



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

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# MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP

## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### SESSION 1: A Look at the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Church

When we look back to the early church as recorded in the book of Acts, most of us get inspired by the growth of the church and their fruitfulness.

In that book we see a church whose members:

- loved one another.
- took care of widows and orphans,
- fed the hungry
- transformed cities.
- taught the Bible and built believers to maturity.
- saw the power of God heal the sick, raise the dead and cast out demons.
- won the lost with amazing effectiveness.
- disciplined new converts and equipped them for ministry.
- were effective in various cultures and ethnic groups and the church grew with explosive power wherever it was planted.

***Acts 2:42-47*** <sup>42</sup>*And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.* <sup>43</sup>*And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.* <sup>44</sup>*And all who believed were together and had all things in common.* <sup>45</sup>*And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.* <sup>46</sup>*And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts,* <sup>47</sup>*praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

**What 4 things did the early Church devote themselves to in Acts 2:42?**  
**They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching; to the fellowship; to the breaking of bread together; to prayer**

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In Acts 2:43 what do the Scriptures tell us was happening as the people were together? **Awe came upon every soul as many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.**

How did the first believers live and view their personal property? **All who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.**

What does this show us about their faith? **Their faith was in God to provide for their needs and they demonstrated this by operating in a spirit of generosity vs. selfishness.**

What two things did the early church do daily? **(verse 46) Attended the temple together and broke bread in their homes,**

We see from this passage of scripture that there was something going on in the hearts of the people. What was it? **They ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart. (2 Cor. 11:2-3)**

What was the result of their heart attitudes? **They continually praised God and had favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to them those who were being saved.**



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This church was made up of real people with real problems, yet they lived in continual revival lasting hundreds of years, and spanning generations.

What can we learn from these people? Well first let's look at who they were.

This church was a Messianic Church. They were mostly Messianic Jews, Jewish People who had come to faith in Jesus, Yeshua\* as Lord and Savior.

- They quoted a Jewish Bible, followed the Jewish Messiah, and worshipped the God of Israel.
- Most of the leaders were Messianic Jews.
- Their values, lifestyle, and worldview were heavily influenced by the Jewish teachings of their day.
- For the first 400 years of church history most Gentile Christians joined their Jewish believing brothers and sisters in celebrating the biblical feasts.
- They observed Saturday as the Sabbath.
- And they worshipped together on the first day of the week (now known as Sunday) to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.
- They were closely linked with the Jewish community.

\*Yeshua is Jesus' Hebrew name and actually means "God is salvation."



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What would a typical church service look like back then?

- The Jewish day starts at sunset and Saturday, the Shabbat (Sabbath) is the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week.
- We'll talk more about that in a future session.
- The early Church would typically gather every Saturday night at a home to celebrate the resurrection of their Messiah.
- Sunday is the first day of the week in Israel and most people work that day.
- Saturday night is seen as the beginning of that first day, so that's why the believers gathered that night.
- The weekly gatherings would be in homes and the courtyards surrounding the homes.
- The people would be singing, clapping and dancing as they rejoiced before the Lord.
- As the songs slowed down many people would get down on their knees in worship before the Lord.
- Most would be lifting up hands to God as His presence entered the place where they were worshiping their King.
- After much singing and circle dancing, food would be brought out.
- The meal would be a joyful time centered on devotion to the Lord.
- As they ate, the believers would talk about the things of God, share testimonies, recite and discuss Scripture and sing praises to the Lord.
- After the meal ended the worship would continue.
- At some point there would be a tangible change in the atmosphere where the presence of the Lord would manifest.
- Some of the people would fall to the ground in worship.
- Others would stop and be silent, welcoming the Lord's Presence.



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Ministry would begin to take place as the gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12) would move throughout the group of people.

***<sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup>and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup>and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. <sup>7</sup>To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. <sup>8</sup>For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.***

Through it all they would continue to move in and out of worship.

It was during these times of ministry that much of the evangelism in the church took place.

As the miraculous power of God worked in the midst of His people – people would get saved.

Prophetic words, tongues and miracles of healing were common in the church.

The church meetings would run late into the night, but the people didn't mind.

It wasn't like today where people are constantly looking at their watches if the service goes longer than one hour.

When the meetings did begin to break up it was because the sense of the Spirit's presence began to lift. The people would leave to go home, but some small groups would stay gathered in prayer.

As the people prepared to leave, there was a great deal of hugging and kissing.

This is a picture of the weekly family reunion of the family of God.

This is how the church met for over 300 years!



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**Most Christians think that the apostles rejected Judaism. No, that never happened.**

- The 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians observed the weekly Sabbath and the Feasts of the Lord.
- They took part in Jewish rituals and worship in the temple and synagogues.
- The apostle Paul never spoke of his Judaism in the past tense.
- He actually planned the itinerary of his missionary journeys around the biblical feasts.
- To the early church, biblical\* Judaism was the root through which its life was nourished.
- They were not anti-semitic. They loved and honored their culture.
- The church understood that the Jewish heritage was the God given heritage through which they received vital keys to power and growth.
- Jewish Believers (the early Christians) were grieved that many Jews rejected their Messiah, but they rejoiced in the extravagant inheritance God had provided through their Jewish roots.
- For 300 years the church followed a very Jewish pattern of worship.
- Jesus never came to create a new religion (Christianity). He came and lived as Jew, fulfilling the biblical laws of God perfectly for all to see and proving that He was indeed the Messiah of Israel.

**Scriptures for reflection over the next week:**

**Jeremiah 31:31-37**

**Matthew 15:21-24**

\*Much of what we see and know as Judaism today is more rabbinic than biblical. In other words it's become a religion of tradition that's been created by rabbis (teachers) vs. adherence to God's instructions and teachings found in the Scriptures.



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### SESSION 2: The Removal of the Jewish Roots

#### **For Groups:**

#### **Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### **Review of Session 1:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Century church was a Messianic Church. They were mostly Messianic Jews, Jewish People who had come to faith in Jesus, Yeshua as Lord and Savior.

- They quoted a Jewish Bible, followed the Jewish Messiah, and worshipped the God of Israel.
- Most of the leaders were Messianic Jews.
- Their values, lifestyle, and worldview were heavily influenced by Judaism.
- For the first 400 years of church history most Gentile Christians joined their Jewish believing brothers and sisters in celebrating the biblical feasts.
- They observed Saturday as the Sabbath.
- And they worshipped together on the first day of the week (now known as Sunday) to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.
- They were closely linked with the Jewish community.

#### **The effects of Constantine**

In the 4<sup>th</sup> century a pagan Roman emperor Constantine caused the Jewish roots of the church to be removed. Cut off from its life giving roots the early church died.

Some of the changes that he made included the following:

1. House churches were outlawed and followers of Christ a.k.a. "Christians" were only permitted to hold church in the Catholic Church buildings.

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2. Constantine dictated the type of worship that was offered to God – the Spirit led and intimate worship of the house churches was outlawed. In its place rituals originally developed for pagan emperor worship were imported into the church. Worship services became solemn public ceremonies with fixed written forms of worship with burning of incense and carrying of candles.
3. Constantine attempted to purge the church of its Jewish elements beginning with the Council of Nicea (AD 325) because of his hatred of the Jews. In a letter to the bishops following the council, he declared that it was improper for the church to follow the customs of the Jews. Those who followed Jewish practice were marked anathema (cut off or accursed) which eventually evolved into a crime against the state, punishable by death.
4. Constantine not only divorced the church from Judaism, he married the church to paganism. In 321 he decreed that the Christian day of worship was a Roman holiday and called it the “venerable day of the Sun.” That’s where the name Sunday came from. This was named after a pagan sun god.

### **By the year 500 almost nothing of the early church remained.**

During the dark ages (5th to 15th centuries AD) the church became a corrupt political organization. Starting with the Protestant Reformation (1517) God began a process of restoration.

