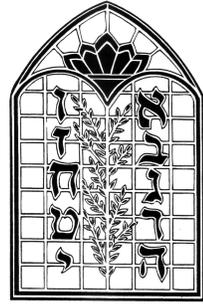


# CHAPTER 3

## THESE BONES SHALL LIVE: *A Survey of the History Surrounding Messianic Judaism and Christianity*



### Introduction

The Messianic community was established as a Jewish-only movement and remained that way for about fifteen years. Then Gentiles entered the movement, beginning with the Roman centurion Cornelius (Acts 10). Even with Gentiles grafted in, the movement remained under the control of Jewish followers of Yeshua<sup>1</sup> throughout the first century, and was viewed as a sect within Judaism (Acts 24:14).

We find throughout the Book of Acts, the book that recorded the practices of the early believers, that the Jew and Gentile talmidim (disciples) did not abandon Judaism (including the Torah<sup>2</sup>) for some new religion. Nor did the Jewish disciples abandon the Jewish community at large, to which they were closely tied. The Book of Acts tells us that Yeshua's followers kept the Shabbat (Acts 13:14, 13:44, 16:13, 17:2, 18:4), met daily in the Temple (5:42), went to synagogue regularly (9:20, 13:5, 19:8), participated in the daily times of prayer (3:1, 16:16), ate kosher food (10:9-14), and kept the feasts of: Shavuot (2:1, 20:16), Pesach/Matzot (Passover/Unleavened Bread) (12:3, 20:6), Yom Kippur (27:9), and one unidentified feast (18:21).

We also learn that Rabbi Sha'ul (Paul), whose writings are cited by Christians and traditional Jews as evidence that believers are to no longer keep the Torah of Moses (Moshe), took a Nazirite vow (18:18, 21:23), held a Havdalah<sup>3</sup> service (20:7), lived his life according to Jewish customs (21:20-22, 28:17), remained zealous for the Torah of Moses (Moshe) (21:20, 24, 24:14), remained a Pharisee all of his believing life (23:6, 26:5), was accused by Gentiles of teaching Jewish customs (16:20-21), and even attempted to offer peace offerings (animal sacrifices) in the Temple (21:26, 24:17). All this after having becoming a follower of Yeshua.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this publication, the name Yeshua is used to refer to Jesus, the man of Nazareth. Yeshua is a Hebrew word meaning "salvation." Jesus is an Anglicized form of the Greek word "Iesus" (pronounced e-soos), which itself is a Greek transliteration of Yeshua. Since the language of Judea and Galilee in the first century was most likely Hebrew, Yeshua represents the actual name given to the Messiah. Therefore, this publication will use the Hebrew form of the name in most instances.

<sup>2</sup> The Torah is a collection of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Torah means "instruction." It derives from the root "yara," meaning "to throw [a stone]" or "to shoot [an arrow]," in a skilled and controlled manner. In the same way that the archer or the stone thrower aims at the target, so the teacher aims at the heart of the student with his instruction. This word is usually translated as "law" in English, but "law" does not accurately capture Torah's true essence. Therefore, throughout this paper, the Torah will be used.

<sup>3</sup> Havdalah means "separation," in the sense of distinction, and is the name of the special ceremony that ends the Sabbath at sundown on Saturday night, beginning the new week.

Acts 21:20 states that tens of thousands of Jews believed in Yeshua (around 55 A.D.) and remained faithful to the Torah of Moses (Moshe). Historians substantiate this claim with their estimates that over one million Jews believed in Yeshua as the Jewish Messiah in the first century. Of this number, the Book of Acts reports that Pharisees (15:5) and many priests (6:7) were included.

### 30 A.D. <sup>4</sup>

The New Covenant era began on Shavuot<sup>6</sup>, in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4) as the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) was poured out on believers (Acts 2:1). This commemorated the inauguration of the congregation in the wilderness of Sinai 1,500 years earlier, when God made a covenant with His people (Deuteronomy [D'varim] 5:2-5) and gave them the Ten Commandments (Exodus [Sh'mot] 20:1-17) on this same day of the year.<sup>7</sup> According to Jewish tradition, a fiery substance appeared on Mt. Sinai that day, representing the voices of God,<sup>8</sup> which traveled around the world, speaking to all its inhabitants in each of their seventy different languages.<sup>9</sup> In like fashion, the Messianic community formed with the appearance of “tongues of fire” (Acts 2:3). Only this time, those who heard the voices did not hear them emanating from the midst of the fire, cloud, and thick darkness (Deuteronomy [D'varim] 4:11-12), but from individuals empowered by the Ruach HaKodesh to share the good news of redemption in Yeshua HaMashiach,<sup>10</sup> beginning with the Jews of Judea (Acts 1:8). Their witness convicted about 3,000 people who were added to the community that first day (Acts 2:41).

This event was not the beginning of some new “movement that would divorce itself from the land, the people, and the Scriptures of Israel.”<sup>11</sup> Rather, it represented an inaugurating of the New Covenant wherein God started writing His Torah on men’s hearts. Similarly, on this same day 1500 years earlier on Mount Sinai, God inaugurated the Mosaic covenant by writing His Torah on tablets of stone.

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<sup>4</sup> Throughout this document, the designation “A.D.” is used to indicate the Common Era (C.E.) and commonly referred to as A.D.

<sup>6</sup> Shavuot, in Hebrew, is the Feast of Weeks, derived from the Hebrew word “shavuah,” meaning week. The name originates from the book of Leviticus (Vayikra) (23:15), which says, “From the day after the Shabbat – that is, from the day you bring the sheaf for waving-you are to count seven full weeks . . . “ The Greek name for this holy day is Pentecost, meaning fifty. This name is derived from the next verse which says, “until the day after the seventh week; you are to count fifty days . . .”

<sup>7</sup> Derived by counting the days from the day the children of Israel left Egypt (Exodus [Sh'mot] 12:17) until the third day after they reached Mt. Sinai (Exodus [Sh'mot] 19:1-2, 10-11).

<sup>8</sup> Derived from Exodus [Sh'mot] 20:18: “The people saw the voices . . .”

<sup>9</sup> Shabbat 88b. The number 70 derives from the belief that Genesis (B'reshet) 10 lists a total of 70 nations, each with its own language.

<sup>10</sup> HaMashiach is the Hebrew title Messiah, meaning “the Anointed One.” Modern-day Christians most often use the Greek title Christ. In attempting to restore the Jewish context of the Gospel message, this paper will give reference to the Hebrew title.

<sup>11</sup> Ariel and D'vorah Berkowitz, *Take Hold*, p. 163

Shavuot was also known as “Firstfruits.” On this day, 3,000 people entered into this New Covenant as a firstfruits offering.

Acts chapter 2 records the following:

“The festival of Shavuot arrived, and the believers all gathered together in one place. Suddenly there came a sound from the sky like the roar of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which separated and came to rest on each one of them. They were all filled with the Ruach HaKodesh and began to talk in different languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak” (2:1-4).

Christian tradition tells us that they were gathered in the upper room. This interpretation is rather difficult, given the fact that several thousand people heard the disciples speaking in foreign languages and thought they were drunk with wine. The house where they were gathered “does not necessarily refer to a person’s private home. Rather, this phrase was commonly used during the Second Temple period to denote the Temple itself.”<sup>12</sup> Based on this interpretation, the message being communicated by God seems to be “that the new and visible Temple in the world would now be one in which living stones would be built into a spiritual house ‘ . . . upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Yeshua Himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.’”<sup>13</sup> Thus we see a shift “from a Temple made of stones, to a house made of living stones.”<sup>14</sup> This new temple would be mobile, extending to all nations.

### **35 A.D.**

Rabbi Sha’ul, known by Christians as the apostle Paul, became a follower of Yeshua the Messiah as a result of his famous Damascus Road experience (Acts 9:1-18). Even though he was called to be the ambassador to the Gentiles, he did not preach the gospel to them for at least another ten years. The author is of the persuasion that during this time he sought God and searched the Scriptures for the proper understanding of how Gentiles would fit into the community, which at that time was exclusively Jewish.

### **45 A.D.**

The first Gentiles were admitted into the Messianic community without first converting to Judaism (Acts 10). Until this time, the entire movement was Jewish, and the disciples taught that one first had to convert to Judaism before becoming a follower of Yeshua. There is evidence of this position in Acts 6:5, where the Greek-speaking Jews within the Messianic community chose deacons (shammashim) from among themselves. One of the men they chose was Nicholas, a “proselyte from Antioch.” Not until the time of

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 165

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pp. 165-166

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 166

Cornelius (Acts 10) does Scripture record that the gospel was spread to the Gentiles. This event was at least 15 years after the New Covenant was inaugurated.

We should note, however, that the first Gentiles to receive the message of Messiah were known as God-fearers.<sup>15</sup> These people were familiar with Torah and the one true God. They attended synagogue and kept many of the commandments. However, for various reasons, chose not to convert to Judaism.

### **46 A.D.**

Jacob (Ya'akov),<sup>16</sup> the brother of Yeshua, wrote his letter around this time. This New Covenant writing is known by the erroneous title of James.

### **50 A.D.**

After the apostles realized God's desire for the gospel to spread to all nations, many Gentiles began joining the community. Eventually, the message began spreading to Gentiles who had no knowledge of the Torah or the one true God. These Gentiles began posing a serious problem for the community. Many of them came from backgrounds steeped in idolatry and paganism. How could Jews and probably even God-fearers fellowship with them? Rules needed to be established requiring immediate change in the lives of those Gentiles converting from paganism so fellowship could commence.

A council of the Messianic community leaders was held in Jerusalem to address the issues arising from these Gentiles joining the movement. Proponents on both sides were invited to present their case. Some used it as an opportunity to demand the conversion of these Gentiles to Judaism. Acts 15 records this event. Verse 7 states they "discussed the matter at length" (translation by the authors). For all we know, they could have discussed it for days. After listening to both sides of the argument, Jacob (Ya'akov), Yeshua's brother and the Nasi<sup>17</sup> (president) presiding over the meeting, made a decision. According to verse 29, these Gentiles would be required to abstain from things sacrificed to idols (idolatry), from fornication (sexual immorality), from strangled meat (improperly slaughtered meat<sup>18</sup>), and from blood.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The God-fearers were a class of non-Jews drawn to Yeshua, but not formal converts to Judaism. They attended synagogue regularly on the Sabbath, and they observed many of the Torah commandments.

<sup>16</sup> In the New Covenant Scriptures, the person whose name is normally translated as James is actually Jacob. The English translators of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries chose to translate this name as James. The name has become so common that his actual name seems foreign. Throughout this publication, the name Jacob will be used to refer to the apostle and brother of John as well as Yeshua's brother, the head of the Messianic community in Jerusalem.

<sup>17</sup> During the first century, the president of a synagogue or congregation was known as the "Nasi," or president.

<sup>18</sup> If this were the correct interpretation of "things strangled," then this would also imply that non-kosher animals are forbidden, since one would not slaughter them.

<sup>19</sup> The phrase "blood" could be interpreted in a number of ways, including the prohibition against eating bloody meat, sexual relations with wives while on their periods, and/or drinking animal blood as part of an idolatrous practice. If eating meat with blood is prohibited, perhaps we might consider the orthodox

According to Messianic scholar David Stern, these requirements “were primarily practical social requirements for fellowship between Jewish and Gentile believers. A Gentile who did not immediately observe all four prohibitions would so offend his Jewish brothers in the faith that a spirit of community would never be able to develop.”<sup>20</sup>

The apostles established these stipulations so they could begin immediate fellowship with other believers. As for the rest of the Torah, verse 21 indicates these Gentiles would be attending synagogue every Shabbat and learning about the Torah of Moses (Moshe). The implication, then, is that they would be taught to keep the Torah, not abandon it.

### **51 A.D.**

Rabbi Sha’ul wrote his letters to the congregation at Thessalonica.

He also spent 18 months in Corinth teaching the congregation he planted there. Acts 18:11 says, “he continued there (in Corinth) a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.” Corinth was known for its paganism and idolatry. We can assume that some, if not most, of the Gentiles converting to faith in Yeshua were not God-fearers, but those abandoning paganism. From the content of his letters to the Corinthians, we can deduce that the “word of God” Sha’ul taught them was the Torah. For instance, we see in 1 Corinthians 5 that he writes about Passover in a way that indicates the Corinthians celebrated it. In chapter 6, he discusses the establishment of a court to settle matters of dispute as commanded in the Torah. He also warns against sexual immorality, another Torah commandment. In chapter 7, he provided guidelines for married life, also derived from the Torah. In chapter 10, he again speaks in the language of Passover. In 10:16, he mentions “the cup of blessing which we bless.” This cup of blessing is known as the third cup of the Passover Seder. Why would he use such terminology if the Corinthians weren’t familiar with it? And if they were familiar with it, can we not assume that the reason was because they were celebrating Passover?

### **53 A.D.**

Sha’ul spent two years in Ephesus teaching the congregation he planted there. Acts 19:9-10 says,

“ . . . he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Yeshua, both Jews and Greeks.”

Like Corinth, Ephesus was known for its paganism and idolatry. Also like Corinth, we can assume that at least some of the Gentiles converting to faith in Yeshua were those abandoning paganism. In his letter to the Ephesians, we learn that Gentiles are brought in to the “covenants of promise” (2:12). Notice the word “covenants” is plural. Scripture

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practice of soaking meat in salt water before cooking it.

<sup>20</sup> David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 278

mentions at least five covenants God made with man. These are the Noachide, Avrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New Covenants. Sha'ul seems to be referring to the Avrahamic and New Covenant in this passage, and probably the Mosaic as well, in which the Torah is written upon believers' hearts. (Jeremiah [Yirmeyahu] 31:31-33). Thus, we learn that Gentiles were brought into the same covenants God previously made with Israel, thereby making them "fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19).

## 55 A.D.

### **Sha'ul's Nazirite Vow**

About this time, Rabbi Sha'ul went to Jerusalem a third time after taking a Nazirite vow. Acts 21:23-26 states that he was instructed by the leadership of the movement to take four other men who had also taken a Nazirite vow. "Be purified with them and pay their expenses so that they might shave their heads." The purpose was that everyone would know that he did not forsake the Torah of Moses (Moshe). Sha'ul did just as instructed, and then entered the Temple to bring the animal sacrifice required of them (Numbers [B'midbar] 6:13-21). He would never have done so if we are to believe that he taught that the Torah had been rendered obsolete. To do so would have been hypocritical. Therefore, we can only conclude that he continued to keep the Torah AFTER becoming a believer. We must interpret his writings in light of this understanding.

Interestingly, we also learn from this chapter that tens of thousands of Jews believed in Yeshua at that time, yet they all were zealous for the Torah of Moses (Moshe) (Acts 21:20).

We also learn from Acts chapters 21 and 15 that Jerusalem was viewed as the seat of authority for the Messianic community. In the words of Hebrew Christian<sup>22</sup> historian Hugh Schonfield,

"For the Christians of the Churches in Asia Minor and Greece, the Church at Jerusalem was an authority, in the same sense and to the same extent as the Sanhedrin was for the synagogues of the diaspora."<sup>23</sup>

We see further evidence of Jerusalem's authority in the Clementine Recognitions. In this letter, Peter (Kefa) urges the Gentiles to "observe the greatest caution, that you believe no teacher unless he bring from Jerusalem the testimony of Jacob (Ya'akov), the Lord's brother, or of whosoever may come after him. For no one, unless he has gone up thither

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<sup>22</sup> In this paper, the term "Hebrew Christian" is used in two contexts. The first is to identify Jewish followers of Yeshua who became part of Gentile Christianity after the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. but before the rebirth of Messianic Judaism around 1970. For them, the idea of Messianic Judaism was mostly a foreign concept. The second context is used to distinguish modern-day Jewish believers who adhere to a Messianic Jewish lifestyle from those who choose to maintain a Gentile Christian lifestyle.

<sup>23</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 26

and there has been approved as a fit and faithful teacher for preaching the word of the Messiah, unless, I say, he brings a testimony thence, is by any means to be received.”<sup>24</sup>

**Mark’s Gospel** — The Gospel of Mark was written about this time.

**56 A.D.**

Rabbi Sha’ul wrote his letters to the congregations at Corinth and Galatia.

**57 A.D.**

Sha’ul wrote his letter to the congregation at Rome.

**58 A.D.**

Matthew (Mattityahu) wrote his Gospel around this time.

**61 A.D.**

Sha’ul wrote letters to the congregations at Collosse and Ephesus. He also wrote his letter to Philemon around this time.

**62 A.D.**

Sha’ul wrote his letter to the congregation at Philippi. Luke likely completed the Book of Acts around this time.

**63 A.D.**

The Gospel of Luke was likely written at this time. Sha’ul probably wrote his first letter to his disciple Timothy and his letter to his disciple Titus around this time.

**64 A.D.**

Peter (Kefa) probably wrote his first epistle around this time.

**65 A.D.**

An unknown author wrote the book of Hebrews. Peter (Kefa) likely wrote his second letter around this time.

**66 A.D.**

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 26. (The name Jacob [Ya’akov] was changed to James).

Israel went to war with Rome as a result of hostilities initiated by members of the Zealot party. The Roman army annihilated the Jewish revolt. Later, the Rabbis stated that Jerusalem's destruction was due to "baseless hatred."<sup>25</sup> If so, perhaps the hatred is unknowingly directed at Yeshua—the fact that he was rejected as Messiah by the Jewish leadership of his day and handed over to Pilate<sup>26</sup> to be crucified. Others believed that heavy taxes, levied by the Sadducean priests and Herodians, led to a revolt by the general populace.<sup>27</sup> Until this time, Jerusalem was the central gathering place for Jewish believers. Those who were considered elders for the entire movement resided there. When the Roman army surrounded the city in 68 A.D., the Jewish believers fled the city in response to the words of Yeshua (Luke 21:20-24), and went to Pella, a region in the southeastern end of the Lake of Galilee, beyond the Jordan. This action earned them the title "Meshumed" (traitors) with the rest of the Jewish community.<sup>28</sup>

The Gentile Christians, decades later, viewed the Temple's destruction as a sign that God had abandoned the Jewish people and selected the Christians as His chosen people. They interpreted "the destruction as a sign that God had abandoned Judaism and provided them the freedom to develop their own Christian theology in a setting free from Jerusalem's influence."<sup>29</sup>

### **67 A.D.**

Sha'ul probably wrote his second letter to Timothy about this time.

### **68 A.D.**

The apostle John (Yochanan) wrote his gospel around this time. Also, the book of Jude (Yehudah) was written around this time.

### **70 A.D.**

While the Roman army surrounded the city of Jerusalem, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zachai escaped from Jerusalem. The Zealots refused to let anyone leave the city, even though many were starving from the Roman siege. Ben Zachai left by pretending to be dead, having his body carried out in a coffin to be buried. Once outside the city, he approached Vespasian, the Roman general, and asked for the city of Yavneh (a town on the coast of Judea) to be given to him and his disciples. Vespasian granted his request.<sup>30</sup> Later that same year, the Romans conquered the city, broke down its walls, killed thousands of its inhabitants, took thousands more as slaves, and destroyed the Temple.

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<sup>25</sup> (Mishna 9) Yoma 9

<sup>26</sup> Pontius Pilate was the procurator of Roman-controlled Judea from 26 A.D. to 36 A.D. Josephus characterizes him as vile and cruel.

<sup>27</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 30

<sup>28</sup> Michael Schiffman, *Return of the Remnant*, p. 13

<sup>29</sup> David Ruasch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 3

<sup>30</sup> Mesorah Publications, *Tishah B'av*, pp. 135-136

## 72 A.D.

Historians believe the Jewish believers who fled to Pella returned to Jerusalem after the war with Rome, making Jerusalem the head of the Messianic community once more.

## 85 A.D.

The apostle John (Yochanan) probably wrote 1 John (Yochanan) around this time.

## 90 A.D.

Yochanan Ben Zachai and his students redefined Judaism in light of the fact that the Temple was no longer a way of life. Since they were Pharisees, they redefined it according to their view. Until that time, many sects of Judaism existed, including Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots, Boethusians, Pharisees, Nazarenes, and many others. Ben Zachai managed to exert enough influence and power, with the exception of the Nazarenes, all other expressions of Judaism ceased to exist. Hence, the Pharisees began a policy of exclusion — “either play by our rules or we don’t let you play at all.” They proceeded to excommunicate the Jewish believers from their midst. A nineteenth blessing was added to the Amidah,<sup>1</sup> the eighteen benedictions said daily by observant Jews. This additional blessing was called the “Birkhat haMinim,”<sup>2</sup> the blessing for the heretics. Messianic Jews would not say this blessing with other Jews in the synagogue, because it would pronounce a curse on them. Those not saying this blessing were immediately suspected of being Nazarenes (Messianic Jews) and were subject to excommunication from the synagogue. If the one leading the prayers stumbled over his speech on this blessing, he too, was suspected of being a Nazarene and was immediately removed from being prayer leader.<sup>3</sup>

In keeping with their policy of exclusion, historian Paul Liberman writes,

“The Rabbis ordered that there was to be no contact with Jewish believers. The children of Jewish believers were declared illegitimate; their sons were not to be taught a trade. No medical treatment was to be accepted from the believers . . . they were not to be helped when they were in need. Their food products were considered unfit for consumption; their books sorcery.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Amidah is a set of 19 prayers said three times daily while standing. These prayers are still said daily in Orthodox synagogues by a group of at least 10 Jewish men, known as minyan.

