

Notes: May 18, 2019

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tov
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

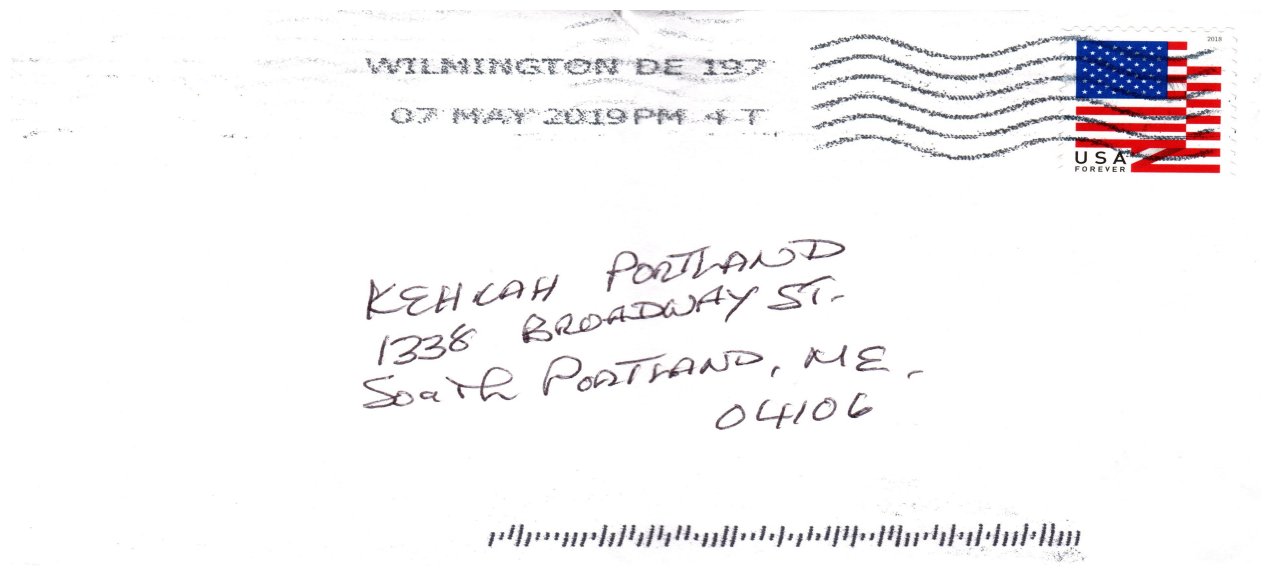
Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

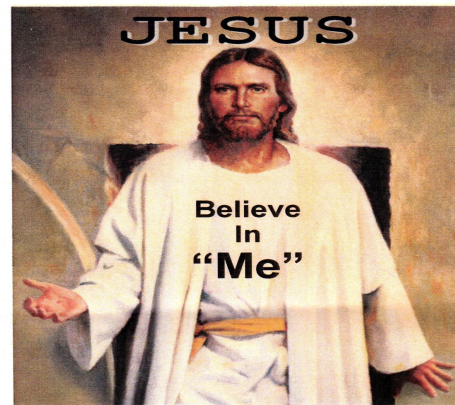
Introduction: *I Am Not Anonymous*

Last Shabbat, once everything was put away and restored back to its original state I went up to the top floor to check our mail slot. There are times people send us mail here, rather than our mailing address.

In the box was this envelope...



And the contents within the envelope...



Because GOD Loved the Human Race so much, He gave His only begotten Son (Jesus) to be SACRIFICED to save their SOULS. That who ever believes in (Jesus) will not face GOD'S judgement, but receive everlasting life in "Heaven."

We have an anonymous individual who sent a tract to a Messianic Jewish Synagogue about believing in Jesus.

How many here, when sharing with a friend or family member who is also a believer in Yeshua raise concerns that you attend a Messianic Jewish Synagogue, wonder if you still believe in Jesus – Yeshua?

Based on this one piece of mail, I want to raise two points

1. The premise / assumption that prompted this piece of mail to be sent
2. The manner by which the sender sent it

Based on the tract that was sent, I would say it assumes we don't believe in Yeshua...

Everything in it is factually true, based on Scripture.

