

Toward Jerusalem Council II

Vision, Origin and Documents

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Toward Jerusalem Council II

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The Purpose of this Booklet

This booklet, *Toward Jerusalem Council II: Vision, Origin and Documents*, brings together important information for anyone wanting to understand the TJCII vision and how this initiative developed. The question that many who are familiar with the first booklet may ask is, “Does this booklet replace, *Toward Jerusalem Council II: the Vision and the Story?*” The answer to that question is both, “Yes” and “No.”

Toward Jerusalem Council II: Vision, Origin and Documents, takes its place in playing a similar role to the first booklet. Similar, because it also offers an account of our origin and how TJCII developed from the very beginning. However, the difference is that the initial booklet contained the origin and history from 1996 to 2003, whereas this booklet only has the origin (though told differently). This booklet does not repeat that portion of our history nor does it attempt to simply update the information. Instead, it offers a short summary of key events in the history of this initiative. It also provides all the authorized TJCII documents from beginning through 2009. These documents, authorized by the TJCII Executive Board, are the most important aspect of the booklet. They are the documents being used worldwide, by a rapidly growing number of people, in spreading the vision of TJCII.

Toward Jerusalem Council II: the Vision and the Story is not being withdrawn, nor will it be reprinted. The reason it is not being withdrawn is because this booklet is not a revision of the first booklet. Also, the earlier booklet retains value in chronicling TJCII events between 1996 and 2003. But with the addition of all that has happened since 2003 – and the time since 2003 has really been seeing a burgeoning of TJCII in many parts of the world – the first booklet is less useful as an introduction, and now serves simply as a historical record.

This TJCIH booklet is unique in that an author is not noted. The reason is because no attempt was made to produce an overarching narrative. Its historical account of TJCIH's origin is new and not a revision of the first booklet's narrative. This was achieved by gathering memories from key people and then sharing their personal accounts of TJCIH's origin in their own words. These detailed, personal accounts enrich our knowledge of the initial stages of TJCIH's development. They not only document how the Holy Spirit was preparing this vision in the hearts of several leaders but they also tell us how Marty Waldman received the revelation. That divine revelation, of a second Jerusalem Council, was the catalyst for bringing these strands together and launching the initiative known as, **Toward Jerusalem Council II.**

February, 2010

Introduction

In the summer of 1995, Marty Waldman, rabbi of Baruch HaShem Messianic Congregation in Dallas, Texas, was seeking the L-RD in preparation for a sermon he was to deliver at the UMJC (**Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations**) mid-year conference. G-d spoke to Marty, through His Word, with a profound message from Acts 15. In Acts 15, the L-RD revealed his desire for the full coming together of Jewish and Gentile believers in Yeshua (Jesus) through a Council. At this first Council, all the leaders participating were Jewish (the apostles and the elders, verse 6). They decided on the terms of admission of Gentile converts to the Body of Messiah. The leaders gathered in Jerusalem were led by the Holy Spirit to be very generous in imposing the minimum conditions on the Gentiles: “For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things” (Acts 15:28).

In Marty Waldman's vision, the second Council will be a gathering of both Jews and Gentiles, fully accepting one another within the one Body of Jesus the Messiah (Yeshua haMashiach). In such a gathering, the Gentile leaders would recognize the Jewish believers in Jesus, personally and corporately, as an integral part of the church while remaining as contiguous members of the Jewish Community and indeed as those representing the elder brother who had been given the first place (Rom. 1:16). Since at least the fourth century C. E., the Christian Church had not allowed the expression of a Jewish identity within the body, excluding any expression of Jewish identity and prohibiting all forms of Jewish practice by Jewish believers in Jesus, the Son of God.

In this vision, which has become the vision of TJCII, the reconciliation of Jewish and Gentile believers would not be simply an acceptance of one another, but also of the Gentiles rec-

ognizing and honoring the rightful place of the Jews. It would mean honor instead of contempt, humility in place of pride. The younger brother would honor the elder brother, the first-born. The Gentiles would heed the warning of Paul: “Do not boast over the branches. If you do boast, remember it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you” (Rom. 11: 18). Such a restoration of the Jewish believers to their rightful place would enable them to restore the God-given calling of the Jewish people to be a blessing to the nations and would encourage the Messianic Jewish community to preserve the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant and to observe the traditions of their fathers (Acts 21).

Section One

How TJCII Began: Key Memories

The Converging Stories of Some Pioneers in this Vision

John Dawson

Since 1990, I have been organizing a reconciliation network among global Christians. Fourteen basic categories of human conflict were identified and published such as generation, gender, class, ethnicity and nationality; however it was understood that divisions among Christians themselves needed to be addressed as the very foundation for all other initiatives.

In January 1995, the year before the **Toward Jerusalem Council II** initiative was commissioned, Messianic leader, Dan Juster, was attending a large reconciliation event focusing on healing the wounds between black and white believers. This event took place in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, site of the historic American Civil War battlefield. Emboldened by the fact that the conference was taking place on the 50th anniversary of the liberation from Auschwitz concentration camp, Dan approached me with the simple statement, “If you’re ready, we are ready.” He went on to elaborate that after many years of turbulence and division within the embryonic Messianic networks, a historic reconciliation had taken place some months before, involving the UMJC and the MJAA (the **Messianic Jewish Alliance of America**). As a result there was the beginning of a credible leadership that could dialogue with like-minded leaders from the Global Church starting with those leading the prayer movements because they have already exhibited a heart for repentance and reconciliation. Dan challenged me to form a network of Gentile Christian leaders who would respond to the emergence of the Messianic congregations. We agreed that a reconciliation initiative was needed between Jewish and Gentile believers that paralleled the growing number of initiatives addressing historic of grievances, such as the memory of indigenous peoples relating to some of their

experiences with Christian civilization and its institutions. Both of us went to work promoting this idea and were well received by most. We understood that free church movements must work with historic church movements in this initiative and that the healing of the wounds between Jews and Gentiles “in Christ” was foundational for all communities showing allegiance to Jesus. Healing the fracture at the root of Church history could now be possible because a community in some ways equivalent to the Nazarenes of the First Century was now becoming identifiable.

Both of us began to dialogue with other leaders within our respective constituencies. A strategy began to emerge and we sensed that this could become one of the most profound works of a generation, involving a huge diversity of believers. However it was not until Dan tried to enlist Messianic congregation leader, Marty Waldman, that the initiative received its catalyst. Here was a Jewish believer whose personal story and present position brought authenticity to the vision. Not only that, Marty witnessed to an encounter with God that gave a face and a language to our vision for reconciliation.

Dan Juster

At the end of January 1995, I was attending the Mid East Leadership Conference in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. I had been a board member for this conference for many years and the leadership of Beth Messiah (the congregation I pastored), had been attending for many years.

The speakers that year were John Dawson, today’s President of **Youth With A Mission** and Wellington Boone, a noted leader of a network of mostly African American churches. John’s message emphasized mutual repentance and forgiveness between groups that had a significant history of division, caused by the sin of one, of the other or of both. These groups could be nations, ethnic groups, races, or church streams. In

the years leading up to the Gettysburg conference, there were many gatherings in the United States between different ethnic communities to mutually repent, forgive, and be reconciled. This included most especially African American Christians with Anglo or white Christians, and Native American Christians with those of European descent. John had written an important book entitled, *Healing America's Wounds*, as well as important booklets. John shared about such reconciliation meetings in the United States, Africa and East Asia. John's point in this was that when Christian representatives from the divided groups meet to represent their people in representation, in repentance and reconciliation, power is released for the furtherance of the Gospel. He gave many illustrations.

Many of us from our Messianic Jewish congregations were amazed that John did not mention the great wound between the Jewish people and the Church. One of our leaders noted that this was the granddaddy of all wounds. This was all the more pronounced in that this conference was taking place during Jewish commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Eli Weisel even prayed that for all eternity God would not forgive those who perpetuated the Holocaust. I was stirred as I realized that repentance by the Church before the Jewish people, and especially to the Messianic Jewish remnant, was the most foundational of all the forms of repentance and reconciliation.