<sup>2</sup> Birkhat HaMinim literally means “blessing for the heretic.” This blessing was actually a curse. Followers of Yeshua would not recite this blessing, because it would pronounce a curse on them. The word Haminim is actually a play on words, because the believers called themselves the ma’aminim.

<sup>3</sup> David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, pp. 139-140.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Liberman, *The Fig Tree Blossoms*, p. 37

In their redefinition of Judaism, “the synagogue became the center of Jewish life. Pharisaic Judaism became the norm.”<sup>5</sup>

### 95 A.D.

The last of the B’rit Hadashah<sup>6</sup> books (New Covenant) were written by John (Yochanan), the last of the twelve emissaries (apostles). If we can assume that John (Yochanan) was considered the foremost human authority in the Messianic community at that time, then we can also assume that the movement was still a Jewish movement.

### 115 A.D. (?)

Around this time, Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, taught in his Epistle to the Phillipians that whoever “celebrates the Passover along with the Jews, or receives emblems of their feast, he is a partaker of those who killed the Lord and His apostles.”<sup>7</sup> In addition, the Epistle of Barnabas states that Jewish fasts are no longer acceptable to God and that Christians are the heirs of God’s covenant with Abraham. It goes on to state that the covenant was meant for Jews and Christians, but the Jews lost it.<sup>8</sup>

With the apostles dead, signs began appearing indicating that Gentile believers were losing sight of their identity with the Jewish people. Forces were set in motion for the Gentiles to begin the process of divorcing themselves from their Jewish roots.

### 130 A.D.

The heretic Marcion appeared about this time and began teaching that the Hebrew Scriptures “have no value or authority for the Church.”<sup>9</sup> Marcion believed the grace of God, as taught by Sha’ul, had replaced the Old Covenant.<sup>10</sup> According to Marcion, the old legalism of the Bible had been fulfilled, and a new dispensation of grace had been inaugurated.<sup>11</sup> Marcion believed Paul taught a more excellent way of grace. Moses brought condemnation, but Paul enabled men and women to discover God’s grace.<sup>12</sup> Marcion was aware of Yeshua’s statement in Matthew (Mattityahu) 5:17, “. . . I did not come to destroy the Torah, but to fulfill.” Marcion’s disciples were so troubled by this verse that they changed the words to read, “Think not that I have come to fulfill the Law, but to destroy it.”<sup>13</sup> They simply inverted the words “fulfill” and “destroy” to suit their opinion.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Schiffman, *Return of the Remnant*, p.14

<sup>6</sup> The term “B’rit Hadashah” means New or New Covenant

<sup>7</sup> Ignatius, *Epistle to the Phillipians*, IV, as quoted in *Messianic Judaism*, p. 13, by David Rausch

<sup>8</sup> *Epistle of Barnabas*, IV, as referenced in *Messianic Judaism*, p.13, by David Rausch

<sup>9</sup> Brad H. Young, *Torah for Jesus, Paul, and Marcion*, Yavo Digest publication.

<sup>10</sup> Brad H. Young, *The Torah as Light*, Yavo Digest publication

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

Marcion taught that “the God of the Old Testament was cruel and a totally different God from the one revealed in the New Testament.” He “founded his own Church which merged Gnosticism with orthodox Christianity, creating a theology that was simply dualistic, violently antagonistic toward Judaism, strictly ascetic and celibate, and wielded a wide and destructive influence throughout Christendom. Unfortunately, some modern Christians have unknowingly endorsed his ideas.” His “theology was so contrary to God’s word that Polycarp, a student of John (Yochanan), called him ‘the first-born of Satan.’”<sup>15</sup>

Years after Marcion’s death, Irenaeus, a late second century patristic writer (Church father), said that Marcion “mutilated the Gospel according to Luke, removing all the narratives of the Lord’s birth, and also removing much of his teaching of the discourses of the Lord wherein he is most manifestly described as acknowledging the maker of this universe to be his father.” He did the same to the letters of the apostle Paul (Sha’ul).<sup>16</sup> His flawed logic required him to do so. Otherwise, how could the God of the Old Covenant, a supposedly different God than the one revealed in the New Covenant, be his father?

Even though he was declared a heretic, his dualistic concept of grace vs. law was later accepted as truth. From this evidence, we can see the rift widening between Jewish and Gentile believers. The Gentiles gained momentum in their efforts to separate themselves from their Jewish brethren. A Gentile Church began to emerge.

### 132 A.D.

A second war broke out between Israel and Rome, called the Bar Kochba war. In this war, one of the generals, Bar Kosiba, displayed great valor and military genius. Rabbi Akiva changed his name to Bar Kochba (“son of a star”), alluding to the verse in Numbers (B’midbar) 24:17 which states, “A star shall go forth from Jacob.”<sup>17</sup> The “star,” in Jewish thought, was understood to be the Messiah.

Rabbi Akiva called Bar Kochba the Messiah himself. The Jewish disciples of Yeshua could not accept him as such. They once again fled to Pella and again were “branded as deserters and destroyers.”<sup>18</sup> This time, they remained in Pella, soon to become isolated from the rest of the Jewish community.

Once the war ended in 135 A.D., the Roman emperor Hadrian renamed Jerusalem Aelia Capitolina (Aelia, in honor of his own name, Publius Aelius Hadrianus, and Capitolina in honor of Jupiter, whose temple in Rome was on the Capitoline Hill<sup>19</sup>) and forbade all

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<sup>15</sup> Ron Mosely, *Yeshua*, p.35

<sup>16</sup> Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, p. 53

<sup>17</sup> Mesorah Publications, *Tishah B’av*, p. 151

<sup>18</sup> Michael Schiffman, *Return of the Remnant*, p.15

<sup>19</sup> Mesorah Publications, *Tishah B’av*, p.149

Jews from entering it for 100 years.<sup>20</sup> He also renamed the territories of Judea and Samaria to Palestine, a Romanized term for the Philistines, Israel's ancient enemy.<sup>21</sup> The result of the Bar Kochba war was a further rift between Messianic Jews and the rest of the Jewish community.

### 135 A.D.

The first Gentile bishop was appointed to preside over the congregation in Jerusalem, since practically all Jewish believers had long vacated the city. This marked the end of an era for Jewish bishops. Ancient Church historian Eusebius recorded over 14 Jewish bishops presiding over the Messianic community in Jerusalem since the beginning of the New Covenant.<sup>22</sup> Reportedly, they were all direct descendants of David and blood relatives of Yeshua.<sup>23</sup>

As a result of Hadrian's decree, the believers in Jerusalem now became exclusively Gentile, and the bishops of Jerusalem were now Gentile as well.<sup>24</sup>

Following the second Jewish revolt against Rome, Gentile believers throughout the Roman Empire "could not be expected to sympathize with the national aspirations of the Nazarenes. For them, the destruction of Jerusalem and the cessation of the temple services meant the end of the Law. It came to them as a happy release from the incubus of Judaism and left them free to develop a Christian philosophy of their own, better suited for the Gentile temperament."<sup>25</sup>

Ancient Church historian Hegesippus observed that as long as the apostles and the generation they taught were alive, the Messianic community remained pure. But as soon as they passed away, the false teachers arose who shamelessly taught false doctrines against the true gospel.<sup>26</sup> Less than 100 years after Rabbi Sha'ul warned of such errant leaders (Acts 20:29-30, 2 Timothy 3:13), they began to be accepted as proclaimers of truth.

### 140 A.D.

Writings from those assumed to represent the Gentile leadership within the Messianic community begin to evidence recession of the original Jewishness of the faith about this time. Justin Martyr spoke of two groups of Jewish believers: those who observe the Law of Moses, but do not teach that Gentiles are obligated to keep it, and those who believe Jew and Gentile are required to observe it. The former he considered weak-minded.<sup>27</sup> The

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<sup>20</sup> Ron Mosely, *Yeshua*, p. 2

<sup>21</sup> Petah Tikvah, *The Crusades-A Vale of Tears*, October-December 1996

<sup>22</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p.4

<sup>23</sup> Ron Mosely, *Yeshua*, pp.1-2

<sup>24</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, IV, 6, 2-4, as recorded in *Messianic Judaism*, p. 5, by David Rausch

<sup>25</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 54

<sup>26</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, III, 32

latter he considered heretics. Justin was also of the persuasion that Messiah had abolished “both the Sabbath and the Law.”<sup>28</sup>

Also about this time, the Church at Rome appeared to be the first Christian community to observe Sunday as a day of worship.<sup>29</sup> By now, Gentile believers far outnumbered Jewish believers. In addition, the voice of leadership no longer resounded from the Jerusalem of old. In that vacuum, the Gentiles had chosen a new course. Gentile Christianity had begun to express its own identity.

### **142 A.D.**

About this time, Polycarp, bishop of Ephesus and disciple of John (Yochanan) the apostle, debated the dating of Passover with Anicetus, bishop of Rome. Polycarp, along with the rest of the Asian community, celebrated the feast according to Jewish custom on Nisan.<sup>30</sup> The Romans, and believers in many places within the Roman Empire, had begun observing Sunday during the week of Unleavened Bread. The two men were unable to come to an agreement, so they basically agreed to disagree, peacefully.<sup>31</sup>

The Gentile Christians had already begun the process of changing the Shabbat to Sunday. Then they set out to change the date of Passover.

### **150 A.D.**

Modern day historian Jakob Jocz concludes that there were four classes of Jewish believers by the middle of the second century:

1. Jews who were a part of the Gentile Church.
2. Jewish believers who taught that the Torah of Moses (Moshe) was binding on Jew and Gentile
3. Jewish believers who kept the Torah, but did not demand Gentile Christians to do the same
4. Secret Jewish believers who remained in the synagogues.<sup>32</sup>

From this observation, we can begin to gain a clearer picture of how rapidly the Messianic community was changing from a Jewish-centered faith to Gentile-centered.

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<sup>27</sup> Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew*, XLVII as referenced in *Messianic Judaism*, pp.5-6, by David Rausch

<sup>28</sup> J.N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath* (Reprinted 1995), p. 303

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281

<sup>30</sup> Nisan is a month on the Jewish calendar, occurring in spring. It roughly begins anywhere from mid-March to early April. Biblically, it is known as both Nisan (Esther [Ester] 3:7) and Aviv (Exodus [Sh'mot] 13:4).

<sup>31</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01514a.htm>

<sup>32</sup> Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, p. 173, as quoted in *Messianic Judaism*, p.10, by David Rausch

The idea of a Messianic community was being replaced by the concept of a Gentile Church.

### 155 A.D.

According to testimony provided at the Council of Nicea 170 years later, Polycarp, disciple of the emissary John (Yochanan), continued the tradition of keeping Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, as taught by John (Yochanan) and the other apostles.<sup>33</sup> He was martyred in the year 155 AD, so we can only assume that he kept tradition until he died. Polycarp probably represents the last of the Messianic community leaders who were direct recipients of the emissaries' teaching. After his death, Torah teachings contrary to that of Yeshua and the twelve emissaries began to escalate.

### 170 A.D. (?)

About this time, a group of heretical Messianic Jews appeared in the region of modern-day Jordan. This was the area Jewish believers fled during the Bar Kochba rebellion. This new group emerged from the midst of the community of Jewish believers in that region. The Ebonites, as they were called, denied the virgin birth and Messiah's deity.<sup>34</sup> Irenaeus, a late second century patristic writer (Church father), said of them:

“Those who are called Ebonites . . . use only the Gospel according to Matthew; they reject the Apostle Paul, calling him an apostate from the Law. The prophetic writings they strive to expound with especial exactness; they are circumcised, and persevere in the customs according to the Law, and in the Jewish mode of life, even to the extent of worshipping Jerusalem, as if it were the abode of God.”<sup>35</sup>

### 175 A.D. (?)

“Irenaeus was the first to apply the term New Testament to sacred Scriptures.”<sup>36</sup> Similarly, “Melito of Sardis [was] credited ‘for the first use of the term Old Covenant or Old Testament to refer to the [Hebrew Scriptures].’”<sup>37</sup> These terms actually refer to two different covenants God made with Israel — the Mosaic covenant and the New Covenant. “These covenants are particular agreements, not designations for the two major parts of the Bible.”<sup>38</sup> By coining these terms, these individuals confused the distinction between the covenants and the Scriptures. For example, when the writer of the book of Hebrews speaks of the first covenant becoming obsolete (8:13), he refers to a change in the Mosaic covenant, not erasing the Scriptures as some people now assert.

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<sup>33</sup> *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus*, op.cit., Bk.5, chapter 23, p.207, as quoted in *The Church and the Jews*, p. 27, by Daniel Gruber

<sup>34</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, pp.5-6

<sup>35</sup> Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, p. 52

<sup>36</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 3

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4

This new labeling also led “to the erroneous belief that the ‘Old Covenant’ was for the Jews, and the ‘New Testament’ is for the Church.”<sup>39</sup> Likewise, it also led to the old Marcionite heresy “that ‘the God of the Old Covenant’ is a God of wrath, and ‘the God of the New Testament’ is a God of mercy.”<sup>40</sup> However, Scripture tells us that God is one (Deuteronomy [D’varim] 6:4) and that He never changes (Exodus [Sh’mot] 3:15, Deuteronomy [D’varim] 32:40).

### 185 A.D.

Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, preserved a list of the first twelve bishops of Rome. The first was Linus. Interestingly, Peter’s (Simon Bar Jonah) name is never mentioned. Later, Eusebius, the father of early Church history, never mentions Peter’s (Simon Bar Jonah) name as a bishop of Rome either.<sup>41</sup>

From this information, we can conclude that the Roman Catholic claim that Peter (Simon Bar Jonah) was the first pope is patently false.

### 190 A.D.

About this time, a controversy arose between the bishop of Rome and the bishops of Asia over the date Passover should be celebrated. In the beginning, the whole community of believers among the Gentiles celebrated Passover at the same time and in the same manner as the Jews. Later, the Gentile congregations in parts of the Roman Empire began changing the nature of Passover to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus. At the same time, they began restricting the celebration to a single day, rather than the entire week of Unleavened Bread, according to the Biblical commandment. As these congregations further evolved their version of Passover, they moved their day of Passover to Sunday.<sup>42</sup> To them, Passover had become Resurrection Day, or what we modernly consider Easter.

Toward the end of the second century, these congregations, led by the bishops of Rome, Caesarea, and Jerusalem (Where the bishops had been of Gentile origin since 135 A.D.), began to strive for unity. Then all congregations would keep the Passover on their single day of Sunday, rather than on Nisan 14, according to the Biblical injunction. They had also begun to use the Roman calendar, rather than the Jewish calendar,<sup>43</sup> for determining the date of Passover.

As Christians from the province of Asia, where the feast was kept according to Jewish custom, migrated to Rome, controversy erupted. Victor, the bishop of Rome, decided to effect unity in the observance of the festival. He wrote to all the bishops of the

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>41</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 101

<sup>42</sup> Les Juifs dans l’empire romain I, Paris 1914, p. 308ff, quoted in “A Note on the Quartodecimans,” C.W. Dugmore, *Studia Patristica*, Vol. IV, Berlin, 1961, p. 412 and as referenced in *The Church and the Jews*, p. 26, by Daniel Gruber

<sup>43</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 26

congregations that he viewed as allies, including the bishops of Caesarea, Jerusalem, and Pontus. They unanimously endorsed the observance of Passover/Easter on Sunday. Victor now called on the bishops of the province of Asia to abandon their customs and accept the now “universally” prevailing practice of celebrating Passover/Easter on Sunday. If they refused to comply, they would be excluded from the fellowship of the Church.

He wrote to Polycrates, the bishop of Ephesus, and urged him to gather the bishops of the province of Asia to discuss the matter with them. Polycrates did so and responded to the Roman bishop by letter,<sup>74</sup> stating “We observe the exact day; neither adding, nor taking away. For in Asia, also great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again on the day of the Lord’s coming, when He shall come with glory from heaven, and shall seek out all the saints. Among these are Philip, one of the twelve apostles, who fell asleep in Hierapolis; and his two aged virgin daughters, and another daughter, who lived in the Holy Spirit and now rests at Ephesus; and, moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord, and, being a priest, wore the sacerdotal plate. He fell asleep at Ephesus. And Polycarp in Smyrna, who was a bishop and martyr; and Thrasesas, bishop and martyr from Eumenia, who fell asleep in Smyrna ... All these people observed the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith. And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, do according to the tradition of my relatives, some of whom I have closely followed. For seven of my relatives were bishops; and I am the eighth. And my relatives always observed the day when the people (i.e. the Jews) put away the leaven. I, therefore, brethren, who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord, and have met with the brethren throughout the world, and have gone through every Holy Scripture, am not at all afraid of those things with which I am now threatened. For those greater than I have said ‘We ought to obey God rather than man’” (Acts 5:29).<sup>75</sup>

Victor immediately attempted to cut the parishes in Asia off from the common unity. He wrote letters declaring all the brethren there wholly excommunicated.

But this did not please all the bishops who kept Passover on Sunday. Irenaeus, bishop of Gaul, was among them. He convinced Victor he should not cut off entire Churches of God simply because they observed the tradition of an ancient custom.<sup>76</sup>

Though wisdom prevailed this time, it would not be accepted 135 years later at the Council of Nicea.

## 196 A.D.

A council was held in Caesarea and attended entirely by Gentile Christian leaders. They decided that Passover [Resurrection Day] should be observed on Sunday, not the 14<sup>th</sup> day

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<sup>74</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15408a.htm>

<sup>75</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, V, p.23-24

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 24

of Nisan as instructed by the emissaries.<sup>77</sup> Apparently, what we consider modernly as Easter, the Gentiles at that time still referred to as Passover. Only later did they change the name to Easter. Labeling it Easter confuses its identity with the Biblical holiday.

History is not clear on the subject, but the author believes that Gentile believers saw Passover as only commemorating Messiah's death, burial, and resurrection and chose to recognize a single day during Passover week to observe these events, rather than observe the entire week. Jewish believers, on the other hand, would have also recognized these events, but would have kept the feast for the entire seven days beginning on Nisan 14, according to the Biblical commandment (Leviticus [Vayikra] 23:5-8, Numbers [B'midbar] 28:16-25). The Gentile believers may have even recognized a day during this seven-day period for commemorating Messiah's resurrection. If so, they likely observed it on the Sunday after the Shabbat. The first Sunday after the Passover was considered the Day of Firstfruits during Passover and foreshadows Messiah's resurrection as "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep [i.e. died]" (1 Corinthians 15:20).

To the Jewish believers, Passover represented more than the sacrifice and subsequent resurrection of Yeshua. To them, it also reminded them of God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt, their redemption from slavery, and death of the firstborn. It further reminded them of how God delivered them with great signs and wonders and that He made them His own special treasure. To them, Yeshua's righteous act gave new meaning to these events. Gentile Christians, many of who were now estranged from their Jewish brothers, lost sight of these meanings.

Even though some communities, both Christian and Messianic, did not accept the council's decision, we can now see that Gentile believers progressed in the separation process. They were able to change the date and purpose of the Biblical holiday.

## 200 A.D.

Tertullian<sup>78</sup> discussed keeping Sunday as the Lord's Day and tracing the sign of the cross on the forehead.<sup>79</sup> This is believed by some historians to be the first mention in history of Gentile Christians treating Sunday like the Shabbat, as a day of rest.<sup>80</sup>

Assuming this observation is correct, we can conclude that sometime during the latter half of the second century (probably in keeping with the Roman practice mentioned earlier), the Gentile Christian leadership, in many places, began teaching that the Shabbat was changed to Sunday. Their reasons for doing so were likely tied to Yeshua's resurrection on the first day of the week (Matthew [Mattityahu] 28:1, Luke 24:1).

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<sup>77</sup> Paul Liberman, *The Fig Tree Blossoms*, p. 40

<sup>78</sup> Tertullian was a Church father of the late second/early third century.

<sup>79</sup> J.N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath* (reprinted 1995), pp.223-225

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.223, 231

Sadly, Tertullian acknowledges in his day, Sunday was considered a pagan festival day by the heathens. Christians who observed Sunday as a day of worship were thought to be sun-worshippers by the pagans around them.<sup>81</sup>

Although their intentions may have been noble, the advocates of change erred in their thinking. Scripture states that the Shabbat was given to the children of Israel as an everlasting covenant (Exodus [Sh'mot] 31:13-17). Nowhere in Scripture do we find even a hint that God would ever change the nature or occurrence of the Shabbat in any way.

Sixty years earlier, the Church of Rome began honoring Sunday as a day of worship. Now it was becoming a replacement for the Shabbat in many Gentile Christian communities.

### **230 A.D.**

Tertullian lamented that Gentile Christians compromised their faith with the pagans by joining them in their festival of the Saturnalia and other pagan cultural events.<sup>82</sup>

The Saturnalia was a Roman pagan holiday commencing December 17 and concluding December 23,<sup>83</sup> in conjunction with the winter solstice. Our modern-day Christmas celebration derives from the early Gentile Church embracing this festival and calling it the season of the birth of Christ.

Apparently, as late as Tertullian's day, the Christian communities did not observe a day in the year to honor the birth of the Messiah, at least not on December 25. From Tertullian's comment, the sentiment seems to be that it would have been considered idolatrous. Nevertheless, what was idolatrous in his day became accepted as divine within two hundred years.

