ARLENE STUCKI
Biography

John and Arlene Stucki are the parents of four children and three grandchildren. Arlene is a retired R.N., having received her nursing education at the University of Colorado. She worked in the hospital setting most of her career, and taught for several years as a Nursing Instructor at North Park College in Chicago.

In 1973, the Lord called Arlene to Jewish ministry. The LORD entrusted to her a passion for the Jewish people that has not abated to this day. For three years she served with American Board of Missions to the Jews (now Chosen People Ministries). Arlene studied with Louis Goldberg, at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago for four years, following which she went on to earn her Master's degree in Jewish Studies at Spertus College of Judaica in Chicago. She and John received a certificate of completion of a three year course in adult Jewish education from the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning, sponsored by Hebrew University in Jerusalem. But by far, the Stucki's deepest and richest learning has come through many trusted relationships with both Messianic Jews and not yet Jewish believers, both in the Land of Israel, and in these United States.

The Stucki's were instrumental in the planting of a Messianic Congregation in Buffalo Grove, Il., which grew out of the many years of Bible Studies for Jewish seekers meeting in their home. Following this, the Stucki's planted the first Messianic Jewish Chavurah in Estes Park, CO.

Arlene has written many courses of instruction and taught Jewish Roots in several Evangelical churches in northwest Chicago suburbs, in Estes Park, CO, and in Williams Bay, WI where they currently live. The Stucki's have also taken many groups to Israel in an effort to educate Christians in the miracle of the return of the Jewish people to the land, to raise awareness of the Messianic Jewish community there, and to teach Christians to turn and bless Israel. They continue to do so.

Arlene and John have been engaged with Toward Jerusalem Council II since 2003, and have planted four of the current TJCII Intercessory teams in North America. In 2006 Arlene was commissioned by the TJCII North American Committee to write an education curriculum that can be of benefit to all those engaged with this vision---especially those who are new to the history between the Messianic Jewish Community and the Church. She is committed to this vision, given from the heart of the LORD to Rabbi Marty Waldman in 1985.

While Arlene writes and teaches curriculum in Jewish Studies, her husband John has been her most valuable support, encourager and prayer warrior. Together, they are working toward the promotion of the vision of "Toward Jerusalem Council II". Arlene has served on the North American Committee, and John serves as an intercessor. May the name of the LORD be sanctified through this vision entrusted now to many.

TOWARD JERUSALEM COUNCIL II
Education Curriculum

Session One – The Covenant Relationship between ADONAI and Israel.

"K'DUSHAT HASHEM" "HALLOWED BE THY NAME"

"I am telling the truth in Messiah, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Messiah for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Messiah according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen" **Romans 9:1-5 (NASB)**

"You are My witnesses", declares the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no G-d formed, and there will be none after Me. I, even I, am the LORD: and there is no savior besides Me." **Isaiah 43:10, 11 (NASB)**

"And in Israel He shows forth His glory"
Isaiah 44:23b

The first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis demonstrate that apart from the direct intervention of G-d into the history of the world that He created, mankind is hopelessly lost in the abyss of its own imaginations of the meaning of good and evil. Beginning with Genesis chapter 12 we see the LORD break into this cycle and begin the process of world redemption through a faith based, irrevocable covenant. He took one man, Abram, born into an idolatrous society (Joshua 24:2), drew him to Himself, and began to form a new nation from his seed, through which He would reveal Himself to all people. He saw in this man a characteristic that the great accuser could not touch: faith. And He counted Abram's faith as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6) The entire Bible, from this point on, documents the history of the intimate relationship between the Master of the Universe, and the specifically designated and blessed seed of Abram/Abraham, in order that the love of G-d for the world He created might be made manifest, and that the Name of G-d be sanctified.

I. The unconditional (oath) Covenants **("By Myself I have sworn")**

A. Identifying "**The Root" of Romans 11:18**: the Abrahamic Covenant. (Genesis 12:1-3, chapter 15, chap. 17, 22:16-18; Psalm 105; Isaiah 43:10, 21)

1. Israel is the only historical flesh and blood eye-witness to the truth of the Covenants, the Scriptures, and the existence of G-d! (Exodus 20:18-22)

2. G-d clearly defined the line of promise through Abraham's seed through Isaac and Jacob/Israel through visible and/or audible manifestations of Himself:

a. The Covenant, cut with Abram (Genesis 15:9-21; Jer.34:18, 19), rested upon the integrity of G-d alone, and is sealed with an oath: (Genesis 22:16-18)

". . .because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son. . .", this foreshadows Rav Shaul's words in Romans 8:32.

b. The Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed to Isaac: Genesis 26:23-25. To this day, a spirit of jealousy from the sons of Ishmael resists submission to this covenant. (Genesis, chap. 16) That spirit of jealousy has become absorbed into the history of the Church. The spirit of Korach has entered deceitfully into our midst. (Genesis 17:18-21and 21:1-12; Numbers chap 16). Yet, there are wonderful promises of G-d directed to the sons of Ishmael as well as to the Church. (Genesis 16:8-16, 21:13; Ephesians 3:1-6; Isaiah 19:19-25; Matthew 16:13-19)

c. The Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed to Jacob <u>before</u> he came to Paddan-Aram at Beth-El. (Genesis 28:10-15)

d. It was re-confirmed to Jacob, commanding him to leave Paddan-Aram, and return to the Land of his birth. (Genesis 31:3-13)

e. The Covenant was again re-confirmed to Jacob <u>after</u> he re-entered the Land of promise, <u>now as Israel</u>, again at Beth-El. (Genesis 32:24-32; 35:6-15).

3. Why then, have we not been afraid to disregard the Abrahamic Covenant as extended through Isaac and Jacob/Israel? (Numbers 12:6-8; Romans 11:18; Hebrews 11:8-21)

B. The Mosaic Covenant establishes the unconditional and perpetual calling of Israel in terms that reflect a marriage covenant, "for better or for worse". From the day of this calling, we see the LORD take upon Himself the responsibility for the Covenant upon which the Mosaic Covenant rests! (Exodus 19:5, 6; Deuteronomy 7:6-8 and 9:4-6; Jeremiah 31:31-34; The book of Hosea; John 5:45-47; Romans 11:28, 29)

1. Israel's <u>calling</u> as G-d's "firstborn son" rests upon G-d's unconditional Covenant with Abraham, **sealed with an oath**. (Genesis 22:16-18; Exodus 32:13; Micah 7:18-20; Luke 1:46-55)

2. It is a national <u>prophetic</u> <u>calling</u> (as opposed to individual)—There is no choice. (Ex. 4:22, 19:5,6; Amos 3:2; Romans 2:9, 10; Romans 11:25-29)

3. The Mosaic covenant is reaffirmed, time and time again, even (and especially) in the presence of Israel's disobedience. The "works" of the teaching of the LORD through Moses were never understood to be the means of atonement for sin. (Galatians 2:16) From the very beginning, faith was the requirement, whether within or apart from Torah, bathed in grace. (Isaiah 56:1-8; Habbakuk 2:4; Romans 9:32)

4. In the Mosaic Covenant, atonement for sin and guilt was available through the Levitical sacrificial system, which required blood sacrifice offered in faith in the word of God. The faithful offeror was then forgiven. From the outset, the LORD provided for disobedience that He knew was inevitable. (Leviticus 4:20, 26; 5:16)

5. Why then, were we not afraid to speak against G-d's servant Moses? (Numbers 12:6-8; Luke 24:44-47; John 5:45-47; Revelation 15:3, 4)

C. The Davidic Covenant (II Samuel 7:8-17; Psalm 89:34-36; 110:1-4)

1. The Davidic Covenant, **sealed with an oath,** (Psalm 89:34-36) rests upon and flows from the Abrahamic Covenant. (II Samuel 7:18-29; II Chronicles 13:5; Amos 9:11-15; Luke 1:54, 55)

2. The Messianic Hope rests upon the promise of the coming son of David. (Genesis 49:10; II Samuel 7:16; Isaiah 2:1-4, 11:1,10; Micah 4:1-4; Luke 1:67-79)

3. Yeshua, son of David, Word of G-d incarnate brings that hope to its fullness. (Genesis 1:1-3; Psalm 2: 33:6; Matthew chapter 1, 9:27; Luke 1:26-33.46-55; John 1:1-14; Romans1:1-4; II Timothy 2:8)

4. Why then were we not afraid to acknowledge that the promise of the Messianic reign of Jesus, Son of David, resulting in Israel's freedom from her enemies and peace on earth is true? (Luke 1:32, 33; 68-79; Acts 3:18-21; Romans 8:18-23)

D. The Covenant of an eternal Priesthood through Melchizedek, is **sealed with an oath**. (Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:1-4, Hebrews 8 and 9)

E. **ALL** of these unconditional and irrevocable covenants, including the prophetic calling of Israel, bring SPIRITUAL blessing to both Israel and the Gentiles. (Genesis 12:3; Deuteronomy 4:1-8; Luke 2:29-32; John 3:16; Romans 11:11-15)

II. The Church and the Irrevocable, Prophetic Calling of Israel at Sinai---we missed it.

A. Israel is the historical witness of the revelation of the LORD, and the truth of His word. (Isaiah 43:10)

1. Her preservation, through many centuries, in the face of countless attempts to destroy her bears witness to this irrevocability, and is a sign to this generation. (Jeremiah 31:35-37)

2. The LORD is "married" to Israel "for better or for worse". (Isaiah 63:9)

3. The return of Israel to the Land also bears witness that the irrevocable covenant stands in this generation. This is an event unprecedented in world history. The "dry bones" of Ezekiel 37 are not only coming together, but flesh and skin are appearing once again.

4. The raising up, in our generation, of the Messianic Jewish community of faith in Yeshua, also bears witness that G-d's promises are true, that the Spirit of the living G-d is being breathed once again into this chosen nation. The redeemed remnant of Israel is being resurrected in our day AS AN AUTHENTIC JEWISH WITNESS! This may also signify the approaching time of the fullness of the Gentiles. (Isaiah 43:19-21, 44:23; Ezekiel 37; Matthew 23:39, Romans 11:25-27)

5. It is in the teaching of the LORD through Moses, that we find the foreshadowing of a priestly, dying Messiah. We also see the pattern for world redemption in this teaching. (John 5:39-47)

6. Israel is assured of Divine protection so long as the universe continues. (Isaiah 54; Jeremiah 31:31-37, 33:23-26)

7. Why then were we not afraid to doubt the promises of G-d to preserve His people Israel, and to apply those promises solely to ourselves?

B. Temporal aspects of the Mosaic Covenant:

1. The earthly blessings of the Covenant belong only to Abraham's earthly children, as defined by G-d through Isaac and Israel and their children. These are the people of Israel, known for 2500 years as the Jews.

   a. The Land (Leviticus 25:23; Deuteronomy 11:8-17; Joel 3:1-3)
   b. Seed (Leviticus 25:55; Deuteronomy 26:18, 19)
   c. Blessing (Deuteronomy 29:29-30:20)

2. Israel's temporal <u>blessing</u> and prosperity remain conditional upon obedience. (Exodus 34-40; Leviticus 26:1-13; Deut. 10:12-11:32, 28:1-14; Amos 3:2)

3. Sometimes G-d overrides disobedience with grace and blesses Israel, even as He does so with the Church. (Wilderness blessings, Ahab's conquests, Romans 5:8; 11:30-36)

4. Disobedience requires repentance, blood atonement, and will bring discipline—in severity it will bring Israel's exile and dispersion, but **never rejection**. (Gen. 3:21; Leviticus 1-9 and 26:14-39; Deut. 28:15-29:29; Jeremiah 33:23-26; <u>Amos</u>

3:2; Matthew 20:1-16; Romans 11:1)

5. Israel's repentance ensures restoration and return. (Leviticus 26:40-46; Deut. 30; Joel 2:12-13; Zechariah, chapters 12 and 13; Romans 9-11)

   a. Israel's darkest hours are inscribed in Holy Writ for the entire world to see. We fail to learn from her mistakes, tending instead to hold her in contempt while feigning our own innocence. (Amos 3:2)

   b. Sadly, the record of church history has not been so forthcoming.

   c. Just as Israel as a nation is accountable before G-d, so is the Church. (Joel 3:1-3; Matthew 23:29-36; 25:31-46; Revelation chapters 1-3)

6. There has always been/ will always be a "remnant" to affirm Israel's calling. (Isaiah 1:9, 10:20-24; Romans 9:27-29)

7. Israel's failures in the Tanakh (Old Testament) did not preclude G-d sending Yeshua HaMashiach to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" First. (Matt. 15:24, Acts 3:25, 26)

8. The leadership of Israel's rejection of her Messiah was predicted, and did not preclude Rav Shaul's statement that "All Israel will be saved". (Psalm 118:22, Isaiah 8:13-15; Zech. 1:14-17, 3:9, 12:10-13:1; Romans 11:25-27)

9. The first 8 chapters of the book of Acts makes it clear that thousands of Jews came to faith inYeshua within the very generation that initially rejected Him, including Pharisees and Priests. (Acts 2:47, 6:7, 15:5, 21:20)

10. It is to the "terra firma" of the Mt. of Olives in Israel that Yeshua will return. (Zechariah 14:4; Acts 1:11)

C. The Aaronic Covenant is temporal and earthly, G-d sealed the line of Eleazar through Phinehas, leading to the primary line of Zadok. (Psalm 106:28-31;II Samuel 20:25; I Kings 2:35, 4:2, 4; I Chron. 29:22; II Chron. 31:10; Ezra 7:2; Ezekiel 40:46)

D. The promises of the temporal/earthly Covenants belong to Israel and Israel alone. Nowhere in Scripture are these specific promises negated nor have they ever been transferred to another people/faith group. Do not dismiss them lightly; they are essential to world redemption, and the sanctification of The Name of G-d is caught up in their fulfillment. Israel's calling, even in the face of disobedience, is never in question in Scripture when read in context. Again: Israel is the historical witness to the truth of G-d's eternal Word. It is through her faithfulness that we have it!

