

**General Topics :: I attended a Messianic Jewish Synagogue****I attended a Messianic Jewish Synagogue - posted by docs (), on: 2008/6/2 11:23**

Let me get it off my chest. Yuk, those Bentley tapes are deplorable!

Now forgetting that. I just got back from two weeks in the Orlando area and my last week there while going along with my brother I spotted a curious church sign that had a Jewish star on it and read, "Serving the God of Israel in Messiah." I went to the yellow pages and tried to look it up and went to where the pages directed. So Fri last I ended up at a synagogue/church that wasn't the one I spotted so there is more than one Messianic Synagogue in the area I presume. But I wasn't disappointed. It was a first time for me.

The people were very friendly and welcoming at Gesher Shalom Messianic Synagogue. Many of them had on the Jewish prayer shawls and caps but it wasn't a problem for me. Part of their literature says it isn't necessary to wear them. There was young and old and a few black and Hispanic believers in the congregation. Prayers were in Hebrew and English and the same with the singing in Hebrew and English. There was a reverent but exuberant Jewish dance where a few people joined hands and danced in a circle. The musicians played a guitar and flute and it wasn't corny or shallow music. There were no drums to which some would say thank the Lord. The Rabbi's (does anyone call him pastor I wondered) wife then prayed a beautiful prayer for pureness and cleanness in living and prayed in the name of Yeshua/Jesus. They mentioned their various outreaches to the poor and homeless and in Ethiopia and plans for evangelization in the Melbourne, Fla. area and then there was a pretty powerful sermon by the Christian Rabbi, Dr. Charles Sluge, concerning the stumblingblock of pride in our spiritual walk versus humility. There was an emphasis also on unity of purpose in the body of Christ. Not bad. Not bad at all.

From their handout literature:

Messianic Judaism is a biblically-based end-time movement of Jewish and non-Jewish people who have come to believe that Yeshua is the promised Messiah of Israel. Yeshua is the Hebrew name for Jesus and His name means "the Lord saves."

Messianic Judaism is the fastest growing branch of Judaism today. There are hundreds (emphasis mine) of Messianic Synagogues around the world in nations such as Israel, Canada, Russia, England, France, Australia, Brazil, the U.S.A. and many more.

In Messianic Jewish Synagogues, Jews and non-Jews worship the Lord side-by-side in unity as they embrace the entire Word of God from Genesis to Revelation.

The Real Issue

Messianic Judaism is a spiritual renaissance, a revival, a return to the faith as the Messianic Jews had in the first century, unencumbered by the traditions of men. It is a return to a pure and simple faith based upon having a living, vibrant and personal relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through the Messiah Yeshua.

The real issue we must recognize is not whether it is Jewish to believe in Yeshua, because the Jewishness of Yeshua is historically unquestionable. The real issue at stake here is whether Yeshua is truly the Messiah or not. If He is, then it is the most Jewish thing in the world to believe in Him. If He is not the Messiah then we should not follow Him.

There is only one way to find out and that is to go back into the Jewish Scriptures ourselves and study the Messianic prophecies.

In the 21st century we are seeking the truth. The Bible is God's truth to us. We can choose to follow the god of time, the god of money, the god of power, and the god of self-indulgence. However, the God of the Bible is the one true God. We at Gesher Shalom Messianic Synagogue would encourage you not to follow us, and not to follow other people even if they are learned. We encourage you to think for yourself and follow God. Read the Bible for yourself and feel free to call us if you want to discuss what you have read. "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-2

6.

Me: In other parts of the literature there is ample room made for mention of Gentile believers and their inclusion in the body. The Jewish emphasis is not any claim to exclusiveness.

The Christian Rabbi (doesn't that have a nice ring to it) shared an interesting story during his sermon. He is sitting in McDonald's I think it was and sharing with a few men from his church/synagogue. A lady who happened to be Jewish was sitting nearby and engaged him in conversation. He began to try and witness to her in a way and realized that like many Jewish people today she was largely uninformed and full of caricatures concerning Christianity. But she said she couldn't understand why after all these centuries that Jewish people were starting to believe in Jesus. It made no sense to her she said. Why after all this time were large numbers of Jews becoming Christians? What does it mean? I was left wondering if a Jewish person asked us the same question what our reply might be. I've got a few strong ideas of what it all means. Interesting. All very interesting.

www.geshershalom.com

Re: I attended a Messianic Jewish Synagogue - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/6/2 12:04

Quote:

Messianic Judaism is a spiritual renaissance, a revival, a return to the faith as the Messianic Jews had in the first century, unencumbered by the traditions of men.

