

An Examination of the unorthodox beliefs of the First Fruits of Zion, their Torah Clubs, and the Hebrew Roots Movement in general

**** Direct quotations are in *italics*, brief explanatory notes are within {brackets} ****

1. A non-Trinitarian view of God in the forms of both Modalism and Subordinationism.

Examples:

Every day, millions of Christians pray to the God of Israel through their mediator, the King and Messiah of the Jews. (6) {Boaz speaks of prayer through Jesus, not to Jesus}

Pg. 128 Bradford makes a point that the Bible does not refer to Yeshua by the Father's personal name, Yehoveh – (4, #6)

The Doctrine of the Trinity is a tough issue for the Church and the Jews. – (4, #6)

Early Church and the Shema: Did not think of God being a conglomerate of "3 persons"...NAS Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!"...NAS Mark 12:29 Jesus Answered, "the foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; - (4, #6)

The Names of God...WE MUST RESTORE THE NAMES OF GOD!...When Lord and God are used, how can we tell if it is "God" or "Jesus" being referred to?...Y'shua, Who do you say he is? – (4, #6)

Reinserting God's name (YHWH) creates doctrine problems...NAS Acts 1:11 and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you watched Him go into heaven." The manner he went includes: (1) The FORM God/Man Jesus (2) the PLACE Mt. of Olives (3) The WAY into the sky, clouds...Zechariah 14 says it is Y-H-W-H (Yahweh) who lands on the Mt. of Olives!! We have always just 'plugged in' JESUS. Hebrew says YHWH. Vs.9 says 'He is ECHAD' ONE. This description is always reserved for the totality of the Godhead. The one we call "God" – (4, #7)

"3 Persons" Doctrine...We must re-examine this un-Scriptural construct..."Left Behind" is a story! NOT A CHALLENGE to the nature of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Separates the Persons. Separates the Functions. Logical conclusion of 3 Persons doctrine: when Christ was on earth, God in Heaven was only 2/3rds complete! – (4, #7)

Theory of the 'Trinity'...Tom Bradford (p. 127 also 132-139) "...I think we do a great disservice to ourselves when we attempt to artificially limit the possible manifestations of G-d to three, so that it makes a nice and tidy Roman Catholic doctrine." – (4, #8)

Bradford likens the Trinity to one Person with three different ATTRIBUTES/ROLES rather than three separates pieces that we label as persons.

Father – grand author of the divine plan

Holy Spirit – container and messenger of the divine plan

Son – the grand executor of the divine plan

Found a Teaching at www.ariel.org that is one of the best Messianic teachings I have ever heard on the subject! I highly highly recommend it. He lays out in Church History the (6) major views concerning the doctrine of the Trinity as he sees it. – (4, #8)

Throughout the history of the Church there has been tremendous opposition and conflict to the connect of the Trinity of God – Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum - (4, #8)

Where I Fall on this Issue...

Scripture does not ask us to believe in a contradiction. A contradiction would be..."There is one G-d and there is not one G-d" "God is shown/revealed in three roles/attributes/persons and G-d is one role/attribute/person"

To say "G-d is revealed often in three roles/attributes/persons and there is one G-d" is not a contradiction. It is something we do not understand, and it is therefore a mystery or paradox, but that should not trouble us as long as the different aspects of the mystery are clearly taught by Scripture, for as long as are finite creatures and not omniscient deity, there will always (for all eternity) be things that we do not fully understand.

From: www.messianicapologetics.net

Our attention needs to be placed squarely upon the Biblical text, to see if the concept of G-d composed of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is something that can be legitimately derived from Scriptures. – (4, #8)

Relationship between Yeshua and Yehovah

I also wanted to acknowledge Tom Bradford's teaching on pg. 273 and 274 of our student manuals.

Oneness, Unity, ECHAD yet...

Subservience of the Son to the Father...just as Joseph wielded the full power and authority of Pharaoh, but was not Pharaoh

Bradford reminds us of how Yeshua taught his disciples to pray...not to Jesus; rather we pray to the Father in the name of Jesus. – (4, #11)

2. A lesser view of all portions of scripture that are not Torah. Torah is the lens through which all scripture must be viewed, including the words of Jesus, and only Torah is fully inspired.

Examples:

The Torah is God's initial revelation of Himself to mankind, and as such it is the basis upon which all further revelation of God is tested, and the foundation upon which all else is built. – (1, p. 2)

In the Messianic Era, the revelation of God will surpass even what He revealed to Moses. Yeshua is the prophet like Moses. Moses heard the voice of God speaking clearly, not in riddles, dreams, visions, or dark oracles. All the other prophets heard only an obscure echo. Moses heard the voice of God directly; consequently, Moses' words were not his own. In the same way, the Master tells the disciples, "The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative" (John 14:10). He spoke only what He heard from the Father – (5, p. 6)

The commands of the Master cannot be different from the commands of the Torah any more than the Word of the Master is different from the Word of the Father. – (5, p. 11) {Jesus has no authority to declare Torah fulfilled, to give a 'new commandment'}

3. The belief that Jesus did not fulfill the Mosaic Law.

Examples:

If Jesus was (and is) Jewish, his teaching must be located on the map of greater Judaism. His prophetic rebuke to his generation should be seen in continuity with that of the earlier prophets. His core message, his "gospel," should not be seen as a call for Jews to abandon Judaism, but rather, it must be recognized as a call to covenant fidelity, a rallying cry to the Torah and its teachings. (6) {Jesus' Gospel is in quotations, he has not a new message to offer}

Jesus' Last Supper took place at Passover. The ceremony known today as communion (or the Eucharist) was originally part of a Passover Seder... Jesus took the unleavened bread and cup of wine and gave them new meaning, and commanded us to partake of them in remembrance of him. For this reason, we take the bread and the cup annually in the context of our Passover meals. (1, p. 3)

The Master told His disciples, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." A few verses further on in the text, He reiterated the sentiment: "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me" (John 14:21). Some teachers limit the scope of this statement by appealing to Yeshua's "new commandment" of love for one another or His summary of the Torah's greatest commandments: love God; love neighbor. That might make sense if Yeshua intended to replace the Torah as replacement theology assumes. But He did not intend to replace the Torah. Instead, His commandments should be understood to include the broad range of His teaching about the kingdom, including His words about the Torah. – (5, p. 10-11)

Each newer covenant was NOT a replacement of an older one...The Mosaic covenant (agreement to keep the law) and the Law itself was NOT declared null and void because of the covenant with Yeshua for the New Covenant. – (4, #5)

Odd isn't it? That one would be temporary and the rest permanent, and considering the wording throughout about 'perpetual', 'obedience, and 'forever' and knowing there will be a return to it in the Millennial Kingdom – (4, #13) {With respect to the Mosaic Covenant}

4. An eschatology that awaits the rebuilding of the Temple complete with a Levitical priesthood and sacrificial system where the whole world will obey Torah in the millennial kingdom.