III. These Covenants established by G-d, are fully revealed in their appropriate context in the New Covenant, realized in Yeshua HaMaschiach through His life on earth, through His atoning sacrifice for sin, and then in full realization through His coming in glory. (Hebrews 9:28)

A. In the Name of Yeshua, all that ADONAI has purposed for world redemption will be brought to fullness. (Isaiah 49:1-6; Jeremiah 31:31-37, 33:23-26; Zechariah 14:9; Luke 22:14-20; John 12:32, 4:1-3; Galatians 4:4, 5

1. Yeshua was sent first to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel".

a. In fulfillment of the Law of Moses, He poured out His blood, the blood of the New Covenant, promised through the prophet, Jeremiah for the house of Judah and the house of Israel. (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Luke 22:20)

b. He also affirmed the love of G-d for people of the nations, reminding the Jewish people that they were called to be a light to the nations. (Matthew 8:5-13, 15:21-28; Luke 4:25-27)

c. Those of His faithful brothers, carried the word of salvation, in His Name to the nations. In turn, people of the nations, through faith in His Name, carry the message of salvation throughout the world to this day. (Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:24)

d. Together, members of His body, consisting of Jew and Gentile, complete the mystery of the "One New Man", and are bringing to fullness the will of the LORD for world redemption. (Ephesians 2:11-3:11)

2. Therefore, the Name of G-d is sanctified through the salvation of His people in order that World Redemption (Tikkun HaOlam) may be accomplished. There will be no kingdom without Israel! (Deut. 7:6-8; Is. 43:10, 21, 44:21-23; Acts 3:19-21; Romans 8:18-23)

a. Restoration requires the preservation of Israel as a definable people.

b. Restoration of Israel requires the return to the land.

c. Restoration of Israel requires a New Covenant community.

d. World redemption requires the presence of the community of Israel. (Zechariah 8:1-8, 12:10, chap. 14; Matt. 23:37-39)

B. It is because of this bedrock truth that Moses and Rav Shaul could make the "unthinkable statement of love for their G-d for which Yeshua gave up His life! (Exodus 32:32; Romans 9:1-5) They understood that apart from the salvation of Israel, the word

of the LORD is null and void, His Name is blasphemed among the nations, and no one is saved apart from the Divine protocol of the LORD that He has established with an oath!

C. The false teaching of Replacement Theology (supersessionism; fulfillment theology; one people of G-d theology) denies the integrity of the Word of G-d, and rather than affirming that "the gates of hell will not prevail" against the Church actually calls His promises to the Church into question.

1. The Church is the new Israel. The "root" is missing.
2. Israel gets the judgment, the Church gets the blessing.
3. The first coming is literal, the second coming is spiritual.
4. The promised kingdom of G-d can come without Israel.
5. The proof that this is false teaching (Matthew 7:13-20):

a. Resulted in division rather than unity of believers.

b. Fostered persecution of the Jews in the Name of Yeshua.

c. Continues to foster indifference and confusion among Christians---the only people in the world who should know better--toward Israel.

d. The Church is impoverished without the foundations set in place through Moses, the Prophets, and the Writings.

D. Gentiles have a significant role in world redemption: (Deut. 32:21; Is. 28:11; Romans 11:11)

1. To make the Jews "jealous", that they may see their Messiah and desire Him.

a. Does the Church look like the nations in her attitudes toward the Jews? (Ezekiel 36:1-15; Joel 3:1-3; Obadiah 10; Matt. 25:31-46)

b. The gentile body of Messiah has been given the capacity to change the ways of their forefathers. (Matthew 23:29-36)

2. "The Gospel: To the Jew first. . ." (Matthew 10:1-7, 15:21-28; Romans 1:16)

a. Are we as obedient to this protocol as we are to others?

b. Judgment comes to the Jew first. (Exodus 4:2; Isaiah 40:1, 2; Romans 2:9) Do Gentile believers weep for them and pray for them or do we use the Scriptures to malign them? (II Timothy 3:16, 17)

3. "The first shall be last, and the last first". (Matt. 20:1-16)

4. The mystery of the Gospel is revealed. (Ephesians 2:11- 3:6)

5. Do we understand what G-d has done in this generation? Do we understand the signs of the times in which we live?

6. A right understanding of the "Day of the LORD" depends upon our understanding of the irrevocable Covenants.

IV. The treatise of Rav Shaul regarding world redemption through the sanctification of the Name. (Romans 9-11)

A. Preceded by Romans 8:32-39

1. **"He who did not spare His own Son. . ."**
2. Recalls Genesis 22:16 **"By myself I have sworn. . ."**

B. **Chapter 9: The sovereignty of G-d.**

1. Rav Shaul's Cry for the Sanctification of the Name.
   a. A cry like that of Moses. (9:1-5; Exodus 32:30-25)
   b. A cry in the spirit of Yeshua; the only qualified cry. (John 12:27, 28)
   c. If the Word of G-d is not true, if it fails, then nothing else matters!

2. The choosing of the Patriarchs.

   a. Isaac, not Ishmael. (Genesis 17:19-21, 18:10; Romans 4:20)

   b. Jacob, not Esau. (Genesis 25:21-23)

   c. G-d's mercy extended to those whom He foreknew. (Rom. 8:29)

3. The raising up of Pharaoh.
4. The plan to redeem the world through one small nation—the least likely.
5. Faith is counted as righteousness.

C. **Chapter 10: Man's free will to receive grace or to dismiss it.** Israel missed the fullness and blessing of faith counted as righteousness. By observing the Law as though it were by works instead of faith, Israel fell prey to fleshly thinking. . . . .

1. Is Yeshua the point of the Law, or the stumbling block?
2. Do we seek righteousness on G-d's terms or our own?
3. In the face of uncertainty, do we trust in the One who calls, or in the calling?
4. Do we believe in the whole of revelation or are we selective?

D. **Chapter 11: The sovereignty of G-d and Man's free will meet at the mercy seat of faith.**

The Church could miss blessing as well. The Scriptures foretell that Israel will hear the Gospel through a "foolish nation" (Deut. 32:21), and "through stammering lips and a foreign tongue" (Isaiah 28:11)

1. Just as through one man, Noah, the world was preserved in the flood, through one Man, Abram, came a covenant of faith, through one man, Moses, the redemption of the chosen nation, so through one Man, Yeshua HaMashiach, came resurrection of the dead. Even one man of faith, the Rav Shaul, guaranteed the remnant of promise, attesting to the integrity of G-d's Word, and the sanctity of His Name.

2. Elijah despaired: G-d preserved.

3. Are Gentiles concerned enough with the sanctity of the Name? Have we made the Jews jealous or have we been a stumbling block to them?

a. Are we more focused on Israel's transgression or her fulfillment?

b. Do we covet the position of the natural vs. wild branches?

c. "When the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, all Israel will be saved. (Is. 66:7-9; Ezekiel 20:40-44; Zech. 3:9, 12:10; Luke 21:24; Romans 8:19, 11:26)

D. Rav Shaul's benediction: K'DUSHAT HASHEM: THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE NAME. (Romans 11:33-36)

1. This is the answer to Rav Shaul's cry in 9:1-5.
2. The sanctification of the Name of the Father was Yeshua's first concern at the cross. (Psalm 22:1-3; Luke 23:46; John 12:27, 28)
3. Mercy and salvation flow from this place as the Savior went beyond holiness that the world might be saved. (John 3:16, 17)
4. We have a role in the hallowing the Name of the LORD.

"Sacrifice and meal offering Thou hast not desired; My ears Thou hast opened; Burnt offering and sin offering Thou hast not required. Then I said, 'Behold, I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy Law is within my heart'. I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation; Behold, I will not restrain my lips. O LORD, Thou knowest. I have not hidden Thy righteousness within my heart; I have spoken of Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation; I have not concealed Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth from the great congregation." Psalm 40:6-10

"For whom He foreknew He also predestined to become <u>conformed to the image of His Son,</u> that He might be the firstborn among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. . . . Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us." Romans 8:29, 30, 33, 34

Reviewed and Revised: Arlene Stucki, July, 2016
With special thanks to Fr. Peter Hochen for his wise counsel without which, this work would not have been complete.

TOWARD JERUSALEM COUNCIL II

Education Curriculum

Session Two - Embracing the Younger Brother

A Study of the Historical Division in the Body of Christ (Yeshua)

For more than 1600 years, a dysfunctional tension has existed between the Jewish people and the Church. This tension has waxed and waned from time to time, but nevertheless, the dysfunction remains distinctly intact whenever dialogue moves beyond a common ethic. It is difficult and rare to have conversation on matters of religious belief of any substance between a committed Christian and a committed Jewish person; neither understands the language of the other.

For the Church, faith in the sacrificial atonement provided through Yeshua HaMaschiach (Jesus the Messiah), combined with Israel's rejection of it, is foundational to all such discussion, and the dialogue must begin there.

For the committed Messianic Jew, the same foundation is central, but the discussion will rarely begin there; he stands with his people. For the committed traditional Jew, the false teaching of supersessionism resulting in centuries of persecution of His people in the name of Jesus Christ and the absence of the expected kingdom of peace, when "the LORD is king over all the earth" (Zech 14:9), rules out the possibility that there is anything for him to gain by such discussion.

For most mainline Christians, Jesus fulfilled all that the Father intended for the promised Messiah to accomplish when He walked the earth in Jewish flesh. For the Messianic Jew, Yeshua HaMaschiach will return to bring to fullness the promise of world redemption. For the observant Jew, Jesus accomplished nothing of what the Master of the Universe intends for the long expected Messiah. As a result of these conceptual language barriers, among others that are even more profound, the camps remain divided. Yet, the children of Israel, and the Church are both beloved of G-d. What has brought us to this impasse, and how can we re-enter history, and reverse this tension, to the glory of G-d?

In an amazing out-pouring of the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit) upon this generation, the LORD has raised up the Messianic Jewish Community. We have been given a bridge of reconciliation

between Israel and the Church that is truly prophetic in its scope. Messianic Jews, as members of this international family of followers of Yeshua carry into the body of believers a historical reality to Biblical faith so needed in our day.

They are reaching out to their own brothers, as well as the body of believers among the nations! Through them, the LORD is blessing the Church with a concreteness that anchors the promises of God in real history! Through them, G-d is reaching out to the largely gentile Church for unity unknown from the days of the Apostles.

Concurrently, the gentile branch of the Church, consisting of people of all nations, makes visible the spiritual blessings promised in the Abrahamic covenant, as many branches are grafted into the root of this covenant faith. Let us "seize the day", and rejoice in the grace that calls us back to our roots. And as to unity, Yeshua (Jesus) prayed for a level of unity resembling the Oneness of the Father and the Son (John 17:21-23) that His followers have not realized---- certainly not since the first century---perhaps never.

Texts for Study:
Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 4:22; Leviticus 26:32, 33; Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 28:58-68; Psalms 118:22-26; Isaiah 8:13, 14; 11:1-9; 49:14-16; 52:13-53:10; Jeremiah 31:31-37; Ezekiel 36:16-37:28; Joel 3:1-3; Obadiah; Matthew 16:16-23; 22:41-46; 25:31-46; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 22:19, 20; John 5:46, 47; 17:21-23; Acts chap 15; 21:15-26; Romans 9-11; Ephesians 2:11-3:11

I. Some Roots of the Tension:

A. As a nation represented by her leadership, most of Israel did not recognize Yeshua (Jesus) as the fullness of the portrait of the coming Messiah painted so perfectly in the Torah given through Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms. (Luke 24:44-48; John 5:45-47)

1. Messianic Jews acknowledge, mourn and repent for this, however, very few Christians understand these truths, having dismissed the Law of Moses as no longer valid for followers of Yeshua----Jew or Gentile.

2. The words of Yeshua just before His ascension make it clear that these

Scriptures were essential to an understanding of who Yeshua was. (Luke 24:44-49)

B. Again, we must understand what the Scriptures reveal about this period of history.

1. Just before His ascension, Yeshua met with the Apostles, and detailed for them the plan for the immediate spread of the Gospel. They were to wait for the promised Ruach Hakodesh (Isaiah 44:1-3; Joel 2:28, 29; John 14:25) and then, follow a protocol of order. (Acts 1:8) They were to take the Gospel to Jerusalem, all Judea, then to Samaria, and then to the nations.

    a. A common evangelical understanding of the first several chapters of the Book of Acts sees Jewish believers as having become "Christians" giving birth to the Church, rather than seeing Jewish people coming to faith in those early days.. (Acts 2:41, 2:47, 4:4, 4:32, 5:14, 6:1, 6:7) Those who resisted the Gospel are still counted as Jews.

    b. Further, there is very little effort to understand what committed Jews, living in a pagan Roman society had to do to remain faithful to the Covenant given to their forefathers.

    c. It was at Antioch, the Roman Capital of Syria, where Gentile disciples were first called "Christians". Jewish believers were more often called followers of "The Way" or Nazarenes. (Acts 11:26, 9:2, 19:9, 24:5 and 14)

2. A grasp of Jewish religious thought in the first century is helpful in understanding the Messianic Hope of Jewish people of that day, as well as our own. We have the benefit of recorded prayers of three faithful Jewish people, who praised and worshipped the LORD for sending the long awaited Redeemer:

    a. Miriam (Mary), the mother of Yeshua.. (Luke 1:46-55)

    b. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. (Luke 1:67-79);

    c. Simeon, perhaps a priest, who blessed the infant Jesus. (Luke 2:27-32)

d. In addition, a knowledge of intertestamental Jewish history is quite essential to an understanding of the Messianic Hope of the first century. Some basic theological concepts, well understood in Yeshuas' day, and accepted in the Church today, were formed by the Rabbis of those years.

3. Through the centuries the Church has often misinterpreted Israel's Messianic expectations, which were in fact rooted in Scripture. Through spiritualization of the Scriptures which marginalize the advent of worldwide peace, and the earthly reign of a righteous Messiah-King, the Church has tended to ascribe those expectations to prideful nationalistic exaltation and political aspirations. The sins of a few have been visited upon the entire nation, not only at the time of Yeshuas' sacrificial death, but to this very day!

