

ATTACKS AGAINST THE MESSIANIC MOVEMENT

As most of you know, I am a Messianic Jew. Yes, I use the words Yeshua, Yahweh, Elohim, so on and so forth. I read Torah and observe Shabbat. We really do no work during that day and we usually rest or spend time with family and friends on what most call Saturday.

As you probably also know I was not raised in a Jewish household. I found out about my Jewish ancestry later on in life. My mom used to take me to Church when I was very young and I was trained in a rudimentary faith in Jesus. My mother was a mixture of Episcopal and Lutheran. I learned all about Jesus; could recite the Nicene Creed and even have a prayer book signed by the then Bishop of New Jersey for the Episcopal church which I was given after my Confirmation. So, I am well acquainted with the western way of terminology of the Bible and church stuff.

A couple of years after I was saved in the blood of Yeshua I discovered my Jewish ancestry through a genealogical search of my earthly roots. I had always known that I was different. I was always attracted to Jewish friends; always read magazines from back to front, which puzzled many; and I always felt that there was something more to me than I could identify with or that my relatives would tell me about. I can remember being in school during the 1973 Israeli war and that the kids in class took up sides. Some of the kids of northern and southern European extract sided with the Arabs while I sided with the Jewish kids in our classes. I was not popular with the gentiles, and for that matter never have been.

After I discovered my true Hebraic Roots, I decided to become Kosher. Not that I felt a lawful duty to do so, but I figured that if Yahweh told His people to do it back in the old days it was probably a good idea. He had to have some reason and I didn't question; I just did it. I ALWAYS received flak from my Christian friends. I heard, "we're not under the Law but under Grace" to the point of nausea. When I started to see the pagan roots of Christmas, I started to avoid the celebration and I did the same with Easter. Again, I received flack and looks of disbelief, like I had left my faith in Yeshua and reverted back to Judaism. I hooked up with Jews for Jesus in San Francisco and would drive the 1.5 hour each way to attend their services at the Shalom Center on Ocean Avenue. They didn't indoctrinate me; they were just fellow believers in Yeshua who gathered and worshipped Yahweh in a more Biblical fashion. I always felt nearer to them than I did at any of my churches, the latter of which I had tried several.

There were always those who just could not reconcile that fact that a person could be Jewish and Christian at the same time and they were quick to tell me so; some still do even today. The whole Law vs. Grace thing still confuses a lot of people. They'll give you the whole spiel about the Law being written on our hearts and that grace covers all. Well, that is true but let's look at something. Traffic laws here in the States tell us that we cannot run a stop sign. We obey (hopefully you do) that law because we will get a traffic ticket and have to pay a hefty fee for our error. Grace is the police officer pulling you over, and seeing that you've had a bad day, has mercy on you and lets you off with a warning. Just because the officer let you go doesn't mean that the law of stopping at stop signs is null and void. If you're a good person, you'll remember that officer every time you come to one of those signs and you'll be extra careful not to run through one without stopping.

In the same way the Torah is still viable today. If we're walking humbly with Yahweh, He tells us about things that we've done wrong, or even better, He'll tell us not to do them before we do them and this prevents us from breaking the law. This is Yahweh's grace in action; not just forgiving after we sin, but talking to us before we sin. This is Yeshua's fulfillment of the Torah; His blood of forgiveness along with the Ruach Ha Kodesh (Holy Spirit) who makes us think about things before we do them so that we can weigh out whether we want to obey Yahweh or disobey Him. And yes, we still have a choice to obey or disobey.

A better rendering of the word Torah is "teaching." The meaning of Torah is like this, "you obey Yahweh and you will live a good life and be content; you disobey Yahweh you'll live a miserable life without the many blessings that Yahweh has to offer." I didn't mention sin because I'm talking to believers in Yeshua and our sin is atoned through the blood of Yeshua. If Yahweh wrote the Torah on your heart, then how can it be abolished? It is there to be called back up whenever you mess up or before you mess up. In essence, you can still run that stop sign, but you've got Yeshua as your arbitrator for your offense. That doesn't mean however that if you get into the habit of running stop signs because you have a Holy Arbitrator it won't prevent someone coming from your side to run into you when they run their stop sign. If you obey, even though it's a hassle to stop you will live another day.

Did you ever have one of those situations, where you come to a four way stop sign and you stop and some guy from your left or right comes barreling through without stopping. You stop for a brief moment and realize what would have happened had you not stopped. You breath a sigh of relief. Your obedience to the law saved your life; a written code that you could disobey,

but you did obey because you've now come to know that stopping is best for you and for everyone at that intersection.