### **231 A.D.**

About this time, Origen became known as a heretic by some of the Church leaders of his day. Origen said that keeping the Shabbat was meant to be interpreted mystically or spiritually, not literally.<sup>84</sup> Not surprisingly, he is considered the father of the allegorical method of interpreting Scripture. In his book, *The Church and the Jews*, Dan Gruber says of Origen:

“Origen is credited with being the father of the allegorical method of interpretation. The reason for this is that Origen, in a comprehensive system, made allegory the only way to truly understand the Scriptures. In Origen's system of interpretation, he often denied the ordinary sense of the text, and replaced it with allegories which he concocted. These allegories then

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., pp.265-266

<sup>82</sup> Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, ch. XIV

<sup>83</sup> City University of New York website: <http://deptftp.brooklyn.cuny.edu/classics/strnalia.htm>

<sup>84</sup> J.N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath* (reprinted 1995), p. 226

became the real meaning of the text. There was no way to challenge the allegories on the basis of the text, since what the text actually said was no longer what it meant. In this allegorical system, when the text said 'Israel,' it meant 'the Church' and not the Jews, so long as the promise or comment was good. If the promise or comment was not good, then 'Israel' still meant 'the Jews,' and not 'the Church.'"<sup>85</sup>

Gruber goes on to say, "For some of the doctrines he believed and taught, Origen was considered by many to be a heretic. During his lifetime, he was excommunicated by two Church councils held in Alexandria in 231 and 232 A.D." However, the Churches in Israel did not recognize his excommunication, and even "established a theological school and library dedicated to establishing Origen's views as the true orthodoxy throughout the entire Church." After his death, some of the leaders in the Gentile Church condemned his views as heretical. Even today, some of his views would be considered too heretical for most of the modern Church. Nevertheless, Gruber says, "Most of the Greek fathers of the third and fourth centuries stood more or less under the influence of the spirit and the works of Origen, without adopting all his peculiar speculative views [including the well known early Church historian Eusebius]<sup>86</sup>." Though the third and fourth century Church fathers "did not accept all the teachings which Origen's system of interpretation generated, they did accept the system itself." His system of interpretation is credited with producing "the anti-Judaic 'New Israel' theology where the Church replaces the Jews in the plan and purpose of God."<sup>87</sup>

Gruber continues,

"Anyone who did not accept [Origen's] allegorical system of interpretation was nothing more than a 'Jew,' and really did not belong in the Church. Origen maintained, 'If anyone wishes to hear and understand these words literally, he ought to gather with the Jews rather than with the Christians. But if he wishes to be a Christian and disciple of Paul, let him hear Paul saying that 'the Law is spiritual' [and] declaring these are 'allegorical' when the Law speaks of Abraham and his wife and sons."<sup>88,89</sup>

### 300 A.D. (?)

Church historian Hugh Schonfield notes the name "Nazarene," previously a title for early Jewish followers of the man of Nazareth, now became a title of scorn. It now denoted the "heresy" espoused by those who believed in Yeshua, yet clung to the Torah of Moses.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 11

<sup>86</sup> Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church, Vol. II, Ante-Nicene Christianity, A.D. 100-325*, as quoted in *The Church and the Jews*, p. 12, by Daniel Gruber

<sup>87</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 12-17

<sup>88</sup> Ronald E. Heine, translator, *Origen, Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, in *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 71, as quoted in *The Church and the Jews*, p. 15, by Daniel Gruber

<sup>89</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 15

<sup>90</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 98

By this point in time, the separation of Gentile Christianity from its Jewish heritage was almost complete. What began as the accepted and even expected way of life for first century believers now became heretical.

### **303 A.D.**

Roman Emperor Diocletian began what is known as the Great Persecution. All Christian churches and Jewish synagogues were to be destroyed, all Bibles were to be confiscated, all clergy were to be jailed, Christian expressions of worship were strictly forbidden, and every citizen was to sacrifice to pagan gods or else be put to death.<sup>91</sup>

This persecution lasted until 313 A.D., when the next Roman emperor, Constantine, restored all rights of citizenship to Christians. His action laid the groundwork that would ultimately lead to “an apostasy that would envelop Christendom for more than a millennium.” Messiah’s bride would soon be wedded to paganism.<sup>92</sup>

### **312 A.D.**

Constantine, emperor of Rome, became a so-called follower of Messiah, after having a vision of himself victorious in battle under the sign of the cross.<sup>93</sup>

We know from history, however, that Constantine never truly repented of his sins. He continued to serve as the high priest of the pagan priestly cult.<sup>94</sup> He later had his own son, wife, and brother-in-law killed.<sup>95</sup> As leader of the Roman Empire, he later forced the marriage of Church and state.

### **321 A.D.**

Constantine enacted a law for the Roman Empire to rest on Sunday in all cities and towns. This act officially sanctioned Sunday [known by pagans as the venerable day of the sun] as the Sabbath for Christians.<sup>96</sup> Until this time, they observed the Jewish Shabbat as well as Sunday.<sup>97</sup> However, Sunday had not previously been an official day of abstinence from work.<sup>98</sup>

In response to Constantine’s edict, Sylvester, the bishop of Rome, changed the name of the day [the venerable day of the sun at that time] to Lord’s Day. As bishop of Rome [not yet known as the Pope], his office carried much authority.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 202

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., pp.202-203

<sup>93</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04295c.htm>

<sup>94</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 46

<sup>95</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04295c.htm>

<sup>96</sup> *Sabbath and Sunday*, The Jewish Encyclopedia

<sup>97</sup> Probably Saturday night, based on Acts 20:7

<sup>98</sup> J.N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath* (Reprinted 1995), pp.343-344

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., pp. 351-352

The following day, Constantine issued another decree stating that if any royal edifice should be struck by lightning, the ancient ceremonies propitiating the pagan deity should be practiced and the *haruspices* were to be consulted to learn the meaning of the misfortune. The *haruspices* were soothsayers who foretold the future by examining the entrails of animals that had been sacrificed to the gods.<sup>100</sup> Someone of a regenerate heart could hardly issue such a decree.

### 323 A.D.

Eusebius, the authoritative writer of early Church history, completed the ninth of his 10-volume work entitled *Ecclesiastical History*.<sup>101</sup> Most of what we know about early Church history was learned from him. He completed this work in 325 A.D.

Eusebius was a disciple of third century heretic Origen, and sought to convince everyone that he was not a heretic. “Origen taught Pamphilus, Pamphilus taught Eusebius, and Eusebius wholeheartedly gave himself to the task of defending the views of Origen.”<sup>102</sup> As Origen’s views spread throughout the Church through men like Pamphilus and Eusebius, an anti-Jewish, New Israel philosophy began to take precedence. In the words of Gruber, “what was once considered heresy was put forward as the new orthodoxy. **The millennial restoration of Israel began to be considered a carnal, Jewish doctrine which no Orthodox Christian could believe**” (emphasis by the writer).<sup>103</sup>

By “millennial restoration of Israel,” Gruber is referring to a literal 1,000-year period in which the kingdom will be restored to Israel with Messiah ruling as king. This understanding is clear from Scripture passages such as Acts 1:6 and Revelation 20:4-6. Regarding this issue, Gruber says of Eusebius:

“On the issue of a literal millennial restoration of the kingdom to Israel — **the theological issue on which the new Church-state relationship would stand or fall** [i.e. the outcome of the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.] — Eusebius does not quote from anyone in the early Church [first and second centuries] who embraced his own view [i.e. an allegorical interpretation of the Millennial Kingdom]. He does not because he cannot. There were none who supported his view. Eusebius shows that he had early Church writings on this issue. But these writings expressed a faith in a literal, millennial restoration of the kingdom to Israel. Since Eusebius rejected that view, and because he wanted to brand it a heresy, he chose not to quote from any of the early Church writers at all. So it is understandable that those who accept the writings of Eusebius as an accurate representation of the theology of the early Church tend to believe as he did. Unfortunately, Eusebius is not faithful in this regard.”<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., pp.347-348

<sup>101</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04295c.htm>

<sup>102</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 17

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 18

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p.18

In contrast to Eusebius, the New Covenant Scriptures, plus two second century writings reveal a widely accepted view at that time of a literal 1,000-year reign of Messiah in a restored Israel. These include *The Revelation of Peter*, and Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*. In addition, Eusebius admits that Papias, a disciple of the apostle John, credited with writing the fourth gospel at the apostle's dictation, Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, and most of the first and second century writers, were of a similar opinion. Eusebius, however, never quotes from any of these writers. He simply ignores them. He pretends their writings never existed. "For Eusebius, it is not a part of the history of the Church, because it is not what he wants the Church to believe."<sup>105</sup>

### 325 A.D.

The Roman Emperor Constantine (now reigning from Constantinople, his new capital) convened a council in Nicea. The purpose of the meeting was primarily to deal with a heresy, called Arianism, which began to flourish. Arianism denies the deity of Yeshua. In response to this heresy, the doctrine of the Trinity was formed at this council.

A secondary, and lesser-known purpose for the meeting, was officially setting the date for Passover. Those on one side of the issue claimed, "the Jewish custom should be adhered to, [while] the other affirmed that the exact recurrence of the period should be observed, without following the authority of those who were in error, and strangers to gospel grace."<sup>106</sup>

Three hundred eighteen bishops attended the council and a vast number of lesser clergymen.<sup>107</sup> Unfortunately, no Jews were invited. Through Constantine's efforts to achieve unity among all the bishops over this matter, the council decided that all the Churches should celebrate Passover on the Sunday following the first full moon that occurs after the Spring equinox. We need to keep in mind that the nature of Passover had been redefined by this point in history to be a commemoration of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. In other words, it had become like modern-day Easter.

We also need to realize that unity was of utmost importance. Unity was a greater priority to Constantine and the council than obeying the Word of God. Constantine was interested in unifying the empire, not the truth of the gospel. As such, he was the first ecumenist, and introduced that error into the now Gentilized Church.<sup>108</sup>

According to Scripture, unity is healthy. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity" (Psalm [Tehillim] 133:1). Unity, simply for the sake of unity, is quite a different matter. The key to Psalm (Tehillim) 133 is that "brothers" are the ones who "dwell together in unity." The unity enacted by the council's action was not

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp. 19-23

<sup>106</sup> Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, III, 5

<sup>107</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04295c.htm> Eusebius puts this number at 250 bishops plus clergymen. See Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, III, 8.

<sup>108</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 46

between “brothers,” but between believers and pagans. Such “unity” cannot exist. Scripture declares, “How can righteousness and lawlessness be partners? What fellowship does light have with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14)”

Constantine sent letters to all the Churches in the Roman Empire encouraging them to follow the decision of the council. Why were the Churches so willing to follow his decree? Daniel Gruber answers,

“What the Emperor said had great weight. After all, Constantine was the one who had ended the persecution of the Churches. He was the founder of the Holy Roman Empire. He openly, personally, professed the Christian faith. He had convened the council. The Churches, therefore, were more than willing to hear whatever he had to say to them.”<sup>109</sup>

In his letter to the Gentile Churches, Constantine wrote,

“At this meeting, the question concerning the most holy day of Easter was discussed, and it was resolved by the united judgment of all present, that this feast ought to be kept by all and in every place on one and the same day . . . First of all, it appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin, and are, therefore, deservedly afflicted with blindness of soul. For we have it in our power, if we abandon their custom, to prolong the due observance of this ordinance to future ages, by a truer order, which we have preserved from the very day of the passion until the present time. Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd; for we have received from our Savior a different way.”<sup>110</sup>

If anyone should fail to comply with the ruling, Constantine stated, “Any dissension in a business of such importance, and in a religious institution of so great solemnity, would be highly criminal.”<sup>111</sup>

After the council concluded this business, Constantine held a great feast in honor of the bishops who attended to demonstrate his victory and authority over the Church. Eusebius recounts the event by writing,

“The emperor himself invited and feasted with those ministers of God whom he had reconciled, and thus offered as it were through them a suitable sacrifice to God. Not one of the bishops was wanting at the imperial banquet, the circumstances of which were splendid beyond description. Detachments of the bodyguard and other troops surrounded the entrance of the palace with drawn swords, and through the midst of these the men of God proceeded without fear into the innermost of the imperial apartments, in which some were the emperor’s own companions at table, while others reclined on couches arranged on either side. One might have thought that a picture of Christ’s kingdom was thus shadowed forth, and a dream rather than reality.”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 28

<sup>110</sup> Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, III, 18

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, as translated in *The Church and the Jews*, p. 29, by Daniel Gruber

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 15

In response, Gruber writes,

“Eusebius is somewhat misleading. It is true that some of the Church leaders were brought into close relationship to the emperor, his private apartments, and his table — in such time, such privileges became a measure of religious success — but it is highly doubtful that all the men of God walked through the circle of guards and soldiers without fear. The emperor intended the drawn swords to teach a lesson. On the Passover controversy, the Council of Nicea had chosen an anti-Biblical course and demanded conformity to it. The swords were a way of indicating the necessity of conforming to the official decree.”<sup>113</sup>

Gruber continues,

“There were some quartodecimans [from the Latin for 14<sup>th</sup>], as they were termed, who remained pertinaciously attached to the celebration of Easter on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the moon, and among others the Audeans, and schematics of Mesopotamia. They found fault with the council, reproachfully remarking, that this was the first time that the ancient tradition, through complaisance for Constantine, had been departed from.<sup>114</sup> In convening the council, Constantine had already declared that whoever would disturb the unity of the Church was a “malignant foe” motivated by a “malevolent demon,” exposing God’s Law to “slander and detraction.” Constantine had achieved political victory, in the name of the Lord, by the sword. He was not about to trade in his weapons . . . From that point on, Church doctrine was to be enforced by the sword of the State. Those who would not conform were to be exiled or put to death. The books of heretics — those who taught what was contrary to the accepted teaching — were to be burned and exterminated from the earth . . . The Church ceased to be the Church of Jesus, and became the Church of Constantine. It was no longer the bride of Messiah. It had become the bride of Caesar . . . The Church made a significant official change both in doctrine and in the way doctrine was to be established . . . God’s truth was to be determined by Church councils, and not by the Word of God. Consequently, the teaching which was a blasphemous heresy to Justin Martyr [140 A.D.-160 A.D.] became the new, unchallengeable orthodoxy.<sup>115</sup>

As a result of this marriage of the bride of Messiah to paganism, all sorts of idolatry would soon creep in. One Church historian writes,

“An intimate and trustful worship of saints replaced the cult of pagan gods . . . Statues of Isis and Horus were renamed Mary and Jesus; the Roman Lupercalia and the feast of purification of Isis became the Feast of the Nativity; the Saturnalia were replaced by [the] Christmas celebration . . . an ancient festival of the dead by All Souls Day, rededicated to Christian heroes; incense, lights, flowers, processions, vestments, and hymns which had pleased the people in older cults were domesticated and cleansed in the ritual of the Church . . . soon people and priests would use the sign of the cross as a magic incantation to expel or drive away demons.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 32

<sup>114</sup> Isaac Boyle, *A Historical View of the Council of Nice*, p.27, as quoted in *The Church and the Jews*, p. 32, by Daniel Gruber

<sup>115</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, pp. 32-34

In a word, the Gentile Christians seceded from the commonwealth of Israel and formed their own nation.

At this time, Jewish believers in Messiah faced a dilemma. They were long ago excluded from the Jewish community for their faith in Yeshua. Now they were excluded from the official Gentile Christian community. Most agree that over the next few centuries, Messianic Judaism went into exile, not to reappear until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, at least one author believes that Messianic Judaism remained active until around 1500 A.D.<sup>117</sup>

The cracks developing in the early second century had now become a great divide. The Gentilized Church had totally separated from its Jewish roots. The Church attempted to cut down God's "olive tree" (Romans 11:17-21) and plant itself as another.

When the Devil took Yeshua up on a high mountain and offered Him all the kingdoms of the world (Matthew [Mattityahu] 4:8-9) saying, "All these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me." We know, of course, that Yeshua refused. Tragically, the Gentile Church fell for the same offer when made through Constantine.<sup>118</sup>

One final point needs to be made. Throughout the transitional years (110 A.D.-325 A.D.), leading to the Council of Nicea and for centuries following, not all Gentiles sought to separate themselves from Jewish believers. These Gentile believers kept the Shabbat, Passover, and other Jewish holy days according to the scriptural commandments. We have evidence in the words of the late fourth/early fifth century orator, John Chrysostom. He chastised Gentile members of his congregation for their fellowship with the Jews on the Shabbat and Jewish festivals.

Beginning with the late tenth/early eleventh centuries and continuing until the fifteenth century, such groups as the Albigenses and Waldenses, were predominately in the southern region of France. Their doctrines swept across Europe and were known for keeping the Shabbat and other Jewish practices.<sup>119</sup>

Even in the early twentieth century in Transjordan, Arabic believers in Messiah were keeping the Shabbat, circumcising their children, and "governing their lives by the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. They [also] looked for [Messiah] to return and reign for a thousand years."<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization* (Simon and Schuster, 1950), vol. IV, p. 75; vol. III, p. 657, as quoted in *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 203, by Dave Hunt

<sup>117</sup> Richard Chamberlain, *The Forgotten History of Messianic Judaism*, Petah Tikvah magazine, Vol. 11, Oct-Dec. 1995. Another historian, Hugh Schonfeld, apparently believed that Messianic Jewish communities existed until the seventh century A.D. See his classic work, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, pp. 90, 119.

<sup>118</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 42

<sup>119</sup> Hugh Schonfeld, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 177

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120

The Armenian people of the East Indies are some of the strongest evidence to demonstrate that not all Gentiles forsook their Jewish roots. This community of Gentile followers of Yeshua was able to trace their history back to the bishops sent out from first-century Antioch to preach the gospel to them.<sup>121</sup> They remained isolated from the Roman Empire for 1,500 years and had never even heard of Roman Catholicism until their conquest by Catholic Portugal in the sixteenth century. In 1545, the Office of the Inquisition rooted out the Armenians' "Jewish wickedness."<sup>122</sup> This so-called "wickedness" derived from their faithful observance of Jewish Shabbat as taught by those sent from Antioch 1,500 years earlier.<sup>123</sup>

### **326 A.D.**

Constantine, the self-proclaimed believer, ordered his son Crispus' death, suffocated his wife Fausta in an overheated bath, and had his sister's husband strangled.<sup>124</sup>

From this point on, most of Church history is a record of anti-Judaic decrees, doctrines, and practices. In addition, we find many compromises with paganism along with persecution of those who remained faithful to the true gospel. No longer would faith in Yeshua be viewed as an expression of Judaism, but rather as a separate religion altogether.

### **329 A.D.**

Laws passed forbidding Jews to circumcise their children. The death penalty was imposed on anyone who embraced the Jewish faith. Marriages between Jews and Christians were also forbidden under penalty of death.<sup>125</sup>

### **337 A.D.**

Eusebius wrote his famous work, *The Life of Constantine*, as a tribute to the Roman emperor shortly after the latter's death in 334 A.D.<sup>126</sup> We learn, from this writing, many of the details of the Council of Nicea. According to author Daniel Gruber, we must keep in mind that Eusebius was a second-generation disciple of the heretic Origen, writing with the intent to establish Origen's views as orthodoxy for the entire Church.

### **341 A.D.**

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<sup>121</sup> Massie, *Continental India*, vol. 2, p. 166, as cited in J.N. Andrews, *The History of the Sabbath* (reprinted 1995), p. 430

<sup>122</sup> Yantes, *East Indian Church History*, pp. 130-140, as cited in *Ibid.*, p. 431

<sup>123</sup> J.N. Andrews, *The History of the Sabbath* (reprinted 1995), p. 431

<sup>124</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04295c.htm>

<sup>125</sup> *Constantine I*, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*

<sup>126</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05617b.htm>

The council of Antioch prevented Gentile Christians from observing Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan under penalty of excommunication.<sup>127</sup> It also forbade them from celebrating it with Jews and barred them from observing the Biblical Shabbat.

The decision of this council provides preliminary evidence we have that not all Christians complied with the decree of the Council of Nicea 16 years earlier. Apparently, the number of dissenters proved substantial enough that another council met to discuss and decide the matter.

### **350 A.D. (?)**

During the 4<sup>th</sup> century, various councils met to discuss matters of Church doctrine. From one of these councils emerged the “Apostolic Canons.” They decreed:

“If any clergyman shall enter into a synagogue of Jews or heretics [Nazarenes] to pray, let him be deposed. If a layman does so, let him be excommunicated.

“If any bishop, presbyter, or deacon, or any one of the list of the clergy, keeps fast or festival with the Jews, or receives from them any of the gifts of the feasts, as unleavened bread, or any such things, let him be deposed. If he be a layman, let him be excommunicated.”

“If any Christian brings oil into a temple of the heathen, or into a synagogue of the Jews, or lights lamps, let him be excommunicated.”<sup>128</sup>

### **375 A.D. (?)**

During this time, we begin to see the rise of two more so-called patristic writers, or Church fathers — Epiphaneus and Jerome. Jerome is known for translating the Bible into Latin around 400 A.D., known as the Vulgate.<sup>129</sup>

Epiphaneus and Jerome were both familiar with the Messianic Jews of their day, both those who were considered orthodox in their beliefs and those considered heretical. However these writers, particularly Epiphaneus, lumped orthodox Messianic Jews and heretical Ebionites and Elkasites together, obscuring the differences between the two groups. “This lumping together . . . reflects a patristic view that to live Jewishly as a believer was in itself heretical.”<sup>130</sup>

Given the Council of Nicea’s anti-Judaic outcome, we should not be surprised at such a theological outcome.

