

# OIM UPDATE

March 2017

There is something about this time of the year that reminds me of the “seasons of life” which continue in clockwork like fashion, to spring forth life and renewed vigor to pursue the Holy One of Israel. Perhaps it was a recent birthday, coupled with attending a Messianic Jewish conference and a congregational leadership retreat, in consecutive weekends, which all combined to make me reconsider these memorable statements from the Preacher in the Book of Ecclesiastes:

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace” (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).

Without getting too philosophical or overly dramatic, there is definitely a personal benefit from taking some “time of reflection,” to simply meditate upon God’s Word, as the Holy Spirit brings it to mind. In this case, I have been reminded of the timely cycles or events of life that occur for every soul on the planet we call home.

Thankfully, for those inclined to follow the Torah reading patterns established by the Jewish Sages, to inculcate every generation with the wisdom found in the instruction given to Moses, there are annual reminders of the Almighty’s faithfulness to His people. Consequently this month, we conclude the Book of Exodus, reconsidering the deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt, and when they receive the nascent instructions on how to establish the holy nation of priests:

“Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel” (Exodus 19:5-6).

In addition this month, our methodical study of the miraculous Exodus events is interspersed with another deliverance story, when the Book of Esther is considered and *Purim* or the Feast of Lots is celebrated. Once again, the Creator God demonstrated His sovereign will for the children of Israel, as they avoided potential annihilation from the ancient Persian Empire. So, it is extremely important for modern-day followers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to reflect upon the “times and seasons” of life found in the Holy Scriptures, being continually cognizant of the ancient and modern realities of Israel’s (and God’s) persistent foes. After all, the obstinate Enemy of our souls has always used people like the Amalekites to destroy those who have been called to bring the light of truth. In fact, it is clearly stated that after Moses declared the Holy One as a banner over Israel, the harassment from the Amalekites will continue forever:

**“Moses built an altar and named it The LORD is My Banner; and he said, ‘The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation’” (Exodus 17:15-16).**

Therefore, let us all be persistent in our intercessory prayers, as we reflect upon historical occurrences, and present realities! 2017 is a year of significant anniversaries for the State of Israel and the liberation of Jerusalem, which will keep Israel in the media focus throughout the year. It is our fervent prayer that despite the attempts of nefarious interests to do harm to Israel, we will all redouble our prayers for protection for those in positions to lend help and security. We know from past experience that as the Lord continues to bring His people together in harmony, the Evil One continues to prowl about as a lion seeking to devour any susceptible to his wiles.

This month’s lead article by J.K. McKee has been entitled, **“Purim, Haman, and Anti-Semitism.”** As he continues to expand the Messianic Apologetics division of Outreach Israel, there is also a change in our service narrative that will begin to come into focus. In the past, our ministry has tended to almost exclusively be focused on helping non-Jewish families and individuals, like ours, get acclimated to the Messianic movement and experience, as they embrace their faith heritage in Israel’s Scriptures. Because of our growing associations with Messianic Jewish Believers and leaders over the past few years, we will be focusing more efforts on how we can make a substantial contribution to Jewish outreach and evangelism, particularly in the apologetics of Yeshua’s Messiahship and Bible difficulties. This is very exciting! Please continue to support our efforts with your financial contributions! Without your offerings and gifts, it would be difficult to dedicate the time and energy to produce our many educational resources.

Thank you in advance for your partnership with our ministry endeavors!

**“The LORD bless you, and keep you; the LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace” (Numbers 6:24-26).**

Shalom and blessings,

Mark Huey

# PURIM, HAMAN, AND ANTI-SEMITISM

by J.K. McKee

This month the worldwide Jewish community will be commemorating the Festival of Lots or *Purim*. As many of us know, *Purim* is a time when the account of the Book of Esther is read, there is typically some kind of congregational play where young people dress up as Biblical characters, and there is a great deal of food. *Purim* is a calendrical reminder that one month later, we will be remembering the Passover. There are many important themes of *Purim*, as witnessed in the Book of Esther, which force us as God's people to not only consider the ancient Jewish exile from the Promised Land, but also how anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism is a blight that humanity has been suffering from for well over two millennia.

