

Introduction: Acts 4 What's In A Name

Read Letter to JCA in response to annual meeting visit.

We had corresponded about a year ago, when we had provided the JCA with a small donation from Kehilah Portland. I would like to thank you for the hospitality of the JCA and allowing us to attend your annual business meeting. We had 10 faithful people (a minyan) of the congregation attend the JCA meeting. For most, it was their first exposure to the JCA directly and the Jewish community as a whole. The reports were both educational and inspiring.

A comment made by outgoing president Marcus emphasizing the need to maintain a Jewish identity in the community as a result of combined marriage (Jew and non-Jew) and assimilation into society are the very challenges we face as a congregation. There are various Jewish believers in Messiah who have chosen to attend a church and thereby assimilating into the church culture. The percentage that continue to follow their Jewish heritage is a small percentage. This is unfortunate because there is such a blessing that is being lost.

As a Messianic Jewish congregation, we continue to emphasize biblical Judaism as a way of life to our people that attend. The foundation of this lifestyle is Torah. This lifestyle includes meeting on Shabbat for a service, liturgy, Davidic worship, a sermon / teaching, oneg after service and Torah study. We also convey the benefits of a biblically kosher diet and the significance of the moadim and the blessings associated with celebrating them. It is our goal to equip our congregation with the information found in Torah and the teachings of Messiah, that further emphasize the intended context of Torah in order to live the lifestyle of biblical Judaism.

We experience the very same challenges that the Jewish community are experiencing as conveyed by Mr. Marcus.

There are several views that fall under the umbrella of Judaism. Until recently, the reconstructionist movement was not accepted. That has since changed. Likewise, female and homosexual rabbis were not accepted, yet that has also changed to where they are accepted into positions of leadership within the congregations they serve and are recognized by the larger community. Even though not all accept these changes, these people and congregations are still identified as Jewish. Some of these changes are contrary to the very foundation we all follow, that being Torah, yet their identity is still Jewish.

In your statement you had further emphasized that within the Jewish community are its diversity and challenge to come to agreement on many matters. This is nothing new. The common joke is, "ask three rabbis the same question and receive four answers." This is part of who we are. I believe we will likely contribute to that dynamic.

The recent passing of the resolution to support Israel by the Maine legislature included contributions to the resolution by a Messianic believer in Yeshua. We are supporters of Israel, its right to exist and flourish.

We may differ on one view specifically, that being Messiah, however, we share more in common than you or the Jewish community truly realize. It is this common ground that I would like to explore in greater detail with yourself, the JCA and its board, ultimately determining how Kehilah Portland can assist in meeting the challenges expressed at this past meeting. An integral part of our vision as a congregation is to support the Jewish community. One of our members expressed an interest after the meeting in the food pantry. Our people have a desire to serve and support.

<http://www.shalommaine.com/vision.htm>

Again, I would like to thank you and your staff for a wonderful time. May Adonai continue to bless your endeavors, strengthening the community and reinforcing its identity.

Reconstructionist Judaism is a progressive, contemporary approach to Jewish life which integrates a deep respect for traditional Judaism with the insights and ideas of contemporary social, intellectual and spiritual life.

Mission:

Kehilah Portland is established with the purpose of restoring the people of Israel, in the state of Maine, to their God, and ultimately to their biblical calling. We will set forth to do this in the following manner:

- Be committed to and grow in a lifestyle of faith called Biblical Judaism
- Reveal first to the Jewish people of Maine, and also to the non-Jewish people of Maine the true identity and heritage of King Messiah Yeshua
- Support Israel and the Jewish people in opposing all acts of hatred (anti-semitism) brought against them.
- Call all people in the body of Messiah to the proper understanding of God's covenant promises to Israel and their restoration.

Act 4:8 Then Kefa, filled with the Ruach HaKodesh, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people!

Act 4:9 If we are being examined today about a good deed done for a disabled person, if you want to know how he was restored to health,

Act 4:10 then let it be known to you and to all the people of Isra'el that it is in the name of the Messiah, Yeshua from Natzeret, whom you had executed on a stake as a criminal but whom God has raised from the dead, that this man stands before you perfectly healed.

Act 4:11 "This Yeshua is the stone rejected by you builders which has become the cornerstone.

Act 4:12 There is salvation in no one else! For there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by whom we must be saved!"

Authority:

Authority means you have received authorization, permission to act in the authority of...

There is power transferred when one becomes authorized by another.

Kefa and Yochanan are acting on the authority of Yeshua.

Mat 28:19 Therefore, go and make people from all nations into talmidim, immersing them into the reality of the Father, the Son and the Ruach HaKodesh,

Mat 28:20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember! I will be with you always, yes, even until the end of the age."

Last week during Shavuot I had established a connection with Adonai and Yeshua as being Echud.

The one who was the river of living water is the one who gave authority and the one to whom authority was given

The one who was in the wind is the one who gave authority and the one to whom authority was given.

Act 4:13 When they saw how bold Kefa and Yochanan were, even though they were untrained `am-ha'aretz, they were amazed; also they recognized them as having been with Yeshua.

Act 4:14 Moreover, since they could see the man who had been healed standing right there beside them, there was

nothing they could say to discredit the healing.

Identity:

CUFI is identified as a bridge builder

Joe's Contemplator email

Act 4:33 With great power the emissaries continued testifying to the resurrection of the Lord Yeshua, and they were all held in high regard.

There is more power and conviction when you are a direct witness to an event.

Act 5:34 But one of the members of the Sanhedrin rose to his feet, a Parush named Gamli'el, a teacher of the Torah highly respected by all the people. He ordered the men put outside for a little while

Act 5:35 and then addressed the court: "Men of Isra'el, take care what you do to these people.

Act 5:36 Some time ago, there was a rebellion under Todah, who claimed to be somebody special; and a number of men, maybe four hundred, rallied behind him. But upon his being put to death, his whole following was broken up and came to nothing.

Act 5:37 After this, Y'hudah HaG'lili led another uprising, back at the time of the enrollment for the Roman tax; and he got some people to defect to him. But he was killed, and all his followers were scattered.

Act 5:38 So in the present case, my advice to you is not to interfere with these people, but to leave them alone. For if this idea or this movement has a human origin, it will collapse.

Act 5:39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop them; you might even find yourselves fighting God!" They heeded his advice.

Time has proven this to be true.

If you believe what we are doing, your action will follow.

If we are doing what we should be doing, our existence should provoke discussion...

Act 19:8 Sha'ul went into the synagogue; and for three months he spoke out boldly, engaging in dialogue and trying to persuade people about the Kingdom of God.

What is that Biblical calling I had mentioned earlier?

Isa 49:5 So now Adonai says — he formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Ya`akov back to him, to have Isra'el gathered to him, so that I will be honored in the sight of Adonai, my God having become my strength —

Isa 49:6 he has said, "It is not enough that you are merely my servant to raise up the tribes of Ya`akov and restore the offspring of Isra'el. I will also make you a light to the nations, so my salvation can spread to the ends of the earth."