

“A Mixed Multitude”: Gentiles in the Messianic Movement
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It is well known that most Messianic congregations involve the active participation of many Gentile believers. In this paper, I will address briefly each of the following questions:

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1. *Who is this ‘mixed multitude of Gentiles’ in the Messianic movement?*
2. *What are the historical and biblical contexts in which this phenomenon occurred?*
3. *What is the place of Gentiles in the modern Messianic movement?*

If we ask most Gentiles in the Messianic movement today why they are there, or what is the biblical basis for their commitment to the Messianic movement, many would not be able to provide a clear biblical answer. Many probably assume that Gentile engagement in the Messianic movement is a modern phenomenon or a new move of God. However, when we look at the biblical text and ancient history, we quickly conclude that Gentiles joining themselves to Israel has a long history, long before Paul ever wrote about the grafting in of Gentiles in his letter to the Romans.

When I mention to Christian friends and colleagues that I am deeply and actively involved in the Messianic movement, the following questions arise. They ask,

“Are you Jewish?” My answer is: “NO.”

“Do you have any Jewish background that you know of?” Again, my answer is: “NO.”

“Do you observe Jewish laws?”

I find this question interesting because individuals who ask this question often cannot define what they mean by “Jewish law” or “biblical law” or “Mosaic law”! Are they referring to the Ten Commandments, the laws in Exodus 20 to 23, the laws in Leviticus, the laws in Deuteronomy, or Rabbinic law? The answer to this question is complicated since it cannot be answered with a YES or a NO. I can confirm that I have observed the following “biblical laws”: I have never murdered, committed adultery or incest or bestiality; I have never stolen an ox or a sheep, moved the boundary stone of my neighbor, or cooked a goat in its mother’s milk! However, I must admit that I have indeed broken some of the biblical laws: I have worn garments with mixed fabrics, done work on the Sabbath, broken the occasional vow, and eaten shrimp and cheeseburgers.

So, do I observe Jewish law or biblical law or Mosaic law? The answer is YES **and** NO. I observe what I believe to be applicable to Gentiles throughout scripture. Hopefully, those who inquired about my religious practices will be sufficiently intrigued by my answers to continue investigating the topic and begin to explore the topic at a deeper level.

So why would a French Canadian, ex-Roman Catholic, ordained evangelical woman, former pastor, and professor of Old Testament want to be actively involved in the Messianic movement? To this

question I answer, “*For me*, it is the biblical thing to do, the right thing to do and the right time to do it. It is clear from a biblical and historical standpoint that multitudes have done so long before me.”

As soon as I moved to Colorado (17 years ago), I began looking for a Messianic congregation. I soon found Congregation Yeshuat Tsion led by Rabbi Chaim Urbach. I began attending and felt right at home. I invited Chaim and Joy to my home for dinner and one of the first questions Chaim asked me was, “Are you Jewish?” Without hesitation, I replied, “No, I am Gentile through and through.” This conversation sealed our friendship. I knew who I was—a Gentile—and I knew who I was not—a Jew.

Scripture provides evidence of a long history of the inclusion of foreigners—Gentiles—of all types in Israel’s community of faith. At least since the day of Abraham, Gentiles have been invited to join the family that was called by God to reveal his redemptive plan to the world.

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Abraham and the nations of the world – When I read **Genesis 12** with my students, I entitle the passage “The first Great Commission.” In the Genesis passage, we are told that God chose Abraham and his seed to “GO ... so that all the nations of the world may be blessed through you” (וַיְבָרְכוּ בְךָ כָּל) (מְשִׁפְחוֹת הַיָּדָיִם).” In other words, God said to Abram, “Go, teach and make disciples in all the nations of the world.” It is more than understandable therefore that since that day, the nations of the world would find themselves drawn to and desiring to join those who worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

