

My Journey....

(By Pastor John K Johnson; Summer 2004)

How did I get here, to being a Messianic believer... from lifelong traditional Christian Church affiliation?

Those of us who dare to probe our own rationale for the deep and emotional religious convictions that we hold, or have held that have been shaken or redirected, must continue to grip the helm of our ship and keep it stayed in the midst of the worst of life's storms as well as in fair sailing. Some of the worst of storms are experienced in transitions of faith and basic doctrines of our theology and religious beliefs, from what we thought we believed to what we are now certain are changes that must be embraced to correct our course. It is in times of great and deep emotional challenge to our faith and probing into the very core of our deepest foundational beliefs (some life-long that are anchored in bedrocks of family relationships, friendships and deep traditional customs) that our faith is tested and the outcome defines our pathways into our future, for better or for worse. However, we must submit our innermost thinking and convictions to the testing of the "refiners fire." Otherwise, our house may prove to be built upon the sand and not upon the rock... and only the rock will stand when the real shaking of our faith comes... and come it will as we enter these last days of pre-tribulation time... Yeshua (Jesus) said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." (Jhn 9:4) KJV. All of those who understand that the "night commeth," must take heed to start working the works of Yeshua while it is yet "day." It is time to get our theology straight.

My journey into this very realm of living faith and storms of spiritual dynamics and doctrinal conflict are the issues this article speaks to. It is my desire that I will, with Divine leading of the Holy Spirit (the Ruach HaKodesh), successfully convey my thoughts and experiences in such a way that persons who read this will be challenged to probe their own rationale for their own religious convictions... deeply, and honestly... and openly present their convictions before the Holy Scriptures and allow the truth of Scripture to not only enlighten their thinking, but trust the same Holy Spirit to lead them to a place of courage and conviction to come out of the snares of pride, fear of relationships, fear of losing social and current religious associations, and fear of uncertainty (often caused by demonic intimidation)... and embrace the simple truth of Scripture... and trust Yahweh (God of Israel/YHWH) to lead them on.

A wise Torah teacher said "unfortunately, much of the contemporary "Christian Church" is made up of leaders and laymen (both) who exist in their present theological position by starting at random places in Bible stories or Scriptural statements and stay 'unlearned' in the entire counsel of the Bible." He elaborated on the "inside the group" message that not only defines most of the modern church today, but is nearly always at the base of splits and offshoots that become just another group of "church" people off to follow another wandering teacher or minister. And so it goes, nearly a never ending flow of people moving from one church to another or starting new fellowships so they can be "fed." The problem is that they normally lack the food of the entire meal and will never be satisfied until they sit at the table of the "Whole Meal," the entire counsel of the Bible. That feeding place is very hard to find these days when you seek it in the modern "church." It is however, as near as your personal study of the Bible... from cover to cover."

I have seen two statistical models that spoke volumes to me as I journeyed my way along life's experience to where I am today. The first, from a mid 1990's National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) newsletter, which said that a *Barna Research Survey* revealed that only 1-percent of confessed "born-again" believers read their Bibles as much as once a week. No wonder people simply follow men and not Yahweh, although you would likely stir up their anger if you pointed out their error. Tragically, many pastors prefer their sheep allow them to "feed" them instead of having them self-sufficient in the pasture of the Great Shepherd. Many churches today use teaching aids and computer presentations and most of these congregations do not even crack their dusty Bibles during the show. More tragically, some popular books are now the focus of church teaching (some on the best seller's list in secular stores) effectively replacing the Bible. Friends of ours recently attended a Florida Evangelical church, and out of a large congregation, they thought they were the only people in the building carrying a Bible. Second, I have attended church growth meetings (as a Staff Pastor in 700-plus cluster meetings organized for larger ministry groups, churches larger than 700 active members) and been told that 80-percent of the folks in the pews next to you are not Christian converts, but sheep from other area churches looking for greener and more "attractive or interesting" pastures. The emphasis of the meetings was to learn how to improve the "holding power" of the sheep pen, since the sheep were getting out the back door as fast as the new ones were coming in the front door. This year (the writing of this article) is 2004... but in an Old Testament (Tanach) Prophet's words of thousands of years ago, "... My people perish for lack of knowledge." (Hos 4:6) What do you think Hosea was saying...? Read the entire book of Hosea if you will, as it is a short book... and it speaks volumes of our times.

