

## DEFINITION OF MESSIANIC & OUR VISION

For those of us with a heart for God that includes explaining Torah and the Messianic faith, it is a never ending struggle because, people, friend and family view us as **"STRANGE", Out of Touch, belonging to a cult, etc.** Some humor us by quietly listening and offering little or no feedback; while others or some will tell you **"whatever makes you happy"**, but it's not for us". Some will become right down mean and belligerent and storm out of our life's because they think we might be attacking their religion or traditional beliefs. So with that in mind, I am going to try to give you a definition of Messianic here at Ahava B'Shem Yeshua and what it means to us.

There are many that have asked; **"what is Messianic"**? Is it a cult, or is it a religion? Messianic is **ONLY** bible based. We don't offer or follow doctrines or tradition.

**Messianic is a people movement**, a movement of Jews and Gentiles, who follow Yeshua, the Messiah. It is a movement that kind of embraces short of a Jewish life style. I feel it is God's given heritage and culture, viewed through the revelation of Yeshua's life, death and resurrection. It embraces the Hebrew Testament and the Brit Chadashah, which is the New Testament, believing that the bible (**ALL OF IT**) is the word of God. This is a movement centered on biblical truth, recognizing the unique calling of Jewish people and the Goyim or Gentiles to follow the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. **II Timothy 3:16 says; " All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness"**, and also **Joshua 1:8 says; " Yes, keep this book of the Torah on your lips, and meditate on it each day and night, so that you will take to act accordingly to everything written in it."**

The Messianic movement is a movement that honors many of the traditions that have been developed over Thousands of years, but does not submit itself to Rabbinic Authority.

Instead it submits to God the Father, Yeshua and the Ruach Ha-Kodesh. This is a movement of God that honors and submits to the work and word of Yeshua.

Yeshua said in **Matthew 5:17 -19;** **"<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.**

**The movement is much more! Look around you! What do you see?** We see more than just Jewish people here, or people of Jewish decent. **We are a melting pot of God's children** who are seeking to walk with Ha-Shem (which is Hebrew---**The Name**), walk in a manner that was and is laid out before us in the scriptures.

Now, if you study, especially ACTS in your Bibles, you'll find that the early congregations and communities of believers were primarily Jewish. They were Jews and proselytizes coming to faith in the shadow of the synagogue and temples. **So we are Jews and Gentiles, worshiping the one God --- the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.**

So how does this all fit together and what is the example? **Well it's in the Book – The Bible! The early congregations were Messianic Jewish communities.**

The disciple Paul proclaimed in: Romans 1:16: **<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to EVERYONE who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek or (Gentile).**

**Ok, so it's in the book, the Bible, Now what? Rav Sha'ul or Paul** remained a **good Jewish boy** his whole life. But, Paul many times affirmed his heart regarding his walk. In **Acts 28:17**, he said in a meeting with local Jewish leaders: **"Brothers, I have done nothing against either our people or the traditions of our fathers"**.

We know that from many scriptures that Yeshua and His disciples, or Talmidim in Hebrew, **WERE NOT** encouraging Jews to **stop being Jewish. IN FACT**, they were encouraging them to honor their calling as Jews. Yeshua lived as a Jew, died as Jew and was raised as a Jew. We know that Paul, who is known as the Apostle to the Gentiles, lived his life as a Jew, as the scripture give testimony. Rav Sha'ul or Paul saw Israel, **as a nation called: Romans 11:26 it says; "and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB"**. The calling on Israel is irrevocable! (So there is no trying to slip out the back door on this one).

**So there are some Goyim that say, "But what about Gentiles in the movement?" Well we're here now, so you had to do something with us.** You know in the **first century in the book of Acts**, the problem was not what to do with Jews, but **what to do with the Gentiles**. The ones that wanted to follow **The Jewish Messiah**. They had a Gentile problem on their hands and, **today** some in the Body of Messiah say, **"What do we do with these Jewish people that want to believe in Yeshua?" Funny what a couple thousand years can do to a viewpoint!**

The Apostles spend a great deal of time on how to address this, and as we all know "accommodations were made in (Acts 15:28-29) **<sup>28</sup> "For it seemed good to the Holy**

**Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: <sup>29</sup> that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell."**

We also had Peter's famous dream is one of those passages in Acts 10.

