

OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS

monthly newsletter of Outreach Israel Ministries
and MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS



JULY 2021

SPIRIT OF MAMMON



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STATEMENT OF BELIEF

*Outreach Israel Ministries
and Messianic Apologetics*

There is One Almighty Creator God of the Universe, who has revealed Himself to us in the manifestations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) came in fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies of the Scriptures and is fully God. It is mandatory for us to believe in a Divine Redeemer to be saved. Salvation is a free gift of God to all who receive Messiah Yeshua into their lives and confess of their sins. Those who reject Messiah will be consigned to eternal punishment.

The Holy Scriptures, Genesis-Revelation, are the inspired, infallible Word of God as revealed in the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts

All Believers in Israel's Messiah are to be regarded as a part of the Commonwealth of Israel. Jewish and non-Jewish Believers are to respect one another in mutual love as brothers and sisters, and are to work together for the salvation of the Jewish people and return of Israel's Messiah.

The Torah (Genesis-Deuteronomy) is the foundation of all Scripture, was followed by our Messiah Yeshua, and is to still be studied and heeded by Believers today.

Yeshua the Messiah is coming to gather the Believers after the Tribulation period.

OIM is an *agapē* ministry, freely and benevolently giving the vast majority of its teachings and resources, without charge, to those who desire to be spiritually nourished.

For a fuller Statement of Faith, consult the OIM website

Outreach Israel News is the monthly newsletter of Outreach Israel Ministries, a non-profit organization with an emphasis on reaching, teaching, and encouraging the Messianic community. Subscription to **Outreach Israel News** is without cost and supported only by donation.

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OIM UPDATE

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"Now without faith it is impossible to please God. For the one who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6, TLV).

SPIRIT OF MAMMON

In recent months, especially during the raging invisible war (psychological, biological, cyber) and spiritual struggle between good and evil that is plaguing the world, it has become abundantly clear to people, with the spiritual eyes to see and ears to hear, that the competing forces influencing humanity can be categorized into two distinctive worldviews. One group vying for supreme power, is simply God-less and under the absolute dominion of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. The other group is those who recognize the Creator God, His Word, and seek to be led by the Holy Spirit of the Almighty One. These diametrically opposed perspectives are certainly not new to the created order, and should not surprise anyone, as noted millennia ago in statements appearing in Ecclesiastes:

"A generation comes, and a generation goes, but the earth remains forever. . . What has been is what will be, and what has been done will be done again. There is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything about which is said, 'Look! This is new!'? It was already here long ago, in the ages long before us" (Ecclesiastes 1:4, 9-10, TLV).

Despite the technological advances of the Digital Age, and the skewed, perceived evolutionary enlightenment of modernity, the core challenge for humanity always returns to its fallen nature and/or lack of knowledge regarding that lost condition. But given this inherent problem, people naturally resort to following one of the two choices succinctly offered to **all** people by God's Son Yeshua, on how to survive or thrive in the world they occupy. In His Sermon on the Mount to those gathered in ancient Galilee, the concept of **treasures** or wealth is addressed, with the caveat that the heartfelt pursuit of treasures, and where they are invested, can become a person's master or controlling entity:

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for your-

selves **treasures** in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in or steal. **For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.** The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore if your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! **No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick by one and look down on the other. You cannot serve God and money"** (Matthew 6:19-24, TLV).

Upon comparing the personal choice to serve God or money (mammon), Yeshua unequivocally states the predicament this engenders. The human ability to do both will be impossible, with hatred toward one, or despising the other, and in essence, become what James describes as a **double minded** person:

"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. **But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all without hesitation and without reproach; and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, without any doubting—for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord—he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. . . Therefore submit to God. But resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded"** (James 1:2-8; 4:7-8 TLV).

This concept of **double-mindedness**, especially among professing Believers, became apparent to me when I had a vivid impression in my mind upon returning to the Dallas area after twelve years pursuing the Lord in other environments. In 1998, our family was called to sell our home and move to Honduras for some spiritual seasoning, regarding our commission to exclusively serve the Lord. After the country of Honduras was ravaged by Hurricane Mitch, we were led to Norman, Oklahoma for a year of further growth in anticipation of Y2K. These experiences precipitated our next relocation to Kissimmee, Florida in 2000. Then in 2010, we were redirected back to the Dallas area, where the transition to reestablish former relationships nurtured from 1978-1998 commenced. For nearly two years, I lived in an apartment with one of my daughters, while we tried to sell our home in

Florida. During that time, I reengaged with many of my former friends and acquaintances from twenty years of previous involvement in Christian and Messianic circles.