I have already written many things about *Purim* and the Book of Esther, which are included in our ministry's *Messianic Spring Holiday Helper* publication, as well as in *A Survey of the Tanach for the Practical Messianic*. As someone who has been involved in Biblical Studies, my approach to reading the Book of Esther is not guided by me trying to look for esoteric or hidden meanings behind the characters of Queen Esther, King Ahasuerus (Xerxes), Mordecai, or Haman. While there are points of irony within the account of Esther, and one can surely see the sovereign direction of the God of Israel behind the events—my interest is understandably more focused on the historicity of the events, and how we learn from them moving forward in time. There certainly was an Ancient Persian Empire that controlled what we today call the Middle East, and into parts of both India and the Eastern Mediterranean. There certainly was a large displaced population of Jews, living in exile away from their home in the Land of Israel.

At the end of 2003, I can recall some of the unexpected reactions that many people in the Messianic community had, when *The Jewish Study Bible* by Oxford University Press was released. Even today, the engagement level that many Messianic people have tends to begin and end with the resources produced by Orthodox Jewish publishers such as ArtScroll—which definitely sits at the (far) Right end of the spectrum. When *The Jewish Study Bible* was released, it was acclaimed to be a compendium of Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Jewish scholarship; what it ended up being was a Jewish edition of another *Oxford Annotated Bible*, meaning that it was very liberal. Its introduction for the Book of Esther approached Esther as though the story were ahistorical at best, but in all likelihood an ancient novella akin to modern day soap operas, broadly fiction, with its inclusion in the Hebrew canon of the Tanach to be somewhat spurious. I certainly believe that the Book of Esther contains reliable history, and should not be removed from the Biblical canon—but historical issues in the Book of Esther are actually some of the least of our challenges when approaching the Tanach.

I seriously wonder if some of the conclusions drawn by those who treat the Book of Esther as being ahistorical, are affected by how *Purim* can often be com-

memorated today in various settings. None of us should have any real problems with having a good time, and even putting on a dramatic presentation, in costume, of various Biblical stories. Dramatic presentations will necessarily invite embellishing a few things here or there. Ultimately though, the account of Esther chosen to be the wife of King Ahasuerus, Mordecai's position in the Persian court, Haman's manipulations—and God working behind the scenes through people strategically positioned—is something very serious and sober. **There is no denying the fact that the account of the Book of Esther, forces each of us to consider the dastardly effects of anti-Semitism throughout world history.** There has been a concentrated effort by the enemy to see that the Jewish people are eradicated—mainly because without the Jews, you have no people who can bear forth to God's faithfulness of a Messiah to come.

When I was living in Central Florida from 2001-2012, my local Messianic congregation did have a customary *Purim* play, where the younger people, and a few of the adults, dressed up as characters from the Book of Esther. Periodically, however, the traditional play would be supplemented with another presentation: **Hamans throughout history.** In the traditional *Purim* play, the figure of the evil Haman is typically booed. Haman dresses up in all black, with some kind of an elaborate headpiece, and he is played by someone who has to give him sinister characteristics. *And yes, for the record, I have played Haman on multiple occasions.* Even though at the end of the record of Esther, Haman is put to death using the same mechanisms with which he sought to exterminate the Jews—anyone who reads history, is quite consciously aware of how anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism did not die with Haman. What many would rightly classify as “the spirit of Haman,” a chief demonic principality which seeks for the annihilation of the Jewish people, has been passed down among many willing vessels to our present day.

So, assuming that in attending a *Shabbat* service during the week of *Purim*, and witnessing the younger people and a few adults seemingly make fun of themselves as they go through the story of Esther—is the story of Esther to just be something where we have a good laugh, and then eat 250-calorie Hamentashen cookies afterwards? I am hardly someone who is against having a good time, but as I recall from the Hamans throughout history presentation, the customary *Purim* play only gives one-half of the story. How do we move forward with it?

