

Jewish Remnant History

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rior to Yeshua's coming a Jewish remnant has always existed. Just as when Elijah believed himself to be the only prophet left in Israel, God showed him there were 7000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal, it is reasonable to assume that even if one Jewish believer could be ascertained in writing in a given generation, that believer is just the tip of an iceberg. Jewish believers have been called by many names, among them Notzrim (Nazarenes), Ebionim (Ebionites meaning "poor of this world, but rich in faith"), maaminim (believers), minim (heretics), anusim (forced converts), meshumadim (apostates), Hebrew Christians, Jewish Christians. In the last thirty years, the term of choice that has gained ascendancy both in the Diaspora and in Israel is Meshichim Yehudim (Messianic Jews) which both retains the identity of Yeshua as Messiah and the Jewish identity. Thus, the faith of this regrafted branch is called Messianic Judaism, vying for recognition as a legitimate faith for the Jewish Nation, not for a place among the other brands of Judaism.

Messianic Judaism recognizes one root (God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who sent Yeshua his Son and His Holy Spirit) and many branches (each being the faithful remnant of a nation). There are no denominational or sectarian or other religious branches in the olive tree. For example, there are no Protestant or Catholic branches, no Jehovah's Witness or Mormon branches, no Islam or Bahai branches, etc.

The Jewish Church has been described as surviving a few generations and then "becoming more and more evidently a futile anachronism as the main body of the Church grew up into a stately tree in the eyes of all men: and at length dying naturally away. ...This point of view can no longer be held by the serious investigator. Gentile Christianity has been intelligibly enough preoccupied with its own rise to power and influence, and in the first flush of that power it sought by anathema, suppression and wholesale destruction of documents to overthrow the witness of Jewish Christianity. If there was a death at all, which there is good cause to doubt, it was no natural one; it was matricide. Far from becoming a futile anachronism, its spirit and human activity has persisted until the present day, and is even now undergoing a revival on a scale unknown since apostolic times." (Schonfield, p.13)

Commenting on Romans 11:1-7, Arnold Fruchtenbaum identifies the remnant as a believing Jewish remnant: "The question here is whether or not God has cast off his people Israel. Paul answers in the negative. His proof is himself; he is a Jew who believes. The critic may argue that the Jews who believe are a very small minority; so it does not follow that the nation has been cast off? Again the answer is negative. What is happening now, Paul explains, is what has always happened throughout Jewish history, that is only a remnant believes. It is always the remnant that believes. This was true in Elijah's day and it is true today. The fact that the majority does not believe is not evidence enough that the whole nation has been cut off. The point is that in Israel, past, present, and future, it is the remnant that is faithful to the revelation of Grace; ... The remnant is always in the nation, not outside

of it; the Hebrew Christians, the present-day remnant, are part of Israel and the Jewish people. Their Jewishness is distinct. Isaiah 1:9 and 65:8 point out that it is the remnant that is keeping Israel as a whole alive. Because of the Jewish remnant, God did not permit the success of the many attempts throughout this age to wipe out the Jewish people.” (Hebrew Christianity, p. 30-31) “Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved” Romans 9:27.

If you are Gentile, and a messianic believer, you also are part of a chosen remnant of your tribe or nation (Rev 5:9; Rev 7:9) just as the believing Jew is part of the chosen Jewish remnant. Historically, several factors have contributed to a loss of visibility and witness of the Jewish believing remnant:

In the Apostolic age

- The persecution by the Jews of the first Messianic Jews (controversy is internal to Judaism, “Judaizers” v. Pauline Christianity)
- The decree of Jerusalem Council relaxes the demands on Gentile believers for membership into the household of the Elect, Israel, thus challenging Judaism with its seemingly antinomian¹ character.
- Numerous Gentiles respond to the Gospel, more than the Jews.
- The persecution of all sects by the Romans, including the Nazarene, and the destruction of the Temple.
- The Council of Yavne and the disenfranchisement of the Messianic Jews.