At the end of the conference, I approached John and noted that he had not mentioned the Jewish people and that it was the 50th anniversary of the liberation from Auschwitz. He himself was stunned because he saw the wound between the Church and the Jewish people as the greatest wound in history. Indeed he had written in his book that the healing of this wound would be the greatest healing in history that would release the greatest power for world harvest. How could he not have mentioned this? I saw it as providential. I told John that the Church rejection of the Jewish people was rooted in their rejection of the Messianic Jewish community. If this living Jew-

ish community had been embraced, it would have been impossible to reject the Jewish people as a whole. John had not seen this before. Furthermore, John's meetings for repentance and reconciliation were through representatives who were followers of Yeshua. Only the Messianic Jews could play this role with the Church. I told John that if he brought together a representation of the streams of the Church, I could gather a representation of the Messianic Jewish community, including leadership. This could help the Church to align itself with the Messianic Jewish and larger Jewish community and would have huge implications. John was convinced and asked me to write this in a letter. I did so, soon upon returning to Maryland.

Within the next month, according to my best memory, two more events took place which amazed me. The first was a visit of Fr. Peter Hocken to my office in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Peter came to give me a book and said I might be interested in what he had to say about Israel. In his book, *The Glory and the Shame*, Peter put forth the view that the Church could not come to unity and heal its divisions unless it dealt with its rejection of the Messianic Jewish communities of the early centuries. He wrote that it was as if the Messianic Jewish community had been raised from the dead. The Church needed to repent and deal with its historic sins and find reconciliation with this community. This would lead to unity, harvest, and the second coming. I was stunned and cried while reading this book. Peter even noted the importance of the Messianic Jewish movement being self governing since its call was both to the Jews and to all the streams of the Church. It could not therefore be under any one stream of the Church. Indeed, the Church could only come to new unity in a re-evaluation of its theology through a return to its Jewish roots. I knew from this that the gathering that John and I had envisioned was very important.

I had intended to tell Marty Waldman of my encounter with John Dawson. But before I had a chance to call him, I believe

in less than two weeks, Marty called the executive of the **Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations** which I was serving as Executive Secretary. Marty shared a vision he was given in his study during a sermon preparation time. He was undone by it. He believed he was called by God to gather the leaders of the Church to have a council to reverse the many decisions of the churches to reject the legitimacy of the Jewish identity and life of Jewish followers of Yeshua. The churches needed to repent and embrace the Messianic Jewish movement. He envisioned a council where this would be done. It would be called, "Jerusalem Council II." The executives of the UMJC were very favorable. I saw this as most amazing in the light of my interaction with John Dawson and Peter Hocken. I said that we would be supportive of this effort. Marty had also sensed he was to travel to Jerusalem to present the vision to the noted Evangelical leader, Dr. Jack Hayford. His confirmation would be a sign to proceed.

Because Marty knew few Church leaders, he asked my help to form a committee to carry the vision forward. I suggested John Dawson, Peter Hocken, Chuck Pierce, Ilan Zamir from Israel, David Rudolph, and Olen Griffing. We sought to draw in the leaders of the **Messianic Jewish Alliance of America** whose leaders had recently had a great reconciliation with the leaders of the **Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations**. We believe that this paved the way for our efforts. David Chernoff and Robert Cohen represented the Alliance. At our first meeting, John Dawson suggested Don Finto, and Ilan suggested Evan Thomas. Eventually, we had seven Jews and seven Gentiles from the Churches of the nations. Our early meetings led to some deep repentance and mutual repentance among ourselves. We envisioned a meeting of many Church leaders who would enter into a process of mutual repentance and reconciliation and would affirm or declare themselves in alignment with the Messianic Jewish community and its calling. Our effort and vision now combined the revelation given to Dan, John, Peter and Marty. This was very coherent.

Early on, Peter Hocken brought up the point that we cannot ourselves convene a Council but we could call for Church governing bodies to do so. It would be easier to affect this if we called our effort **Toward Jerusalem Council II**, envisioning an ultimate ecumenical council of the churches or councils in the various governing bodies of the churches. This made it clear that the ancient historic churches were most important in our effort since they were directly tied to the councils that rejected Jewish identity and life in the New Covenant. Their involvement was crucial.

Brian Cox

In 1994, I was invited by my friend, Christa Behr, to participate in a Service of Repentance at Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp near Berlin. There were approximately 300 Germans present in a service led by Pastor Paul Toasperm, Messianic Rabbi Benjamin Berger and Christa Behr. At one point during the service I was overtaken with deep, gut wrenching, sobbing which I couldn't stop. As a person who does not cry easily, this was a highly unusual experience for me. Yet, I could also feel the palpable presence of the Lord in the midst of it. At one point I turned to my friend, Pastor Peter Dippl from Berlin who was sitting next to me, and said, "Peter, I don't know what is happening to me!" He smiled at me and responded, "Brian, the Lord did the same thing to me when he gave me a supernatural love for the Jewish people." This was the first part of God's call to TJCII; a supernatural love for the Jewish people.

In 1995 the second part of the call was issued by the Holy Spirit. One day I received a note in the mail from a former parishioner, Barbara Bolte Smith, a woman who I had led to faith in Christ in 1979 and who had been involved in ministry to Jewish people. Enclosed with the note was a one page description of the vision the Holy Spirit had given to Rabbi Marty Waldman as the core of the TJCII vision. As I read it

my heart leapt for joy. I felt the Holy Spirit beckoning me to embrace this vision. However, by nature I am not an impulsive person. I set the vision aside and prayed about it for over two weeks. The more I prayed, the stronger the sense of call took root in my heart. Finally, I called Marty Waldman to test my own discernment. Since he wasn't in, I left a message with his secretary. I prayed, "Lord, if you are calling me to this vision, then I believe he will call me back." The next day Marty called me and we talked for over an hour. Within the first ten minutes of the call, both of us sensed the work of the Holy Spirit. A week later Marty asked me to join Dan Juster and him for dinner in Pasadena, as both were involved in meetings at Fuller Seminary. Sometime later Marty invited me to attend the first meeting in Dallas of what would become the TJCII Executive Committee.

Peter Hocken

When I wrote my book, *The Glory and the Shame* (1994), I had never visited a Messianic Jewish congregation nor had I even consciously met a Messianic Jew. This was despite the fact that I had been living in the same city as Dan Juster for several years. But through my long-standing commitment to Christian unity, the Lord had made clear to me that Christian unity was impossible without the Jewish witness to Jesus. I had no idea that what I had written was fully in line with what the Lord was revealing to Messianic Jewish leaders and others like Brian Cox and John Dawson. But as soon as the group met, that was to become the TJCII Executive Committee, I saw that the Lord had been preparing me to enter into this initiative and to make a contribution as a Roman Catholic.

Marty Waldman

After receiving the strong vision of the second council, I understood that TJCII would tear down strongholds that have ex-

isted over the church for the past 17 or 18 centuries - these strongholds are partly represented by Anti-Semitism but more specifically by the suppression of the Messianic Jewish witness in the Church. These strongholds represent the divide between the Church and Jewish Community in general, as well as the Church and the restoration of the Messianic Jews in particular. The divide between Christians and Jews contributed to a skewed theological hermeneutic and perspective of God's scriptural purpose for the Messianic Jewish community. The result of their skewed perspective was replacement theology in the Church and a rejection of Yeshua in the Jewish community.

At the time this vision was being revealed to me, HaShem (the Lord) allowed me to understand the prophetic nature of TJCII. Like Rav. Shaul (Paul), my heart's desire and my prayer is for Israel to be delivered (Rom. 10). The prophetic unfolding of the second Jerusalem Council would include a very similar phenomenon to that which occurred after the first Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15; the flood gates of evangelism were opened to the Gentile world after the declaration of the Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem was written and declared to all who would listen. As a consequence, of the Acts 15 decision and subsequent proclamation of liberty for Gentiles, Paul was able to plant many, many more congregations than he had already planted. In other words, releasing Gentiles from the requirement of circumcision (and conversion to Judaism) in order to obtain membership in the Body of Messiah released the Gospel to reach more Gentiles than otherwise could have been touched by the Good News of Yeshua's redemption.

I believe we are seeing a glimpse of God's intention for Jewish evangelism. Many Jewish people have come to trust in Yeshua and many Messianic Jewish congregations have arisen in our day but this is only a fraction of what we will see once a declaration of liberty (similar to that of Acts 15) to the Messianic Jews is made by church leaders. In this act, may the LORD be pleased to open the floodgates of the Good News

into the Jewish community for Yeshua to be accepted in much greater numbers. Perhaps the number of Jewish people who come to faith in Yeshua would constitute that which Paul stated in Romans 11:26, “and so all Israel will be saved: as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion...” Could it be that when “all Israel” is saved and the Messiah has returned to the Nation that all the nations of the earth will at that time turn toward Yeshua (and Israel), not as individuals within nations, but as entire nations? TJCII may indeed be one of the key elements in human history that triggers the Messiah’s return. This would, of course, lead to the redemption of all the nations of the world as well as the Jewish people and the nation of Israel.