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In **Exodus 12:38**, we encounter the *‘erev rav*, the “mixed multitude” (also found in 1 Kgs 10:15; Jer 25:20, 24; 50:37; Ezek 30:5; Neh 13:3). In the Exodus passage, the group undoubtedly included Egyptians who became disillusioned with the Egyptian gods, when the magicians of Pharaoh failed to duplicate the plagues sent upon Egypt. Evidence to support this proposition begins with the third plague—the plague of gnats—where the magicians failed to imitate the phenomenon and declared: *‘etsba’ Elohim hi’* “This is the finger of God” (Ex 8:15). Although Pharaoh ignored their words and refused to let the Hebrews go, the magicians acknowledged publicly with their words that there was a deity greater than the gods of Egypt. Following this event, the magicians continued to witness with their own eyes the deeds of the God of Israel, and by the beginning of the seventh plague—the plague of hail—we find Egyptians obeying Moses’ instructions instead of cowering before Pharaoh. In Exodus 9:20 we read that “*whoever feared the word of Adonai (YHWH) among the servants of Pharaoh had his own servants and cattle flee into their own houses*”, thereby saving their servants and animals from the hailstorm divinely orchestrated by Adonai. No doubt, these *servants of Pharaoh* had realized that the God of the Hebrews was to be feared above all the gods of Egypt. Consequently, some of them chose to leave Egypt with their families and slaves in tow, forming in part the *‘erev rav* “the mixed multitude” of Exodus 12:38, and joined the Israelite community on their journey to the Promised Land.

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Moses and Jethro – Although it is possible that Jethro was a descendent of Abraham with his wife Keturah, it is clear that Moses was instrumental in revealing the God of Israel to him. Upon hearing that God had brought his people out of Egypt, Jethro “rejoiced” and stated: “Blessed be *ADONAI (YHWH)*, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians ... ¹¹**Now I know that *ADONAI (YHWH)* is greater than all gods**” (Ex 18:10-11a).

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Regarding “**Jethro rejoiced**”, the rabbis suggest that the verb וַיִּיחַד (*vayyichad* - “he rejoiced”) should not be read as such but rather, it should be read as וַיִּיהַד (*vayyihad*) “he became a Jew”, having done that through personal circumcision. (אַל תִּקְרֵי וַיִּיחַד אֶלָּא וַיִּיהַד – Midrash Tanchuma, Yitro 7.) Avi Baumol, rabbinic representative of the chief rabbi of Poland, notes that, “There is a debate in the Talmud as well as in modern commentaries as to whether he [Jethro] went home to convert his family and then rejoin the Israelites, or if it was enough for him to come and be inspired but then return to his home and remain there as a Midianite priest. I believe Jethro went home to Midian and spread to his people the message of the greatness of the God of the Hebrews and the miracles with which He redeemed His nation. He stayed a Midianite priest, but his consciousness was forever altered in that he understood that the Israelites are indeed a blessed nation due to their unique position in God’s plan.”

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Rahab, in Joshua 2, the first Canaanite with whom the Israelites engaged before their entry into the Land (counters the idea of genocide of all Canaanites). The text reveals the amazing power of the Holy Spirit in the heart of someone who hears a testimony of what God has done in the lives of his people Israel. After hearing about the parting of the Sea of Reeds, the defeat of Sihon and Og, and the promise of Land to Israel, Rahab declares: “*For Adonai (YHWH) your God, He is God, in heaven above and on earth beneath.*” After the conquest of Jericho, Rahab is integrated into the Israelite community and eventually, her name appears in the genealogy of Yeshua in Matthew 1 and in the hall of faith in Hebrews 11.

Then we find **Ruth**, a non-Israelite Moabitess who proclaims to Naomi, “*Your people will be my people and your God my God*” (2:16-17). Ruth marries Boaz, becomes the great-grandmother of king David, and becomes an instrument in God’s hand through whom Yeshua, the Messiah, comes to earth (Matt 1:5-6).