Yet, sanitises any Jewish context about Yeshua.

There is an assumption by many (not all) in the body of believers regarding the reality of a Jewish person accepting Yeshua – Jesus. The assumption is that Jewish people don't believe in Jesus – this is construed as an exception, an anomaly and second, if you are Jewish and believe in Jesus you are no longer Jewish.

I don't know about you, but in reading the New Covenant writings I am hard pressed to make either of these assumptions. When I say that I am hard pressed to make them, it is when I am reading Scripture within the context it is written. Should you modify the context from with the New Covenant writings are written, you can draw these two assumptions.

Act 11:26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. (KJV)

The assumption made here is that all who believe are called Christian. The assumption that by today's standard people convert to Christianity.

Yet, what is missing from this one verse but the context that is found in this verse...

Act 11:18 On hearing these things, they stopped objecting and began to praise God, saying, "This means that God has enabled the Goyim as well to do t'shuvah and have life!"

This verse conveys a new reality to the Messianic community in general and Kefa specifically, Gentiles have the opportunity to repent and turn to God in the same manner that had been afforded the Jewish people, through the Jewish Messiah.

Then next verse takes us to our next destination – Antioch...

Act 11:19 Now those who had been scattered because of the persecution which had arisen over Stephen went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch; they spoke God's word, but only to Jews.

The first thing I want you to pay attention to is...who are these ones who were persecuted...

Act 8:1 and Sha'ul gave his approval to his murder. Starting with that day, there arose intense persecution against the Messianic Community in Yerushalayim; all but the emissaries were scattered throughout the regions of Y'hudah and Shomron.

Act 8:2 Some godly men buried Stephen and mourned him deeply.

Act 8:3 But Sha'ul set out to destroy the Messianic Community — entering house after house, he dragged off both men and women and handed them over to be put in prison.

Act 8:4 However, those who were scattered announced the Good News of the Word wherever they went.

These men fled the persecution in Judea and Jerusalem and in this case fled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch

And who are they...but Messianic Jews, sharing the Gospel with Goy, Gentiles.

Act 11:20 However, some of these, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, when they arrived at Antioch, began speaking to the Greeks too, proclaiming the Good News of the Lord Yeshua.

Act 11:21 The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number of people trusted and turned to the Lord.

Act 11:22 News of this reached the ears of the Messianic community in Yerushalayim, and they sent Bar-Nabba to Antioch.

Act 11:23 On arriving and seeing for himself the grace of God at work, he was glad; and he encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with their whole hearts;

Act 11:24 for he was a good man, full of the Ruach HaKodesh and trust.

Act 11:25 Then Bar-Nabba went off to Tarsus to look for Sha'ul; (CJB)

Act 11:26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. (KJV)

David Stern writes the following about verse 26...

*"**Messianic**," or "Messianics," Greek Christianoi, which could also be rendered, "Messiah people" or, as in other translations, "Christians." I think the name "Christianoi" was applied to Gentile believers by Gentile nonbelievers.*

Why? Because Jewish believers would have designated their Gentile brothers in faith by the same term they used for themselves, "people belonging to the Way" (see [Act 9:2](#)); while the Jewish nonbelievers of Antioch wouldn't have thought enough about Gentile believers in Yeshua to have given them a special name.

Therefore, in the beginning it was not a name that was favorable, yet became so over time.

This notion of minimising identity is further found in Galatians 3:28:

Gal 3:28 there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor freeman, neither male nor female; for in union with the Messiah Yeshua, you are all one.

Rom 3:21 But now, quite apart from Torah, God's way of making people righteous in his sight has been made clear — although the Torah and the Prophets give their witness to it as well —

Rom 3:22 and it is a righteousness that comes from God, through the faithfulness of Yeshua the Messiah, to all who continue trusting. For it makes no difference whether one is a Jew or a Gentile,

Rom 3:23 since all have sinned and come short of earning God's praise.

Rom 3:24 By God's grace, without earning it, all are granted the status of being considered righteous before him, through the act redeeming us from our enslavement to sin that was accomplished by the Messiah Yeshua.

These verses from Romans don't diminish identity but rather convey an equality of transgression in that all have fallen short. from God's perspective. Yet, there is a greater burden to the Jewish people, who have received Adonai's instructions and therefore, when much is given, much is required.