4. Israel's national rejection of Yeshua as her sin-bearer, as well as her restoration to faith was foretold by the prophets, and was confirmed by the Rav Shaul (Psalm 118:22, 23; Isaiah 53:1, 4; Romans 11:25-32)

B. Israel was given the necessary preparation to enter more deeply into the mystery of the promised Messiah. She is accountable for making the truth of G-d known to the nations. She is the first witness to that truth, and the first to be judged by it. (Exodus 4:22; Is.40:1, 2; 43:10; Romans 1:16, 2:5-10)

1. G-d states through the prophets as well as through the Apostles that <u>for the sake of His Holy Name,</u> He will be faithful to His unconditional Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Israel, and will restore His ancient chosen people to Himself. (Ezekiel 36:16-37:28; Romans 11:25-29) G-d's faithfulness to this irrevocable Covenant is THE fact that is critical to the integrity and the sanctification of His Great Name. (Genesis chapter 15, 22:16-18)

2. The first followers of Yeshua were Jewish; the Brit Hadashah (New Testament) was written by Jewish authors, possibly with the exception of Luke. Their writings, along with those of Moses and the Prophets, demonstrate the greatest tensions of their day regarding the conceptual stumbling blocks of a dying, yet deified Messiah (Psalm 110:1-4; Isa. 8:13,

14, 52:13-53:12; Matthew 16: 15-21) and the inclusion of gentiles into the Covenant. (Deut. 32:21; Is. 28:11; 22:41-46; Acts 15; Ephesians 2:11-22, 3:6)

3. The Jewish people have preserved the Scriptures for the world to read, often to their own hurt. Because their history is Holy Writ, they have not hidden their darkest hours from the nations. In addition, they have born the yoke of the Law---the embodiment of the knowledge of good and evil for the world. **With or without their knowledge and cooperation, they have paid a heavy price for the sake of the Gospel.**

C. The destruction of the Temples in 586 B.C.E /B.C. and 70 C.E./A.D. were disastrous events in the history of the Jewish people. Both believers and non-believers in Yeshua, and Yeshua Himself, mourned the destruction of the second Temple. In light of the fact that the Scriptures do not present the destruction of the Temples in a positive light, how have Jews and Christians historically viewed it?

1. Was the destruction of the Temple and exile of the people a severe punishment?

a. Knowing that the cause of the first destruction and exile was idolatry—failure to love the LORD, resulting in lack of social justice, Jewish priests and leaders returning from the Babylonian exile, determined to ensure that Israel would never again fall prey to this violation.

b. The accepted Jewish understanding of the destruction of the second Temple is the division, fragmentation and "needless hatred within the community-----a failure to love one another. .

c. Scripturally, exile from the Land is the most severe punishment meted out to Israel for disobedience/failure in her role as the light of the world. Rejection of the nation will never happen, by G-d's grace, because of the irrevocable covenant. (see session one)

2. As the numbers of Gentiles in the body increased, a divide between Jewish and Gentile believers opened up and widened with opposing views of both the first and second destructions. While the Jews saw them as the consequence of their disobedience, Gentile believers saw these events as proof that G-d had rejected the Jews as visible proof of supersessionism. Some Christian groups continue to hold to this position, while many others give it little thought at all, to the point of indifference.

3. Both the destructions of the first and second Temples reflect strongly what Yeshua had to say about the most important of the Commandments. (Mark 12:28-31)

a. Since this is Yeshua's teaching regarding His people, what would G-d have to say to a divided Church, including division between Gentile and Jewish believers?

b. How then should we, "younger brothers", respond to the lessons of this history? (II Timothy 3:16, 17)

4. Jewish scholars (Tannaim) of the first century gathered together in a small town named "Yavneh" to determine how Israel would survive without a Temple, for what they expected to be a long diaspora. These Rabbis determined a course aimed at Jewish survival, preservation and unity, by laying foundations for the "one way Judaism" that would prevail well into 18th century.

a. Although there were many sects of Jews that existed prior to the destruction, no sectarianism would at this point be tolerated. Sects outside of these rabbinic decisions were called "minim" and are to this day cited in the 19th benediction of the "standing prayer" (Mark 11:25, 26) known as the Shemoneh Esreh or the Amidah. (S. Cohen, pp. 228, 229)

b. Jewish followers of Jesus were one of several "sects" in the first and second centuries that were considered heretical, along with others that did not follow the decisions of this body. However, the complete separation of Jewish believers from the synagogue took a long time to have full effect.

. c. The concept of a divine Messiah, dying as an atoning, vicarious human sacrifice was (is) blasphemous in traditional Jewish religious thought. This is a huge leap of faith for Jews to become believers in Yeshua, but is the reflection of the fullness of the purposes of G-d. (Is. 43:18-44:8; chap. 62; Jer. 31:31-37)

d. This gathering of the scholars of the day chose to substitute prayer and repentance, particularly those that accompanied the Temple sacrifices, for the actual sacrifice which was no longer possible, due to the destruction. Prayer and repentance were already a part of the known sacrificial liturgy.

5. It is an amazing truth to ponder that the LORD G-d of Israel did in fact preserve His people as a distinct, identifiable nation, although dispersed to the four corners of the earth for over 2,000 years, through the work begun by these men. The arduous work of the codification of the oral law began here, and would eventually become that great work known as the Talmud.

D. Jewish followers of Yeshua were also under pressure to understand these times:

1. Jewish believers struggled to understand what G-d expected of them, both in relationship to their own nation, and in relationship to the nations of the world.

2. They also struggled with the concept of the destruction of the Temple, and the book of Hebrews may reflect this.

E. The "gap" between traditional Jews and followers of Yeshua, whether Jewish or non-Jewish continued to widen.

1. The Bar Kochba revolt of 135 C.E./A.D. furthered the split between Jews who were followers of Yeshua and those who were not.

2. Early dialogues between the Church fathers and Jewish scholars reveal a growing breach between the camps. (Flannery, chapter 2)

3. A growing Christian acceptance of the concept of supersessionism, i.e., that Israel had become a living witness to the wrath of God, superseded by the Church who became the "true spiritual Israel", helped to set the stage for the final "divorce" of Christians from their Jewish roots.

4 Jewish resentment of this mindset resulted in conflict that at times became quite violent on both sides.

5. On-going dialogue between Christians and Jews resulted in various edicts intended to prohibit such interaction. With the coming of the Constantinian age, the separation of Christianity from its Jewish roots became official church policy. These edicts, leading to others, even more stringent, served to accord to the Church a special position of favor. Judaism was relegated to the tolerated cults. The Scriptures, preserved by Jews, were interpreted in such a way as to denigrate them. (Flannery p. 48)

6. The Council of Nicea of the 4th Century adopted concepts that made a continuing Jewish theological influence almost impossible.

    a. Constantine wanted to unite the Empire politically, theologically, culturally, and philosophically. Choice became heresy. 250 Gentile bishops of the church attended the Council of Nicea in 325, setting the course. Much later, the council of Nicea of 787 would complete the division.

    b. There were 2 bishops who disagreed with the decisions of the council; they were removed from office. (Shelley p. 102)

    c. According to Bellarmino Bagatti, a 20th century historian, there were 18 bishops of the "church of the circumcision", i.e. Jews, who were not invited to the council. (Bagatti, p 47) Other scholars disagree with Bagatti on this issue.

7. In some regional councils that followed 325, the church demanded that Jewish believers renounce their heritage, thus depriving gentile Christians of a cultural reference for the life and teachings of the Jewish Jesus.

8. Division in the body of Messiah was the natural consequence of this disregard for the Jewish foundations of Biblical faith.

9. To this day, Christian preaching often demonstrates an inheritance of this de-judaized mindset. The church is impoverished without these roots.

10. In the centuries that followed, Israel, the "light of the nations", turned inward, rejected the gentile Gospel, and in the effort for preserving the nation, laid aside their distinct calling to bring the nations to the G-d of Israel. During those centuries, and to this day, the Church must be credited for assuming that calling, but apart from Jewish roots. This fact begs the question: what have the nations been taught regarding Israel's place in world redemption?

F. The Church came to see itself as the "New Israel", superseding Israel the nation as the witness people of God.

1. From the days of the Church fathers, mainline Christianity has continued to see itself in this way.

2. The advent of the Reformation did not break this cycle. The advocacy and cultivation of contempt for the Jews and a policy of humiliation of them has continued from the days of the Church Fathers into the ancient as well as the modern Church.

    a. Even Christian support for Israel sometimes carries anti-Jewish overtones.

    b. Many Christian tour groups completely ignore the people of the Land, choosing to emphasize only the Christian/New Testament history.

    c. Stereotypes of Pharisees continue to malign the Jewish leaders of Jesus' day with little or no attempt to discern honest inquiry from malicious intent.

3. The term “Replacement (more recently “Fulfillment” Theology” or “One people of G-d” Theology) has been coined and is widely understood among Messianic Jews to describe this concept of the Church’s supersessionism over Israel. The Jewish people at large know the concept well from centuries of persecution in the name of Jesus. (Matthew 24:9)

4. Supersessionism can only be Biblically defended through the spiritualization of, and actual “hi-jacking” of G-d’s promises to Israel and the application of those promises as exclusive to the Church.

5. Unfortunately, this teaching has been and continues to be destructive to both the Church, and to Israel.

6. Through these many centuries, supersessionism has been the justification for the disinheritance of, persecution of, forced dispersion of, vilification of, and indifference toward the Jewish people as the Covenant people of G-d.

7. It is also the root of Christian indifference to Israel’s struggle in our own day to remain in the Land promised by G-d to her in perpetuity.

8. Very few churches support Messianic Jewish initiatives at all; many who do, maintain heavy Christian “strings attached”.

9. It is significant that many missionaries who bring the Gospel to Muslim people are unwilling to deal with the irrevocable covenant, out of fear that they will lose their audience and their followers. No one loves the Muslims more than the LORD G-d of Israel, but the Church at large and the Muslim people must submit to His choice of Israel as His” first-born son”. (Ex. 4:22; Hosea 11:1; Isaiah 19:19-25)

10. How many of those who reject this calling as valid, would want to walk in the historical footsteps of the Jews to whom it was given?

G. We believe that through the vision of TJCII, God is calling the church to repent of this false teaching, by acknowledging the irrevocable calling of Israel. The

preservation of the people of Israel as a distinct and definable people, the resurrection of the Messianic Jewish Community of the first century, and the return of Israel to the Land are His historic and visible challenges to this false teaching God has spoken! Israel lives! Supersessionism will have to go!

II. Where do we begin to defuse?

A. "TJCII" is a vision of grace extended to the Church of our generation, <u>given to us through those whom we have persecuted!</u>

1. Supersessionism/Replacement Theology could not have taken shape, had Jewish and Gentile followers of Jesus been unified in the building of the community of believers.

   a. Jewish scholarship would have been helpful to the fledgling gentile Church. The Church will be greatly strengthened as she grasps her Jewish roots.

   b. The on-going persecution of the Jewish people, in the name of Yeshua would have been avoided.

   c. The "gentile Jesus" would not have taken shape in the minds of either Jew or Gentile. We would have understood Him as G-d sent Him to be----the Redeemer and Messiah foretold by the Jewish prophetic voice, who came that all the world might be redeemed.

   d. A right understanding of the distinct roles of both Jewish and Gentile believers in the plan of world redemption would have remained intact.

   e. Countless divisions in the community of believers may well have been avoided.

2. For the Church to embrace its Jewish roots even now, enables a richer understanding of a Biblical faith. The LORD is extending grace to the Church of our day, through our "elder brothers".

a. This ministry of reconciliation, modeled in a unified community of Jewish and Gentile believers, can become a powerful witness in a fragmented, unbelieving world.

b. Yeshua as the promised coming Messiah would become more recognizable to the Jewish world, even as Messianic Jews live as Jews among their own people..

B. The modern Church must acknowledge that G-d invested Himself in the ancient churches.

1. The ancient church has preserved many of the Biblical worship models given to Israel that are lost to the modern churches. In the midst of significant theological and historical differences, evangelicals and reform Christian groups can agree to respect and appreciate the Church upon which the reformation was built.
2. TJCII calls for the revoking of all ancient decrees against the Jewish believers.
3. No creedal convictions of the ancient churches have to be renounced. Some elements need to be completed, others need to be interpreted in a different framework.
4. The vision of TJCII has a narrow but challenging focus. First, it calls upon all believers to consider the need for healing of the oldest wound in the Body of Messiah---that of her divorce from her Jewish roots. And secondly, it presents a strong challenge to all sectors of the Christian world to deal with all the damage caused by supersessionism.

C. The Church must acknowledge and repent of centuries of persecution of the people of Israel in the name of Jesus Christ.

1. Replacement Theology cannot be Biblically supported without doing violence to the whole counsel of Scripture. It must be renounced as false teaching.
   a. Corporate accountability and identificational repentance is a foreign concept within the modern church, but these are Biblical concepts.

(Joshua chap. 7; Ezra chap. 9; Daniel chap. 9; Matthew 23:29-36; John 20:21-23; James 5:13-16; I John 5:14-17)

b. Arbitrary spiritualization of promises to Israel with sole application to the Church must be recognized.

c. The prideful seizing of those promises with little or no consideration for the people to whom they were made.

d. Literal application of curses upon every generation of the people of Israel for rejecting Jesus.

e. Literal interpretation of prophecies concerning the first coming of Messiah, while holding to a spiritualization of the prophecies concerning His promised return, world redemption, and establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth is biased exegesis.

2. Current indifference to Israel, the brothers of Yeshua HaMaschiach, both believers and not-yet believers must be addressed through prayer and education. (Joel 3:1-3; Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 3:25)

D. The Church must affirm the irrevocable Covenant between G-d and Israel as a Scriptural truth foundational to world redemption.

1. We recognize the signs to this generation.

a. The preservation of the Jewish people as a definable nation surviving the centuries of dispersion, forced assimilation, persecution and attempted annihilation is miraculous.

b. The return of the Jewish people to the Land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is unprecedented in world history.

c. The resurrection of the Messianic Jewish community of the first century is of the Holy Spirit; it is not through the effort of either synagogue or church.

2. We must stand against the predicted movement of the nations against Israel. (Zechariah 14)
3. We must renounce the idea that these signs, even if recognized, are often interpreted as only critical to the eschatological agenda of the Church.
4. We must be educated and able to stand against and expose as false the historical revisionism taking place in our day.
5. We must be aware of and recognize aberrancies that have risen in these times, such as the "one law" and "Ephraimite" movements.

