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TJCII AND THE JEWS IN THE CHURCHES

TJCII EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

This statement concerns the place of the Jews who are part of the Christian Churches. It has become necessary for TJCII to address this question because of the increasing number of Jews within the Churches who are affirming their ongoing Jewish identity. This trend is reinforced by the Helsinki Consultations begun in 2010 that are gathering Jewish believers from several historic Church traditions and from the Messianic Jewish movement.

Within TJCII we uphold the divine election of the whole Jewish people. This includes all Jews, whether synagogue-attending Jews, secular Jews, or Jews adhering to other non-Christian religions.¹ All the more so, the Jews who are members of Christian Churches remain part of the Jewish people and heirs to the promises given to Abraham and his descendants.² As the Churches abandon supersessionist or replacement conceptions of the relationship between the Church and the Jewish people, they make possible an honoring of the witness of their Jewish members that refuses the older pattern of absorption or assimilation.

As a single-focus initiative concerned solely with the full reconciliation of Jewish and non-Jewish believers, personally and corporately, within the one Body of Christ, TJCII recognizes that this reconciliation necessarily includes the Jewish members of the Christian Churches. But the TJCII Executive Committee recognizes that its distinctive vision arose within the Messianic Jewish movement that directly presents the challenge of faith in Yeshua as Messiah to the wider Jewish community. The Messianic Jewish movement affirms the importance of the ongoing witness of Jewish believers in Yeshua and their need to affirm and support their convictions. The Jews in the Churches can be their witness to the nature of the Church as the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in the Messiah.³ The Jews in the Churches contribute to this reconciliation as they affirm their Jewishness publicly within their Churches and claim a space there for a distinctive Jewish witness. This witness will fully recognize the historic heritage of the Church rooted in the Jewish Scriptures in every way that is consonant with the Scriptures and the apostolic tradition. They can provide a model for Jewish believers learning from the wisdom of the Church and can be a means for the Churches to return more fully to the Jewish heritage of the Church's origins.

“As Jewish believers in Jesus, we affirm our identity as both part of the people of Israel and of the Body of Christ”

(continued on Page 2)

¹ See Rom. 11:29. Election does not guarantee final salvation.

² See Gen. 12:2-3; 17:4-8; 26:2-5; 35:10-12; Luke 1:54-55; Rom. 9:4-5.

³ Eph. 2:15; 3:4-6.



JOURNEYING INTO MESSIANIC JUDAISM

(Part 2)

By Revd. Tim Butlin (Anglican vicar, Loudwater, England)

“...and so all Israel will be saved...” (Romans 11:26)

Among the many formative experiences of 30 years ago when I first moved to Israel was the televised Simchat Torah celebration at Liberty Bell Gardens in Jerusalem. Simchat Torah, an exuberant rejoicing in the law, is the concluding celebration of Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles. I was in the crowd watching as different Hassidic traditions whooped and danced on stage with their Torah scrolls, though my embryonic Hebrew of only three weeks at language school was not adequate to understand them. But there was one group who sang in English and what they sang left its mark on me. “We want Messiah now, we don’t want to wait” repeated over and over – the melody was similar to all the others, the group took its part with all the rest, but the singing in English appeared at that moment to be the Holy Spirit’s way of communicating their deep heart-cry directly to me. This group was yet to put its trust in Yeshua, but were passionate about the teaching of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav whose motto was “My fire will burn until the Messiah comes”. I was witnessing an outpouring of Messianic longing.

At the other end of the Messianic spectrum, today I have in my Anglican congregation in England a Messianic Jew who has spent several years unlocking her Jewish background. Her grandparents immigrated to England from Latvia a century ago and promptly hid their Jewishness. Keeping their heritage to themselves they chose not to teach their daughter or granddaughter the traditions in which they themselves were raised. So this lady is Jewish, but functionally Gentile, and now has grown a yearning to be enriched by specific Biblical promises that are hers.