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<sup>127</sup> Paul Liberman, *The Fig Tree Blossoms*, p. 42

<sup>128</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 104

<sup>129</sup> David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 105

<sup>130</sup> Michael Schiffman, *Return of the Remnant*, p. 18

## 380 A.D.

The Edict of Emperor Theodosius I established Catholicism [Eastern Orthodoxy] as the state religion. In it, he decreed that the title of “Catholic Church” was to be used to designate those who adhere to the doctrines of the bishops of Rome and Alexandria. Those who entertained opposing opinions should be treated as heretics, regarded with contempt, and delivered over to punishment.<sup>131</sup>

## 387 A.D.

In Antioch, John Chrysostom delivered eight unrestrained sermons that demonstrated his utter contempt of Jews.<sup>132</sup> His purpose was to terminate all Gentile Christian contact with Jewish believers. Examples of his statements include: “[The Jews] really are pitiable and miserable,” “the Jews are worse than wild beasts and are murderers,” “their synagogue is not only a brothel and a theater, it is also a den of robbers and a lodging for wild beasts,” and “no Jew adores God.”<sup>133</sup> His only proof offered for these diatribes was “the Son of God says so.”<sup>134</sup> In his attempts to totally separate the Gentilized Christian faith from what little remained of its Jewish heritage, he asked his audience in one of his sermons, “. . . if the ceremonies of the Jews move you to admiration, what do you have in common with us [true followers]?”<sup>135</sup> In another sermon, he continues his attack:

“Let me, too, say this against these Judaizing Christians. If you judge that Judaism is the true religion, why are you causing trouble to the Church? But if Christianity is the true faith, as it really is, stay in it and follow it. Tell me this. Do you share with us the mysteries, do you worship Christ as a Christian, do you ask him for blessings, and do you then celebrate the festival with his foes? With that purpose, then, do you come to the Church?”<sup>136</sup>

On close examination, the term “Christianity” had become popular by this time, signifying that faith in Yeshua was no longer viewed as an expression of Judaism. Rather, it was seen as an entirely different religion. The community of believers no longer saw themselves as a part of Israel. Instead, they saw themselves as the Church, the New Israel.

Historian Jakob Jocz wrote, “It is doubtful whether the Gentiles, without the insistence of Hebrew Christians, would have retained the Old Testament canon [of Scripture].”<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, VII, 4

<sup>132</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 13

<sup>133</sup> John Chrysostom, *Discourses Against Judaizing Christians*, Sermon I, II, 1, as referenced in *Messianic Judaism*, p. 14, by David Rausch

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, Sermon I, III, 1-2, as referenced in *Messianic Judaism*, p. 14, by David Rausch

<sup>135</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 14

<sup>136</sup> John Chrysostom, *Discourses Against Judaizing Christians*, Sermon IV, IV, 1, as referenced in *Messianic Judaism*, p. 15, by David Rausch

<sup>137</sup> Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, p. 198, as quoted in *Messianic Judaism*, p. 16, by David Rausch

By the end of the fourth century, the process of gentilizing the faith was complete. Jewish believers were caught between two opposing groups: the traditional Jews who excommunicated them, and the Gentile Christians who rejected them. Their numbers and influence shrank to insignificance. By the seventh century, Jewish believers went into exile.

### 400 A.D.

Sadly, Augustine wrote in the Churches of his day, one would see “many drunkards, covetous men, deceivers, gamblers, adulterers, fornicators, men who bind upon their persons sacrilegious charms and others given up to sorcerers and astrologers, and diviners practiced in all kinds of impious arts.” He further stated that these same individuals would “fill the theaters on the festival days of the pagans.”<sup>138</sup>

In his writings, we see the fruits of the “unity” sought by the Council of Nicea 75 years earlier. We should not be surprised, for the “unity” spoken of was really nothing more than a compromise with pagans to achieve the “unity” of the empire required by Constantine.

### 426 A.D.

Augustine completed his treatise, *Concerning the City of God Against the Pagans*.<sup>139</sup>

Augustine was the Bishop of Hippo, a city in northern Africa. He is revered by modern-day Catholics (Roman and Eastern) and Protestants alike. His writings had a major influence on such men as Martin Luther and John Calvin, the fathers of the Christian Reformation. One writer declared, “He deserves to be named the Doctor of the Church as well as the Doctor of Grace.” Another wrote, “For depth of feeling and power of conception, nothing written on the Church since St. Paul’s time is comparable to the works of St. Augustine.”<sup>140</sup>

On the contrary, one might expect such a well-respected theologian to adhere to sound doctrine. Augustine adopted Origen’s allegorical system of interpretation, “at least as far as it defined the Church as Israel.”<sup>141</sup> His work, *City of God*, provides “the framework for almost all Church theology down to this day.” In it, he defined the Church as having replaced Israel. He also denied a literal 1,000-year reign of Messiah at the end of days. Augustine believed during his own time, the devil had already begun to be bound for a thousand years (Revelation 20:2-3), and the saints were reigning with Messiah, in a spiritual sense. At the end of that period, Messiah would return to Earth and the saints would reign with Him here in a greater way.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Augustine, *On the Catechising of the Uninstructed*, Chapter XXV, 48

<sup>139</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02089a.htm>

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02084a.htm>

<sup>141</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 204

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 204-217

Gruber reveals all sorts of problems with such an interpretation. He says,

“If the thousand years begins with ‘Christ’s first coming,’ then whatever happens before the thousand years begins, must have happened before ‘Christ’s first coming.’ These things would include the marriage supper of the Lamb [Revelation 19:7-9], the return of Jesus with the Church to the earth for battle against the goyim [nations - Revelation 19:11-21], the destruction in the lake of fire of the beast, the false prophet, and those who received the mark of the beast or worshipped his image [Revelation 19:20-21], and the beheading of those who, for the testimony of Jesus (who had not yet come and died), did not receive the mark of the beast or worship his image [Revelation 20:4]. It also would mean that before ‘Christ’s first coming,’ the Devil was bound with a great chain, thrown into the Abyss, which is then shut and sealed over him so that he cannot deceive the Gentiles any more [Revelation 20:1-3]. When did these things happen before ‘Christ’s first coming?’ The words must have some meaning. To what events do they refer? For Augustine’s explanation to be an actual interpretation there must be some way in which all these things happened before ‘Christ’s first coming.’ But all of these are unanswered questions for Augustine. In fact, they do not even arise, because he ignores the words of the text.”<sup>143</sup>

Others believe the ideas of second century heretic Marcion were a major part of Augustine’s theology.<sup>144</sup> Marcion taught that God’s grace was opposed to Torah.

With the separation of the Church from natural Israel in 325 A.D. and her self-declaration as the New Israel, the new, post-Nicene, breed of Biblical scholars were left with no other choice than to allegorize their interpretations of Scripture. To do otherwise would undermine the new orthodoxy the Council of Nicea had established.

### **519 A.D.**

The forty-day season of Lent,<sup>145</sup> borrowed directly from Babylon idolatry,<sup>146</sup> was implemented immediately preceding Easter. The Council of Aurelia decreed that Lent should be solemnly observed.<sup>147</sup>

### **593 A.D.**

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., pp. 217-218

<sup>144</sup> Ron Mosely, *Yeshua*, p. 35

<sup>145</sup> Lent is a Catholic custom of giving up something for a 40-day period beginning with Ash Wednesday and ending on Easter, Sundays excluded. This act of self-denial is usually referred to as fasting, regardless of whether food is the object given up.

<sup>146</sup> This forty-day season supposedly derives from the Babylonian custom of weeping for Tammuz, a pagan deity. Ezekiel 8:14 contains a reference to this practice. In this chapter, God showed the prophet a number of abominable practices among the Israelites still living in the land. In the case of Tammuz, the custom seemed to have been related to the deity’s alleged death and resurrection. See Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, pp. 106-107 for more information.

<sup>147</sup> Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 107

Pope Gregory I,<sup>148</sup> Bishop of Rome, proposed the idea of purgatory. Purgatory was believed to be a place where “the spirits of the dead suffered in order to be purged of their sins and fully delivered from the ‘debt of eternal punishment.’” Later, the Roman Catholic Church accepted this idea as Church doctrine in 1439 A.D. at the Council of Florence.<sup>149</sup>

### 610 A.D. (?)

There is evidence that at least a remnant of Messianic Jews remained in the area of modern-day Jordan early in the seventh century. A Persian commander, on one occasion, asked the Byzantine general, Belisarius, to postpone a battle during the Passover, when the Jews and Nazarenes would not willingly fight.<sup>150</sup> Thus, early in the seventh century, the Nazarenes were still fairly numerous.<sup>151</sup>

### 637 A.D.

The Muslims conquered the Gentile Christians and occupied the land of Israel.<sup>152</sup> With the rise of Islam, Messianic Judaism in the Near East ceased.<sup>153</sup> From the seventh century until the mid-twentieth century, the history of Messianic Judaism was mostly a record of individual Jews who accepted Yeshua as the Messiah and expressed their faith as Christians, not Messianic Jews.<sup>154</sup>

### 640 A.D. (?)

By now, Jews who accepted Yeshua were excluded from the Jewish community and were forced to renounce their Jewish upbringing by their Gentile “brothers and sisters,” if they could be called that. Historian Hugh Schonfield provides several examples of different confessions Jewish converts were required to make upon acceptance of Yeshua. One will suffice. In front of the entire Church, he would recite,

“I renounce all customs, rites, legalisms, unleavened breads and sacrifice of lambs of the Hebrews, and all the other feasts of the Hebrews, sacrifices, prayers, aspersions, purifications,

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<sup>148</sup> The title of Pope was not used in the modern designation until 1054 A.D. The Roman Catholic Church formed in this year when the bishop of Rome exerted authority over all other bishops in the empire. Since that time, the Roman Catholic Church retroactively designated all the bishops of Rome prior to 1054 A.D. as pope.

<sup>149</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, pp. 187-188

<sup>150</sup> Parkes, *Conflict of Church and Synagogue*, p. 269, as referenced in *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 119, by Hugh Schonfield

<sup>151</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 119

<sup>152</sup> Ramon Bennett, *Philistine*, p. 23

<sup>153</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 120

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121

sanctifications and propitiations, and fasts, and new moons, and Sabbaths, and superstitions, and hymns and chants and observances and synagogues, and the food and drink of the Hebrews. In one word, I renounce absolutely everything Jewish, every law, rite and custom, and above all I renounce Antichrist, whom all the Jews await in the figure and form of Christ, and I join myself to the true Christ and God.”<sup>155</sup>

## 664 A.D.

In England, national Church leaders met at the Synod of Whitby to discuss the dating of Passover, much like the Council of Nice over 300 years earlier. Apparently, the influence of the Roman-dominated Church was slow to penetrate this part of the world. The Christians of Northumbria in Northern England, being heavily influenced by Church leaders in Ireland, followed the teaching of the apostles, observing the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan. Those in the south, however, adhered to the decisions of the Council of Nicea. Northumbrian King Oswy, who sided with the latter, settled the matter. As a result, England severed its ties to the Church of Ireland in favor of Rome. Dissatisfied with the decision, Bishop Coleman left for Ireland, taking with him about 30 English monks.<sup>156</sup>

## 1054 A.D.

The bishop of Rome began to exert authority over the rest of the Gentile Church in the Roman Empire, claiming that he was the sole representative “of Christ on Earth.” He forbade all other bishops throughout the Roman Empire to be called “papa,” or pope. He took for himself the three titles formerly reserved for the Roman Emperors since the time of Constantine: Pontifex Maximus, Vicar of Christ, and Bishop of Bishops. The popes have retained these titles to our day.<sup>157</sup>

As a result of the Roman bishop’s declaration, Michael Cerularius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, excommunicated the bishop of Rome, Pope Leo IX. The first Pope of the now Roman Catholic Church likewise excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople. Thus formed the Roman Catholic Church in the West and the Greek Orthodox (also known as Eastern Orthodox) Church in the East.<sup>158</sup> To this day, the two have been at odds with one another. Their animosity has played a major role in European wars, including some of the Crusades, and even the war in Bosnia.<sup>159</sup>

Since the Roman emperor had long since left Rome for Constantinople, and since the Roman Empire by now had fallen, the bishop probably made a power play to fill the vacuum felt in that part of the Mediterranean. The Bishop of Rome soon took the titles of Vicar and Pontiff, titles previously reserved for the emperor. Through this, we can see

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid., p. 107

<sup>156</sup> M.J. Swanton, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, pp. 34-35 and F.L. Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* article, “The Synod of Whitby”

<sup>157</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 89

<sup>158</sup> Peter deRosa, *Vicars of Christ*, pp. 205-206, as referenced in *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 93, by Dave Hunt

<sup>159</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 38

that the bishop was attempting to become king. As history proves, that is precisely what happened.

The term Vicar of Christ, a title first originated by Constantine, and then later by the popes, is a Latin term that means “anti-Christ”<sup>160</sup> when translated to Greek.

### **1090 A.D.**

Pope Urban II initiated the first crusade, or holy war, when he rallied the Roman Catholic congregants from Europe to liberate the Holy Land from the Muslims and the Jews. He decreed that all heretics [Muslims and Jews] were to be tortured and killed.<sup>161</sup>

As they marched across Europe on their way to the Holy Land, the Crusaders gave the Jews the choice of being baptized, i.e. converting to Roman Catholicism, or being killed. After capturing Jerusalem, the Crusaders herded the Jews into the synagogues and set it on fire.<sup>162</sup> As the soldiers marched around it, led by a priest, they sang “Christ We Adore Thee.”<sup>163</sup>

### **1179 A.D.**

The Waldenses formed in southern France, although many scholars believe their origin is much older, at least seventh century. They were known as “the Poor Men of Lyons,” from the city on the Rhone River where they originated. They rejected the authority and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. They would preach and teach in pairs of two. They were also called “The Israel of the Alps.” This group placed great emphasis on following the apostles’ practice and obeying Yeshua’s teachings in the Sermon on the Mount. They were also a Sabbath-keeping group and proclaimed the Bible as the final authority on matters of life and faith. They later embraced the Reformation movement. Some eventually emigrated to the U.S. in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. A small remnant remains to this day, mostly in northern Italy and in Valdese, North Carolina.

Arising from the Waldenses came the Passaginians, referenced in 1184 by Cardinal Humbart as Nazarenes.<sup>164</sup> Neander, a German Church historian of the early 1800’s, said the origin of the word “Passaginian” alluded to Palestine and believed they were a surviving remnant of Judaizing Christians.<sup>165</sup> The word originates from the Latin “passagium,” meaning, “passage.” Some say it referred to the mountain passes where

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<sup>160</sup> “Anti-Christ” in Latin can mean “in the place of Christ.” In their view, the pope is Christ’s stand on Earth. Others see him as opposed to Christ, another meaning for the term.

<sup>161</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 246

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 269

<sup>163</sup> Petah Tikvah, *The Crusades-A Vale of Tears*, October-December 1996

<sup>164</sup> J.N. Andrews, *The History of the Sabbath* (1912 edition), p. 545, cited in Petah Tikvah, *The Forgotten History of Messianic Judaism*, October-December 1995

<sup>165</sup> *Church History*, p. 404, cited in Petah Tikvah, *The Forgotten History of Messianic Judaism*, October-December 1995

they lived, and associate them with the Waldenses.<sup>166</sup> Others say it referred to their wandering, unsettled lifestyle, as a result of the persecution they suffered.<sup>167</sup> Some authorities claimed that the Passaginians taught believers to keep the Law of Moses, including keeping the Sabbath and circumcision.<sup>168</sup> The Passaginians remained a movement until they were persecuted out of existence in the early 1500's.<sup>169</sup>

## 1208 A.D.

Pope Innocent III instituted the Office of the Inquisition. Its stated purpose was to keep the church free from heresies.<sup>170</sup>

William Lecky, a nineteenth century historian, wrote regarding the Inquisition,

“Almost all Europe, for many centuries, was inundated with blood, which was shed at the direct instigation or with the full approval of the ecclesiastical authorities . . .

That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history. The memorials . . . of many of her persecutions are now so scanty, that it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is quite certain that no powers of imagination can adequately realize their sufferings.

Llorente, who [as one-time secretary in the Inquisition] had free access to the archives of the Spanish Inquisition, assures us that by that tribunal alone, more than 31,000 persons were burnt, and more than 290,000 condemned to punishments less severe than death. The number of those who were put to death for their religion in the Netherlands alone, in the reign of Charles V, has been estimated by a very high authority at 50,000, and at least half as many perished under his son.”<sup>171</sup>

Since Lecky's time, we have witnessed the 20<sup>th</sup> century horrors of the Russian pogroms, the Holocaust, and other attempts at “ethnic cleansing.” These genocides claimed the lives of millions of Jews and people of other faiths considered harmful to the human race by those in power. Even though these minorities seem to outbalance the Roman Catholic Church, one must realize that the centuries of Roman and Eastern Catholics' anti-Judaic teaching, as well as some Protestant denominations, played a major role in these horrors.

## 1209 A.D.

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<sup>166</sup> J.N. Andrews, *The History of the Sabbath* (reprinted 1995), p. 419

<sup>167</sup> Petah Tikvah, *The Forgotten History of Messianic Judaism*, October-December 1995

<sup>168</sup> J.N. Andrews, *The History of the Sabbath* (reprinted 1995), p. 419. See also Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Petah Tikvah, *The Forgotten History of Messianic Judaism*, October-December 1995

<sup>170</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, pp. 233-234

<sup>171</sup> W.E.H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, Vol. II, pp. 40-41 and note 3, as cited in Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 234

Pope Innocent III declared a crusade against the Waldenses and Albigenses in southern France.<sup>172</sup> These followers of Yeshua were burned at the stake or killed by the sword when papal armies attacked their villages and towns.<sup>173</sup>

### **1213 A.D.**

By this point in history, the Roman Catholic Church periodically forced Jews to convert. In some countries, Jews were deprived of all their possessions upon baptism. The reasoning was, as Roman Catholic Christians, they ceased to be the king's lawful prey. The practice supposedly was a test of the sincerity of their conversion.<sup>174</sup>

### **1215 A.D.**

In this year, Pope Innocent III convened the Fourth Lateran Council. The council decreed that Jews were to wear a special piece of clothing (believed to be a badge). On Good Friday, Jews were to remain indoors to avoid riots through their alleged mockery of the Christians' lamentations of the death of their Savior. Jews and pagans were forbidden election or appointment to a public office. They believed that those who blaspheme Christ should not be allowed to hold authority over His followers.<sup>175</sup>

### **1230 A.D.**

Pope Gregory IX began what is now known as the Inquisition.<sup>176</sup> He "declared that the duty of every [Roman] Catholic is to 'persecute heretics,'" meaning "anyone who did not give complete allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. Such persons were to be tortured, imprisoned, and slain."<sup>177</sup>

The pope required the civil authorities in each Catholic country to carry out the punishments. The reason he held such sway over kings was "the keys of heaven" belonged to him, according to their understanding. "The most powerful civil rulers trembled when threatened with excommunication, for it was almost universally believed that outside the [Roman Catholic] Church, there was no salvation."<sup>178</sup> Furthermore, if they refused to comply with the pope's demands, they could "be brought before the Tribunal and consigned to the flames."<sup>179</sup> Such was the authority of the pope over the kings of Europe.

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<sup>172</sup> E.H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church*, pp. 88-89, cited in *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 255, Dave Hunt

<sup>173</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 255

<sup>174</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 165

<sup>175</sup> Mgr. Phillip Huges, *The Church in Crisis, A History of the General Councils*, XII

<sup>176</sup> Apparently, not everyone agrees as to whether Pope Innocent III or Pope Gregory IX initiated the Inquisition. The confusion may lie in the fact that Innocent III was perhaps the bloodiest of all popes, putting many so-called "heretics" to death.

<sup>177</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 124

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245

Every citizen of the Holy Roman Empire was required to be a Roman Catholic. Anyone not giving complete obedience to the pope was considered guilty of treason and was sentenced to death. The Office of the Inquisition sought out such heretics, “found them guilty, and handed them over to the civil authorities for execution.”<sup>180</sup>

Dave Hunt, author of *A Woman Rides the Beast*, writes:

“Whenever the inquisitors swept into a town an “Edict of Faith” was issued, requiring everyone to reveal any heresy of which they had knowledge. Those who concealed a heretic came under the curse of the Church and the inquisitors’ wrath. Informants would approach the inquisitors’ lodgings under cover of night and were rewarded for information. No one arrested was ever acquitted.

“Heretics” were committed to the flames because the popes believed the Bible forbade Christians to shed blood. The victims of the Inquisition exceeded by hundreds of thousands the number of Christians and Jews who had suffered under pagan Roman emperors.

The Inquisition . . . was the perfect setup for bigots, villains, enemies, and crazies with overworked imaginations to seek revenge, rid themselves of a rival, or gain personal satisfaction of having become important to the Church . . . The property of heretics was confiscated and divided between the inquisitors and the popes.”<sup>181</sup>

## 1297 A.D.

In keeping with the practice of forced conversion, a decree of James II of Aragon<sup>182</sup> reads:

“We also desire and ordain, that the brethren of the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans<sup>183</sup> do offer the Word of God to the Jews and Saracens of both sexes, by preaching, arguments, conversations, or declaration of the Christian faith. These shall assemble at their call, and listen without interruption to the preaching. Also, to avoid the possibility of their suppressing the conviction of truth by stubborn silence, they shall reverently answer to the interrogations or objections of the said brethren; they shall also be compelled, when desired, to give access to their books for the investigation of any matters, that so the truth may be the better sifted by a mutual exhibition and collation of writings, and thus be brought to more open light.”<sup>184</sup>

## 1311 A.D.

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p. 243, p. 249

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., pp. 252-253

<sup>182</sup> James II (1260-1327) was the king of Aragon and Count of Barcelona (1291-1327), and king of Sicily (1285-1295). He succeeded his father, Peter III, in Sicily, and his brother, Alfonso III, in Aragon. James defended Sicily against the claims of Charles II of Naples until 1295, when he relinquished the island in exchange for the title to Sardinia and Corsica. (Sardinia was annexed in 1323-1324, but he did not take Corsica).

