

Notes: October 19 2013

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Jeri's Drash
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: Identity

Numbers can tell a story, support a position and confirm a trend.

On October 1st, the PEW Research Center release its results for one of the most comprehensive surveys on American Jews – A Portrait of Jewish Americans

Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world. It conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, media content analysis and other empirical social science research.

Polling is considered to be a science and incorporates a margin for error, making it an inexact science.

In exact because we are dealing with the views and opinions of individuals.

Results are dependent upon the structure of the question. Questions for a truly unbiased scientific poll should be non-leading.

More than 70,000 screening interviews were conducted to identify Jewish respondents in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Longer interviews were completed with 3,475 Jews, including 2,786 Jews by religion and 689 Jews of no religion.

In addition to interviewing Jews, the survey interviewed 1,190 people of Jewish background – U.S. adults who were raised Jewish or had at least one Jewish parent, but who now have a religion other than Judaism (most are Christian) or who say they do not consider themselves Jewish (either by religion or aside from religion).

Finally, the survey also interviewed 467 people with a Jewish affinity – people who have a religion other than Judaism (or have no religion) and who were not raised Jewish and did not have a Jewish parent, but who nevertheless consider themselves Jewish or partially Jewish in some way.

2000 – 2001 National Jewish Population Survey

INTERMARRIAGE

- The intermarriage rate for Jews who have married since 1996 is 47%.
- Differences between intermarriage rates reported in the 1990 Highlights Report and this report are due to differences between the “born Jewish” definition used for the 1990 analysis and the “currently Jewish” definition used in this report.
- Both definitions show intermarriage slightly increasing since 1985, but at a much slower rate than during the 1970s and early 1980s.
- Intermarriage is more common among young adults, Jews in the West, Jews with no or less intensive forms of Jewish education, those with lower levels of secular education, and the adult children of intermarried parents. Among adult Jews with intermarried parents, those raised Jewish are less likely to be intermarried than those not raised Jewish.
- In-married Jews maintain more Jewish connections and greater engagement with Jewish life than intermarried Jews.
- Almost all children of in-married spouses are being raised Jewish, compared to one-third of the children of intermarried spouses.

During data analysis, 264 of the 9175 respondents (2.8%) initially classified and interviewed as Jews were re-classified as non-Jews of Jewish background because they said they were Christians, and in one case Muslim. At the same time, 303 respondents initially classified and interviewed as PJBs were re-defined as Jews.

Today, interfaith marriage is 58% nation wide and over 60% in Maine.

What is the challenge with interfaith marriages, in this case a Jewish spouse and a non-Jewish spouse.

Typically it centers around “how to raise the children?” but not exclusively. You may also find each spouse attending their own place of worship. We even see this within the church where each spouse attends a different congregation.

Sometimes there is a compromise and both are done, while others choose one path.

Ultimately, when a compromise of doing both it is in essence “separate but equal” Meaning there is no connection between the two.

Unfortunately, this is how the majority of Jewish people and Christians see this. The two faiths are separate and distinct from one another.

Belief in God:

Seven-in-ten U.S. Jews believe in God or a universal spirit (72%), including one-third (34%) who say they are “absolutely certain” about this belief. Eight-in-ten Jews by religion say they believe in God or a universal spirit, including 39% who are absolutely certain about this belief. Among Jews of no religion, 45% believe in God with 18%

saying they are absolutely convinced of God's existence. Most Jews see no conflict between being Jewish and not believing in God; two-thirds say that a person can be Jewish even if he or she does not believe in God, as discussed in [Chapter 3](#).

Belief in God is much more common among the general public than among Jews. Even among Jews by religion, belief in God is less common than among members of other major U.S. religious groups. And Jews of no religion are more skeptical of God's existence than is the religiously unaffiliated general public.

Though most Jews express some doubt about God's existence, certainty about God is nearly universal among Orthodox Jews, 89% of whom say they are absolutely convinced of God's existence. Far fewer Jews from other denominational backgrounds share this level of conviction.

Belief in God

	Believe in God or universal spirit, Believe, absolutely certain, but less certain, Do not believe, Other/Don't know			
	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	34	38	23	5=100
Jews by religion	39	41	16	4=100
Jews of no religion	18	28	47	8=100
Men	32	37	26	5=100
Women	36	39	20	5=100
Ages 18-49	32	36	27	5=100
Ages 50+	35	40	20	5=100
College graduate+	25	43	27	6=100
Post-grad degree	21	44	29	6=100
BA/BS	28	41	25	6=100
Some college	44	34	18	4=100
HS or less	52	28	17	3=100
Married	35	40	20	5=100
Spouse Jewish	43	35	16	6=100
Spouse not Jewish	23	47	27	3=100
Not married	33	36	26	5=100
Orthodox	89	8	2	1=100
Ultra-Orthodox	96	2	1	1=100
Modern	77	19	3	2=100
Conservative	41	46	9	4=100
Reform	29	47	20	4=100
No denomination	18	35	39	7=100
U.S. general public	69	23	7	2=100
Christian	78	19	1	1=100
Protestant	84	15	1	1=100
White evangelical	93	7	0	*=100
White mainline	63	32	3	2=100
Black Protestant	93	7	0	0=100
Catholic	67	30	2	1=100
White, non-Hisp.	71	25	3	1=100
Hispanic	58	39	3	0=100
Unaffiliated	30	38	27	5=100

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. Q.H6/H6b. U.S. general public data from June 28-July 9, 2012, Pew Research Center survey. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Talk about the structure of a poll question regarding Belief in God...

What is Compatible – and What is Incompatible – With Being Jewish?

