

Endeavoring to Support:

- "The Messianic Times" - Publisher
- Israel Legal Defense
- Jewish/Gentile Fellowship
- International Conferences
- Forum for Debate
- Emigration to Israel
- Dispute Mediation
- International Affiliations
- Monthly Essays
- Theological Papers

Early Foundations:

Our Alliance was originally established in England in 1925. During the Nazi era, some of our European affiliates were decimated. The remaining groups worked together to fund the escape of many fellow Jews.

This life saving work was officially recognized by Great Britain. Our earliest leaders were honored i.e. Sir Lawrence Levinson was knighted by royal decree and Harcourt Samuel was given the "Order of the British Empire" (OBE).

In 1976, the IMJA, in conjunction with two other founding charities established the Ebenezer Home in Haifa, Israel. This institution continues today and the IMJA annually helps fund its operation. It is home to 30 individuals, without regard to original nationality, race or religion. Food, clothing, medical care and transportation are provided. About a hundred people can be seen at some of its social events and there is always a waiting list to become a resident.

Amazingly, many Gentiles out of a sense of compassion want to help. The Lord Himself has put it on some people's hearts. It is a blessing! This is a supernaturally created love. It is a fulfillment of Isaiah 40:1, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God".

Sometimes Jewish believers are not fully expressive of their inward gratitude. However, there is an appreciation which grows and grows. It is said too little.

In the Comforter,

Paul Liberman
Executive Director

P.S. Hopefully our communications are not considered "junk mail", because they are sent out with bulk rate postage. We would like to receive some feedback on subjects that interest you the most. Do you read or merely scan the text? Would you prefer that we sometimes focus on special financial needs of worthy projects in other countries?

Many of you have been loyal and generous supporters for a long time. Of course, there are always newcomers. We would appreciate your taking a moment to let us know what you think.

International Messianic Jewish Alliance

האגודה הבין לאומית של היהודים המשיחיים

72-877 Dinah Shore Dr., Ste. 103-141 • Rancho Mirage, CA 92270 • TEL: (760) 668-3011 • FAX: (760) 837-0451 • Website: www.imja.com

Essay #151

THE FLESH

Dear Fellow Workers,

We all find ourselves in this life where so many things seem so mysterious. How random, events must appear to those who have not yet accepted Yeshua (Jesus) as Messiah and the Holy Scriptures as their guidebook.

So many of the most pressing issues of life have to do with our flesh. When the Bible uses this term, it is not merely referring to our skin. The Scriptures are describing the gamut of pleasure and pain experiences. Most obviously, this pertains to a large degree to our physical bodies. We daily seek food, water, air etc. to avoid discomfort and even provide a sense of gratification. Aging, health, beauty seem primary and immediate.

Yet, the Biblical meaning of "the flesh" goes beyond that into the mental and psychological discomforts and pleasures. Social acceptance, prominence, fame, power, financial success are among the many emotional pluses or minuses we can either experience or feel deprived.

We all seem to be chasing an elusive, in fact, impossible goal. Questing after perfect health, good looks, popularity etc. keeps us busy most of our waking hours. Has anyone ever obtained all of it, or most of it? No, of course not, as Job said in Chapter 5, verse 7:

"Yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward."

We have never really seen sparks go downward. In modern parlance, we would say in life, sorrow and discomfort are a certainty. So, we are really chasing a mirage. If I can just solve this or that, then all will be great. Still, we have attained many of our goals.

Can it all ever be solved in this life? No, of course it cannot. Nevertheless, we relentlessly chase this delusion. This may all seem too broadly stated.

What We Do

Israel Support:

- Home for the elderly
- Humanitarian aid of goods from local warehouses
- Unwed mothers and widows
- Civil Rights Defense for Messianic Jews in Israel
- Jerusalem Headquarters utilized by Ethiopian Jewish Believers

Among the nations:

- Fostering the growth of New Testament Messianic Congregations (now numbering 750, including 120 in Israel).
- Small Ministries—Poor Countries: In many countries fund raising is not a practical possibility, especially for Jewish work. These works are volunteer efforts where even small amounts go a long way. It is our fervent wish to do what we can to facilitate Jews and Gentiles worshipping our Lord together.

