

A photograph of a path winding through olive trees in a sunlit outdoor setting. The path is made of light-colored stones and is flanked by green olive trees and some low-lying plants. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

# OUTREACH ISRAEL NEWS

monthly newsletter of Outreach Israel Ministries  
and MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS



MARCH 2024  
WHY ARE PEOPLE  
GIVING UP ON ISRAEL?



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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.

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# OLM UPDATE

March 2024

*J.K. McKee*

Since the start of the Israel-Hamas conflict on 07 October, 2023, there have been a great number of things happening, both geopolitically and spiritually-theologically. While the ultimate cause of warfare is the Fall of humankind, and the introduction of sin—and the ultimate solution is salvation in Yeshua the Messiah, and His reign over Planet Earth as the Prince of Peace—we still have to sort through matters in the present. For those of us within today's Messianic movement, this mainly involves how our Messianic mission of Jewish outreach, evangelism, **Israel solidarity, and standing against anti-Semitism**, is being affected by current events. While there are aspects of this which involve Arab extremism, there are also aspects of this which concern (claiming) followers of Israel's Messiah, who are, in various ways, giving up on Israel and the Jewish people.

Over the past half dozen months or so, it is doubtless that many striking thoughts and legitimate fears have arisen in each of us. Certainly within the Jewish community, memories of the Holocaust and the credo of "Never Again!" have been invoked. Many Messianic Jewish Believers I have encountered, are deeply worried that the world at large is getting ready to come against them, and that they are in mortal danger. Other Messianic Jewish Believers, I know, recognize this as a time to stand for the truth of the God of Israel, acknowledging Him as our Supreme Protector. Still, many others are declaring forth important end-time prophetic words from the Scriptures—especially in view of protesters violently screaming, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!" When one hears from many of the Millennials/Generation-Z/Generation Alpha Woke types, that the State of Israel is a terrorist regime which needs to be disbanded, I am sure many of us have thought about the statements of Joel 4:1-3:

"For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there

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on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; and they have divided up My land. They have also cast lots for My people, traded a boy for a harlot and sold a girl for wine that they may drink” (Joel 4:1-3, NASU).

We have probably also thought about the thoughts offered by Zechariah 12:2-3:

“Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples round; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it” (Zechariah 12:2-3, NASU).

While none of us wants to speak presumptuously regarding timetables, the anti-Israel and anti-Zionist propaganda machine on social media is intense! If you are not paying attention to how many people—some of whom you would least expect—are just giving up on Israel, **then you need to be informed of how the walls have indeed started closing in.** For certain, today’s Messianic community is being given a major wake up call, to return back to the original Messianic mission, and to make any appropriate adjustments as huge leaps are being taken toward the ultimate return of Yeshua.

## Why are many evangelical Christians giving up on Israel?

In response to the terrorist attacks and kidnappings of 07 October, 2023, there has been a great, worldwide, public support for Israel—not just from religious communities, but even from those who are secular. At the same time, though, major world cities have also seen, perhaps, a much larger open and public support for the Palestinian cause. While there have been a great number of evangelical Christians stand up in support of Israel and the Jewish people as God’s chosen—it cannot go unnoticed how if this were the 1980s, 1990s, or even 2000s, there would have been a much, much higher proportion of Christian support offered for Israel. Why is this the case?

Polling data frequently suggests that support for the State of Israel is highest among Baby Boomers, and then it steadily decreases from Generation X to Millennials to Generation-Z, with Generation Alpha having the highest amount of support for the Palestinians. That there is a huge generational divide, particularly among those who were reared on electronic devices, cannot be overlooked. But the generational divide among conservative evangelicals in their 60s-70s, versus Millennials in their 30s-40s and Genera-

tion-Z in their 20s, was not solely affected by the tools of the Information Age. There were specific things which took place, mainly around the turn of the Millennium, which have negatively contributed to much of what we see happening now in the mid-2020s. The loss of support for Israel among younger people, has taken place because of religious factors.

