



DUAL EXPRESSION CHURCHES

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Background:

The 1970s was the real launching of the Messianic Jewish movement in America. From America, this movement spread to the rest of the world. The basic conviction of the movement was that Jews who come to faith in Yeshua are called to identify and live as Jews. Different theological underpinnings were given for this conviction and there were different out-workings. Most did understand that Jewish life in the Messiah entailed embracing the Sabbath, the Feasts, Jewish liturgy, modern Messianic Jewish worship songs, Jewish dance and avoiding foods on the biblical list of forbidden foods. There was a great desire to see a people movement for Yeshua within the Jewish community. Evangelism was thus a strong motivation, but so was the fact that Jews are called to be Jewish, the saved remnant of Israel. Distinct congregations were considered essential because Jewish life in Yeshua required social reinforcement.

It is important to recognize that Messianic Jewish congregations were an expression of the need to fulfill the biblical mandate that Jews remain Jewish in the New Covenant. It was a practical response to the reality that churches generally did not understand or foster the Jewish life of their members; indeed, many were not in favor of Jewish life. Jewish commitment to most churches would lead to assimilation and diminishing the numbers of the Jewish people. The need for Jews to find inter-generational Jewish identity in Yeshua was clearly recognized. It should be recognized that although the congregations of the first century in Eretz Israel were Jewish congregations, the congregations planted in the Diaspora were Jewish and Gentile together. We read of no effort to plant separate congregations for Jews and Gentiles. However, because the congregations of the Diaspora looked to Jerusalem, and because many had a Jewish leadership contingent along with those Gentiles that had been part of synagogues (see the history in Acts), Jewish life would have been naturally maintained in a one new man context. I Cor. 7 notes that distinct callings were recognized in these congregations.

In the 1980s, the Messianic Jewish Congregational Movement in the Diaspora was primarily a Jewish movement. By the 1990s the Messianic Jewish Congregations were primarily Gentile in numbers. This had both good and bad dimensions. Those Gentiles who have a life calling to the Jewish people, and who seek to serve the Jewish people and to win them to Yeshua are a great blessing. They expand the witness potential of the movement. However, those Gentiles who are in the Messianic Congregations because they believe that the Messianic Jewish Congregation is the best and ideal form of a New Covenant Congregation do create many problems. Many of these folks do not understand the heritage of Christian Church streams and tend to be negative to the expressions of life in the Church world. Without understanding, even the Protestant Church is sometimes accused of being pagan and of keeping the wrong dates for feasts, and the wrong day for gathering and rest (Sunday). Of course, the right dating is a very dicey issue and some leading Jewish scholars today argue that the Church dating for Passover, First Fruits (resurrection) and Shavuot (Pentecost) is sometimes closer as the Temple

calendar was solar reconciled annually.

Two other problems are notable. Some Messianic Jewish congregations simply are not strong congregations. Their constituents are not the kind that will attract Jews and Jews who visit and see mostly Gentiles “doing Jewish” may well be put off though some may find this interesting or attractive. The idea of being indigenous in missions is that the community has people that are like those we seek to attract. For Jewish people, this often is not merely that they are looking for Jewish practice, but they are looking for Jews. They are also looking for people like them in professions and business. We often forget this. This explains to some degree that tens of thousands of Jews are in churches, some say far more than this. This is far more than in the Messianic Jewish congregations. Part of the reason is that they were brought to the Messiah by Christians in these churches who may not be clear about the calling to Jewish identity in the Bible. However, another reason is that they find more of their own kind on other levels in successful churches, more business people, doctors, lawyers, and professors. There are Messianic Congregations that are strong in this way as well, but they are the minority.

We do not want to lose these Jews in churches to the Jewish people. We do not want to diminish the numbers of the Jewish people. However, most of these Jews are not open to come out of their churches to Messianic Congregations.