E. We are exhorted to fulfill the role of the grafted branch to the root. (Romans chapter 11)

1. Rejoice as "co-inheritors" of the Kingdom of G-d by faith in the sacrificial atoning death of Yeshua HaMashiach! (Ephesians 2:11-22; Ephesians 3:6)
2. We are witnesses to the power of the Holy Spirit to regenerate gentile hearts apart from the Law.
3. We are witnesses to the power of the Ruach HaKodesh to regenerate Jewish hearts within the Law.
4. We are exhorted to make Israel jealous to know Yeshua as Messiah and LORD. (Deuteronomy 32:21; Isaiah 28:11; Romans 11:11) The Church has a role in Jewish salvation, but should strongly consider the impact of assimilation. (Rudolph-Willitts, p. 11-18)

Updated: July, 2016, Arlene Stucki; reviewed by Fr. Peter Hochen.

TOWARD JERUSALEM COUNCIL II
Education Curriculum
Session Three – Rejoicing in the Return of the "Elder Brother"
A Study of the character of Messianic Judaism

The LORD G-d of Israel has always preserved a remnant of faith, though sometimes hidden, among His beloved chosen people. (Isaiah 1:9, 10; Romans 9:27-29) This is an "iron clad" truth, because the Word of G-d is "iron clad" truth. Flowing from that very same grace and faithfulness of G-d, there is in our generation a most amazing moving of the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit) within the house of Israel. For the first time in nearly 2,000 years, there is a community of Jews who are followers of Yeshua Hamashiach (Jesus Christ) who live and walk as Jews, by faith, among their ancient people. These people have become known as "Messianic Jews".

Neither the Christian community nor the Jewish community have spawned this movement as it exists today, although both communities have willingly and/or unwillingly been used of G-d to bring it into being. Messianic Judaism has had to "go it alone" in many ways, and this too is evidence of its Divine origin, "lest any man should boast".

Texts for Study: Genesis 2:17, 3:21; 12:1-3; Numbers 23:8, 9; Deuteronomy 7:1-9; Isaiah 49:5, 6; Amos 9:11-15; Matthew 5:17-19; 10:16-20; 28:19; Luke 24:44-53; John 4:22; Acts chapters 1-9, Chap. 15; 21:15-26; Romans 2:25-29, chapters 9-11; Galatians 2:15, 16; Ephesians 2:11-3:12; Revelation 7:1-8; chapter 12.

I. First Century Jewish Believers:

A. A distinctly Jewish life---never a question of becoming anything else. (Acts Chaps. 1-3, 15)

1. A beautiful thing to see: the Torah lived out in a life of faith. (Romans. 9:32)

2. The knowledge of good and evil for which Adam and Eve grasped, is no longer a curse in Messiah. (Genesis 2:17; Acts 15:10; Rom. 6:23)

a. A right understanding of "the Law" as given to believing Israel.

b. Neither Yeshua nor the Rav Saul saw the Torah in negative terms. (Luke 24:44-53, Romans 9:3-5, II Timothy 3:14-17)

c. The weight (glory) of the Law was born by the Jewish people that both Jew and Gentile would understand their need of a Redeemer.

B. The Apostles' understanding of the full role of Messiah had to be expanded to include the Gentiles apart from the Law, but their identity and calling as Jews who walk according to the Law by faith, was reinforced and affirmed by Yeshua Himself. (Matthew 5:17-19; Luke 24:44-53)

C. Now indwelt by the Spirit, they received from the LORD the revelations they needed to step into the gentile world. (Acts 1:8, chaps.2, 9, 10) This was, and still is the "Mystery of the Gospel". (Ephesians 2:11-3:12)

1. This move into the world of the gentiles was a major leap for them. The Jewish people were and are commanded to be a separated people even in the face of their distinctiveness. (Deuteronomy 7:1-9)

a. Jews were the only strict monotheists in the world at that time. There is the possible exception of Ethiopia. (I Kings 10:1-13, Acts 8:26-38)

b. Their lifestyle reflected their faith.

c. They were called as G-d's instruments to free the Gentile world from the curse of idolatry. (Isaiah 49:6, 7; Acts chapter 17)

2. The promises through the Abrahamic Covenant to the nations were already there, but difficult to flesh out so many centuries later. The influences of false gods had taken a toll on the Jews. (Ex. 34:10-16)

3. Israel retains her unique role in world redemption. (Numbers 23:8, 9)

4. She is joined in this mission by those who by faith are "grafted in" to the irrevocable Abrahamic Covenant. (Romans Chap. 11)

D. The Holy Spirit confirmed for them that it was spiritually safe to do this.

1. Words from the Lord Himself. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8)
2. Philip and the Ethiopian. (Acts 8:26-38)
3. Peter and the Centurion. (Acts 10)

E. The Council of Yavneh determined one way to be a Jew, until 18th century.

1. Impact on first century believers, who were seen as one of several "sects" of Judaism that threatened to weaken a nation in dispersion.

a. The “minim” and the 19th benediction in the “standing prayer”.

b. Jesus’ predictions take on new meaning. (Matthew 10:16-20)

c. The foundations laid at Yavneh evolved into the Mishnah, then the Gemara, followed by on-going Jewish literature that preserved the people as a distinct entity for nearly 2,000 years. This was the intention of the Rabbis of Yavneh; the LORD used their work beyond anything they could have known.

2. New Streams of Judaism in the 18th century:

a. Reform (Samuel Holdheim 1806-1860),

b. Conservative (Solomon Schecter 1850-1915),

c. Reconstructionist (Mordecai Kaplan 1881-1983)

This was a phenomenal change in the history of post-Biblical Judaism which paved the way for the resurrection of “new/old” community of Messianic Jews of the first century. The emerging of these new streams led to the adoption of the term “Orthodox” by Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888), who became the leader of Jewish Orthodoxy in Germany. The term Orthodox was not known in Judaism until the traditional path of Rabbinic Halachah (Rabbinic law evolving from before the days of Yavneh) was challenged.

3. Thus, the resurrection of the Messianic Jewish community is an eschatological sign. (Romans 11:15; Revelation 7:1-8, 12:17.

4. Every new stream of Jewish Religious thought and observance, mentioned above was vilified at its onset, as were the words of Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua Himself.

II. The early flutterings of “old/new” life.

A. As early as the 17th century, the LORD raised up several voices from within the Church that expected the spiritual restoration of the Jews, as well as their return to the Land. (Keith p.185, Pragai, p. 12 and throughout)

B. At the same time, there were several European Jewish Scholars who wrote of Israel’s restoration in the early 19th century. They were responding to the signs of their day; but these authors did not live to see the outcomes of their dreams. Nevertheless, they, among others, are respected for their insights as precursors of Israel’s restoration. (Hertzberg pp. 102, 108, 116)

C. The still small voice of Hebrew Christianity was awakening and organizing in London and elsewhere in the 19th century, at the very same time that G-d was calling Jews back to the Land. In this effort, Jews and Christians were

receiving the same revelations and working together; even with differing motivations.

D. In 1947-48, on the cusp of achieving statehood in the land, British authorities recommended all Christians to leave before the new nation came into being. But a small number of Yeshua-believing Jews stayed and this became the beginning of the Messianic movement in Israel.

1. Being in a Jewish state, it was natural for them to have a Jewish form of congregation. It was there that the term "Messianic Jew" was first introduced.

2. In affirmation of this designation for Jewish believers in Yeshua, and not knowing the Israeli use of the term, a prophetic word was received by Martin Chernoff, founder of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America, in the early 1970's to use this term to designate Jewish believers.

3. The term "Messianic Jew" has not been well received by traditional Orthodox Jews who are waiting for a Messiah other than Yeshua, but who also call themselves "messianic". There were also serious controversies, within the fledgling movement itself regarding this designation. However, today, the name is largely understood by believers and non-believers in the Jewish community as well. The church at large still has a marginal knowledge of the name and significance of this community.

E. "Jews for Jesus" was founded in 1973 by Moishe Rosen (1932-2010). The big breakthrough was from 1967 through the Jesus movement. Young Jewish "hippies", seeking peace and truth, came to faith in Yeshua in those turbulent years. From the outcome of the "6 Day War" in 1967, they immediately saw the connection between Jerusalem coming wholly into Jewish hands, and the immediate fruit in the realm of the Spirit. Only a strong dependence upon the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) could accomplish this amazing resurrection of a community that had disappeared so many centuries before.

"Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth. Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. The beasts of the field will glorify Me; the jackals and the ostriches; because I have given waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My chosen people. The people whom I formed for Myself, will declare My praise." Isaiah 43:19-21

F. How to understand this new development.

1. For centuries, most believing Jews had assimilated into the Church.

2. There was delight and interest in having an identifiable Jew in the Church, but reluctance, even among Jewish believers, to accept genuine Jewish practice within a New Covenant faith. (Jer. 31:31-34; Luke 22:20)

3. The Evangelical Church became the place of nurturing for Jewish believers, but also a place of assimilation, polarization and division.

4. To this day, Jewish believers of this generation retain the divisions inherent in the Christian world. The outcome is division among themselves. But they have served faithfully, and the LORD is raising up a second generation of reconciliation which is building in unity upon the foundations already laid by their fathers. For TJCII, the NOW Generation has been born----Hallelujah!

5. The response of traditional Judaism: NO!

G. On-Going Struggles within the evolving fledgling movement.

1. How "Jewish" should we be?

   a. "To assimilate or not to assimilate, and how much?" that is an on-going struggle, impacting all Jewish groups, including this one.

   b. Dialogue with both Christians and Jews, with regard to Torah observance and Jewish tradition, can be helpful or it can be distorted.

2. As the movement has evolved into a community, concern for Jewish authenticity has increased, in tension with a desire to be part of the full body of believers.

   a. Traditional Christian rules of interpretation and mis-application of the Law of Moses die hard.

   b. These interpretations have traditionally been applied to Jewish and Gentile believers, without distinction. Perhaps the most harmful of those are the traditional interpretations of the Apostle Paul's letter to the church at Galatia, without regard for these distinctions.

   c. Christian support for Jewish ministry often rests upon Jewish conformity to these "rules".

3. The community is maturing, but with understandable struggle. Messianic Judaism is maturing, seeking (and finding) identity. It deserves the support of the whole church without those Christian strings attached.

H. Messianic Judaism: In the midst of enormous obstacles, a Jewish community, born of the Spirit lives, and is here to stay. GOD HAS SPOKEN!

III. Messianic Jews: the natural branches: grafted in again. (Romans 11:11-24)

A. Embracing commandments given in perpetuity. (Example: Exodus 12:14)

1. The Law (Teachings of the LORD through Moses) always required faith. (Example: The application of the Levitical Sacrifices in the days of Tabernacle/Temple worship.)

2. ". . by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified." (Galatians 2:15, 16)

a. Paul is not saying something new here.

b. Justification had always come by faith in the atoning power of the blood sacrifice, according to Moses.

B. Dealing with a New Covenant belief and leap of faith that would have been and still is unthinkable to the traditional Jew. (John 3:1-15)

a. Trinity: how does it read in "Jewish"? (Genesis 1:1-3).

b. The sacrifice of a human being effects atonement for all?

c. Enormous family and community pressures.

d. And then there is the history.

e. And what about "peace on <u>earth</u>, good will toward men"?

C. Reactions: Very little help from either the Jewish or the Christian communities.

1. The Church: "You can't do that!"

a. "You are rebuilding the wall!" (Ephesians 2:14, 15)

(1) Misunderstanding what the "wall" was.

(2) Misunderstanding what the Torah meant to Yeshua Himself. (Matthew 5:17-19)

(3) Misunderstanding what the Torah meant to Rav Shaul. (Acts 21:15-26, Romans 9:1-5)

b."You are judaizers!"

(1) A term indiscriminately used.

(2) Paul strongly affirmed the decision of the Jerusalem Council, which applied to Gentiles. There was no question of whether or not the Law of Moses still applied to Jewish believers.

(3) Gentiles who wished to make a formal conversion remained free to do so, but never were compelled to do so, nor vilified if they chose to remain Gentile "G-d fearers". (Acts 15:21)

2. The Synagogue: "You can't do that!"

a. "It's just a veiled Christian proselyting plot!"

b. "These are simply uneducated Jews", reminiscent of some first century Jewish rulers who judged without understanding. (John 7:46-49; Acts 5:34-39)

c. Messianic Jewish Scholarship is in fact very present, and is increasing rapidly all over the world.

IV. The gates of the Kingdom are opening to the Jewish world in ways not seen since the first century.

A. Messianic Judaism: a Jewish reality to be reckoned with.

1. A manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit, here to stay.

a. Does not require the permission of either Church or Synagogue to exist, but desires community with both.

b. Deeply committed to Israel and the Jewish people, in spite of the vilification leveled at them through their own people.

c. Committed to reconciliation with the church in spite of her historic persecution of the Jews, and her current indifference.

d. The vision of Toward Jerusalem Council II (TJC II) is that the welcome extended to the younger brother (gentile believers) in the first century be extended in like manner to the elder brother (Jewish believers) in this generation.

2. Seeking reconciliation on both fronts, while remaining firm.

a. Reconciliation with the Church.

(1) "That they may be one as we are one". (John 17:21)

(2) What would the Church look like that would "make Israel jealous"? (Romans 11:11, 12)

(3) Acknowledging and gratitude for the role of the gentile church in bringing the nations to faith.

b. Reconciliation with traditional Judaism.

(1) Israel lives: a phenomenon of world history like no other!

(2) Acknowledging the riches of ancient Jewish wisdom.

(3) Increasing dialogue with the traditional community.

c. Messianic Jews are painfully aware that their leaders of 2,000 years ago rejected their Messiah, even as the Scriptures foretold. (Psalm 118:22, Acts 4: 11, 12)

(1) The Stone which the builders rejected. . .

(2) But they remain firm that there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.

(3) They are living proof that G-d has not rejected nor has He replaced His Covenant people. (Acts 5:14, 6:7; Romans 11: l)

B. The Church is awakening to its Jewish roots.

1. The LORD is stirring the heart of the Church toward Israel.
2. The current polarization within the Church with regard to Israel in contrast to centuries of indifference is significant.
3. The vision of TJC II is an extension of grace to the Church.

"O to see the sight, next to Christ's coming in the clouds, the most joyful! Our elder brethren the Jews and Christ fall upon one another's necks and kiss each other! They have been long asunder; they will be kind to one another when they meet. O day! O longed-for and lovely day-dawn! O sweet Jesus, let me see that sight which will be as life for the dead, Thee and thy ancient people in mutual embraces."
<u>Source</u>: Samuel Rutherford 1635 quote <u>The Puritan Hope</u> by Iain Murray

Next stop: A Vision of Hope.