So what about Gentiles committing their whole lives? For us Messianics that feel called to live out what some may say is **a Jewish calling** though we were not born Jewish. I reference Numbers (15:14-16) **The Law Of The Sojourner**:

**<sup>14</sup> If an alien sojourns with you, or one who may be among you throughout your generations, and he wishes to make an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to the LORD, just as you do so he shall do. <sup>15</sup> As for the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the alien who sojourns with you, a perpetual statute throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the alien be before the LORD. <sup>16</sup> There is to be one law and one ordinance for you and for the alien who sojourns with you."**

**So, what is our calling together and what is our vision?** Our vision as a Messianic movement, and I feel at **Ahava B'Shem Yeshua**, we feel ordained by the Lord Himself --- Elohim. **Jeremiah 31:31-33:** "<sup>31</sup> **Behold, days are coming,**" declares the LORD, **"when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,"** declares the LORD. <sup>33</sup> **"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,"** declares the LORD, **"I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people"**.

**This new covenant did not direct Jewish people to change** who they would be. In fact by Yeshua's own testimony and that of the Talmidim or the disciples was that there was no question that becoming believers in Messiah was of **most importance**, what else would they be? If Yeshua came for the lost sheep of the house of Israel! **What would they change to?**

Recognizing that the Jewish Messiah was and is the high point of being Jewish. The Jewish forefathers waited their whole lives in waiting. In Yeshua it is fulfilled! Now Messianic Jews can be Jewish with a **"happy face"**!

But we also know that **God promises that He will also claim the nations** as his own promise in **(Isaiah 49:6)** **"He says, "It is too <sup>[a]</sup>small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may**

**reach to the end of the earth."** And also we have Zechariah 8, which talks about the nations taking hold of the fringes of the Jew, because God is with them. **"I am holding on to Larry's fringes"**.

**But some might say "what about us Gentiles? For Some Jews and Gentiles, I might have complicated everything or some things! Well to some that may want to "covet" (which means to have a strong desire to possess something that belongs to somebody else) OUR Messiah I say, GET OVER IT!** It is very clear in scripture that Gentiles, the Goyim are called. **Romans 11** Being grafted in as a Wild root. **Acts 10:34** Peter's understanding that God does not play favorites.

**Acts 10:45** Peter's amazed that the Ruach HaKodesh is poured out on Gentiles. **Isaiah 55:3** A foreigner joining Adonai should not say, Adonai will separate me from his people. There are too many scriptures that set the foundation for Gentiles and the Jewish people to be of one Body through Messiah.

Ephesians 2:14 --- Dee's favorite **"For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, The pa-rok-het in Hebrew or veil in the temple was ripped so that the hostility, enmity, or hate between Jew and Gentile was destroyed. You can find this in (Matthew 27:51).**

**SO WHAT IS OUR VISION?** It is very clear that Jews and Gentiles are being called to the Body of Messiah period.

**BUT, why not just to a church? Jews or Israel have a unique calling, as Jews. They cannot be maintained, or nurtured outside of their culture and life cycle that God has created, through Torah, and a heritage that has been developed over thousands of years.** Our Elohim is doing a work. He is preparing Jewish houses of prayer and praise, ---congregations or synagogues where Jewish people can come and worship Messiah Yeshua in a culture that they will at least be familiar with. Remember, many that have and will come have not expressed their Jewish identity for many years or not at all. **Some will come with the roots of their youth and some will come seeking out the roots of their faith as God the Father calls them back or as the remnant returns.**

We at **Ahava B'Shem Yeshua** are preparing a place where our Jewish Brothers and Sisters and people can **find a home**, a place where they can tap into their roots, a place where we can disciple them not only in the truth of the Good News, which are the Gospels and the New Testament, but in how to live out a Jewish life in the **revelation of the Jewish Messiah!** We are not Christianity warmed over, but a genuine expression

of what it means to be Jewish and Gentile worshiping God in the revelation of Messiah Yeshua! **This movement is a work in progress.**

I think John, Larry and I feel that part of our vision is to prepare a place for ourselves and those to come, to be able to **worship and be disciplined.** Disciplined in ways that not only honors God, but carries on with **what God desires for us not only as Jews, but Gentiles called to live, pray, play and build a community affirming and practicing what God has given us in the richness of Jewishness. Some of these expressions are:** Reading, studying and Keeping Torah. Keeping the Sabbath. Celebrate the Jewish feasts. Hebrew prayer. Davidic Dancing. Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Marriage under the Chuppah and Death.