When we contemplate the figure of Haman in the Persian court, we see the ultimate opportunist. Haman uses his subordinates to help elevate himself, and he manipulates the Persian king to acquire more and more power. One wonders if Haman ever saw himself deposing King Ahasuerus to become king himself, but what was more likely is that Haman was positioning himself to be the major power behind the throne, with Ahasuerus a puppet to do his bidding. Haman is stated to be a descendant of Agag (Esther 3:1), who was spared by King Saul (1 Kings 15:8), which can provide for some interesting speculation. But, Haman is ultimately someone intimately involved in the high political affairs of the Persian Empire. And, Haman is someone who found the Jew Mordecai to be a significant threat to him (Esther 3:2). Rather than simply seeking revenge on Mordecai for not showing him the respect he believed he was due, Haman seeks to eliminate all of the Jews in the Persian Empire (Esther 3:6).

The customary *Purim* play usually ends with two young people dressed as

Persian soldiers, marching out a much larger adult, who will be hanged on his own gallows. When I played Haman years ago, I was marched out to the back of the congregation—where I then joined six others, as the second presentation was getting ready. Our congregational leader made a few observations about the fun and humor everyone was able to participate in, but that there was more to be heard. That the spirit of Haman lives on, in not just many people—but specific people in positions of great power in history—has to be recognized. And so, he invited the “Hamans throughout history” to come up and be introduced, with their various profiles as evidence of the great scourge of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism.

While “Hamans throughout history” was supposed to be a very serious and probing presentation, it too embellished things. As I was obviously the first to walk out in front of the congregation, I recall back in 2004 how *The Imperial March* from *Star Wars* was specifically chosen to be played. Everyone had just “met” the **Persian Haman** in the preceding *Purim* play, but there was a recounting of who Haman was, his hatred for Mordecai and the Jewish people, and how he met his fate. And then, six others in costume were announced, one by one, to come up to the congregation and be introduced.

The next person who was announced to the congregation was a **Greek**, but more specifically someone who represented the Seleucids who invaded the Land of Israel, and sacrificed pigs at the Temple in Jerusalem. Because *Chanukah* had taken place only months before, the account of the Maccabean resistance was fresh on everyone’s minds. The Seleucid Greeks wanted the Jewish people to give up on the Torah, circumcision, the Sabbath, kosher dietary laws, and be assimilated into Greek culture and religion. Those who did not comply were put to death. While not the blanket extermination intended by the Persian Haman, the insidious nature of Antiochus Epiphanes, and in wanting to see the Jewish people annihilated by assimilation into the wider Hellenistic milieu, was well taken. Even today, the biggest threat to the survival of the Jewish people is not necessarily Middle Eastern terrorism, but instead is in Jews wanting to give up on their heritage, and completely assimilate into wider Gentile society.

The third person announced was a **Roman**, but someone who specifically was in costume as a Roman emperor. While Judea was a province of the Roman Empire, and Judaism was a legal and protected religion exempt from Caesar worship, on the whole the Jewish population within the Roman Empire tended to be a tolerated minority at best, but frequently discriminated against. The temptation to assimilate into paganism was always present, which led to Jewish zealots and others wanting to see the national integrity of the Jewish people preserved, by political independence. As readers of the Apostolic Scriptures are innately aware, as the good news of Yeshua was spreading out in the First Century, the tensions which led to the Jewish revolt and the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. to Rome, were also building. The relationship between not only the Jewish people and the Romans—but the Believers in Israel’s Messiah—substantially deteriorated in the centuries following.

The fourth person introduced to the congregation was a **Roman Catholic inquisitor**. The common Jewish hostility to Roman Catholicism is very palpable. In the case of the Spanish Inquisition, its major purpose was to identify and con-

vert those it considered to be heretics, so that the Kingdom of Spain could be a fully Catholic society. In the Sixteenth Century, this mainly included those of the nascent Protestant movement, which rejected Rome and papal authority—and the longstanding Jewish population, which had once flourished and thrived in Spain. The figure of the inquisitor invokes not only forced conversions of Jews to Roman Catholicism, but also the forced renunciation of various converts' Jewish heritage via the compulsion to eat pork. But most especially, the figure of the inquisitor represents how there were Jewish people tortured to death by those claiming to represent the Messiah of Israel.