Revised and Updated: July, 2016 (Arlene Stucki)

TOWARD JERUSALEM COUNCIL II

Education Curriculum

Session Four

A Vision Of Hope: A Study of the blessing of Oneness

"I do not ask in behalf of these alone; but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me, and the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one. . . . ."
John 17:20-22

We are living in unprecedented times. There seems to be a convergence of uniquely historical events that reflect aspects of Biblical prophecy to this generation that is deeply thought provoking. Perhaps the most unexpected surprise of all is the manner in which events are literally taking place. Because Christians have historically tended to look for the spiritual application of Biblical prophecy and current events, we are finding ourselves compelled to reconsider our expectations that may be moving eschatological concepts to a literal reality.

Some of us have to think corporately for the first time, in addition to being deeply committed as individuals to the G-d of our salvation and biblical truth. Many of us are being confronted with the strength of historical evidence that the G-d of history continues to be unconditionally faithful to the Jewish people with whom He has pledged to keep Covenant. Some of us are beginning to differentiate between the long expected Messianic Hope of world redemption (Tikkun HaOlam) and the universalism that prevails in the world view of pluralism.

Is it possible that in our quest for spiritual wisdom we might miss the significance of events taking place in our generation that may literally herald the Messianic age? Do we need to revisit the Scriptural promises to Israel and the nations? Do we believe with the Apostle Paul that "the anxious creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of G-d?" Do we really believe the fact that G-d has obligated Himself to literally redeem His creation, and that He will do it? Do we believe that the will of G-d will be done "on EARTH as it is in HEAVEN"? Can we consider that just as the promises to Abraham and to David entail both material blessings to people on earth as well as spiritual blessings, that their fulfillment might be manifested in both earthly and spiritual ways?

Let us consider together a marvelous Vision of Hope for both Jew and Gentile, within the Body of Messiah (Christ) that the LORD has graciously extended to this generation, after centuries of distortion, division and mistrust. We are, after all, a literal body of people, Jew and Gentile, sojourning together on this literal planet, in expectation that His kingdom will, indeed come! LORD, Hallowed be Thy Name!

Texts for Study (NASB): Genesis 12:1-3, Chap. 15, 17:9-11, 22:1-18; Exodus 19:4-6, 31:12-17; Numbers 23:8, 9; Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 10:12-16, chapter 30; Isaiah 43:21, 44:1-3, 49:5, 6; Jeremiah 31:31-37; Ezekiel 36:16-

27; Joel 2:28, 29; Amos 9:11-15; Malachi 4:1-4; Matthew 5:17-19; John 17:21, 22; Acts 11:15-18, chapter 15, 16:1-3, 21:15-26; Romans 11:11-36, 15:27; Galatians 2:3; Ephesians 2:11-22, 3:1-7, Philippians 2:12.

I. The first Jerusalem Council: A prayerful, respectful, and thoughtful conference as well as a heated debate. (Acts 15:1-35**)**

A. Consider the stakes involved.

1. Israel's commission and calling. (Exodus 19:4-6, Deut. 10:12-16; Is. 43:21; Malachi 4:4)
2. This was "holy ground". Any alteration would require Divine revelation.

B. Consider the opinions expressed and respectfully considered:

1. Circumcision and Sabbath: the perpetual signs of the Covenant. (Acts 15:1; Genesis 17:9-11, Exodus 31:12-17)

a. Many Jews had given their lives in obedience to these commandments.

b. The Apostle Paul was careful to honor and to obey these commandments. (Acts 13:14, 16:1-3; 21:15-26; Galatians 2:3)

2. Jews must be faithful to observe the Law of Moses. (Deut. Chap 30; Malachi 4:4; Acts 15:5; Matt. 5:17-19)

a. Judea was surrounded by paganism and mythology. Israel was commanded to remain a separated people.

b. Jews in Diaspora had to intentionally isolate themselves from the pagan world.

c. Jews were the only strict monotheists in the world at this time, perhaps with the exception of Ethiopia.

d. Many Jews had already given their lives for the "Sake of the Name".

e. This is the critical concept of Kiddushat HaShem ("Hallowed be Thy Name").

C. But there was another way to think within Biblical boundaries. (Gen. 12:1-3, Isaiah 49:5, 6; Amos 9:11-15, Acts 10, 11 and 15:7-21)

1. Peter's careful presentation of Divine revelation: (Acts 10 and 11)

a. All are saved by grace through faith; the indwelling Holy Spirit was witness..

b. God does not show partiality between Jews and Gentiles who fear Him and live righteously.

2. James appeals to the prophet Amos for encouragement.

a. In obedience to the Lord, Amos took the Word of G-d to the people of the northern kingdom, who had pillaged his country. (II Chron. 28:7-15)

b. He affirmed the Messianic hope for Israel and the nations. (Amos 9:11-15)

3. Seeking unity in the midst of diversity, in obedience to the evidence presented.

a. The Elders and Apostles were willing to reconsider positions of belief that they had held tightly for centuries, regarding the blessing of the nations.

b. They chose to trust in the evidence provided through the Holy Spirit to guide them into their roles as Jews, as well as these fledgling Gentile believers, who they address as "brothers"!

c. The concept of unity (NOT UNIFORMITY) of the faith community was the eventual outcome of the council. (The decision of the Council hearkens back to the Noachide laws, and foreshadows those sins for which a Jew to this day must give his life rather than to transgress.)

d. This unity was NOT achieved at the expense of Biblical conviction. It was achieved through the recognition that G-d had spoken with regard to salvation of the Gentiles; affirmed by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, and the willingness of the Apostles to respond in obedience. The outcome was the result of an intentional pursuit of Biblical common ground.

4. The affirmation of the Spirit was understood to be consistent with the ancient promises, first to Israel, and then to the nations. (Isaiah 44:1-3; Joel 2:28, 29; Amos 9:11-15; Acts 1:8; 11:15-18; Romans 1:16, 2:9, 10)

II. Review events leading to the great split in the body of the Messiah.

A. The Council of Yavneh (70-90 C.E.) Made critical decisions that refuted ALL sectarianism; therefore, Jewish disciples of Yeshua were included with those perceived as sectarian. However, there is evidence that there were Jewish believers still frequenting the synagogue until well into the second century CE. .

1. The motivation for this decision was the preservation of a unified nation through what was expected to be a long diaspora, and it succeeded!

2. Eventually, Jewish scholars agreed that sectarianism, division, and hatred for one another was the reason for the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. (Ben-Dov, Naor, Aner p. 26)

3. In light of Yeshua's statements regarding the greatest of the commandments, This is instructive, considering that idolatry is the stated reason for the destruction of the first Temple in 586 C.E. (II Kings 17)

B. The Bar Kochba revolt resulting in the Hadrianic persecutions of 135 C.E.

C. Distorted dialogues between Jewish scholars and the Church Fathers took place between the first and third centuries, setting the stage for Nicea.

III. The "Great Divorce": The Council of Nicea (325 C.E.) .

A. The covenants of God given to and through Israel were revisited by a largely gentile church, restructured, and indigenized out of the context of their original application.

1. Constantine and Christianity.

a. "In this sign (the cross) you will conquer!"

b. Three issues before the Councils were particularly polarizing:

(1) The outcome of the Arian/Athanasian struggle to understand nature of the G-dhead seemed to conflict with the Hebrew concept of Divine Oneness. (Compare Deut. 6:4; Genesis 2:24 and use of the word "echad")

(2) The Sabbath vs. the "Lord's Day" (Ex. 31:16, 17)

(3) Estras=Easter and the Feast of First Fruits.

2. Did the Councils exclude leaders from the Church of the Circumcision? Was there a Jewish voice in this council? (Bagatti p. 47)

3. The Jewish dimension of the Church was not honored, and was weakened, even though it was not totally removed.

4. Assimilation was now the only option for the Jewish believer in Yeshua.

a. Spiritualization: the only way to formulate an eschatology that omits Israel's restoration.

b. It became acceptable to consider the Church without a definable Jewish component. (Romans 11:11-24)

c. The distinct role of Israel in the plan of world redemption was ignored and largely forgotten. (Numbers 23:8, 9)

B. 1600 years of persecution in the name of Messiah (Christ) began here. (Matthew 24:9)

1. The ancient churches fostered replacement, degradation, persecution of the Jews.

a. However, the liturgy of the ancient Church has preserved more of the Jewish heritage than their theology, in which replacement was more evident.

b. Vatican II (1962-1965) and the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1994) brought major breakthroughs. For instance, the Catechism goes further than Vatican II in teaching that the Jewish people have to enter before Yeshua comes in glory! (Paragraph 674)

2. The reformed/Protestant/modern churches did not depart from the cycle of replacement, moving toward an indifference which would become lethal for Jews during WW II. After the Holocaust, certain aberrancies have risen as well:

a. Some have adopted a two Covenant theology.

b. The Ephraimite movement presents confusion.

c. "Fulfillment Theology" masks the "replacement" error.

3. Even Evangelical support for Israel is often a veiled Christian eschatological agenda, rather than acknowledgement that G-d has kept covenant with His ancient chosen people.

4. Some Palestinian Christians of today are being misled into a brand new version of Replacement Theology; some out of fear.

a. "Jesus and His disciples were Palestinians". (Elias Chacour)

b. "He came first to the Palestinians".

c. "The Hebrews of the Old Testament are not related to the Jews of today". Therefore, modern Israel has NO claim on the land. (This is the teaching of Sabeel, a Palestinian Christian group currently within the land.)

d. The Temple never stood on the Temple mount, and the Jews have no claim to it.

e. New Marcionite tendencies that move in the direction of eliminating the Old Testament and ignoring parts of the New are another aberrancy.

C. In spite of these difficulties, G-d continues to bless the Church and the gates of hell have not prevailed. He has extended grace to the Churches in their many forms through the vision of "Toward Jerusalem Council II".

IV. After 1600 years, Israel's Redeemer bares His arm in our generation!

A. In the historical return to the Land, the Abrahamic promise linking the Land with the covenant is confirmed as literally true.

B. The preservation of the definable nation throughout the centuries, in the face of persecution, assimilation, and attempted annihilation affirms the promise of Jeremiah 31:35-37 as literally true.

C. G-d has prepared the way within traditional Judaism for another stream of Jewish Religious thought by interrupting the monolithic tradition begun at Yavneh.

D. The raising up (resurrection) of a community of distinctly Jewish people who call upon the name of Yeshua HaMaschiach (Jesus Christ) as Lord, while remaining distinctly Jewish in practice is a movement born of the Spirit, living now in community.

V. The Vision of a second Jerusalem Council (TJC II), in the spirit of the first council. This council will include, but will not be limited to the following characteristics:

A. Profound repentance and submission to G-d throughout the Church and from the Messianic Jewish world. (Romans 11:32)

B. Affirmation of the indwelling Spirit of G-d is evident upon Jewish believers in the Messiahship of Yeshua. There is no Biblical mandate for Jews to depart from a life of faith that is distinctly Jewish. There is absolutely no evidence that Yeshua ever departed from it. This lifestyle has as its roots in the Torah as given by G-d to the Jewish people in perpetuity, as well as the traditions that blossomed from those roots, reflecting a biblical faith. (I Corinthians 11:2)

1. Affirmation that as the Church embraces the Messianic Jewish community as true brethren, she too will be blessed.

2. Affirmation that the Church (Ikklesia) as envisioned by the Scriptures, includes Jew and gentile, as one new man, through faith in the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 2:11-22, 3:6; Romans 9-11)

C. Acknowledgement of the work of the Spirit in the hearts of Jewish believers, the natural branches, having been grafted back into their rich roots by faith.

1. An understanding that the indwelling Holy Spirit regenerates both those under the law and those apart from it into one new man by faith in the efficacy of the shed blood of Messiah Yeshua. This is the Gospel. (Ephesians 2:11-22)

2. The first Jerusalem Council made it possible for Jewish and Gentile believers to be united in one body, as "one new man," to the glory of God. Both have chosen "circumcision of the heart". (Deut. 10:16, 30:1-6; Jer. 4:4; Romans 2:25-29)

D. There must be respect for the perpetuity of the commandments to Israel, lived out by faith.

1. The apostle Paul strongly affirmed the decision of the first council with regard to gentile observance of the law. (Galatians)

2. He was equally adamant that he had NOT taught Jewish non-observance. (Acts 21:15-26)

E. There must be corporate repentance for gentile unbelief in and replacement of the literal promises to Israel, as well as spiritual promises to both Israel and the nations.

1. The dark history of persecution of the Jewish people in the name of Christ must be acknowledged. .

2. The Church must embrace those promises in the spirit of humility reflected in Messiah Himself.

F. Acknowledgment that G-d is demonstrating the strength of the ancient covenants with the nation of Israel, even in the face of her unbelief in Yeshua. (Ezek. 36:16-37:28)

1. An unprecedented and historic revelation, confirming this vision—the return to the land, even before the LORD pours out His Spirit upon them. .

2. A new way to think within Biblical boundaries.

G. The beauty of unity in the midst of diversity, as a tool for learning rather than division will be evident within the Body of Messiah..

1. The prayer of Messiah Yeshua that His followers would be "one" has to be possible. He never uttered a prayer that was in vain.

2. Jewish and Gentile believers, standing together, as witness to the regeneration of both by the indwelling Spirit. Hallelujah!

3. Joining in prayer for world redemption that G-d may be glorified.

H. Praising G-d for this Vision of Hope that extends His mercy and His grace to both Jewish and Gentile believers in this generation.

I. Opening the gates of the very Jewish G-spel to the Jewish people at large.

J. See document from TJC II Jerusalem, Sept. '06. "The Cry to the Church".

"For God has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all." Romans 11:32

TOWARD JERUSALEM COUNCIL II

Education Curriculum

Session Five - Epilogue

Repentance and Forgiveness: Bearing Witness to the Circumcised Heart

Together we have studied the dark and tragic history that has resulted in alienation, suspicion, and division among the very people, both Jew and Gentile, for whom the Holy Scriptures are foundational to faith and belief. Now the question to ask ourselves is, "What are we supposed to do with all this information?" It is not enough to just know; we must respond.