Luk 12:48 however, the one who did what deserves a beating, but didn't know, will receive few lashes.

From him who has been given much, much will be demanded — from someone to whom people entrust much, they ask still more.

Sha'ul wrote the following, just prior to Chapter 3...

Rom 2:5 But by your stubbornness, by your unrepentant heart, you are storing up anger for yourself on the Day of Anger, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed;

Rom 2:6 for he will pay back each one according to his deeds.

Rom 2:7 To those who seek glory, honor and immortality by perseverance in doing good, he will pay back eternal life.

Rom 2:8 But to those who are self-seeking, who disobey the truth and obey evil, he will pay back wrath and anger.

Rom 2:9 Yes, he will pay back misery and anguish to every human being who does evil, to the Jew first, then to the Gentile;

Rom 2:10 but glory and honor and shalom to everyone who keeps doing what is good, to the Jew first, then to the Gentile.

Rom 2:11 For God does not show favoritism.

Rom 2:12 All who have sinned outside the framework of Torah will die outside the framework of Torah; and all who have sinned within the framework of Torah will be judged by Torah.

Rom 2:13 For it is not merely the hearers of Torah whom God considers righteous; rather, it is the doers of what Torah says who will be made righteous in God's sight.

Rom 2:14 For whenever Gentiles, who have no Torah, do naturally what the Torah requires, then these, even though they don't have Torah, for themselves are Torah!

Now there are other verses that can be used out of context to further substantiate the senders assumption such as Acts 18:6

Act 18:6 However when they set themselves against him and began hurling insults, he shook out his clothes and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! For my part, I am clean; from now on, I will go to the Goyim!"

The assumption here is, because the message of Messiah was rejected by his Jewish brethren, Sha'ul will no longer share the Gospel with his brethren, but will now focus on the Gentiles. Fortunately, this assumption is utterly disproven...how...

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.

Act 19:9 But some began hardening themselves and refusing to listen; and when these started defaming the Way before the whole synagogue, Sha'ul withdrew, took the talmidim with him, and commenced holding daily dialogues in Tyrannus's yeshivah.

Not only did Sha'ul go to another synagogue, but he stayed three months. When it got contentious, he would continue in the yeshivah.

So, what happened in Acts 18:6, but Sha'ul cutting bait and moving to another fishing hole.

So the senders first assumption based on the premise that people who attend a Messianic Jewish Synagogue don't believe in Jesus – Yeshua is just plain false and I would state further one of ignorance, one that lacks knowledge and understanding. Jewish believers are found throughout the New Covenant writings. It is within the context of history and the destruction of Judea, the once center of The Way that this premise has changed 180 degrees.

And yet today, the very representation of Jewish believers found throughout the New Covenant writings remains primarily a foreign concept.

Which now leads me to the second point of this envelope, the premise by which the sender conveyed their intended message.

The only identification mark, whether within the contents of the envelope or the markings of the envelope was the post mark. No name, no return address, not even a handwritten note in the envelope...just the tract itself.

What could this convey?

What does it mean to be anonymous?

- of a person) not identified by name; of unknown name.
- having no outstanding, individual, or unusual features; unremarkable or impersonal.

This person chose to be anonymous, chose to conceal their identity.

Why?

I could speculate on their reasons...

Did they not want to be confronted, yet believed what they were doing was “from the Lord”

Are they weak in their faith and understanding, yet know the basics.

Were they motivated by Genesis 12:3 to be a blessing to the Jewish people?

Who knows...I certainly don't.

What I do know is that they don't know what Messianic Judaism is and likely assumed it is just another sect of Judaism.

If they had any inclination as to what Messianic Judaism is, we would not have received this tract.

So, I don't want to focus on their intent but rather their method by which they transmitted their message – anonymously...

I see more examples in Scripture, specifically the book of Acts to the contrary...

Act 4:23 Upon being released, they went back to their friends and reported what the head cohanim and elders had said to them.

Act 4:24 When they heard it, they raised their voices to God with singleness of heart. "Master," they prayed, "You made heaven, earth, the sea and everything in them.