As this prophetic vision began to flood my mind and heart I felt that I was either seeing something of the Lord or I was losing my mind. I needed confirmation for this vision from other Messianic and Christian leaders. Since all of this occurred while I was President of the **Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations**, I first sought the counsel of the UMJC Executive Board. They responded with a unanimous voice: “This vision is from G-D.” Their response led me to share the TJCII vision with Christian leaders outside of my Messianic milieu. One of those leaders was Pastor Jack Hayford.¹ Later that summer, I received a call from a friend and Messianic leader in Israel who invited me to gathering of Israeli Messianic leaders to be held in Hertzlia, Israel. Initially, I said, 'No' because my schedule would simply not afford me the time to make this trip. The next day the urging of the Lord came upon me, “You need to have this vision confirmed by Jack Hayford.” I called my friend in Israel back and I asked, ‘If there was still room for me at the conference. He replied, “I only have one seat left but it is yours if you want it.” “Yes,” I said, “I’ll take it.”

Maoz Israel Ministries sponsored this gathering which was

¹Jack Hayford is the founding pastor of *The Church On The Way* in Van Nuys, California (1969-1999) and is also founder and chancellor of *The King’s College and Seminary* in Los Angeles.

one of the first leadership conferences in Israel for the Messianic community. I believed this meeting to be so important that I was willing to pay for all my expenses out of my own pocket. When I called the UMJC Executive Committee to share the TJCII vision they offered to pay my expenses to Israel so off I went to begin my journey.

When I arrived in Israel, there were about 150 Messianic Jewish leaders who had come to this conference and all of them were seeking time with Jack Hayford. As the only Messianic leader not resident in the Land, I was careful not to displace any of the local leaders; they must have priority access to see Dr. Hayford. On the second day of the conference, I went up to Jack Hayford after one of the sessions and I waited a few minutes while other people got a chance to speak with him but when the opportunity arose I said, "Dr. Hayford, the LORD has given to me, what I believe, could be a very important vision. May I share it with you?" His response was, "Let's have lunch tomorrow." The next day I had lunch with Jack and his wife and presented him with a written copy of the vision. He read it, then turned to me and responded, "Marty, this is from God." We talked about it during lunch and he offered his 100% endorsement. "If it will open any doors for you, please feel free to use my name," He said. Jack made that commitment to TJCII even before we had formed a TJCII Executive Committee! I returned from Israel feeling confident that the vision of TJCII was indeed a vision from the LORD.

In March 1996, we convened the very first meeting of what would later become the TJCII Executive Committee. Ilan Zamir became our first Israeli representative. Fourteen men, in all, attended this first gathering to discuss the vision; seven Messianic Jewish leaders and seven Gentile Christian leaders. After hearing about the condition of the Messianic Jews in Israel from Ilan, those of us Messianic Jews in the room, repented to him for the insensitivities and brash attitude we North American Jews had displayed to our Israeli brothers in Yeshua.

During this solemn moment one of our Gentile brothers declared that the Church world he represented would never forsake the Jews. In response, I turned to this well meaning man and said, “Thank you brother, but that is simply not true. History has taught us that the Church has traditionally forsaken the Jews.” My response was so unexpected that a degree of tension and an awkward silence draped over us like a wet blanket. In his wisdom, John Dawson drew all the Gentiles and Jews together then began to repent, on behalf of the Church, to the Messianic Jews for this terrible history. He declared the Messianic Jews to be their elder brother and implored us to once again take up our G-D given role in the Body of Messiah. There wasn’t a dry eye among us and the presence of Adonai in the room was palpable with repentance and forgiveness declared by all. We (Jews) then declared the Aaronic Benediction over our Christian brothers and the sign of the LORD’s approval seem to come immediately with two loud thunder claps after we completed the blessing. Someone later described this event as the marriage between the Jews and Gentiles of TJCII. In my opinion, that holy moment will ever characterize our first meeting and was an absolute necessity for TJCII to move forward.

While the TJCII initiative was still in its formative stage, I received a call from Richard Wurmbbrand. He had heard about TJCII and asked for a private meeting in order to better understand this vision. After my explanation and his reading of the original Jerusalem Council II vision he responded, “Marty, this is from G-d but you will not accomplish this goal in three years as you have written. Your vision parallels Yeshua’s prayer in John 17 but the LORD has yet to answer. If Yeshua’s prayer remains unanswered after two millennia, your vision will require you to dedicate a lifetime.” Richard Wurmbbrand’s word was difficult for me to hear but none the less was revelatory. When I brought this word back to our newly formed executive committee, all agreed that Wurmbbrand’s exhortation was Godly wisdom. It goes without saying; Wurmbbrand’s words to me that day were prophetic. We

are still on the TJCIH journey.

Don Finto

It is appropriate to close these memories of the inspiration and origin of TJCIH with words from the most senior pastor involved in TJCIH from the beginning. Don Finto's short testimony brings the story up to the early days of the TJCIH Committee in 1996.

I was in Israel in 1967 about two months before the Six Day War and had no idea that I was visiting a land that was a fulfillment of prophecy, nor that another prophecy, the return of Israel to Jerusalem, was about to be fulfilled.

However in the late days of the Jesus Movement, all this changed. I was the pastor of a church on Nashville's "Music Row," and the church began to be populated with hippies-turned-Jesus-freaks. Some of them were Jewish. They challenged me about my supposition that Jewish believers should simply fit into the Christian world like every other believer. Why should they not maintain their biblical heritage from which all of us have descended? Was not the Gentile Church grafted into the Jewish root rather than the opposite? How were we to live together as Jew and Gentile in Messiah? How could the Church regain its relationship to a people whom we have persecuted for centuries?

This opened my heart to accept the invitation extended to me by John Dawson and Dan Juster to come to one of the first TJCIH meetings in September 1996. I knew immediately what a call to a second Jerusalem Council meant. It was time for the Church to welcome back the Jewish believers just as the Jewish apostles had welcomed the Gentiles in the first century.

The three days in Dallas were emotionally wrought. Leaders of the Messianic movement in the US and in Israel gathered with

some of us from the Gentile world. We were at times on our faces together as we felt the weight of the centuries of estrangement and mistreatment from the Church to our family of heritage. We left committed to walk together to see the reunion of the Church of the Gentiles united with the “Church of the circumcision.”

Four months later we met again. At that meeting, David Chernoff gave me a copy of his mother’s book, *Born a Jew, Die a Jew*, the story of the early Messianic movement in which his parents played a dominant role. I was reading the book on my return flight to Nashville, when I had an encounter with the Lord that changed my life. “This is more important to you than you thought,” He said. “I want you involved in this the rest of your life.”

When the biblical Ruth covenanted together with the biblical Boaz, they brought forth the house of David. When today’s Ruth (the church from the nations) makes covenant with today’s Boaz (the resurrected Jewish believing community), we will herald the return of David’s Greater Son – Yeshua/Jesus.

This pilgrimage has left me with an intense desire to see the Church come into the recognition of our resurrected family of Jewish believers, and Jewish believers uniting with those from the Church to form the bride for which the King will return.

Section Two

Significant Events in the Story of TJCII

Significant Events in the Story of TJCII

March 1996	First meeting of the Executive Committee at Baruch HaShem Messianic Synagogue, Dallas, Texas.
September 1996	Second meeting of the Executive Committee at Shady Grove Prayer Center, Grand Prairie, Texas. Basic initial structuring of TJCII completed.
May 1997	Diplomatic journey of five committee members to England, France, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Austria. Key meeting with Archbishop Schönborn of Vienna, Austria.
September 1997	International consultation held at Emmetten, Switzerland.
March 1998	First prayer journey visiting Granada, Cordoba and Toledo in Spain.
September 1998	Second prayer journey visiting Rome (including meeting with Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger) and then Nicaea (today Izmit in Turkey).
April 1999	Third prayer journey takes place in Israel including Yavneh and Jerusalem.
April 2000	Death of founding member, Ilan Zamir of Jerusalem.
October 2000	Re-organization of TJCII initiative at Executive Committee meeting in Dallas. Marty Waldman becomes Executive

	General Secretary. Dave and Raquel Pyles from Dallas are given responsibility to oversee TJCII intercession.
October 2001	Established European office in Vienna, Austria. First European consultation in Vienna.
2002	First edition of booklet: <i>Toward Jerusalem Council II: The Vision and the Story</i> published.
February 2003	Second European consultation in Vienna, Austria. First approach of Jerusalem Olive Tree Fellowship to TJCII.
May 2003	First North American consultation in Dallas.
May 2004	Consultation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Meeting with Patriarch Paulos of the Coptic Orthodox Church.
October 2004	Third European consultation in Vienna. Beginning of formation of TJCII national groups in Europe. Booklet, <i>The Messianic Jewish Movement: An Introduction</i> , published.
February 2005	First issue of TJCII <i>Communiqué</i> .
May 2005	Executive Committee meeting in Dallas. Fr Vasile Mihoc joins the committee as the first member from the Orthodox Church.
September 2005	First Latin American consultation in

Buenos Aires, Argentina.