We can acknowledge and /or even justify the painful historical facts.

. . . . . .*We can seek to lay blame at the feet of those who came before us and proclaim the reality of their failures.*

. . . . . *We can acknowledge this dark history as being informative but ignore its impact on this generation.*

. . . .*or, we can actively seek to defuse the impact, through repentance, prayer and forgiveness.*

Every believer in Yeshua HaMaschiach (Jesus Christ), knowingly or unknowingly, has a role in the reconciliation between the church and the Messianic Jewish community. If we refuse to engage with the deep wounds of the Jewish people over so many centuries, then we are willing to live with the alienation, suspicion and division that will continue to plague the body of believers until Yeshua returns. In the meantime, our view of world redemption, either in theory or practice will remain slanted; our view of the protocols of Scripture selectively clouded; messianic expectations will continue to be greatly diminished. ***Indifference is an active choice. In this generation, ignorance is also a choice.***

"When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8b)

We must ask ourselves what we, both as individuals, and as members of the faith community as a whole can do to reverse the historic and current divisions within the Body of Messiah: initially between Messianic Jews and Christians----then between Christians and Christians----between Messianic Jews and Messianic Jews------and ultimately back full circle to Messianic Jews and Christians. How sad that some of us have dismissed true unity within this body as impossible, or as a compromise of conviction. We have failed to see the beauty of unity in midst of diversity for which our Redeemer prayed. (John 17:21, 22) Yeshua never prayed an empty or meaningless prayer. Sadly, we have yet to see the unity for which He prayed.

A familiar story in Genesis, chapters 37-50: that of the sons of Jacob/Israel who lived in dysfunction, jealousy, and competition for decades, yet became united in the birth of a nation may give us some clues as to how this vision of "Toward Jerusalem Council II" might actually become reality. It's a story of deep repentance and profound forgiveness----emblematic of "circumcised hearts" **Jacob's boys looked somewhat like us in their dysfunction!**

Jacob's children, born of mothers who were treated as slaves, and sold as slaves, inherited sorrow and conflict on all sides. Their names, given by the mothers and noted in order of their birth, reflect the story of competitive family turmoil among the very people the LORD had chosen to emulate Him to an already broken world. (Gen. 29:31-30:24; 35:16-22)

Born in Haran:

1. Reuben= "Look, a son!"	The LORD has seen my affliction	Leah
2. Simeon= "Hearing"	The LORD has heard that I am unloved	Leah
3. Levi= "Attached"	Now my husband will be attached to me	Leah
4. Judah= "Praise"	This time, I will praise the LORD	Leah
5. Dan= "Justice"	God has vindicated me (Rachel)	Bilhah
6. Naphtali= "Wrestling"	I have wrestled with Leah and prevailed	Bilhah
7. Gad= "Fortune"	How fortunate! (Leah)	Zilpah
8. Asher= Happy	Happy am I	Zilpah
9. Issachar= "Reward"	God has rewarded me because I gave. .	Leah
10. Zebulun= "Dwelling"	Now my husband will dwell with me	Leah
11. Joseph= "Let him add"	May the LORD give me another son	Rachel

Born in the Land of promise:

12. Benoni= "Son of my Sorrow" Benjamin= "Son of my right hand"	Named as Rachel was dying renamed by Jacob-	Rachel

Jacob also fathered one daughter in Haran:

Dinah= "Justice"	Feminine form of "Dan"	Leah

The LORD first revealed Himself directly to the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They were tried and tested until they were ready to be instruments through which world redemption would come.

- Abraham was severely tested at the binding of Isaac.
- Isaac was tested as he was commanded to remain in the Land during famine, and trust the LORD for His provision.
- Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes of Israel endured twenty long years of divine discipline in Haran before the LORD called him to return to the Land promised to his

grandfather Abraham. Through a mighty wrestling match with the angel of the LORD, as he feared for his very life, Jacob was given the name, Israel.

- Jacob's sons also would undergo very intense discipline before fulfilling their God ordained roles. God would prepare these men, as He will prepare no other people, to bear the weight and the glory of the Abrahamic Covenant.

After Abraham, Isaac and Israel, there would be no recorded episodes of direct communication from the LORD to Israel's sons. But He did communicate to them through three sets of prophetic dreams to Joseph. The beginning of the restoration of Jacob's family in conflict began with those dreams.

<u>The testing of Joseph:</u>

The "long-sleeved tunic" (TLV) given to Joseph by his father Jacob designated a felt authority. The first set of dreams revealed a prophecy of redemption, but they were heard and seen through a veil of envy.

The dream of sheaves in the field was interpreted by the brothers as a prophecy of Joseph's dominance. But it was intended to foretell their deliverance from famine. The sun, moon and stars dream foreshadowed the plan and the price of world redemption that would come through the nation of Israel. (Revelation chapter 12) Even Jacob, who partially interpreted the second dream, missed its full intent. Even though he rebuked Joseph, "he kept the saying in mind", almost to say that he suspected a deeper meaning than he could see at the time.

Would Joseph accept the brothers' misinterpretation of the dreams and become prideful, or would he trust the LORD to work out His divine plan, not knowing the severe testing that was to come? Was he proud and arrogant toward his brothers as many have claimed? If so, why was Joseph willing to travel alone to see of the welfare of his brothers if he did not care for them, or if he was fully aware of their hatred for him? Why would Jacob have asked him to go in the face of such a known threat? (Genesis 37)

Joseph had to learn that righteousness must be its own reward. (Genesis 39) He had obeyed his father in his concern for the welfare of his sons. His "reward" was to be kidnapped and sold into Egypt, and not to see his family for many years. The temptress was not to be spurned. Righteous Joseph was not willing to exploit Potiphar's trust. He refused her advances. His "reward" was imprisonment. Joseph was trustworthy in prison. The second set of dreams play a role in his molding even there, as he interpreted dreams for the cup-bearer and the baker, but the former forgot to mention Joseph to Pharaoh, so his "reward" for easing the cup-bearer's anxiety was continued imprisonment for two full years. (Genesis 39, 40)

Joseph had not yielded to earlier temptations to pride; but could he handle being "Grand Visier" of Egypt? Again, the life saving dreams from the LORD made a difference, as he gave glory to the LORD and rightly interpreted Pharaoh's dreams. As the dreams of his youth foretold, he was

placed in high position, and Joseph saved Abraham's children from starvation, as well as the Egyptian people and the nations who came to purchase grain. (Genesis 41)

Joseph was tested with the subtle test of assimilation. He could have chosen to forget who he was, and chosen to interpret his exaltation as a reward for himself. The names of his sons affirm his temptation to be assimilated into Egyptian life. (Manasseh=God has made me forget) and (Ephraim=God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction). *But before Jacob's demise, Joseph's sons would be adopted into Jacob's family as sons, Joseph will see his father buried in the Land, and he himself will choose to be buried in the Land. Thus his heart remained in Covenant context. (Genesis 48-50)*

Finally the Greatest Test of all came, piercing into the deepest wound of Joseph's heart: Can Joseph forgive his brothers and seek their welfare even as he leads them into the gift of repentance, which will be critical to the unification of this family? Genesis 42) On the surface, it is difficult to know Joseph's original motives for his harshness with his 10 brothers: was this a redemptive harshness or was he tempted to seek revenge?

The text outcome supports that he was more concerned with issues of greater merit than his wounded heart. Yes, he would learn whether or not his brothers felt remorse for what they had done to him. But could they see how they had caused enormous pain to their father? Was he really still alive? Was Benjamin, their father's only remaining link with his beloved Rachel, truly alive? If so, was he in danger from their covetousness? Joseph had learned patience; he would act and he would wait for answers to these questions.

<u>The testing of the brothers:</u>

As the testing of Joseph prepared him to not only rescue the children of Abraham from starvation, but to bring them into unity, the testing of the brothers proved essential to their role of repentance. Did they want unity? Was the Abrahamic Covenant even a concern for them? For instance, after the incident of the loss of Joseph, Judah had left the family and assimilated among the Canaanites until after the encounter with Tamar. The LORD used Tamar to test his character. (Genesis 38) By the time of the brothers' journey to Egypt to purchase food, Judah had come home, and was counted with the ten. (Genesis 42:3) It is highly significant that both Judah and Joseph, through whom the reconciliation of the family would come, were tempted with assimilation. Then, as now, assimilation of the Jews into the nations means death to the Covenant!

After their first visit to Egypt, the brothers returned home to Jacob, quite confused about their experience in Egypt. Carrying a heavy load of unconfessed guilt over Joseph, (Genesis 42:21, 22), how would they explain Simeon's imprisonment? How were they to understand that the money intended for the purchase of food was still in their sacks? And above all, how would they explain to Jacob the only condition under which they would be allowed to return for more provisions? (Genesis 42:20)

Reuben, eager to establish himself as Jacob's heir, had already violated his father's bed. As with the treachery of Adam, he grasped at the birthright while his father lived, and without blessing. (Genesis 35:22; Hosea 6:7) Now, in keeping with his lack of discernment, he offered the lives of two of his own sons as "atonement" for Simeon and Benjamin, should any harm come to Benjamin. Was that an offer intended to comfort his father? (Genesis 42:36-38)

But Judah, having been himself tried, tested and restored to the family, offered himself as collateral for Benjamin; this provided the level of trust that allowed Jacob to capitulate and release Benjamin into the care of the brothers. (Genesis 43:8, 9) This selflessness is in keeping with the spirit of Moses as well as Rav Shaul (the Apostle Paul), men of God who were willing to risk everything for the sake of their people. (Exodus 32:31, 32; Romans 9:1-5)

The second visit of the brothers to Egypt, with the returned money, with the present from Jacob, and above all, with Benjamin, made it safe for Joseph to begin to reveal himself to them. They were seated, in the order of their birth at a dinner in Joseph's home. Benjamin, being the only brother who had not wounded Joseph, and the son of Joseph's mother Rachel, was honored above all the others. Would the brothers resent this honor? Joseph would see for himself. (Genesis 43)

One more test; how will the brothers respond if Benjamin is in danger for his life? They begin the return journey to Canaan, but are stopped by Joseph's steward; the time for full disclosure has come. They will return to Joseph, fall on their faces before him in fear and remorse. Yes, by their return, Joseph knows that their father is still alive, and that they care for his welfare. (Genesis 44:1-13)

Now Judah "draws near". (Genesis 44:18-34) His heartfelt, selfless and repentant plea to protect both Benjamin and their father, to release Simeon, and offer himself to a life of slavery on their behalf, touched Joseph's heart, and unleashed a profound compassion toward those who had wounded him so deeply. As a result of Judah's repentance on behalf of the brothers Joseph gathered his guilt ridden brothers to himself, and offered to them a profound forgiveness that they knew they did not deserve. This is a beautiful foreshadowing of the regathering of Yeshua's brothers to Himself in the day of redemption to come.

The four hundred years of captivity in Egypt were drawing near. Israel's sons would become the nation through which the LORD God, the Master of the Universe will reveal Himself to the world. Through this "not yet" nation, the Torah, embodying the knowledge of good and evil for which Adam and Eve grasped will become theirs to carry throughout their generations. Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus Christ) will come through this nation, sealing the Abrahamic Covenant with His own blood, that the world might be redeemed.

Now, with the embryonic nation of Israel, safely conceived in the "womb" of Egypt. the testing of the whole nation, as foretold to Abraham, will begin. (Genesis 15:13, 14)

What are the lessons for TJCII in this story?

The tragedy of our divisions, both Jewish and Gentile believers in Yeshua, deeply grieves the Holy Spirit. (Ruach HaKodesh) We cannot afford to continue to miss Joseph's foreshadowing of our Redeemers yearning for peace among His people---first His family, and then "those who would believe through their word" (John 17:20). We can't change all the entanglements of the past without doing harm to one another, (Matthew 13:29, 30) but we can change the direction of the future as we learn to pray with one another.

The Church, both ancient and contemporary, must choose to respect and love one another, pray with and for one another, and learn from one another in midst of her many diversities. The church must be done with the false teaching of supersessionism which has pridefully sought to steal the distinct prophetic role given to Israel first, and then to the nations.

The Messianic Jewish Community reflecting the conflicts within the traditional Jewish community as well as within the church that may well have nurtured them, is also divided over religious as well as political and religious practice issues. It is time to benefit from diversity as instructive.

The church must earnestly repent before the people of Israel in general, and before the Messianic Jewish Community specifically. The Church must demonstrate the depth of selfless repentance as a worldwide community that we have seen in Judah. The wounding of Israel through the Church is extremely deep. **In addition, the Church should expect any demonstration of repentance for that wounding to be tested for genuineness.**

The Messianic Jewish world has the opportunity to emulate the LORD by unleashing forgiveness toward the church, and to pray for the church, even "while they are yet sinners". Most Christians have no knowledge of the abuses of the past, nor of the inherited false teaching of supersessionism (replacement theology). This attitude of compassionate forgiveness is not foreign to Jewish thought.

The Jewish people have blessed the entire world on countless levels; they care for their enemies; they do not rejoice over the fall of their enemies; every year at Passover, Jews pause to remember the Egyptians whose lives were taken than they might be redeemed at the Exodus. And there are hints in the book of Revelation that it will be Messianic Jews who faithfully take the battle with evil to its very end on this earth on behalf of world redemption. (Revelation chap. 12)

Joseph, gathering his brothers to himself, in forgiveness and submission to God, seems to foreshadow the future, when Yeshua will gather His blood brothers to Himself in a profound forgiveness, as they "look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him as an only Son." (Zechariah 12:10) May we be granted the grace we learn from this familiar story.

Respectfully Submitted: With deep appreciation for the counsel of Fr. Peter Hochen and Rabbi Marty Waldman. I am deeply grateful or years of teaching from many of my "Elder Brothers", both now and not yet believers in Yeshua, who have enriched my faith as a Christian woman. They are too many to mention. It has been and continues to be an enormous privilege to walk among the Jewish people; We stand with them and we have often wept with and for them. May it all be to the Glory of the LORD.