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King Hiram of Tyre (1 Kings 5:11) – Eitan Shishkof notes that “One of the greatest building projects in all history was achieved by the partnership of a Jewish king and a Gentile king” (Shishkof, 16). Hiram was the Phoenician king of Tyre during the 10th century BCE (969 to 936 BCE). King Hiram had great respect for King David and consequently sought to develop a good relationship with his son Solomon to whom he said, “*Blessed is the Lord (YHWH) today who gave to David a wise son, (to rule) over this great people.*” Hiram acknowledged the covenant God of Israel—YHWH—and blessed Adonai publicly in the hearing of all people.

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In **1 Kings 8:41-42**, after the dedication of the Temple, Solomon prays the following words: “*Concerning the foreigner (nokri) who is not of your people Israel, when he comes from a distant country because of Your name—for they will hear of your great name, of your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when he comes to pray toward this House, then may you hear from heaven your dwelling place, and do according to all that he asks of you. So all the peoples of the earth may know your name, to fear you as your people Israel do, and know that this house that I have built is called by your Name.*”

- This would be a great prayer for Messianic leaders to pray – for Gentiles to come and hear about Yeshua in a Messianic context.
- This prayer is echoed later by the prophet Isaiah who declares, “*for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations*” (56:7).

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In 1 Kings 10, **Queen of Sheba** visits King Solomon and is left breathless by what she sees in Jerusalem. She tells the king, “*Blessed be Adonai (YHWH) your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel. It is because of Adonai’s everlasting love for Israel that He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.*” Although she did not join the community of Israel, she publicly confessed faith in the God of Israel.

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In 2 Kings 5, **Naaman**, a Syrian commander of the Aramean army, is introduced as an arrogant and self-centered leader who is plagued with a serious skin disease. After being healed by the God of Israel, he declares “*Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel ... and your servant will no longer offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any other god, except Adonai (YHWH)*” (15,17).

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Jonah, the prophet we studied in our devotional times yesterday and today, reluctantly brings the message of repentance to the Assyrians in Nineveh. Assyrians, including the king of Nineveh, repent in sackcloth and ashes. The king declares publicly, “Let the people cry out to God with urgency. Let each one turn from his evil way and from the violence in his hands ...” (Jonah 3:8-10).

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Later on, during the Persian period, **King Cyrus helps Ezra** in the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Cyrus takes the articles of silver and gold that had been taken by the Babylonians 70 years earlier and gives them to Shesbazzar to bring back to Jerusalem. The succeeding ruler, King Darius also supported this effort publicly (Ezra 6:7-10).

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King Artaxerxes supported Nehemiah in his efforts to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. **King Ahashverosh granted Queen Esther’s request** and participated in the salvation of all the Jewish people of Persia. At the end of the book of **Esther**, we read the following statements: “*the Jews took it upon themselves to establish the custom [celebration of Purim] that they and their descendants and all who joined them should without fail observe*” (9:27).

Scripture also speaks of the ...

GER and TOSHAV: Second, we have the **ger and toshav**, “the stranger” and “sojourner” who could decide to dwell among the Israelites temporarily or permanently. The **ger** could remain uncircumcised and refrain from celebrating the Passover and giving voluntary offerings. However, the **ger** was subject to prohibitions against the worship of idols and had to keep the commandments related to the purity of the land. According to Exodus 12:48-49, the **ger** found protection and safety in the midst of Israel. After Israel entered Canaan, the **ger** who had killed unintentionally—committed manslaughter—was allowed to live in cities of refuge. In Lev 24:16, we read that the **ger** was subject to the same death penalty as a

native-born for murder. As noted by Patrick Miller, “the resident alien [*ger*] was not required but was permitted to participate in those actions that involved the active worship of Adonai.”¹

NOKRI OR BENEY-NEKAR: Third is the *nokri* or *ben-nekar*, “foreigner, alien.” The non-Israelite in this category could profit from the just and pious behavior of obedient covenant people. In the 10th century BCE, we read about Solomon’s public invitation to the *nokrim* to participate in the worship of God along with the Israelites.