Another question can also be posed, and that is what a Jew will see as more authentic. Here is a thought experiment. If a Jewish person comes to a Messianic Congregation and finds mostly Gentiles doing Jewish and a few Jews if that, will he gain a good first impression? This impression may or may not be able to be overcome. Now I am not arguing against such congregations. Where people are finding life and nurture, I support them. However, now picture that he is brought to a church with many Jews and finds that the Jews of that church are encouraged to maintain their Jewish life. Picture also that they have Jewish expression gatherings in the context of that church that celebrate the Feasts, that many keep the Sabbath, and that Jewish parents circumcise their sons to enter them into the Jewish covenant. Imagine that he meets Gentiles and Jews who seem like normal together people. The Jewish expressions may be in chavurah meetings (home groups) or in a weekly Jewish oriented service. He may also be given discipleship material that explains that the congregation believes that their Jewish members are called to identify and live as Jews for the enrichment of the whole congregation. Which will be less of a hindrance to him? I recognize that these are not the only two choices. The third are strong Messianic Jewish congregations that make great impressions on Jewish visitors; some have a large proportion of Jews and some have a majority of quality gentiles who are wise in their comportment.

Of course, such a congregation where it is the conviction of the community that its Jewish members are called to be Jewish, can be a challenge to Jewish believers in the churches that are assimilating without real understanding or with a false theology. If leaders of Churches came to this conviction, they could call their Jewish members to Jewish life and create structures and programs toward that end.

We have now identified some churches that are doing just this. Most of the ones I know are led by Jewish pastors, but there is one I know led by the pastor of a very successful church mostly of Gentiles. One has purchased an old and large synagogue, refurbished it and made it gorgeous. They have a weekly Jewish service with a Messianic Jewish leader who is mostly committed to the Jewish ministry.

However, for a dual expression congregation to succeed over the long haul there are several principles and cautions that need to be given. The key to it is the understanding and commitment of the dual expression pastor.

Key Principles in Dual Expression Churches

Dual expression churches may exist under one incorporation or ultimate organization and eldership or may carve out two leaderships that are integrated in defined ways. They may be one leadership in one building, may have separate incorporations with some leaders serving both or the dual expression may take other forms. The key to dual expression is that the head leader is clear in conviction and has significant understanding of Jewish life and calling and deeply values Jewish expression while at the same time has a significant understanding and commitment to the value of historic Christian expressions. Dual expression is just that; that one gathering is fully Christian with a Jewish roots understanding of the Bible, and the other is a fully Messianic Jewish expression. The people who prefer one or the other are taught to value the other.

It is important in this regard that people learn to compare apples to apples and not apples to oranges. What I mean is that many Gentiles who think that the Messianic Jewish congregation is the ideal form of the Church think this because of an insufficient understanding, education or experience in the heritage of the Church. Today, many contemporary expressions of Christianity have no rooting. The songs were recently written. There are few verses and little depth of content. They are cut off from the great content of historic Christianity. Therefore, when they compare Messianic Judaism and the contemporary Christianity they have known, Christianity comes out badly. In Messianic Judaism they find a continuity of rooting where they are saying prayers that were said anywhere from 3,500 years ago, or from the time of Yeshua, and that are many centuries old. In the Feasts they find numerous traditions of depth that give guidance as to how to celebrate, though much Yeshua centered content needs to be added. Christianity also has depth of rooted expression that is from the Apostles, the Church Fathers and then throughout history. Some Christians may have come from Catholic or Orthodox backgrounds and have judged these expressions as compromised with paganism. While some of these judgments may be a misunderstanding, they then reject these expressions and compare them to Messianic Judaism which looks pure and rightly rooted, with historic pagan Christianity (in their view) and shallow contemporary Christian expression and again choose Messianic Judaism as the ideal expression of the New Covenant. We should note that if Messianic Judaism embraced the whole of Orthodox Judaism there would also be much that is objectionable. The main issue is that the person who disdains the Christian heritage does not know the depth of the

Protestant Christian heritage in its many varieties. These factors are important in creating the kind of dual expression that is really more trustworthy. It is an expression that honors both the Jewish and Christian heritage where it is coherent to the Bible.