When Constantine cut the church off from her Jewish roots it involved much more than losing the celebration of a different set of holidays. It meant the loss of the biblical worldview and value-system that God had built into the people of Israel.

It brought to the church a completely different way of looking at God, the Bible and Christian life.



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

**There were four main areas of loss that the church experienced from being cut off from her Jewish roots.**

**1. There was the loss of the Hebraic attitude of reverence and awe toward God.**

To the Jewish People God was treated with great respect. God was not a subject for analysis. He was the object of loving worship, service and obedience.

The Greek mentality deified human intellect above God. Their goal was to “figure out” God logically because they believed that if you could understand something, you could control it.

The Church embraced this intellectual Greek preoccupation to analyze God. This led to many centuries of unproductive theological debate.

**2. There was the loss of the reverence for the Scriptures.**

Although many secular Jews today do not know the Scriptures it hasn't always been that way for the Jewish People. The Jewish People have throughout history had an incredible reverence for the Scriptures.

As the church lost touch with its Hebrew heritage this reverence for the Word was lost. In its place the church developed an attitude toward Scripture more in keeping with the Greek worldview.

This view was that the average Christian didn't need to know the Bible and the serious study of the Word was reserved for professionals, the clergy.



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### **3. Another area lost was the Jewish emphasis of the home.**

In the Jewish mentality the primary place for spiritual development and discipleship was in the home.

Because of the Jewish tradition of family worship it was normal for almost any believer to feel comfortable leading in prayer, worship and the discussion of God's Word.

This provided the early church with a large pool of potential leaders.

When 3000 people were added to the church in Acts 2 most of these men and women came into the church already accustomed to walking in spiritual leadership in a "home group" setting.

The early church could grow rapidly because it was made up of thousands of men and women whose level of experience and biblical knowledge would surpass many seminary graduates today.

The weekly Jewish Sabbath celebration provided a pattern for the development of early Christian house churches.

On Friday evening each Jewish extended family gathered in a home for a meal to celebrate God's creation and welcome His provision of rest.

On the following evening the Messianic spiritual family (the house church) gathered weekly for a meal to celebrate God's redemption and welcome His Holy Spirit.

These celebrations served as a training ground for early church leaders.

As men and women learned to lead their family in worship on the Sabbath, they gained the spiritual skills necessary to lead a house church into the Presence of God.

As long as the church retained this Jewish heritage, it continued to grow and prosper with incredible speed.

When the legacy was removed it lost the power to fulfill its mission.



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### **4. Another area lost was the Hebraic attitude to life.**

The Jews view all of life as a gracious gift from God and teach that God desires His children to enjoy His blessings. It is not more spiritual to be joyless.

In the biblical calendar there are days for fasting and repentance, but there are also days for feasting and being extravagant – and for enjoying every blessing God has given.

When stoic philosophy and Greek asceticism were merged with biblical teaching the result was a joyless Christianity where poverty and suffering were seen as virtues. This is one of the primary things that has kept non-believers from coming to Jesus. They perceive the church as a joyless, judgmental, legalistic group of people.

**Although the first Church was a sect of Judaism, when Constantine divorced the Church from her Jewish roots he changed the face of Christianity and the Jewish Messiah.**

A new religion was established that was friendly to the masses but hostile to Jesus' own people. Hatred and anti-semitism born of serious doctrinal error began to be taught in the Church.

Jesus was stripped of His Jewish heritage and this de-Judaizing of the Savior and the Gospel built a wall between the Jews and Christianity for nearly 2000 years.

However, as the hands of God's prophetic time clock moved forward some amazing events announced the beginning of restoration in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We'll talk more about those in future lessons.

### **Scriptures for Reflection:**

**Matthew 23:1-3**

**Matthew 5:17-19**



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### SESSION 3: God's Designs and Plans for the Church

#### **For Groups:**

#### **Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### **Review of Session 2:**

In the 4<sup>th</sup> century a pagan Roman emperor Constantine caused the Jewish roots of the church to be removed. Cut off from its life giving roots the early church died.

There were four main areas of loss that the church experienced from being cut off from her Jewish roots.

- There was the loss of the Hebraic attitude of reverence and awe toward God.
- There was also the loss of the reverence for the Scriptures.
- Another area lost was the Jewish emphasis of the home.
- Another area lost was the Hebraic attitude to life.
- Jesus was stripped of His Jewish heritage and this de-Judaizing of the Savior and the Gospel built a wall between the Jews and Christianity for nearly 2000 years.

However, as the hands of God's prophetic time clock moved forward some amazing events announced the beginning of restoration in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

First the rebirth of the State of Israel; and then with the reunification of Jerusalem came an outpouring of the Spirit upon Jewish People, reuniting them once again with their Messiah in numbers not seen since events recorded in the book of Acts.

God began to restore the Church in its original design.



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In Messiah, God created “one new man” made of Jews and Gentiles who had both been reconciled to God through the cross.

### **Ephesians 2 & Romans 11**

#### **Ephesians 2:11-16**

***<sup>11</sup> Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands— <sup>12</sup> remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.***

Let's look at another Scripture that illustrates God's plan for the church:

### **Romans 11:11-24**

***11 I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. 12 Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! 13 But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. 15 For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too. 17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." 20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; 21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. 22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. 23 And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?***

It was never God's plan that the Church be made up of only Gentiles, and the Jews be excluded.



## **Jewish Roots of Christianity**

In fact, as we've seen, it was the loss of the Jewish Roots of the Christian faith that caused the church to lose vital keys to her power and growth.

But today is a new day. God is bringing Jewish people back into the Church and God is revealing the truth of His whole Word to the Church.

In the upcoming sessions we're going to look at the Jewish traditions surrounding the weekly Sabbath and the Feasts of the Lord. These were a big part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Church's life.

We're going to see that in the Old Testament God painted some very prophetic pictures regarding Jesus and what was going to be accomplished in the New Testament.

By learning this we're going to uncover some keys to the power and vitality that the early Church had.

Are you ready for that?

And guess what else?

This isn't only about the value of the restoration of the Jewish Roots to the Christian faith. Yes it's about that, but it's also about the restoration of all things.

We're going to learn that by the Jewish people being restored into the Body of Christ and with all members of the Church understanding their Jewish roots, we are seeing an unfolding of God's plan to usher in the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of the Messiah, and world-wide revival.

### **Scriptures for reflection:**

**Ephesians 2:11-16**

**Romans 11:11-24**



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### SESSION 4: Understanding Shabbat – The Sabbath

#### **For Groups:**

#### **Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### **Review of Session 2:**

In past sessions we talked about the Acts 2 church being a group of Believers that lived in continual revival, lasting hundreds of years, and spanning generations.

We talked about the church being made up of predominantly Messianic Jews.

They kept the Jewish traditions and Old Testament celebrations with a New Testament understanding that came from knowing Jesus/Yeshua as the Messiah and Savior who they'd been waiting for, for thousands of years.

We then talked about the pagan Roman Emperor, Constantine purging the church of all of its Jewish elements and heritage, beginning with the Council of Nicea (AD 325.)

We saw that because of his hatred of the Jews, the healthy and vibrant early church disappeared by the year 500.

A miracle happened in 1948. In Isaiah 66:8 a prophetic question is recorded when the prophet asks ***“Can a nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons?”***

This accurately describes what happened on May 14, 1948 – when after the horrors of the holocaust the Jews declared independence for Israel as a united and sovereign nation for the first time in 2,900 years. During that same day, the United States issued a statement recognizing Israel's sovereignty. And, only hours beforehand, a United Nations mandate expired, ending British control of the land. During a 24-hour span of time, foreign control of the land of Israel had formally ceased, and Israel had declared its independence, and its independence was acknowledged by other nations. Modern Israel was literally was born in a single day.



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Then in 1967 Jerusalem came under the control of the Jewish People and God began to pour out His Spirit on Jewish People around the world.