In the subapostolic age

- Proliferation of sects after the death of the apostles.
- The spiritual disinheritance of Israel by the Church and her appropriation of Hebrew Scriptures, national history and national hope.
- Rivalry between Synagogue and Church as place of worship and the fear of synagogue proselytism.
- Equal status of Jew-Gentile in the first Church encourages intermarriage between Gentile-Jewish believers.
- Growing wall of partition and warnings against philosemitism (friendship with Jews) as protective measures.
- Roman persecutions, the destruction of Jerusalem, the eastward flight of the Messianic Jews severely reduce the numbers of Jewish survivors. All Jews are dispersed from the Land into the nations.
- Judaism loses its status of religio licita²

In the Church Age

- Secular legal discrimination

¹ “Antinomian”: anti-law, in this case bypassing the (Mosaic) Law

² “religio licita”: Latin for “authorized religion” (Judaism had a privilege status in the Roman Empire and Jews were not required to sacrifice to Roman idols)

- Religious discrimination through Council decrees and Papal Bulls prohibit philosemitism and vilify the Jew and all Jewish customs and traditions.
- Antioch in the 3rd century: Cult of martyrs' relics spreads, originally meant to upstage gentile recourse to Jewish wonder-workers in matters of healing & medicine, etc. (Maccabean martyrs cult first...)
- Justinian Novella 146: stress on LXX, Greek liturgy in synagogues meant to uproot use of Hebrew, replace it with Greek with allegorical interpretation superseding literal (too Jewish)
- Patristic rhetoric vilifies synagogue for killing Son of God as places for heretics. Also "synagogue becomes an allegory for people of Israel, a synonym for "Jews" distinct from ecclesia (church) & superseded by it – Doctrine of Contempt emerges from church triumphalism.
- The Church misinterprets the Great Commission. The gospel is not for the Jews because they are cursed by God forever. Missions to Jews will not start in earnest until the 19th century.
- The Jewish remnant survives through intermarriage and assimilation.
- Forced conversions, pogroms, crusades, inquisitions and pogroms deepen the hatred and the gap between Judaism and Christianity.
- Reformation and Enlightenment fail to restore human rights and equal citizen status to the Jews and to protect them from Christian bigotry, false accusations (libels), abduction of children, and forced expulsions.
- Anti-Judaism in the pulpit discourages missions to the Jews until the nineteenth century, and plants the seeds that lead eventually to Holocaust. Now let's see how seemingly impossible odds caused or fail to hinder the rebirth of Messianic Judaism and the prophesied 1st Return to the Land in suffering (aliyah) prior to the prophesied aliyah of Joy .

In the Twentieth century (rebirth of MJ Congregations)

- Increased interest in eschatology in mainline churches sparks interest in Jewish return to the land.
- Increased interest in Jewish nationalism ((Zionism) and zeal for survival intensified by terrorism and Holocaust on the part of the Jews.
- Nationhood in one day, immigration begins (aliyah), the collapse of totalitarian regimes and the Law of Return – Yet most of the Jews see themselves as other nations and seek the secular escape from their past (archaeological and historical revisionism, post-Zionism)
- The Big Question? Is God's hand in the establishment of the nation of Israel? The next prophetic event is the judgment of the nations at Yeshua's return. Yes, the nation of Israel must exist and suffer the jealousy and hatred of the nations before His return to deliver her. She is first in judgment as well as blessing. This is the time of Jacob's trouble.
- The struggle of religious freedom: Jewish evangelism is restricted and opposed by anti-missionary movement in Judaism (the Messianic Jew is still declared Meshumed). Yet Messianic Jewish congregations are on the rise.
- The struggle of Judaism to survive: intermarriage, assimilation and Jewish identity crisis. Without Messiah, Judaism is a crutch that gives us the illusion that we are not stumbling or

falling. It has become centered on Jewish identity rather than the identity of the God of Israel. Many Jews undergo a profound identity malaise. The hope for Messiah keeps growing, His true identity yet to be revealed as Joseph revealed it to his brothers. He is the Rock upon which we stand: He is finding a way to the heart of His people. He is our true identity.

- Israel and other religions: Is it war or peace? Islam has declared war, holy sites are under siege. Israel, look up and wake up: He is about to rise upon you! Nations, pray for Israel... Believers are also persecuted all over the world: a global harvest is under way. Surprisingly, these believers are Christian Zionists, Israel's best friends.
- Israel, the nations and the Middle East conflict: The nations appease those who cause terror, and demonize Israel, refusing her the right to defend herself. The wars spread to the media and every home causing polarization and growth of censorship, Judeophobia, anti-Zionism, in preparation of the cup of judgment all nations are about to drink.