The Enriching Christian Heritage

I want to take one example, and that is Christmas and the birth of Yeshua. Those who want to bash Christianity seek to say that Christmas is a pagan holiday. While I am not arguing for a Messianic Jewish emphasis on Christmas, I think it is important that we understand the richness of the meaning of this season for true Christians. The traditions of the four weeks of advent leading up to the nativity are alive with anticipation. A new candle is lit every week. There is great celebration that the incarnation has taken place. The tradition of bringing festive joy through caroling in various neighborhoods, to nursing homes, to shut ins, and just in public places calls attention to the great act of God in Messiah Yeshua. In addition, the content of the carols for the most part is spiritual, deep, and true. A world without this heritage would be less rich. Some may argue that the date of the birth of Yeshua was not December 25, and that the date had pagan origins. That is not the main point to me; but the point is what is celebrated. What is celebrated is thoroughly biblical in meaning. Messianic Jews, despite seeking to bring Yeshua into the meaning of Sukkot and or Chanukah, have not developed near the depth and wonder that is part of the Christian celebration. Christmas has its Jewish roots in the biblical readings for the season, the very Semitic stories in Luke and Matthew that speak of a Jewish young virgin, betrothal, circumcision, the dedication of the first born (the *pidyan ha ben*), and the amazing accounts of the prophecies of Zechariah and Simeon. The texts emphasize with clarity that the coming of Yeshua gives certain hope concerning the fulfillment of the destiny of the Jewish people. I might say that there is more emphasis on these Jewish texts in the Christian liturgical tradition than we yet find in the Messianic Jewish liturgical tradition. My view is that dual expression will not work unless the leader of the dual expression congregation understands to some degree the great depth of the Christian heritage and the great depth of the Jewish heritage when brought to coherence with the New Covenant.

Much of the Christian heritage is Jewish rooted. The issue is that those roots have been obscured or unrecognized. Jewish rooted practices have been Christianized. I herein give some more examples of the richness of the Christian heritage with its Jewish rooting. Good Friday and Easter are good examples. The tradition leading up to Good Friday is one of fasting and preparation. During Holy week Christians who follow their heritage have gatherings that relive the experience of Yeshua and the disciples in the last week. This emphasis of reliving and the use of imagination is very strong in the historic Christian heritage and is parallel to our reliving the Passover-Exodus events. The elements of the Passover celebration as it was in the first century is marked well in the Gospel accounts. Yeshua is gathered with his disciples in a Passover meal in the Synoptics and the traditional elements are distributed. He uses them as symbols for a new meaning, his body and blood that

are given for us. The celebration of the communion connected to Holy Week is very solemn. Good Friday brings solemn readings from the accounts of his trial and crucifixion. Sadly, many contemporary Christians are cut off from this heritage. However, we should note the obscuring which a dual expression congregation will remove. It will be clear that Yeshua celebrated a Passover meal remembering the Passover and Exodus from Egypt to introduce the theme of his Passover and Exodus. Good Friday is the deepest time of self examination and the closest thing in the Christian tradition to Yom Kippur, the day of Atonement in Judaism.

Resurrection day is the most joyful day on the calendar. I would imagine that dual expression congregations would gather as one on this day. Sun rise services recalling those who went to the tomb early in the morning, the proclamation that Messiah (Christ) is risen, and the singing of glorious hymns of His resurrection and our resurrection are the most joyful and uplifting in the whole year. This is a Jewish Feast. By some calendar theories, according to Elat Mazir of Hebrew University, the day of resurrection on the Christian calendar is closer most years to the right day than the Rabbinic dating. Yes, we would prefer it not be called Easter. However, again the point is the meaning. Again, the Jewish roots should be unveiled; that this is the Feast of First fruits and our resurrection is anticipated.

The Church also celebrates the Feast of Shavuot, or Pentecost. The hymns, readings and messages on Pentecost Sunday emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit. This is very Jewish in rooting, since the day recalls Acts 2 and the Jewish Feast taking place in Jerusalem. Again the veil does need to be removed. It should be known, as many scholars teach, that the Jewish believers in Yeshua were meeting in the Temple, probably Solomon's Portico, when the Spirit came upon them. This is why so many could rush toward them and hear them speaking in tongues and then hear the Gospel message spoken by Peter. The New Covenant Temple filled with the Spirit was given birth in the ancient Jewish Temple. Connecting to Jewish roots will adjust the way the Christian heritage is presented, but it will still be the Christian heritage.