Examples:

We believe that there is a Jewish man who has taken up residence within each and every believer. The more one gets in touch with this inner Jew (i.e. Yeshua), the more one will feel compelled to turn to the ways of Torah and identify with the people of Israel. The non-Jewish call to Torah is part of biblical prophecy too. In the Messianic era, all nations will be keeping the Torah. – (3, p. 14)

In the Messianic Era, Israel will walk in covenant fidelity, observing God's commandments and statutes. The whole world will live according to the Torah, - (5, p. 10)

Why does keeping God's commandments bring us into the Messianic Era in advance of its actual coming? – (5, p. 12) {Group discussion question}

Gentile Christianity mistook the fall of Jerusalem and the exile of the Jewish people as indications that the church had replaced Israel...To the Gentile Christians, the Temple symbolized the Old Covenant and Judaism. Its destruction symbolized the end of the ceremonial religion of the Jews and the beginning of a spiritual religion in which the church became the new spiritual temple...While the New Testament does speak of the believers as the temple of the Holy Spirit and while we understand Christ is our high priest and ultimate sacrifice for sin: the New Testament writers NEVER intended to imply the cancellations of the literal Temple or the Levitical priesthood. (1. Sacrifices continued in the Temple after the ascension of Christ and we see the rebuilding of the Temple and the coming of Messiah with the sacrifices reinstituted. We need to work thru this information and make sure our theology meshes with what the Scripture has to say.) – Ideas taken from: Shadows of the Message – parsha Terumah – (4, #1)

What are your thoughts on righteous people/animals/objects atoning for mankind? These things indicate (when studied) why the millennial sacrifices will return under the rule and reign of Messiah. (Another subject for another day.) (4, #9)

The work of preparing for the Final Redemption requires the restoration of a Jewish Messiah, a Jewish gospel, a Jewish concept of discipleship, and Jewish understanding of Torah. (8, 10.2)

5. That there has never been a Covenant with the Gentiles, thus it is only through 'becoming a Jew' in spirit and in practice that one can be a full/true follower of Jesus Christ.

Examples:

we believe that a non-Jew's position in Israel and participation in Torah are the natural results of his identity in Messiah. As believers in Messiah, non-Jews have a right and responsibility to take hold of the commandments of God. – (3, p. 4)

"The point is not whether or not you are Jewish or Israelite. The point is that there is a Jewish Israelite living within you." – (3, p. 4)

In this teaching we present that the New Covenant is made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, resulting in the restoration of Israel. It is a common teaching of FFOZ that there

is no covenant made with the people of the nations—Gentiles. Our position is that the ger was always considered to be equal participants in Israel based on their faith and faithfulness to the covenants. This is not a replacement theology—this is a theology of inclusion. – (3, p. 7)

the core teaching at FFOZ has always been one of full non-Jewish participation in the things of Torah and the people of Israel. We have predicated this participation upon the individual's identity in Messiah alone. We believe that, as disciples of the Torah-observant Messiah, we are beholden to imitate His life and conform to His teaching. We believe in Torah observance on the basis of our identity in Yeshua. We believe that we have a position in Israel on the basis of the Messiah of Israel's position within each one of us. – (3, p. 12)

What is not debatable is that all, believers already have citizenship in Israel through faith in Messiah. Non-Jews are grafted into Israel. Non-Jews are made part of the commonwealth of Israel. Non-Jews are given the covenants of promise. All of this is accomplished only through faith in Messiah. – (3, p. 15)

Most people who attend Beth Immanuel are not Jewish, but we all practice Messianic Judaism together. – (1, p. 1)

Most people who attend Beth Immanuel are not Jewish, but they practice Messianic Judaism in imitation of Jesus. – (1, p. 2)

Q – If the Jews are still G-d's chosen people, what about believing Gentiles? How can Gentiles benefit from the covenants G-d made with the Jewish people without becoming Jewish? More practically, how can Gentiles who are drawn to the Torah and the Jewish people become involved with Messianic Judaism? Essentially, if Israel is limited to the Jewish people, and Israel is the people of G-d, where do believing Gentiles find their identity? – (4, #10)

Let's consider that the church has taught a theology of replacement and substitution by which we believe the church has replaced and even superseded Israel. We have taught the church is the New Israel. We have taught that if a Jewish person wants salvation or any inheritance in the covenants of promise, he or she must forsake Judaism and convert to Christianity. This story contradicts replacement theology. The sons of Jacob were not adopted into the family of Ephraim and Manasseh, rather Ephraim and Manasseh were adopted into the family of Jacob to become sons of Israel. Israel does not join the Gentile church; the Gentile church has been spiritually united with Israel (Romans 9:4-5) Depth of the Torah p. 425-426 – (4, #12)

Because there is no mention of the New Covenant being a "universal covenant" made between G-d and the Gentiles, Gentiles have no part of this new Covenant unless they are somehow declared by YHVH to be part of either the house of Israel or the House of Judah. (p. 287) Romans 11 explains how this works. – (4, #14)

Believers have been brought into a new family: the family of Israel. (8, 2.17)

New Testament is not the New Covenant: The New Testament is a collection of scriptures that tell about how the gospel brought about the New Covenant, but it is not actually the New Covenant itself. (8, 3.17) {Followed by the use of Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:24-28, FFOZ identifies this as the New Covenant, a covenant with Israel, not gentiles}

The New Covenant is a covenant only with the: people of Israel (8, 3.21)

We learned that the “New Covenant” is not the “New Testament,” and it does not replace Torah. The Torah is actually a part of the New Covenant; that is why the New Covenant could be called the “Renewed Covenant.” (8, 3.23)

We learned that the New Covenant was made only with God’s chosen people Israel. Gentiles who want to have a share in the New Covenant must do so by participation in Israel through the Messiah of Israel. (8, 3.23)

The Old Covenant is part of this present world. The New Covenant is the covenant of the restored world of the Messianic Age. The Torah is the same in both covenants, but our relationship to it changes. In the Old, it was a matter of “if you obey me” and in the New it is a matter of “this Torah will be written on you heart.” Thus the New Covenant is not an abrogation of the Torah but rather a new agreement changing our relationship to the Torah. (8, 3.30)

From Paul’s perspective in Galatians, the offense of the cross is Gentile inclusion in Israel. (8, 6.24)

6. That faithful discipleship of Jesus Christ requires keeping the Mosaic Law, including the dietary (kosher), Sabbath, and festival provisions.