<sup>183</sup> The Dominicans were a particular order of Roman Catholic monks. Other orders included the Franciscans and the Augustinians.

<sup>184</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, pp. 151-152

At the Council of Vienne, the Roman Catholic Church restricted social interaction between Christians and Jews.<sup>185</sup>

### **1313 A.D.**

The Council of Zamora ruled that Jews must be kept in strict servitude and subjection.<sup>186</sup>

### **1431 A.D.**

The Council of Basel renewed canonical decrees forbidding Christians to associate with Jews. It further required civil governments to confine Jews in separate quarters [ghettos], compel them to wear a distinguishing badge, and ensure their attendance at sermons aimed at converting them.<sup>187</sup>

### **1435 A.D.**

The forced conversions of Jews in Spain and Portugal had grown so commonplace that they formed a distinct class of citizens, known as the Marranos.<sup>188</sup> Some believe that Christopher Columbus may have been a member of this group. Many of these converted Jews continued to secretly practice Judaism. For this “crime,” the Office of the Inquisition formed in Spain about 50 years later, unleashing a reign of terror against all Spanish citizens, both Jew and non-Jew.

### **1450 A.D.**

Gutenberg invented the printing press, making the printed word available to the masses. Many historians believe, this author included, that this tool has increased knowledge and science more than any other human invention. It most likely made the Reformation possible 70 years later. Prior to the printing press, the common man was prevented from reading Scripture. Only those “properly trained” could read Scripture. From this point on, that would change forever.

### **1480 A.D. (?)**

Pope Sixtus IV declared that, as Christ’s vicar on Earth, he could grant indulgences<sup>189</sup> to the dead as well as the living. This way, he was able to obtain payments from the surviving relatives of deceased loved ones to have them released from “purgatory.”<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Peter de Rosa, *Vicars of Christ*, p. 194, as referenced in *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 23, by Dave Hunt

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 175

<sup>189</sup> Indulgences were alleged divine permissions to commit sins without penalty. For a certain price, a person could purchase an indulgence. Even murder had its price.

<sup>190</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 191

## 1483 A.D.

In response to assertions of the Dominicans to root out the evil converted Jews of Spain who continued to practice Judaism, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella requested the Pope to form the Office of the Inquisition. In response, the Holy Office was established in Seville and run by Thomas de Torquemada, the Inquisitor-General. The stated objective of the Inquisition was the purification of the Roman Catholic Church from heresy, and particularly the dangers of Judaism. Thus began the infamous Spanish Inquisition. No one was safe — from the highest ranking in the land to the lowest.<sup>191</sup>

Historian Hugh Schonfield, author of *The History of Jewish Christianity*, records that

“One of the earliest decrees of the Inquisition provided that no bishop or other priest of Jewish descent should have a seat in the court. Twenty-seven indications of secret Judaism were drawn up, including the following: expecting the Messiah, hoping for justification by the Law of Moses, keeping the Sabbath by wearing better clothes or not lighting fires on that day, . . . celebrating the Jewish festivals or fasting on Jewish fast days, . . . bewailing the destruction of Jerusalem on [Tisha B’av<sup>192</sup> — the ninth day of Av], performing any Jewish rites such as circumcision, retaining Jewish marriage or burial customs . . .”<sup>193</sup>

One officer of the Inquisition estimated the number of condemned Spaniards exceeded 3 million, with about 300,000 burned at the stake.<sup>194</sup>

## 1487 A.D.

Pope Innocent VII declared a crusade against the Waldenses in France.<sup>195</sup>

## 1492 A.D.

An edict ordered all unbaptized Jews to be expelled from Spain in four months time. When Christopher Columbus set sail on his famous voyage, boatloads of Jewish refugees were docked in the harbor, and Jewish believers were among his crew members.<sup>196</sup> Jews were given the choice of converting or leaving the country. Those who chose to convert faced the Inquisition’s wrath should they be suspected or accused of practicing Judaism in secret.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 176

<sup>192</sup> Tisha B’av is the ninth day of the Jewish month Av. On this day, both the Temple of Solomon and the second Temple were destroyed, the former by the Babylonians and the latter by the Romans.

<sup>193</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 177

<sup>194</sup> R.W. Thompson, *The Papacy and the Civil Power*, p. 82, as referenced in *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 79, by Dave Hunt. One may notice the inconsistency with W.E.H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, cited earlier.

<sup>195</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 257

<sup>196</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, pp. 178-179

<sup>197</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 271

Columbus may have been a member of the Marranos, as much evidence strongly supports this belief. His personal physician and mapmaker were Jewish. The mapmaker supplied Columbus with astronomical tables in Hebrew. Columbus took a Jew who spoke Hebrew and Aramaic on his voyage in 1492, just in case they met any “lost tribes” of Israel.<sup>198</sup> Columbus set the date for his voyage on August 3, 1492, the day after Jews were expelled from Spain. Perhaps he intended to rescue some of the Jews who were adrift in boats with no oars, anchors, sails, food, or water.

Columbus mentions the exodus in his diary, and connected it with Tisha B’Av, the date the two previous Jewish temples were destroyed by the Babylonians, and again by the Romans. Columbus also understood Hebrew and the Scriptures, a rare trait for Catholics. Modern author Newton Frohlich wrote in the December 1991 issue of *Moment Magazine* that Columbus seldom spoke in Italian. He spoke Castillian, a version of Spanish spoken by Jews and conversos (Jews forced to convert to Catholicism). Columbus wrote in his diary “Jesus Christ is our redeemer.” He also mentioned the signs of the end times in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

### **1514 A.D.**

John Wycliffe and Miles Coverdale translated the Bible into English. Fifth century theologian Augustine, who was influenced by second century heretic Marcion, heavily influenced these men. Like Augustine and Marcion, these men taught that grace was in opposition to Law.<sup>199</sup>

### **1515 A.D.**

Pope Leo X established prices for indulgences, absolution from sins of all kinds, including murder. He “commissioned the Dominican Friar Tetzel to sell indulgences.” His sales pitch was, “As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory springs.”<sup>200</sup> This abominable practice became the catalyst for the Reformation, which began with Martin Luther and swept across Europe over the next few decades.

### **1517 A.D.**

The second decade of the sixteenth century introduces us to Martin Luther, considered to be the father of the Reformation. Luther was a Roman Catholic monk of the Augustinian order, having entered the monastery in 1505 after surviving a lightning strike.<sup>201</sup>

Several years later, he received insight into the meaning of Romans chapter 1. Verse 17 says, “The righteous shall live by his faith.” He realized all of his years of fasting and

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<sup>198</sup> Petah Tikvah, *The Forgotten History of Messianic Judaism*, October-December 1995

<sup>199</sup> Ron Mosely, *Yeshua*, p. 35

<sup>200</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 185-186

<sup>201</sup> Professor Gerhard Rempel, *Martin Luther and the Reformation*, Western New England College website: <http://mars.acnet.wnec.edu/~grempe/courses/wc2/lectures/luther.html>

penance as a monk meant nothing, and simple faith in the Messiah Yeshua was the only thing that could save him. This understanding became a fundamental doctrine of Protestantism and is often referred to as “justification by faith.”<sup>202</sup> He understood that anyone could obtain forgiveness from God, independent of any priest.<sup>203</sup>

In the year 1515, the Roman Church was presumably in need of funds. Pope Leo X commissioned Friar Tetzel of the Dominican order to sell indulgences that would forever remit sins. Anyone who bought these indulgences would supposedly bypass purgatory and immediately go to heaven without having to repent first.<sup>204</sup>

Tetzel proclaimed his famous sales pitch to appeal for funds. When he came to Whittenburg in 1517, Luther was so outraged that he nailed his famous 95 theses on the Whittenburg castle door (the community bulletin board of the day), challenging the scriptural basis of indulgences.<sup>205</sup> This act is considered by many to be the catalyst of the Reformation in Europe.

Over the next three years, Luther further developed his doctrinal position. By 1520, he argued that the pope had no special powers and the doctrine of apostolic succession of the popes was blatantly false. He taught that only Church councils, not popes, could decide matters of doctrine and laymen could participate in those councils. As laymen, the governing authorities were considered just as valid a leader as any priest. He even stated that the Emperor had an obligation to call a General Council.<sup>206</sup>

Until Luther, the kings of Europe trembled before the Church of Rome. The popes were believed to hold the power to give or withhold salvation from anyone, including monarchs. Outside the Church, many believed they could not be saved from their sins. Through his teaching, Luther broke that power. He encouraged the German ruling class to “throw off the yoke of Rome.”<sup>207</sup>

Nevertheless, Luther did not release some of the erroneous doctrines from the writings of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas,<sup>208</sup> considered by some to be the theologian of the

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<sup>202</sup> Dr. E.L. Knox, paper on Martin Luther, Boise State University

<sup>203</sup> Professor Gerhard Rempel, *Martin Luther and the Reformation*, Western New England College website: <http://mars.acnet.wnec.edu/~grempe/courses/wc2/lectures/luther.html>

<sup>204</sup> Dr. E.L. Knox, paper on Martin Luther, Boise State University

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Professor Gerhard Rempel, *Martin Luther and the Reformation*, Western New England College website: <http://mars.acnet.wnec.edu/~grempe/courses/wc2/lectures/luther.html>

<sup>208</sup> Thomas Aquinas is known as the Roman Catholic Church’s greatest theologian. In 1265 A.D., he began work on his theological treatise, *Summa Theologica*. Gruber states that his teaching is based on philosophy, not Scripture, but calling upon Scripture “intermittently to support a chosen philosophical or traditional view.” Luther claimed that much of what Aquinas wrote was heretical. In his work, Aquinas claimed that dissenters from the Catholic Church (i.e. “heretics”) could be physically punished or even put to death, providing justification for the Inquisition. Hence, many people see him as the theologian of the Inquisition.

Inquisition. For instance, in his letter to Philip of Hesse, he asserted the right of civil magistrates to punish heresy,<sup>209</sup> i.e. anyone holding a contrary doctrinal view.

Luther also believed the Gentile Church replaced Israel as God's elect. His commentary on Romans begins with a chapter-by-chapter summary. While he wrote much on other chapters, he devoted a mere three paragraphs to chapters nine, ten, and eleven, without once mentioning Israel or the Jewish people.<sup>210</sup> In these chapters, Rabbi Sha'ul explained why only a remnant of Israel accepted Yeshua's message. The apostle further explains that the remainder, even though they have rejected Yeshua, has not been cast away, but continues to be God's chosen people. Finally, he tells the Gentiles their place in the nation of Israel as grafted-in branches, and provides a warning not to be boastful against the natural branches, lest they be cut off. How Luther can write a summary on these chapters without mentioning these things is a mystery.

In commenting on Romans 11:28, Luther says, "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes. The word 'enemies' must be taken in a passive sense; that is, they deserve to be hated. God hates them, so they are hated by the Apostles and all who are of God."<sup>211</sup> Luther ignores the rest of this verse and the next that says, "but concerning the election, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable."<sup>212</sup>

Romans 11:5 implies that throughout history, God maintained a remnant of those who would adhere to His calling, including those in every generation who would accept Yeshua as Messiah. Luther claimed that "Jews and heretics are incapable of seeking to obtain only the righteousness of [Messiah]."<sup>213</sup> In response, Gruber concludes that the reality of believing Jews — "the remnant according to God's gracious choice" — cannot be reconciled with Luther's theology, so the reality does not exist for him.<sup>214</sup>

For Luther, a Jew who follows Yeshua is no longer a Jew. He drew his conclusion from Galatians 3:28 which states, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yeshua." The context of this verse shows that the writer, Rabbi Sha'ul, does not imply these distinctions have been erased. For example, we still have separate bathrooms, showers, and changing rooms for men and women. Rabbi Sha'ul is simply telling us that, in God's eyes, the body of Messiah is all equal.

Luther says of Galatians 3:28:

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<sup>209</sup> Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 50-51, cited in *The Church and the Jews*, by Daniel Gruber, p. 245

<sup>210</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 276

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276

<sup>212</sup> Protestants usually interpret this verse (Romans 11:28) to apply to people called to full-time ministry. Though such a conclusion might be valid, the context of this verse concerns God's calling for the nation of Israel, the Jewish people.

<sup>213</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, pp. 276-277

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 277

“The Apostle speaks not here of the Jew according to his nature and substance: but he calls him a Jew, who is the disciple of Moses, is subject to the Law, is circumcised, and with all his endeavor keeps the ceremonies commanded by the Law. For [Messiah] has abolished all the laws of Moses that ever were. Wherefore, the conscience believing in [Messiah] must be so surely persuaded that the law is abolished, with its terrors and threatening, that it should be utterly ignorant whether there were ever any Moses, any law, or any Jew. For [Messiah] and Moses can in no wise agree. Moses came with the law, with works, and with ceremonies; but [Messiah] came without law, or works, or ceremonies, giving grace and righteousness, remission of sins and eternal life: ‘For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by [Yeshua Messiah]’ (John [Yochanan] 1:17).”<sup>215</sup>

In defense of the apostles, Gruber points out several errors in Luther’s conclusions. He writes:

“Luther makes five serious errors in this one comment. First, he says, ‘The Apostle speaks not here of the Jew according to his nature and substance,’ but that is exactly what the apostle **is** speaking of. As Paul [Rabbi Sha’ul] notes earlier in Galatians 2:15-16, he had said to Peter, ‘We are Jews by nature . . . even we have believed in Messiah [Yeshua], that we may be justified by faith in Messiah . . .’ Paul and Peter are believers, but they are still Jews by nature.

Second, Luther asserts that ‘[Messiah] has abolished all the laws of Moses that ever were.’ But [Yeshua] said, ‘Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill’ (Matthew [Mattityahu] 5:17).

Third, Luther says that ‘the conscience believing in [Messiah] must be so surely persuaded that the law is abolished, with its terrors and threatening, that it should be utterly ignorant whether there were ever any Moses, any law, or any Jew.’ But Paul’s conscience did not operate that way. By Moses and the Law, he was led to Messiah (Galatians 3:24). In Messiah, he became fully Jewish (Romans 2:28-29).

Fourth, Luther claims that, ‘[Messiah] and Moses can in no wise agree.’ But [Yeshua] said, ‘For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me’ (John [Yochanan] 5:46).

Fifth, Luther maintains that, ‘[Messiah] came without law or works, or ceremonies.’ [Yeshua] said, ‘. . . the works which the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me . . . For if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me . . .’ (John [Yochanan] 5:36, 46). [Yeshua] came as a Jew, did the works of the Law, and observed the ceremonies which God had prepared before the foundation of the world.”<sup>216</sup>

On the one hand, Luther seems to be friendly toward the Jews. He wrote a pamphlet entitled, *Jesus Christ was born a Jew*. In it, he writes:

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<sup>215</sup> *Commentary on Galatians*, Martin Luther, translated by Erasmus Middletown [slightly modified to remove Old English style], Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 1976, p.223, cited in *The Church and the Jews*, by Daniel Gruber, p. 285

<sup>216</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, pp. 285-286

“If the apostles, who were also Jews, had dealt with us Gentiles as we Gentiles have dealt with the Jews, no Christians would ever have emerged from among the Gentiles.<sup>217</sup> For our fools, the popes, bishops, sophists, and monks — the gross asses’ heads — have treated the Jews to date in such a fashion that he who would be a good Christian might almost have to become a Jew. And if I had been a Jew and had seen such oafs and numskulls governing and teaching the Christian faith, I would have rather become a sow than a Christian.”<sup>218</sup>

Many believe he wrote this pamphlet in the early years of the Reformation.<sup>219</sup> He later seemed to change his position toward the Jews. He wrote:

“Everything concurs with [Messiah’s] judgment that the Jews are venomous, bitter, vengeful, slimy snakes, assassins, and devil’s children, who steal and wreak havoc on the sly because they cannot afford to do so in the open. A Christian has, next to the devil, no more venomous, bitter enemy than the Jew . . . (The Jews ought to convert,) but if they refuse, we should neither tolerate nor suffer their presence in our midst!”<sup>220</sup>

Though modern Christians can look back in appreciation of what Martin Luther did to enact the radical changes of the Reformation, we can see from his writings that he was by no means infallible. The reforms introduced by Luther and others were an attempt to return to the Biblical gospel. Yet they were only a beginning. Certainly more reforms are needed to return the believing community back to their Jewish heritage.

## 1525 A.D.

In Zurich, Switzerland, a separate group of reformers began to form, believing that, in order for a Christian baptism to be valid, one must do so upon confession of faith in Yeshua. Accordingly, anyone not baptized, or immersed, in this manner, though he may belong to some [Catholic or Reformed] church, must be baptized according to Scripture before he can be scripturally received into fellowship. All people holding this belief were known as Anabaptists,<sup>221</sup> from Latin, meaning, “to baptize again.”

This teaching was a radical departure from the status quo of that day. The accepted practice among Catholics was to baptize an infant as soon as possible. In the Catholic

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<sup>217</sup> *That Jesus Christ was Born a Jew*, Wemarer Ausgabe [WA] 11:315.19-21, quoted in *The Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Age of Renaissance and Reformation*, Heiko Oberman, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1983, p. 93

<sup>218</sup> *That Jesus Christ was Born a Jew*, Wemarer Ausgabe [WA] 11:315.19-21, quoted in *Luther’s Last Battles: A Study of the Politics and Polemics, 1531-1546*, Mark Edwards, Jr., Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1983, p.121

<sup>219</sup> Gruber disagrees with this view. He points out that Luther wrote his famous *Commentary on Romans* before he nailed his 95 theses to the Whittenburg castle door. See *The Church and the Jews*, p. 296

<sup>220</sup> *That Jesus Christ was Born a Jew*, Wemarer Ausgabe 51:196, 16f;cf.Ibid. 53:530,25-28,31f, quoted in *The Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Age of Renaissance and Reformation*, Heiko Oberman, p. 113

<sup>221</sup> Daniel Kaufman, *Mennonite History*, 3, online: <http://www.anabaptists.org/history/mennohist.html>

mindset, this act removed the stain of original sin and initiated the child into the kingdom of God.

By 1524, these reformers began disagreeing with the practice of infant baptism, claiming they could find no scriptural basis for it. Some began to refuse baptism for their infant children, an act deemed treasonous by the Church of Rome. In 1525, the Zurich City Council ordered them to do so or be exiled from the city. A group of these reformers rebelled against the government's demands and soon formed a small community of believers. By 1527, this group was wiped out of existence in Zurich. Some of these early Anabaptists escaped, and eventually came to Moravia. Over the next few years, Anabaptists spread along the Rhine River in Germany, to the city of Munster, and into Holland.<sup>222</sup>

In Holland, Menno Simons, a Dutch Catholic priest, adopted the doctrine of the Anabaptists and began to teach others. His followers and Anabaptists in general, became known as Mennonites, and still exist today.<sup>223</sup>

While the Roman Catholic Inquisition spread to Holland, where most of these Anabaptists/Mennonites were found, tens of thousands of them were burned “at the stake for espousing the baptism of adults who had come to faith in [Messiah].”<sup>224</sup> Over 30,000 Anabaptists were put to death in Holland and Friesland between 1535 and 1545.<sup>225</sup>

Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists all hated the Anabaptists. In some regions of Europe, they sought to purge this radical group from their territories.<sup>226</sup> Anabaptists were by no means monolithic in their beliefs. Not all of them formed communities. However, they did share a core set of doctrines. The first and foremost of these is believer's baptism. They also believed in a separation of true Christians from the State, freedom of conscience and worship, pacifism, voluntary church attendance, the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, refusal to take oaths, mutual help, and instructing others in the community of believers.<sup>227</sup> All these beliefs were contrary to the Roman Catholic Church, and to some extent, with Lutherans and Calvinists.

## 1541 A.D.

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<sup>222</sup> Adapted from Dr. E.L. Knox, paper on the Anabaptists, Boise State University website, online: <http://history.idbsu.edu/westciv/reformat/>

<sup>223</sup> Daniel Kaufman, *Mennonite History*, 3, online: <http://www.anabaptists.org/history/mennohist.html>

<sup>224</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 258

<sup>225</sup> Dr. E.L. Knox, paper on the Anabaptists, Boise State University website, online: <http://history.idbsu.edu/westciv/reformat/>

<sup>226</sup> Adapted from Dr. E.L. Knox, paper on the Anabaptists, Boise State University website, online: <http://history.idbsu.edu/westciv/reformat/>

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

John Calvin, another former Catholic priest, published his revised version of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in France. The book has since become “the definitive statement of Calvinism.”<sup>228</sup>

Like Luther before him, Calvin was one of the leaders of the Reformation sweeping across Europe at that time.<sup>229</sup> Calvin was another leader who rejected the authority of Rome. He accepted “the Bible as the ultimate standard of truth.”<sup>230</sup> This was a radical change to the status quo until that time.