Jews began to come to faith in Jesus as their Messiah, and as a result a restoration began in the Church.

God's plans regarding the "one new man" – Jew and Gentile working together in the body of Christ began to once again be put into motion.

The once predominantly Gentile Church began to awaken to her Jewish roots.

This has reactivated life giving power.

Seeking out a fuller understanding of the Word of God through the Jewish/Hebraic lens, the Body of Christ has begun to have greater intimacy with Jesus, and a deeper understanding of the plans that God has for the Church.

**The starting place for understanding the biblical worldview and value-system that God gave the children of Israel are the cycles of worship that God instituted in the Old Testament, known as the Feasts of the Lord.**

We're going to look at them now.

We're not learning about these feasts because understanding them is going to make us more holy or righteous in God's sight. Our righteousness comes from Christ alone.

What understanding the Feasts does do is give us a greater appreciation and understanding of Christ.

**Colossians 2: 16 Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.**

**The Feasts of the Lord are found in Leviticus 23.**

The Feasts occur in cycles that are both weekly and annual cycles.



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**Leviticus 23:1-2** *<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts.*

Convocation: a large formal assembly; Appointed: To fix or set by authority

These are not the Feasts of Israel.

They're the Lord's feasts.

***<sup>3</sup> "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwelling places.***

Each week on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week God prescribed a day of rest. This day was to be considered holy by the children of Israel.

The Sabbath (or Shabbat, as it is called in Hebrew) is one of the best known and least understood of all Jewish observances.

People who do not observe Shabbat think of it as a day filled with restrictions, or as a day where all you can do is pray.

To those who observe Shabbat it is a precious gift from God; a day of great joy eagerly awaited throughout the whole week.

It's a time that we can set aside all of our weekday concerns and devote ourselves to fellowship with friends and family, and to God.

In Jewish literature, poetry and music, Shabbat is described as a bride or queen.

It is something that is treasured and desired.

It is said.... "more than Israel has kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept Israel."



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Shabbat is the most important ritual observance in Judaism. It is the only ritual observance instituted in the Ten Commandments.

### Exodus 20:8-11

***<sup>8</sup> “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.***

Shabbat is primarily a day of rest and spiritual enrichment.

The word "Shabbat" means to cease, to end, or to rest. In modern America, we take the five-day work-week for granted. What a radical concept a day of rest was in ancient times. The weekly day of rest had no parallel in any other ancient civilization. In ancient times leisure was for the wealthy and the ruling classes only, never for the serving or laboring classes. In addition, the very idea of rest each week was unimaginable. The Greeks thought Jews were lazy because they insisted on having a "holiday" every seventh day. In today's busy "workaholic" world the concept of rest is foreign to most people. People are busy running here and there. They don't realize that rest is extremely important for physical and emotional health. Unhealthy work patterns have caused families to be destroyed, and for people to burn out.

But God gave the Sabbath to Israel as a gift.

It is weekly gift that the people are given to help them realign with their families and with their Creator.

One of the reasons that the early Church was healthy and strong was because they celebrated the Shabbat.

They didn't celebrate it out of religious obligation or a legalistic mindset – but out of a desire to want to reconnect with each other, and with God.



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Jesus alluded to the benefits of the Shabbat in **Mark 2:27** *“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”*

In Judaism, Shabbat involves two commandments: to remember (*zachor*) the Sabbath, and to observe (*shamor*) the Sabbath.

We are commanded to remember Shabbat; but remembering means much more than merely not forgetting to observe Shabbat. Remembering means to remember the significance of Shabbat, a commemoration of creation, and our freedom from slavery in Egypt.

The Sabbath, like all other Jewish days, begins at sunset, because in the story of creation in Genesis Ch. 1, it says, "And there was evening, and there was morning, one day."

From this, we infer that a day begins with evening, that is, at sunset.

On Friday night at sundown Shabbat candles are lit and a blessing is recited. This ritual, performed by the woman of the house, officially marks the beginning of the Sabbath. Two candles are lit, representing the two commandments: *zachor* and *shamor*.

Each of the feasts of the Lord are prophetic pictures of Jesus’/Yeshua’s “redemptive career” as Messiah.

It’s interesting that it’s the woman who lights the lights of the Shabbat. It’s actually a very prophetic act that happens in Jewish homes each week. It’s a testimony to the fact that it was a woman who was chosen by God to birth the “light of the world” 2000 years ago, when Jesus was born.

Also prophetically, some say the six days of creation parallel the six millenniums of this world. It is believed that the Shabbat is a prophetic picture of the Millennium when Yeshua/Jesus will reign for a thousand years.

The Shabbat is a beautiful day of celebration of the family, and of God. On Shabbat it’s traditional for the husband to bless his wife and children.

Sadly, many Christians have been taught that God doesn’t want the Church to

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celebrate the Shabbat, or any of the Feasts of the Lord.

That belief is the result of the anti-semitic decrees of Constantine in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Jesus says something very different in **Matthew 5:17-19**

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

The early Church was great in fruitfulness because they embraced the totality of God's Word.

***2 Tim. 3:14 14But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.***

Other Scriptures that talk about the blessings resulting from keeping the Sabbath are found in Isaiah 56:1-8 and 58:13-14.

It's important to remember that there is freedom with regard to the keeping the Feasts.

We must guard against the dangers of falling into legalism, or the influences of a religious spirit, with regard to our adherence to any of the Feasts of the Lord. We are under a New Covenant now.

To protect us from that, it's essential as the New Testament Church, that we're led by God's Holy Spirit in our practice and adherence to God's Word.

# **MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP**

## **Jewish Roots of Christianity**

**John 4:23 <sup>23</sup> *But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.***

### **Scriptures for Reflection:**

**Leviticus 23: 1-3**

**Exodus 20:8-11**

**Isaiah 56:1-8**

**Isaiah 58:13-14**



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### SESSION 5: The Spring Feasts of the Lord

#### **For Groups:**

**Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### **Review of Session 4:**

The Feasts of the Lord are found in Leviticus 23.

The Feasts occur in cycles that are both weekly and annual cycles.

**Leviticus 23:1-2** *<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts.*

We're not learning about these feasts because understanding them is going to make us more holy or righteous in God's sight. Our righteousness comes from Christ alone. What understanding the Feasts does do is give us a greater appreciation and understanding of Christ. (Colossians 2: 16)

The Sabbath is the first feast and occurs weekly.

The next seven feasts found in Leviticus 23 are divided into 2 sections. The first four happen in the spring and then three in the fall.

**God proclaims that the biblical year begins in the spring and the spring feasts prophecy Jesus' 1<sup>st</sup> coming to earth 2000 years ago.**

**The fall feasts prophecy His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.**

When you see the prophetic pictures that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob put in His feasts it will help you understand His sovereignty.

It will also help you share about Jesus/Yeshua being the Messiah of Israel when you're talking to Jewish People.

Let's take a look at the four Spring Feasts of the Lord.



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### The Passover

***Leviticus 23:4-8*** <sup>4</sup> "These are the appointed feasts of the LORD, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. <sup>5</sup> In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight, is the LORD's Passover. <sup>6</sup> And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. <sup>7</sup> On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. <sup>8</sup> But you shall present a food offering to the LORD for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work."

The first two feasts are intertwined. They are the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The Passover is the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan (the 1<sup>st</sup> month) at twilight.

Each of the Feast looks back; looks forward and has an application to life here and now!

The Passover looks back to the story found in Exodus 12:1-14

It's the story of the death of the first born in Egypt when the children of Israel were slaves in Egypt.

It's the story of deliverance from slavery.

The Passover celebration memorializes Israel's protection from the death angel in Egypt, when they put the blood of the spotless lambs on the doorposts of their homes.

Prophetically the Passover celebration looks forward to the crucifixion of Christ and the shedding of the Messiah's blood, as atonement for sin. (Leviticus 17:11)

# **MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP**

## **Jewish Roots of Christianity**

Yeshua/Jesus was the Lamb of God who delivered us from the slavery of sin.