American Jews overwhelmingly say a person can be Jewish:

- If they work on the Sabbath (94%)
- Are strongly critical of Israel (89%).
- Two-thirds (68%) also say a person can be Jewish even if they do not believe in God.
- Far fewer say believing that Jesus was the messiah is compatible with being Jewish. Even here, however, a sizable minority (34%) says a person can be Jewish even if he or she believes Jesus was the messiah.

Similarly, Jews of no religion are more likely than Jews by religion to say believing in Jesus is compatible with being Jewish (47% vs. 30%).

What is Compatible With Being Jewish?

	NET Jewish	Jews by religion	Jews of no religion
<i>Can a person be Jewish if he/she ...</i>	%	%	%
<i>... works on the Sabbath?</i>			
Yes	94	93	96
No	5	6	1
Don't know	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100
<i>... is strongly critical of Israel?</i>			
Yes	89	88	91
No	9	10	5
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100
<i>... doesn't believe in God?</i>			
Yes	68	66	75
No	29	32	22
Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100
<i>... believes Jesus was the messiah?</i>			
Yes	34	30	47
No	60	65	45
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. Q.E6a-d. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

One third of those surveyed did not consider belief in Yeshua as Messiah something that eliminates one's Jewish identity. I could not find any results from past surveys to where this question was asked.

Some people will look at this number and say it is still a minority, however, when you look at the bigger picture, I believe this number is higher now, then it has ever been. Factor in an additional 6% that don't know and the door opens a little more.

40%

This is a significant statement.

Ultimately what this survey does is confirm the JCA's concerns regarding threats of assimilation of the Jewish community and its identity.

I had conveyed to the incoming President of the JCA that as a Messianic Jewish Synagogue, we are not a threat to the community in “converting” people away, but that the threat already exists. In reopening our dialog after the summer, I sent him some snippets and my thoughts. This is his response...

“Yes I did see this study in the NY times last week . Very interesting particularly as it relates to your situation. At my meeting this week with the executive director, I plan to bring the study up. I have given some thought about Kehillah Portland's place in Maine's Jewish community and discussed with a few people who are much more learned than I who do not agree that a person can be Jewish if they believe that Jesus is the Messiah(probably in the 60%). I think they will find the Pew results somewhat surprising. It seems to be a polarizing issue and a difficult one. I will be in touch soon to talk with you again about it.

A Different Romans Road:

What does all this mean for you as an individual and Kehillah Portland as a congregation...

Ultimately, it means that doors are being opened.

Our purpose is extremely focused, but this is just as important whether you are Jewish or not.

In Sha'ul's writings, he uses Jew and Gentile together in the same sentence 7 times, 5 of which come from his comprehensive letter to the Roman community.

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."

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 3:20 For in his sight no one alive will be considered righteous on the ground of legalistic observance of Torah commands, because what Torah really does is show people how sinful they are.

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 10:10 For with the heart one goes on trusting and thus continues toward righteousness, while with the mouth one keeps on making public acknowledgment and thus continues toward deliverance.

Rom 10:11 For the passage quoted says that everyone who rests his trust on him will not be humiliated.

Rom 10:12 That means that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — Adonai is the same for everyone, rich toward everyone who calls on him,

Rom 10:13 since everyone who calls on the name of Adonai will be delivered.

Gal 3:25 But now that the time for this trusting faithfulness has come, we are no longer under a custodian.

Gal 3:26 For in union with the Messiah, you are all children of God through this trusting faithfulness;

Gal 3:27 because as many of you as were immersed into the Messiah have clothed yourselves with the Messiah, in whom

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.

This dynamic of Jew and Gentile together is what the Gospel is all about. You can't have one without the other and vice versa.

Once separate from the world, Adonai is now calling the nations to come along side the Jewish people.

Yeshua spent His time primarily in Judea, but He instructed His talmadim to go to the nations...

Luk 24:45 Then he opened their minds, so that they could understand the Tanakh,

Luk 24:46 telling them, "Here is what it says: the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day;

Luk 24:47 and in his name repentance leading to forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed to people from all nations, starting with Yerushalayim.

This dynamic of Jew and Gentile together indicates one of unity.

Someone posed the question...Where's the unity?

In order for there to be unity within the body of Messiah there must be agreement rather than "agreeing to disagree"

Ultimately, there will not be unity in the body until Messiah returns and deals with the mess that currently ensues.

Just looking at the church side of things, not even taking into account the stark contrast of the Messianic Jewish movement, you can't even obtain agreement from within a single denomination, let alone different denominations. We have challenges as well, regarding a meeting of the minds. There is a common Jewish saying - ask three Rabbis - get four opinions.

In order for there to be unity, decisions will need to be made. What is right? Who is willing to admit that they are wrong regarding their understanding of scripture?

Is anything possible? Certainly!!!

However, there needs to be humble hearts and not prideful egos.

I find it interesting...

Eph 4:4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as when you were called you were called to one hope.

Everyone claims to be following the Ruach ha Kodesh, the Holy Spirit, yet there is such diversion. I will state that there are many who think they are following the Spirit of Adonai, but really are not. One such test to know if you are or are not is weighing your progress against the Scriptures. I can also tell you right now, that there are many things being done in the church not supported by scripture. The other challenge is how people learn and understand scripture. There are many erroneous teachings that are considered foundational, yet totally wrong.

So, in order to move towards unity, the change that needs to occur first is in how scripture is understood and ultimately taught. Here is the mountain that needs to be moved.

Why are you here?

You are likely here, because you have been lacking in your walk...something has been missing.

Sometimes you don't know what it is until you actually find it.

Everyone is here for their own reason or reasons. The point is you are here and borrowing a thought from Jeri's drash, you are not "Walking Dead" but rather alive and growing deeper in your faith.

In conveying the results of this survey, I would like to encourage each and everyone of you, that Adonai is moving in such a way that doors are being opened.