Examples:

We have risen to defend the unchanging authority of the Torah from those who claim it has been abolished. We have done the hard work of figuring the Torah back into the equation of discipleship as it applies to Jewish and Gentile disciples, respectively. (7)

We share a desire to walk after the commandments and to live our lives in faithful obedience to God’s Torah. We share a sense of belonging in the greater body of Israel. – (3, p. 4)

a large number of non-Jewish believers who are seeking out their biblical roots in an attempt to return to a purer form of our faith. – (3, p. 6)

Lest there be any doubt about where First Fruits of Zion stands on this issue, allow me to remind everyone that First Fruits of Zion officially separated from the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) in May of 2000 over the issue of Gentile inclusion. – (3, p. 9)

He clearly states that the Messianic Jewish Movement was never intended to be a place in which Gentiles would begin to embrace the Torah or feel compelled to keep the Torah. – (3, p. 10)
{Which is why FFOZ broke with Messianic Judaism, they wanted that compulsion}

We both espouse full non-Jewish participation in Israel. We both believe the Sabbath, the Festivals, the dietary laws and the whole of Torah applies equally to all God’s people, Jew and non-Jew. – (3, p. 16)

The restoration of Early Messianic Judaism has implications for everything we do at Beth Immanuel. We keep the Sabbath and biblical festivals such as Rosh Hashanah and Passover according to God’s prescription in Leviticus 23. We keep the Bible’s dietary laws in keeping with the instructions in Leviticus 11. More than that, we endeavor to preserve a basic form of Jewish

practice and tradition within our community. At the same time, we clearly distinguish between Jewish identity and Gentile identity within our community, making it clear that Gentile disciples are not required to observe the Torah as Jews or to abandon their Gentile identity. – (2, p. 2)

As sons of Abraham by faith in Messiah, we all have access to Yeshua's Jewish heritage. This does not mean that Gentile believers become Jews, but they should not be discouraged from practicing Messianic Judaism: the Jewish roots of their faith. – (1, p. 1)

we strive to be like Jesus in everything we do, which includes observing Jewish tradition. – (1, p. 3)

if they truly love Him, they must keep His commandments, including what He said about the unchanging Torah. – (5, p. 3)

The Master binds the commandments, judgments, ordinances, and statutes of the Torah upon His disciples with the cords of love. He taught them to observe even the least of the Torah's commandments. All of Yeshua's teachings were explanations and interpretations of His Father's commandments. The Apostle John understood the equation, and he explained that every disciple of Yeshua is obligated by love for God to walk in obedience to Torah: For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. (1 John 5:3) – (5, p. 11)

Only those who subject themselves to the authority of the Master's teaching and His Torah enter into the union of His love and the love of God: - (5, p. 14)

We are primarily interested in those passages which Christianity has traditionally used to teach that Jesus was against Judaism and the observance of the Torah. On closer examination, each of these passages proves just the opposite. Instead, we learn that in order to be "sinless," Jesus had to be Torah observant. (8, 4.2) {Question: Why is "sinless" in quotation marks??}

Yeshua came to properly interpret the Torah – not to cancel it or replace it.

Yeshua is the Living Torah.

Yeshua did not teach against Torah, Sabbath, or kosher laws.

Yeshua's law of loves does not replace the Torah. (8, 4.2)

We learned about Yeshua's yoke of discipleship and that "yoke" was a rabbinic metaphor for "Torah." (8, 5.21)

The biblical Sabbath and holidays have not been abolished or replaced.

The biblical Sabbath and holidays are relevant to believers today. (8, 8.2)

To say that Gentile believers are not expected to keep God's appointed times is the same as saying that Gentile believers are not supposed to have any holy days or days of worship. (8, 8.5) {Evidently, the Lord's Day, Christmas, and Easter don't count as holy days or days of worship unless we faithfully keep the Jewish calendar too}

Not every commandment is applicable in our current situation. “For there are many commandments that are in force in the Land of Israel but not in countries outside the Land; and there are commandments in force only at the time the Sanctuary exists. There are those which are related to ritual holiness and purity; there are those in force only at beth din (court of law) of ordained and authorized judges [i.e. the Sanhedrin]. – Chofetz Chaim, The Concise Book of Mitzvot

77 Applicable Positive Commandments

194 Applicable Negative Commandments

26 Commandments Applicable only in the Land of Israel (8, 9.5)

If Gentile believers see the importance of keeping a biblical diet in order to maintain their identity as a participant in the holy nation, why should they be discouraged? After all, Yeshua kept kosher. (8, 9.14) {Notice the rationale: “in order to maintain”, they may state over and over that salvation is by faith through grace alone, but “maintaining” that status requires Torah observance.}

The Torah gives us 613 opportunities to show our love for our Father in heaven, and our love for our fellow man. (8, 9.21)

It is not useful to try to impose higher standards on the Gentile believers than the apostles themselves imposed. However, the apostles offered those standards as a minimum threshold of dietary law, not a maximum. They pointed the Gentiles in the direction of the Torah’s higher standards by encouraging them to remain in the synagogues and learn Torah from the weekly readings {Acts 15:21 is quoted} With these words, the apostles invited the Gentile believers to take hold of their spiritual heritage by learning more of the ways of Torah...If someone who is not Jewish wants to eat a biblically kosher diet, how can anyone object? How could it possibly hurt to do so? How could it be wrong to obey the Bible. (8, 9.28)

The person who decides to keep kosher needs to vigilantly guard his heart from looking down on other believers who do not share his conviction...Nevertheless, we certainly can argue against the idea that keeping the biblical dietary laws places us under legalistic bondage...I would argue that keeping the dietary laws and other ceremonial laws of Torah is completely natural for believers. After all, if we are under the new covenant, God has written His Torah on our hearts (8, 9.29) {Jeremiah 31:33 is quoted, once more misidentified as the origin and definition of the New Covenant}

Keeping the dietary laws is a natural expression of who we are in Messiah. It is part of our identity in the new covenant. If believers see the importance of keeping a biblical diet in order to maintain their identity as a participant in the holy nation, why should they be discouraged? After all, Yeshua kept kosher. (8, 9.29)

The Gentile believer’s relationship to Israel and the Torah comes through the Messiah. He is not required to keep the specific signs of Torah that were given to Israel {Colossians 2:16 is quoted, but then Ruth 1:16-17 is quoted to imply strong that truly dedicated Christians will volunteer to

keep Torah} *Gentile believers have a biblical invitation to participate along with Israel in keeping the Torah.* (8, 10.18)