When we spiritually apply His blood to the doorposts of our hearts, we are protected from eternal death and we are set free from slavery and redeemed back to God.

In Luke 22 we read about the last supper, which was actually a Passover celebration.

Jesus proclaimed that His blood, which would be poured out, would usher in the new covenant that would have the power of redemption.

What an amazing thing God has done through the shed blood of our Messiah!

Each year at Passover, at the Lord's command, we remember the sorrow of His suffering and the beauty of His redemption.

By celebrating the Feasts of the Lord we're obedient to God's Word and we remember.

All throughout scripture God commands us to remember.

He knows that there's power in remembering.

Each year at Passover, in the Spring, God's Feast of Passover leads us to remember Christ, the crucifixion and the resulting redemption.

Remembering God and the things He has done, is how God has caused the children of Israel to survive time, when all the other people groups from biblical history have perished.

Remembering is powerful for our lives as believers too.

We need to remember our own personal "Egypt" that God has delivered us from.

# MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP

## Jewish Roots of Christianity

God delivers all of us from slavery.

There's a tremendous blessing when we align our thoughts and our worship with God's Word and we remember what He has done for us during His appointed Feasts.

Imagine our Creator and Deliverer saying *"I want you to remember what I've done for you on this particular date. I'm going to meet with you then and by the power of My Spirit I'm going to make My Word come even more alive to you."*

That's what celebrating the Feasts of the Lord is all about.

Doing so stirs up our faith and gives us courage to move forward with the Lord when we may be facing difficult times.

As a general application to our lives, the Passover reminds us to have thankful hearts because we've been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God.

Every day we need to make it our goal to share about the blood of Jesus with others so that their lives can be redeemed, and they can be set free from sin.

The holiday intertwined with Passover is the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

It starts on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the Hebrew month of Nisan and continues for seven days.

During that time God instructs us to eat nothing with leaven in it.

Leaven is yeast and in the Bible leaven is a symbol for sin.

# MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP

## Jewish Roots of Christianity

**Unleavened Bread**, *Hag-Matzot* (Exodus 12:15-20, Leviticus 23:6-8)

15-21 Nisan

Represents holy walk **1 Corinthians 5:8: *Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.***

Memorializes: God's deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt to be a people who are set apart, and holy to Him.

Prophecies: that Messiah would be sinless when he died and was buried. He has set us free from slavery and His Spirit helps us live holy lives.

Life Application: We're to examine our lives daily to see if there is any sin that we're in bondage to. We can be confident that God's Holy Spirit can bring total deliverance to our lives if we're humble and repentant.

### The Feast of Firstfruits

**Leviticus 23:9-14** <sup>9</sup>*And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>10</sup>"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest to the priest, <sup>11</sup>and he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, so that you may be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. <sup>12</sup>And on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb a year old without blemish as a burnt offering to the LORD. <sup>13</sup> And the grain offering with it shall be two tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, a food offering to the LORD with a pleasing aroma, and the drink offering with it shall be of wine, a fourth of a hin. <sup>14</sup>And you shall eat neither bread nor grain parched or fresh until this same day, until you have brought the offering of your God: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.*

# MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP

## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### 1. **Firstfruits, Bikkurim** (Leviticus 23:9-14)

Celebrated the day after Unleavened Bread

Crossing of the Red Sea, Jesus' resurrection

Represents resurrection **1 Corinthians 15:22-23: *For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.***

Memorializes: The harvest that the Lord provided in the land He gave to the children of Israel

Prophecies: the resurrection; first of Messiah and then the resurrection of those who are part of the Kingdom harvest of souls who are God's, and will be resurrected at Messiah's second coming.

Life Application: Everything we have belongs to the Lord; to honor him it's important that we seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness; and that we remember that everything of any value in our lives comes as a result of the Holy Lamb who gave His life for us. To honor God and the sacrifice He made we bring the first fruits of our money, our time, and our talents to Him; We need to actively pursue reaping a harvest of fruit in our lives, both spiritually through our walking in the fruit of the spirit and via souls we bring into the Kingdom through the use of the talents God has given us.

### The Feast of Weeks

**Leviticus 23:15-22** <sup>15</sup>*"You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering.* <sup>16</sup>*You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall present a grain offering of new grain to the LORD.* <sup>17</sup>*You shall bring from your dwelling places two loaves of bread to be waved, made of two tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour, and they shall be baked with leaven, as first-fruits to the LORD.* <sup>18</sup>*And you shall present with the bread seven lambs a year old without blemish, and one bull from the herd and two rams. They shall be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain*

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## Jewish Roots of Christianity

*offering and their drink offerings, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. <sup>19</sup>And you shall offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old as a sacrifice of peace offerings. <sup>20</sup>And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. <sup>21</sup>And you shall make proclamation on the same day. You shall hold a holy convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work. It is a statute forever in all your dwelling places throughout your generations. <sup>22</sup>"And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God."*

2. **Feast of Weeks, Pentecost, Shavout** (Leviticus 23:15-22)  
7 x 7 + 1 (50 days) after First-fruits

Memorializes: The giving of the law and the entering into covenant of the children of Israel with God. Law (Torah) given at Sinai; Holy Spirit given after Messiah's resurrection.

**Acts 2:1-4:** *When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.*

Prophecies: The giving of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church – Jew & Gentile grafted together into the family of God.



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### Life Application:

It's our responsibility as disciples of Messiah to have a balanced view and application of the Word and the Spirit in our lives. Sadly, there has been a "silent divorce" in the modern day Church between the two. God has united Jew and Gentile through the sacrifice of His Son (see Ephesians 2) into one new man (the Body of Messiah). It's also important that we now recognize this and play the role God intends for us to help all believers mature in the ways and plans of God; and to work together so that unbelievers to come to know God.

### **Scriptures for Reflection:**

**Lev. 23:1-22**



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### SESSION 6: The Fall Feasts of the Lord

#### For Groups:

**Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### Review of Session 5:

The Spring Feasts of the Lord are found in Leviticus 23:1-22.

They prophecy different aspects of Messiah's first coming, namely, the crucifixion; resurrection and the birth of the Church/Body of Messiah made up of believers and followers (disciples) of Christ.

Remember these are not referred to as the Feasts of Israel in the Scriptures. They are called the Feasts of the Lord.

#### Fall Feasts of the Lord

Each feast looks back; looks forward, and has an application to life here and now!

**Yom Teruah - Feast of Trumpets, Rosh Hashanah**

**Lev. 23:23-25** <sup>23</sup> *Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,* <sup>24</sup> *"Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.* <sup>25</sup> *You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD."*

1 Tishri (7<sup>th</sup> month)

Regathering of Israel, Rapture

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## Jewish Roots of Christianity

**Matt. 24:29-31:** *“Immediately after the distress of those days” ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.*

Memorializes: In the Jewish religion the rabbis teach that Yom Teruah (Feast of Trumpets) memorializes the creation of the world. They have renamed this holy day Rosh HaShanah, or “head of the year.” It begins the secular new year for the Jewish People, while the Word of God specifies the month of Nisan as the first month. The Spring Feasts of the Lord begin in the 1<sup>st</sup> month on God’s biblical calendar.

Yom Teruah a.k.a. Rosh HaShanah begins the “Days of Awe” – 10 days of introspection and repentance that take place between the first and second of the Fall Feasts of the Lord. Some say Jesus’ earthly ministry began during this time. “Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand.” (Matt.3:2)

Prophecies: This day prophesies, or looks forward to the return of Messiah to the earth, the re-gathering of God’s people, and the Rapture.

Life Application: We’re to live expectant of the Lord’s return. We’re to be alert and with humility be listening for the Holy Spirit’s gentle voice calling us to repentance in areas of our lives that are displeasing to the Lord. We’re to constantly seek to lead others to Messiah and help them understand that there will be a Day of Judgment. God’s mercies are new every morning for those who call upon the Name of Yeshua/Jesus, the Messiah, for salvation. Repentance must be a life style for all believers in the Lord.

# MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP

## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur

**Leviticus 23:26-32** <sup>26</sup>And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>27</sup>"Now on the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and you shall afflict yourselves and present a food offering to the LORD. <sup>28</sup>And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. <sup>29</sup>For whoever is not afflicted on that very day shall be cut off from his people. <sup>30</sup>And whoever does any work on that very day, that person I will destroy from among his people. <sup>31</sup>You shall not do any work. It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. <sup>32</sup>It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict yourselves. On the ninth day of the month beginning at evening, from evening to evening shall you keep your Sabbath."

10 Tishri- 7<sup>th</sup> month (9<sup>th</sup> day evening to 10<sup>th</sup> day evening)  
Atonement for Israel, Tribulation

**Memorializes:** Judaism is a religion of atonement. God set up the Temple and the sacrificial system out of His grace, because He wanted the people to have a way to be cleansed from their sin. The Day of Atonement is the most sacred day of the year and through it God speaks to the Jewish person of his dire need to be in right standing with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jesus was declared by John to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. (John 1:29) In God's sight atonement is only accomplished through a blood sacrifice (Lev. 17:11) Jesus paid the final price with His blood for the atonement of the Jewish People, and for all nations.

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Prophecies: The prophetic pictures found in the Day of Atonement point to the atoning blood of Jesus as being a covering for our sins, and the amazing fact that His sacrifice is what allows us to walk in right standing with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This most holy day also points to that great and fearful Day of Judgment. A holy and somber day when all souls will stand before God and be judged.

Life Application: In the average Jewish person's life repentance might very well be heartfelt during the days of awe, and they might experience a false assurance that their sins have been atoned for by their attendance at the annual Yom Kippur synagogue services; however, sin will no doubt creep back into their lives quickly after the holy days are over and the process will have to be repeated year after year after year, proving the ineffectiveness of the rituals associated with the day of atonement. As believers in Yeshua we must live each day in absolute thanksgiving and gratitude for the indwelling Holy Spirit and the power of the blood of Yeshua/Jesus to cleanse and deliver us from sin and eternal damnation. We must be quick to share the good news of the power of Messiah's sacrifice with all we meet – Jew and Gentile alike.

**Hebrews 10:1-10** *For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. <sup>2</sup> Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? <sup>3</sup> But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. <sup>5</sup> Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME; <sup>6</sup> IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE. <sup>7</sup> "THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS*

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## Jewish Roots of Christianity

**WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.”<sup>8</sup> After saying above, “SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them” (which are offered according to the Law),<sup>9</sup> then He said, “BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second.<sup>10</sup> By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

### **Feast of Booths/Tabernacles, Sukkot**

**Leviticus 23:33-43<sup>33</sup>And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,<sup>34</sup>“Speak to the people of Israel, saying, On the fifteenth day of this seventh month and for seven days is the Feast of Booths to the LORD.<sup>35</sup>On the first day shall be a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work.<sup>36</sup>For seven days you shall present food offerings to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall hold a holy convocation and present a food offering to the LORD. It is a solemn assembly; you shall not do any ordinary work.<sup>37</sup>“These are the appointed feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim as times of holy convocation, for presenting to the LORD food offerings, burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each on its proper day,<sup>38</sup> besides the LORD’s Sabbaths and besides your gifts and besides all your vow offerings and besides all your freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD.<sup>39</sup>“On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD seven days. On the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest.<sup>40</sup>And you shall take on the first day the fruit of splendid trees, branches of palm trees and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.<sup>41</sup> You shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It is a statute forever throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month.<sup>42</sup> You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All native Israelites shall dwell in booths,<sup>43</sup>that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.”**



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

**Feast of Booths, Sukkot** (Lev. 23:33-43)

(The name Feast of 'Tabernacles' is found nowhere in Scripture)

15th-22 Tishri – The 7<sup>th</sup> Month (8 days)

Millennium

Memorializes: Historically, Sukkot memorializes the forty-year period during which the children of Israel were wandering in the desert, living in temporary shelters. Agriculturally, Sukkot is a harvest festival and is sometimes referred to as Hag Ha-Asif, the Festival of Ingathering. Jesus ministry in John 7 took place during this Feast and in conjunction with the typical practices of the day relative to the Feast of Booths.

Prophecies: The day that God comes to earth and fights the enemies of Israel (Zechariah 14) and establishes His Kingdom on earth. God will gather and establish His holy people and the Lord will reign as King on the earth. It also prophecies the fact that we are just sojourners in this life on earth, now. The life we are living is very transitory. Our bodies are temporary dwellings. We are wandering through the wilderness of a fallen world. Our real home is in heaven with the Lord and with new resurrection bodies.

Life Application: For those of us who know Messiah we can rejoice that one day our days living in the wilderness of this fallen world will be over. We will live in the presence of our King and Savior, Jesus – Yeshua – the Messiah, who will tabernacle among us. (That's where the "Christian" name Feast of Tabernacles comes from.) We need to live every day knowing that we are on a journey and look forward to that glorious day when we dwell with the Lord.



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

We must allow that future promise to give us hope and strength to persevere through life in a way that glorifies God, and draws others to Him, through the testimony that our lives declares when we joyously endure hardships, persecutions and trials. One day the Lord *will* wipe every tear from our eyes.

All males were required to go to Jerusalem for Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths (Exodus 23:14-19).

***<sup>44</sup>Thus Moses declared to the people of Israel the appointed feasts of the LORD. (Leviticus 23:44)***

### **Scriptures for Reflection:**

**Leviticus 23: 23-44**

**Hebrews 10:1-10**

**Zechariah 14**

# **MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP**

## **Jewish Roots of Christianity**

### **SESSION 7: Understanding Covenant**

#### **For Groups:**

#### **Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### **Review of Session 6:**

The Fall Feasts of the Lord are found in Leviticus 23:23-44.

They prophecy different aspects of Messiah's second coming, namely, the rapture, the great white throne judgment and the time when all the nations will come to worship the Lord in Jerusalem.

Remember these are not referred to as the Feasts of Israel in the Scriptures. They are called the Feasts of the Lord.

A covenant is a promise to do, or not do something specified. There are two types of covenants in Scripture. First, there are conditional covenants that guarantee God will do His part when humans do what's required of them. Secondly, there are unconditional covenants that are only dependent on God's power and sovereignty for their fulfillment.

Covenants are an important concept in Scripture. For an example that is well-known in Judaism: God made a covenant with Abraham that He would bless his descendants, and make them more numerous than the stars.

God made history-making covenants with Moses and David as well. Suffice it to say, God is a God who makes covenants.



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

The Adamic Covenant can be thought of in two parts: the Edenic Covenant (innocence) and the Adamic Covenant (grace) (Genesis 3:16-19). The Edenic Covenant is found in Genesis 1:26-30; 2:16-17. The Edenic Covenant outlined man's responsibility toward creation and God's directive regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Adamic Covenant included the curses pronounced against mankind for the sin of Adam and Eve, as well as God's provision for that sin (Genesis 3:15).

The Noahic Covenant was an unconditional covenant between God and Noah (specifically) and humanity (generally). After the Flood, God promised humanity that He would never again destroy all life on earth with a Flood (see Genesis chapter 9). God gave the rainbow as the sign of the covenant, a promise that the entire earth would never again flood and a reminder that God can and will judge sin (2 Peter 2:5).

Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3, 6-7; 13:14-17; 15; 17:1-14; 22:15-18). In this covenant God promised many things to Abraham. He personally promised that He would make Abraham's name great (Genesis 12:2), that Abraham would have numerous physical descendants (Genesis 13:16), and that he would be the father of a multitude of nations (Genesis 17:4-5). God also made promises regarding a nation called Israel. In fact, the geographical boundaries of the Abrahamic Covenant are laid out on more than one occasion in the book of Genesis (12:7; 13:14-15; 15:18-21). Another provision in the Abrahamic Covenant is that the families of the world will be blessed through the physical line of Abraham (Genesis 12:3; 22:18). This is a reference to the Messiah, who would come from the line of Abraham.



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

Mosaic Covenant (Deuteronomy 11; et al.). The Mosaic Covenant was a conditional covenant that either brought God's direct blessing for obedience or God's direct cursing for disobedience upon the nation of Israel. Part of the Mosaic Covenant was the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) and the rest of the Law, which contained over 600 commands—roughly 300 positive and 300 negative. The history books of the Old Testament (Joshua–Esther) detail how Israel succeeded or failed at obeying the Law. Deuteronomy 11:26-28 details the blessing/cursing motif.

Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:8-16). The Davidic Covenant amplifies the “seed” aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant. The promises to David in this passage are significant. God promised that David's lineage would last forever and that his kingdom would never pass away permanently (verse 16). Obviously, the Davidic throne has not been in place at all times. There will be a time, however, when someone from the line of David will again sit on the throne and rule as king. This future king is Jesus (Luke 1:32-33).

New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). The New Covenant is a covenant made first with the nation of Israel and, ultimately, with all mankind. In the New Covenant, God promises to forgive sin, and there will be a universal knowledge of the Lord. Jesus Christ came to fulfill the Law of Moses (Matthew 5:17) and create a new covenant between God and His people.



## **Jewish Roots of Christianity**

There are two teachings within the modern day Church regarding covenants that are unbiblical and are poisoning Believers' understanding of the truth of God's Word.

1. Dual Covenant Theology teaches that God has one covenant with the Jews (Mosaic Covenant) and another with the Gentiles (New Covenant). This can be proven to be 100% erroneous by a number of different Scriptures in the Word of God. Here are just a few: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 15:24; John 14:6.
2. Replacement Theology: Some Christians think that all the covenants are conditional in nature. If the covenants are conditional, then Israel failed miserably at fulfilling them. Some believe that the church fulfills the covenants and God will never deal with Israel again. This is called replacement theology and has little scriptural evidence. Scripture teaches us that Replacement Theology is unbiblical. See Jer. 31:35-37; The book of Acts talks of both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews) coming to faith in Jesus as Messiah. This truth completely negates the claim that God is done with the Jewish People and has no plans for them in the coming Kingdom of God.

### **Scriptures for Reflection:**

**Jeremiah 31**

**Genesis 12:1-3**

**Matthew 15:24**

**John 14:6**



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

### SESSION 8: The Roots of Anti-Semitism

#### **For Groups:**

**Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### **Review of Session 7:**

Covenants

The New Covenant was given by God to Israel and Judah.

#### **The Roots of Anti-Semitism**

“Anti-semitism is on the rise again today and is actually at an all-time high since WW II.” *Contemporary Global Anti-Semitism Report: Released by the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, U.S. Department of State*

**Anti-semitism is nothing new** – it’s been around since the birth of the Hebrew nation – from the Pharaoh of Egypt to the evil Haman in the book of Esther to Assyrians, Babylonians and the Syrians under the leadership of Antiochus Ephiphanes – and eventually Herod the Great – responsible for the death of all Jewish males under the age of 2 in an effort to prevent the birth of Messiah.

Even worse – the terrible history of persecution against the Jews since the advent of the Church. The Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the Pogroms of Eastern Europe and the Holocaust – were all acts of gross anti-Semitism committed against the Jewish people in the name of Christ, and Christianity.



## Jewish Roots of Christianity

A new anti-Semitism is cloaked behind names like “anti-Zionism” and “anti-Israel” but it’s still the same thing a hatred of the Children of Israel.

Anti-semitism is fueled by age old stereotypes and fabrications about Jewish people. These misconceptions have their root in lies created by the author of confusion, Satan, who hates God, His Word and His People. His ultimate goal is to destroy the “Chosen People” in an attempt to keep God’s plan from being accomplished, and prevent his own destruction. It is being cloaked or packaged in a new format propagated by the fanatical Islamist world: anti-Zionism, which holds that there is no place for the Jewish People in the world.

So where does Anti-Semitism come from? Why is it strongly on the rise again?

Let’s go back to Genesis 3:15

In Genesis 3:15 we have the first promise of redemption. Scholars call this the proto-evangelium – the pre-Gospel message. It’s a verse familiar to you – in the midst of God judging the earth, the serpent and the woman we have a glimmer of hope in a wonderful promise where God says “I will put enmity (or division) between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise your head and thou shalt bruise his heel.” With those words, God decreed a death sentence on Satan.

This is the first Messianic prophecy in Scripture and is the key to understanding anti-Semitism. It addresses the coming of the Messiah, the Redeemer, through the seed of the woman – who will come forth and crush the head of the serpent. This is the “seed promise.” It refers to 3 things: the redemption of mankind, the destruction of Satan and the virgin birth.

God has promised redemption, which includes Satan’s destruction and man’s redemption from the terrible curse of separation from God. Satan has gone through millennia with this death sentence hanging over his head. He knows his time is limited and as the last days get nearer his efforts to escape his destiny, and drag as many souls with him as possible, are significantly increasing.



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God revealed himself to Abram in Gen. 12 and Abram became the father of the Jewish people. Gentile disciples of Messiah (Christ) are grafted into Abraham.

After revealing Himself to Abram, God made a tremendous promise to him.  
Gen. 12:2

Then in verse 3 we see a significant verse revealing a principle that's still as real today as it was when God spoke it some 4000 years ago. Gen. 12:3

This is a profound principle that God put into place. Let's look at the last part ***"in these all the families of the Earth shall be blessed."*** The KJV reads ***"through your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."***

It's a historic fact that through the centuries the Jewish people have been a great blessing to the world. Though only  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 1% of the populations of the world, some sources report that 20% of all Nobel Prize winners are Jewish. Jews have helped make great advancements in medicine, science, literature and culture. They have blessed the world. But there's a much greater blessing and deeper meaning to this decree.

Through Abraham and his descendants came "One" who blessed the world. His name is Yeshua/Jesus. He was and is a Jew who came to His own people, but also as a blessing to the whole world in that whoever would believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

We also have the blessings of the words of the Prophets, the Word of God, the sacrificial system, the Temple and the New Covenant from the Jewish people. But the ultimate fulfillment of Gen. 12:3 is the Redeemer Yeshua/Jesus, who came to bring us all eternal life.

As the decree of redemption and the Seed Promise turn to Abram and his descendants, so does the full force of the hordes of Hell. The logic is simple. Satan believes that he won't be destroyed if he can keep the Seed Promise from materializing. He is interested only in his own self-preservation.

We saw it in ancient Egypt when Pharaoh decreed to destroy all the male Hebrew children.



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We saw it in the story of Esther when Haman plotted to destroy of the children of Israel.

We saw it in Jesus/Yeshua's life when Herod made a systematic effort to annihilate the Jewish males born around the time of Yeshua's birth.

You may ask why Satan continues to attack the Jewish People if the Seed Promise (Yeshua) has come. The answer is that Gen. 3:15 is not yet fulfilled. The head of the serpent hasn't been crushed yet. Yes, Yeshua has come, but a few things must be in place before He returns to crush Satan's head – and the enemy not only knows those things, but is also working to keep them from occurring.

Satan knows that the majority of the Jewish people are blinded to the truth about their Messiah, Yeshua/Jesus. He knows that their rejection of the Gospel allowed the Good News to go to the Gentiles. He knows that the Gentiles have a responsibility to the Children of Abraham to live a life in Christ that provokes the Jewish People to jealousy, and causes their blindness to depart, restoring them by allowing them to see the reality of Yeshua as their Messiah.