GOY or GOYYIM: translated “nations.” This generic term primarily refers to non-Israelites or non-Jews. However, in some cases, the term is applied to Abraham and his descendants (e.g., Gen 12:2; 17:4, 5, 6, 16; 35:11; 46:3; 48:19; Ex 19:6; 33:13; Deut 4:6). Throughout Scripture, the *goyim* are invited to join Israel in the worship of the living God, as is seen in many biblical stories. Isaiah 60:3 – *The Gentiles (גוֹיִם) will come to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising.* Zechariah 8:23 – *Gentiles (גוֹיִם) who will hold on to the fringes of the garment of their Jewish brethren and go with them to serve the Lord.*

In **Acts 10 & 11**, we read about **Cornelius**, “a righteous and God-fearing man” who gave alms, prayed Jewish liturgy, may have attended synagogue services and identified in his spirituality with the Jewish community. As a Gentile, Cornelius was not required to keep the Law of Moses, but as Tobi Janicki notes, he “did so out of a sincere and intense love for God’s Torah and his ways.” Cornelius sent messengers to bring Peter to his home in Caesarea in order to hear the message of Yeshua. When Peter arrived at Cornelius’ house, he found there a large number of Gentiles who were eager to listen to Peter’s homily. After listening to Cornelius’ story, Peter responded: “*In every nation, the one who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him*” (10:35). We can assume from this story that Cornelius and the other Gentiles in his house joined the Messianic community or possibly planted a Messianic congregation in Caesarea on that very day.

Acts 15 provides a balanced approach to the involvement of Gentiles in the Messianic movement—the laws to be applied to the Gentiles become the norm in the growing body of believers in Jerusalem and beyond. As Toby Janicki notes, “According to the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), Gentiles have full access to God and his covenants through Yeshua without the need of formal conversion.”²

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What biblical evidence do we have that Gentiles were meant to join Israel?

- Egyptians
- Midianites
- Canaanites
- Assyrians
- Babylonians
- Persians
- Phoenicians
- Romans

¹ Patrick M. Miller, *The Religion of Ancient Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 201.

² Toby Janicki, *God-Fearers: Gentiles and the God of Israel*, 21.

#1 - None of these people became Israelites or Jewish after joining the Israelite or Jewish community. They remained ethnically who they were.

#2 – In none of these cases do we get a hint of Replacement Theology.

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Later evidence of the association of Gentiles in the Messianic movement almost completely disappears after the first century CE due to the growing anti-Semitic agenda of the Church and the supersessionist writings of Church Fathers. This anti-Semitic attitude was openly displayed in the Church for centuries. Gentiles who sympathized with anyone in Jewish communities were condemned by Church leaders and sometimes excommunicated. So, the chasm between Jews and Gentile believers continued to widen.

However, “In some communities of faith, the Hebrew roots of Christianity were more evident than in others. For example, the Church in Edessa, Syria, is known from Syriac documents to have intentionally preserved Jewish elements in its liturgy. “The first Christian converts to the Church of Edessa included the earliest Jewish-Christians. Therefore, its liturgy is strongly influenced by the worldview of the Bible.” Jewish and Gentile believers from this community read from the Torah and the Prophets during their services and followed the Jewish liturgical calendar. The community observed the Sabbath along with Christian worship on Sunday and celebrated Easter on the calendar date of the Jewish Passover. The Eucharist liturgy of the Syrian church in Edessa found its origin in Jewish liturgy as the prayer was strikingly similar to the *birkat-ha-mazon*, the Jewish thanksgiving prayer recited after meals during that period. In support of Jewish believers, Syriac Church documents from this city omit the polemics against the Jewish Sabbath included in other Syriac authoritative documents of this period.”³

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Missing in Church History courses in most seminaries is teaching on the anti-Semitism and supersessionism of the church during the last 2 thousand years.