As for me (I will be 62 this year in November, 2004), I have seen the steady decline of Bible teaching where the balanced message of grace, righteousness and judgment are taught and the congregation admonished that they must understand that there IS a penalty for sin. Everything seems to be focused upon entertaining people instead of giving them the instruction of Yahweh's Word. I even had a dynamic preacher once tell me that if you preach against sin you will run people off. I also heard a very popular Author and Radio Teacher (also very popular guest speaker worldwide) say you need not teach against sin as people know how to do it, but you need to teach forgiveness and salvation so they will want to get saved. This is NOT Bible teaching, it is the rationale of men who think they know best and have objectives they feel they know how to achieve. It is NOT the "full counsel" of Yahweh's Word. This is all rooted in the Prophetic utterance,

(Isa 56:11)

11 Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

(Ps 81:11-12)

11 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.

12 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels. KJV

Now I must be fair to say that there are many good and dedicated people in ministry who work hard and believe they are "doing the work of the kingdom." Unfortunately, many of them are trapped in faulty doctrines, mainly "hand me downs" from institutional traditions, most of which have their initial roots in teaching originated by the Roman Church from Constantine's time.

Protestant reformation is known, by Roman Catholics, as works of wayward children that need to be brought back. (Which will eventually happen in the ecumenical conglomeration coming in the near future... where inter-faith movements are headed that will form the “one world religious order”). For the most part, the Catholic’s “wayward children” description of the Protestants is fairly accurate when you lay their theological teaching alongside each other, with mostly the traditional customs being the main difference. The problem is, and this is a crucial point, that brings us to the drifting church of 2004... that the bedrock of faith, Yahweh’s Word, namely the Torah (first 5 books of the Bible, called Moses’ teachings) that makes up the very foundation of Scripture, has been slowly and methodically removed from modern religious practice. You surely know that Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) meticulously and often referred to the Tanach (Old Testament) and He IS the fleshly manifestation of Torah; and He clearly stated He came to fulfill it (its requirement of completeness for qualifying Him as a “sacrificial lamb without blemish.”), NOT to do away with it. Does your church teach (and insist) that its people endorse and adhere to this same instruction He gave the people of His day? If not, does this not bother you? When I began to re-think this bedrock fact, study the Scriptural truth, and do the deep heart searching I spoke of earlier, I found I had to do more than just know about these facts, and that I had to repent of my past failure to “believe them” and start redirecting my spiritual life to actually “do them,” which is the same thing... as the Hebrew mindset sees “believe” as “do,” where the Greek-Roman mind equates giving mental affirmation to completing the matter... a fatal flaw that leads to departure from the original faith of the Apostles and Yeshua Himself, because simply knowing something does not equate to living it.

Historical records confirm that anti-Semitism has its modern roots in Constantine’s time and his political and religious establishment. Because of the emphasis on the New Testament, and especially the focus on Paul’s teachings and the practice of defining Old Testament as “Law,” and as irrelevant to “New Dispensation” times, believers are slanted towards a thought process that concludes it is unnecessary to study or consider the Old Testament’s teachings. Now, if you will allow me to be so bold as to challenge you to ask yourself, “how much time have I given to really study and understand the Old Testament?” And, do I believe the Ten Commandments are applicable to my life and do they form any basis for my religious convictions? Do I really have a serious one-to-one daily relationship of Scripture study and prayer time with Yahweh (God) or do I have more of a social relationship with people I attend church with? If you challenge your own self with these questions and treat them with the importance they deserve... and if you are serious, and if your “church routine” is like that of most churches today, you will know deep within you need to make some adjustments in your thinking about your relationship with Yahweh. You will also find out, if you honestly investigate and allow the “entire counsel of Yahweh’s Word” to speak to your heart, and if you will not filter it out, by using your own opinions and traditions and pressures from “what will people think if I begin to believe this,” and etc, that you have some serious decisions to make that will bring you to the understanding of the opening comments in this article. Those being about the probing of your deepest and most embedded convictions that you have been holding as “truth”... that may in fact need to be tested in the “refiners fire.”