Many mainline Protestant denominations today are descended from his many followers. Among them include Huguenots, Puritans, Presbyterians, and Dutch Reformers.<sup>231</sup>

In spite of all the corrections Calvin enacted in the Reformation, Calvin was heavily influenced by Augustine and Marcion’s writings, which teach that God’s grace is opposed to His Law.<sup>232</sup> Like Augustine, Calvin taught that the Church had replaced Israel as God’s chosen people. Like Luther, he also believed the persecution of heretics was a lawful practice, an obvious remnant from his Catholic background.<sup>233</sup>

Calvin is known for his Five Points [of Calvinism]. Playing on this theme, Gruber points out Five Errors of Calvin. The first is that the covenant of law brings condemnation to all men. Concerning this belief, Gruber writes:

“ . . . the Covenant of the Law was not made with ‘the whole human race,’ or with ‘all the sons of Adam,’ but with Israel alone. Therefore, neither ‘the whole human race’ nor ‘all the sons of Adam’ can break the Covenant of the Law or be condemned by it . . . The Old Covenant cannot bring condemnation for those with whom it was not made.”<sup>234</sup>

The second error Gruber points out is that the faithful in any particular time are the Church. He continues:

“Calvin asserts that the Covenant of the Law applies to all men so that he can eliminate the difference between Israel and the Church. Without doing this, he cannot establish his point that the faithful in any particular time are the Church. His ENTIRE theology depends on this point . . .”<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Dr. E.L. Knox, paper on John Calvin, Boise State University website, online:

<http://history.idbsu.edu/westciv/reformat/>

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 247

<sup>231</sup> Dr. E.L. Knox, paper on John Calvin, Boise State University website, online:

<http://history.idbsu.edu/westciv/reformat/>

<sup>232</sup> Ron Mosely, *Yeshua*, pp. 35-36

<sup>233</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 245

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p. 250

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., p.252

[Calvin writes], “In Isaiah’s day, there was a church in Jerusalem which God had not yet forsaken . . . The church also endured to the time of Jeremiah.”<sup>236</sup> This is critical for Calvin, because he intends to show that the New Covenant is made with the Church. If previous believers in Israel are identified as the Church, then he can take the promise made to Israel of a New Covenant and transfer it to the Church.<sup>237</sup>

The third error Gruber points out is that the New Covenant is made with the Church. He states:

“First, Calvin calls the people whom God brought out of Egypt ‘the church.’ Then he refers to Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning the New Covenant. Since the New Covenant is promised to the people whom God brought out of Egypt, Calvin is then able to speak of the New Covenant as being made with the Church.”<sup>238</sup>

Calvin’s fourth point Gruber maintains is in error is that individuals are grafted into the Church. He writes:

“Calvin maintains the olive tree in various ways: ‘Christ,’ ‘the body of Christ,’ ‘the church,’ ‘the people of God,’ etc.

In his commentary on Romans, Calvin says, ‘It follows that the calling of the Gentiles resembled an engrafting, and that they grew together into the people of God only as they struck root in the stock of Abraham.’<sup>239</sup> [Calvin says] that individuals are grafted into the Church [not into Israel as Scripture states]. He replaces Israel’s olive tree with the Church. He replaces ‘Christ’ with ‘the body of Christ.’ The two are closely related, but they are not the same . . .

Calvin repeats the point: ‘For Paul tells the Gentiles, whom he is teaching, not to vaunt it proudly and inhumanly over the Jews because they have been introduced in place of the latter who have defected (cf. Rom. 11:18 ff.). Paul warned the Gentiles, who were put in the place of a peculiar and holy people . . .’<sup>240 241</sup>

Calvin’s fifth error, according to Gruber, is that there is no future restoration of the Jews, or any millennial kingdom. He says:

“. . . when it comes to commenting on the verse itself [Romans 11:26], where the Apostle Paul writes, ‘and thus all Israel will be saved. . .’ Calvin cannot accept the only and obvious meaning of Paul’s words. He writes, ‘and so all Israel shall be saved. Many understand this of the Jewish people, as if Paul were saying that religion was to be restored to them again as before. But I extend the word Israel to include all the people of God.’<sup>242</sup> Calvin rejects the

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<sup>236</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, op. cit., Bk.4, Ch.9.3, pp. 1168 as cited in Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 252

<sup>237</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, p. 252

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257

<sup>239</sup> John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, translated by Ross Mackenzie, edited by David W. Torrance & Thomas F. and cited in *The Church and the Jews* by Daniel Gruber, p. 260

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, Bk. 3, ch.24.7, p. 974, cited in *The Church and the Jews* by Daniel Gruber, p. 261

<sup>241</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, pp. 260-261

millennial reign of Messiah, so he has to change Paul's meaning by 'extend[ing] the word Israel to include all the people of God.'

He did not . . . believe in a thousand year reign of any kind. He believed that the return of the Lord would be followed by an eternal reign on the earth . . .

There is the inescapable historical fact that those who wrote the New Covenant Scriptures believed in and taught a thousand year corporeal reign of Messiah on this earth in a restored Jerusalem and Israel. No matter how people in the intervening centuries or people today interpret these Scriptures, what the Biblical authors believed and meant is indisputable . . .

A denial of the millennial reign of Messiah is a denial of the apostolic New Covenant teaching."<sup>243</sup>

In spite of the errors introduced by Calvin, we must not underestimate the benefits of the Reformation to our generation. The movement brought sweeping political and social changes. Men began to think freely and be self-governed. Nevertheless, in many ways, the Reformation was only a beginning. Necessary doctrinal changes were made in critical areas. Yet in other areas, the Reformers did not return to Biblical teaching, but accepted Catholic tradition. That's why Gruber calls it "the Partial Reformation."<sup>244</sup>

One final point should be made regarding the Reformers. Most mainline denominations today either descended from, or have been heavily influenced by, these three men: Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Menno Simons. All three were former Roman Catholic priests who maintained some Catholic teachings. That is why we still see elements of Roman Catholicism in Protestant denominations today.

## 1544 A.D.

Martin Luther, father of the Reformation movement, became frustrated in his attempts to win Jewish people to Messiah. He then published a book entitled *Of the Jews and Their Lies*, in which he vents his anger on them. He states, "doubt not, beloved in Christ, that after the Devil you have no more bitter, venomous, violent enemy, than the real Jew, the Jew in earnest in his belief." Tragically, he urged his followers, "(i) burn their synagogues and schools . . . (ii) break into and destroy their houses, (iii) take away all their prayer books and talmuds, in which are nothing but godlessness, lies, cursing, and swearing, (iv) forbid their rabbis to teach on pain of life and limb . . ."<sup>245</sup>

Four hundred years later, Adolph Hitler cited Luther's writings to justify Jewish extermination. For this reason, Luther is viewed by many as the theologian of the Holocaust.

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<sup>242</sup> John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, op. cit., p. 255 and cited in *The Church and the Jews* by Daniel Gruber, p. 266

<sup>243</sup> Daniel Gruber, *The Church and the Jews*, pp. 266-272

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 244

<sup>245</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, pp. 185-186

## 1545 A.D.

The Council of Trent convened, and lasted 18 years. It was the 19<sup>th</sup> ecumenical council held by the Roman Catholic Church. This council “denounced the Reformation and damned evangelicals’ beliefs with more than 100 anathemas.”<sup>246</sup>

Pope Paul III, who convened the council, offered the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V of Spain, great riches if he would use his army to force the Protestant kings of Germany into subjection under the pope once again and put an end to Protestantism. The result of Charles’ actions was almost ten years of war. The Protestants proved too powerful for Charles, and forced a compromise.<sup>247</sup> One church historian explained the peace arrangement:

“In order to permit peace among and within the states, each prince was to choose between Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism; all his subjects were to accept ‘his religion whose realm’ it was; and those who did not like it were to emigrate. There was no pretense on either side to toleration; the principle which the Reformation had upheld in the youth of its rebellion — the right of private judgment — was as completely rejected by the Protestant leaders as by the Catholics . . .

The Protestants now agreed with Charles and the popes that unity of religious belief was indispensable to social order and peace . . . the princes [were to] banish dissenters instead of burning them . . . Each became, like Henry VII of England, the supreme head of the Church in his territory, with the exclusive right to appoint the clergy and the men who should define the obligatory faith.

The “Erastian” principle — that the state should rule the Church — was definitely established. As it was the princes, not the theologians, who had led Protestantism to its triumph, they naturally assumed the fruits of victory — their territorial supremacy over its emperor, their ecclesiastical supremacy over the Church.”<sup>248</sup>

## 1555 A.D.

Pope Paul IV issued a papal bill, returning Jews to the “ghettos, forcing them to sell their properties at huge losses, and reducing them to the status of slaves and rag merchants.” Marriage between Jews and Christians became forbidden on pain of death. The Holy Roman Empire allowed only one synagogue per city. The decree was now ignored in Protestant countries as a result of the Reformation.

## 1611 A.D.

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<sup>246</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 89

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 193-194

<sup>248</sup> Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization* (Simon and Schuster, 1950), vol. VI, pp. 453-457, as quoted in *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 194, by Dave Hunt

The English version of the Bible was published in England. It became known as the authorized King James Version. It incorporated terminology foreign to scriptural language. For example, the names of Biblical characters were often Anglicized. Jacob, Yeshua's brother and author of one of the books of the Bible, was given the name James. Miriam's name was changed to Mary. The term Easter replaced Passover.

The King James Bible also re-arranged the order of the books and used Greek titles for many of the books instead of Hebrew titles. For example, B' resheet became Genesis, Sh'mot became Exodus, B'midbar became Numbers, etc.

The translation, though commissioned by King James, was based largely on the work of John Wycliffe and Miles Coverdale from the previous century. Coverdale was a Catholic monk. As a result, the King James translation, as well as most other Gentile-published English translations, contains some of Marcion and Augustine's ideas.

### 1618 A.D.

The Synod of Dort, a Protestant council, "adopted the rule that every doctrine should be decided by the sole authority of the word of God."<sup>250</sup>

### 1665 A.D.

Messianic expectation among Jews, and even some Christians, arose in anticipation of the year 1666, a year mistakenly believed to be the year of the apocalypse. In response to the worldwide Jewish hope, a man named Shabbetai Zevi arose. Born on Tisha B'Av,<sup>251</sup> he "gained a broader and more devoted following than any Messianic claimant since the Bar Kochba rebellion against Rome. Jews throughout the Jewish community, including many learned rabbis, announced that Shabbetai Zevi was authentic. Jews from all over Europe and the Turkish empire abandoned their work and worldly goods and prepared to follow Shabbetai Zevi to the Holy Land."<sup>252</sup> Unlike Bar Kochba, a man of war, "Zevi was a mystic, a kabbalistic visionary."<sup>253</sup>

By mid-year 1666, he proclaimed to the Jewish world that he was heading to Constantinople to "knock the turban off the head of the Turkish sultan and re-establish sovereignty in the land of Israel."<sup>254</sup> Upon his arrival to the city, the sultan arrested Zevi,

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<sup>250</sup> R.L. Dabney, *The Five Points of Calvinism* (introduction)

<sup>251</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 199. Tisha B'Av is a Jewish day of mourning in remembrance of the destruction of Solomon's Temple by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. (2Kings 25:8-9; Jeremiah 52:12-13) and Herod's Temple by the Romans in 70 A.D. Both events happened on the same day of the year, the ninth of Av (roughly August).

<sup>252</sup> Stephen M. Wylen, *Settings of Silver*, p. 239

<sup>253</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 199. The term "kabbalist" refers to one who embraces and studies kabbala, Jewish mystical writings.

<sup>254</sup> Stephen M. Wylen, *Settings of Silver*, p. 239

and then gave him the choice of death or conversion to Islam. He chose the latter, bringing great sorrow and disappointment to the worldwide Jewish community.

### **1718 A.D.**

A Gentile voice began “crying in the wilderness,” encouraging Jewish believers in Yeshua to remain Jews. The voice was John Toland, an Irish minister. In his work, *Nazarenus*, he declared, “From this doctrine, it follows that Jesus did not take away or cancel the Jewish Law in any sense whatsoever, sacrifices only excepted . . .”<sup>255</sup> He believed that Gentiles who taught that the Torah was eradicated by Jesus, and was no longer applicable to Jewish believers, “err not knowing the Scriptures” and “almost wholly subvert the TRUE CHRISTIANITY.”<sup>256</sup>

Until this point in history, official church doctrine stated God had completely abolished the Torah. However, Toland’s views were not widely accepted.

### **1800 A.D.**

After a lapse of several hundred years of silence, Jewish people once again accepted the good news of Yeshua. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century brought a Renaissance period of Jewish revival. Reportedly, at least a quarter of a million Jews accepted Yeshua as Messiah during this century.<sup>257</sup>

### **1813 A.D.**

In London, 41 Jewish Christians formed a group called Beni Abraham, which met on Friday evenings and Sunday mornings. Their purpose was to encourage one another as fellow Jewish believers.<sup>258</sup>

### **1866 A.D.**

The Hebrew Christian Alliance formed in London. Its purpose was to encourage fellowship among Jewish believers and encourage one another in the faith. Eighty Jewish believers attended the first meeting.<sup>259</sup>

### **1870 A.D.**

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<sup>255</sup> John Toland, *Nazarenus: Jewish, Gentile, and Mahometan Christianity* (London: J. Brotherton, 1718), p. vi, as quoted in *Messianic Judaism*, pp. 51-52, by David Rausch

<sup>256</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 52

<sup>257</sup> De le Roi, *Jewish Baptisms in the Nineteenth Century*, as referenced in *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 212, by Hugh Schonfield.

<sup>258</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 219

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 220-221

At the close of Vatican I, Pope Pious IX convened a Roman Catholic Church council. The bishops present at the meeting voted in favor of declaring the pronouncements on faith and morals by the pope are infallible.<sup>260</sup> Because so many bishops left in protest, the “yes” votes amounted to less than half of those originally invited to attend. Catholic historians of that day agreed that neither Scripture nor church tradition supported such a position.<sup>261</sup>

### **1881 A.D.**

In this year, the first of three waves of Jewish immigration to the Holy Land occurred. The second and third waves occurred in the twentieth century.<sup>262</sup>

### **1882 A.D.**

Joseph Rabinowitz founded the first Messianic Jewish synagogue since the early centuries of the New Covenant period. Rabinowitz was raised in a Chasidic family in Russia. During his teenage years, his future brother-in-law gave him a Hebrew copy of the New Testament. In 1878, at the age of 39, he visited Israel in the hope of establishing a Jewish colony there.

Sitting on the Mount of Olives, he contemplated the meaning of Israel’s suffering since the second Temple’s destruction 1,800 years earlier. In an apparent revelation, he realized that Yeshua was Israel’s Messiah.

Three years later, he was baptized in Berlin. Returning to his hometown, Kischeneff, in Russia, Rabinowitz built what we would now refer to as a Messianic synagogue.<sup>263</sup>

A visit by one Christian minister promoted him to write:

“Rabinowitz is a preacher of the Gospel in the spirit of the Jewish nationality; a preacher so gifted, so versed in the Scriptures, so deeply rooted in the divine word of the New Covenant, as the Jewish nation has not possessed since the days of the Apostles.”<sup>264</sup>

The congregation deconstructed shortly after Rabinowitz’s death, since no one could fill his unique position.<sup>265</sup> Despite this, the fruit of his work lived on.

### **1883 A.D.**

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<sup>260</sup> Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 138

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134

<sup>262</sup> Steven Wylen, *Settings of Silver*, p. 322

<sup>263</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, pp. 223-225

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225

<sup>265</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 97

A document entitled *The Teaching of the Lord to the Gentiles by the Twelve Apostles*<sup>266</sup> was discovered in the Jerusalem Monastery at Constantinople. During the first century, everywhere outside Israel, where Gentile congregations of believers formed, the apostles issued this manual of instruction. Interestingly, the manual urges Gentile believers to keep Moses' (Moshe's) and Yeshua's commandments to the best of their ability.<sup>267</sup>

### 1891 A.D.

Theodore Herzl began writing *The Jewish State*, a book in which he described his plan for an autonomous Jewish nation. Herzl was a news reporter from Vienna covering the Dreyfus trial in France. Dreyfus was a French lieutenant falsely accused of being a German spy, a crime he didn't commit. Nevertheless, the trial revealed an extremely high level of anti-Semitism among the French. Herzl became convinced that Jews would never be safe until they had their own land.<sup>268</sup>

### 1894 A.D.

Leopold Cohn, a Hungarian former orthodox rabbi, established an evangelistic work in Brooklyn, New York. As the success of the ministry grew, the name changed to the American Board of Missions to the Jews in 1924. In his life's work, he led over 1,000 people to the Messiah Yeshua. This ministry continues to operate today as Chosen People Ministries, located in New York City, New York.<sup>269 270</sup>

### 1895 A.D.

The term "Messianic Judaism" appeared for the first time in the Christian journal, *Our Hope*.<sup>271</sup> In his book *Messianic Judaism*, David Rausch, historian and Messianic Jew, quotes from this journal:

"In an article entitled "Christian Judaism," *Our Hope* declared that Christian Judaism was 'not a nineteenth century invention,' but was 'as old as the days of the apostles, yea as old as the Psalms of David and the prophecies of Isaiah and of Zechariah. Its roots lie in the oath-bound covenants of God with Abraham and with David . . . For the Jew, then, to believe in Jesus as the promised Messiah,' *Our Hope* explained, 'does not mean the adoption of a new religion entirely, it means simply the acceptance of divinity appointed, covenanted Israelism, as it will be restored or re-established under Messiah, the King, Jesus, the Son of David . . .

<sup>266</sup> This document is also known as the Didache. Many scholars believe that it was written between 65 A.D. and 80 A.D., although some date it around 100 A.D. to 110 A.D. The document is considered public domain and can be found online.

<sup>267</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 65

<sup>268</sup> Steven Wylen, *Settings of Silver*, pp. 323-324

<sup>269</sup> Chosen People Ministries website: <http://www.chosenpeople.com>.

<sup>270</sup> *Whatever happened to the American Board of Missions to the Jews?* Ibid., <http://www.chosenpeople.com>

<sup>271</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 55. Rausch states that the subtitle of *Our Hope* was "A Monthly Devoted to the Study of Prophecy and to Christian Judaism." In March 1895, this subtitle was changed in the ninth issue to "A Monthly Devoted to the Study of Prophecy and to Messianic Judaism." This is the first known appearance of the term.

Why should the Jew of the present day be required to go through any process whatsoever that would have the inevitable tendency of de-nationalizing him and cutting him off from his own people as such. . . For the Jew to deny this national distinction, appointed by God Himself, is a very serious matter. It becomes a species of unbelief.”<sup>272</sup>

One must keep in mind that *Our Hope* was much like “a voice crying in the wilderness” in those days. The accepted theological position from all major denominations of that time was that the Torah of Moses (Moshe) had been rendered null and void, or had been fulfilled to such an extent that the conclusion is the same. The established Christian leaders, both Protestant and Catholic, viewed all attempts to try and keep Moses’ (Moshe’s) commandments as putting oneself under the bondage of the law. At worst, they accused such people of Judaizing the Church and rebuilding the “wall of partition”<sup>273</sup> that separated Jews and Gentiles.

By writing such articles, the publishers of *Our Hope* proved themselves pioneers, forerunners of the modern Messianic movement. Mark Levy was one such pioneer, whose views closely parallel those of many in our modern movement. This Jewish Christian’s articles appeared frequently in *Our Hope*. In an article entitled “Why Some Jewish Christians Are Not More Loyal to Their Own Race,” he stated:

“First and foremost is the teaching of the Gentile Christian church that Jewish believers in the Messiah must refrain entirely from all observance of the Mosaic Law. Such teaching is in direct opposition to the Scriptures. This . . . is a terrible trial to the Jewish Christian in the springtime of faith in the Son of God . . .”<sup>274</sup>

In spite of his criticisms, Levy maintained that Jewish Christians should remain loyal to their Gentile congregations.<sup>275</sup>

## 1897 A.D.

What would become known as the Zionist movement formed this year was fueled largely by Theodore Herzl’s book, *The Jewish State*, published a year earlier. His work inspired Jews around the world to establish “a homeland and a haven for persecuted Jews

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<sup>272</sup> *Christian Judaism*, *Our Hope*, I (July 1894), pp. 8-10, cited in *Ibid.*, p. 56

<sup>273</sup> This “wall of partition” comes from the letter of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians (2:14). The full text reads, “But now in Messiah Yeshua you who once were far off have been made near by the blood of Messiah (v. 13). For He Himself is our peace, who has made both [Jew and Gentile] one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us” (NKJV with substitutions made for Christ and Jesus). According to Messianic Jewish commentator David Stern, this wall probably refers to the wall surrounding the Temple courtyard beyond which Gentiles could not go. God has apparently removed this wall, so to speak, so that Jews and Gentiles can have fellowship together (see his *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 584). Therefore, to claim that Jewish disciples are rebuilding the “middle wall of partition” by reclaiming their identity as Jews is to take the verse out of context. In reality, those who would oppose this type of action on such grounds are themselves guilty of raising the wall.

<sup>274</sup> Mark Levy, “Why Some Jewish Christians Are Not More Loyal to Their Own Race,” *Our Hope*, II (October 1895), p. 91, cited in David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, pp. 56-57

<sup>275</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 57

throughout the world.”<sup>276</sup> Herzl led the effort to organize the first World Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. The attending delegates founded the World Zionist Organization, which still exists today.

### **1898 A.D. (?)**

A resolution was proposed to the British Hebrew Christian Alliance: Jews who accept Yeshua as Messiah be free to circumcise their children according to Mosaic custom, and to observe Jewish festivals. The resolution was shelved because it was considered too controversial and might endanger support for Jewish missions.

### **1903 A.D.**

Jewish Christians held a conference in Lake Park, Maryland, to discuss the formation of a Hebrew Christian Alliance in the U.S.<sup>278</sup>

### **1915 A.D.**

The Hebrew Christian Alliance of America (HCAA) was finally formed.<sup>279</sup> One of its major focuses, in the beginning, aimed at preventing the assimilation and Gentilization of Jewish believers. Its primary focus, however, remained evangelism among Jews.