From 1995 to 2006, I was privileged to serve on the faculty of a Reform rabbinic seminary—Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati—where students, staff and faculty revealed a partial yet factual knowledge of selected disturbing sayings against the Jews, uttered by prominent Church Fathers and Reformers. This revelation left me speechless since I was aware that most Christians I knew had no knowledge of this textual evidence, and that the modern Church was unaware of its supersessionistic⁴ predisposition. This is when I began to investigate the homilies and writings of Church Fathers and Reformers, whose words created a deep divide between the Jewish and Christian communities.

Originally led by Jewish believers, the first century Church grew from an exclusively Jewish entity to a community that opened its arms wide to Gentile believers. By the end of the first century however, the tables had begun to turn and Gentiles started to promote a prejudiced message against the Jews, preventing Jewish believers from gathering with the rest of the Gentile Body, and discriminating against any Christian who would associate with Jewish practices. The homilies and writings of prominent theologians such as Justin Martyr (AD 100-165), Melito Bishop of Sardis (2nd century AD), Ignatius Bishop of Antioch (around AD 115), Justin Martyr (AD 100-165), Irenaeus of Lyon (mid-2nd cent. AD), Tertullian (AD 155-240), Hippolytus of Rome (AD 170-230), Origen of Alexandria (AD 185-

³ Hélène Dallaire, “Messianic Judaism Through the Centuries: Textual Evidence”, Caspari Center, 2011.

⁴ Supersessionism is also known as Replacement Theology or the Theology of Displacement.

254), Constantine (AD 280-337), Gregory of Nyssa (AD 335-394), Chrysostom (AD 344-407), Augustine (AD 354-430), Cyril of Alexandria (AD 376-444), Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225-1274), Martin Luther (AD 1483-1546), Calvin, and many others contributed to the deep anchoring of supersessionism and anti-Semitism in the Church. The words of these revered leaders resounded loudly in the Church and carried the necessary impact to cause a deep divide between Jews and Gentiles.

Upcoming publication on supersessionism – *The Future Restoration of Israel*, edited by Stanley Porter and Alan Kurschner. McMaster Biblical Studies Series, Vol. 11. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2023.

In my chapter “Anti-Semitic Supersessionism: The Sharp Words that Deepened the Divide”, I quote from the writings of each of the Church Fathers and Reformers listed above and speak of the damage inflicted on the Jewish community and the Church for centuries.

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After two thousand years of silence on this topic, how does the Church recover from the damage done?

1. Teach Christians the truth about supersessionism and anti-Semitism in Church history.
2. Pick up the pieces as Christians discover their devastating history.
3. Tell them what God is doing in Jewish communities and through Jewish ministries around the world.
4. Invite them to Messianic congregations and the celebration of biblical feasts.
5. Bring them to Israel!

Thankfully, over a century ago, the supersessionist picture began to change and a fresh curiosity among Gentiles began to emerge. Mission organizations with a focus on reaching Jews were established by Gentile ministers. Gentiles in various countries began to publish works on the Jewish background of Christianity, the significance of the festivals—biblical and non-biblical—the importance of the Passover tradition for Christian theology, the covenants, Israelite history, the Jewishness of the gospel, replacement theology, Yeshua as the Jewish Messiah – and more, for the purpose of educating the church and restoring its purpose in the plan of God. It would take another paper to cover all the developments of Jewish missions in Europe and America during the past two centuries. The growth of the Messianic movement during the past 40-50 years has been accompanied by the slow awakening of the church and the growing interest of Gentiles in the Jewish background of their faith.