The fifth person introduced before the congregation was dressed up as **Adolf Hitler**. While the anti-Semitism of the Greek, the Roman, and the Inquisitor was less specific, the anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany was self-explanatory. A number of the factors leading to the rise of Hitler, including the anti-Semitism of German Reformer Martin Luther, and how the German Jews deeply integrated into German society were utterly betrayed by their Christian neighbors, were explained. More than anything else, the systematic extermination of the Jews of Europe, enacted by the most advanced society on Earth at the time—in terms of its science, technology, and philosophy—was graphically portrayed on the screen. The Holocaust and 6 million Jewish dead, to be sure, was *the great tragedy* of the Twentieth Century. But the Holocaust was perpetrated not just by some sadistic fascist state; it was perpetrated by those with all of the advancements and education of the age, *and absolutely no ethics or humanity*. And to be sure, the Holocaust was committed by many people claiming to be followers of Israel's Messiah.

The sixth person introduced before the congregation was a **Muslim terrorist**. Since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, modern Israel has not at all had an easy relationship with the surrounding Muslim countries. When I first started being involved with Hamans throughout history in 2004-2005, someone dressed up as Yassir Arafat came up, with a brief discussion and slides presented on the PLO and Intifada. After 2005, someone dressed up as Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the former president of Iran (2005-2013), came up—carrying a briefcase labeled as “Bomb,” with a radiation symbol on it no less! In this case, the point made was not only that the State of Israel had Muslim neighbors wishing its destruction, but at least one in Iran actively out to build a nuclear weapon. And to further intensify the point, President Ahmadinejad is technically a Persian. But, not only is Islamic terrorism and anti-Zionism a threat to Israel and the Jewish people, it is a threat to the Western world.

At this point in the Hamans throughout history, it can be legitimately interjected as to who else in past human affairs could have been brought before the audience. Seeing how my congregational leader, David Pavlik, had a huge walrus moustache, I actually thought about him dressing up as either Joseph Stalin or Saddam Hussein! You could probably have had a white supremacist or KKK member, or going back even before Haman, have had various Egyptians who oppressed Ancient Israel. But, being pressed for time, only one more person filled with “the spirit of Haman” could come before the audience: “**He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time**” (Daniel 7:25).

Not too unlike the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, the seventh figure is presented before the congregation. The music is changed to be far more eerie and bone chilling. The final Haman is dressed in all-black suit, and wears a hockey mask, obscuring his face. The specific identity of this final person is unknown, but he has been foretold in the Holy Scriptures. The final figure who is brought before the congregation, is none other than he "who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). The final Haman, the ultimate enemy of the Jewish people and the God of Israel, will be the antimessiah or antichrist. The challenge is put before the Messianic congregation to not just be able to identify and resist this person when he comes on the scene—but to now do everything humanly possible to increase one's loyalty to the God of Israel, and support the Jewish people. For, as the antimessiah comes on the scene, so will there be a massive influx of Jewish people to the community of faith (cf. Romans 11:25-26ff)!

After moving back to North Texas in 2012, I do not know if the Hamans throughout history presentation is still conducted in my previous Messianic assembly. My current congregation, like many other Messianic Jewish congregations, to be sure, holds a *Purim* play for our *Shabbat* morning service. The sure advantage, of at least sitting down and recognizing that there has been a demonic principality operative throughout many centuries since the deliverance of the Jewish people during the time of Esther and Mordecai—opposing the God of Israel, His ways, and seeking the eradication of Jews—should cause us to consider our role as Messianic people for the future. The story of Esther does not end with the hanging of Haman. It might be said that the story of Esther will only end when "the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone" (Revelation 19:20).

Anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism have been around for a very, very long time. Anti-Semitism was around centuries before the arrival of Yeshua the Messiah. All of us need to be aware of the blatant forces of anti-Semitism, found in the Hitlers, Arafats, and Ahmadinejads of the world. All of us need to stand in support of our local Jewish communities, and find ourselves as eager Zionists in friendship with the State of Israel. But what about the more subtle forms of anti-Semitism that can be encountered? While we know that many evangelical Christians today have a grossly under-whelming knowledge and appreciation for their Jewish Roots in the Synagogue—are you aware that many who consider themselves to be "Hebrew Roots" Believers do not have that much more knowledge or appreciation of Judaism?

One of the more obvious things that we have to encourage people to do, is read the Scriptures more intelligibly. Consider these two different versions of 1 Thessalonians 2:14-15, from two widely accessible Christian Bible versions:

"For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they *did* from the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus

and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men" (NASU).

"For you, brothers, became imitators of God's churches in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, since you have also suffered the same things from people of your own country, just as they did from the Jews who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and persecuted us; they displease God and are hostile to everyone" (HCSB).

The big difference here, in English reading, is whether or not a non-restrictive comma should be placed between vs. 14 and 15: "the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus" *or* "the Jews who killed the Lord Jesus." Anyone who reads the Gospels in context, knows that it was only certain Jews, in the religious and political leadership, who were responsible for the death of Yeshua. Likewise, Paul himself further says in 1 Corinthians 2:8, "the rulers of this age...crucified the Lord of glory," as the Romans also bore specific responsibility for executing the Messiah. In 1 Thessalonians 2:14-15, Paul is associating the Jewish religious leaders who were responsible for Yeshua's death, with the Jewish religious leaders in Thessalonica, who saw him and his party ejected from the city (Acts 17:1-15). A smart reader can recognize this sort of detail, as there were thousands of Jews living in the Land of Israel, and certainly in the greater Diaspora, who had never even heard of Yeshua of Nazareth and cannot be held at specific fault for seeing Him unjustly condemned to death. But an ignorant person from the Middle Ages would have used 1 Thessalonians 2:14-15 as a means to hunt down and persecute European Jews, blaming all Jews everywhere and at all times for the unjust trial and execution of Yeshua. **Do not be surprised if the latter approach experiences some revival in the days ahead.**

This month, an even more perditious form of anti-Semitism will manifest itself across many sectors of the independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement, largely composed of non-Jews—who while having embraced their faith heritage in the Tanach Scriptures, tend to be very suspicious, and at times hostile, to the Jewish Synagogue. To be fair, a number of the Hebrew Roots associations you will encounter embrace the Festival of *Purim*, and do their best to stand against anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism. They rightly believe that there are many lessons to be learned from the Book of Esther, they value the traditions and customs of *Purim*, and they are supportive of Zionism and the State of Israel. But many other people in the Hebrew Roots movement do not support *Purim*. In fact, they believe that Mordecai's establishment of *Purim* as a holiday to be commemorated by the Jewish people, who were saved from extermination (Esther 9:20-22), is to be construed as "adding" to God's Instruction in the Torah, and that *Purim* is to be rejected. I have even seen a few claim, just like many liberal theologians, that the Book of Esther is ahistorical and should not be canon.

If I want to see anything change this year, I want to see our appreciation for the themes of *Purim* deepen and increase. I do not want it to begin and end with a child's play; I want to see more congregations having presentations on Hamans throughout history. I want the themes of God's deliverance behind the scenes through good people, and the vigilance we all must maintain against anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism, be carried throughout the year.

# MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS UPDATE

March 2017

Dear Friends:

I believe that this past month has inaugurated a significantly important season of ministry for Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics. The biggest development of February was the launch of the Messianic Apologetics app for Android. Be praying that the iPhone and iPad version will be available sometime this month, as there are certain approvals which have to be issued. (As an iPhone user, no one wants this more than me!) The Messianic Apologetics app—and with it the ability to send push notifications—has already helped see our website hits go up between 400-500% per day. Of course, this also requires that we send out around twenty posts per day, featuring them on: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and the App.



