritative weight, so can the rulings of the Rabbis.

Of course, as with all things, we should never follow the opinions of a pastor blindly, nor follow the rulings of the Rabbis blindly, either. We have to test everything against God’s Word, to make sure that it aligns with the character of our Heavenly Father, and we have to see if it is something that enhances our walk with Him, rather than takes us away from Him. More than anything else, we have to deal with things on a case-by-case basis, and recognize the fact that there is a lot of “grey” when it comes to interpretation and application. In today’s emerging Messianic community, we have to extend grace and mercy to those who are more Rabbinical in their approach to God, and those who want nothing to do with it. Hopefully, we can find a proper balance between Scripture and tradition, where neither is considered unimportant.

## NEW BOOKLETS AVAILABLE!



### THE ROLE OF HISTORY IN MESSIANIC BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

The need to understand the passages of the Bible in their original historical and cultural contexts cannot be overstated in an age when criticism against the Scriptures is at an all time high. How is today's Messianic movement to adopt a more valid historical approach to Scripture that considers the larger world that Ancient Israel found itself? How are we to properly employ extra-Biblical literature in interpreting the Biblical text? How are we to understand the worldview of those who originally participated in the Biblical events?

These are some very important questions to consider as today's Messianic theology moves ahead, and as we contemplate our role in an ever-decreasing world beset by globalization and multi-culturalism. How important it is for us to understand the diversity of the Bible, and how it might effect our role and mission as the people of God today?

TNN Online editor J.K. McKee addresses this subject in a thorough, challenging, yet reasonable way—as Messianic Believers seek to be a people who can be used effectively in God's service today.

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### THE QUEST FOR CREDIBILITY

Today's Messianic movement is reaching out to fill a need in the lives of people who desire renewal in their relationship with God. Many have been blessed as they have adopted a lifestyle of Torah obedience and in understanding the ministry of Yeshua from a First Century Jewish perspective. Yet as the Messianic community has grown, so have there appeared various obstacles to some of the objectives we believe that the Lord is desiring to see accomplished?

What three areas of teaching will seriously discredit the Messianic movement in the minds of those who are sincerely convicted about the message of Torah observance and the restoration of all Israel? TNN Online editor J.K. McKee addresses these three areas: (1) Denial of the Divinity of Yeshua the Messiah, (2) Denial of the Inspiration of the Greek New Testament, (3) Treating Christians with utter contempt and hatred.

How are we to become a force of positive change for the community of faith in the coming years? How will we be considered believable? These, and other pertinent questions, are asked in *The Quest for Credibility*.

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