What does being part of the Jewish remnant mean to me? *My Testimony*



First let me say that every believer today is part of a chosen remnant in God's eyes, because they belong to a particular tribe or nation whom God has called to hear the good news. **None are excluded because before God chose Israel, he chose the human race. Just as the disobedience of nations caused the election of Israel, so the disobedience of Israel caused the salvation of the nations.** Whether we come in the morning, at noon or in the evening, we are paid the same wages. God chose Israel as an object lesson, to remind the human race Who He was and His intention to save them in spite of their rebellion. My forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, went through slavery in Egypt, exile in Babylon, the great dispersion of the 1st century AD. God had sent us Yeshua and performed many signs through Him, but our leaders did not choose Him. So, for lack of a good shepherd, we were scattered. My family was expelled from Spain during the Inquisition as an infidel and cursed people. We lived in Bulgaria, Turkey and Greece. My father moved to France just prior to WW2. I was born in Paris right after the Holocaust, which almost decimated us. Yet, the Lord sought us after generations of unbelief, and I became part of the chosen remnant, recognizing in Yeshua the promised Messiah of the Jews and all mankind. My sister soon followed, then my parents and younger brother. We are praying still for my elder brother. But is the Arm of the Lord too short? No. He can reach where no one can. Did He play a cruel game of hide and seek? No, we unwittingly did just that, because of our stubbornness. **Our blindness helped the nations see what we refused to see. Just as our sinfulness, pride and rebellion once helped blind the nations, so today, the**

nations' arrogance also keeps us blind. Let's examine ourselves: Not all who profess to believe have truly believed. Not all who reject have truly rejected. Even Christians have misunderstood Yeshua, Paul and the apostles. None of us, Jew or Gentile, have merited the gracious gift of His salvation. But we deserved to be chastised, since we failed in our role as a model priesthood nation. The royal priesthood of Messiah Yeshua has replaced the Temple and its sacrifices. It includes both Jews and gentiles. Let's wake up to what that really means: Hasn't the first become last and the last become first? Is it not The Lord's privilege to provoke nations to jealousy for His Name's sake? Who can impugn God's ways as unrighteous? The stone the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. Choose to stand on the Rock lest it causes you to stumble! What a lesson in Servant leadership from the Servant King!

We did not understand it in part because of the veil that hardened our hearts, and in part because our suffering was at the hands of wicked ones who had no discernment and knew nothing about how to provoke us to "godly" jealousy. Again, a costly misunderstanding took place in the House of God: When the early church abandoned its Jewish roots, Messianic Jews became abandoned. Unbelieving Jews rarely heard the gospel in a loving credible Jewish voice. Instead, they were condemned as Christ-killers of Yeshua because those who supposedly knew Christ used Him to cover their hatred for the Jews. They claimed our rejection of Messiah condemned us forever to everlasting cursing rather than blessing from God. We were told Israel's calling now belonged to the gentile Christian church and all future prophecies were meant for the church only, and that as unbelievers, Jews were cut off from the Israel of God forever. A few knew Messiah better: They did not try to vilify our identity and heritage or assume our place in God's plan, but recognized us as senior brothers and sisters in faith, though we had stumbled. They loved us, and risked their lives to save us, so we would take again our place in God's plan! Thus they fulfilled the Torah and opened our eyes. They provoked some of us to godly jealousy, always a few in each generation, but now more and more.

Today God has given us a voice. Through our voice, He seeks to encourage you today as we face the final unfolding of history! Prepare to be shaken, but do not be dismayed. What God has made will remain, but what man has made will not. God made all the nations, but their pride will be brought low. God loves every tribe and nation. Search back and see that their cultural riches were gifted from above. He calls for the diversity of the many ethnic lifestyles in the world to