- May 2006 Executive Committee meeting and prayer journey to Antioch (present day Antakya in Turkey) as the place where the Church of the “one new man” first came into existence and from which the mission to the Gentiles was begun. This meeting was followed by smaller groups going to Nairobi (with an important meeting with Anglican Archbishop, Benjamin Nzimbi) and to Egypt.
- July 2006 First consultation for the Orthodox Church, Brancoveanu, Romania.
- September 2006 International Prayer Gathering in Jerusalem co-sponsored by TJCII and the **Jerusalem Olive Tree Fellowship**. Issue of TJCII, *A Cry to the Church*. Executive Committee decision to set up continental committees for TJCII. Booklet, *The Marranos: A History in Need of Healing*, published.
- October 2007 First European Leadership meeting in Helvoirt, Netherlands.
- Spring 2008 Covenant Bonding of TJCII leaders and the **Jerusalem Olive Tree Fellowship**. Benjamin Berger and Marcel Rebiai become the Olive Tree representatives on the TJCII Executive Committee.
- September 2008 International Gathering in Gnadenthal, Germany with approximately 100 leaders present. Young leaders invited

as a distinct category.

May 2009

Document, *The Theological Task of TJCII*, completed and published.

October 2009

Executive Committee meeting in Israel. Some young leaders are on site and build relationships with executive members.

Section Three
Documents issued by TJCI

I: Toward Jerusalem Council II Original Declaration

This declaration was drawn up during the first two meetings in 1996 of what became the TJCII Executive Committee. It bears traces of the original idea to name the initiative “Jerusalem Council II” before the decision to add the word “Toward.”

Jerusalem Council II is a vision to repair and heal the breach between Jewish and Gentile believers in Yeshua dating from the first centuries of the Church, and to do so (primarily) through humility, prayer and repentance. In order to achieve this reconciliation, a gathering of cross-denominational representatives, both Gentile and Jewish, from around the world will convene in Jerusalem, the city of our King, to pray for and affirm the specific goals put forth in this document. **Toward Jerusalem Council II** is, first of all, a movement of prayer. Before convening in Jerusalem, smaller prayer journeys to prepare the way will have taken place.

WHO: Prayer representatives of the Gentile Christian Community and the Messianic Jewish Community. These representatives should be builder-leaders in various communities who practice a life of prayer.

WHAT: Jerusalem Council II is based on:
Acts 15 — The Council
Acts 21:17-26 — The Messianic Jewish View
Romans 11:29 — The Irrevocable Call To Israel
Romans 11:11-24 — Israel’s Acceptance - Life From the Dead
II Corinthians 5:18-19 — Reconciliation
Ephesians 2:11-16 — One New Man

Toward Jerusalem Council II is a meeting of Gentile Christian and Messianic Jewish leaders to foster these goals to:

1. Recognize the schism between Jewish and Gentile brethren created by the early Church, especially culminating in the decrees of the Nicene Council II. Repair and heal this breach through humility, repentance, prayer and intercessory representation on the part of both Gentile Christians and Messianic Jews, including prayer for the recanting and rescinding of the anti-Messianic Jewish decrees which declared that Messianic Jewish communities had no right to exist. These decrees have hovered over the Body of Messiah for at least sixteen centuries.
2. Pray to be reconciled in heart and to call for all true believers to affirm the reality of our reconciliation as one new man. Recognize that true reconciliation is not the result of diluting one's identity, but is the miracle of breaking down the wall of partition through the Blood of the Messiah so that the two identifiable groups can become one new man (Ephesians 2).
3. Understand the Jewish roots of Christianity. The Bible is essentially a Jewish book written primarily by Jews, and the Jewish people were entrusted with the oracles of God with which the world is to be blessed. Jesus was Jewish, all of His first disciples and apostles were Jews, and the first congregations of believers were all Jewish. Jews and Gentiles alike who turn their hearts toward God are turning toward the LORD God of Israel, "Who was, and Who is, and Who is to come"—"the same yesterday, today, and

forever”. Because our faith has its roots in the Jewish people, anti-Semitism is a most heinous sin to be repudiated by all Christian people.

4. Recognize the sacrificial, loving effort of true believers from among the Gentiles to share the Good News of the Messiah with the Jewish people. We, as Messianic Jews, are called on to repent of sinful attitudes and actions, of pride, arrogance, fear and isolation toward the rest of the Body of the Messiah. We must pray for the integrity, stability, restoration and evangelistic progress of the Church. We also are called to repudiate decisions taken since the days of the Apostles to direct the Jewish community away from faith in the Messiah Yeshua.
5. Encourage Gentile Christians as individual believers and as churches to recognize and to grieve over the Church’s sins against Jewish believers in Jesus: (1) for all forms of “replacement” teaching that treated the first covenant as obsolete and discarded due to Jewish rejection of Jesus as Messiah, and that saw the (Gentile) Church as replacing Israel and inheriting Israel’s promises in her place; thus not taking seriously the scriptural promise of Romans 11:29, that “The gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.” (2) for the rejection and suppression of any Jewish expression of faith in Yeshua, and for all requirements that Jews believing in Yeshua should repudiate their Jewish identity and all their Jewish practices; (3) for the seeds of Church division that were sown by the repudiation of the community of Jewish believers in Yeshua (Jesus) and its denial of the

“one new man” of Ephesians 2.

6. Understand and appreciate the validity of the Messianic Jewish community.
 - A. That God is once again doing a great work among our Jewish brethren for the salvation and redemption of Israel.
 - B. That Jews who turn to the Messiah are free to and encouraged to remain distinctly Jewish in accord with the apostolic Jewish life pattern — including the circumcision of their sons as well as walking according to the pattern of Jewish life as is rightly applicable in the New Covenant.
 - C. Our Gentile brethren are called upon to affirm and pray for the doctrinal and moral integrity, stability and the evangelistic progress of the Messianic Jewish community. Gentile brethren are called to take up the imperative of intercession and support for the salvation of Israel.
7. Pray for and call for the Church to affirm a declaration(s) similar to that of Acts 15 whereby Jews who follow Jesus would be affirmed in their continued Jewish life and calling within the context of Scriptural norms.

WHEN: To Be Announced

WHERE: Jerusalem, Israel

WHY: Because God should be honored in the reconciling work of His Son through the reuniting of Jewish and Gentile followers of Yeshua. This schism between Jew and Gentile was the original split in the Body of Messiah, and became the root for all further divisions in the Church throughout the centuries. The ultimate purpose in unifying the Body is to bring about the fulfillment of the promise of Romans 11:11-15, which speaks of reconciling the world to the glory of God.

HOW: By God's grace, the listed members of our executive and steering committee will coordinate the gathering of the leadership of both communities

PERSPECTIVE

We are encouraged by the efforts resulting from Jewish and Christian dialogue whereby Church leaders have called for Church repentance for all expression of anti-Semitism, for contempt for the Jewish people, for the cultivation of that contempt by preachers and theologians through many centuries, and for the spreading of all calumnious myths about the Jews that provoked persecution, violence, bloodshed and pogroms; which prepared the way for the ultimate horror of the Shoah. We affirm the calls for repentance that have gone forth with regard to the error of distorting the Scripture by not seeking its meaning in its original Hebraic context. **Toward Jerusalem Council II** deals with a different and related issue which is a significant root of these other great concerns. This root is the repudiation of the community of Jewish believers in Yeshua (Jesus).

Toward Jerusalem Council II may be tapping into the mystery of the ages declared by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians chapter 3. Through Yeshua, the Gentiles are fellow heirs (not exclusive heirs) and fellow partakers of the promise in Yeshua with the believing remnant of Israel. This revealed mystery, which is the manifold wisdom of God, is to be made known through the Church to the rulers and authorities in the heav- enlies in accordance with the eternal purpose which God car- ried out in Messiah Yeshua, our Lord.

