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## The Remnant of Israel: History, Theology & Issues of the Messianic Jewish Movement

Instructor: Mottel Baleston - [www.MessiahNJ.org](http://www.MessiahNJ.org)

For Ariel's Camp Shoshanah 2025 updated

### I. BACKGROUND: JUDAISM BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF MESSIAH

A. The return from Babylonian exile

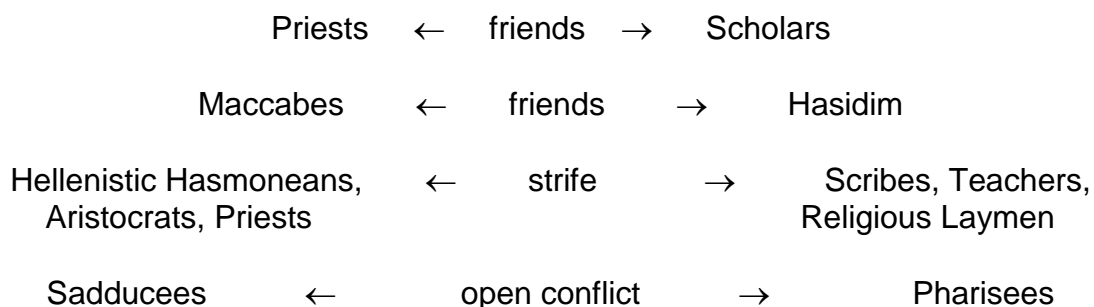
B. The Hellenistic/Greek period 332 thru 63 BCE (Alexander The Great)

1. The Maccabean Revolt 168 thru 135 BCE

2. The Hasmonean Period 135 thru 63 BCE

3. The Rise of Distinct Political Parties

The Oniads - Faithful Priests



4 Intra-Jewish strife, Rome Invited in to settle the dispute 63 BCE

C. Under the thumb of Rome 63 BCE

D. The Jewish community of the first century CE

1. Sadducees – Controlled the Temple

2. Pharisees – Guided the Houses of Study

### II. YESHUA AND PHARISAIC JUDAISM

A. Conflict Over the Interpretation of the Law

- B. Conflict Over the Sabbath
- C. The Rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua
- D. The Subsequent Judgment

### **III. THE AGE OF THE APOSTLES - A.D. 30-66**

- A. The Book of Acts
- B. The Issue of Gentile relationship to Mosaic Law
- C. The Schism
  - 1. The Point of conflict
  - 2. The Legalizers

### **IV. THE FIRST JEWISH REVOLT - A.D. 66-70**

- A. The Dilemma for Jewish believers
- B. The Results

### **V. THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE TWO REVOLTS - A.D. 70-132**

- A. The Jerusalem believers go to Pella
- B. Mainstream Judaism will reinvent itself in Yavneh/Jamnia in 90 AD
- C. Advancement of Messianic Judaism

### **VI. THE BAR COCHBA REVOLT - A.D. 132-135**

- A. Shimon ben Kosiba and Rabbi Akiva
- B. The Response by the Jewish believers
- C. Estrangement from the mainstream Jewish community
- D. The Rabbis and the "Minim" (sectarians)
  - 1. Theological Discussions
  - 2. The Move to Expulsion
  - 3. Effects on the Synagogue
    - a) Less tolerance to individual expression