My personal journey in faith goes back to my childhood (first grade) where I went to a small Baptist church and had wonderful and caring teachers. The Pastor there counseled me and led me to make a decision to give my heart to Christ Jesus (now known to me by His proper name

Yeshua), and be baptized for the remission of my sins... I was 12-years old. Today, I can yet recall the time we kneeled down and prayed in the small room off the sanctuary. I have never doubted my salvation and yet today thank Yahweh for Pastor Tyler... truly a godly man. Where I am today, and based upon what I truly believe the Scriptures teach without doubt, I cannot endorse the attendance of people to most institutional Sunday churches... albeit that I do believe much good foundational work has been done, individually in some, in spite of their doctrinal error. This is because I believe Yahweh uses many ways to harvest his "wheat" from among the "tares." As we now draw closer to the final harvest, I among thousands, likely millions, around the world have come to understand the Hebraic roots of our faith and have returned to the basic Torah teachings, keeping of the Sabbaths (7th day, not SUNday) and Festivals. Yes I still believe in Messiah Yeshua as Savior, the ministry and work of Yahweh's Holy Spirit, and that my Salvation is attained only by believing in the saving blood of Messiah that He shed for me upon the cruel torture stake (cross).

At this point in this conversation I will make a fundamental "foundational" statement that is bedrock to every believer's understanding for "true" Bible doctrine to be complete, and it is this:

You can ONLY come to salvation by faith in Yahweh's (God's) Son, Yeshua (Jesus), because you receive your salvation as a free gift, by Yahweh's grace. There is NO part of the Torah that you can perform or keep to come to salvation. Faith alone, in Yeshua's redemptive work at Calvary is your ONLY claim on eternal salvation...this alone is how you receive your "birthright" as a redeemed son of Yahweh, and whereby you become an "Israelite." This, of course, includes your agreement that you acknowledge that you are born into sin and that it is your understanding that you are making a complete "sacrifice" of your "old man" and becoming a "new man" in Yeshua (called "born again")... forsaking all your worldly sin and acknowledging that you understand you are now following Yeshua's teachings forever from this day on (day of your confession of Yeshua for salvation). This redemptive work is done in your heart, with the fullest of your mind's understanding. It is an instantaneous "new birth," and there are no "notches" or "incremental steps" to salvation. You cannot approach salvation piecemeal. You are saved (born again) or you are not. You cannot fool the Holy Ghost... Yahweh knows your innermost and deepest motives and thoughts. You either place yourself on the sacrificial altar of Calvary and join Yeshua in the experience (by your understanding, that HE... in your place... did the actual physical, emotional and fully spiritual act of substitution for YOU; EVERYTHING required to satisfy Yahweh's requirements for man's redemption) or you have not completed the new birth... this CAN NOT be a "mind only" knowledge, it MUST be a sold-out heart conviction. This is the only way to eternal salvation.

NOW: how do we walk out our new life in Yeshua? The short answer is walk like He walked... in the original way "in the time of the ORIGINAL Apostles." Where do we get the information for this walk? The short answer is to follow Yahweh's "forever settled Word," the instruction of Torah. (Remember, Yeshua did not have a King James Bible, there was NO New Testament, the ONLY commandments He ever referred to "keeping, if you love Him" was the Torah; read John Chpt 14). Yeshua rebuked the hypocritical Pharisees for their "legalism," of their man made rules and regulations (NOT the keeping of Torah). If you do not understand this important issue you will enter the doctrinal merry-go-round of men's institutional confusion. This is why we

now have over 30,000 “non-Torah observant” denominational groups doing church their own way (and growing). What is wrong with this picture? The answer is:

Isa 8:20

*20 To the law (**Torah**) and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. KJV [**Bold “Torah” added for clarity**]*

Yeshua made a very strong statement to the Pharisees... it applies to every believer today:

John 5:46-47

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words? KJV

Second to salvation in Yeshua (understanding He alone is the way to salvation and the obtaining of your eternal birthright, by your faith in Him) the next most important understanding is: **to walk out a “Yeshua walk.”** **FOR THAT**, you will need to know that Torah alone gives the guidelines, just as Yeshua “exampled” in His ministry... not the doctrines and teaching of men and church institutional teaching that most of us “Christians” are exposed to. Modern theology takes the New Testament and generally annuls the teachings of Moses... an error of the most grievous kind, as the New Testament is the “flower” that emerges from the “bud” of the Old Testament, and if the flower does not look like the bud’s DNA... you have a hybrid. Hybrid ministries are the bulk of modern religion. The Old Testament is said to be the “dictionary” of the New Testament. Do not get it in reverse, as so many have. Unlike the Pharisees and their legalism, who also added to the “letter” of the Torah and produced their own hybrid doctrines, and enslaved men in the “realm of death,” Yeshua taught the “heart or spirit” of the Torah which is the way to blessings in this life. **If you do not know what Moses taught, and believe Moses writings as the “view port” for understanding the New Testament... you have the wrong example of how to live a “Yeshua like” (“Christ like”) life. The New Testament is a marvelous work of divine inspiration, but Yahweh only has one mind... He did not write two separate doctrines. Beware of ANY teaching that violates Isa 8:20 above (Moses teachings)... Yeshua clearly confirms this in John 5: 46-47. NOW, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THIS “TRUTH?”**

There are only two men you can safely follow: Yeshua, for salvation and Moses for how to live (receive) the blessings instead of the curses and how to understand New Testament teachings (especially Paul’s writings). The Holy Spirit in us is the power for understanding and living the Torah instructions of Moses teachings. It is the believer’s obedience in keeping the commandments ALONE that qualifies them for blessings. It is the believer’s faith in Yeshua ALONE that saves them... establishes their birthright. You cannot obey Torah into salvation (works alone); and, you cannot “faith” alone into blessings: as Yeshua’s brother said...

James 2:20

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? KJV

These Bible “truths” are for everyone, and NO man or institution, teaching or other manipulation of the scriptures will change the “truth.” One of my greatest discoveries was that Paul and Moses agree... that is if you allow the Holy Spirit to help you sort out the truth... Paul never violated Torah (Moses teachings)... and he never taught anyone else to violate Torah. He lived Torah... SO MUST WE.

It is here I want to explain my own experience with the institutional system, “church,” if I may call it that. Our small community had three main churches, First Christian (which my wife of these past 43 years grew up in), Methodist, and First Baptist (where I grew up). We also had a small Pentecostal church, and about 15% of our community and surrounding area was Amish and Mennonite. We attended school in a small-town system (32 in our Senior HS class); and were for the most part like other people of the school years of the 1940’s and 1950’s, as my wife and I graduated from High School in 1960. We mid-westerners are often included in the “Bible-Belt” label when that definition is used. Catholics (few there were) had to go out of town to nearby towns to find a church for their faith. We were “clones” of our time and like so many others, we really did not know why we believed what we believed. We simply learned the traditions and customs of our day. Since we were the “majority” as Protestants and were never really challenged to examine our basis and roots of conviction for our beliefs... all was well. Time would pass and we were like others, busy with living and trying to meet the challenges of life. I started to college in 1960 and the University was larger than the town I grew up in... and cultural shifts began to emerge. Judy and I married young, I was 18 and she was 19, and soon the challenges of life and family narrowed my focus to survival and providing for the needs of a wife and eventually three wonderful children.

During the early years of marriage, college first jobs and getting “settled” into life, religious priority was lower on my list than on Judy’s. She was good for me as her faith and commitment to regular church attendance was stellar. I was slow getting that issue focused and our different opinions on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was a tough issue between us for about 7-years... since I had all the wisdom and understanding as “head of the house,” so I thought. Her patience, love and prayers for me, and steadfast faith in Yahweh and His Spirit’s work, did its work of grace and truth in me and brought me out of my ignorance and resistance to Scriptural truth. In 1970, the re-dedication of my life to “Jesus” and the “church” was a turning point in my life... all for the better. I began a journey with a faith-based, main line Denominational, Pentecostal Church that would later lead me into full time pastoral ministry in 1990. It was a good thing and I am thankful that I had the benefit of such a blessing. I became deeply committed to church community life and began teaching, working in different committee areas and board of deacon’s duties and so forth. All of this in the “inter circle” of what the church programs and leaders believed... much of the emphasis was on “programs” and the like to draw new people to check us out. I was also involved with Home Cell Ministry there for 15 years. Busy was the doctrine, and if your date book had a blank spot, surely you felt guilty of something. I am convinced that so many others follow the same path and most likely do not really examine their rationale for their faith and deepest convictions because they are “doing the Lord’s work.” At least we try to convince our own selves that is the way it is. What really happens is that people get involved in activity and grow old... seldom looking outside the circle they are comfortable in... unless

something moves them, like crisis or disagreement, etc. It is good when Yahweh uproots our complacent attitudes... otherwise we would not grow.