### Witnessing to Jewish people: keys & tools

Satan knows that when the Jewish people embrace Yeshua great revival will break out in every nation. Rom. 11:15

Some scholars say Romans 11:15 is talking about a physical resurrection of the dead connected to the return of Messiah. Most scholars say it is talking about a spiritual renewal. But whatever you believe, it is something greater than individual salvation, because it has to do with the restoration of all things and the restoration of the world. (Acts 3:21)

Know this, if you want to see Japan saved, pray for the salvation of Israel. If you want to see China saved, pray for the salvation of Israel. If you want to see America saved, pray for the salvation of Israel, because they are



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inseparably connected in the plan of God. Just as the Jewish People's rejection spiritually released the Gospel to the nations, their salvation will release the power of God for world revival upon the nations of the Earth.

Satan understands this and is working around the clock to stop this from happening, because part of "life from the dead" is God's ultimate plan being fulfilled, which includes the destruction of Satan – the crushing of his head.

This is what fuels anti-semitism. Sadly, much of today's anti-semitism lurks in unexpected places, reveals itself in off-hand comments and passes from generation to generation, often unknowingly.

Even within the Church – the Body of Christ – we see anti-semitism manifesting, and as the Gentiles in the Body of Christ are grafted into the Olive Tree (Romans 11), anti-semitism is actually a form of self-hatred. Remembering that Jesus Himself was Jewish, anti-semitism within His Body works to undermine the effectiveness of the work of the Gospel in and through the modern day Church.

We must fight anti-Semitism whenever and wherever we find it. We must combat misconceptions and errant theology with well-spoken truth.

As the New Testament Church sits on the shoulders of the true biblical faith of the Jewish People, it's no wonder that members of the Church suffer persecution as followers of the Messiah of Israel. All the early apostles were martyred for their faith. Countless believers today are being killed and imprisoned because they follow Christ.

Upon entering into 'the faith' we all enter into an age old spiritual war that involves God and Satan.

### **Scriptures for reflection:**

**Acts 3:19-21**

**Matthew 23:37-39**

**Matthew 10**



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### SESSION 9: God's Plans for the Jewish People\*

(\*Taken from "Messianic Bible Study" by Ronna Cohen)

#### **For Groups:**

**Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### **Review of Session 8**

God forbid that we learn about, and develop a love for the Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith and Jewish "things," without developing a love for the Jewish people. God is Love and calls Christ's true disciples to have His love at the center of all they do, and are focused on.

This session will help get a clearer understanding of God's plans for the Jewish People, so we can prayerfully begin to love them and see them come to a deeper knowledge of the truth about their God, and Messiah.

God's plans for the Jewish people are multi-faceted and span thousands of years. These plans began between 2000 and 1500 BC (during the life of Abraham) and will continue on through the time of the return of the Messiah and the Messianic Age (*Isaiah 2*); the coming thousand-year reign of Yeshua as King/Messiah on the earth.

When reading the Scriptures and trying to understand God's plans for the Jewish people, one thing is certain: God's plans are very mysterious.

***"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' declares the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.'"***  
**Isaiah 55:8-9**



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When we read about the Jewish people through the history of God's Word, they're identified as the people who are descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Historically, they're known as "Israel" or the people of "Judah." They were to be a people in covenant relationship with God, who would live in the land given to them by God (*Genesis 12:6-7*), be obedient to the commands of God (*Deuteronomy 28:1-2*), and as a result, be a light to the nations to illuminate the truth about God.

***"Listen to Me, O islands, and pay attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called Me from the womb; from the body of My mother He named Me. He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; and He has also made Me a select arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver. He said to Me, 'You are My Servant, Israel, In Whom I will show My glory.' But I said, 'I have toiled in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity; Yet surely the justice due to Me is with the LORD, And My reward with My God.' And now says the LORD, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him (for I am honored in the sight of the LORD, and My God is My strength), He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'" Isaiah 49:1-6***

It was through the Jewish people that God chose to bring the Messiah into the world. If we have faith in the Messiah, God sees us—both Jew and Gentile—as righteous, and He grafts us together as "one new man."

***"For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity." Ephesians 2:14-16***



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As Believers, both Jew and Gentile, we have a destiny and a role in eternity alongside Messiah. The lie that Christianity (following Messiah/Christ) is for Gentiles and Judaism is for Jews is just that: a lie. The Jewish people have not been disqualified from walking in covenant with God through knowing Messiah. In fact, God's Word promises that all Israel will be saved.

***"For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, 'THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.'"***

**Romans 11:25-27**

The meaning of this Scripture is the cause of great debate, quarrelling and division in the Body of Messiah. It may refer to the Jewish people who survive the horrible persecution of the last days.

***"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man, My Associate,' declares the LORD of hosts. 'Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; and I will turn my hand against the little ones. It will come about in all the land,' declares the LORD, 'That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it. And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"***

**Zechariah 13:7-9**

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It appears the Scriptures are telling us that only one third of the people will survive and be saved. The other two thirds are the reason that we cannot remain silent. We must share the truth of Yeshua with as many people as we can, in hopes that they will turn to God and be saved through the promises made to us by God in Scripture.

***“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.” John 3:14-17***

Historically, the Jews have been a people who have turned to God and away from Him time and time again. Because of their rebellion, they are a picture of all humanity. They have also been a people who have endured horrible persecution. Most modern day Jews know they’re “chosen,” but they don’t have a clear understanding of what they’re chosen for. In light of all the persecution they’ve endured, jokingly some say, “God, couldn’t you choose someone else for a change?”

They have, in fact, been chosen because of God’s love for them, to be a people for His own possession.

***“For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from***



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*the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” Deuteronomy 7: 6*

Because of their rebellion, God has scattered the Jewish people across the globe, but not forever. He has given them the promise of bringing them back to the land He originally promised them. This not only means the restoration of a physical inheritance, but it indicates the restoration of a spiritual inheritance as well.

***“Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, though I had removed them far away among the nations and though I had scattered them among the countries, yet I was a sanctuary for them a little while in the countries where they had gone.’ Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’ When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.” Ezekiel 11:16-20***

Miraculously, the modern day State of Israel was established in 1948 after thousands of years of Jewish dispersion. The Zionist enterprise, with its goal of creating a Jewish national home in Eretz Yisrael (the land of Israel), was set in motion by Theodor Herzl in 1897, at the First Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland. This was all part of God’s plan for the Jewish people.

At present date, we see parts of the land exchanged in a ludicrous “peace” process that will never achieve the desired goals of the politicians involved. And then we ask ourselves again, *what is God’s plan for the Jewish people at this junction?* Only God knows. But to see the miracle of the birth of the nation of



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Israel, as the Jewish “homeland” in 1948 proves beyond a shadow of a doubt; God is not done with the Jewish people, and as a whole nation, they do have a role to play in these “last days.”

God is the sovereign ruler of the universe. His plans are perfect. Many of the Jews rejected Yeshua as Messiah when He came to earth the first time, but God never rejected the Jews. This was all part of His divine plan so that salvation would go to the Gentiles.

There is a remnant within the Jewish people today. This remnant knows the truth about Yeshua as Messiah and follows Him, taking an active role in the revelation of the Kingdom of God on earth. This remnant seeks to follow God wholeheartedly, by the power of the Holy Spirit. They are witnesses of the Messiahship of Yeshua. They, along with their Gentile brothers and sisters in the Body of Messiah, are the ones God has chosen to be a light to the nations, including the nation of Israel, and the Jewish people.

Some say there are more Jewish believers in Yeshua as Messiah than ever before in history. We’re not really certain the number, but God is doing a great work in the hearts of the Jewish people to reveal the truth to them. There are even stories of orthodox Jews in Israel who secretly believe that Yeshua is the Messiah, and are waiting for God’s direction for them to step out and expose their faith in Yeshua/Jesus. To do so often comes with an incredible cost.