### **1917 A.D.**

#### **Controversy of Messianic Judaism Discussed by the HCAA**

The HCAA discussed the controversy of Messianic Judaism. A resolution, similar to the one proposed to the British Hebrew Christian Alliance in the 1890’s, was proposed to the American Alliance. After much debate, the resolution was overwhelmingly rejected as heretical. The HCAA later reported in its Journal that the Alliance would forever reject the concept of Messianic Judaism.<sup>280 281</sup> Today, this statement seems rather humorous in light of the hundreds of Messianic synagogues worldwide.

#### **The Balfour Declaration**

During World War I, Jewish scientist Haim Weizmann made significant contributions to the war effort. In appreciation, British Foreign Minister Lord Balfour asked how he could honor him. Weizmann replied that he wished “for England to favor the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine,” as the land was then called.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial*, p. 208

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27,29

<sup>279</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, p. 223

<sup>280</sup> “Messianic Judaism,” *The Hebrew Christian Alliance Quarterly* (July and October 1917), pp. 85-86, cited in David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, pp. 32-34

<sup>281</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, pp. 32-37

<sup>282</sup> Stephen Wylen, *Settings of Silver*, p. 328

Responding to his request, Lord Balfour drafted a letter to Lord Rothschild announcing that England favored the establishment of a homeland to the Jewish people in Palestine. However, Lord Balfour was not the only person involved in drafting this letter, now known as the Balfour Declaration. It received many revisions over a period of several weeks, passing back and forth between the British Cabinet and various Jewish groups. A number of Jewish leaders were worried that if the British government recognized the formation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, their status as citizens in England and other countries might be jeopardized. After finalizing the wording they considered acceptable, the letter was sent to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson for approval. Since Wilson was the son of a Presbyterian minister, and had been president of Princeton University, many felt he might have been exposed to the Christian Dispensational teaching that was sweeping America. At any rate, Wilson agreed, and informed the British government of the American approval.

Until World War I, the Ottoman Empire ruled Israel. During the war, Turkey sided with Germany. As a result, the British attacked Turkey, the seat of the Ottoman Empire, from Egypt, by way of Israel. Under the command of General Allenby, the British captured Jerusalem. At war's end, Israel came under British control. England had to decide how it would administer the protectorate. The Balfour Declaration seemed the answer to the British dilemma.<sup>283</sup>

During the war, the British courted the favor of both Jews and Arabs in the land, making contradictory promises to both groups. As a result, the British were unwilling to grant statehood to the Jewish people. This resulted in armed conflict and bloodshed till this day.

## 1922 A.D.

The League of Nations gave Great Britain a Mandate to rule Israel, which at that time encompassed all of modern-day Israel and Jordan. Shortly after, the British demarcated the land of Jordan and gave it to Emir Abdullah, the late King Hussein's grandfather.<sup>284</sup>

Following World War I, new authorities governed a number of countries. The simple way of understanding the situation is to view these municipalities as spoils of war. In theory, but not always practiced, the League of Nations gave its member countries mandates to govern and rule such displaced peoples until they could rule themselves. This was the

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<sup>283</sup> Thomas S. McCall, Th.D., *Israel: The Center of Divine History*, Zola Ministries website: <http://www.levitt.com/mccall/dh.html>

<sup>284</sup> Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial*, p. 236

type of mandate given to Britain. Known as the Palestine Mandate, it was established in the spirit of the Balfour Declaration.<sup>285</sup> This mandate lasted until 1948.

## 1925 A.D.

The International Hebrew Christian Alliance (IHCA) formed in London, England. Part of its stated purpose was to encourage fellowship among Jewish believers around the world, to share the gospel message with Jews and non-Jews, and to claim equal rights for Jewish believers to immigrate to Israel under the Balfour Declaration. Its formation opened communication channels with many Jewish believers in the synagogues. Non-Jews were invited to become associate members, enjoying the same rights as their Jewish counterparts in all matters except voting.<sup>286</sup>

That first year, only two affiliated alliances were represented in the International Alliance — the HCAA from the U.S. and the British Alliance in Great Britain. By 1935, that number included alliances from twenty countries.<sup>287</sup> Today, the IHCA hosts some 16 countries.<sup>288</sup> It holds “two meetings every five years attended by delegates from the Alliances around the world.”<sup>289</sup>

## 1934 A.D.

David Bronstein founded one of the first Hebrew Christian churches in the U.S. in Chicago.<sup>290</sup> It was appropriately named the First Hebrew Christian Church.<sup>291</sup> Earlier works had been established in New York City (1895), Toronto (1917), and Philadelphia (1922).<sup>292</sup> His ministry directly and indirectly impacted the lives of several individuals who would later become leaders in the modern Messianic movement. Among them were the late Martin Chernoff, his sons Joel and David, the late Manny Brotman, and Paul Liberman.<sup>293</sup>

The congregation was the first of its kind in the United States.<sup>294</sup> Prior to this time, Jewish believers were predominately scattered among Gentile Christian churches. Now, for the first time, they had a congregation of their own. The church displayed a culture that was more Gentile Christian than Messianic Jewish. Rausch records:

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<sup>285</sup> Mid East Web, *The League of Nations Mandate System*, online:

<http://www.mideastweb.org/Leaguemand.htm>

<sup>286</sup> Hugh Schonfield, *The History of Jewish Christianity*, pp. 240-242

<sup>287</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, p. 87

<sup>288</sup> IMJA website: <http://www.imja.com>. This web document lists only 15 nations. The latest, Germany, is mentioned in an article entitled *Messianic Jewish Alliance of Germany is Reborn* and can also be found on the organization's website.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87

<sup>290</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 100

<sup>291</sup> The congregation still exists today. In 1975, under the leadership of Dan Juster, the church changed its focus from Hebrew Christianity to Messianic Judaism and renamed itself Adat HaTikvah.

<sup>292</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, p. 62

<sup>293</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, pp. 102-104

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100

“ . . . The church did not pattern itself after the liturgy of the synagogue. While a few colorful Hebrew phrases were used and the Sh’ma<sup>295</sup> was recited, the First Hebrew Christian Church sought to ‘prove’ that it was the same as any English-speaking Protestant Church.”<sup>296</sup>

In his book *Peniel Portrait*, Bronstein’s son, David Bronstein Jr. recalled explaining to Christians suspicious of the ministry in 1943:

“Most of the members [of the First Hebrew Christian Church] are American-born and do not understand the Hebrew language sufficiently to use it to any greater extent. In addition, the people have no desire or taste for the Hebrew language. As a Hebrew Christian Church, it is not their wish to be racially exclusive. Membership is open to all who desire to be a part of its fellowship. There are some Gentiles who are members of the church. Some have married Jews and others love the Jews dearly and are engaged in Jewish evangelization.”<sup>297</sup>

### 1938 A.D.

The IHCA acknowledged the plight of Jews in the early days of the Holocaust era. In his book, *The Calling*, Robert Winer writes,

“They made every effort possible to assist in their rescue. Many Messianic Jews were given shelter, helped financially, [and] aided in emigration. They were given a job or trained for employment in a new field. Although the Alliance was a small organization, a great work was done, which we can all be proud of.”<sup>298</sup>

During the Holocaust, the main priority of the IHCA was saving as many members of the German Alliance as possible from the Nazi death machine. To the Germans, belief in Yeshua made no difference — everyone born of Jewish descent was treated with the same level of cruelty. Through the efforts of the IHCA, many German Alliance members were saved, yet many more died in concentration camps. In addition to Germany, members of the alliances in Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Russia perished in the war. With the financial assistance of Jewish believers around the world, the IHCA bought houses in England to shelter the many families leaving Germany. Many others were given aid as they moved to the U.S., Canada, Australia, Argentina, and other countries.<sup>299</sup>

After the war, the Alliances of Germany, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Russia ceased to exist.

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<sup>295</sup> The Sh’ma means “Shema Israel Adonai Elohenu Adonai echad,” “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.” In its entirety, it encompasses Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Deuteronomy 11:13-21, and Numbers 15:37-41. Its primary emphasis is on the oneness of God and on loving Him with all one’s heart, soul, and might. It is considered the very heart of Judaism.

<sup>296</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 101

<sup>297</sup> David Bronstein, Jr., *Peniel Portrait* (Chicago: D. Cameron Peck, 1943), p. 66, cited in David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 101

<sup>298</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, p. 35

<sup>299</sup> IMJA article, *Messianic Jewish Alliance of Germany is Reborn*, online: <http://www.imja.com>.

## 1947 A.D.

### U.N. Resolution 181

The United Nations adopted Resolution 181, which enacted the partition of British-ruled Israel into a Jewish and Arab state. Of those nations voting, 33 were in favor, 13 were against, and 10 abstained. The Jews in Israel accepted the resolution, while the Arabs, both in Israel and in the Arab states, rejected it. The U.N. General Assembly required the inhabitants of Israel to take any necessary steps for the implementation of that resolution.

The resolution paved the way for the establishment of the Nation of Israel in the following year.

### Holocaust Victims Aid Fund

The IHCA established a fund to give aid to Holocaust victims. Working primarily in Hungary, the Alliance established soup kitchens, an orphanage for children whose parents were killed in the death camps, a home for the elderly, and provided “aid to destitute and sick Jewish believers.”<sup>300</sup>

## 1948 A.D.

Israel became a nation once again, establishing its own sovereign people in the Land. On May 14, the British Mandate over Israel expired. The time for the fulfillment of the dreams of many generations over two thousand years had finally come. The Jewish People’s Council gathered at the Tel Aviv Museum and declared the establishment of the State of Israel. The new state was recognized that night by the United States, and three days later by the Soviet Union.<sup>301</sup>

As a result of Israel’s nationhood, the neighboring Arab countries banished the Jews in those lands in the coming years. Approximately 850,000 Jews became refugees. Most of those Jewish communities had existed for hundreds, and even thousands, of years. The bulk of these displaced individuals were absorbed by the new nation.<sup>302</sup>

When the surrounding Arab nations attacked Israel that same year, about the same number of Arabs left Israel at the insistence of their fellow Arabs, who promised they would be allowed to return after conquering the Land. When that didn’t happen, these “Palestinians” became refugees. Rather than absorb these displaced individuals as Israel had done for the displaced Jews, the Arab nations put these refugees in camps and used them as political pawns. While some of these people have been absorbed by the Arab world, the majority, along with their children and grandchildren, remain in the camps to this day.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> Ibid., p. 37

<sup>301</sup> *The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel*, Historical Society of Jews from Egypt website: [http://www.hsje.org/files/histo\\_documents/independ.htm](http://www.hsje.org/files/histo_documents/independ.htm)

<sup>302</sup> Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial*, p. 116

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., pp. 25, 398-400, 409

## 1955 A.D.

Dr. Lawrence Duff-Forbes founded a ministry in California called Israel's Anchorage. Meeting in his home, the group of 20 to 30 people met on Friday nights. About this time, he also founded a training program called Yeshivat Yahadut Meshichit — The Academy of Messianic Judaism. He trained men and women to “follow what he called Messianic Judaism.”<sup>304</sup>

Although not highly successful, Duff-Forbes was an early pioneer of Messianic Judaism.

## 1958 A.D.

To augment the effectiveness of its national conference, the HCAA held regional conferences. These regional conferences reached more people than the national conference, since they helped overcome cost and distance. The first of these sessions was held in Tampa, Florida.<sup>305</sup>

These conferences were discontinued a number of years later, then re-instituted in 1985.

## 1960 A.D.

In this decade, a number of Hebrew Christian congregations formed. They were located in Chicago (First Hebrew Christian Church), Cincinnati, Philadelphia (Congregation of the Messiah), Baltimore, Miami, Tampa, Detroit, and San Francisco.

Other Jewish congregations were later planted in Philadelphia (Beth Messiah-1970 (?) and Beth Yeshua-1975), Cincinnati (Beth Messiah-1970), and Rockville, Maryland (Beth Messiah-1973).

These congregations contained elements of Jewish expressions of faith in Yeshua to varying degrees. For example, the Congregation of Messiah in Philadelphia had an ark and Torah scrolls, and celebrated some of the Jewish festivals.<sup>306</sup> This congregation probably represented one extreme. On the other end of the spectrum, Beth Messiah in Rockville did not light Shabbat candles<sup>307</sup> until as late as 1975.<sup>308</sup> During the 1960's, the worship services of these congregations “differed little from regular Christian church services, and they stressed that they were not setting themselves apart in any way from other Christians.”<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, p. 41-42

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42

<sup>306</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 102

<sup>307</sup> Shabbat candles are the two candles lit at the inauguration of the Sabbath. In each Jewish household, the woman of the house lights two candles, then recites a blessing just before sundown Friday evening.

<sup>308</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 85

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91

In North Hollywood, California, Dr. Michaelson, a Supreme Court Judge for the Prussian Empire, established a Messianic congregation that met on Shabbat.

### **1965 A.D.**

Manny Brotman formed a youth group within the HCAA called the Young Hebrew Christian Alliance (YHCA).<sup>310</sup> Prior to this time, youth involvement in the Hebrew Christian movement (as it will be referred to in those days) was practically non-existent. This group would become influential in the decade that followed.

### **1967 A.D.**

Israel reclaimed the old city of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in the Six-Day War. Hebrew Christians and evangelicals considered this the beginning of the end times. The Jesus Movement gained tremendous momentum. An explosion of belief in Yeshua took place, and many Jewish people came to Messiah.

A changing of the guard began to take place during the 1960's. The old generation of Hebrew Christians began to conflict with a younger generation of Jewish believers who wished to maintain a Jewish lifestyle. In the words of Robert Winer:

“It is hard for those who were not involved in the Alliance at this time to comprehend what it was like to be a part of the events that took place . . . The foremost thing in the hearts and minds of the people was the Messianic Vision . . .

There were pockets of Messianic Jews around the United States who knew about each other through their involvement in the Alliance. [Among them were] Joe Finkelstein and his wife Debbie [who] became believers in Messiah in the 1960's. They continued to maintain a Jewish lifestyle after they accepted Yeshua. Their home in Philadelphia, which they used for Bible studies, attracted large numbers of young Jewish believers. It was during the “Hippie” era that their home became known as the ‘Fink Zoo,’ reflecting the wide range of colorful characters who were involved there.”<sup>311</sup>

The Finkelstein's taught these young people that they could become believers in Messiah and still keep Jewish tradition.<sup>312</sup> Several modern-day leaders in the Messianic community came from this group.<sup>313</sup>

### **1970 A.D.**

The first official Messianic Jewish congregation in the U.S. formed in Cincinnati, in the home of Martin Chernoff.<sup>314</sup> Other congregations prior to this time would have been

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid., p.72

<sup>311</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, p. 47

<sup>312</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 72

<sup>313</sup> Ibid., p. 74

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., p. 74

considered Hebrew Christian churches. Martin Chernoff and his wife Yohanna became well-respected leaders in the early days of the Messianic movement. His children Joel, David, and Hope Edelstein, formed the nucleus of a core group of young believers in those days and continue to serve as leaders in the movement.

The annual conference of the Young Hebrew Christian Alliance proved to be a pivotal event in the cultural revolution of the new generation of young Jewish believers. One must remember that this younger generation desired to express its faith in a Jewish form, while the older generation wished to follow what more closely resembled Gentile Christianity. Turning to the words of Winer:

“The 1970 YHCA Conference was a milestone in the change of the outlook of the Alliance to Messianic Judaism . . . An entirely new type of worship and praise was expressed for the first time corporately . . .

The young people did not want to worship in the old manner of Hebrew Christians. They felt that the use of church hymns was something that was done in a Gentile setting and that it was out of context in a Messianic Jewish worship service . . . This difference in music contributed further to the division between the generations, as it did not promote worship together.

The youth felt that the message of Yeshua in a Messianic Jewish context must be shared with others. Their methods of evangelism took forms that were unfamiliar to the older generation . . .

The youth were also unhappy with the name YHCA and wished to express their identity not as Hebrew Christians, but as Messianic Jews. Therefore, there was a push from them to change the name of the organization to the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA).<sup>315</sup>

## 1971 A.D.

As the number of young Jewish believers increased, the voting power within the HCAA began to shift from the older generation, with a Hebrew Christian mentality, to the YHCA, which favored Messianic Judaism.<sup>316</sup>

### **Jews for Jesus**

Moishe Rosen officially founded the Jewish missionary group Jews for Jesus in San Francisco. He originally began the ministry as an offshoot of Chosen People Ministries (then the American Board of Missions to the Jews or ABMJ) in 1970. His tactics for presenting the gospel were radically different from any used before. More traditional methods tried to avoid conflict with unbelieving Jewish people. Rosen, on the other hand, was confrontational in his approach. In Rosen’s words,

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<sup>315</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, pp. 47-48

<sup>316</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 74

“We had to stop trying to avoid conflict. Most of the workers in Jewish evangelism were well-meaning Gentile Christians who, above all, sought the goodwill of the Jewish community and tried to avoid friction at all costs . . .

There was no way, however tactful, loving and sensitive, to tell Jewish people that they needed Jesus without risking the displeasure of the Jewish community leaders. Having committed myself to the idea that disapproval and rejection were a normal part of Jewish evangelism, I taught my helpers that we all must bear the cross and risk rejection. Once we oriented ourselves to handle rejection, we began to win many Jews to the Lord.”<sup>319</sup>

His methods included “broadsiding,” handing out tracts called “broadsides” (folded-over humorous tracts presenting the gospel in a Jewish manner) on the streets of major cities, such as New York City. These often-humorous tracts were (and still are) handed out by millions, not only on city streets, but also in airports.

In 1973, the ABMJ terminated Rosen’s position, as his practices conflicted with the Board’s wishes. The other eleven staff members serving with Rosen resigned from the ABMJ in order to remain with Rosen and his newfound ministry.<sup>320</sup>

## 1975 A.D.

The name of the HCAA was officially changed to the MJAA at the annual conference in Grantham, PA. Due to the overwhelming number of people calling themselves Messianic Jews, the name change went into effect with little opposition. This move caused a split between Hebrew Christians and Messianic Jews. Many of the mostly older members who continued to refer to themselves as Hebrew Christians dropped out of the Alliance at that point.<sup>321</sup>

In the same year, the quarterly publication of the Alliance changed its name to *The American Messianic Jewish Quarterly*.<sup>322</sup> The change in name probably represented more than a new title. In the words of Messianic Jewish historian David Rausch,

“ . . . it represented an evolution in the thought processes and religious and philosophical outlook toward a more fervent expression of Jewish identity.”<sup>323</sup>

By 1980, nearly one thousand people were attending the annual Alliance conferences. Most of these were young people. As Rausch observes,

“The New Guard had arrived; a ‘revolution had indeed occurred.’”<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> Jews for Jesus website: <http://www.jewsforjesus.org/about/history>

<sup>320</sup> William Greene, Ph.D., *The Ascendance of Messianic Judaism in the Context of Hebrew Christianity: A History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Movement in America of Jewish Believers in Yeshua Ha Mashiach*, online: [http://mcu.edu/papers/mess\\_jud.htm](http://mcu.edu/papers/mess_jud.htm)

<sup>321</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 76

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77

Robert Winer notes,

“The average age of the members of the Alliance dropped dramatically, as the attendance at the yearly conferences increased. The messages at the conferences were now distinctly Jewish. The worship included dance, more animated music, and extemporaneous prayer.”<sup>325</sup>

Winer also notes that the makeup of the executive committee began to change. Prior to 1975, it had been composed mostly of those involved in Jewish missions. Over the next few years, leaders of Messianic congregations began to hold the committee positions.<sup>326</sup> Throughout the 1800’s and 1900’s until this point, most Jewish believers called themselves Jewish Christians. For the most part, they viewed Torah as laws already fulfilled by Yeshua, and thereby rendered obsolete. They did not encourage one another to keep Moses’ commands. They might discuss Torah, and even teach how it pointed to Yeshua. However, they frowned upon actually keeping it. For example, Jewish Christians might conduct a Passover Seder demonstration, but they would not likely hold a Passover Seder meal. To do so would be seen as being “under the Law.”

This would change from this point forward.

### 1979 A.D.

A group of nineteen Messianic congregations from the U.S. and Canada formed the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC). That number grew to twenty-five by 1982.<sup>327</sup> At that historical 1975 conference when the Alliance changed its name to the MJAA, the eight Messianic congregations present discussed the possibility of forming a union of some sort. Although the Alliance was officially in favor of such a union, the leadership unanimously agreed to wait until the right timing. The group cited a number of reasons, including the fact that the organization changed its name (and ultimately its direction and character) only that year.<sup>328</sup>

Discussions arose again in 1976 and 1977; with some still wanting to wait and others feeling that the time had come. The latter agreed to form the new union. Sadly, this action brought division between the two groups,<sup>329</sup> lasting nearly 15 years. In the mid-1990’s, the two sides managed to work out their differences and reconcile with each other.

The UMJC’s stated five-fold purpose is:

1. To provide whatever aid possible in the initiation, establishment, and growth of Messianic Jewish congregations worldwide.