There is so much more that we can note that has its origins in Judaism. The symbols of the churches include an eternal light (*ner tamid* in Jewish Synagogues), and an altar reminiscent of the table of show bread, since Yeshua is our sacrifice, and on it are the elements of the bread and wine, the symbols of his sacrifice, the seven branched candelabra (*menorah*) and in some churches two pulpits, one for reading the Word (since the word itself stands above its exposition) and one for the sermon. This is also parallel to synagogue use. In some churches there is a processional with a very large Bible parallel to the processional with the Torah. The lectionary gives a set of set readings to cover much of the Bible during the year, and there are blessings before and after the readings! This sounds very much like the Synagogue. It is indeed from the Synagogue though the New Covenant Scriptures are central to the lectionary. The architecture of most classical churches preserves the three fold division of the ancient Temple, the outer court=the narthex, the inner court= the sanctuary where the people sit, and the front stage area where the elements of the Lord's supper are placed as a symbol of the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place.

The symbols of the architecture are to remind the gathering of believers that they are now the Temple when they meet and are in the sanctuary and they enter the Most Holy Place when they receive Communion. All of this is very Jewish in rooting. However, because there are also sometimes big crosses, a Jewish visitor misses all the Jewish elements that are present in the Church, because they are Christianized. While the Christian heritage will not be the primary expression of Messianic Jews, it should be understood and appreciated and Christians need to understand their heritage from a Jewish contextual place and with gratitude. Even the creeds of the Church are defended as basically Jewish in content and from Scripture in the argument of Oskar Skarsaune in *In the Shadow of the Temple*. Creeds are declarations that release great power through faith proclamation.

I want to close this section with one more paragraph about the Communion Service. The astute observer will note that the Church rightly connected the Communion not only to Passover, but to Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), but again this is obscured. The book of Hebrews gives an exposition of the meaning of Yeshua's sacrifice and His High Priesthood in the light of Yom Kippur. While in Judaism, the family table is like an altar, in the Christian tradition, the altar is the table where the elements are placed, connecting it to the symbol of the Most Holy Place and the meaning of Communion portrayed in Hebrews 8-10. In the most ancient churches, the priest in symbolism, went behind a veil and came forth with the elements that would not be mere elements when we partake. I know that this is a more controversial ancient tradition, still maintained in the Eastern Orthodox Church in its many ethnic expressions, but rightly or wrongly, the ancient churches did use even more of the symbolism of the ancient Jewish Temple in the vestments and rituals, from incense to an even more distinct Temple architecture.

The Enriching Messianic Jewish Heritage

The Messianic Jewish heritage adheres more closely to the Jewish calendar and the most ancient expressions of Judaism and seeks to bring out the fullness of Yeshua in that ancient heritage. While the Church emphasizes a weekly Sunday as the weekly day of resurrection celebration, a weekly first fruits celebration, the Messianic Jewish heritage emphasizes the Sabbath day as the day that symbolizes our entering into rest in him. All of the meaning of Yeshua's teaching on the Sabbath: healing, his being Lord of the Sabbath, and more are central to the day. In Judaism the Sabbath is a memorial of the Exodus, so for Messianic Jews the Sabbath is a symbol of his triumphant exodus from death to resurrection life. As divinity, He has work to do on the Sabbath that is parallel to his Father who sustains the universe on the Sabbath. Hebrews 4 is an important text. In addition, the Sabbath is full of eschatological meaning since it points to the Age to Come, and Age of Rest from all sorrow and sin, the Age of the Spirit.

All of the Feasts take on the note of eschatological victory. Messianic Jews celebrate Passover according to the Rabbinic calendar so as to be in sync with the usages of our people. No one knows the exact dating for sure. Passover celebrates the events in Egypt leading to the Exodus. The family and congregational gatherings use the

Jewish liturgical book called the Hagaddah. In addition to the traditional material which is usually abbreviated in Messianic Jewish circles, there is a wealth of material added that brings out the full meaning of Yeshua as our Passover Lamb and the one who gave his blood for us. Where the service is for believers in Yeshua, the broken bread after the dinner (*afikomen*) and the third cup of wine are taken after solemn reflection as the symbol of his body and blood given for us.