For example, before WWI, a Dutch Reform mission-pastor by the name of Willem ten Boom, “published a book on ‘the three main festivals of the Old Testament and their symbolism’⁵ He informed his readers extensively about the Jewish practice of Passover, Pentecost and the feast of Tabernacles. He also entered in discussion with rabbinic interpretations, so as to bring out the New Testament significance of these three holidays.”⁶

In 1985, a French Pentecostal pastor by the name of **André Boulagnon**, published a book on the spiritual significance of the Jewish festivals—biblical and non-biblical festivals. In his view, these traditions have much to reveal about Yeshua.⁷ French, British, Belgian, German and American Christian leaders have also written similar books regarding the Jewishness of the New Testament and the place of Jewish tradition in the Christian Church.

van der Poll stated that

when Evangelicals took a closer look at this movement (the Messianic Movement), they had the impression to ‘discover’ feasts and festivals that were far more in keeping with the Biblical liturgical calendar than the Christian Church Year to which they were accustomed. Here they saw Jewish roots in action, so to speak. It was only predictable that this would lead to a desire to celebrate with their Jewish brethren. It is not an exaggeration to state that the practice of Biblical holidays in Messianic assemblies was one of the main reasons for Gentile believers to become members (van der Poll, 280).

⁵ Willem ten Boom, *De drie hoffdfeesten van het Oude Testament*.

⁶ van de Poll, 272.

⁷ André Boulagnon, *La signification spirituelle des fêtes juives*.

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Eitan Shishkof wrote, “There is something so pleasing to God and so puzzling to Jewish people when Gentiles turn toward us, not with anti-Semitic judgment, but with respect and appreciation.”⁸ Shishkof adds that “what began in the 1970’s as distant curiosity has become a growing passion globally, to explore the Jewish roots of New Covenant faith and to further God’s purpose for Israel” (Shishkof, 11). Today, Jewish symbols are found in many churches and Christians around the world are eager to go to Israel to experience the land where most of biblical history took place.

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Shishkof adds, “The Scriptures speak vividly and with inspiration of an end-time partnership between Jewish and Gentile believers in Yeshua.... We Messianic Jews cannot fulfill our God-given role in hastening Yeshua’s return without our Gentile brethren. Nor can they realize the age-old dream of God’s Kingdom established on earth without us” (Shishkof, 9-10).

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In 1997, Bruce Stokes presented a paper on “Gentiles in the Messianic movement at the IMJA conference in which he notes that Gentiles hold various motives for being involved in the Messianic movements:

- Deepen one’s biblical knowledge
- Improve relationship with the Lord
- Inter-marriage
- Jewish evangelism
- Understand the place of Israel in prophecy and eschatology

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I recently read Rich Nichols’⁹ 2019 article entitled “The Unique Place of Gentiles in Messianic Jewish Congregational Life.” Although I have respect for Rich Nichols and Mark Kinzer, I find their promotion of a Bilateral ecclesiology seriously problematic. In their view, Gentiles are only welcome into the Messianic movement as visitors and not as members or contributors to the movement. Nichols’ article made me feel like an unwanted outcast, an individual whose gifts are not welcome in the Messianic movement, and a second class Gentile.

Here are notes from Nichols’ article:

- The Messianic Jewish Rabbinic Council established standards of appropriate practice for non-Jews in our midst.⁵² These were formally adopted at our May 2011 meeting.
- They address questions regarding (1) why Gentile should not teach Torah studies; (2) why Gentiles should not preach in Messianic congregations; (3) Why Gentiles should not serve on a standing committee or lead an ad-hoc committee; (4) Why Gentiles should not lead worship in messianic congregations.

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“It is the ambiguity of their status that creates the up-tightness in the community and prevents the relaxed, good-natured feeling conducive to creativity and joy. Identity confusion is the curse. Clear boundaries with love embody the blessing.”

⁸ Shishkof, 58

⁹ Dr. Richard Nichol is the President of the Messianic Jewish Theological Institute (MJTI).

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- Consider the Conversion Option—Though controversial in Messianic Jewish circles, we in the MJRC have found it helpful to have a mechanism whereby a limited number of non-Jews among us can formally join the Jewish people
- Gently explain to Gentiles that it is not appropriate for them to wear a tallit and remind them that the fringes of the tallit are key reminders of the Jewish people’s obligation to the Torah
- Find a sympathetic church or two—“Would it not be a good thing for the rabbi to locate a couple of churches in the area, which support the Messianic Jewish idea, have a regard for Israel and the Jewish people, and could make a comfortable home for the non-Jew.”