For the first twenty years of my walk with the Messiah, I had been a fervent pursuer of God and was constantly attending Bible Studies, men's fellowship, prayer, and accountability groups throughout the week. I became acquainted with a wide variety of men who had careers in the real estate, oil and gas, banking, and construction businesses. In fact, upon my return, I got right back into the rhythm of weekly Bible oriented gatherings. But things were different after a twelve-year hiatus of following the cloud and pillar of fire. Everyone had aged, and I had to jokingly state that "I was not sequestered in a penitentiary," during my prolonged absence. Instead, I related my enthusiasm about what the Lord had done in my walk to expand my understanding of the Scriptures from a Messianic perspective. Quite frankly, I thought this would intrigue many of my former colleagues, but that did not necessarily happen. While some were curious, for the most part, their polite patience to listen to what I had experienced and learned did not generate many insightful dialogues. This was frustrating, because I sincerely believed that a fuller comprehension of the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation was beneficial to any Believers walk with the Messiah of Israel.

Then one day as I was asking the Lord why these men were so reluctant to want to know more about Him and His ways from a "Hebraic Roots" viewpoint, I had a vision that gave me what I believe was His answer. Most of these men were extremely successful in their business careers, and God had prospered some of them with great wealth. As I pondered these circumstances, I saw a rail fence with a verdant field of grain on both sides. Upon the top rail I noticed different men perched on the rail clinging to maintain balance, with their feet on the bottom rail. On one side of the fence were what appeared to be their respective vocations, jobs, businesses, assets, or things of the world—and on the other side were the things of the Lord, giving, ministries, outreach, and other good works. After all, these ostensibly God-fearing men were not only fruitful in their accumulation of resources, but also were investing in the Kingdom of God in various capacities. But as I surveyed the scene, I noticed that as the men began to get involved reaching out to pursue one side of the fence versus the other, they began to lose their balance and had to grab onto the rail to avoid falling. That seemed perfectly normal, until I noticed one of the men sitting on a fence post with the fence post all the way up to his neck. This shocked me, because I realized that this was a much more permanent station for

that impaled man. In other words, he was stuck, and certainly limited in his reach.

After envisioning this unique scene, I asked the Lord for an interpretation, to better understand what this meant. Of course, my mind might have been biased, because years earlier in 1997, Margaret and I had jumped off the envisioned rail, and by faith entered full time ministry, depending solely upon the Lord for His daily provision. To make that radical leap, I had received two distinct words from the Bible that convinced me and our family to serve the Lord exclusively once being called and activated. First, do not look back, **"But Yeshua said to him, 'No one who has put his hand to the plow and looked back is fit for the kingdom of God'"** (Luke 9:62, TLV), and secondly, **"swear to your own hurt, and does not change"** before making our decision, as epitomized in this Psalm of David:

"A psalm of David. *ADONAI*, who may dwell in Your tent? Who may live on Your holy mountain? **The one who walks with integrity, who does what is right, and speaks truth in his heart, who does not slander with his tongue, does not wrong his neighbor, and does not disgrace his friend, who despises a vile person in his eyes, but honors those who fear *ADONAI*, who keeps his oath even when it hurts, and does not change, who lends his money without usury, and takes no bribe against the innocent. One who does these things will never be shaken**" (Psalm 15:1-5, TLV).

In retrospect, I could have been admittedly making a comparative analysis when I had this vision from the Lord. **But that does not change the reality of what I saw.** In addition to those "words" when making our decision, to seek the Lord and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33), I had some additional thoughts filter into my mind. I recalled that when I was pursuing the accumulation of wealth in my commercial real estate business, I personally had a problem with my thought and prayer life. For whatever reasons, I sincerely assumed that every piece of commercial real estate that I saw had the potential to bring me a 3% commission, if I could convince the owner to sell it, or a buyer to purchase it. This mindset tended to consume me, as I began to consider various properties with a laser-like determination to initiate and then consummate a transaction. In fact, the anticipated closing of deals began to occupy an increasing amount of my prayer time. Refrigerator lists of deals supplanted prayers for the salvation of relatives and friends. **I was the classic double-minded person**, wavering from one side of the fence to the other in my prayers. Maybe the Lord was simply showing me what I had been, and then revealing what a joy it has been to make

the decision to let go of the rail and jump wholeheartedly into His arms and service. **A life choice with absolutely no regrets!**