reflect the purity and like-mindedness of His Son. He makes salvation available to all, in order to enrich and fulfill their ethnic identities, not destroy them, seeking a multicolored worship that never fades in appeal and flavor. Seek an ethnic lifestyle that is not of the world, but a beacon of His light in the world! Life requires a lifestyle and God is in the business of transforming our lifestyles, not vilifying our cultures. Is it wrong then to still be a Jew, dress as a Jew, eat as a Jew, speak as a Jew? No. **My desire is not to awaken you with a Jewish or Gentile lifestyle, because a lifestyle does not save, but with the power of Messiah's Word and Spirit in my life.** It means that any lifestyle, Chinese, African, Polynesian, or Jewish can expect to be transformed but not abolished. We are not imprisoned by a lifestyle when we approach God in order to see Him. However, we are free to reflect His light through our various cultural identities to give Him glory. He commanded, "Go to the Jew first, and then to all the corners of the earth." How will a Jew understand if I don't speak as a Jew, at the very least? And how long has it been since the Jewishness in me could express itself freely in praise, exultation and worship? In the praise of his Lord, Judah ("He who praised Yah"), the Jew fulfills his destiny.

Israel as a nation has always fulfilled her call, whether in unbelief or in faith, with the veil or without, for God both blessed and cursed, honored and reproved, healed and chastised her continuously, **so that the nations might see that there is a God in Israel and that He keeps His word to her and also consequently to all, throughout all generations.** Because he fixed his eyes upon us, he has pursued us throughout our history, calling us in Deuteronomy his special treasure, in the prophets, "the apple of His eye." Our history reveals our irrevocable calling and its ultimate purpose, to woo back the nations unto Him. He hid Messiah in us, and then revealed Him suddenly. Many did not recognize Him, but he continued with His plan and scattered us among the field of nations, which he had purchased with His blood. Why? So that swiftly the Gentiles might know Him, ally themselves with us in faith and become His new creation in Messiah. Adam's seed was redeemed and given a new heart. Abraham's spiritual seed swelled in numbers. But our unfaithfulness was a snare to the nations who became arrogant against the root, just as their former infidelity had been a snare to us, and we had envied them for not having to obey God's Torah. **Whether we take God's yoke lightly or not, the snare is pride and arrogance AS IF WE POSSESSED GOD, BUT HE POSSESSES US!** Now that I have faith, shall I sit here and do nothing? Shall I continue to profane His name among the nations with a worldly lifestyle that offends Him or with a denial of his inheritance for

my own people? Having received all from Him, shall I seek out for more as if it was not enough? No! I am a Messianic Jew, heir to all God's promises to Israel and ready to share them with both Abraham's physical & spiritual seed from within the nations.

I am also ready to take my place as a beacon of His light in the land. Please understand what God says about our return from exile ([Ezekiel 36:20-24](#)).

Now, if you say to me, "You have no right to return to the land of Israel because all promises to the Jews have already been fulfilled in Yeshua," then I ask you, "Do you no longer desire to see Messiah Yeshua return?" If you still long for His return, then are you aware that He promised to return only when His Jewish brethren in Jerusalem call out to Him, "Baruch HaBa b'Shem Adonai" (Blessed is He who come in the Name of the LORD)? The return of the Messianic Jewish remnant to the Promised Land is a prophetic act that proclaims the faithfulness of God to all the nations, not based on the Israel's merit, but on God's love for His people, even when they were disobedient, so no one can boast ([Rom 11:25-32](#)). **The Messianic Jewish remnant has yet a role to play calling their brethren back to their Messiah Yeshua before He returns. Who is to say otherwise? Wasn't the gospel first to the Jew then to all until He returns?** The return to their promised land heralds the beginning of the prophesied end of exile, though not the end of suffering for the Jewish people. Indeed, God promised to gather all nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat for judgment when He returns. In fact Jacob's trouble is supposed to intensify during this brief period as the nations gather against Israel. The city of God's choosing, Jerusalem, is the stone that causes all nations to reel and stumble, not just Israel ([Psalm 118:22; Acts 4:11; Zechariah 12:2-3](#)). As the judgment begins with the Jews, the wicked who have been hardened beyond hope will be removed as revealed in [Amos 9:8-15](#). The remnant will labor only for the one true peace and reconciliation in Yeshua empowered by the Ruach of Elohim can and will accomplish this. Amen? Amen. So let us all abandon our former ways and be reconciled together in Him! Now as a messianic Jew, the United Nations may not recognize me, and my own people may reject me, so what? **In Him, I have all. I am all He intended me to be. Of whom shall I be afraid?** Who can take what God has freely given? O, Blessed is He who removes the veil from the eyes of Israel and from all the nations! Blessed is He who makes us one in Him and reconciles us by the Name above all Names, Yeshua HaMaschiach!