In 1997 I resigned my position and about four months later I began attending another local Evangelical Church with Pentecostal underpinnings, although with less of the visible expression. I taught adult CE classes there for several years and was part of other church support, including filling in for the Pastor when asked to do so. I was also involved in Home Cell Ministry for about five years there as well. In September of 2003, when the "Purpose Driven Life" campaign was on the second wave in its rise to fame, this church embraced its wave along with a great many of the 300-plus churches community wide. I stumbled through a few weeks of the program, telling myself that I would endure it and that it would be over in a few weeks. I have been through similar thought processes before in "programs" I had a hard time connecting with. This one was over the top for me and I could not stay with it because it violated too many Scriptural truths for me. Judy and I decided to take inventory of our spiritual life and we began to look for a more Scriptural based fellowship to worship with. We visited a number of churches and did not really connect with them.

We began to investigate the Internet and look for other believers who might be meeting in our surrounding community or nearby towns. We especially wanted to find and be an active part of genuine balanced Bible teaching body. Following the study of many statements of faith and looking into their teachings, we were challenged to visit some Messianic groups, which was a real interesting experience. In early May 2004, we attended a Derek Prince Ministries, "Israel in the Last Days" conference in Charlotte, NC. Following that wonderful week and after sorting out the details of what we came to believe, we began to understand the meaning of "...working out our own salvation with fear and trembling." We are not referring to our "position" of salvation by grace through faith, but to our walking out our faith by becoming "doers" of the Word that Messiah and the Apostles taught (and as they themselves did) in the early years of "Christian" church history (Messiah like in living, not in name only). And it is said that the Church began to define itself apart from Judaism (its Hebraic roots) beginning about 160 A.D., the time of Justin Martyr. This was even before Constantine the Great (306-337 AD) and the destroyers of Jewish Heritage ravaged the early church to eliminate the doctrines and witnesses that conflicted with the Roman Church's political and theological positions... including changing the day of "church" to Sunday, from Sabbath (7th day or Saturday)... as the Scriptures declare in some over 60 separate directives... with not ONE directly specific to Sunday. I had done some serious soul searching, praying and study for several months (it all started in September 2003), and I also had done some serious praying and asking for forgiveness for being part of a system of errors... for which I have repented and continue to humble myself of. I was challenged a few months ago by an article I read that I felt the Holy Spirit wanted me to acknowledge, and that was to stop my weekly teaching ministry until I had my doctrinal convictions correct. I consider myself yet "on the bench" studying and learning as I "unlearn" some things and gather new substance for myself so I can share it with others in Yahweh's time when He wants to release me for that purpose if that is His will. This IS serious business, and I only share this article as an "experience" that I have had... and not as any kind of new doctrine. It is my prayer and hope that others who read this will be challenged to dig into their Hebraic roots and learn these truths as well.