However, that was then—and now returning to the present, one discovers that the same competing choices **to serve mammon or God** are vying for every person on the planet's undivided attention. But now, with those innate free will influences so obvious, and the repercussions of divergent individual and corporate decisions impacting geopolitics, economies, societal norms, and cultures, the age-old battle for dominion of the world systems is in the balance. But even if Believers can flippantly state that **they know, according to the Bible, who "wins" in the end**, there remains some considerable time to traverse before the "end" arrives. After all, Yeshua clearly states, "no one knows the day or the hour" (Matthew 24:36):

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven nor the Son, except the Father alone. For just as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For in those days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. And they did not understand until the flood came and swept them all away. **So shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man"** (Matthew 24:36-39, TLV).

If one continues in the context of Yeshua's statement, there is a indicative hint about the times being **"just as the days of Noah were"** when the return of the Messiah will come. Of course, in Noah's day, the description of humankind is one of total depravity and absolute opposition to the Creator God:

"Then ADONAI saw that the wickedness of humankind was great on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil all the time" (Genesis 6:5, TLV).

At this point in time, it would be difficult to claim that humanity has fallen that far away from God, because it is obvious that there still remain millions of Believers throughout the world imploring the Almighty for mercy and understanding about what is happening. Nevertheless, the societal shocks of the **invisible war** referenced in the opening paragraph above are generating considerable angst, anxiety, and fear among even those who call upon the Holy One for answers to sincere supplications.

As finite beings moving through time in this current era, our dilemma is to try and understand just where the world is regarding God's timeline for humanity, in the cosmic theatre and time spectrum He created. This search of knowledge of God and His ways has been happening since the Fall

in the Garden, when the forbidden knowledge of good and evil began to impede our relationship with the Holy One. Therefore, what should Believers do? Are there perhaps any viable answers to the plethora of questions bombarding our Heavenly Father? After all, it appears from a limited perspective that the created order will either be influenced by the Judeo-Christian worldview seeking to take the gospel to the nations, or the forces of evil will come in like a flood and overwhelm humanity with all sorts of controlling “digital” influences.

One viable answer is to turn to the Holy Scriptures, to learn from the ancient authors what they prophesied about the future to discern what is happening today before our very eyes. A few passages come to mind that draw a picture of the attitudes and condition of humanity now evident and influencing the world. In Paul’s first letter to Timothy, he gives his version of what the Messiah stated in Matthew 6 above, regarding where treasures should be stored that culminated in the admonition to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. But here, the traps set by the temptation to seek wealth (mammon) defines how **all kinds of evil**, like what is prevalent in the world system today, are the result of “the love of money” or avarice:

“Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, So we cannot take anything out of it. But having food and clothing, with these things we shall be content. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil—some, longing for it, have gone astray from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee from these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, perseverance, and gentleness” (1 Timothy 6:6-11, TLV).

Obviously, Paul gives some sound advice to his disciple Timothy, to flee from the tempting pursuit of acquiring great wealth—but rather pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, perseverance, and gentleness, some of the fruit of the Spirit of God found in Galatians 5:22-23. In addition, in Paul’s final epistle from imprisonment prior to his execution, Paul forecasts to Timothy what life will be like in the Last Days, as a return to the days of Noah approaches. Here when analyzing the modern-day Western culture, these God-less, self-serving attitudes and actions, are beginning to prevail without significant pushback by those who proclaim a Judeo-Christian heritage:

"But understand this, that in the last days hard times will come—for people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, hardhearted, unforgiving, backbiting, without self-control, brutal, hating what is good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to an outward form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid these people! For among these are those who slip into households and deceive weak women weighed down with sins, led away by various desires, **always learning yet never able to come to the knowledge of truth" (2 Timothy 3:1-7, TLV).**

Lamentably, Yeshua's exhortation to be salt and light in every generation appears to be waning, as the end approaches. This should not be the case! Expectantly, the Lord will hear from Heaven and answer the repentant pleadings of the saints, forgive personal and corporate iniquities, and begin to heal the land and people of the abominations that have taken place (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Hopefully, what was foreseen by the Prophet Daniel will begin to take place as the seals on the books of revelation will be opened. After all, the time forecast when many will run back and forth and **knowledge will increase, especially in this Digital Age**, has arrived with all sorts of implications that must be addressed:

"At that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has never occurred since the beginning of the nation until then. But at that time your people—everyone who is found written in the book—will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake—some to everlasting life, and others to shame and everlasting contempt. **Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavenly expanse. And those who turn many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever.** But you, Daniel, close up the words and seal the book **until the time of the end. Many will run back and forth and knowledge will increase"** (Daniel 12:1-4, TLV).