A huge amount of the customary, evangelical Christian support for Israel during the past seventy years or so has not necessarily been rooted in a genuine desire on the part of Christians to want to acknowledge past anti-Semitic mistakes, learn from some of the great virtues of Judaism and Jewish approaches to the Tanach (OT), and in wanting to appreciate the contributions of the Jewish people. A huge amount of the customary, evangelical Christian support for Israel, has been rooted within a dispensational framework of reading the Bible, and in particular, how there must be an established Jewish presence in the Holy Land, prior to the return of the Messiah. A dispensational theology holds that God has two groups of elect: Israel and the Church. Because of the widespread Jewish rejection of Jesus as Messiah, God's program for Israel is temporarily on hold, God's current program for the Church will conclude following the pre-tribulation rapture to Heaven—and following the pre-tribulation rapture, the Seventieth Week of Daniel 9:27 will begin. God will then fully resume His program with Israel.

Much of this kind of support for Israel was spurred on within the second half of the Twentieth Century, first by dispensational scholars such as John Walvoord or Dwight Pentecost—and then later by popular dispensational figures such as Hal Lindsey and Tim LaHaye. *Has dispensational support, for Israel, been something genuinely based in the Torah promises to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—or instead rooted in accelerating the fulfillment of Bible prophecy?* In the 1980s or 1990s, was Christian support for Israel something based more in wanting to stand against anti-Semitism and prevent another Holocaust—or instead wanting to see mechanisms put in place to build the Third Temple and facilitate the arrival of the Tribulation period, and with it the pre-tribulation rapture escape of Christians to Heaven?

My Christian peers from high school and college, from the late 1990s to early 2000s, were largely raised on the dispensational, pre-tribulation rapture culture, most epitomized by the *Left Behind* series of novels. Around the turn of the Millennium—and in no small part exacerbated by the 6,000-year doctrine—it was expected that the rapture and Tribulation period were imminently forthcoming. All of us should be able to remember the huge amount of prophecy forecasting which took place around the Year 2000, Y2k, and even the launch of the Euro (€). Many were expecting world events

to line up, and for the classic dispensational, pre-tribulation rapture and Tribulation scenario to begin. Some were willing to push things a few years or so beyond the Year 2000, given the likelihood of a few miscalculations. But by the time the 2000s were over, many of my Millennial peers had started to grow weary of hearing dispensational Baby Boomers thump their Bibles and urge preparing for the rapture—and considered them to have lost a great deal of credibility in terms of their theological orientation.

What had been some of the tangible fruit of a dispensational any-moment, pre-tribulation rapture theology? 2009 saw the release of *Surprised By Hope* by N.T. Wright, which while mainly concerned about how death and afterlife matters are to affect current living on Planet Earth—directly challenged many of the negative effects of a dispensational theology. Wright’s proposal was that the redeemed are to be representatives of the world to come, in the present world, and that this is to be manifested in godly acts of service toward one’s fellow human beings, as well as demonstrating proper care for the Earth. Many dispensationalists, in stark contrast—and believing in an imminent pre-tribulation rapture—had instead been seen to encourage various Christians to amass great debts, not be concerned about unimpeded industry and destruction of the environment, and sometimes not care too much about the needs of disenfranchised social groups. *The rapture is going to happen*, so none of it really matters. Along with this, whether actually intended by dispensationalists or not, has been the idea that since the State of Israel is to be a major player in the Last Days, that it cannot be criticized or condemned in any way. The State of Israel has to exist, and it is permitted to survive by any means necessary, *because the rapture is going to happen*.