b) Additional impetus for the development of Talmud

4. Jacob of Sichnin

E. Roman Empire regards any form of Judaism as suspicious

## **VII.THE SECOND HALF OF THE SECOND CENTURY, 150 – 200 CE**

A. Extent of the Jewish believing community

B. The growing independence of Gentile dominated Christianity

1.Split over Jewish Practices

2.The Question of Passover/Easter

3. The growing practice of Sunday worship

C. Hegesippus

D. Report on the Nazarenes by Epiphanius in his “Panarion”

E. The Split of the Messianic Jewish Movement

1. The Nazarenes – נצרים

2. The Ebionites – אביונים

## **VIII.THE THIRD CENTURY**

A. Increasing church distance from the Jewish origins of the faith

B. Growing influence of the Bishops who controlled regions

C. Codifying of the Mishnah with directives against the Minim

## **IX.THE FOURTH CENTURY**

A The coming to faith by Constantine

B. Notable Jewish believers

1. Epiphanius of Constantinople

2. Joseph of Tiberius

C. The council of Nicea 325 CE

D. John Chrysostom – 349-ca.407

1. Contempt and hatred towards Jews
2. Attempts to outlaw all connections of Christianity with its' Jewish origins

E. CANONS OF THE APOSTLES c. 390, legislate unfettered anti-Jewishness

## **X. THOUSAND YEARS OF SILENCE**

- A. Occasional mention of Jewish believers as Bible translators
- B. Occasional mention of Jewish believers in forced debates
- C. No identifiable group of Jewish believers is allowed to exist

## **XI. FIFTEENTH THROUGH EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES**

- A. Spanish Inquisition
- B. The Marranos and Christopher Columbus
- C. The embarrassment by Pfefferkorn and other "Christianized Jews"
- D. Emergence of Jewish believers as Biblical Scholars
- E. New availability of Bible Translations increase interest in Jewish-Christian links

## **XII. REBIRTH OF THE MESSIANIC JEWISH MOVEMENT**

- A. The London Society for the Promotion of Christianity amongst the Jews founded 1809
- B. Forty-one Jewish believers form in London as Beni Abraham in 1813
- C. The Hebrew-Christian Alliance forms in London in 1866
- D. Indigenous, genuinely Messianic Jewish, independent Congregation in Kishinev, Russia
- E. Jacob Freshman founds the First Hebrew-Christian Church, 1885 in New York
- F. The Hebrew-Christian Alliance of America (HCAA) was established in 1915
- G. Large numbers of Jewish people come to faith in Europe by 1939,  
a quarter million are martyred in The Shoah (Fryland)
- H. Large numbers of Jewish young people come to faith in the 1970's
  1. The Jesus Movement and the Six-Day War create spiritual interest
  2. Lack of discipleship allows some to fall away, others to major on the minors

## I. The attempt to create a Messianic Jewish identity

1. Many Jewish believers make Aliyah, seek Israeli citizenship
2. Desire by some for acceptance by mainstream Judaism, with Torah observance
3. The elusive search for Biblical balance

## J. Major issues in the Messianic Movement today

1. Labels: What should we be called?
2. Doctrine: Is Mosaic Law adherence obligatory? Recommended?
3. Relationships: Is the movement part of the Church or Synagogue?
4. Jews/Gentiles: Should a congregation be called Messianic if it's comprised exclusively of Gentiles?
5. "Messianic Jewish" movement vs. "Hebrew Roots" movement, there is a difference

### **ADDENDUM – A BASIC MESSIANIC JEWISH TIMELINE**

**6 BCE** – Messiah Yeshua born in Bethlehem of Judea as the Hebrew prophets foretold

**30** – Messiah Yeshua dies as an atoning sacrifice and is resurrected as the Jewish prophets foretold

**70** – The 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple in Jerusalem is destroyed, the Jewish believers scattered with many in going to Pella, across the Jordan River

**132** – When Akiva proclaims Ben Kosiba to be Bar Kochba, the messianic Son of the Star, Jewish Believers in Yeshua abandon the revolt

**390** – “**CANONS**” Authorized persecution of Jews, proclaims Catholicism to be the new “Spiritual Israel”

**1543** – Toward the end of his career, German Martin Luther urges violent persecution of Jews, proclaims Protestants to be the new “Spiritual Israel”. Nazi Germany would cite this as justification of Holocaust

**1809** - The London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Amongst the Jews founded

**1813** – 41 Jewish believers form a fellowship in London, “Beni Abraham”

**1823** – A group of Jewish believers and their supporters attempt to purchase 20,000 acres in southern New Jersey for a communal farm to house persecuted Jewish believers.