7. The New Covenant is an extension of the Mosaic, which is still operative and normative for everyone.

Examples:

it seemed to harmonize with the work that the Spirit of God was doing within them, turning their hearts toward the Torah of God—the work of the New Covenant. – (3, p. 7)

By espousing these premises, Messianic Judaism has maintained a convenient niche right next to the evangelical Christian church. Since they are not teaching that the Torah is the biblically prescribed way of life for all peoples and nations who call upon the name of the God of Israel, they can conveniently co-exist in cooperation with the Church’s anti-Torah theological assumptions. – (3, p. 8) {Here FFOZ differentiates itself from Messianic Judaism which does not, like FFOZ, teach that Torah is for Gentiles}

From the outset of our ministry, FFOZ has maintained equal covenant participation for Jews and non-Jews. That is to say, we believe that the Torah is for everybody who follows the Jewish Messiah. However, that message has not always been crystal clear in our magazine publications and personal communications – (3, p. 12) {Lamenting that it wasn’t always clear that gentile Torah keeping was their central purpose}

Parts That Don’t Apply Today

The Torah is not done away with or cancelled, but some parts of it do not apply to us today. (A) Death Penalty and Court-Imposed Punishments – Death penalty does not apply outside land or without Sanhedrin (B) Animal Sacrifices and Levitical Laws – Alter sacrifices and Levitical laws do not apply outside of temple in Jerusalem (8, 1.14-1.15)

Is Messiah to be understood as the ending of the Torah then? No. He is the end, but not the ending. He is the goal of the Torah, but not the termination of it. In fact, He Himself said, “Do not think that I came to abolish the law [Torah]” (Matthew 5:17) (8, 1.22)

James calls the Torah the “perfect Torah,” and the “Torah of liberty.” (8, 2.20) {Followed by a quotation of James 1:22-25 where law (Gk. Nomos) is replaced in the text by Torah each time}

{Offered for context: James 1:25 English Standard Version

25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.}

Messiah did not abolish the Torah; He abolished the enmity between Jew and Gentile engendered by Torah. Because of the inclusion of Gentile believers into the greater people of Israel, the Torah is no longer a wall of separation. In Messiah, Gentile believers have the prerogative to take hold of the covenant and take on the commandments. The enmity that kept Jews and Gentiles on opposite sides of the Torah wall has been removed. (8, 7.14) {In explanation of Ephesians 2:14-16}

We believe that the Torah is a revelation of the righteousness of God and a description (along with the rest of Scripture) of the lifestyle of the redeemed community. (8, C.1)

8. The ‘good works’ of the New Covenant, and the purpose of the sending of the Spirit at Pentecost, is to enable Jesus’ followers to more fully keep the Mosaic Law.

Examples:

First Fruits of Zion teaches a different message, but many of the results are the same. We teach that the believer’s identity in Messiah gives him the right and responsibility to “take hold” of the commandments of God. The observance of the Sabbath, the biblical Festivals, the biblical dietary laws and the lifestyle of Torah becomes incumbent upon us because we have been “created in Messiah Yeshua for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10) – (3, p. 6)

*SIDENOTE*** Interestingly, the New Covenant and the giving of the Spirit at Pentecost is to help us keep the Torah. – (4, #4)*

When we keep the Torah, we allow Messiah to live through us. He is righteousness, and Torah is the standard of righteousness. He is the law fulfilled, and He desires to fulfill it through us. (8, 2.25)

9. That the practice of the Early Church, through the entirety of the apostolic generation, was a form of Judaism, complete with observance of the Mosaic Law by gentiles, and that this was in keeping with the desire of the Apostles and the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15).

Examples:

the majority of people in attendance at Beth Immanuel are not Jewish; most of us are Gentile Christians who have found spiritual significance in a traditional Jewish expression of our faith as we emulate the earliest form of Christianity. We feel called to follow the Jewish calendar, celebrate the weekly Sabbath, enjoy the Jewish holidays, and participate in the synagogue liturgical tradition – (2, p. 1)

The earliest form of Christianity—the Christianity of the apostolic era—was a messianic sectarian movement within greater, first-century Judaism. More than one hundred years after the life of Yeshua of Nazareth, the explosive growth of Gentile Christianity eclipsed the early, messianic, sect of Judaism he had founded. Many Jewish and Gentile Christians discarded the distinctively Jewish practices of the Torah (Law) as they assimilated into the evolving Gentile religious environment. The original, biblical faith and practice of Yeshua and his first disciples faded into obscurity. – (2, p. 1)

In the days of the New Testament, Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus worshipped together as co-religionists, participating together in the prayers, rituals, expressions, and customs of daily

Jewish life. They understood the person and teaching of Yeshua from within the context of Judaism and the Torah world-view. – (2, p. 1)

Beth Immanuel exists to reconstruct and propagate that simple form of faith. (2, p. 1)

According to the Apostles, Gentile believers are not required to keep the distinctive commandments of Jewish identity such as circumcision, Sabbath, the dietary laws, etc. Nevertheless, God-fearing Gentile disciples in fellowship with those early Jewish believers naturally participated in the Sabbath, synagogue, and Jewish-life along with the Jewish community of faith (Acts 15:19-21). – (2, p. 2)

The traditional synagogue liturgy is an essential part of Messianic Jewish expression and continuity with the rest of the Jewish world. Liturgy has been used in the Temple and in synagogues for thousands of years. The prayers are based heavily on Scripture and most them were in use in the Temple and synagogues of Yeshua's time. The early apostolic community used liturgy extensively, and it is a hallmark of authentic Messianic Judaism. – (1, p. 3)

*ALSO in the language of Torah, certain laws apply to both the Jew and the stranger **who sojourns in the midst of the people of Israel** (not all Gentiles...but those in the midst of the Hebrews). All four of the apostolic decrees belong to that category of laws. (Read Leviticus 17-18) – (4, #2)*

Many Christians have difficulty accepting the idea of the ongoing roles of Torah and Israel because of the writings of the Apostle Paul...Therefore, it is important for us to examine Paul – the man and his message – in order to see if, in fact, his teaching are actually incompatible with the Land, the People, and the Scriptures of Israel. (8. 6.2)

Paul has thus, wrongly, I believe, been seen as disregarding the Law and customs of his Jewish past as he developed entirely new, Christian solutions. He has, mistakenly, been made the creator of a Gentile Christianity that rejected Judaism and the Law as operative, rather than the champion of the restoration of Israel who fought for the inclusion of “righteous gentiles” in this new community as equals...as understood by James and the Council – Mark Nanos, The Mystery of Romans (8, 6.15)

There is really no way around Acts 21. Paul meant to pay for the Nazirites to demonstrate that he lived in obedience to Torah and never taught contrary to Torah observance. Any seemingly contrary statements from his epistles must be weighted against Acts 21. (8, 6.29)

Many believers today might consider living in obedience to God's commandments if not for the writings of Paul. It is widely believed that Paul discouraged believers from practicing Torah and that he warned us from “going under the Law” and “falling from grace.” But if that is really true, then Paul's writings hopelessly contradict what we know about Paul himself. This week we will examine a sampling of Pauline passages that have traditionally been interpreted as anti-Torah and anti-Jewish. We hope that we will be able to unravel these misunderstood passages to discover the true message of the Apostle Paul. (8, 7.2)

Just like the apostolic decision in Acts 15, the Didache does not bind Gentile believer to the Torah. Instead, it encourages them to take on as much as they are able.