Toward Jerusalem Council II may result in a major thrust in evangelism. Although the Apostle Paul had planted a number of believing congregations before his visit to Jerusalem in Acts 15, it was after the declaration of the original Jerusalem Coun- cil that God opened wide the floodgates of Gentile evangelism for Paul and his companions. Because of the Jerusalem Coun- cil decision, he was able to preach liberty in the Gospel, put- ting to rest the idea that Gentiles had to become proselytes to Judaism before attaining acceptance in the Body of Messiah. In like manner, God may mirror the first Jerusalem Council and open up the floodgates of evangelism into the Jewish com- munity worldwide and to the nations.

This proposition is so exciting because of what Paul recorded in Romans 11 — what will Israel's acceptance be, "*but life from the dead*" — something far greater than riches for the Gentiles and the reconciliation of the world.

II: Toward Jerusalem Council II The Gentile Response

This statement was drawn up by the Gentile Christian members of the Executive Committee in the year 2000 when the initiative was re-launched after a period of setbacks and inactivity. It was realized that the original declaration was in effect a plea to the Churches from the Messianic believers that called for a Gentile response.

As Gentile Christians, drawn from the Christian Churches and communities of the nations, we hear the heart-cry for recognition and fellowship from our Messianic Jewish brethren, as Jews who have come to faith in Jesus as Lord, Savior and the Messiah of Israel, and who seek to live this faith in communities whose worship, teaching and life-style are distinctively Jewish.

We receive and identify with the vision that one day there will be a Second Council of Jerusalem at which the leadership of the Church of the nations (*Ecclesia ex gentibus*) will recognize and enter into full fellowship with the resurrected Church of the Circumcision (*Ecclesia ex judaeis*), annulling all decrees and legislation against the Jewish expression of the Church.

We affirm afresh the New Testament vision of Ephesians 2, that the Church is formed as one new man by the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in one body through the cross.

We recognize that for such a Council to take place, all the Gentile Churches and traditions must be led by the Holy Spirit into a process of prayer and purification, in which there would be a growing repentance for:

- All preaching and teaching that God has revoked the covenant with Israel thus denying the teaching of Romans 11:29.

- All enforced assimilation of Jewish believers into Gentile communities, culture and ways of thought.
- All forms of anti-Semitism.

We believe that this reconciliation of Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ will be a fulfillment of the prayer of Jesus in John 17:21 and that it will add a new dynamic for unity between the Gentile believers. We confidently hope that this work of reconciliation will unleash a great wave of evangelism and the restoration of justice among the divided peoples of the world.

We accept the invitation of our Jewish brothers to work for the realization of this vision of reconciliation in Christ, and we commit ourselves to spread this vision in all the Christian Churches and communities of the nations.

*October 25, 2000
Dallas, Texas*

III: Vision Statement

This Vision Statement was drawn up in 2002 and approved by the Executive Committee.

“Toward Jerusalem Council II” is an initiative of repentance and reconciliation between the Jewish and Gentile segments of the Church. The vision is that one day there will be a second Council of Jerusalem that will be, in an important respect, the inverse of the first Council described in Acts 15. Whereas the first Council was made up of Jewish believers in Yeshua (Jesus), who decided not to impose on the Gentiles the requirements of the Jewish law, so the second Council would be made up of Gentile church leaders, who would recognize and welcome the Jewish believers in Yeshua without requiring them to abandon their Jewish identity and practice.

The initiative is led by an Executive Committee of fourteen leaders, seven Jewish and seven Gentile, while both, the Jewish and Gentile members being broadly representative of the different international movements and churches, historic and modern that confess Yeshua (Jesus) as Lord and Savior. The committee members offer themselves as servants of this vision:

To make known to church leaders and Christian scholars the restoration of the Jewish segments of the church (the church of the circumcision).

To foster repentance for the sins of Gentile Christians and the Christian Church against the Jewish people, especially for the suppression of the corporate Jewish witness to Yeshua, the Messiah.

To foster intercession for all the churches of the nations to abandon all forms of replacement teaching concerning the calling and election of Israel and to recognize the place of the Jew in the body of Messiah.

To encourage the Messianic Jewish community in and out of Israel to enter into this vision of reconciliation and restoration and thereby fostering unity among the different streams and organizations within the Messianic Jewish Movement.

The Executive Committee will seek to do everything possible to forward a convocation of a second Council of Jerusalem. This can only happen under the special leading of the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit can show us how a Council recognized by all churches, denominations and movements can be possible.

Within this process toward a second Council of Jerusalem there would be a gathering in Jerusalem as representative of churches/ denominations and continents as possible for the purpose of issuing a call to the whole Christian world for the recognition of the church of the circumcision at a second Council of Jerusalem.

We are doing this so that God may be honored in the reconciling work of His Son through the healing of the original schism in the Body of Christ, that between the Jewish and the Gentile components.

The ultimate purpose in unifying the Body and restoring the Jewish believers to their rightful place is the hastening of the coming of the Lord Yeshua in glory and the full accomplishment of His work of redemption in the Kingdom of God.

*If their rejection means the reconciliation of the world,
what will their acceptance mean but
life from the dead? (Rom. 11: 15)*

IV: A Cry to the Church

A Cry to the Church, was drawn up during the TJCII Jerusalem Intercessory Gathering in Jerusalem in September 2006 and approved by the Executive Committee in the name of TJCII

We are a gathering of followers of Jesus. We come from many nations, from many Church traditions and from the Messianic Jewish community, both in Israel and in the Diaspora. We met in Jerusalem, September 12 – 14, 2006 under the auspices of the **Toward Jerusalem Council II Initiative** (TJCII) and the Olive Tree Fellowship of Jerusalem. The purpose of our gathering was to pray together and, through repentance, to seek reconciliation with the Lord and with each other.

From this gathering we issue the following cry to the Church worldwide in the name of TJCII:

1. Please hear our cry for recognition of and fellowship with our Messianic Jewish brethren. As Jews they have come to faith in Jesus as Lord, Savior and the Messiah and seek to live out this faith in communities whose worship, teaching and lifestyle are distinctively Jewish.
2. Please hear our cry that one day there will be a Second Council of Jerusalem at which the leadership of the Church from the Nations (“Ecclesia ex Gentibus”) will recognize and enter into full communion with the resurrected Church from the Circumcision (“Ecclesia ex Judaeis”) annulling all the decrees and legislation against the Jewish expression of the Church.
3. Please hear our cry that for such a Council to take place, all the Churches from the nations must be led by the Holy Spirit into a process of corporate repentance for:

- i. all forms of anti-Semitism;
- ii. all enforced assimilation of Jewish believers into the church communities of the nations, into their cultures and into their ways of thought;
- iii. all forms of replacement teaching that God has rejected the Jewish people and that the Church has taken the place of Israel;
- iv. all deeds that contributed to the near extinction of Jewish belief in Jesus.

4. Please hear our cry for the restoration of Jerusalem to the fullness of its divine purpose and potential:

- i. as a prophetic city central to God's redemptive purpose;
- ii. as a city of authority in the worldwide Body of Christ;
- iii. as a city of reconciliation that will be a blessing to all the nations.

5. Please hear our cry to all the Churches to rediscover their Jewish roots.

6. Please hear our cry for this reconciliation in Christ between Jewish believers and believers from other ethnic backgrounds and church traditions. (see Eph. 2:14, 15). This will be a fulfillment of the prayer of Jesus in John 17:21 and will lead to a new dynamic for unity among the Churches and believers from the nations.

7. Please hear our cry that this work of reconciliation will usher in great progress in spreading the Gospel and in the restoration of justice among the divided peoples of the world (see Romans 11:11-15).

We pray that the response to our cry may contribute significantly to this already growing movement of reconciliation, both corporately and personally, between the disciples of Je-

sus, the Jewish disciples and the Christian disciples from the nations.

Addendum:

In response to a question as to why *A Cry to the Church* does not mention the land of Israel, we would like to point out that the booklet, *Toward Jerusalem Council II: the Vision and the Story*, (2nd Edition, 2004) already contains the following statement:

“It has become clear to us, especially through our discussions with Messianic Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, that a truly biblical understanding of the election of Israel and of God’s “irrevocable” covenant with the chosen people involves an essential connection between the gift of the land of Israel and the calling of the people. Support for TJCH does not involve taking any particular political or theological position concerning the boundaries of the land or the policies of any Israeli government. A proper Gentile acceptance of the Jewish believers does require a recognition that the promise of the land is an intrinsic part of the covenant that has not been revoked. As part of Israel’s call to be a blessing to the nations, the gift of the land is to bring blessing to the neighboring peoples who also share in an Abrahamic inheritance” (p. 29).