Act 4:25 By the Ruach HaKodesh, through the mouth of our father David, your servant, you said, 'Why did the nations rage and the peoples devise useless plans?

Act 4:26 The kings of the earth took their stand; and the rulers assembled together against Adonai and against his Messiah.'

Act 4:27 "This has come true in this city, since Herod and Pontius Pilate, with Goyim and the peoples of Isra'el, all assembled against your holy servant Yeshua, whom you made Messiah,

Act 4:28 to do what your power and plan had already determined beforehand should happen.

Act 4:29 "So now, Lord, take note of their threats; and enable your slaves to speak your message with boldness!

Act 9:26 On reaching Yerushalayim, he tried to join the talmidim; but they were all afraid of him — they didn't believe he was a talmid.

Act 9:27 However, Bar-Nabba got hold of him and took him to the emissaries. He told them how Sha'ul had seen the Lord while traveling, that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Dammesek Sha'ul had spoken out boldly in the name of Yeshua.

Act 9:28 So he remained with them and went all over Yerushalayim continuing to speak out boldly in the name of the Lord.

Sha'ul was most certainly a man who had a reputation, yet in spite of his past, went all over to boldly proclaim the name of Yeshua.

Act 13:44 The next Shabbat, nearly the whole city gathered together to hear the message about the Lord;
Act 13:45 but when the Jews who had not believed saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and spoke up against what Sha'ul was saying and insulted him.

Act 13:46 However, Sha'ul and Bar-Nabba answered boldly: "It was necessary that God's word be spoken first to you. But since you are rejecting it and are judging yourselves unworthy of eternal life — why, we're turning to the Goyim!

Act 13:47 For that is what Adonai has ordered us to do: 'I have set you as a light for the Goyim, to be for deliverance to the ends of the earth.' "

Act 13:48 The Gentiles were very happy to hear this. They honored the message about the Lord, and as many as had been appointed to eternal life came to trust.

Act 14:1 In Iconium the same thing happened — they went into the synagogue and spoke in such a way that a large number of both Jews and Greeks came to trust.

Act 14:2 But the Jews who would not be persuaded stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.

Act 14:3 Therefore, Sha'ul and Bar-Nabba remained for a long time, speaking boldly about the Lord, who bore witness to the message about his love and kindness by enabling them to perform signs and miracles.

Act 18:24 Meanwhile, a Jewish man named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent speaker with a thorough knowledge of the Tanakh.

Act 18:25 This man had been informed about the Way of the Lord, and with great spiritual fervor he spoke and taught accurately the facts about Yeshua, but he knew only the immersion of Yochanan.

Act 18:26 He began to speak out boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the Way of God in fuller detail.

Act 18:27 When he made plans to cross over into Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote the talmidim there to welcome him. On arrival, he greatly helped those who through grace had come to trust;

Act 18:28 for he powerfully and conclusively refuted the unbelieving Jews in public, demonstrating by the Tanakh that Yeshua is the Messiah.

Act 28:30 Sha'ul remained two whole years in a place he rented for himself; and he continued receiving all who came to see him,

Act 28:31 openly and without hindrance proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Yeshua the Messiah.

Act 2:14 Then Kefa stood up with the Eleven and raised his voice to address them: "You Judeans, and all of you staying here in Yerushalayim! Let me tell you what this means! Listen carefully to me!

Repeat after me – I am not anonymous.

Consider these words from Yeshua...

Mat 10:24 "A talmid is not greater than his rabbi, a slave is not greater than his master.

Mat 10:25 It is enough for a talmid that he become like his rabbi, and a slave like his master. Now if people have called the head of the house Ba`al-Zibbul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!

Mat 10:26 So do not fear them; for there is nothing covered that will not be uncovered, or hidden that will not be known.

Mat 10:27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim on the housetops.

And...

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the Good News, since it is God's powerful means of bringing salvation to everyone who keeps on trusting, to the Jew especially, but equally to the Gentile.

Rom 1:17 For in it is revealed how God makes people righteous in his sight; and from beginning to end it is through trust — as the Tanakh puts it, "But the person who is righteous will live his life by trust."

Next Shabbat I am going to explore the other aspect of my title, because I like to play with words and there is much that can be extracted from the title of this sermon.