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<sup>325</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, p. 51

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56

<sup>327</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 191

<sup>328</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, pp. 63-64

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64

2. To be a voice for Messianic Jewish congregations and Messianic Judaism worldwide.
3. To provide a forum for the discussion of issues relevant to Messianic Judaism and Messianic Jewish congregations.
4. To aid in the causes of our Jewish people worldwide, especially in Israel.
5. To support the training of Messianic leaders.<sup>330</sup>

Also at this conference, the group discussed the need for a Messianic siddur,<sup>331</sup> or prayer book.<sup>332</sup> Later, the Union identified additional needs in the areas of children's education programs and materials, as well as bar/bat mitzvah material.<sup>333</sup>

### **1982 A.D.**

The number of Messianic synagogues in the U.S. had now grown to about 30.<sup>334</sup> At the same time, numerous Jewish Bible study groups were springing up around the country. Some would eventually become new congregations. A total of 30,000 to 50,000 American Jews were believed to be followers of Yeshua at this time, with most of them attending churches rather than Messianic synagogues.<sup>335</sup>

### **1985 A.D.**

The practice of holding regional conferences in the 1950's and 1960's was reintroduced by the MJAA. Orlando, Florida served as host for the first of these gatherings. Known as the Southeast Regional Conference, two others soon followed — The Southwest Regional and Midwest Regional. These conferences are held on an annual basis to this day.<sup>336</sup>

### **1986 A.D.**

Following in the footsteps of the founders of the UMJC, the Executive Committee of the MJAA formed the International Alliance of Messianic Congregations and Synagogues, or IAMCS (pronounced "I am CS.").

### **1989 A.D.**

#### **Yeshiva founded**

<sup>330</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 192

<sup>331</sup> The Siddur is a book of prescribed prayers recited during synagogue services. It's name means, "set order," since it provides the order of the service. The prayers it contains are ancient, some going back to the centuries prior to Yeshua and others going back to the second and third centuries. The Siddur was compiled in the centuries following the destruction of the second Temple.

<sup>332</sup> David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism*, p. 194

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106

<sup>336</sup> Robert Winer, *The Calling*, pp. 61-62

To address the needs of the IAMCS congregational leaders, the Alliance founded the Institute for Messianic Rabbinic Training (IMRT), later called Yeshiva. Those leaders who complete the training program become eligible for ordination licenses and an ordination process developed.

### **The fall of Communism**

Soviet communists lost control of Eastern Europe as country after country broke away from communism and formed freely elected governments. The movement began in 1980 with the rise of the Polish labor group Solidarity. Solidarity originally advocated increased economic and political rights for Polish workers. As the movement gained an increased following, its members called for an end to one-party control, freedom of academic choice in the schools and universities, and economic reforms which would guarantee everyone in the country the opportunity for a higher standard of living.

As the strength of Solidarity grew, the citizens of other communist-controlled countries neighboring Poland took note of the failure of the Polish government to use adequate force, or call in Soviet troops, in order to stop the movement. Most took this as a sign that the Soviet Union's power was weakening in the Eastern Bloc. As a result, new movements for democratization and economic reforms followed in other Eastern European countries. Finally, in 1989, a series of upheavals in these states resulted in the breakaway of the vassal Eastern European nations from their big brother, the Soviet Union.

In Hungary, opposition parties gained control of the Parliament. In Czechoslovakia, the Communist leadership resigned, resulting in free elections and a new, democratic president. In Romania, the citizens stormed the Presidential Palace, forcing an end to the reign of the infamous Nicolae Ceausescu who had served as dictator of Romania since 1965. He and his wife were subsequently executed by the mobs of angry citizens. In Bulgaria, the leader of the Communist Party, who had ruled Bulgaria for 35 years, was removed from office and replaced. In the following year, the rest of the communist government resigned, resulting in free elections. And finally, in Berlin, the Berlin Wall, which had divided East Germany from West Germany since 1961, was torn down. This event, covered by news media around the world, marked the dramatic end of Soviet control in Eastern Europe. Soon after, East and West Germany, divided since the end of World War II, were reunified.<sup>337</sup>

The fall of communism opened a door of opportunity to share the gospel with millions of people, both Jew and non-Jew, in Eastern Europe, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, the Ukraine, and other Soviet bloc countries. The door remains open to this day, but many fear that it might not be open much longer in Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine, as communism appears to be returning in those countries.

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<sup>337</sup> Drafted almost entirely from *Fall of Communism in Eastern Europe 1980-1991*, part of the Great Events series of Bell and Howell Information and Learning-online.

Since communism's collapse in Russia and Eastern Europe, over a million Jews have emigrated. The International Fellowship of Christians and Jews reports that since 1990, over 700,000 of those leaving the former Soviet Union have immigrated to Israel with another 500,000 wanting to leave now. Of this group, over 100,000 are reported to have visas in hand and waiting their turn to immigrate to Israel.<sup>338</sup>

### **Gary and Shirley Beresford denied Israeli citizenship**

The Supreme Court of Israel ruled against a Messianic Jewish couple who had applied for citizenship under the 1950 law of "Oleh," which states that every Jew has a right to immigrate to Israel as an "*Oleh*" — an immigrant with automatic citizen status.

They were considered "apostates"<sup>344</sup>, yet they still remain Jews.<sup>345</sup>

Among Messianic Jews, the Beresford case seemed to create a greater awareness and appreciation for returning to the Land of Israel under the law of return. Gary cites an increase in the number of Messianic Jews making aliyah in the years following their court decision.

### **Growth in Messianic congregations**

By this point in time, the number of Messianic congregations worldwide grew to 150, joined together by three societies including the UMJC, the IAMCS, and a new group called the Fellowship of Messianic Congregations (FMC).<sup>346</sup>

## **1993 A.D.**

Jonathan Bernis established an outreach ministry in the former Soviet Union called Hear O Israel Ministries. The ministry's primary strategy has been to hold Messianic music festivals in concert halls and stadiums in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Latvia, and Hungary, and presenting the gospel in a Jewish context. Over a seven-year period, some 325,000 Jews and Gentiles have attended, with 80,000 Jewish people responding to altar calls. These festivals have also reached millions more in Eastern Europe through nationally televised broadcasts of the concerts. Over the same time-period, Hear O Israel has successfully planted, and continues to oversee, multiple Messianic Jewish congregations in many key cities throughout the former Eastern bloc nations.<sup>347</sup>

Many other Messianic ministries have formed in the former Soviet Union as a result of communism's collapse, but none have been more successful than Hear O Israel.

## **2000 A.D.**

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<sup>338</sup> International Fellowship of Christians and Jews website: <http://ifcj.org/>

<sup>344</sup> Gary and other Messianic Jews strongly disagree with this position. In fact, they hold that the opposite is true. That is, that one cannot truly express his Judaism until he accepts Yeshua as Messiah and begins to follow him.

<sup>345</sup> Sanhedrin 44a.

<sup>346</sup> Michael Schiffman, *Return of the Remnant*, p. 33

<sup>347</sup> Hear O Israel Ministries website: <http://www.hoim.com>

### **Maturity of Messianic Judaism and its impact**

The Messianic congregations worldwide now numbered more than 350,<sup>348</sup> with 150 of them in the U.S. and 81 in Israel.<sup>349</sup> <sup>350</sup> Jews for Jesus estimates the number of American Jews who believe in Yeshua total more than 100,000 people.<sup>351</sup> This number includes both Messianic Jews, who identify primarily with a Messianic Jewish synagogue or congregation, as well as Hebrew Christians, who identify with a Christian church.

In Israel, the number of Jewish believers totals about 3,000.<sup>352</sup> This number only includes those attending Messianic congregations. The nation of Israel also contains a number of Gentile Christian churches. The number of Jewish believers attending these groups remains unknown. Even though these numbers might seem small to some people, growth among Jewish followers of Yeshua in Israel has grown steadily. Just after Israel became a nation in 1948, the number of Jewish believers was estimated to be anywhere from half a dozen to one hundred individuals. By 1950, that number had grown to 200 persons. By 1960, around 300 Jewish believers existed, and by 1967, the total increased to about 500 people.<sup>353</sup> Over the last ten years, most of the growth has stemmed from Russian immigrants. Based solely on numbers, the Messianic movement in Israel appears to still be in its infancy.

Since most Jews in the world live in the United States and Israel, an explanation of the differences between Messianic congregations in the two countries seems appropriate. In the U.S., the congregations have become fairly liturgical. In other words, they incorporate traditional Jewish elements such as the Sh'ma,<sup>355</sup> the prayers from the Siddur,<sup>356</sup> and the weekly Torah reading. The degree to which each congregation incorporates traditional components varies. The worship services among the congregations in Israel, on the other hand, are mostly free-style (non-liturgical).<sup>357</sup> Only two groups in Israel have a Torah scroll,<sup>358</sup> while scrolls are quite common in the U.S.

Harassment of Messianic Jews by traditional Jews in the U.S. occurs periodically, but in a far less organized and malicious manner than that of their Israeli counterparts. In Israel,

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<sup>348</sup> The Messianic Times, Fall 1998, volume 9, number 3. This number was derived by counting the number of synagogue listings in the congregational directory, and probably understates the actual number of Messianic synagogues worldwide, since many home fellowships do not place a listing. In addition, the former Soviet Union likely has a number of groups which we don't know about.

<sup>349</sup> The Chicago Tribune, *Messianic Judaism Finding An Audience*, March 31, 2000.

<sup>350</sup> Kai Kjaer-Hansen and Bodil Skjott, *Facts and Myths About the Messianic Congregations in Israel*, p. 16

<sup>351</sup> The Chicago Tribune, *Messianic Judaism Finding an Audience*, March 31, 2000.

<sup>352</sup> Kai Kjaer-Hansen and Bodil Skjott, *Facts and Myths About the Messianic Congregations in Israel*, p. 70. The authors' figures resemble a census, more than an estimate. They list 3,560 adult members of all 81 Messianic congregations in Israel, of which 2,178, or 61% are Jewish. Another 1,397 children under the age of 18 comprise the remainder of the members/core group of attendees. Assuming the same percentage of children are Jewish, we can estimate that 852 children members are Jewish, giving a total of 3,030 total Jewish members of the 81 Messianic congregations in Israel.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64

<sup>355</sup> See footnote to 1934 section for a definition of the Sh'ma.

<sup>356</sup> See footnote to 1979 section for a definition of the Siddur.

<sup>357</sup> Kai Kjaer-Hansen and Bodil Skjott, *Facts and Myths About the Messianic Congregations in Israel*, p. 40

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29

harassment of Messianic Jews by traditional Jews is a way of life. At the same time, activities are more organized, and the treatment much harsher. Hostilities against them include actual job loss, death threats, property damage, posters of groups and individuals exposing them as “traitors,” unfavorable newspaper articles, interruption of meetings, arson, and graffiti.<sup>359</sup> On one occasion in March of 2008, just before the holiday of Purim orthodox Jews had sent a gift basket containing a bomb to a Messianic family. David and Lea Ortiz live in the city of Ariel in Samaria, about thirty minutes east of Tel-Aviv, and were not home when their fifteen year old son picked up the gift basket that exploded in his face severely wounding him. This does not mean that every single believer or congregation suffers mistreatment. The threat, however, remains constant. Most of the bullying stems from the activities of the group Yad L’achim (“A Hand to the Brethren”). According to Baruch Maoz, pastor of Kehilat Chessed veEmet (Congregation of Grace and Truth) in Israel, Yad L’achim is:

“An organization which employs substantial financial support from the government and many municipality authorities and has an Anti-Missionary Department, which utilizes information culled from government files.”<sup>360</sup>

### **German Messianic Jewish Alliance reborn**

The IMJA re-admitted the Messianic Jewish Alliance of Germany into its ranks of member national organizations. In the 1920’s and 1930’s, the German Alliance played a prominent role in the IMJA. One of its members, Arnold Frank, served as president of the IMJA for 10 years. With the advent of the Holocaust, the German Alliance ceased to exist. The Nazis did not spare anyone of Jewish origin, whether believers in Yeshua or not. As a result, the number of Jewish believers in Germany fell to a level below the minimum requirement for membership in the International Alliance.

Since the fall of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe, 120,000 Jews have immigrated to Germany. With the influx of new Jewish arrivals, came a renewed interest in re-establishing the German Alliance. Although most of its members are immigrants, the organization also caters to the needs of its native German members.<sup>361</sup>

One cannot help but notice the supreme irony here. Hitler did everything in his power to wipe the entire Jewish population from the face of the earth. He practically decimated the Jewish communities of Poland and Germany. Yet in spite of that, Jewish communities in Germany are beginning to thrive once again. The words of the prophet Ezekiel seem to echo, “these bones shall live” (Ezekiel [Yechezk’el] 37:5).

### **Messianic Gentile phenomenon**

Along with the phenomenal growth in the number of Jews coming to faith in the Messiah Yeshua, is an equally impressive number of Gentiles who have identified with Messianic Jewish congregations. Although no statistics are currently available, the total number

<sup>359</sup> Ibid., p. 25

<sup>360</sup> Maoz 1986:10, as cited in Ibid., p. 25

<sup>361</sup> IMJA article, *Messianic Jewish Alliance of Germany is Reborn*, online: <http://www.imja.com/Germany.html>

probably ranks in the tens of thousands worldwide. These individuals are attracted to Messianic Judaism for a number of reasons, some valid and some invalid.

Michael Schiffman observes four categories of such Gentiles. The first consists of those married to Jewish spouses. The second he identifies as “lovers of Israel,” which he further subdivides into three categories:

1. Those who genuinely love the Jewish people and desire to reach them with the message of Yeshua;
2. Those who desire to befriend the Chosen People and receive a blessing for themselves based on the promise to Abraham in Genesis (B’resheet)12:3; and
3. Those who have a love for Jewish things.

The third category is made of those individuals who want to “keep the Jews in line.” The fourth group he sees as having become disgruntled with Gentile Christianity. This latter group wrongly views Messianic synagogues as being anti-church.<sup>362</sup>

Obviously, only the first category, along with the first subcategory of the second group constitutes valid reasons for Gentiles to become members of Messianic synagogues. Schiffman identifies the key components that constitute a Gentile’s calling to a Messianic congregation. These include “a love for Jewish people that manifests itself in service, not a desire for appreciation; a desire to see the congregation grow in its cultural context; and a desire to see the congregation grow in the number of Jewish people coming to know the Messiah.”<sup>363</sup>

Messianic Jews have not in any way sought to proselytize Gentile Christians away from churches, making the impressive growth of this group somewhat of a phenomenon. The degree to which they have adopted a Messianic Jewish lifestyle varies from individual to individual. As more and more Gentiles abandon Gentile Christianity in favor of Messianic Judaism as a way of life, the Messianic movement will be challenged to deal with a number of issues caused by this happening.

Another interesting trend among Messianic congregations in America is their tendency toward traditionalism. In its very early stages of development, congregations in the movement were often much like evangelical churches in their worship, with minimal Jewish elements incorporated. Today, many of these congregations are much more traditional in their services. Congregations all over the U.S. recite Jewish prayers from the Siddur, often while wearing yarmulkes and prayer shawls.<sup>364</sup> A few congregations offer Morning Prayer services for men, where the traditional daily prayers are recited. In some of these settings, the men wear the traditional phylacteries on the arm and forehead.

<sup>362</sup> Michael Schiffman, *Return of the Remnant*, pp. 115-118. The promise found in Genesis 12:3 is as follows: “I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you, and all peoples on the earth will be blessed through you.” According to Schiffman, people who fall into this category of wanting a blessing for themselves view the Jewish people as a sort of “good luck charm.”

<sup>363</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118

<sup>364</sup> Such items are worn by men, not women

Many groups have an ark containing a Torah scroll. In some of these congregations, the scroll is paraded around the sanctuary on a regular basis, and then opened, so that a qualified individual can read from it. Often services are concluded with the reciting of the priestly blessing from Numbers (B'midbar) 6:24-26. Thirty years ago, such practices were practically unheard of in Messianic Jewish congregations. Today, these practices are quite common in varying degrees in the U.S.

### **Appendix I—The History of Christmas<sup>365</sup>**

In the centuries prior to Yeshua's time, the European people celebrated the winter solstice, the time of year when the days go from shorter to longer. Many observed this day as the sun's birthday. It occurred on December 21, according to our Gregorian calendar, or December 25, on the old Julian calendar.

In the Norse country, this day was known as Yule. Each year on Yule, men would cut a log as large as they could carry, drag it home, and then set it on fire. This custom of lighting the Yule log is still practiced today. In ancient times, each spark was said to represent a pig or calf to be born in the spring. In addition to the Yule log, the ancient Norsemen also brought an evergreen tree inside the home. This was the one plant that could withstand a Norse winter. Evergreens proved life could survive even the dark of winter. Hence, Yule was a type of fertility celebration.

During the twelve days the Yule log burned, the community feasted and celebrated. To the revelers, inside where the log burned was a place of safety, while the cold outside was believed to be a place of demons.

The Germans named this holiday after their pagan god, Odin. They believed that Odin decreed who would prosper and who would die in the coming year.

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<sup>365</sup> Adapted almost entirely from the television special, *Christmas Unwrapped-The History of Christmas*, produced by the History Channel, 1997.

The Romans called the day Saturnalia. They began celebrating the Saturnalia one week prior to the winter solstice. It lasted an entire month, constituting an orgy of food and drink. During this time, the Roman upper classes worshipped Mythra, the god of the unconquerable sun. In their view, the winter solstice was the holiest day of the year, since it was Mythra's birthday.

By the fourth century, the Gentile Church declared the winter solstice the feast day of the nativity. Many scholars believe this day was chosen to accommodate the pagans celebrating the birth of Mythra. To evolve the feast day of the risen sun to the feast day of the risen Son became a natural step for post-Nicene Christianity.

Because of the Gentile Church's policy of compromising with pagan culture, it adopted its holidays, rather than denouncing them. After adopting the evergreen tree, they soon began decorating it with apples, to symbolize the Garden of Eden. In time, Christmas tree ornaments replaced these apples.

In 1645, the Puritans, led by Oliver Cromwell, overthrew the king of England. They vowed to rid England of all ungodliness. In 1652, they outlawed Christmas. Until that time, most people celebrated Christmas in much the same way as modern-day Mardi Gras. It was not a family holiday, as we celebrate today. To the Catholics, Christmas was a time for going to church for Christ's Mass.

In 1656, the king of England returned to power under Charles II. Some historians cite the desire of the people to celebrate the winter solstice as one of the reasons the Puritans were ousted from power.

When the Puritans came to North America, they brought their beliefs with them. In 1659, they outlawed Christmas in Boston. The Puritans held enormous influence over the New World culture in its first two centuries. In its inaugural year of 1789, the U.S. Congress sat in session on Christmas day, and for most of the next 67 years.

By 1820, Christmas had become a time of rioting in New York City. A year earlier, the best-selling novelist Washington Irving wrote *Brace Bridge Hall*. This book was a collection of short stories about Christmas at an English manor house. In his ideal world, the various social classes joined each other at this time of year. The rich remembered the poor by inviting them into their homes and treating them with food and drink. His book began having an impact on American society, where the rich had plenty, while the poor went without.

In 1822, Episcopal minister Clement Clark Moore wrote a poem for his children about a good-natured saint who came down the chimney on Christmas Eve. Entitled *A Visit from Saint Nicholas*, he began the modern myth of Santa Claus. He based his character on a Turkish bishop of the middle Ages, known for giving gifts to children on December 6. His name was Saint Nicholas. In Holland, he became known as Cinter Klaus, and is the source for the American name of the man in the red suit. Within 20 years, retail merchants began capitalizing on the opportunity to turn Christmas into a gift-giving day

to children, most of whom were expecting Santa Claus to bring them presents. This American tradition soon expanded into the tradition of exchanging gifts on Christmas day.

In 1843, Charles Dickens wrote his famous short story, *A Christmas Carol*, a bestseller in both the U.S. and England. It was an attempt to redefine Christmas as a time for the rich to remember the poor by being kind and generous to them.

In 1848, Prince Albert, the cousin and husband of Queen Victoria of England, introduced his native German tradition of erecting an evergreen tree for the winter solstice. The London Illustrated News published a drawing of the royal family in Windsor Palace, standing around the first Christmas tree most Englishmen had ever seen. Within three years, nearly every English home had a Christmas tree. This new “tradition” soon became popular in the United States.

By 1860, Protestant churches began holding services on Christmas, a result of the growing popularity of the holiday. Until now, the day was celebrated everywhere in society except in Protestant churches. The irony is that modern people feel we need to put “Christ” back in Christmas. The problem with such thinking is that Christmas, as we know it, was never intended to be a Christ-centered occasion.

In 1863, Thomas Nast, a cartoonist for Harper’s Weekly, gave the world a face for Santa Claus. Seventy-five years later in 1939, Robert May, a copywriter for Montgomery Ward, created a sidekick for him when he wrote *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*.

By now, Christmas had become a national holiday in the U.S.—cleansed of the pagan ritual of centuries past, and transformed into a family day. In addition, America’s reinvention of the holiday spread to other nations around the world. Nevertheless, Christmas has its roots in pagan fertility rites.

Should we stop celebrating Christmas? That decision must be left to the individual. However harmless Christmas may seem on the surface today, the spirit of the pagan Christmas is one of enmity toward God. At the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., all Biblical holy days were outlawed. The Gentile Church developed an anti-Biblical stand on keeping God’s commandments. It considered itself the New Israel, usurping the position of the authentic Chosen People of God. Christmas was initiated as a result of the new course the Gentile Church plotted for itself.

In a similar fashion, the 10 northern tribes, constituting the kingdom of Israel, broke from their brothers in the southern kingdom of Judah. In their rebellion, they too outlawed the Biblical holy days, and replaced them with their own holy days. We learn from 1 Kings that God was not pleased with their actions. Perhaps the Gentile Church today can learn from ancient Israel’s actions.