Many of those raised in overly-conservative, dispensational religious environments, in the 1990s and 2000s, saw a number of significant cracks to the system be exposed in the 2010s. Much of this was associated with the political disposition and divisions in the United States, but also with how dispensational Christian denominations and traditions began responding to new theological challenges. (Consult the extensive historical review offered by Daniel G. Hummel, *The Rise and Fall of Dispensationalism* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2023].) And, whether we like to admit it or not, a great deal of the rise of the modern Messianic Jewish movement has been intertwined with dispensationalism—because there needs to be some kind of a Messianic Jewish legacy around after the rapture.

Because of the frequent association of dispensationalism with the Christian Right in America, many Millennials and Generation-Z—who were raised expecting the rapture and Tribulation to have surely taken place by the early

2010s—began to question much of the underlying ideology when things did not take shape. One of the first teachings to often be jettisoned was the 6,000-year doctrine, and with it came many considering alternative approaches to Genesis 1-11, outside that of Young Earth Creationism. Because dispensational theology has also been closely associated with complementarianism, which often opposes ordination of female clergy, that became another matter to be jettisoned, with more egalitarian perspectives to be considered. Yet, opening one's horizons in these two areas, would hardly constitute someone "going liberal," because of the plentitude of non-dispensational evangelicals, of the Center-Right, who believe in more open approaches to Genesis 1-11 and co-leadership of males and females. But many Millennials and Generation-Z were seen to go much, much further, toward the far Left.

Throughout the 2010s, as a great number of dispensational, pre-tribulation rapture teachers started to age, pass away—but most especially their expectations did not materialize—many Millennials and Generation-Z began to reevaluate dispensational eschatology. Many, recognizing some of the escapist ideology of an "any-moment" pre-tribulation rapture—coupled with how the original Disciples of Yeshua, who walked with Him, were never spared physical harm—abandoned pre-tribulationism for a post-tribulation or pre-wrath gathering of the holy ones/saints into the clouds. *This meant that Believers should expect to go through the future Tribulation.* But they still remained theologically conservative, pro-Israel, and affirmed a future Millennial Kingdom with the Messiah reigning from Jerusalem.

Others, especially seeing ongoing conflict in the Middle East, left a pre-millennial Israel-centered eschatology altogether. Seeing that the rapture and Tribulation had not taken place—and how for many centuries of Church history, post-millennial or amillennial eschatology had been the norm—why were dispensationalists to at all be trusted? *Perhaps dispensationalists and their unbridled support for the State of Israel have been misguided?* For centuries of Church history, the norm had been that God was finished with Israel and the Jewish people, and the Church was the New Israel. And for that matter, many Millennials and Generation-Z witnessed how popular dispensationalism and church denominations started to be stigmatized by all sorts of scandals! How many pre-tribulation rapture televangelists were only interested in getting rich off of the end-times, and not too concerned about real issues of spirituality?

It has now been since the start of the 2020s, that matters have begun to radically change. Because of the **perception** that dispensational Christians, the main bulk of Christian Zionists and supporters of Israel, are only inter-

ested in accelerating the end-times—these people seemingly do not care that much about the billions of people on Planet Earth who are hurting, starving, homeless, oppressed, and persecuted for their lifestyle. *All that dispensationalists can offer is a pre-tribulation rapture, which is now not going to happen.* Dispensationalists permit Israel to do whatever it wants to do, they seldom care about the Arabs. Along with that, a majority of Millennials and Generation-Z think conservative dispensationalists care very little about the major questions raised by movements such as Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ+ rights, and reproductive rights. A majority of Millennials and Generation-Z perceive of conservative dispensational Christians as being tired out, discredited, close-minded and rigid, old men, whose time is well past them. *Their pre-tribulation rapture did not come when it was supposed to, and they were probably wrong about Israel and the Jewish people playing a role in prophecy.*

Some of what has taken place over the past three decades or so (1990s-2020s) is not that pleasant to review. It is the conflux of a dispensational, pro-Israel theology which widely anticipated a pre-tribulation rapture which was believed to have happened by now—a dispensational theology which was close-minded and hyper-conservative in a few areas where it did not need to be. Along with this, many of those raised in a dispensational, pro-Israel theology—largely for the sake of the end-times—have grown tired of it, and have often gravitated toward progressive Christianity, Wokeism, Ex-vangelical, and the like. A few of those on the Christian Left do want the State of Israel to enter into a conclusion, but most on the Christian Left instead recognize that some kind of two-state solution with the Palestinians is more logical.