Between these two examples are many shades of experience. Toward Jerusalem Council II knows there is a long road to prepare not only for the Hassidic successors of Rabbi Nachman, but also for the many like my friend who are currently in our churches, to be identified together within “all Israel”. We are all heirs of a history wherein by design, default or damage, many Jewish believers are yet to raise up their Jewish identity to the point where they count themselves as Jews within “all Israel”. Other Jewish people, not-yet believers in Yeshua, whose devotion to the Word of God is undoubted, are alienated from those of us who love and adore their Messiah.

Paul wrote to the 1st century church in Rome with a confidence in the ultimate unity of believers. That journey, as he recounts it, involves Gentiles like me coming to trust in a Jewish Messiah. At the same time, recognizing the on-going Messianic hunger inside a burgeoning Jewish Orthodoxy, both in Israel and worldwide, is integral to the same TJCII journey. Re-examining the foundations of theological alienation, confessing the centuries of hostility and pain, understanding that the very devotion to Torah that kept the Jewish community through these years has also contributed to rejection of Yeshua as Messiah – all these are along the way. Along with Paul in his letter, TJCII looks to the day when Gentile Christian separation from her Jewish roots is a thing of the past “and so all Israel will be saved”.

TJCII

(TJCII and the Jews in the Churches, continued from Page 1)

Since TJCII is a prophetic vision for the Lord’s full plan for gathering Jew and non-Jew under the Lordship of the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of the world, the TJCII leadership emphasizes that this process can only proceed as it is led by the Holy Spirit following the model of the first Jerusalem Council in full freedom and mutual respect. It is as the Jewish believers within the Churches give a distinct witness of their Jewish heritage and as they do so in unity with their non-Jewish brethren that they will play a role in the specific calling of TJCII. For this reason, the TJCII leadership welcomes the Paris Statement issued by the Helsinki Consultation of June 2011 affirming *that “As Jewish believers in Jesus, we affirm our identity as both part of the people of Israel and of the Body of Christ”* and that *“we are a living witness to the mysterious and invisible bond which persists between the Church and Israel.”* A healthy development of the relationship between the Jews within the Churches and their respective church bodies will produce blessing for both and can also contribute to the Churches taking the Messianic Jewish movement more seriously. Mutual interaction and mutual acceptance of Jew and non-Jew with the goal of mutual enrichment is the goal in all the TJCII work of reconciliation, both between the Messianic movement and the Churches, and between the Churches and their Jewish members.

TJCII

THE PRIVILEGE OF INTERCESSION

By Arlene Stucki

In conjunction with the annual meeting of the TJCII Executive at Kiryat Yearim, intercessors from Africa, Austria, Ireland, England, Holland, Israel, the United States and Mexico gathered on site to provide the foundation of prayer that is essential to the vision of TJCII. Led by Dave and Raquel Pyles, International Intercessory Coordinators from Baruch HaShem Messianic Congregation in Dallas, Texas, we came for a week of preparation before the Executive Committee arrived so that we might come before the LORD with "clean hands and pure hearts."



We joined in a partial fast during the week of September 4-9, asking the LORD to purify our minds and hearts, and to unify us, that we might seek Him, fully submitted to His direction, both as individuals and as a team. A very strong exhortation to guard our tongues, even in jest, came to us through that week. We represent several streams and expressions of faith that have the

potential of strengthening our intercession or of dividing us. We are Messianic Jews, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, First Nations Cree, and Evangelicals; we are charismatic and non-charismatic. Will we unite in this intercessory effort or will we allow our diversities to divide us? **We choose to unite!**

We had three sessions of education into the Heart of



an Intercessor, and into the TJCII vision. On the intervening weekend, we attended Shabbat services at Christ Church in the Old City, led by Reuven Berger; we prayed at the Kotel, (Western Wall); we walked the ramparts (walls) of Jerusalem, praying into the

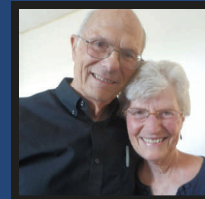
promises of the LORD to His people, knowing the critical times in which we live and serve.