This new thrust of seeing many of our articles, FAQ entries, and Bible studies featured, has certainly focused my attention in what I want the Messianic Apologetics website and app to become. That I am a person who “stays busy,” with something generally in pre-production, production, and post-production—along with various “open files”—seems pretty obvious. Yet, with the new features that we have started to integrate, one might think that because we have so many teachings already available, that we should not have to spend too much time focusing on new topics or studies. The fact is: completed projects naturally lead to new projects. I am continually astounded by the reality that our broad Messianic faith community has been literally “scraping by” on so many issues, that the enemy has indeed been able to take advantage of. In these Last Days, and in the current season of relative religious freedom, I want to be able to take advantage of the tools and gifts that God has given me to the fullest extent possible, while I still can, *without burning out*. **I want to facilitate stability among Messianic people.**

When Outreach Israel Ministries started in 2003, we cast a pretty big net as to what the Father wanted to do with us. We were surely involved in some very good things, and then some other things that we are pleased in hindsight went nowhere. For the bulk of the 2000s and into the 2010s, our narrative was mainly one of us being an educational Messianic ministry, with a primary focus on us helping the non-Jewish Believers God was drawing into the Messianic movement, just as He had drawn in our family. Much of our ministry has been in testifying to others what our experience has been, in leaving evangelical Christianity and entering into the Messianic movement, and adopting a lifestyle of Torah obedience as the Holy Spirit more consciously wrote the commandments onto our hearts and minds (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27). We believe that families such as ours, are precursors to many more non-Jewish individuals and families who will become Messianic, as the prophecies of the nations coming to Zion to be taught God’s Instruction (Micah 4:1-3; Isaiah 2:2-4) come into greater focus as the Messiah’s return draws near.

Moving back to the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex four years ago, and getting reintegrated into the Messianic Jewish movement, necessarily means that our narrative has changed. As a ministry Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics definitely has a mission in helping the non-Jewish Believers that God has directed into the Messianic movement. But the Messianic movement originally started out as a vehicle for the evangelism of Jewish people, with the message of Israel's Messiah. The Messianic movement originally began as a movement of Jewish Believers, not only receiving the salvation of Israel's Messiah, but not having to give up on their Jewish heritage and see themselves assimilated into the Church system. The primary focus of the Messianic movement has always been the Romans 11:26 trajectory of "all Israel will be saved," which necessarily involves seeing a massive number of Jewish people come to faith in Yeshua the Messiah. This is not something, lamentably, that the independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement has been too concerned with.

Over the years, it has bothered me, at times, that the name of our ministry was **Outreach Israel**, and yet the situation and sphere of influence into which God had placed us, was mainly in helping non-Jewish individuals and families get acclimated to the Messianic movement. With a change in geographical location, and new technologies being able to be employed, we are now in a different sphere of influence. And, Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics are definitely going to begin to make our contribution to the Jewish mission, using the gifts and talents and abilities God has given us. The same scholarship, attention to detail, and fairness that you have seen us employ for issues such as Torah validity or in writing commentaries on the Pauline letters, will also be seen in us addressing the theological issues that very much involve Jewish outreach and evangelism.

This year, a lengthy resource in *Salvation on the Line: The Nature of Yeshua and His Divinity* will be finally released, in two volumes. As this is being completed, succeeding volumes in this series are now being planned. These will naturally include discussions on the Messiahship of Yeshua, how the Apostolic Scriptures (NT) employ the Tanach (OT), and various Bible difficulties stemming from both ancient history and contemporary science. Issues like whether Yeshua of Nazareth is the prophesied Messiah and whether or not the New Testament is anti-Semitic, obviously affect the Messianic movement's mission to present Jewish people with the good news of Yeshua. Issues about Bible difficulties affect all people who encounter the Holy Scriptures, especially as the return of Yeshua draws closer. But, this can especially present some unique challenges in matters of Jewish outreach, given how many Jewish people are well educated professionals (especially scientists), and can frequently be quite liberal at that. *These are obviously all multi-year assignments before me.* I will be sure to give you regular updates as things come together on these new fronts!

Even though it can be quite overwhelming to think of all of the new tasks that need to be performed—I am encouraged that the Lord has steadily brought us to the point in our ministry development, where I believe we will be able to help *everyone* in today's Messianic movement.

Until next month... J.K. McKee