This is an unfortunate assumption of theirs. While there might have indeed been Messianic Jews in the first century who continued practicing various Jewish customs, such does not have as its foundation apostolic practice. 1 Corinthians 11-14 is a perfect picture of what was taught and practiced by the apostle Paul in regard to the assembly of Christians. This pattern established in Corinthians has little to no parallel to the Jewish synagogue.

Sadly, many well meaning and sincere Messianic Jews have baptized the synagogue practices into the Church, thinking that such is in keeping with the faith. But consider that the entire synagogue system with all its practices did not have its origins in the faith, but rather, was a creation of the Jewish diaspora. That is, it is the child of a people who were under the judgment of God. Well meaning, without a doubt, yes.

But, is such in keeping with what the God of Israel actually established for His people through Yeshua/Jesus the Messiah? Christ said He would build His Church, not His synagogue. In fact, Christ predicted that Jewish Christians would be expelled from the synagogues. Such wineskins while they might have been useful for the Jewish diaspora do not appear compatible with the new wine of this age.

I highly recommend Art Katz concerning issues regarding Messianic Judaism. For a while, he served as the poster child of Jews for Jesus, and Mitch Rosem (spelled?) of Jews for Jesus had once said that Art Katz would become the Jewish Billy Graham. But, God had other plans. Katz was highly involved in that movement for a while, serving as a missionary for them. But, God would eventually awaken him to the deep problems that lay under such practices, and how they are ultimately incompatible with the faith. For the Church is called to be a prophetic witness, whereas the synagogue has no room for prophetic witness.

See Katz's sermon on here, "Beyond Messianic Judaism" and "Has Jesus Made You Jewish?" amongst many other titles.

Re: I think I understand KingJimmy - posted by docs (), on: 2008/6/2 12:59

It was my first visit to such a congregation. The worship was Christian with a Jewish emphasis and I mainly was just trying to be respectful and observant while there. I discerned some kind of something going on in me and it may have just been instinctive inner questions or discernment of some kind that was going on in me while there. I am not trying to say that in a superior or condescending way. But I was edified in the midst of the environment I was in. Physical healings were spoken of and united with the rest of the body of Christ and evangelization.

To be honest, I've never thought of the synagogue versus church dichotomy. I felt like I was in a church though. I think if the synagogue is not God's ultimate ideal then also many of the practices adopted by the church may not be also. But we all know that. I can agree on I Cor 11-14 being a model but these good people were not entirely without that as they prayed for each other and their children. But it was my first visit as I said. Brother Katz and Ben Israel are the ones who have mainly stoked my interest. I have listened to and read a lot by Brother Katz but have not listened to the particular tape you recommend but will try to do so.

I stopped off at your blog the other day. Good things there.

"Doc"

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/6/3 12:37

Quote:

I felt like I was in a church though.

Well of course :-) You were with other believers! So there will always be that mutual witness of the Spirit no matter the ceremonies that happen. I am only suggesting that these brothers and sisters, who are part of the church, have attempted to baptize synagogue practices into the church. Most have been very well meaning and very sincere in such.

But in my opinion, the introducing of anything into the church that does not conform itself to apostolic practice as handed down to the early church introduces something into the life of the church that will only ultimately hurt it. Unfortunately, Messianic Judaism sees these elements as something that enriches their Christian experience, whereas God, in my opinion, sees something that takes away and ultimately has the potential to bring death. Messianic Jews are not alone in this guilt though. The same can be said for your typical evangelical Church that has mixed and introduced a number of practices within it (especially in liturgically heavy churches), that while well meaning, don't have their origins in God.

Quote:

Brother Katz and Ben Israel are the ones who have mainly stoked my interest. I have listened to and read a lot by Brother Katz but have not listened to the particular tapes you recommend but will try to do so.

Yeah, Katz has stoked my interest in it a bit over the years as well.

Quote:

I stopped off at your blog the other day. Good things there.

I am glad the Lord blessed you.

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Re: All in all though - posted by docs (), on: 2008/6/3 19:03

I see the Messianic synagogues/churches as something positive in spite of the reservations about some of the practices found in them. I wouldn't presume to speak for you but I sense you do also. After all, I was among Jewish believers in Christ when I visited them and when was the last time in church history the Christian landscape was dotted with congregations of largely Jewish believers like it is today? It's an encouraging and prophetic sign to me and I think we need each other at this juncture as we corporately seek to be fashioned into and become what the Lord desires.

Thanks bro,

"Doc"

:)

Re: I attended a Messianic Jewish Synagogue - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2020/10/16 16:02

David, I got to scrolling through old posts and found this one posted by you. I read it was blessed.

I am finding it very insightful to note how today there are Messianic Jewish Rabbis preaching with force and power - something one rarely heard of 30 years ago.

Anyhow, just thought it may be of interest to you that this old post still blessed someone.

Sandra