Will we unite in this intercessory effort or will we allow our diversities to divide us? We choose to unite!

As the Executives began their meetings on Monday, September 12 lasting through Friday morning, September 16, we were prepared to Pray into their submitted agenda, and experienced several significant breakthroughs of affirmation to the decisions being made. As there had been for us, there was a very strong call to unity among the Executives – so necessary, because we are moving toward Jerusalem; "The Cloud is lifting." May we continue to be faithful to see it, to listen, and to follow. (Exodus 40:34-38.)

TJCII

Arlene Stucki is a member of the TJCII North America Committee. A Bible teacher, she has been immersed in the Jewish community for nearly 40 years, and is deeply committed to the vision of TJCII. She and her husband John, live in Estes Park, CO, and lead the TJCII intercessory team there.



Martin Bühlmann, is the planter and leader of the Vineyard in Berne, Switzerland. He and his lovely wife of 37 years, Georgia, together oversee the development of the Vineyard congregation in Berlin, Germany. Martin and Georgia are equally the leaders of the Vineyard movement in Germany, Austria and Switzerland where they are overseeing 75 congregations. They have also been instrumental in developing 12 African migration congregations and another 50 congregations in Europa and Africa. Martin is part of the Vineyard International Executive, an executive team that helps the coordination of the global Vineyard movement which counts over 2,000 congregations worldwide. Martin and Georgia have five children and three grand children.

The Cloud is Moving!

Report from the TJCI Executive Committee—Israel, September 2011

TJCI's journey toward Jerusalem took important steps forward during the Executive Meeting in Kiryat Yearim September 12 through 16, 2011.

- * **First, the proposal for a TJCI Center in Jerusalem is moving forward. We will provide more information as concrete progress is made.**
- * **Second, there is to be a one-day meeting for Messianic leaders in Israel during next year's Executive Meeting in Israel.**
- * **Third, there will be another international TJCI conference in Jerusalem from October 7-10, 2013, seven years after the last international gathering.**
- * **Fourth, there was a strong sense that the season of meetings at Kiryat Yearim was completed and so it was decided that in 2012 the Executive Committee will meet in Jerusalem.**

The committee invited Martin Bühlmann, the European leader of the Vineyard movement, to join the Executive Committee (see item on page 3). Martin Bühlmann has a heart for forming leaders for the future, and he will play a major role in developing our outreach to the younger generation.

During the meeting there were exchanges with Marcelo Miranda Guimarães in Brazil concerning a possible TJCI Conference in Belo Horizonte next year. Please keep this in your prayers.



A short statement on TJCI policy concerning the Jews in the Churches was discussed and approved (see page 2). The need for such a document arose in Europe leading to a longer paper being discussed at the 2010 Executive Meeting, but the committee felt that we needed a shorter statement. The week before the Executive Committee met, the shorter document was prepared in Jerusalem by a group with Messianic and Gentile participants. The Committee is encouraging those working for TJCI in the area of theology to work on potential study documents addressing issues that require deeper study and reflection for the TJCI vision to advance.

TJCI

May we send you the TJCI Communiqué electronically? In this way you could help us at TJCI be even better stewards. As the cost of postage escalates, we feel compelled to use email wherever possible. Please send us your email address at egs@tjci.org and thank you for your generosity.

TOWARD JERUSALEM COUNCIL II



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The Aims of TJCI Include:

- Make known the restoration of the Jewish segments of the Body of Messiah
- Foster repentance for the historic suppression of the corporate Messianic Jewish witness of Yeshua (Jesus), the Messiah
- Further the calling and election of Israel and the Messianic Jewish Community through intercessory prayer, teachings and diplomacy
- Foster reconciliation and unity between Christians and Messianic Jews