First Fruits on the Rabbinic Calendar is the day after Passover day, but this is probably mistaken and the celebration of his resurrection should be on the first day of the week during Passover week, the Feast of Unleavened bread. The Messianic Jewish community does not yet have a rich quality of celebration on a day given as Resurrection Day. Many years the Christian date is the same as the probably Biblical day. So a joint celebration with Jewish and Christian heritage elements could be very appropriate.

There are key liturgical texts for the weekly service. Despite some arguing that Judaism does not have creeds, this is false and many Jewish scholars have said the same. The Sh'ma from Deut. 6:4 ff is the basic creed of Judaism. It proclaims that God is One, our God alone and then notes that we are to teach loyalty to God to our children and constantly remind ourselves of this commitment by various memory means noted in the text. Messianic Jews usually add a confession of Yeshua as LORD to the Sh'ma part of the service. There are numerous texts that have probable origin in the Messianic Jewish community that serve as creeds or confessions, the first verses of I Cor. 15, the most ancient written confession, Phil. 2:5 ff, Hebrews 1, and others. Messianic Jews often add the commandment that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, this from the teaching of Yeshua on the two greatest commands in Mark 12. The Amidah, the prayer said standing is the other great confession of faith. It was contemporary to Yeshua and included at that time 18 prayers but also spoken in the form of a confession of faith with certainty of the fulfillment of what is prayed. I believe it functions as a confession of faith. A 19th prayer was added after the destruction of the Temple.

The weekly service in the Messianic Jewish congregations vary greatly. Some use more liturgy and some emphasize mostly new Messianic Jewish praise and worship songs; others include generic contemporary Christian worship pieces but that are fitting to a Messianic Jewish context. We do note that for many the Torah service with the songs and blessings before and after are a staple. Readings from the prophets and the New Covenant Scriptures are important. The Aaronic Benediction is almost universal. It should be noted that other benedictions from the New Covenant Scriptures which are used in the churches are also appropriate with the Aaronic. Other important prayers and hymns, the Adon Olam, the Kaddish that parallels the Our Father prayer of Yeshua, are sometimes used in memorial for mourners. The Alenu with the Hope of the world wide Kingdom of God to come, is also commonly used. There are Messianic Jewish versions and additions to these worship pieces. Many Messianic Jews do wear fringes on a prayer shawl that remind of us of our covenant obedience and priesthood. It is more common for

women now to wear a prayer shawl with fringes. As believing Gentiles are now part of the priesthood in Yeshua, communities vary as to whether Gentiles wear prayer shawls or fringes in the Messianic Jewish worship service.

The other Feasts of the Jewish calendar are full of Messianic meaning and there is an ease of connection to the fullness that Yeshua brings. Messianic Jews remember Israel and the harvest seasons as was originally part of the Feasts. Shavuot or Pentecost emphasizes the giving of the Law and for Messianic Jews, the emphasis of the Spirit connects us to Romans 8:4 where it is taught that only by the Spirit do we fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law.

The Fall Feasts are of great importance. The season begins with Yom Teruah, the Feast of the Blowing of the Shofar, on the first of the seventh month (Tishri) but also recognized as the first day of the first month of the ancient Near Eastern New Year, hence called Rosh Hoshana, celebrated as the anniversary of creation. The Feast emphasizes God's Kingship and the coming judgment. There is an emphasis on repentance as well. The sacrifice of Isaac is especially noted and is proclaimed as a point of appeal for the forgiveness of sins. There is a note on repentance and forgiveness for the whole 10 days from Rosh Hoshana to Yom Kippur. The content on God's mercy and grace as our only hope is outstanding. This is seen especially in the most popular prayer-song during these days, the Avinu Malkeinu, our Father and our King. The ease of adding Yeshua centered content is quite amazing. The sacrifice of Isaac leads to exposition on the sacrifice of Yeshua. The blowing of the Shofar on Rosh Hoshana is a herald of the coming of Yeshua as described in I Thess. 4, and I Cor. 15 which become prominent texts. More than any Church tradition, Rosh Hoshana is a Feast of the Second Coming.