For if you are able to bear all the yoke of the Lord, you will be perfect; but if you are not able, do what you are able to do – Didache 6:2

Yoke of the Lord = The Torah (8, 10.19)

10. That Sabbath worship was the practice of the Early Church, something not ‘changed’ until Constantine.

Examples:

Constantine and the Catholic Church in the 4th century attempted to change the keeping of the 7th day...Though Christ’s resurrection day, the 1st day of the week, is not ordained in the Holy Scriptures as a weekly day of meeting, there is certainly no prohibition against the church meeting on the 1st day but the L-rd’s Day is not the Sabbath as defined by G-d Himself in the Holy Scriptures...Justification to change the Sabbath can sometimes be misunderstood by reading Paul’s writings out of context. (Colossians 2:16-23) – (4, #3)

The New Testament contains no specific commandments concerning the nature, place, or time that God desires for corporate worship. There is no commandment to assemble on Sunday morning or any other day of the week. The Torah, on the other hand, contains ample instruction about God’s appointed times of worship. In the faith and practice of the apostolic community, believers followed the biblical calendar, kept the seventh-day Sabbath, and worshipped God at His appointed times. (8, 8.2)

11. A hostility toward the history of the Church, predicated on the notion that the Church has always been in error (and/or lying to you) and only this movement has God’s truth.

Examples:

So, we aren’t fighting the church, and we aren’t fighting against Christians or Christian practice. However, we are challenging the underlying system of replacement theology and supersessionism. That’s the root issue. Rooting it out is going to be a battle. I’m afraid it’s going to be an ugly fight. While we can organizationally separate the goodness and productivity of the institutional church and sincere spirituality and devotion of the individual Christians—both the church and most Christians will feel assaulted, offended, and targeted. (7)

Separating the institution from the theology that supports it is difficult, but that is what we need to do to progress. Again, the church is not the enemy—but we are challenging the theology the institution represents and propagates. (7)

Most churchgoers still have no idea that they are called to be disciples of a Jewish rabbi. The potential to come alongside these brothers and sisters and seriously reorient their understanding of Jesus’ life and teachings is nearly limitless. “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few” (Matthew 9:37). (6) {Boaz defines the Church as the mission field}

Messianic Judaism rediscovered an authenticity deeper and older than any form or structure existing within the mainstream Church: Torah. Suddenly, it wasn’t primarily Jews coming into the

movement. Rather, it was Christians, Gentile Christians who have been starved for authenticity for centuries. Gentile Christians hungry and zealous for Torah. – (3, p. 9)

Suddenly Gentile Christians everywhere are responding, “Yes! This is what my faith has been missing. This is what I have always been looking for.” – (3, p. 9)

The matrix of the Messianic Jewish Movement simply is not big enough for the restoration that God is doing in the Body of Messiah. The Hebrew Roots movement has outgrown Messianic Judaism. – (3, p. 11)

Rest assured we are working on this issue in our study...little by little...chipping away doctrines of men and replacing it with the Scriptures themselves. Please be patient!!! – (4, #10)

We are on a mission to restore the original faith and practice of the apostles and first followers of Jesus of Nazareth. We rejoice in our rootedness in Judaism as well as our relationship with Christianity. (8, Intro XV)

Galatians 3:23-24 retranslated: “But before faith came, we were kept protected under the Torah, being kept inside for the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Torah has become our caretaker to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.” (8, p. 1.12)

{Provided for comparison: Galatians 3:23-24 English Standard Version

23 Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. 24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.}

For the unbeliever is bound by Torah to sin and punishment while sin is living; but if sin and punishment dies, the unbeliever is released from the Torah’s condemnation of sin. So then, if while sin and punishment is alive the unbeliever is declared righteous and justified, the unbeliever shall be called a lawbreaker; but if sin and punishment dies, the believer is free from the condemnation of the law, so that the believer is not a lawbreaker though she is joined to righteousness and justification. Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the condemnation of the Law through the body of Messiah, so that you might be joined to righteousness and justification, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. (paraphrase of Romans 7:2-4) (8, 7.8) {Part of a pattern of using paraphrases of key passages to ‘demonstrate’ that they mean the opposite of the Church’s traditional interpretation}

{For Comparison: Romans 7:2-4 New International Version

2 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. 3 So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

4 So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.}

Later readers of the epistle who were not aware of the contextual situation interpreted Galatians as an anti-Torah and anti-Jewish work. Based largely upon this misreading of Galatians, early

Christianity jettisoned Torah and our connections to Judaism. We began to believe that anyone who attempted to keep a commandment of Torah was under the curse of the Torah. In retrospect, it was an absurd position...Paul was not preaching against Gentiles keeping the Torah. Technically, he was not even preaching against Gentiles becoming circumcised. He was preaching against Gentiles undergoing the conventional conversion into Judaism in order to achieve salvation and status in the Jewish community...Ironically, the epistle to the Galatians is the very scripture that Christians most often use to refute Gentile believers who are beginning to return to their Jewish roots and practice aspects of Messianic Judaism. As Christians begin to involve themselves in the various aspects of their heritage (such as Sabbath observance, kosher laws, daily prayer, etc.), they are often rebuked by other believers quoting from Galatians. That is turning it exactly backwards. Galatians was written to argue for Gentile inclusion in Israel, not Gentile exclusion from Israel. (8, 7.24-25)

We live in a prophetic time of restoration, and we are committed to seeing the whole body of Messiah, Jews and Gentiles, restoring four essential elements of apostolic faith

{The 4th standard in the list:} Torah – The Torah is God's eternal standard of righteousness and must return to its place of prominence and authority in the community of faith. (8, 10.19-20)

We considered four things that we need restored to our faith:

The Jewishness of Messiah

The Torah context of the gospel

The Jewish tradition of discipleship

The prominence of Torah in the body of the Messiah (8, 10.21)

Today's Bible students are seeking more! More than just creeds and dogma, today's Christian wants to apply the Bible to life by studying to learn, practice, and teach. Believers want to explore outside of traditional, denominational interpretations by examining the Bible as it was understood by the Jewish writers of the New Testament. (8, D.1) {A sound exegetical principle, except FFOZ defines traditional orthodoxy as a dead-end in this pursuit}

We perceive what's happening here as an impetus to the kingdom, a contribution to the kingdom, something prophetic, something profound, something world-transforming. (10, 6:14ff)

So, the responsibility of this message falls on us, a small minority of God's people who've come to an understanding of the gospel of the kingdom and whose lives are being transformed by the undiluted power of Yeshua's message. And we're called to take this gospel of message to the kingdoms, repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. And this prophetic movement has only become possible in our generation. It's our responsibility. (10, 23:11ff) {We alone can save the Church? A reform not possible in any point of Church history until now?}

Until the gospel of the kingdom, the original authentic message of Yeshua, has been proclaimed to the ends of the earth, the partial hardening of Israel will continue. (10, 29:16ff) {Only FFOZ can bring salvation to the Jewish people.}

You are the creators. You are the doers. You are the ones that God has chosen to proclaim this gospel, the gospel of the kingdom, to all nations. What an amazing burden that HaShem has placed upon us. You've dedicated yourself to a mission. You might not have the biggest Torah Club. You might not even think of yourself as qualified to teach others about the gospel of the kingdom and yet you are here. And yet your eyes have been opened. (10, 44:13ff)

Your efforts as Torah Club leaders and students is a direct, and in my opinion, fulfillment of these words of our master. The reconciliation of Israel and the restoration of the world are in God's hands, but the mission is in yours. (10, 46:21ff) {Breathtaking hubris.}

Our eyes have been open to the reality of the kingdom. We're standing on that summit and we see far off in the distance, and we wonder why other people don't see or share our same perspective. Seems like it's an inspiring idea to know the authentic Jesus. (11, p. 1) {When the entirety of the Church sees things differently, maybe that's a sign that you've wandered away?}

Until then, however, there's a small remnant, right. It's a pretty small remnant of the kingdom on earth. There's a few of us. There's a few of us clinging to the Commandments in the testimony of Yeshua as it says in the Book of Revelation. (12, 7:47ff) {Any Gospel that supposedly only saves a tiny minority of those who claim Jesus as Savior is warped and twisted.}

12. A goal and methodology designed to disrupt the Church and pull people from the fellowship and discipleship of their current congregation.

Examples:

One of our dreams as an organization is to see post-supersessionist Christianity. A Christianity that is restored to a proper theology with Israel to the Torah and to the Kingdom. Most of us started our journey to post-supersessionist Christianity in the church. And while many of us still attend the church we see it differently now, we see it through different eyes. We see that something is missing. (10, 8:27ff) {Participation in FFOZ starts with people who are in the Church, there's no reason for them to stay there once they've had their "eyes opened."}

Imagine having your home filled with Christians, experiencing the renewal of their salvation, bringing them into an understanding of the gospel of the kingdom, increasing their devotion to king Messiah, assisting them alongside yourself of becoming agents of the kingdom alongside Israel. And this is all through your mission and efforts where HaShem has placed you. (10, 38:20ff) {Why belong to the Church if the real Kingdom work is only happening in Torah Clubs?}

We're going to return to the Torah and find that its wisdom is the antidote to the fractured and confused world that we live in and a fractured and confused church that we are part of. Some of you might feel like your Torah clubs groups are in some way subversive. Like they're supplanting the local church. Like they're not legitimate expressions or legitimate places of communal fellowship. Now I want to tell you the opposite is true. Many people say, many people say, I don't wanna say it because someone might say, "you said that." So I'm just going to say many people say that the institutional church that we have known is not recoverable. It's not coming back the way it was. It's going to change, and perhaps a Torah Club or some type of home base communities are the pattern for the future. But know this and be confident in this, the institutional churches' issues are not a result of your efforts in the Torah Club. They are a result of

various cultural and generational shifts. And perhaps it's the result of sharing a tired message that has not resulted in what it has promised. (10, 39:52ff) {FFOZ proclaims the Church to be dead, groups like the Torah Clubs are the future.}

At the end of the day we are a disruptive movement. We're disruptors. And a disruptive movement is an ideological idea that's connected to community to prevent something from continuing or operating in a normal way. We're introducing an idea that is intended to challenge and to transform the status quo. We're not satisfied with, and we've not been inspired by the direction that the institutional church has gone for the most part over the past 2000 years. (11, p. 1) {The Church throughout its history doesn't suit them, so they'll disrupt it.}

We have to be disruptors that are very patient in our disruption. We have disruptive ideas. A disruptive idea is a perspective, the introduction of an idea that opposes an entrenched view, process, or perspective. This disruptive idea of ours, it attempts to displace the opinion of the majority in a particular field and transform the status quo. So we are a disruptive movement full of disruptive ideas. And we believe that the church or perhaps disciples must be re-introduced to the Jewish Messiah. And this re-introduction will result in radical changes to their worldview, to their theology, to their practice of faith as disciples of Yeshua. (11, p. 1-2) {FFOZ's goal is radical change to both the faith and practice of the Church.}

So these ideas, they are disruptive. And to some degree they're confrontational. They are threatening to established organizations And structures of power. So it should come as no surprise that we should encounter opposition. That we feel suppressed. (11, p.3) {FFOZ knows that their ideas are a threat to the Church, to dismantle/overthrow the Church is the end goal.}

Likewise, were in a similar situation right now where we realize that the whole body of Messiah, the whole church, is a mission field as well. (12, 1:14ff) {The Church is the mission field because in FFOZ's belief system, the Church is full of people who don't know the true Gospel.}

13.The acknowledgement by FFOZ that what they are teaching is 'another Gospel'.