V: Proposed Statement for Church Bodies to Affirm the Messianic Jewish Movement

This statement was drawn up by members of the executive members and approved by the whole committee in 2007 so as to provide church bodies with ideas for how they might respond to the TJCII, A Cry to the Church, and to the question “What response is TJCII looking for from the Christian Churches?”

Consistent with the principle established in the original Jerusalem Council of Acts Chapter 15 regarding respect for diversity in the Body of Christ concerning Jewish and Gentile identity, we _____ do make the following affirmations:

1. We affirm the election of Israel, its irrevocable nature and God’s unfinished work with the Jewish people regarding salvation and the role of Israel as a blessing to the nations.
2. We affirm that Jews who come to faith in the Messiah, Jesus, are called to retain their Jewish identity and live as part of their people in ways consistent with the New Covenant.
3. We affirm the formation of Messianic Jewish congregations as a significant and effective way to express Jewish collective identity (in Jesus) and as a means of witnessing to Jesus before the Jewish community. We also affirm Jewish groupings which are part of churches when they are committed to Jewish life and identity.

4. We affirm our willingness as an ecclesiastical body to build bridges to the Messianic Jewish community; to extend the hand of friendship and to pray for their growth and vitality. We will do so even in the midst of pressure from the local or national Jewish community.

5. We affirm our willingness to share our resources with Messianic Jewish congregations, mission organizations and theological training institutes so as to empower them to fulfill their God-given purpose.

6. We affirm our willingness to be a voice within our own ecclesiastical structures and spheres of influence against all forms of anti-Semitism, replacement theology (supercessionism) and teaching that precludes the expression of Jewish identity in Jesus.

7. Finally, we affirm that as Jewish and Gentile expressions of life in Jesus grow organically side by side with distinct identities that God will be glorified; that the Kingdom of Heaven will be advanced and that the vision of “the one new man” in Ephesians 2 will unfold as part of the original Abrahamic blessing to the nations.

VI: The Joint Declaration of the JOTF and TJCI Leadership

The leadership of both the *Jerusalem Olive Tree Fellowship* (JOTF) and the Toward Jerusalem Council II initiative (TJCI) met together at Kyriat Yearim, Israel, on April 29th and 30th, 2008.

We reaffirm our deep respect and love for each other.

We embrace each other in the unity of the JOTF and TJCI visions for the full reconciliation of the Jewish and the Gentile expressions of the Body of Messiah.

We commit ourselves to walk together in unity and trust, with full respect and honor for the complementary character of our respective gifts and callings.



Handwritten signatures of JOTF and TJCI leadership members. The signatures are arranged in two columns. The left column contains: Ravi Shulman, Benjamin Shulman, Mark Galadima, Isaac K... (unclear), John R... (unclear), David... (unclear), and Jon Guite. The right column contains: E. R... (unclear), Peter Hockan, Johannes... (unclear), and W... (unclear).

Unable to Attend:
Jonathan Bernis, John Dawson and Vasile Mihoc.
Each later signified their agreement.

VII: The TJCII Vision

This statement of the TJCII Vision was originally prepared for the International Consultation held in Gnadenthal, Germany in September, 2008. It was not intended to replace the Toward Jerusalem Council II Vision Statement and the two statements should be taken together as expressing the TJCII Vision.

In the vision of TJCII, the word “Council” serves not only as a projected future event but also as a symbol for the coming together of leaders from both sides to bring to completion this process of Jewish – Gentile reconciliation in the one body.

Key Elements of the Vision

- the acknowledgement by the Christian churches of the legitimacy and necessity of Jewish expressions of faith in Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel and Savior of the world;
- the full reconciliation of Jewish and Gentile expressions of the Body of Messiah;
- the honoring by Gentile believers, personally and corporately, of the Jewish believers as their “elder brother”;
- the restoration of the biblical pattern of relationship between the Jewish and the Gentile expressions;
- the repudiation by the Churches concerned of all decrees and judgments enacted against Jewish identity and Jewish life in Yeshua;

- the movement back toward Jerusalem as origin, center and goal, now symbolized in the relationship with the **Jerusalem Olive Tree Fellowship** as full participants in the vision.

The Necessary Means to Realize the Vision

- repentance for all the aspects and consequences of replacement theology, especially for the suppression of a distinctively Jewish witness to Yeshua, and the asking of forgiveness from the Lord and from the Jewish believers;
- affirmation of the ongoing validity of the biblical promises to Israel, including the return of the Jewish people to the land;
- rediscovery of the Jewishness of Yeshua, “son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matt. 1: 1), the “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” (Rev. 5: 5) and the outworking of this understanding in the life of the Churches.

The Promised Fruits of this Reconciliation

- immense mutual blessing: “riches for the world” (Rom. 11: 12) and for the Jewish people, “life from the dead” (Rom. 11: 15);
- the lifting of ancient curses and the removal of all the evils flowing from replacement theology;
- the opening of doors so that the Jewish people can receive their Messiah;
- a new dynamism for evangelism of the nations;

- a new dynamism for unity within the Body of Messiah;
- opening the Christian Churches to receive the full riches of the new covenant in Yeshua made “with the house of Israel and the house of Judah” and opening them to receive a thorough purification of all the treasures they have carried through the centuries;
- opening the Messianic Jewish movement to receive these purified treasures from the churches of the nations;
- hastening the coming of Our Lord Yeshua in glory.

VIII: TJCII and the Unity of the Church

This document was drawn up in preparation for the International Gathering at Gnadenthal, Germany, in September 2008, was amended in the light of discussions at Gnadenthal and then approved by the TJCII Executive Committee

The Jewish Believers and the Unity of the Church

The focus of TJCII is for the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in the One Body of the Messiah (the universal ekklesia out of Jew and Gentile). This vision began from an understanding of the first Council in Jerusalem, described in Acts 15. At the first “Council” the Jewish apostles and elders heard how the Gentiles had begun to believe “the word of the gospel” (Acts 15:7) and to receive the Holy Spirit as had the Jewish believers in Yeshua (Jesus) before them (see Acts 15:8). The hearts of all were purified by faith (see Acts 15: 9), so that all, both Jew and Gentile, are saved “through the grace of our Lord Jesus” (Acts 15:11) and form one holy people unto the Lord. The TJCII vision is for the recovery of this unity of “the one cultivated olive tree”, into which the Gentile believers are grafted (see Rom. 11) and of “the one new man in place of the two” (Eph. 2:15), described as “the mystery of Christ [Messiah]” in Eph. 3:4. TJCII is based on the conviction that the Jewish believers hold the key to the restoration of the unity of Messiah’s divided body.

The community of believers of the first generation was totally Jewish, existing as an increasingly identifiable grouping within Israel. The decision of the first Council of Jerusalem to admit Gentiles to the body of believers without requiring conversion to Judaism caused new tensions within Israel. There were two stages in the original division. The first stage was when the

synagogue excluded the Jewish believers in Yeshua. This began to happen toward the end of the first century, CE.¹ This was the separation between Israel and the Messianic Jewish community. The Jewish believers came to be excluded from the synagogue, but they remained full members of the larger community of believers in Yeshua (Church). The second stage was when the Church, between the second and fourth centuries, now a Church overwhelmingly made up of Gentile members, first marginalized and then excluded Jewish believers in Yeshua. This was fully accomplished (outwardly) in the fourth century by legislation requiring new Jewish believers in Yeshua and other believers of Jewish origin to cease all Jewish practice and to renounce any Jewish identity. In this way, the “one new man” model of unity in Ephesians was replaced by the “universal” model of a conciliar Church of the nations. From this angle, TJCII is an initiative for restoring the original model for the unity of the body of Messiah.

The One New Man Model for the Unity of the Body of Messiah

The TJCII vision presents a different model for the reconciliation of divided Christians from those that have been advocated over the past century, whether Ecumenical or Evangelical. It is a model that is rooted in the Messianic faith of the New Testament. It is directly rooted in the death and resurrection of Yeshua, for the reconciliation is effected in the flesh of Jesus; it is “in this one body to reconcile both of them [Jew and Gentile] through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.” (Eph. 2:16).