Now, I want to emphasize that there is no doubt in my mind that most of the people who are leaders in these system churches are sincere and dedicated in their missions. However, they are where I was, self-indulgent in a regurgitated doctrine that simply goes in a circle of error, with error teachers teaching more error. These are not illiterate and untalented people, quite the contrary; most are educated, many are talented and dynamic speakers and charismatic in their own ways. They go unchallenged because most people in churches do not know the Scriptures and/or church history. And if they do, through either stubborn resistance to change, relationships and or traditions, or for fear of truth, they can't seem to dislodge themselves from the system. There are many who, in my sincere opinion, will be coming out of these Sunday systems and like us return to their Scriptural mandated roots of Sabbath keeping and solid Word study teaching (especially foundational Torah instruction)... it is just a matter of time... as it is happening world wide. Yahweh IS calling His people out of the watered down, error-filled body of "believers" world wide... the Internet is exploding with the groups and fellowships of believers, who like us, are sensing this shift... it is growing and its speed is accelerating. Unfortunately, there are those who fear for their livelihood and "place" in amongst their peers if they should dare to consider such doctrinal shifts. In the opposite direction, the "system" churches will accelerate in their "entertainment" modes and continue gathering people in, yet failing to deliver soul-penetrating preaching of consequence for sin and certain judgment for ungodly living. The end result of these system churches will be the enjoining with apostate churches, in the end times, that unify into the ecumenical conglomerate "one world" religion that will form the base from which the false prophet will attack Yahweh's true assembly of people who have their anchors in the rock of Torah and dare to be peculiar as Sabbath keepers who do not want to look like the Babylonian apostates, but keep Messiah Yeshua's directive of "if you love me, keep My Commandments." Yeshua was Torah in the flesh, Torah reveals Messiah, who was/is declared to come, and come He did... and He will come the second time "for those who look for His appearing." Those who know Torah are the only ones who will know who the "Real" Messiah is to look like and where and when His arrival is imminent. The scriptures say many false messiahs will come (and have come) in His Name. It is said that the single most difficult division between "Christians" and "Jews" is the Jewish perception of the Christian "Messiah" who does not even keep Torah... which is a major perception block. Jews have been taught Torah from their birth and quickly recognize Torah violations in lifestyles and doctrine. If the Christian church is to ever witness to Jews, they first need to live like the Messiah of the Bible... and have His ways apparent in their daily walk. This is all "spiritual warfare," as Dr. Gavin Finley says (with which I agree) that all spiritual warfare is an "information war." So it is, after all, is not the archenemy of Salvation the one Yeshua called the "father of lies."

I have come to understand that there are two distinct issues for me at this time in my life while this "re-structuring" of my theology is being done to set my thinking and ministry on the correct path. First, is the issue of "preparation," as everyone needs to be prepared for service. Some of us need to be "de-programmed" from our past indoctrinations and traditions... as in my case. Make no mistake about it; I was a solid Bible student, with years of study and memorization of scriptures, and three decades of involved ministry in the body, and a tither PLUS mission's supporter. I had invested my life's time and fortune in "the work of the Kingdom," and it has been a blessing and a privilege for which I have no regrets (except for the imbalance I had with time for my family... that was my error). Paul the Apostle is the best example of a Bible character that admittedly had a similar experience. He was a "Pharisee of the Pharisee's" in his

own words, he was more zealous in Judaism than his peers... and he was “dead certain” he was right in abusing the followers of Messiah. In fact Paul was on the way to Damascus to further terrorize the new body of believers in his day. He met Yeshua Messiah on the road to Damascus and in one of the Scriptures most amazing stories; Paul was transformed into the very example he had been trying to destroy. He had to be “de-programmed” and start learning how he would be used by Yahweh to live out his remaining days doing Yahweh’s work. The Book of Acts is a detailed documentary of Paul’s ministry and life’s work. Many of the NT books were written by Paul and document his efforts to faithfully preserve the Torah’s truth.

If you will refer to Galatians 1:11- 2:2, you will find out that Paul had to do away with his religious perceptions and man-made “church” customs and traditions and learn new truth to teach people. He spent three years preparing himself for his new role, separated from others, further he spent another 14 years teaching on his own without being under the so-called “authority” that so many try to place people under when they disagree with their taking an independent stand for unpopular truth. Being accountable is good and I believe in it, and I spent my entire ministry under authority and being accountable, so I know from which I speak. However, Paul was opposed wherever he went by the “theologians” of his day. He was a Torah keeper up until the day of his death. He was a Sabbath keeper up until the day of his death. He was a keeper of the festivals up until the day of his death. He was a rock-solid believer in salvation by grace through faith in Messiah Yeshua. He has been misquoted and had his teachings distorted. Paul’s teachings have been misunderstood more than any other Bible character’s teachings (as Peter said in 2 Pet 3:15-16). The facts are that truth is where you find it, and often times it is unpopular to expose your convictions to truth and openly embrace its demands. Truth will demand that you “de-program” your old errors in thinking and that you set your self aside to learn things that must be learned so you can get it right. Most Christian, Sunday church “believers” will (and must) come to the grips with this fact. Pagan traditions and errors that have been absorbed into institutional training, which have displaced genuine Hebraic roots underlying Bible truth, will make this very difficult to face for most.