Examples

I mean, as this evangelical I did not understand the full scope of the gospel message. That is for sure. Especially as it pertained to Israel. But I would say as it pertained to any human being, but especially as it pertained to Israel. Instead, I learn to divide the world, as I'm sure many of you did, into two types of people: the saved and the unsaved, right? Those who have been born again by accepting Jesus into their hearts for a personal relationship went into a category we called the saved, that is the Christians. And those without Jesus, the unsaved, the non-Christians. And so the onus was on those of us who are the saved, that we have a responsibility and a mission to save the unsaved and persuade them to become Christians. Which seems reasonable. In this respect this approach to evangelism, you know from what I'm looking at it now, was a little naïve and largely a misunderstanding of the gospel message. I mean, this is just not what Yeshua taught. We thought the gospel message was believe in Jesus so that you will go to heaven when you die. I mean, really, that was it. So believing the right things about Jesus. That was our

sacrament. Having the right things in your head about Jesus, that was the thing that saved you. But that's not what Yeshua said and that's not what he taught. When I started to learn the New Testament from a Jewish perspective and to study the teachings of the Jewish Yeshua, I discovered a totally different gospel message. In fact, it used to trouble me that he never said anything about becoming Christians. Didn't it trouble anyone else? I mean, it really troubled me. I mean, I'm talking as a teenager reading. I remember throwing the Bible across the room because it just seemed like everything contradicted, everything in the Bible contradicted everything I was learning in church. (9, 24:10ff) {Daniel Lancaster, who grew up as an Evangelical Baptist, admits that he rejects the Church's understanding that the people of the world can be divided into the saved (those who trust in Jesus) and the unsaved (those who do not trust in Jesus). While painting a very weak Straw Man version of what the Church has always taught about the Gospel, Lancaster claims to have discovered a "totally different gospel message."}

His message had nothing to do with consenting to a creed. He didn't introduce a new religion. Instead, he called for repentance within the religion that he was already in. (9, 26:37ff) {Again, Lancaster proclaims that FFOZ's version of the Gospel has nothing to do with what you believe about Jesus, is NOT a new religion, but only a reform movement that was intended to and must remain within Judaism.}

Going to heaven and escaping from hell, in other words, dealing with the world of souls, these are corollaries. They're related ideas. But not at all the focus, and never presented as the measure by which humanity can be divided into two categories, or that we could divide humanity into two categories, saved and unsaved. Wow! You know for somebody who grew up as an old Evangelical like me, that's a big shift. It's taken most of a lifetime for me to absorb the implications there, and I am still to this day trying to process it. I mean, it's another one of those complete reshuffling of the cards, right? The Jewish gospel as I just described it is far more nuanced and at the same time far more robust, far more sweeping than rescuing a few fortunate souls from the fires of perdition. But, if you're like me, and I'm assuming a lot of you are, coming from an evangelical background like me and accustomed to a simple formula message that divides the world into black-and-white, saved and lost, who is in and who is out, then this broader, deeper, wider message of the gospel actually leaves you feeling a little tongue-tied when it comes to evangelism and articulating the mission. (9, 30:13ff) {Here Lancaster fully develops the Straw Man version of the Gospel, one that only cares about souls and Heaven and has nothing to say about repentance and this life (Who is preaching this nonsense? Virtually nobody). By creating the deficient Straw Man, now Lancaster can reject the traditional Gospel in favor of what FFOZ intends to replace it with.}

I hope tonight to communicate clearly that the message that all of us have heard, the gospel message that all of us have heard, is not the message of the gospel of the kingdom. It's a gospel in fact devoid of the kingdom, a gospel that has in fact obscured the kingdom. (9, 8:27ff) {The Founder and President of FFOZ proclaiming that the Gospel message taught by the Church is NOT what God intended.}

We've seen something that most Christians haven't. Most followers of Yeshua have accepted him as their Savior, maybe as their Lord, but they have yet to see him as a humble rabbi from

Nazareth, a teacher of Judaism who upheld the Torah and the Jewish way of life. Missing these critical aspects of Yeshua's life and ministry doesn't just mean missing out on Shabbat or Passover. It means we are missing the very corner stone of his message, the gospel of the kingdom. In fact the biggest difference, the biggest tension between post-supersessionist Christianity and Christianity, mainstream Christianity, isn't what holidays we keep or the kind of food we eat. It's not the biggest difference. It's our understanding of what Yeshua ultimately came to teach and accomplish. The church's gospel, the church's interpretation of Yeshua's core message, has been incomplete for nearly 2000 years. (10, 8:27ff) {FFOZ believes they are the first ones in Church History to teach the "complete" Gospel, the hubris involved and the blanket condemnation of the entire Church is astounding.}

Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. It's a message to Israel and it's a message that doesn't make sense without Torah, without Judaism, without Jewish people, and without Jewish, like, identity. It's a promise of restored monarchy, restored Sanhedrin, restored nation of Israel. (10, 8:27ff) {A Gospel without obeying Torah, practicing Judaism, and adopting Jewish identity doesn't make any sense?? It is clear where FFOZ stands.}

Every house needs a firm foundation. The church has built its entire mission on an incomplete foundation on a partial gospel. This process began early, early, early when church theologians intentionally, intentionally stripped away the Jewish context of the New Testament. (10, 8:27ff) {According to FFOZ, the Early Church intentionally warped the Gospel message.}

The church today is floundering in the waves of cultural change with no Torah to guide them, no clear direction, and no concrete moral compass. Like shattered glass, thousands of denominations and independent churches fight each other over theology and practice because their core message is missing something. The gospel of the kingdom has been replaced with an oversimplified distortion of Yeshua's message. (10, 16:53ff) {Boaz blames a non-unified Church on a delinquent Gospel message.}

The same Christians who propagated this incomplete gospel also translated the Bible into languages all of us can understand. The whole world knows about the Messiah of Israel because of missionaries and their efforts. But they were only telling a small part of a much larger story. Perhaps HaShem has ordered that for a time, let's consider this. It's temporary. The gospel of the kingdom needed to be watered down. It needed to be simplified so that at least some part of Yeshua's message, his name, would travel as far as possible. And reach as many people as possible...But I believe that gospel and that time is coming to an end. I believe that the missionary efforts of the church have paved the way for the original gospel of the kingdom, repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. (10, 16:53ff) {Why did God allow the Church to "flounder" with a "watered down" Gospel for 2,000 years, and why were missionaries so successful in spreading it? Boaz thinks that it made evangelism easier, so God allowed it, but now the world is finally ready for the "real Gospel". FYI, God doesn't operate like this, how could this be the Church that Jesus promised was coming and the Spirit came at Pentecost to empower?}

This gospel that has gone forth is only a tiny sliver of an idea but yet it was able to spread like wildfire and drew billions of people into the church. But, without Torah, without Israel, without repentance, it's not the gospel of the kingdom. The whole world knows at this point, from my

perspective, the whole world has heard or seen, knows the name Jesus, perhaps even Yeshua. They know the classic formula for what it means to believe or to go to heaven. Everyone has heard it. But the work isn't finished. It's just beginning. (10, 19:10ff)