¹The statements often made that the “synod” of rabbis at Yavneh decreed the expulsion of Jewish believers in Yeshua from the synagogue often ignore the facts that the rabbis at Yavneh had no direct authority over the Jewish communities of the diaspora. For this reason, it is better to say that this decision began the process of expulsion of Yeshua-believers from the synagogue.

As a vision for the union of Jew and Gentile in the one body of Messiah, the TJCII vision for unity cannot be merely spiritual. Just as Israel is an historic people in the world, so the Church is an historic reality of the nations grafted into the reality of Israel that is at once spiritual and embodied. Because Israel is a historic visible people, so the Church is a visible historic people. The unity of the “one new man” will be a unity of all believers and of all communities bearing witness to the historic faith “that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3).

The one new man model is truly Jewish in its realistic understanding of “the flesh of Yeshua” that is the body of Messiah. It reflects the realism of the Jewish understanding of Spirit and flesh, as appears in the teaching in Eph. 5, where Paul applies “the two will become one flesh” of marriage to the mystery of Messiah and the ecclesia (qahilah). The “one new man” model for the unity of the Church is then both personal and corporate. It does not allow for a primarily institutional model for unity, though it cannot exclude institutional elements, and it does not permit a merely spiritual vision for unity, as though outward public and corporate expression is secondary or unimportant.

Because a Jewish expression of faith in Yeshua is necessarily messianic, and because the restoration of the Jewish expression of the Body of Messiah is a sign of the “end-times”, eschatology is central to this model of unity being presented in TJCII, which is recalling to the churches that we are all called to the “eternal purpose” (Eph. 3:4), which the apostle Paul still describes as “the hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20).

The Unity of the New Covenant in the Blood of Yeshua Rooted in the Covenants with Israel

The unity of the Church flows from the unity in Jesus the Messiah himself and from this sacrificial love for all consummated on the cross of Golgotha. In the person of Jesus, the new Adam, God and man are perfectly united. This unity in Yeshua becomes the unity of the Church, his Body, through the

offering of his life on the cross and through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The witness of TJCII is that the new covenant cannot be understood or lived correctly apart from the covenants with Israel described in the First Testament. The new covenant is built on the covenants with Israel. It is grounded in the covenant promises made to Abraham and his descendants, in the covenant of Sinai with the twelve tribes led by Moses and in the kingdom promises given to David. The new covenant in the blood of Yeshua does not abrogate the past covenants, but it is a renewal and transformation of the relationship established by all the past covenants between the Lord and the houses of Israel and of Judah (see Jer. 31:31, 33). In the New Covenant there is both continuity and discontinuity with the Mosaic order. The language of the New Covenant incorporates everything in the Mosaic Covenant that is applicable in the New Covenant order, and endorses and brings the fullness of all the earlier covenants.

The key to understanding that the unity of the Church is totally in and through Yeshua and that the new covenant is a renewal of the covenants with Israel is to understand the Jewishness of Yeshua, his distinctive mission to Israel and his total identification with his own people. Yeshua is the servant of the Lord, who receives a baptism of repentance at the hands of John and so totally identifies himself with his own people, even in their sins. In identifying himself with his own people, Yeshua identified himself with the calling of Israel to be a priestly people and to be a light to the nations. In this way, Yeshua, “the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1), is revealed to Israel as Messiah and as the Son of the living G-d (see Matt. 16:16), and so becomes the Savior of the world, who dies for our sins and is raised to life for our justification (see Rom. 4:25). Yeshua is the only means to salvation, and as the head of the body he is also the goal. The apostle John sums up this all-embracing character of the role of Yeshua by saying “I am the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6).

Every teaching that asserts the end of God's covenant with Israel and every teaching that separates Jesus from his own people is inherently divisive. It makes the new order dependent on God breaking his covenant commitment to Israel. Such a position undermines the stability of the new covenant order, and makes it subject to a spirit of judgmentalism, as new claimants to be the "authentic church" replace those judged to have been rebellious and apostate.

While the covenant promises find their fulfillment in Yeshua, not all the promises have yet reached their fulfillment through the first coming of Messiah. The one faith in the Messiah who has come gives rise to the one hope of the Messiah who is to come. The message of the apostle Peter to the men of Israel in Acts 3 makes plain that the fulfillment of all the promises will take place when "the time for establishing all that God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from old" (Acts 3:21) and God sends "the Christ appointed for you, Jesus" (Acts 3:20). TJCII is thus a vision for the ingathering of both Israel and the Church in preparation for the coming of the Lord Yeshua in glory.

The Servant Role of TJCII

TJCII is not Church. TJCII has no membership. For these reasons, TJCII cannot have a Creed or a Declaration of Faith. As a vision for the whole Church, the Body of Messiah, the role of TJCII is to be a servant and facilitator of the unity willed by G-d for the body of his Son. TJCII brings together Jewish communities of faith that confess Yeshua to be the Mashiach and Son of the living G-d, together with historic Christian Churches that confess the divinity and humanity of Jesus in the Nicene Creed and other Christian bodies that affirm the uniqueness of Jesus in more recent statements such as the Declaration of Faith of the International Association of Evangelicals. No religious body can have a place in TJCII that treats the biblical revelation as incomplete and that does not

confess Jesus Christ as the fullness of divine revelation.

The TJCII Strategy toward Unity

The TJCII strategy for unity is grounded in the conviction that the fundamental unity of the Church is affected through the union of Jew and Gentile in the body of the Jewish Messiah. This means that the restoration of visible unity can only take place as the Lord restores an authentic Jewish expression of the Church and as all the Christian Churches and confessions purify their faith and life through a thorough return to the Jewish roots.

The one new man model respects the distinctive identity of both Jew and Gentile. Thus the acknowledgment of the Jewish root does not mean that the Gentiles have to become Jewish or to follow Jewish customs, as the first Jerusalem Council made clear. The image of engrafting means that the Gentile branches receive nourishment from the natural olive tree of Israel, fully embodied in Yeshua, but they do not lose their identity as *ethnoi*, who are to bring the riches of the nations into the holy city (see Rev. 21:26).

The TJCII strategy does not separate love and truth. This means that in TJCII we seek to love, respect and honor everything that is the work of the Holy Spirit of God in each Church and confession that confesses Jesus as the only Son of God, the only Savior of the world and the one mediator between God and man. But it also means that we grieve over and confess the sins that over the course of Christian history have defiled the name of Christ, particularly those sins of contempt and hatred for the Jewish people and for the Jewish disciples of Yeshua. Unity in love and truth requires that these movements of honoring and thanking, and of repentant sorrow, are always held together. The honoring and the grieving are not one-time tactics, but will continually deepen as all move forward together in love and truth.

The fulfillment of the TJCII vision requires willingness on all sides to confess the sins of the past and to face the serious consequences that resulted from the loss and suppression of the Jewish witness to Yeshua. The distancing from the Jewish root has affected different Christian traditions in a variety of ways. We have to allow the Holy Spirit to lead each Church and confession in this process of purification and reconnection with the Jewish root.

To begin on the path of reconciliation that is TJCII does not require the same level of unity in faith, love and hope as will be produced by the full reconciliation for which we aim and pray. Because TJCII brings together the widest possible range of Christian traditions, it brings both an enormous hope and a huge challenge, along with not a little discomfort – and not only on one side! Just as it requires an act of faith in the Holy Spirit to enter into this vision, so it requires constant faith and trust in the Holy Spirit to advance deeper on this unique road of reconciliation.

TJCII and the Reconciliation of Christians

It is the experience in TJCII that the presence of the Messianic Jewish partner radically changes the interaction between separated Christian churches and believers. In the presence of the Jewish witness to Yeshua, both the historic Christian churches and the newer Evangelical revival currents can recognize the “elder brother” who precedes us all and who all should honor. This new situation humbles the Gentile believers, and facilitates a common confession of sin in relation to the Jewish believers in Yeshua.

Often the strongest supporters of TJCII are found among those historic church and Evangelical Christians, who have already been brought into fruitful relationship through unity and reconciliation initiatives, often made possible through the charismatic movement. Although these initiatives did not arise from

any direct connection with the Jewish people, they were made possible by a common experience of the Lord in the Spirit and a common love for the Scriptures of both Testaments. When they encounter TJCII, the Messianic Jewish connection and root provide a deeper theological rationale for the fellowship and collaboration among Christians. As the divided Gentile believers discover and acknowledge their common engrafting into the Messiah, who is totally identified with his people Israel, they discover the real ground for the unity of the Church, as expressed in Eph. 2:12 - 3:6.