Arlene Stucki, July, 2016

FIRST CENTURY JEWISH THOUGHT, AND MESSIANIC EXPECTATIONS

The Messianic Hope, as known in Judaism is supported by Scripture. Quite often, the Church has not recognized this; and has dismissed the Messianic Hope of First Century Israel as political and self-serving. The prayers of Miriam, Zechariah, and Simeon in Luke chapters one and two deny this. The Messianic idea is foreshadowed in the Prophetic books, (Isaiah 2:1-4, Micah 4:1-4) and was developed by the Pharisees of the Inter-Testamental period. Upon that hope, the concepts held by the Jewish people of the first century rested.

Therefore, although we do not see the doctrines of heaven, hell, baptism, judgment spelled out in the Old Testament, they are well known in the New Testament, and were often discussed by Yeshua Himself. Our task in this lesson is to understand the Messianic expectations that were in place during Yeshuas' life on earth. Although the majority of Jews today do not expect a Messianic reign, the people of Israel who look for "the redemption of Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38) continue to expect a Messiah with these qualifications:

I. In traditional Jewish thought, Messiah IS:

A. He must be born of the kingly line of David. (Genesis 49:10; II Samuel 7:10-17; Matthew 1:1-18, Luke 3:31, 32)

B. He is to be a King of Peace, who will usher in an era of peace. (Isaiah 2:1-4, Micah 4:1-4 ; see Matt. 10:34-38 and Luke 19:41, 42)

C. Many Orthodox Jews believe he will rebuild the Temple of the LORD. (Zechariah 6:12-15). Jewish scholars are divided on this subject.

D. In the Messianic age, all nations will worship the One and only G-d. The earth will be full of the glory of the Lord. (Isaiah 2:1-4, Zech. 14:9, 16)

E. As Israel's king, he will submit himself to the word of the LORD, and lead both Israel and the nations, according to the teaching of the LORD. (Deut. 17:14-20, Isaiah 2:1-4; Matthew 5:17-19, Matthew 23:1, 2, Mark 12:28-34).

F. He will regather the Jews out of diaspora. (Jeremiah 31:10,11, Ezek. 37:15-28 and see Jeremiah 16:14-16 with Mark 1:17)

G. He will complete Israel's task to be a light to the nations. World redemption (Tikkun HaOlam) will be accomplished through Him. (Isaiah 49:1-7, John 3:16)

H. It is anticipated that He will perform miracles but this is NOT the affirmation of his identity. (Deuteronomy 13, Revelation 13:11-14) Submission to Torah is the requirement. (Think about the unblemished substitute required for atonement)

I. Note that self-restraint is a characteristic of G-d, emulated in His Messiah. (Mercy triumphs over judgment; the creation of rest. Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit.)

J. The heart of the world is the Land of Israel (Haaretz) the heart of Haaretz is Jerusalem, and the heart of Jerusalem is the Temple. Messiah will rule from Zion. (Genesis 15:18-21; 28:13-22; Psalm 48; Amos 9:11, 12; Zechariah 12:1-5; Acts 3:18-26; 15:14-18)

K. His coming is preceded by Elijah. (Isaiah 40:3-5; Malachi 3:1-4; Matthew 17:9-13, Luke 1:9-13) Note the Passover tradition.

II. In traditional Jewish thought, Messiah IS NOT:

A. Messiah is not Divine, because there is only one G-d. Messiah is not expected to be G-d Himself. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10; 45:5, 6)

1. Therefore, the concept of Messiah as "G-d" or "Son of G-d" is foreign to Jewish thought. The term "son" can mean either the direct progeny of (ben, as in "David ben Gurion"), or one who inherits (bar, such as Bar Mitzvah). It can also mean "to emulate". (See Psalm 2)

2. The use of plural nouns, such as Elohim (Genesis 1:1, or statements such as "let us make man in our own image" is understood to denote majesty, not more than one person. (Genesis 1:26) "Echad" is better (Gen. 2:24, Deut. 6:4)

3. Yeshua does not disagree or try to manipulate the truth that G-d is One. (Mark 12:28-34) So how would He have us understand Divine Oneness as revealed through the Messiah? (see Gen. 1:1-3; Psalm 33:6; John 1:14; Dan. 7:13 and 14 and Matthew 26:62-66) and note how Yeshua dealt with the question of divinity, recorded in each of the synoptic Gospels in Matt. 22:41-46, quoting Psalm 110:1-4.

4. See also Exodus 4:22, Hosea 11:1, Matthew 2:15; Proverbs 30:4, John chap 5, John 10:22-42; John 17:21

5. The doctrine of Trinity, developed over a period of 100 years, through the Council of Nicea in 325 C.E. is foreign to Jewish thought. Divine Oneness is a mystery. Yeshua was very cautious about describing Himself as "Son of G-d", and usually took the title of "Son of Man".

B. G-d is Spirit. He does not take on human attributes. Think of the work of Ezra and the Great Assembly. (But see also Genesis 18, Exodus 23:20, 21; John 4:24)

C. No expectation of **Messiah** being a sin bearer. (but see Leviticus 4; Isaiah 52:13-53:10, Psalm 22; John 5:45-47)

D. No thought of vicarious atonement. (The Levitical Sacrifices; Ex. 32:30-33, Ezek. 18)

E. No human sacrifice is permitted---EVER! (Genesis 22, Deut. 12:31, Jeremiah 7:31, 19:5)

F. No expectation of a Messiah who is both priest and king---in fact it was forbidden for these roles to mingle! (II Chronicles 26:16-23) King David was an exception in I Samuel 6:14, laying the ground for Messiah. But the attempt at crossover became a problem in the days of the Hasmoneans----priests claiming to be kings, such as Alexander Jannai. (See Genesis 49:10; Psalm 110:1-4, Ezekiel 21:27, Zechariah 3:1-10, 6:9-15)

III. The traditions of Judaism:

A. Yeshua supported, taught and followed "the traditions of the Elders", so long as they were in keeping with the spirit of the Torah. (Examples: He agreed with the traditions of baptism, teachings on heaven, hell, judgment; BUT when the traditions contradicted the spirit of Scripture, he strongly opposed them, as in Mark 7:1-23)

B. Rav Shaul encouraged the churches to "remember the traditions" as he had taught them. (I Corinthians 11:2; II Thessalonians 2:15, 3:6)

C. The interpretation of the Torah was needed to made it livable: Ezra had feared writing the oral tradition down; but the Rabbis believed it to be a necessity in order to preserve the nation in diaspora. <u>The preservation of the Jews from assimilation is essential that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.</u>

D. When the Talmud was sealed, some of Yeshua's teachings which were rejected during his ministry were later accepted, such as those dealing with healing on the Sabbath, and the preservation of life.

E. Over time, Yeshua has been re-admitted into Jewish history. Rav Shaul remains suspect, but that is mainly due to the misunderstanding by both Jews and Christians that he abandoned his heritage and taught Jews to do so. He took a vow to demonstrate that this was not the case. (Acts 21:15-26)

IV. Theological barriers as they relate to communication today:

A. G-d is <u>purely</u> One; Altogether Other. He is Spirit. He is not corporeal. He is both transcendent and Imminent. (Genesis 2:24, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Mark 12:28-34, John 4:24) THIS IS REALLY THE ONLY ISSUE OF JEWISH DOGMA.

1. You cannot describe Him; you cannot define Him—to the Jew, the doctrine of trinity comes too close to an idolatrous and forbidden concept of the Godhead.

2. Israel wrestles with G-d; this is considered an obligation, a privilege, and a sign of closeness.

3. He reveals Himself in Torah. Great discomfort with Christian mysticism---"God led me", "God spoke to my heart". (Jews: "Obey, then listen" Christians: "Listen, then obey")

4. Judaism is a religion based upon practice. Christianity is a faith based upon belief. There is a very wide gap between these two concepts, but there should not be. (James 2:14-26)

5. Rejection of statues, saints, pictures, Man-God---smacks of Roman and Greek mythology to Jewish people.

6. The thought that "<u>God dies" is absolutely infathomable</u> in Jewish thought. (See Genesis 15; Jeremiah 34:18, 19; Job 34:14, 15)

7. So, we do not press into doctrines that are not central to belief in Yeshua.

B. Man is the crown of Creation, free will is emphasized.

    1. Man is to emulate his Creator.

    2. Sin is the abuse of man's free will; for the Jew it is violation of Torah. Faith without responsibility for conduct is considered to be morally inferior. The Jew's <u>historical</u> experience with baptismal regeneration and eternal security is that the Christian can confess, go and sin, and confess again, with no penalty whatsoever.

    3. Repentance secures forgiveness; G-d prefers loyalty to sacrifice. (Is. 1:13-15, Hosea 6:6) But this abrogates Moses.

    4. No notion of original sin, ("The soul You have given me is pure") but everyone sins, so we start there. Jews approach this from a different perspective which upholds free choice: Yetzer HaTov and Yetzer HaRa.

    5. Gentiles held accountable to the Noachide law (Rabbinic) only. This is important because it annuls the need for proselytism in the Jewish mind.

C. How the Scriptures are to be divided and interpreted:

    1. Torah, then Prophets, then Writings (Tanakh). Followers of Yeshua can safely allow the Brit Hadasha to rest upon these foundations. (The Church interprets the Torah through the New Testament, leading to our multiple interpretations and divisions). For the Elder Brother, "Old is better" see Luke 5:36-39 and Matthew 13:52.

    2. Talmud is to the Jew what the Brit Hadasha is to the Church. But the Talmud can help the Messianic message.

3. Supersessionism (Replacement/Fulfillment Theology) So, the written law given over to the Gentiles to do with as they wish; the Talmud will remain the Law for the Jew.

4. **We meet in Moses!! Blood atonement was always received by faith. The code of the law tells the Jew how to walk, but the works of the law never brought atonement from sin.**

D. Israel is the Covenant people of G-d. (Supersessionism is a false teaching of monumental proportions.)

1. Israel has miraculously been brought back to the land. Many Christians do not acknowledge this as a sign of the permanence of the Covenant.

2. Messianic Judaism has risen against all odds. The church was not responsible for it, and the Synagogue fights it. But it is here to stay!. This is the first time we see a community of Jews, living as Jews, following Yeshua at this level since the first century.

3. Salvation is a community thing in Jewish eyes; the term is not understood in reference to individual forgiveness from sin, such as "I am saved" or "You need to be saved".

4. The people are collectively accountable for their conduct among the nations. This is the price demanded of a chosen nation. It is a servant position.

5. Christianity is seen as the enemy **culture**; to become a Christian is to betray one's people. (In Jewish literature, Christianity is referred to as "Esau or Edom")----is not recognized as having anything to do with being Jewish. Only recently is it acknowledged that Christians are not idolators. (3 gods)

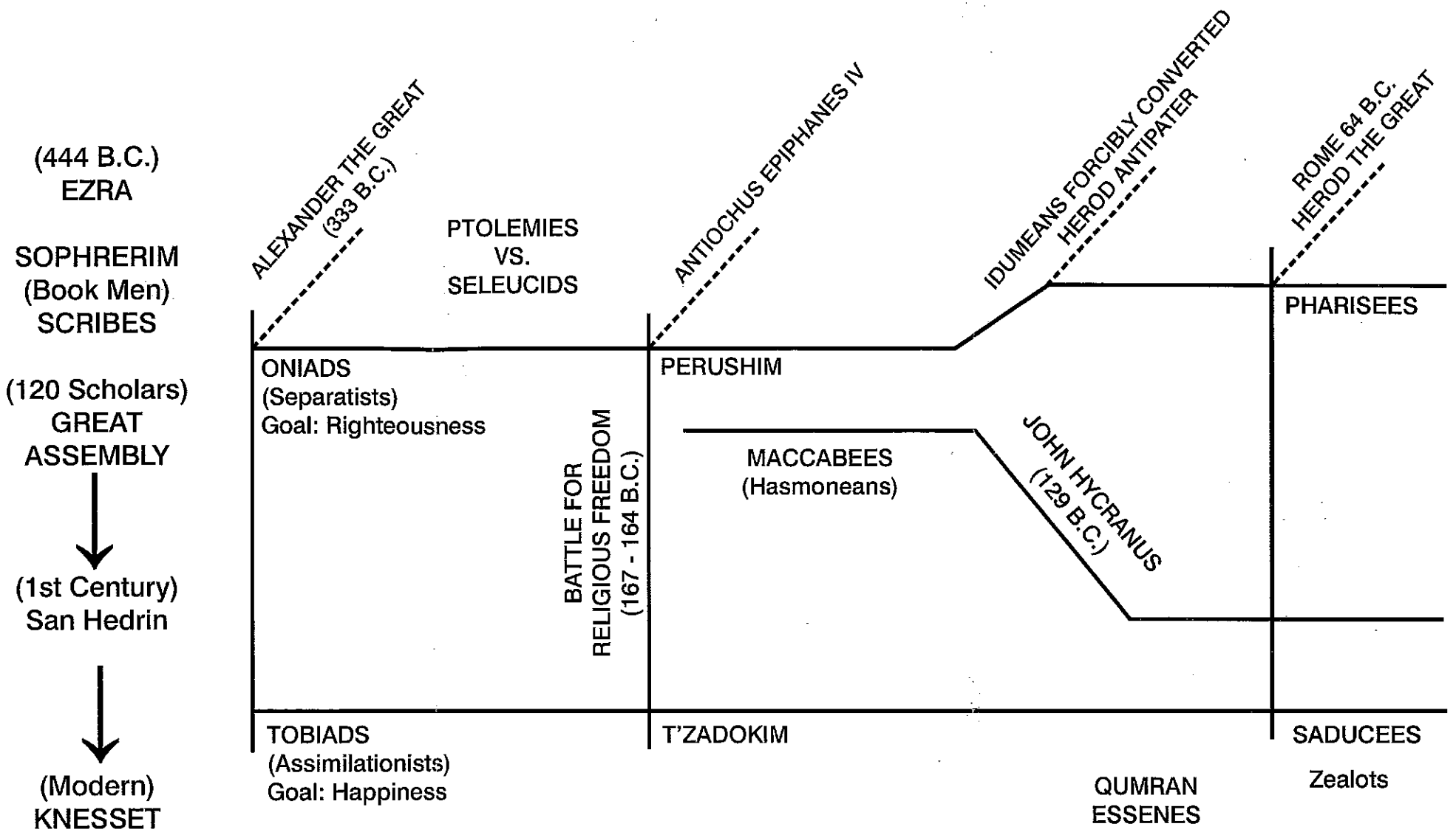
6. Jewish people traditionally do not proselyte (there are exceptions) others since 1st century; and deeply resent the Christian missionary mindset.