Our vision is Jews and Gentiles worshipping together and loving one another, praising the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in a Jewish setting. We are a congregation that witnesses that you can be Jewish and believe in Messiah and we can do it in Love. **Jew and Gentile one in Messiah.** For Jews, it may be a little easier to understand what we are doing in a Messianic Congregation. But many Gentiles that have come have been drawn to the Jewish roots of their faith, and scripture. Romans 11 speaks of spurring the Jew to jealousy! Well how would a Gentile do that? Not by expressing who God is in a church, but embracing the ways of Israel! And Loving the Jewish people!

**The testimony and the witness of Gentiles are key in the end times. To this day the majority of Jews have come to faith in Messiah based on the witness of a Gentile, not a Jew.** (Yeshua was rejected too or also). Many have been drawn by Gentiles giving their lives over to Jewish expressions; it spurs them in love (and curiosity!).

God honors the foreigners, which are the nations, Gentiles, or Goyim, those who attach themselves to Yeshua's ways and that of Israel (Remember the book of Ruth). **Isaiah 56:6 says; foreigners keeping the Sabbath, He will bring to His holy mountain.** God honored Ruth's decision to make Naomi's people her people and to live as they do.

Some are called for a **season** and some are called for a **lifetime**, in either case we celebrate, support and nurture our unique calling and vision. As a **Messianic Congregation**, we are called to Welcome (and Spur) the Jew first and also the Gentile seekers to a life in Messiah Yeshua, a Jewish heart, mind and soul.

**Now I am going to get down to the Jewishness of a Messianic congregation. By if I may, I am going to do it by SPEAKING THE LINGO or GETTING DOWN WITH JEWISH SAYINGS!**

You know it is not just that we are to walk the walk, but are to talk the talk, **Jewish talk**. But to be more serious and heartfelt, we can find scriptural support for not only recognizing Jewish culture and language, but seeing its great value in not only living out who we are as Messianics, but presenting who we are to Jews and Gentiles.

**Rav Shaul (Paul) said in: 1Corinthians 9:20 "and unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law."** Also **Romans 9:3-5: "For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, <sup>4</sup> who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, <sup>5</sup> whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.**

So what does this say? That the Jewish ways are God's ways, especially for Jews! If we want to be able to communicate with Jewish people, befriending them, fellowshiping with them and disciplining them we need to use language that they will not **ONLY BE** familiar with, but language (Semantics) that **WILL NOT** make them uncomfortable, or worse yet offend them. Offend them and cause them to put up a wall. Many terms that the Christian body uses are not Jewish, and in fact have been used to persecute the Jews, the very Term **Christian** can bring terrible persecution to mind not only corporately to the Jewish people but to them as individuals.

I have heard many stories of Jews – even within our own congregation --- stories that is, of an individual getting beaten up by individuals professing to be Christians.

We must be mindful that Christianity doesn't have a comfortable past with many Jews, either directly or by history. Charges of being Christ killer, Destruction of the 2nd Temple, The a lot of Councils such as Nicaea with anti-Jewish elements, The Crusades, The planned persecution by governments, Exile from England, Spain, Russia, The Holocaust, Arab/Israeli wars 1947/1948/1956/1967/1973/1982/2000 and even up to date with Iran and the Palestinian to present. With this in mind and with the understanding that our vision is in parallel with the greater Messianic movement, we need to learn and embrace language that will complement who we are, and for some of us that means breaking old habits and forming new ones.

If you are new to this movement, we are like a new wine. As stated in Luke 5:37-39 **<sup>37</sup> And no one puts new wine into old wineskins** (which maybe unsaved Jews).

**otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined. <sup>38</sup> But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. <sup>39</sup> And**

**no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, 'The old is good enough.'**"

Here are some terms we all need to embrace, and that means leaving some of what we know best at the door. Remember the reason we do this is to not cause Jewish people to stumble, we do it out of love and honoring of what the Lord has commissioned us to do here at Ahava B'Shem Yeshua.