The “Council” as the Ultimate Goal of TJCII

The TJCII vision has been formulated in terms of a future second Council of Jerusalem. This faithfully reflects the vision that Marty Waldman received. However, TJCII remains a vision that we receive as coming from the Lord. It is not a project that the Executive Committee is organizing.

We are aware that the word “Council” has many different meanings among the various Christian traditions. It is a word that is not always easy to translate in some languages. In the TJCII vision, “Council” should first be understood in relation to the gathering of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, described in Acts 15.

This vision of a Council serves to point to a projected future event and as a symbol for the complete healing of the Jewish – Gentile division in the Church. In this latter sense, it can represent the governmental authorities of many church bodies officially embracing the essence of the Affirmations of TJCII. It is also a symbol for a united and reconciled leadership from the Jewish and Gentile segments of the Church. As a symbol of a reconciled leadership, the term “Council” also reminds us of the necessity for a genuine reconciliation that all anti-Messianic Jewish declarations of church authority over the centuries should be officially repudiated. Clearly any such

culminating gathering as the climax of the process of reconciliation would need to exhibit the right pattern of relationship between the Jewish believers as the “elder brother” and the Gentiles as the “younger brother”. This full reconciliation expressed in a second Council of Jerusalem has to include full “table fellowship”, which is foundational to all Jewish concepts of authentic human relationships before the Lord. This essential dimension gives an added priority to the need for all Christian churches and for the Messianic body itself to confess the deep sins that have produced the present chaos and impasse in our divisions at the Lord’s table, which was given as the great sign of unity (see John 13:34 and 1 Cor. 10:17).

In such a gathering in Jerusalem, the Messianic Jewish eldership from the land and city will receive their proper place of honor and will play a foundational role.

IX: The Theological Task of Toward Jerusalem Council II (TJCII)

This statement was drawn up in preparation for the International Consultation at Gnadenthal, Germany, in September 2008, was subsequently revised by members of the TJCII Theology Group and then approved by the Executive Committee in May 2009

As the Holy Spirit leads us into a deeper understanding of the TJCII vision concerning Israel and the nations, and the uniting of Jew and Gentile in the one body, there is necessarily a theological task. The task of all “new covenant” theology is TO KNOW GOD AS REVEALED IN MESSIAH YESHUA, that is to say, to understand the mystery of Yeshua in the light of the Holy Spirit. The specific task of TJCII is to serve the goal of bringing together the two constituent elements of the one body of Messiah, the Jewish and the Gentile.¹ TJCII is a “single focus” initiative: the theological task controlled by this single focus is to reflect theologically on all aspects of this initiative and to serve it with minds sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

The source of all our theology in TJCII has to be the revelation of God in the Scriptures that are the unique and authoritative Spirit-inspired witness to the irrevocable call of Israel and the promises given to Israel concerning the Messiah and his king-

¹ In this statement we use the term “Body of Messiah” to describe the vision of TJCII for a renewed and reconciled church of Jesus Christ uniting Jew and Gentile in the one body. We use the term “churches” to describe all the existing churches, communions and/or denominations throughout the world. In these terms, the Messianic Jewish communities belong as an intrinsic element in the Body of Messiah, but do not form part of “the churches”.

The term ‘church’ as such, is the equivalent of *ekklesia* (greek; used both in the New Testament and in the Greek translation of Tanakh/OT), is originally a translation of the Hebrew *kahal/kehilah*. The *ekklesia*, the Body of Messiah, is the gathering of the people of God – both from Israel and the nations - ‘in the Messiah of Israel’.

dom. They bear witness to a first and definitive fulfillment of these promises in and through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Yeshua, the king of Israel and Saviour of the world. This fulfillment is communicated and transmitted through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, beginning on the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot) known to Gentiles as Pentecost, so as to form the body of the Messiah, made up of Jew and Gentile reconciled through the atoning death of Messiah. The promises in both Testaments to Israel and through Israel to the nations will be brought to their fullness through the visible coming of Yeshua in glory. Since it is only through the Holy Spirit that we can receive this revelation and begin to understand it, our theology has to be a “theology on our knees”, grounded in humble and repentant prayer.

We need to distinguish between the theological task within TJCII which directly serves the TJCII vision, and the theological work being done and needing to be done in the wider body of Messiah that can be a real help to the task of TJCII. We need to bear three major distinctions in mind:

the distinction between the work that is necessary for the TJCII vision to move forward and the work that can be helpful to us (maybe this is a spectrum and not a clear disjunction); and

the distinction between the work that is commissioned by TJCII to be published under the auspices of TJCII and the work that is undertaken by people involved in TJCII and with the desire to benefit TJCII, but which is not for publication as a product of TJCII.

The distinction between the work that needs to be done by Jewish scholars, particularly by Messianic Jews, and the work that needs to be done by Christian scholars. The task for the Jewish scholars is to develop

an authentically Jewish understanding of the New Testament revelation concerning Yeshua and the kingdom. The task of the Christian scholars, in association with Jewish scholars, is to correct the imbalances and distortions brought about by a theology shaped by the exclusion of a Jewish understanding of Yeshua and of the gospel of the kingdom (see agenda point 3 below).

Those responsible for the theological work of TJCII are seeking to identify those topics on which work is necessary for the whole initiative to proceed on a sound foundation. However, there is also a need to discover and make known the significant scholarly work that is already available on topics relevant to TJCII. We hope that the TJCII witness to the restoration of a Jewish expression of the church will further promote and encourage the scholarly work that still needs to be done in these relevant areas.

The theological agenda of TJCII is controlled by the foundational biblical distinction found in both Testaments between the chosen people of Israel and the nations (the Gentiles). This distinction grounds the twofold character of the church of Jesus Christ, expressed in the image of the “one new man” (Eph. 2:15), and forms the basis of the TJCII vision for the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in the one body of Messiah.

The theological agenda needs to include study and reflection on the following topics that are all in their different ways related to the distinction between Israel and the nations:

- to study and reflect upon the elements of covenantal continuity and the elements of radical newness and discontinuity between the covenants given to Israel before the coming of Messiah and the new covenant in the blood of Messiah;

- to reclaim for the whole body of Messiah a proper biblical understanding of the relationship between Israel and the nations, and all its implications for the unity of the one body;
- to uncover and undo the confusion introduced by replacement thinking, to examine how traditional Christian theological language has been shaped by the rejection of Israel and to expose and correct one-sided and partial teaching relating to the church and Israel – in particular the aberrations involved in Dual Covenant Theology,² One Law Theology, and the Ephraimite movement; all of these aberrations are in different ways incompatible with the TJCII vision of the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in one body;
- to deepen theological thinking on the land of Israel and the role of Jerusalem in relation to the restoration of the “one new man” model of the church as well as their roles in the preparation for the coming of the Lord in glory and the fullness of his kingdom;
- to reflect theologically on repentance for the sins of the past, on “identificational repentance” and/or “representative confession”;
- to reflect theologically upon the relationship between the spread and consolidation of the Messianic Jewish

²“Dual Covenant Theology” refers to the widespread view among many involved in the Jewish – Christian dialogue that the first covenant was for the people of Israel and the new covenant is for the Gentiles, with the two covenants being presented as alternative ways to salvation for the two groups. “One Law Theology” teaches that Gentiles have the same relationship as the Jews to the Mosaic Law and are to apply it the same way.

The “Ephraimite movement” has its largest following in the United States, though it is also found in Europe and Israel. In its most problematic form, people become true Christians because they are descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. In a milder form, large contingents of true Christians are from the lost tribes. For them, Ephraim in prophecy is the body of true Christians

congregational movement and the rise of Jewish expressions of faith in Yeshua within the churches of the nations;

- to eliminate misunderstandings that would impede the progress of the TJCII initiative and to contribute to a reduction in the tensions inherent in the TJCII call to all expressions within the body of Messiah.

As we believe that in TJCII the Holy Spirit has lifted up in a particular way the model of the Council of “the apostles and elders” in Jerusalem, described in Acts chapter 15, it is appropriate that in the theological work of TJCII this Jerusalem Council serves as a model and guide for our reflection. In accordance with the principles formulated by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, it is important to encourage the respective contributions of Jewish and Gentile scholars without impairment of the freedom required for all genuine scholarship.

While it is not the call of TJCII to resolve all the theological difficulties arising from many centuries of division and conflict, it is our expectation and our experience that as all return to the Jewish roots of our faith, the Lord will give us light that will lead us beyond our current impasses and oppositions and deeper into the “...all the riches of assured understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:2 – 3).

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