The second thing that I have come to understand is that after the “preparation” time we serve, we have ONE and only ONE mission... and that is that we are to be “restorers” of the House of Israel. I recently heard Monte Judah say during his teaching, “from the beginning, Yahweh has been about THREE things, Creation, Redemption, and Restoration.” Those who will allow themselves to be “prepared” will have the blessing of being part of the “restoration.” Those who are stubborn and opinionated (as I used to be) will have no part in the restoration of the House of Israel, because those who reject the commandments (instruction of Torah) will not understand the work that must be done... nor will they have the basis for the truth of the way Yahweh wants it done. Yahweh has had one plan of salvation from the beginning, one method (by the blood of Messiah Yeshua, for ALL Jews, Israelites, and Gentiles), and one instruction for ALL... Torah. It is absurd for anyone to say they “believe” and not “do” the Word. Torah IS THE WORD. Every teaching in the Tanach (OT) and the Brit Chadasha (NT) firmly agrees on this item. You are about to ask, are you returning to Judaism to be under Law? No, but I observe the forever established teachings... I keep the Sabbaths, Feasts-Festivals, dietary laws, Ten Commandments... and all of the intent of “Shema” (which is):

“Hear, O Israel: Yahweh your Elohim is ONE: And thou shalt love Yahweh thy Elohim with all thine heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” Deut 6:4-5

AND

“...love thy neighbor as thyself...” Lev 18:18, Mat 19:19, 22:39, Mk 12:31, Lk 10:27, Rom 13:9, Gal 5:14, and Ja 2:8

In Deut 6:4, You will note, ONE, is not the “trinity” (three separate parts of “godhead”). ONE means Elohim is the only Elohim, however He can manifest Himself in as many ways as He pleases... the two we are mainly familiar with is the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) and the Word in the flesh, Messiah Yeshua. In the Hebrew, “Elohim” is a plural expression, EL is the singular, and Yahweh is expressed as Elohim, and the Hebrew word for ONE is “Echad” which means unity as one. The trinity teaching has confused many and leads to incorrect theological thinking and must be corrected in the believer’s mind. Misunderstanding for most of us comes from failing to study the real meaning of words and the culture and context in which they are used. Few people read and study their Bibles... leaving themselves open to being deceived. Fewer yet research the original meanings of language and its idioms and cultural expressions. Translations and translations of translations have caused some of this confusion, but for the most part it is a matter of our Greek-Roman mindset verses the Hebrew mind set.

Now what about this “restoration” of the House of Israel? Who is Israel? I will refer you to a couple of excellent Internet links below that will elaborate this item. They are “MUST” read items for any sincere truth seeker. If you ARE a true believer, the Holy Spirit will not let you ignore these truths. Most of my questions over the years are being answered in these days of preparation... Praise Yahweh who leads us into ALL truth by His Spirit. Suffice it for now to say that just as Paul said “all” in Rom 9:6 “...for they are not “all” Israel, which are of Israel:” The “Commonwealth or House” of Israel are ALL those who have believed in Messiah Yeshua for salvation by faith in Him alone, and those who genuinely have forsaken their old sinful ways and walk by faith in the commandments and instruction of Torah... who as Messiah Yeshua said “if you love me, keep my commandments.” To believe is to obey; by definition you can have it no other way. Those who claim salvation by grace and rebuke Messiah’s instruction to keep His commandments are confused and need delivered from their ignorance of the Holy Scriptures. Abraham is the “Father of our Faith.” He is the model of “faith” in that “faith” is the only way man can come to salvation. We are saved by Yahweh’s grace (favor in Hebrew teaching of OT) by, or through faith, and we do the things we do to follow Torah instruction because we love Him, which is a natural desire as we respond to His Redeeming Love. The “seed” that Yahweh promised Abraham that would become multitudes are those who have “faith” as Abraham had, and who receive Messiah Yeshua as their Master. Those who come to salvation and understand “master” know that they are “bond servants” who no longer belong to their own selves... they belong to the House of Israel, and are those who inherit all the promises of Yahweh if He is truly their Master. They come from three places in the “multitudes.” The Jews (Southern Kingdom) Judah, including Benjamin and some Levites are one of the three. The second of the three, Jacob or “Israel” (as Jacob was renamed Israel) passed the blessing to Ephraim (of Joseph) which are referred to as the (Northern Kingdom, Samaria), and the “companions” of them both (companions of Judah and Israel), make up the third group... all kinds of ethnic groups generally called gentiles (but better stated as “nations”). Likewise, when the Children of Israel came out of Egypt, many “non Israelites” came out with them, and all were under the same “blood” of the