We do not know the entirety of God’s plan for the Jewish people in the end times. We do know that perilous times are coming. A time of great persecution will come. It will be a time where God’s enemy, the devil, will attempt to force all mankind to worship him. For those of us who follow Yeshua and worship God, it will be a time of great testing and trial. Many who desire to please God will lose their lives, as they stand in defiance of worshiping the devil. God’s

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Word promises great reward for those who stand strong in the face of persecution in the last days.

***“Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Yeshua and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years.” Revelation 20:4-6***

Who will the believers reign over, alongside the Messiah? Perhaps it will be Jewish people whose eyes have been opened to the truth that Yeshua is the Messiah during the end of the last days.

***“Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it. ‘In that day,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, “A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the LORD of hosts, their God.” In that day I will make the clans of***

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***Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem. The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah. In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.” Zechariah 12:2-10***

Jewish people will see Yeshua. God will pour out His Holy Spirit upon them collectively as a nation, and they will understand that God Himself came to earth to die as final atonement for their sins, and for the sins of all humanity.

***“He saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no one to intercede; then His own arm brought salvation to Him, and His righteousness upheld Him. He put on righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; and He put on garments of vengeance for clothing and wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle. According to their deeds, so He will repay, wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; to the coastlands He will make recompense. So they will fear the name of the LORD from the west and His glory from the rising of the sun, for He will come like a rushing stream which the wind of the LORD drives. ‘A Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,’ declares the LORD. ‘As for Me, this is My covenant with them,’***

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***says the LORD: 'My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring,' says the LORD, 'from now and forever.'"*** Isaiah 59:16-21

Not only did God promise to put His Spirit on the Messiah, He promised to put it on all Israel. This promise will be fulfilled on the physical nation of Israel during the millennial reign of Messiah. The promise, however, manifests today in the lives of true disciples of Yeshua/Jesus. Because of this, as followers of Yeshua we are to humble ourselves and serve God as we wait for the glorious day of His returning, when all will know the truth, and the truth will set them free!

***"Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Messiah Yeshua, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Yeshua EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Yeshua Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove***

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***yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.” Philippians 2:5-15***

Remember that it is through the Jewish people that God first revealed Himself and His plan of redemption. They were entrusted with the “oracles” (Word) of God, and their faithfulness to that task is what enables us to study God’s Word today.

***“Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.” Romans 3:1-2***

It was the Jewish people that God commanded to keep the Feasts of the Lord (*Leviticus 23*), which all point to the redemptive work of Messiah Yeshua. These feasts are holy convocations, or rehearsals. They were appointed times for Israel that served as dress rehearsals then, and memorials now, of the redemptive work of Messiah. Interesting that there are seven feasts, as seven is the biblical number of completion/perfection. There are no coincidences where God is concerned. As we studied in past weeks, four of seven of the feasts take place in the spring. These events have already taken place spiritually and prophetically, between the death of Messiah on the cross and fall of Jerusalem. The three fall feasts are a picture of future events when Messiah returns.

### **A Review:**

**Spring Feasts fulfilled at Messiah’s first coming:**

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***Passover*** pictures the substitutionary death of Yeshua as the Passover Lamb

***Unleavened Bread*** pictures the burial of Yeshua along with His sinless life

***Firstfruits*** pictures the resurrection of the Messiah

***Pentecost*** pictures the birth of the congregation (the Body of Messiah /Believers)

### *Fall Feasts that will be fulfilled at Messiah's second coming:*

***Day of Trumpets*** pictures the judgment

***Day of Atonement*** pictures the day of redemption

***Feast of Booths*** pictures our full access to fellowship with God

When Jewish people come to faith in Messiah Yeshua the Holy Spirit comes to live in them and they learn the prophetic meanings behind each one of the feasts celebrated since childhood. Celebrating the feasts brings a deep, supernatural joy. Coupled with the joy is great sorrow for the others of the Jewish race who do not have the clear understanding of the prophetic picture of the feasts of the Lord.

Please pray for the Jewish people worldwide who don't yet know or understand the truth of Yeshua. Join your heart with mine and with the Apostle Paul that Jewish people would come to God through faith in the Messiah, and walk as children of the promise.

***"I am telling the truth in Messiah, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from***

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*Messiah for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Messiah according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. But it is not as though the word of God has failed For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: 'THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED.' That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants."*

**Romans 9:1-8**

Herein lies one of the great mysteries of God that has to do with the Jewish people. God's Word says "they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel—faith is a pre-requisite.

By modern day definition, Jewish people are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Some follow the religion of Judaism (based on rabbinic teachings), which in and of itself has so many different and distinct branches that it's difficult to accurately lump them together as one religion. To complicate matters further, some consider themselves Jewish purely on a cultural basis, without any religious convictions at all.

Despite people's broad and multifaceted identification of themselves as Jewish, God's plan for the Jewish people as seen in Scripture is clear. Like the biblical mandate to the Jewish people, we're to be lights to the nations, witnesses to all mankind—Jew and Gentile—that Yeshua is the Messiah, King of kings and Lord of lords. Our position is to be a position of humility and servanthood. We're to invite people to accept Him as King of their hearts and lives today—as is His rightful place!



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We must remember that our faith in the Messiah is still very much connected to *biblical* Judaism, which originated with the righteousness that Abraham walked in because of *faith*. The more we learn about God's call and plan for the Jewish people, the more we will learn about His call on our lives as Believers and followers of Yeshua.

Ironically, most people who call themselves Jewish don't know the first thing about the Messiah of Israel. They don't understand the concepts of sin, salvation or a need for a Savior. They don't know that Yeshua is the Messiah of Israel. They have been wrongly taught that He is the God of the Gentiles.

When we stand in the gap and with love, compassion and understanding play the role that God intended for them, we are fulfilling a great mandate.

As an encouragement to Gentile (non-Jewish) followers of Messiah, most Jewish people come to faith in their Messiah through the faithful witness of Gentiles. So be bold. Study the Scriptures and be prepared to thank the Jewish person in your life for the faith of their fathers that enables you to have a personal relationship with their God, through their Messiah, who has given you the promise of eternal life!

God is not finished with the Jewish people. They are still the "apple of His eye" and His covenant with them is eternal.

***"do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, 'Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted***



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*in.' Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either."* Romans 11:18-21

### Scriptures for Reflection:

**Romans 11**



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### SESSION 10: Jewish Evangelism & the Church

#### **For Groups:**

**Discussion about Scriptures for reflection. (15 minutes)**

#### **Review of Session 9**

The goal of this study isn't to just give you more Bible knowledge, or to tickle your spiritual ears. It's to call you to action! God's will for all of us is that we become spiritually mature and Scripture clearly teaches that maturity involves putting action to our faith.

***<sup>14</sup>What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? <sup>15</sup>If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, <sup>16</sup>and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? <sup>17</sup>Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. James 2:14-17***

Spiritual maturity allows us to walk in God's perfect will for our lives, and it's gauged by our application of what we learn in the Bible.

In Jesus' day the Pharisees knew the scriptures better than everyone and they were responsible for crucifying the Son of God. They didn't understand God's plan and so they worked against it. I sure don't want that to happen in my life – how about you?



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This study is intended to tell you about God's plan in the world today so you can work with God, and not against Him. We are living in *the* most exciting prophetic time since perhaps even the resurrection. Your being alive today is *no* accident. God has a very important role for you to play in this monumental time on *His* prophetic time clock.

**1 Corinthians 3:8** *Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.*

The rewards you get in heaven are dependent upon what you do to fulfill the role God has for you on earth. In light of this it may be kind of important to find out what your role is?

We all have individual roles, and as the church body I believe we have a collective role as well.

Hopefully this study has given you greater understanding regarding our collective roles.

Visit [www.missiondiscipleship.org](http://www.missiondiscipleship.org) to learn more about how you can fulfill your personal role.

Jesus told all of us to "go and make disciples." No one is exempt. Visit our website and let us help you obey His commands.