**The point is that among Millennials, Generation-Z, and emerging Generation Alpha, Israel has lost a huge amount of support.** And much of this can indeed be placed squarely at the feet of a dispensational theology, which did not bother to think too long term. Much of its support of Israel was not based in the sentiments of Paul in Romans chs. 9-11, but instead in wanting to accelerate their pre-tribulation rapture and apocalypse.

## What do the non-Jewish Torah movements think?

The non-Jewish Torah movements—ranging in scope from the independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement, to the One Law/One Torah sub-movement, to now Pronomian Christianity—are going to be found at the exact opposite end of the spectrum to Wokeism, Ex-vangelical, and those going through some kind of Deconstruction. The people of the various non-Jewish Torah movements, tend to make a very strong point to say that they

are part of the Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-13), grafted-in as wild olive branches to the olive tree of Israel (Romans 11:16-18), members of the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16). Some of these people adhere to a Two-House teaching of Judah and Ephraim, believing that the vast majority of non-Jewish people being drawn into things of Torah, are descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes. Some of these people might be seen instead to believe in an enlarged Kingdom realm of Israel model, based in Amos 9:11-12 and Acts 15:15-18. But one of the major aspects of the non-Jewish Torah movements, is that their ecclesiology tends to strongly focus on "Israel," whatever that is, in some way.

What is the approach one might encounter, among the non-Jewish Torah movements, regarding matters of the modern State of Israel, Zionism, Judaism, and even Jewish tradition and culture? *Things tend to be all over the board.* More frequently than not, though, non-Jewish people in the various Torah movements, will be seen to strongly, if not abrasively, claim that they are just "Israel," without any real qualifications as to what this involves. More often, though, when such persons claim to be "Israel," they often intend some association with, "the Gentiles are joint heirs and fellow members of the same body and co-sharers of the promise in Messiah *Yeshua* through the Good News" (Ephesians 3:6, TLV). Sadly, when many Messianic Jews hear non-Jewish people claim to just be "Israel"—without qualifying it in terms such as Commonwealth of Israel, grafted-in, or joint heirs—they will immediately be offended, and conclude that those claiming to just be "Israel" are guilty of replacement theology. And sadly, to many of those in the non-Jewish Torah movements, their being grafted-in as wild branches, can actually mean that there is little or no place for the natural branches.

Our ministry can testify how we have been able to help many in the non-Jewish Torah movements, move from the far Right toward the Center, and see them make corrections in those areas where Messianic Jewish Believers can take offense. Many know that to just claim an identity as "Israel," unqualified, can communicate ideas of supersessionism and displacement. Many know that non-Jewish Believers associating with "Israel" in some way, is something which cannot be isolated from the Messianic Jewish community—actual descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who have professed faith in the Messiah of Israel.

How have the different non-Jewish Torah movements responded to the growing anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism in our world, since 07 October, 2023? Certainly, there have been a number of leaders and teachers who have stressed prayers for the Jewish community and for peace. They have stood right alongside those in the Messianic Jewish community. There have

been many others, however, who have scarcely said a thing, if not been completely silent. What is this to mean? What does it profit a non-Jewish person, in claiming to be a part of the Commonwealth of Israel or grafted-in—when they are unwilling to, perhaps, publicly stand with the Jewish community in a significant time of need? While it is true, that there have been divisions and schisms and equality issues, between Jewish and non-Jewish Believers in the Messianic movement for many years, **this is a time to put petty differences aside**. For those humble and willing enough, this might even be a time to see better dialogue and resolution take place.