The Name; **Yeshua vs. Jesus:** This is His name, and the name Jesus many times puts up barriers.

Messiah, **Machiach** vs. Christ: Let's face it; it has the same effect as Jesus! It does not open doors to Jewish hearts.

**Names of the Lord is: Ha-Shem:** The Lord, **Adonai:** The Lord, God

**Abba:** Father

**Melech:** King

**The Cross vs. the tree:** The cross can be **offensive**. It is or can be a threat because of its use in history. The cross is a symbol and I believe we need to be sensitive. This symbol does keep some Jewish people from entering a physical building. Remember the Romans picked crucifixion on a cross. And something else to **remember is that 250,000 Jews died on crosses, but ONLY ONE ROSE!**

We are a **Congregation**, we are not a Church: Jewish people want to go to **Synagogue, Temple or Shul.**

**Tivilah, immersion** vs. baptism: Here again we can connect the act to it Jewish Roots, purification, it is a Jewish concept (Numbers 19:17-22).

In Leviticus, there are many, many instances of purification with water, for many issues from anointing priests or in Hebrew Cohen, to purification for sin, sickness, menstrual cycles, child birth, etc). **Mikvah**, which is the actual location.

## **MINISTRY ROLES**

**Messianic Rabbi** vs. Pastor or Priest

**Chazan or Cantor** vs. prayer leader

**Shamash:** Deacon Servant

- **THE HOLY DAYS AND FESTIVALS**

**Shabbat vs. Saturday:** Shabbat is what the Lord called our holy day

**Pesach, Passover vs. Easter, Feast of Unleavened Bread**

**Shavuot,** Feast of weeks vs. Pentecost

**Succot,** Feast of Booths vs. Feast of Tabernacles

**Channukah:** Festival of Lights

- **LITURGICAL AND BIBLE**

**Siddur** vs. Prayer book

**Torah,** THE 5 books of Moshe or Bible

**Tanach:** all the books of the Hebrew Testament

**Brit Chadasha** vs. New Testament: Remember Jews don't count the new as legit! There is one thing we can do. We can slowly show them the New Testament by sharing it with them in its Jewish context!

**Good News** vs. gospel: Same here, the word gospel is "Christian" (meaning not Jewish)

**Halacha:** Jewish Law

**Mitzvah:** Law, instruction, Good deed

**Brachot:** blessings

**Chesed:** Mercy

**Ruach, Holy Spirit** vs. Holy Ghost: Forget Holy Ghost, it's just not Jewish

**Schulchon Adonai,** Lords Table vs. communion: Seeing this act as remembering in the context of the Passover can really change the image

- **STUFF TO WEAR OR BLOW**

**Kippa or Kippot or Yamulke:** Head covering

**Tallit:** Prayer Shawl

**Tzitzit** vs. Fringes

**Shofar:** Rams horn

- **GREETINGS**

**Baruch ha Shem:** blessed be the Lord

**Shalom:** Hello

**Shalom Alychem:** May peace be with you

**Chag Samaiach:** Happy Holiday

- **NAMES**

**Avraham:** Abraham

**Yitzchak:** Isaac

**Ya'akov:** Jacob

**Moshe:** Moses

**Rav Sha'ul:** Paul

**Shimon Kefa:** Peter

**Judah** vs. Jude

- **LAST BUT NOT LEAST, THINGS TO EAT**

**Nosh:** To eat

**Oneg:** Delight, we partake in eating and fellowshiping

**Bagels:** cream cheese and Lox: No comments necessary, it's Jewish!

**Matzah Ball Soup:** Another no brainer

**Matzah:** See above, no brainer unleavened bread for Passover or to solve Diarrhea

**Challah:** Sweet Jewish Bread

**Koogle:** A noodle delight

**Latkes:** Channukah delight of fried potato pancakes

**Hamantashin:** 3 corned pastry eaten at Purim

Well this is a start on your journey to embracing our vision we have been given by the Lord. For we are AHAVA (Love) B'SHEM (In The Name) YESHUA (Jesus)!

**For we have been called to be a house of prayer and Joy, in Prescott or the community. To live and to prepare the Prescott or the community for those that Elohim or God will bring to us.**