Bringing Yeshua's message to Gentiles is the whole purpose of the Torah Club. If you're a Torah Club leader or student you're part of this prophetic movement to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to all nations. Even if it's not happening at pulpits and churches or in theological textbooks or in alter calls, it's happening in your living room. Gentile Christians are finally discovering Yeshua's message (10, 33:19ff) {According to FFOZ, The Church is not bringing the message of Jesus to the world, only they are, for the first time, in this generation.}

I believe that there is a seed already planted by the gospel message that has been sent out, that is ready to be watered, ready to be nurtured so that it blossoms into the gospel of the kingdom. And as kingdom goes from something that looks dry and dead to something that is green, plush and beautiful. (10, 46:21ff) {The Gospel of the Church is "dry and dead", FFOZ believes they will bring forth something new to replace it.}

Don't think of this as a Bible study. Don't burden yourself with the idea that, "You're just, you know, each week..." You're proclaiming the kingdom. You're bringing Israel's redemption. What we are doing is so much bigger than a Bible study. (10, 50:01ff) {Just a Bible study? They don't think so.}

We teach that Jesus and his disciples were all Jewish, that their religion was Judaism, that Jesus did not cancel the law, Christians don't replace the Jewish people, and Yeshua and the Apostles didn't start a new religion to replace an old one. (11, p. 2) {They believe Christianity should never have existed, only Judaism is God's true plan.}

Because we are on a mission from God to transmit this good news unencumbered with the distractions that have beset it, the distractions of theology and supersessionism and misconstrued dogmatisms about eternal destinies. (12, 7:47ff) {The Gospel that the Church preaches needs to be stripped of its false dogmas according to FFOZ.}

Only a few proclaim an unencumbered gospel message like this. (12, 9:23ff) {FFOZ knows that their version of the Gospel represents only a tiny minority, that it is NOT the same as that of the Church.}

Too often the good news of the gospel has been presented as bad news, as you know. I mean, It's bad news for Israel, I tell you that. According to the bad news of the gospel, you know and I'm just gonna be a little facetious for a little bit, just forgive me because that's just the way I am. It's just part of my yetzer hara. But we need to harness the yetzer hara for the service of the kingdom. So that's what I'm doing. According to the bad news of the gospel that missionaries ordinarily offer to Israel, Jews who don't believe in Jesus, you know, suffer in hell for eternity. So that's a good opening line. Along with the vast majority of humanity, so at least they won't be lonely. But if you consent to believe in Jesus you can escape that fate in hell wherein, of course, almost all of Israel parishes but the only catch is you need to quit being Jewish because in Jesus there is no such thing as such thing as Jew and Gentile. I'm not kidding. I said I'm going to be a little facetious. But that is the message. That is the implicit message anyway that Jesus does

away with Judaism and Jewish identity. (12, 17:43ff) {Daniel Lancaster, writer of the Torah Clubs materials, speaks with disdain about the idea that believing in Jesus or not affects a person's eternal destiny.}

Likewise, the traditional message to the world doesn't sound like good news for the nations either. It sounds, you know, something like this. God created you to be a worthless sinner. From the moment you were conceived, God destined you to suffer in hell forever. And if you've ever broken a single commandment, well it doesn't really matter because Adam did for you, but you've broken them all and of course you know "all have sinned and fallen short" of his impossibly high expectations and the wages of that is eternal torment along with the Jews. So, therefore, you're consigned under God's eternal wrath unless you consent to a certain set of theological propositions according to one side of the church or to a specific sacramental series of rituals according to the other side of the church. (12. 19:25ff) {Utilizing a poor Straw Man presentation of the Gospel, Lancaster again mocks the traditional message of the Gospel as "bad news."}

OK, I'm done being facetious now. And again, I apologize. I'm just trying to make a point. When you put it like that the Gospel does, you know, it sounds pretty bleak. And it sounds a little absurd. That's not good news for anyone. That would be bad news. And that particular formulation of the message probably did work pretty well in the Middle Ages when you could frighten people with dogmas that dangle them over hell only inches above, you know, a host of horn demons with pitchforks. It might have sold well in the Reformation when people were willing to except anything that could liberate them from the authority of Rome. But it just does not have a lot of traction with the average thinking person today. Who wants a religion like that? Who needs it? (12, 20:31ff) {While the traditional Gospel could be sold to the less educated people of the Middle Ages and Reformation eras, according to FFOZ, thinking people today want no part of it. The disdain for, and mockery of, the Gospel as it has been believed since the Apostles is very thick.}

Now, again, I'm not just trying to be controversial or irreverent. I'm just explaining to you why we need to reassess this. Why we at First Fruits of Zion and in Messianic Judaism, why we are putting the time and the effort into recovering the original good news message proclaimed by Yeshua and the Apostles. And this is why we need to understand the Gospels from a Jewish perspective (12, 21:34ff) {FFOZ is leading a conscious 'reassessment' of the Gospel, replacing it with what they claim to be the original version.}

Outside of the Jewish context really, when you strip it back, doesn't really make a lot of sense. It comes out convoluted. It comes out sideways like this which is—and it comes out in a way that really repels people rather than drawing them near to the kingdom and nearer to God. It's rather than a message about God's love for Israel and his love for all of humanity. Even though that's what we say it comes out—it sounds—when you really read between the lines of what we're saying it sounds an awful lot like a message about God's hatred for Israel and for human beings in general. And so, we've got something wrong here. (12, 21:34ff) {In Daniel Lancaster opinion, the traditional Gospel is the message of God's hatred for Israel and humanity. This statement is beyond bold, it is deeply heretical, but also honest in that it reveals that FFOZ has no use for the Gospel of our ancestors in the faith.}

And when we clear the debris and uncover the truth, I don't think it's gonna take a lot of effort to sell the Good News, because it really is good news. But it does take a lot of effort to clear away the obstacles that are obscuring it. (12, 24:21ff) {The Gospel, as it is, is unacceptable to them.}

14. That Hebrew is a 'holy tongue', a more fitting language for worship than any other.

Examples

Why do you pray in Hebrew?

Hebrew connects us with the wider Jewish people and other synagogues throughout the world. It creates continuity that stretches back to the Temple in the days of the apostles. In the Messianic Era, the whole world will speak Hebrew (Zephaniah 3:9). Hebrew is considered to be the Holy Tongue, since it is the language that God used to speak the world into existence, and to speak the words of the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai. However, the majority of people attending Beth Immanuel don't know Hebrew. For this reason the cantor leads in both Hebrew and English, and all Hebrew has an English translation. We encourage people to learn Hebrew to increase their understanding of the Scriptures, and to pass this understanding along to the next generation. – (1, p. 4)

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