The richness of Yom Kippur and all the symbolism of that day lead to a great emphasis on the sacrifice of Yeshua as our High Priest and sacrifice. Hebrews 8-10 is connected to Leviticus 16 as the most prominent texts of the day. Isaiah 53 is also quite universally used on this day in the Messianic community. The longest confession for sins in any liturgical tradition, the Al Het, (For the Sins) provides the very deepest level of self-searching. However, it is important to note that the prayers of confession on Yom Kippur are prayers for corporate Israel not merely individual in purpose. The liturgy of the Feasts is parallel to the Sabbath and includes the Sh'ma and the *Amidah* and other elements that are found in the daily and Sabbath services. Yom Kippur emphasizes the work of Yeshua and can be ended with Communion which in Israel is called the *Siudat Yeshua*, the supper of Yeshua.

The last major Feast is Sukkot, or Tabernacles. This Feast is a remembrance of the time in Egypt when we dwelt in tents. God provided all of our needs. So we are to remember that our provision is in God and not what we have stored up. In addition, we wave the species of the palm, willow and myrtle, and a fruit called an etrog to declare God's Kingship over all the directions of space and time. Zech. 14 says this Feast will include representatives of all the nations. The Sukkah we build is decorated and for a week, festive meals are taken in the Sukkah, as it is the largest

and most joyous harvest festival. Yeshua used the symbolism of Sukkot to declare that he was the water of life and the light of the World. Because of the harvest theme, we think it points to a world wide harvest in the last days. As the Feast celebrated by all nations in the Age to Come, the Feast lends itself to a great celebration of Messianic Jews and Christians together. Sukkot may have been the time of the birth of Yeshua, explaining why there was no room in the inns. So it is appropriate to remember the Incarnation at this season. This is the biblical calendar.

There are also minor Feasts that also have importance in the Jewish heritage. The Feast of Esther called Purim celebrating our deliverance during the Persian Empire is one. Hanukah which celebrates the great victory of the Maccabees in the wars of 165 BC against the Syrian-Greek Empire is another. The Temple was cleansed and rededicated. Israel had almost 80 years of independence. Hanukah is connected to the passages in John 10 on the good shepherd, for false shepherds were seeking to raise a rebellion against Rome, and Yeshua indicated it would be a true disaster to do so. These false shepherds, the zealots, sought to duplicate in their day the victories of the Maccabees. There were other false shepherds among the religious leaders. Yeshua as the true High Priest and Good Shepherd is a good theme. Hanukah was originally a belated celebration of Sukkot and like that Feast is 8 days in length. Some connect this Feast to the Incarnation and bring the birth of Yeshua into their celebration. There are other days recognized in Messianic Jewish Congregations. For example, the 9th of Av when both Temples were destroyed is very significant in Jewish thought. Many other tragedies in Jewish history took place on this date in the summer. Congregations fast and pray for redemption for Israel on such days. There is also Yom ha Shoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, and Israel Independence Day.

Communion in a Messianic Jewish Context

I have a conviction that Messianic Jewish expressions whether in dual expression churches or in Messianic Jewish congregations should have a strong emphasis on Communion or the Lord's Supper. I Cor. 11 makes it quite clear that this was not only an annual celebration. The text is in our earliest written New Testament book and reflects a very strong Jewish background. There is great renewal power in receiving the elements of the Messiah's Supper, including both spiritual and physical healing. In addition, showing the Lord's death may well have a spiritual warfare aspect since his death disarmed the powers of darkness (Col. 2). Participation in unity thus is a great protective covering for the community. In a Messianic Jewish celebration, the elements are always explained in their Passover context and Hebrew blessings precede the distribution of the elements. Some pass the elements to those seated in the sanctuary, some have people come forward. Some take it all at once and some take it one at a time from leaders in the front who distribute. Some vary in their presentation. The reading of I Cor. 11 with its explanation and warnings would be common to both Messianic Jewish and Christian practices. Communion can also be one of the joint times where people who favor one of the dual expressions come together in joint celebration. This is highly recommended

since the unity of the whole congregation can be celebrated and the Jewish dimensions added to the celebration are meaningful to all. Having led Communion in this way in many Christian contexts has always resulted in appreciation and I have never known any to be offended, but only enriched. I recommend that the people in both expressions find a way to celebrate at least monthly, whether in the distinct expressions, together or in both ways. The celebration really elevates Yeshua and his centrality.