**1840** – Sixty prominent Jewish believers in England publish a defense of the Jewish community against the false charge of the “blood libel”.

**1842** – Jewish believer Michael Solomon Alexander establishes a major Protestant church in Jerusalem

**1866** - The Hebrew Christian Alliance was formed in London.

**1885** – Joseph Rabinowitz begins a genuinely Messianic Jewish, independent Jewish congregation in Kishinev, Moldova

**1885** – Jacob Freshman establishes a group of Jewish believers with Presbyterian help in New York City

**1894** – Rabbi Leopold Cohn establishes a Jewish outreach in Brooklyn that would eventually become The American Board of Missions to the Jews, now known as Chosen People Ministries.

**1915** – The Hebrew Christian Alliance of America (HCAA) was established with Sabbati Rohold, born into an Orthodox Jewish home in Jewish Palestine as its first President. The "driving motive" of the early HCAA was deemed to be evangelism. In 1917, the HCAA began publishing the HCA Quarterly with a Yiddish supplement. The early HCAA was a fellowship of Jewish believers, and issued statements viewing with caution the establishment of Congregations that were specifically intended to maintain Jewish culture. HCAA members were generally allied with Protestant Christian churches, although a minority within the HCAA favored a Messianic Jewish stance.

**1920's** - The HCAA took part in the fight against rising anti-Semitism, strongly denouncing Henry Ford's distribution of the hoax "Protocols of the Elders of Zion".

**1930's** - The HCAA protested the treatment of Jews in Nazi Germany, and called attention to the plight of the "one and three-quarter million Christians of Jewish descent, who were all treated as Jews while the Jews of Germany considered them Christians". They had trouble finding relief. The HCAA helped many of them to relocate, and continued to aid victims of the Holocaust after World War II

**1934** - The First Hebrew Christian Church of Chicago was established by Presbyterians. It had a Christian worship service with a Jewish "flavor," and was headed by David Bronstein. A similar congregation exists in Los Angeles.

**1939** – On the even of WWII, over a million people of Jewish origin are attending churches & fellowships in Europe

**1940** - 'Messengers of the New Covenant' established in New Jersey to aid Jewish believers in Europe.

**1938 thru 1945** – Between 100,000 and 250,000 Jewish believers die during The Holocaust.

**1950's** – Messianic Congregations and stable fellowships of Jewish believers practicing Jewish culture exist in Baltimore, Detroit, Toronto, New York, Newark, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles.

**1966 – 1968** - Under the auspices of the HCAA, the Young Hebrew Christian Alliance (YHCA) was started by Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Manny Brotman & Joe Finkelstein. Holding its first separate conference in 1970, they chose Messiah College in Pennsylvania for their meeting place. The entire Alliance would eventually meet there.

**1970's** – This time period would see large numbers of Jewish young people coming to faith

**1971** - Martin Chernoff, a Jewish believer and Assemblies of God pastor, became the President of the HCAA. Chernoff would go on to lead Beth Yeshua Congregation of Philadelphia. His Pentecostal influenced Messianic Judaism, and that of his sons Joel and David would continue to shape the Alliance for decades to come.

**1973** – Moishe Rosen establishes 'Jews for Jesus', an evangelistic mission outreach.

**1974** - First year of Camp Shoshanah as a Messianic Family Bible teaching program.

**1975** – In a divided vote, the HCAA voted to change its' name to the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA). It signaled a move toward unique self-identity for Jewish believers, semi-separate from the larger church body. Even so, a large majority in most MJAA congregations today (2025) are Gentile believers.

**1977** – Ariel Ministries founded by Arnold Fruchtenbaum with dual goals of Jewish evangelism & discipleship. A Baltimore Messianic Fellowship, Publishing and Camp Shoshanah were early ministries.

**1979** - The Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) was formed with Daniel Juster as President. Sabbath observance is a requirement for congregational membership.