Well, there are two sides to a coin so they say, and history does repeat itself. During the early church there were Jews who were telling gentile believers that they needed to be circumcised and to become Jewish so that they could be saved. This thing has arisen again and there are whole groups of people who are touting what was so heavily rebuked in scripture, especially by the Apostle Paul. These new era Judaizers, when approached with the words of Paul will often say that they don't recognize Paul as being an authentic believer so they disregard his testimony and instruction. Paul realized that the Torah wasn't done away with, but that it was fulfilled by Yeshua; he says so. Yet, he also says that in that fulfillment we need to see the grace of Yahweh and have that Grace also.

The Judaizers run around saying that if you don't use the names of Yahweh, Yeshua and other Hebraic terms that a person really isn't saved. They say that one must, in essence, become Jewish in order to be saved; heard that before have we? They say that people must become Torah observant or they're not real believers. But let's look at Torah for a minute, shall we? The Torah is the Five books of Moses; the instruction that Yahweh gave to Moshe at Mount Sinai and afterward to which it was codified as Law. Most of western society is based on the first ten Laws of Torah. But, what the Judaizers fail to recognize is that there aren't just the Ten Commandments, Shabbat and the Feasts; no, there are 613 Commandments, many of which involve sacrifice of clean animals in a Temple or Tabernacle. That Temple or Tabernacle was supposed to always be in Yerushalayim and that is the only place where Yahweh would receive sacrifice. The Torah also encoded laws for offenses, many which included stoning or putting people outside of the camp. People with some diseases were not allowed in certain places and women were unclean for a week after their menstrual cycle ended. My assertion here is, if you're going to be "totally" Torah observant and push it on other people, then go the whole way. Ah, but you can't can you. There is no Temple anymore and if there was, would you go up once a year to offer up your sacrifice of atonement for sin. Oh, but wait, Yeshua is our atone for sin so that part of the Torah has been fulfilled.

It is high time for Messianics of all flavors to realize that there are only a few steps that are needed to be modern Torah Observant people. And realized that when Yahweh was speaking this, he was speaking to the Children of Israel, not the Gentiles. We are to retain Shabbat and we are to celebrate the Feasts in the Spring and in the Fall. We must keep kosher and we must observe Shabbat – as a day of rest.

I find it quite amusing how each Messianic has his/her own interpretation of what Shabbat is. To some, they keep it like the Hassidim do; you don't work, you don't cook and you don't travel on that day. Or at least they'll tell you that they do these things. However, when there is a good speaker twenty miles away, they all hop in their car and listen to the speaker. Suddenly, grace kicks in and this Sabbath breaking "work" is now fine. Some won't eat pork on Shabbat, but it is okay on all other days of the week. My contention being; if you're going to be critical of people for not keeping Shabbat the way that you keep it then just look at Yahweh's finger pointing at you because in your hypocrisy, you're not keeping it like Yahweh defined it. When it comes to the Torah, it's either all or nothing; I mean if you're intent on keeping it.

However, if you're truly in Yahweh through Yeshua you realize that the code of Torah that is written on your heart has been fulfilled and the that writing on your heart happened because of Yeshua's fulfillment of Torah. Scripture in the Brit Hadasha tells us that our bodies are now the Beit Ha Mikdash (the Temple) of the Ruach Ha Kodesh. The abiding of the Ruach in our bodies is yet another fruit of Mashiach's fulfillment of the Torah. The very Spirit of the Law Giver lives within us. He is there to interpret the Torah that is written on our hearts and if we're all walking in obedience to Yahweh then each person operates as one part of a body, that when knit together by Yahweh is one body with the Mind of Mashiach. If any man is in Mashiach, he is a new creature; behold old things are passed away, behold all things are new.

You know what is really sad. If you were sitting in church and you knew that one person in the congregation was a member of the KKK you would be offended and you would demand that the Pastor bring that man to correction. In addition, if you were sitting there and you knew that an unsaved Jew, militant in nature, a member of the Jewish Defense League was sitting there too, and you knew that he was there to disrupt the service, you would have the ushers escort him out of the church. But I ask you, what is the difference today? We have gentile believers running around saying that the Jews have been discarded by Yahweh and cast off forever (racist KKK) and you have the Jewish believers who say that if you don't become Jewish and act Jewish you are not really of Yahweh and are really cast-off people in denial. The time for this crap to stop is here and now. If you are in one of those camps, it is time for you to realize that Yeshua is the Head of the Congregation; He is the vine and we are only branches; He is Yahweh and we are the dust of the earth that He cared enough to die for.

Fellow Jews, the Gentiles have been called unto faith and by faith alone they are called. So, no matter what you believe to be true, only Yahweh's truth is relevant. Fellow gentile believers; we Jews have not been cast off. A remnant of us do believe in Yeshua and that very

same Yeshua is coming back to save the Physical Seed of Israel. He's coming back to redeem Israel and well, if you claim to be Israel, then maybe you are not redeemed after all. So why don't we all just join together, laying customs behind; laying idols behind and worship Yahweh, the author and finisher of our faith. We're going to have to live together in Heaven, so why not start working toward that end right now.