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Reversal discrimination of Gentiles:

As an ordained woman who served in the pastorate for 10 years decades ago, I was repeatedly confronted by proponents of the exclusive message to “let the women keep silent in the church. Let them ask their husbands at home” (which leaves me in a strange place since I have never been married). I learned to listen graciously to those who opposed my presence in the pulpit, and thanked them for their opinion. But I assured them that only God could put me in that position (and then, I filed their letters in the “g” file). I see similarities with the position of the Messianic Jewish Rabbinic Council and its adherents. Exclusion is the norm.

In the Messianic movement, I have been given opportunities to teach, preach, lead women’s retreats, and minister in several congregations, and for this, I am extremely thankful. However, the opportunities given to me do not give me permission to usurp leadership, to promote a Gentile message void of Jewish sensitivity, or demand that traditional Christian practices be integrated into Messianic practices.

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CONCLUSION – (Rabbi Avi Baumol’s article – not Messianic but brilliant statement) –

“The appearance of Gentiles throughout the Bible who hear the call in God’s name and come to the Israelite camp, is intentional. It is God seeing His plan in motion. Each individual who “hears the call” and comes to the camp to experience the light of God through the Israelites and to bless God in response advances the cause to spread God’s name in the world. Israel’s mission, an extremely lofty one with great challenges and responsibilities, comes to partial fruition at critical moments in the Bible. Each time, however, it falls short of the desired goal, it lacks momentum and the great opportunity is missed. But there are certain moments of clarity, when many of the pieces of the puzzle come together. It is those times that Israel shines and some Gentiles hear that call, see the light and make the bold move to come to the Israelite camp and bless Israel and God.”

In conclusion, Gentiles who joined the Messianic movement are not called to be passive but rather, they are called to bring their resources to the table, and join actively in the mission of God alongside their Jewish brothers and sisters who serve Yeshua. Most of all, they are called to humbly serve the Messianic community with every God given gift and talent, and work together with the Messianic community to establish the Kingdom of God on earth and bring the gospel to the Jew first and then to the Gentile.

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Testimonies of Gentiles in the Messianic movement. They answered the question “Why are you in the Messianic movement?” Or “What is the basis for which you are committed to the Messianic movement?”

Carolee: I am in the Messianic movement because the Lord has given me a heart for evangelism and **a heart for the Jewish people**. For decades I have known the prophetic significance of the feasts of Israel, and I wanted to be in a congregation where we celebrate them all - and understand their significance. The Messianic prophecies and the prophetic feasts of Israel are the most powerful evangelistic tools we have - for both Jews and Gentiles!

Michael: **Our leadership**. He was led to bring into Messianic understanding by the Spirit and prayer. He used Scripture to establish his reasoning. Again and again the Spirit has confirmed where I am called to be.

Toni & Fil: When Fil and I first came to CYT I honestly had no idea that the Messianic Movement existed. Now 8 years in I am committed to the movement because I know Yeshua wants all, or as many Jews to become believers of Him as possible, so **I am committed to pray and speak about Yeshua** to anyone (Jewish or not) that I can.

Debra: Messianic teaching provides the context to understand: the "four gospels", the **irrevocable covenants of Adonai**, replacement theology, oral law, the weightier matters, Jewish culture and our Jewish Messiah. **Messianic teaching brings clarity and revelation to all of the sacred scriptures.**

Kent: I am in the Messianic movement for many reasons but the first two that come to mind are: If you desire to understand our Jewish Messiah then you need to immerse yourself in Judaism and the Jewish culture. Secondly, Messianic Judaism is the only place I have found that embraces knowing and teaching the whole counsel of God to all believers.