Why Two Expressions?

To give full expression to the depth of the heritage of Messianic Judaism and Christianity can only be done if there are two expressions and cross fertilization by some attendance between the expressions. To try to have one expression will short change both traditions. Two expressions also maximize outreach to different people.

Jewish and Gentile Distinctions in Practice

One of the harder issues to grasp is that Jews and Gentiles generally have distinct callings. There is such a strong push to a unity that homogenizes. Yet Paul under divine inspiration calls the Jewish disciples of Yeshua the saved remnant (of Israel) which means they are still identifiably Jewish. (Romans 11:5) This saved remnant has a sanctifying effect on the rest of the nation (Romans 11: 16). They are a foreshadowing of all Israel being saved, (Rom. 11:26) and affirm that the Jewish people have a distinct and continuing gift and calling that is irrevocable. (Romans 11:29) Indeed in I Cor. 7 Paul says, “ But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him so walk. And so I ordain in all the churches. Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised.”

A dual expression congregation does not waver about the fact that its Jewish members are called to identify and live as Jews. For most Messianic Jews this is rooted in Torah and Jewish tradition so far as it coheres with the New Covenant order. Jewish parents will enter their children into God’s covenant with the Jewish people (Israel) by circumcising their boy babies on the 8th day and dedicating their girls as well. Gentiles will not practice covenant circumcision for their children. Jewish members will observe the Sabbath. Gentile members may do so, but are not responsible to do so. Jewish members are called to seek God about which worthy Jewish traditions are to be embraced that can enhance their Jewish walk in Yeshua. Jewish members may be called to make Aliya (to go up) and gain citizenship to live in Israel. While Gentiles are free to participate in Jewish Feasts, Sabbath and more, and Jews can participate in the Christian celebrations. In general, Jews will be responsible for Jewish life and tradition and Gentiles will not be so responsible. There are some Gentiles who have a primary call to the Jewish people. They will likely be more a part of the Jewish expression. But most Gentiles do not have this as their primary call though all are called to care about the salvation of Israel and appreciate all that has come to them from the Jews.

An understanding of distinction in unity and unity with distinction has to be taught. People need to be disciplined into this in a deep way if the dual expression congregation is to succeed long term and not produce confusion and offense. Some will think that distinction itself is pride. All such ideas have to be overcome if there is to be success in the quest. Distinction in unity is mutually enriching, just as in the case of male and female, and this is the model for understanding one new man.

The dual expression gives credibility to the Jewish witness. This is because the larger congregation as a whole has ministry to the poor, widows, and homeless, students from the ghetto needing help, immigrants and so much more. The good works in the larger society give a boost to the Messianic Jewish witness of the Jewish believers.

Discipleship

The Dual Expression Congregation is called to disciple all its members in the basic universals. At the same time, it is called to disciple its members in distinctive callings and the meaning and rationale for having a dual expression congregation. Members need to embrace that distinct calling of life and identity of its Jewish members. The book *Growing to Maturity* which I authored some 30 years ago and completely revised in 2011, is a very helpful guide covering the universal and Jewish calling as is the little book I wrote entitled *The Irrevocable Calling*.

Discipleship for the whole congregation needs to stress the issues of Jewish inter-generational continuity. This is especially important in marriage where the Jewish person needs to prayerfully consider the importance of marrying another Jew or at least marrying one who will embrace the calling of Jewish life and raising Jewish children. One cannot preclude the Spirit leading Jews and Gentiles to marry, but one can emphasize marrying within one's calling.

Education for children so they grow up understanding Biblical faith along with distinctive callings is also important. The curricula need to include quality material on this subject.

Dual Expression Meetings

Dual Expression congregations may give expression to this calling primarily through small groups that mostly meet in homes. Messianic Jewish Home Groups can do much to celebrate the Feasts and the weekly Sabbath together. Home Groups can be the foundation connection to discipleship, especially if there is open sharing and if there is real mentoring for new believers. The worship can easily be connected to ancient prayer expressions as well as to modern styles of worship. We call such groups *chavurah* groups, the Hebrew word for fellowship.