**1980's** – Expansion of the Messianic Movement, growing use of American synagogue culture

**1998** - Nazarene Yisrael Alliance is formed as an umbrella for groups teaching the "Two-House" false doctrine that Gentile believers in their groups are of the Tribe of Ephraim. Many reject the teaching of the Trinity and promote obligatory Torah observance. They influence over 20% of Congregations and recruit deceptively. Notables include: Michael Rood, Ed Chumney, Monte Judah, Brian Samtur & James Trimm, who all maintain separate organizations.

**2004** – The Association of Messianic Congregations (AMC) founded by 'Grace oriented' Jewish believers who cite the *"need for a new association of messianic congregations for those who hold to a Messiah centered, joyfully Jewish, Grace embracing Messianic Judaism, with Gentiles as equal members"*.

**2023** - The terror attacks from Gaza pull over 900 Israeli Messianic believers to serve in the IDF, Israeli Defense Forces, many as officers. Several are killed in the fighting.

### **GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR MESSIANIC JEWISH HISTORY**

Cohn-Sherbock, Dan. MESSIANIC JUDAISM. *(Cohn-Sherbock is a Liberal Rabbi but offers a relatively neutral and informative guide to the movement)*

Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL. Ariel Manuscript # 191.

Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. ISRAELOLOGY, Ariel Press.

Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL: The History, Theology, and Philosophy of the Messianic Jewish Community. 2011

Goldberg, Louis, ed. HOW JEWISH IS CHRISTIANITY? TWO VIEWS ON THE MESSIANIC MOVEMENT

Hansen, Kai Kjør. JOSEPH RABINOWITZ AND THE MESSIANIC MOVEMENT.  
 Jocz, Jacob. THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND JESUS CHRIST.  
 Robinson, Rich. FIELD GUIDE TO THE MESSIANIC MOVEMENT.  
 Seif, Jeffrey. TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. 2012, Lederer Books.

### **SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR GENERAL JEWISH STUDY**

Dimont, Max. JEWS, GOD AND HISTORY. A very readable complete overview  
 Gilbert, Martin. ATLAS OF JEWISH HISTORY. Excellent maps, a must for your library.  
 Telushkin, Rabbi Joseph. JEWISH LITERACY. Highly acclaimed book of 346 short chapters, each one a  
 “to the point” explanation of some crucial portion of Jewish history and practice.

### **INTERNET WEB SITES WITH GENERAL JEWISH HISTORY CONTENT**

[www.JewishVirtualLibrary.org](http://www.JewishVirtualLibrary.org) The Jewish Virtual Library, well done & comprehensive. Among the many resources here is the online version of “Myths & Facts”, a guide to the Arab-Israel conflict  
[www.JewishHistory.org](http://www.JewishHistory.org) – All the basics, easily accessible in summery articles  
[www.JewishHistory.org.il/](http://www.JewishHistory.org.il/) Encyclopedia style. One ‘quirk’ is that some Biographies are placed into alphabetical order by the subject’s first name.  
[www.CJH.org](http://www.CJH.org) Center for Jewish History – ‘Features’ style, with archive access  
[www.MessianicAssociation.org](http://www.MessianicAssociation.org) - Features a historical timeline of prominent Messianic Jewish believers

## **ADDENDUM: JEWISH ROOTS OF OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH - By Mottel Baleston**

In recent years, a growing movement among believers in Jesus has become prominent and controversial. It is usually referred to as the “Hebrew Roots MOVEMENT,” or alternatively as the “Jewish Roots movement.” Its supporters claim that it restores the original theological context of the first century church, a Hebrew/Jewish context. But its critics claim that the movement brings nothing but conflict, false doctrine, and divides churches. For believers in Jesus the Messiah, is this issue Important ??

I teach as a born-again believer in Jesus who embraces New Testament Grace and holds a conservative evangelical theological position. I regularly preach in Bible believing churches. At the same time I come from a strongly Jewish heritage, all four of my grandparents born in Orthodox Jewish homes in Europe. You might expect that I would naturally embrace the Hebrew Roots movement. However, the most important question for myself is the answer to: “Is it biblically correct or permissible?” This teaching seeks to identify the parts in the movement that are helpful and I will voice my serious concerns when parts of the movement violate Scripture.