Lynda & Floyd: After coming to the realization that both Testaments of Scripture were written through Jewish believers in God and that **the destiny of mankind was Israel-centric**, my desire was to serve the Lord and to present the gospel to **“the Jew first”**. My delight in continuing to be involved rests in my love for Yeshua’s genetic family and the special joy He must feel as they come to know Him, their Messiah. An added Baruch HaShem is that **I gain access to foundational wisdom** He has given them through the ages, allowing me to gain a greater understanding of who He is. **If Jesus was a Jew, how can this be wrong!**

Willie: 1. My love for the Jewish people.

2. Because **Gentiles have been grafted into the tree of life** as one, it is nice to come together in worship with people who believe in the entire Bible and love Yeshua. Lastly, I believe many Gentiles like myself have walked with the L-rd without really understanding much about the traditions and do not fully grasp High Holidays as a whole.

Irene: The basic answer is I was **drawn to the Movement a few years ago by the Ruach HaKodesh, with no prior knowledge**. The commitment now is the love of Yeshua for His people to bring them into the Kingdom through Gentiles who understand and have "Jewish hearts."

Greg: G-d has drawn Gail and I here without question. Approximately 25 years ago I was attempting to answer the questions of a Jewish doctor and his wife who were in a small group Bible study with Gail and I as the leaders through Cherry Hills Community Church. Through a series of connections, Dr. Vernon Grounds gave me a manuscript of a book written by another Jewish Dr. called “Christianity, it’s Jewish Roots”.

Soon thereafter Gail and I traveled to Israel in 1998 – then again in 2018.

I feel that I better understand scripture and the Bible in general, a life-long process. G-d drew me to CYT, meeting the warmth of R. Chaim, R. David, yourself and many others. G-d has given me a heart for Jewish evangelism. I have deep respect for G-d now more than ever before. He has confirmed this decision repeatedly for Gail and I.

Gail: And Helene if I could add to Greg's answer (might be too late for your conference)... I have performed several weddings over the years as an ordained Elder and Chaplain for Marketplace Ministries. In my love for the Jewish traditions, **I studied in depth the powerful symbolism and traditions** behind the Jewish wedding ceremony and how so much is a reflection of Yeshua yet they are unaware! This began a true desire to know more and so much so that **I became quite uncomfortable in our current church** setting and truly felt we were not where God wanted us to be. It didn't take long for us to be led by the Spirit to CYT.

Hawglovers: I am involved in the Messianic Movement because G-D, my believing parents focus on Eretz Israel and family connection as Bnei Anousim (Children of the coerced via Catholic Church inquisition records)

Tracy: When I first became a believer, years ago, I joined BSF and whenever the lead teacher spoke about Israel or the Jewish people, something stirred within me and I wanted to know more. I ended up joining a ministry that reached out to Israel and the Jewish People that was called "Israel Connection" through Cherry Hills Community Church. This ministry had a Messianic Rabbi that would teach for them on occasion, that Rabbi was Chaim Urbach. At the same time, while I was working with this ministry, my husband decided he was going to raise our kids in the Catholic church and I personally couldn't join that church (very difficult). Someone from Israel Connection said "Why don't you check out Rabbi Chaim's congregation?". I was very nervous about this because it was so foreign (I was raised Lutheran). I did go to their Shabbat services, hesitantly. There were no bells or whistles, the service was long but I kept going. After a month or so, I heard that still small voice say "This is your home" and I have been there ever since, for nearly 2 decades now. All that to say, it was the Lord's plan for me and I hesitantly went along. I think it is a calling for some Gentiles, not because we are cute and clever (as my now Rabbi Chaim would say) but because of God's sovereignty, His plan, His purpose in our life for a set time. I am just grateful that He chose this for me, my Messianic Synagogue IS my home AND my family...I am truly blessed in this. Thank You Father!!!

Barb: G-d prompted me to learn about Yeshua's Jewish background. **I find the Torah portion of our services to be more fulfilling than any other religious services I have been involved in.** The **Old Testament has come alive for me** and what I once saw as a book about a wrathful G-d, I now see as a love letter showing G-d's unending love for His people.