However, many will feel the need for something more. Jewish tradition and Church tradition provide for the greater grandeur of a larger gathering for worship and exposition. Though I think the home group is the most central meeting of the Body, the larger celebration is of great value as well. A weekly or monthly gathering for

Jewish corporate worship and the same for Christian corporate worship can be a wonderful addition. It is hard to maintain the Jewish distinctive if the primary larger gathering is only the Christian expression.

I would hope that dual expression congregations have a wonderful presence of God in both expressions, that the gifts of the Spirit are manifest as is fitting to the smaller home gatherings and the larger gatherings. It is my hope that the dual expression congregations will have a great effect on Jewish evangelism, and will challenge many Jews in churches to return to their Jewish identity and life and to foster dual expressions where their pastors can truly study and with understanding embrace a the dual expression vision. If the pastor is lukewarm, but allows it, it will produce great tension over time. It must be the conviction of the head pastor and the eldership.

Dual Expression Combined Meetings

Members of dual expression congregations will sometimes attend the meetings of the other expression and learn mutual appreciation while maintaining calling and preference. However, times of joint expression are also important. We have mentioned communion as one thing that can be joined. There can be periodically joint services that have both Christian heritage and Jewish heritage elements, but in such joint gatherings, the expression of both due to time constraints will be shortened. Yet such joint meetings are important for unity. A joint celebration for Sukkot is especially worthwhile and may include other Messianic congregations and churches in the region as a foreshadowing of Zechariah 14 and the hope of all nations celebrating this Feast. There could be joint celebrations on the weekend of Passover week, perhaps with the both the Shabbat and Sunday service being joint. Shavuot or Pentecost Sunday could also be a time for such a joint gathering and emphasis on the Spirit. Shavuot Sabbath can emphasize the Jewish traditions to a greater extent. Some may want to join with the Messianic Jewish expression for Shavuot Shabbat.

Symbolism in Dual Expression Congregations

Some Christian churches do not have a crucifix or emphasize the cross as a prominent symbol. However, some classical Christian expressions, Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist Episcopal, and many more emphasize the symbol of the cross. Prominent and beautifully designed crosses are part of processions or prominently displayed behind the platform. Stained glass also displays such crosses. This symbolism creates difficulty if the Messianic Jewish expression uses the same sanctuary. There are many solutions in situations where such overt Christian symbolism prevails. Military chapels use a revolving stage setting. The Christian stage is replaced by the Jewish stage setting. The Chapel in Annapolis has Catholic, Protestant and Jewish settings! Changing the setting is common in cases where Messianic Jewish congregations rent from churches. This could also be the case with Dual Expression churches. Messianic Jewish congregations sometimes rent the fellowship hall in churches and put up their own symbolism. This can also

be a solution in those Churches whose symbolism is too much for the Jewish visitors we seek to reach. Messianic Jews need to appreciate Christian symbolism for what it is and get past Jewish revulsion. Never the less, the Messianic Jewish expression is to be a setting of familiarity and ease for Jewish visitors who do not know Yeshua. Therefore, we need to see that one of these solutions is found. It is the overwhelming experience of our history that the most overt Christian symbolism, sometimes in ornate crosses and stained glass are too foreign for Jewish visitors.

Resources

I am listing important resources that can be helpful. Most are available from Messianic Jewish Resources and from Amazon.

Growing to Maturity by myself is a Messianic Jewish book of basic doctrine and discipleship. It is highly recommended for membership classes and discipleship and worth reading for all members in a Dual Expression Congregation. I have also authored **The Irrevocable Calling** which gives clear outlines of the meaning of the distinctive callings of Jew and Gentile in Yeshua. My book with Asher Intrater, **Israel, the Church and the Last Days** is important in showing God's purposes in the last days with Israel and the Church. **That They May be One**, is an important primer in Church history that will greatly aid all in appreciating the good things in Church history, for we know far too much in Jewish history that is not good.

For a deeper theological understanding my **Jewish Roots** is very helpful. It is a Biblical Theology survey. The most important book writing by a Christian supporting unity with distinction is R. Kendall Soulen's **The God of Israel and Christian Theology**.

The Messianic Jewish Worship Book available from Tikkun International gives provides a Yeshua centered appropriation of the best in Jewish worship expression.