Witness:

- Jewish outreach and evangelism
- New Testament Jewish roots
- Jews & Gentiles in joint worship

National Alliances

- Argentina
- Australia
- Brazil
- Canada
- Colombia
- France
- Germany
- Great Britain
- Holland
- Israel
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Russia
- South Africa
- Switzerland
- Ukraine
- United States
- Uruguay

Let's bring it down to the pesky mosquito bite. It is unwelcome and discomfiting. We feel compelled to scratch it. We really know that will only make it worse and create a more intense itch. But, we do it anyway.

That in miniature is the story of our life experience in the flesh. It can never be satisfied! No matter how hard we try, life can seem long and hard and we feel the need to numb its pain. With some, it is alcohol, narcotics, gambling, illicit affairs or food. The fleeting gratification only creates a greater appetite. As we mature, we gain a sense of this, even if we do not articulate it. Nothing satisfies.

For some people, the addiction has to do with social place, feeling of superiority of intellect, position, power etc. The continued maintenance of these can consume life energy, as much as physical addiction. Ultimately, these don't satisfy either.

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” (Romans 8:9)

How weary and futile all of the above seems. Unfortunately it is the life drama. In the movie “Casablanca” the song's refrain says it well:

“It's still the same old story, a fight for love and glory, a case of do or die...”

The lack of gratification produces frustration. Where this exists, you can be sure the Devil is nearby. The seeming impossible entrapment of our personhood into our flesh in this life is a main means of the Deceiver driving his wedge. He is a bully. Being of the angel class, though fallen, he is stronger than our flesh.

Would a kind and just Creator leave us in such an impossible situation?

Of course He wouldn't! When He sent His Son in human flesh, Yeshua faced our problems, but showed Himself to be stronger than them all. He was fully a human being “the son of man (Adam)”, and He was as a result a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah. 53:3). He proved it was possible for us of the human class to overcome the world, the flesh and the Devil.

He was first born among brethren and we are joint heirs with Him (Romans 8:17).

Most of us have never fully measured the benefits of having a Comforter whom Yeshua promised to us.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name...” (John 14:26)

So, we do have a remedy to comfort us in the wide variety of distresses and perplexities mentioned above. This is not a once in a while opportunity for us to cope better. The Comforter is available at all times and in every situation.

Why don't we believers pursue true comfort? If I am in the Holy Spirit and submitted to Him, I'm temporarily not in this world system and not in my flesh. I'm in the Kingdom of God, where I do not hear the taunts of my flesh. When there, I don't feel like stealing or gossiping. They don't come to mind. I Corinthians 1:29 says, “That no flesh should glory in His presence”.

Why with such a simple solution do I seem to seek it so seldom? My flesh makes seeking refuge in prayer, Scripture reading, worship seem unattractive. Yet, once I switch off of the unfortunate flesh channel and tune into the Kingdom channel, I have temporarily escaped the dilemmas of the flesh and even can feel elevated (edified) for a while. Why don't I seek it more often? Let's be kind and call it, unwise.

“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would”. (Galatians 5:17)

So, what does all of this have to do with Jewish ministry? The Holy Spirit (Comforter) may be wooing a prospective Jewish person to become a citizen of His Kingdom. The person being romanced needs to feel comfortable and relaxed. For some Jewish people, they might feel distracted in a church setting, which brings up issues pertaining to betrayal of family and heritage. Why annoy their psychological flesh unnecessarily, if it can be avoided?

Secondly, there were certain paganisms bred into the early church that seem strange to Jewish people. Like a considerate lover, Yeshua wants to help us relax and reduce feelings of anxiety or insecurity. Messianic congregations and terminology can help. Of course, the Gospel inherently is an offense to the flesh.

Foreign Translations

The Fig Tree Blossoms is a primary book about our Movement translated into Hebrew, Russian and now Spanish. It is a 30 year old classic and explains why accepting a Jewish Messiah, foretold by Jewish Prophets in a Jewish Land is a very Jewish thing to do. Distributions of the Holy Scriptures are available in 17 languages:

- Yiddish
- English
- Armenian
- Bulgarian
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Russian
- Spanish
- Swedish
- Hebrew
- Ukranian