## Diffusing Replacement Theology

Because of the growing, critical mass of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism in our world, it should hardly be a surprise why a great deal of Messianic Judaism is likely to be hyper-sensitive to matters of supersessionism or replacement theology. What should Messianic Jewish rabbis and leaders do—witnessing not only how many in contemporary evangelicalism are going Woke, and abandoning their support for Israel—but also how many non-Jews in the different Torah movements, *somehow claiming to be "Israel,"* often fail to stand with them? One should not be shocked, at the very least, to see a number of Messianic Jews be very guarded around the non-Jewish people not only in their sphere of influence, but even those within their congregations and synagogues. Given the many riots denouncing the State of Israel, and indeed the violence which has been perpetuated by many against the Jewish community—one should expect many of today's Messianic Jews to be more and more distant from the non-Jewish Believers in their midst. And this is, indeed, where the question of whether or not a non-Jewish Believer is truly called into the Messianic movement, definitely comes into play.

If you are a non-Jewish Believer, who considers himself or herself to be a member of the Commonwealth of Israel—and gets upset or offended when possibly accused of replacement theology—there is one significant way which this can be diffused. **Support the State of Israel. Stand against anti-Semitism. Stand there right alongside of your Messianic Jewish brothers and sisters.** Recognize the importance of the Messianic movement to the end-time plan of God. The severity of a non-Jewish Believer having a Ruth calling, is represented by her word to Naomi: "Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if *anything but* death parts you and me" (Ruth 1:17, NASU). Are you willing to experience persecution for the cause of Zion, if at all necessary?

## Our Prophetic Future Considered

Since entering into the 2020s, there have been some unique global dramas which the Lord has been using to get the attention of His people. Only now with the Israel-Hamas war, has the Messianic movement, perhaps, been waking up to some new realities. Timelines and date speculation aside, people within today's Messianic community need to be moved to better action, more consciously recognizing how we are on a Romans 11:26 "all Israel will be saved" trajectory of salvation history—something which is to culminate in the return of Israel's Messiah. This is a huge task to be participating in, and only the future will tell who is actually up to it.

Because of the Lord's love and patience toward all of us, I do not think that it is necessary for us to all get paranoid about what is happening in the Middle East right now. I do think it is necessary, though, for us to each review our own lives, and how much *or* how little we are engaged in the affairs of the Kingdom. We need to recognize how people who are just going on with matters as though they will never be altered, could be swept away (cf. Matthew 24:36:41). My part as a non-Jewish Believer in Israel's Messiah, is to stand alongside the Jewish people—and most especially my Messianic Jewish brothers and sisters—until the end. Our ministry, Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics, has a major burden of helping to facilitate stability, as things get increasingly more complicated. We will have to help people navigate the severe challenges against Biblical faith, brought on by the prophesied apostasy (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

The questions and matters which today's Messianic Jewish Believers, widely in the Diaspora, are going to have to sort through, will be immense. Many Messianic Jews are going to have to legitimately consider the question of *aliyah* to the Holy Land. A wide number of Messianic Jewish Believers have already become Israeli citizens, with various others attempting to do so, but then returning to the United States for various reasons—yet having an internal struggle about it (cf. "A Way Forward," in Jennifer M. Rosner, *Finding Messiah: A Journey into the Jewishness of the Gospel* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2022], pp 173-187). Circumstances of the future may indeed see many Diaspora Messianic Jews return home to *Eretz Yisrael*.

Throughout a great deal of religious history, it has been observed how theology is often produced in an environment of conflict. The Messianic movement has frequently called itself "the end-time move of God." We can only conclude that its true destiny and purpose will actually be known, as we edge closer and closer to the Messiah's return. It is not the purpose which some want, instead desiring various accolades and human recognition. But being the main faith community involved in the final days leading up to the Second Coming, is a purpose which will have eternal repercussions!