Passover, all came through the “parted sea” and all were given the same Torah for instruction. Likewise today, if you are going to be “of the House of Israel” then you have one salvation by Messiah (Yeshua), one baptism, one instruction (Torah) and one “end,” final resurrection unto life eternal with Yeshua. Outside the House of Israel, you have the ONLY OTHER “end” eternal damnation in the “fire that never ends.” Yahweh is calling out his “Israelites” and they are NOT a bloodline DNA people (although some will be included), nor are they “National or Political” people (although some will be included)... they are all “faith” people... who are YOU? The definition of a person is validated by the work or fruit of his doing his faith... NOT simply what he says or claims to be... faith without works is dead. The “church” is NOT Israel and has NOT replaced Israel. Some genuine faithful believers in Yeshua are in the church, and are “of” the same Israel I am, because of their faith. I believe they too will eventually come alive to their calling to embrace all of the commandments and become Torah observant to complete their identity.

My Journey “update” (July 2015- Sept 2017)

It has been a fulfilling and exciting walk since the above 2004 article was written and posted to our “Scattered Seed Ministries” website (now closed down since summer 2015; see new ministry website: <http://rev1467.org>)

It has been our great privilege and a blessing to work in the Kingdom for purpose of teaching and ministering the Gospel of Yeshua... and to serve YHWH as part of His sheepfold. We had the joy of fellowship with so many good teachers and leaders who's efforts enriched us in so many ways. We were able to attend a good number of conferences and Festivals over these years as well. We also were able to co-sponsor a few conferences ourselves, here in Rockford, IL, and a couple in the Chicago suburbs. Judy and I have journeyed together these years in the greatest decade plus of our now 56 years of marriage. This November 2017 we will both be 75 years of age... and we still consider our “ministry” active, although a bit less involved.

When we and the co-leaders of our ministry were led to close down our weekly Scattered Seed Sabbath fellowship in June 2015, for a rest period, little did we know that soon to be discovered would be health issues in July 2015; with that, we both knew we would be “off line” for a period of time. We are thankful that Judy's Colon cancer (with surgery and 10 months chemo treatment for a year's involvement) has been healed, with her just recent two year follow-up exams clear and excellent... and that my issues with prostrate problems and type 2 diabetes is much improved as well... Praise YHWH. We simply say that YHWH was “ahead” of us when we felt led to close our weekly fellowship meetings. Most of our group has adjusted into small groups and continue study and fellowship with others. We can say, “all is well with my soul.”

We continue to fellowship with our co-leaders from Scattered Seed, and enjoy weekly fellowship with them and a couple other families. Thankfully, we live in close proximity and are neighbors.

I (John) continue to administer the <http://rev1467.org> website and hope to maintain it as long as YHWH allows... we also consider it our joy and blessing to personally minister to others who are open to the Gospel and Messianic teachings.

It was near the end of our 2015 season that I completed a “My Book,” composite booklet that includes many of the experiences and lessons I learned and observed during the “my journey” season of 2004-2015. It is in PDF form at this link:

<http://rev1467.org/pdf-files/My-Book2015rev12-20-21.pdf>

If you would like one of these My Book booklets “spiral bound” in a 5.5 x 8.5 book, please ask and I will send you a copy at the address you provide.

The following links will bless you abundantly if you will study them, with your Bible and mind BOTH open.

Who Is Israel?

<http://rev1467.org/teachings/Who is Israel-Patrick.htm>

Two Houses

<http://rev1467.org/pdf-files/Two Houses of Israel in the End-Times.pdf>

The Heritage of Abraham

<http://rev1467.org/guestTeachings/The Heritage of Abraham.html>

Also, follow the links on this website <http://rev1467.org/> to many more studies.

May Yahweh’s Holy Spirit guide you and preserve you, spirit, soul and body until He comes to take you home. I pray His blessings and grace to abound to you and your loved ones and that you have His peace and presence with you always.

Shalom... Pastor John (Rosh Hashanah 2017)