7. Judaism is "here and now" religious faith; does not preclude a belief in eternal life. But because we cannot fully know it, therefore, we love God by keeping His commandments here and now, and trust Him for the world to come.

8. The Brit Hadasha teaches that salvation has been extended to all nations as promised in the Tanakh, and that all are invited to participate in the "World to Come" with Israel, but not as supplanters.

In Yeshua, all the promises of G-d come into their fullness; both to Israel and to the nations, beginning with the Abrahamic Covenant, and experienced in the book of Acts.

INTER-TESTAMENTAL JEWISH HISTORY



Jewish History during the Inter Testamental Years

God had spoken! The blueprint for His plan of salvation was complete and preserved by faithful men as Holy Writ. Carefully and patiently, from the days of Eden, He promised man a rescue from himself. He made and kept covenant with, He ordained, He defined, He protected, and He revealed an extravagance of love for man that is not of this world, yet that would enter the darkness of this world and dispel it. He was prepared to do whatever it took to resuscitate His beloved, fallen children.

He created the nation of Israel, through which He made Himself known. For 2,000 years, they will be the only people on earth who are intimately acquainted with the Master of the Universe. He painted a portrait for Israel that would point them, and the nations, to a priestly, dying Savior. Through this Savior God would redeem the world. He put His word into the mouths of the Prophets of Israel that insisted that His people walk in righteousness and justice before the nations. They foretold a kingdom of peace that would surely come, and would never end, even as He had intended for His creation from the beginning. He disciplined His beloved Israel, the "apple of His eye"; He held them to a standard required of no other nation. He promised that the Messenger of the Covenant was coming----and through the Prophets, He even told them when, where, and through what lineage. And most of all, He defined His character.

But now there was silence! No prophetic word at all! Generations were born and died; Jews prayed, they fasted, they suffered immeasurable persecution if they remained faithful to the LORD. Was it all a dream? What was next?

Texts for Study: Leviticus 26; Nehemiah chap 4, 6:1-4; Daniel 2:39, 7:6, 8:1-14, 9:27; Malachi 3:1-4, 4:4-6; Matthew 7:28, 29, 22:23-32, 24:15;Luke 3:1-6; John 4:19-22, 10:22; Acts 6:1-7, 9, 18:24-28, 21:19-22, 22:21, 22, 23:1-10.

I. Review: 50,000 Jews Return from Exile under the decree of Cyrus, the Medo-Persian.

A. The Rebuilding of the 2nd Temple, **at Mt. Moriah,** with the altar, at the Feast of Trumpets. (Rosh HaShana) This begins the 2nd Temple period.
   1. Without the Ark of the Covenant.
   2. Not without opposition from Sanballat and **Tobiah.** (Nehemiah chap. 4)
   3. The **Samaritans** were opposed to the return of the Jews.
      a. When they were rejected by Nehemiah, they built their own temple on Mt. Gerazim. (see John 4:19-22)
      b. They continued to inhabit the land between Judea and Galilee.
   4. The work was completed, although this Temple was much smaller and less beautiful than **Solomon's Temple**.
   5. The Prophetic voice is that of Haggai and Zechariah.
   6. The leaders were Zerubbabel of the kingly line, and Joshua the High Priest.

B. Ezra the Scribe Returns. Jewish tradition and history ascribe to Ezra the title of "2nd Moses".

1. **Transliterated the Scriptures from ancient Phoenician script into Aramaic block script known as Hebrew script today. The original language of the Old Testament is Hebrew, with some Aramaic passages.**
2. Translated the Scriptures and gave them back to the people.
3. Removed anthropomorphisms from Scripture in the translation to avoid allowing Israel to return to idolatry.
4. Established the reading cycle used in the synagogue to this day.
5. Finished II Chronicles wrote Ezra, possibly Nehemiah.
6. Compiled the Scriptures later to be canonized, known to Jews as the "Tanakh". (**T**orah, **N**eviim, **K**etuvim=Law of Moses, Prophets, Writings)
   A. The Jewish Bible and the Christian Old Testament are the same; only the order is different, because of Jewish understanding of these levels of Divine revelation.
   B. **Only Scriptures were accepted that were accompanied by the Prophetic voice.** This is why no writings from the intertestamental years were canonized by Jews, nor were they accepted in Protestantism. The Catholic Bible includes them, and they are helpful in understanding the history of the time. These are the "hidden", or Apocryphal books.
7. Jewish tradition says Ezra convened the **Great Assembly (knesset)** of 120 members, which would evolve into the **San Hedrin** of the 1st century. According to Jewish history, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah sat on this assembly.
8. The "zugot" or pairs of scholars also descended from this body of scholars.
   A. These are the scholars of the Perushim (separated ones) who developed much of the theology of the New Testament. (see Matthew 7:28, 29). In the first century they will become known as **"Pharisees".**
   B. Hillel/Shammai in Jesus' day, were the last of the zugot (pairs).
   C. The Pharisees will be followed by men known as "Tannaim", the Rabbis who after **70 A.D**. will set the course for Judaism without a Temple---still in effect today.

II. Pre-Exilic vs. Post-Exilic Judaism: The New Testament demonstrates a very different community structure and an evolved theological perspective than that of the Old Testament.

A. Tribal Society to inclusive National Society.
B. The Kingdom without to the Kingdom within.
C. Solely Temple focus to Synagogue/School/Desert/Temple focus.
D. King/Prophet/Priest to Scribe/Priest/Teacher/Individual
E. Never again idolatry—Ezra's great legacy!

III. The World of the Greeks:

A. **Alexander the Great**, the spiritual descendant of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and the son of Philip of Macedon, conquered the known world like a bolt of lightening in approximately **333 B.C.** (See the Daniel texts)
   1. Alexander **hellenized** the known world from Greece to India.

2. Greek became the commercial language of that world. Thus, the original language of the New Testament will be **Greek.** The common language of the day was **Aramaic, which is very close to Hebrew.**
3. Alexandria was established in Egypt in 332 B.C., and held a large Jewish population, with an enormous synagogue. (Acts 18:24-28)
4. Hellenism looked different in every society, as it fused local culture with Hellenistic thought.
5. Alexander did not force Hellenism upon the Jews; he had a vision of the Temple and of the godly Priest, Simon the Just (one of the last survivors of Ezra's Great Assembly), encouraging him in his conquests, and allowed the Jews to live according to the Law of God.

B. Alexander died in 323 B.C.; his conquered lands, from Greece to India, were divided among his four generals: (Daniel 8:8)
   1. Turkey and Greece
   2. Babylon, Persia.
   3. **Egypt: the Ptolemies.** (Controlled Palestine from 301 B.C. to 198 B.C.)
      a. A time of peace
      b. The Ptolemies were close to pure Greek thought in philosophy.
      c. Translation of the **Septuagint** in 250 B.C. (Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek. Tradition says that 70 Scholars did the work, thus the name.)
   4. **Syria: the Seleucids.** (Controlled Palestine from 198 B.C.-165 B.C.)
      a. Antiochus III overcame the Ptolemies, and encouraged the Jews to continue in their law.
      b. 168 B.C., **Antiochus IV Epiphanes** wanted the Temple treasury
      c. **Forced Hellenization upon the Jews** (I Maccabees 7):
         - Write on **doorposts** and the horns of their **livestock**: "I have nothing to do with the God of Israel". The Jews demonstrated a passive resistance.
         - Horrendous persecution of the Jews. 40,000 brutally killed; 40,000 forced into slavery
         - Forced to abandon **Torah** study, so the **Haftorah** was born.
         - The Temple desecrated with a pig on the altar, and a statue of Zeus (in the likeness of Antiochus IV) erected in the Temple. (Daniel 9:27; Jesus references for the future in Matthew 24:15)
         - Jews throughout the land were to eat pork, as a sign that they renounced their faith.
         - Jewish youths to join the races and games in the theatres and hypodromes, offer sacrifice to Greek gods. The cult of the body. Would Jerusalem become a **"polis"? (ANSWER: YES!)**
         - The Samaritans helped the Syrians. (John 4; Acts 6:1-7)

      d. The real issue was a Jewish Civil war between the separatists and the hellenizers, who bowed to assimilation. The diabolical goal was ie **the**

annihilation of the people of the Covenant before Messiah was born.

e. The **Maccabees** of Modin (I Maccabees 2:1-28) overcame the Syrians in a miraculous defeat, rescuing the line of Messiah. **Hannukah**, the Feast of Dedication, or the Festival of Lights, is the memorial to this battle. (John 10:22).

f. The descendants of the Maccabees became known as the Hasmoneans.

1. Some believe this name is a play on words:
    a. Festival observance (Hag)
    b. Sabbath observance (Shabbat)
    c. Circumcision (Milah)
    d. All banned. Hence, the acronym, "Hashmon", eventually becoming "Hasmoneans".
2. Historically and linguistically, the word "Hasmoneans" stems from the establishment of the priestly line of **"Zadok"** in Solomon's day. (I Chronicles 29:22)

C. Hasmonean Rule:

1. In the beginning the Hasmonean rulers were close to the separatists and were concerned for Religious freedom. (See separate handout) The Separatist party was known as Oniads, or Hassidim or Perushim, and ultimately became the **Pharisees**.
2. The **Hellenists** were known as Tobiads, or Tz'dakim, and ultimately became identified with the **Sadducees**. They were the aristocrats, with one foot in each world, but they controlled the Temple.
3. The Hasmonean line deteriorated. Within 3 decades, they became political and corrupt in nature. Concerned for territorial expansion, they sought kingship as well as control of the priesthood, but the Perushim would not allow this, as they were neither of the **royal Davidic line**, **nor of the High Priestly line of Zadok**. The Hasmoneans simply stated that they were chosen by God to lead Israel. Alexander Jannai is infamous for crucifying 800 Pharisees for their resistance to his leadership.
4. In 145 B.C. a Temple was built in Leontopolis, Egypt to rival the Temple in Jerusalem by a priest named Onias IV, demonstrating the struggles within the community. This Temple stood until 73 B.C.
5. **The last period of independent Jewish sovereignty in Judea, until 1948 A.D., was under Hasmonean rule from 142-65 B.C**., and was achieved through political diplomacy with the rising power of Rome, during the decline of the Seleucids,
6. **In 128 B.C. John Hyrcannus forcibly converted the Idumeans. Herod Antipater, an Idumean convert to Judaism, will father the line of the Herods.**
7. The Hasmonean line declined in power with the Civil war instigated by the rivalry between Hyrcannus II and his brother Aristobulos; Rome eventually interceded, and **Pompey entered Jerusalem in 63 B.C.**

8. The Tannaic period (THE rabbis of the New Testament) begins here with Shimon ben Shetach in 100 B.C.
9. **Herod the Great**, refurbished and enhanced the Temple, was the mad and ruthless king of Judea. Depending upon one's interpretation of events, Herod's Temple may be considered the 2nd or 3rd Temple.
10. The impact of Hellenism, and the hatred of the Samaritans remains evident in the New Testament. (John 7:34,35; 12:20-24; Acts 6:1-7, 9; 21:19-22; 22:21,22)

IV. The world of the Jews:

A. The **Diaspora** population was much larger than the Jewish population in Judea, with the largest concentration of Jews remaining in Babylon to the east.
B. The sects of Judaism in the First Century. This is the last time that there was more than one way to be a Jew until the 18th century, paving the way for GOD TO RAISE UP THE MESSIANIC JEWISH COMMUNITY IN OUR LIFETIME!!

1. Sadducees
   - Became associated with Hellenizers, assimilationists, however, a stereotype is inaccurate.
   - Wealthy, aristocratic
   - **In Herod's day, controlled the Sanhedrin**
   - Accepted only the written law, not the prophets nor the writings as binding. (Matthew 22:23-32; Acts 23:1-10)
   - Did not accept the oral tradition of the Pharisees as authoritative.
   - Were not highly regarded by the people at large.
   - As a sect, did not survive the destruction of the Temple.

2. Pharisees (7 houses of Pharisees)
   - Accepted the Prophets and Writings as Scriptural truth
   - Developed the oral law and tradition as binding.
   - Opposed hellenization and assimilation
   - Protection of the faith—opposed to the death.
   - Interpreted the Law to accommodate the times.
   - Wrote prayers to substitute for the Temple rites.
   - **Developed the major doctrines that were in place by first century**, such as: Good and Evil; Immortality of the Soul; Heaven and Hell; Eschatology; Day of Judgment; Resurrection; Coming of Messiah.

3. Qumran—Earliest record in John Hyrcannus' time. People left and went out to the desert because of the corruption of the Hasmonean line. **We will learn about these people when we visit Qumran**.They were attacked and butchered by Alexander Jannai, the Hasmonean king.
   - Had families
   - On Yom Kippur went to the Temple

- Took oaths
- Had annual reexamination
- Had slaves according to the Law
- Would fight
- **The Dead Sea Scrolls are their legacy.**

4. Essenes—also withdrew for pious reasons.
    - Known for charity, prayer
    - Holy lifestyle
    - Biblical mystics
    - Eschatological
    - Celibate
    - Would not enter the Temple at any time
    - Would not take oaths
    - Permanent membership after Mikveh
    - No slaves
    - No private property

5. Zealots—Many groups, but all determined to free Israel from foreign rule; some were terrorists (Sicarri). **From a political standpoint, these are the folks who brought Rome to Jerusalem in 70 A.D.** The Jewish fast day, the **9th of Av**, remembers the destruction of the Temple. **In 135 A.D.** The Romans, angered over the third Jewish uprising within 70 years, plowed up Jerusalem, and applied the name of the ancient Philistines to Judea, renaming it **"Palestine",** and renamed Jerusalem **"Aelia Capitolina",** forbidding Jews to enter the city under pain of death.

It was into this century of chaos and unrest, that Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem of Judea, to a poor Jewish woman, of the blood line of David, named Miriam, betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the Kingly line of David. It is miraculous that his line had survived through the centuries since the first promise of His coming in Genesis 3:15. It is miraculous that we know His name. It is miraculous that the people of Israel live, once again in the land promised to their fathers. Will we once again see an effort to annihilate them? You can count on it!

Toward Jerusalem Council II (TJCII)
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