Lastly, without belaboring the point of turning to the Word of God for wisdom, revelation, and understanding—I will conclude this update with these words from the Apostle Paul. He is one who certainly fought the good fight, and left this written testimony of what it meant to follow the Messiah with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength:

"Finally, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! To keep writing the same things to you is not troublesome for me—but for you it is a safe-

guard. Beware of the dogs, **beware of the evil workers**, beware of the mutilation. For it is we who are the circumcision, who worship by the *Ruach Elohim* and glory in Messiah *Yeshua* and **have not depended on the flesh**—though I myself might have confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he might depend on the flesh, I far more—circumcised the eighth day; of the nation of Israel; from the tribe of Benjamin; a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the *Torah*, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting Messiah's community; as for *Torah* righteousness, found blameless. But whatever things were gain to me, these I have considered as loss for the sake of the Messiah. **More than that, I consider all things to be loss in comparison to the surpassing value of the knowledge of Messiah *Yeshua* my Lord. Because of Him I have suffered the loss of all things; and I consider them garbage in order that I might gain Messiah** and be found in Him not having my righteousness derived from *Torah*, but one that is through trusting in Messiah—the righteousness from God based on trust. **My aim is to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the sharing of His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death—if somehow I might arrive at the resurrection from among the dead.** Not that I have already obtained this or been perfected, but I press on if only I might take hold of that for which Messiah *Yeshua* took hold of me" (Philippians 3:1-12, TLV).

Obviously, these are trying times, as the enemies of the Messiah are emboldened by their misguided perception of power over the planet. But Believers should know, that despite the perceived power and security derived from the accumulation of wealth and the ability to purchase by various means the political and economic controls to dominate the world systems, the Holy One simply laughs at their machinations (Psalm 2). But there is one final warning for the saints, who might **think too highly of themselves** when they are a flutter with the many giddy predictions of revival on a global scale:

"For through the grace given me, **I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think**—but to use sound judgment [Grk. *phroneo*], as God has assigned to each person a measure of faith" (Romans 12:3, TLV).

Whatever measure of faith a person receives, he or she must employ "sound judgment" and discernment, noting that faith without works is dead (James 2:20). However, when reviewing the 29 places where the Greek text uses the word *phroneo*, meaning to exercise the mind or be mentally disposed, there are many places where a distinction between the "carnal mind" and the "mind of Messiah" are contrasted. Here is one example:

"Therefore let all who are mature have this **attitude** [*phroneo*]; and if

you have a different **attitude** [*phroneo*] in anything, this also God will reveal to you. Nevertheless, let us live up to the same standard **we have attained** [*phroneo*]. Brothers and sisters, join in following my example and notice those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. (For many walk who are enemies of the cross of Messiah—I have often told you about them, and now I am even weeping as I tell you. **Their end is destruction—their god is their belly and their glory is in their shame. They set their minds** [*phroneo*] **on earthly things.**)” (Philippians 3:15-19, TLV).

The Apostle Paul was warning the Philippians to note and discern the difference between those with their minds set on Earthly things, versus those who are being led by the Spirit of God. This is critical for Believers, because at some point in time, the Holy One is going to challenge humanity and allow the lawless one to use demonic false signs and wonders to test whether they believe the truth. This “delusional force” will truly separate those who love the truth from those who delight in wickedness:

“The coming of the lawless one is connected to the activity of satan, **with all power and signs and false wonders, and with every kind of wicked deception toward those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God sends them a delusional force, to lead them to believe what is false, so that they may be judged—all those who did not believe the truth but delighted in wickedness**” (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, TLV).

This is a sobering way to end this update, because whether one admits it or not—the information warfare that is raging around the globe has so many twists and turns, that discerning the truth can only be had through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. To that end, I pray that our long-suffering Heavenly Father will continue to bring in the sheep, before the separation from the goats commences, and that by faith alone, we will all please Him. To Him be the glory, Amen!

As always, we are blessed by your prayerful and financial support of Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics, as we endeavor to continue or assignments for the Lord, until He returns, or we are taken home. May God bless you, and keep you, and may His face shine upon you, and His countenance turned toward you, and may He give you His *shalom*!

Until the restoration of all things. . .

Mark Huey