### **A. THE HEBREW ROOTS MOVEMENT vs THE MESSIANIC JEWISH MOVEMENT**

1. People with a strong Hebrew Roots orientation can either be found in Messianic congregations of various kinds or do not attend anywhere because they are critical of every fellowship.
2. The vast majority who participate in the Hebrew Roots movement are not Jewish, it is not a unified movement
3. Their concern is that Christendom has drifted far from its original Jewish roots, this has alarmed them.

### **B. WHAT ARE THE BIBLICAL FACTS?**

1. Biblical Christianity would not exist without its Jewish/Hebrew roots.
2. The Jesus Christ of Christian faith was born of a Jewish mother, in a Jewish home, in a Jewish town.

3. Jesus spent His childhood and young adult years in the Jewish synagogue (Lk. 4:16)
4. It was the Hebrew Jewish prophets who predicted the coming of a Messiah for both Jews & Gentiles
5. When the church ignores these basic truths, people notice and become suspicious or even critical.

#### **C. POSITIVES ABOUT THE HEBREW ROOTS MOVEMENT:**

- Reminds the church of the continuing importance of its Jewish roots
- Allows Christians to be enriched by the Jewish holy days and their Messianic significance
- Reminds us to search the Scriptures instead of being ruled by church tradition

#### **D. SERIOUS CONCERNS ABOUT THE HEBREW ROOTS MOVEMENT:**

- Most in it imagine that we are obligated to keep Mosaic Law.
- Some dismiss or radically reinterpret the epistles of Paul to denigrate grace.
- Some insist on Sabbath observance and belittle those who worship on Sunday.
- Some hold that they have an insight into truth that no other believers have.
- Some won't use the names Jesus/Yeshua and insist on "Yahoshuah" or variations.
- Very sadly, some groups even question the deity of Messiah Jesus.
- Anti-semitism, prejudice against Jews is now seen in some Hebrew Roots groups, many embrace conspiracy theories which target Jewish people. Preference for bias over facts.

#### **E. WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HEBREW ROOTS GROUPS AND EVANGELICALS WHO VALUE OUR JEWISH ROOTS AND LEARN FROM THEM?**

*1. Hebrew Roots believes the New Testament was originally written in Aramaic, not Greek. This gives them an excuse to ignore the parts of the text that do not agree with their doctrines.*

***BUT MESSIANIC EVANGELICALS EMBRACE THE NEW TESTAMENT AS THE AUTHORITATIVE WORD OF GOD***

2. Hebrew Roots often demand that its followers send tithes to one particular individual leader

***BUT MESSIANIC EVANGELICALS ARE COMMITTED TO BIBLE TEACHING CHURCHES***

3. Hebrew Roots has a growing separation and open hostility toward all evangelical churches

***BUT MESSIANIC EVANGELICALS SHOULD BE MEMBERS OF LOCAL BIBLE TEACHING CHURCHES***

4. Many in Hebrew Roots embrace the false doctrine that the Jewish people today are not actually Jewish and imagine that they alone are the true Israel of God.

***BUT MESSIANIC EVANGELICALS RECOGNIZE THAT THE CHURCH IS MADE UP OF BOTH JEWS AND GENTILES (Romans 11, 1st Corinthians 12:12-13)***

We need to look beyond simple labels and recognize that the Hebrew Roots movement has identified a missing element among many churches, the Jewish roots of the faith. At the same time, we should not be blind to the very real errors and false practices in many parts of the movement, and instead embrace Biblically sound Messianic understanding, whether we are associated with an evangelical church or Messianic Congregation.

May God allow us to be wise by not joining in the fads of the day, but rather in searching the Scriptures, being appreciative of the Jewish roots of our faith in Messiah, enriched by them, and ultimately looking onto Messiah Jesus, who alone is the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2).