

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.

of Divine guidance. Of course, the theory is always easier than the actual employment. With practice, decision making can become increasingly easier. Exercising these things is like muscle building. The problems may become heavier, but we have gained more lifting capacity.

These thoughts may sound like they are asserted with assurance. In actuality, we all *see through a glass darkly*" (I Corinthians 13:12). We have to admit we make our decisions based on what we consider to be only our best understanding.

PERSONAL

In recent times I have had to employ the aforementioned principles in grappling with the Lord's direction. After much reflection, at the beginning of April, I let it be known to the IMJA Administrative Committee that a replacement should be sought to take my place on my fifth anniversary of service. The committee deliberated and made a recommendation to the international Executive Committee of 23 prominent Messianic leaders from some 18 international organizations.

Their unanimous decision was to suggest my son, Joel Liberman, who has served the IMJA as its treasurer. He has led a Messianic congregation in San Diego for the last 13 years. Since he is a Certified Public Accountant, he has not been drawing a salary from the congregation. Joel won't give up his CPA license but will be setting this occupation aside. He also has served on the Executive Committee of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America and the International Alliance of Messianic Congregations and Synagogues. He has been walking with the Lord for 36 years, and knows the Messianic movement well.

An international vote was taken and was approved without hesitation or opposition. A smooth transition of leadership is expected, since we share the same vision and both live in Southern California. I will remain on the leadership team and will be available as a consultant.

Writing these essays each month has been a blessing. Please join me and the rest of the IMJA in prayer for Joel and that the organization will go from strength to strength. My son is prepared to take the organization further with vigor and new ideas. May our Lord bless our continued efforts.

In Messiah,

Paul Liberman
Executive Director

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 # 163

DECISIONS

Dear Fellow Workers,

We all began in our lives with little if any decision making ability or responsibility. Our parents, guardians or teachers usually made choices for us. Later, we found we had the abilities to achieve goals.

This process has long been underway, and as the years have gone by, we developed greater sophistication in assessing what we wanted – and how to obtain it. In our early years, we wanted to test our prowess and place among our peers. Getting ahead and becoming a "somebody" dominated our thoughts.

After all, we were bombarded with images of others who had distinguished themselves in athletics, finances, entertainment, and politics. We unwittingly got snared into competing in the world system for rank, status, and fame.

A few became stand outs, but most of us settled into a routine of just getting by. Developing family and communal relations and properly maintaining these things seemed to take all of our energy and effort.

Frustration, boredom and other factors often led us into mild or severe mischief. It took a while, but we eventually came to realize there were consequences to what we said and did. Our long range interests were often sacrificed in favor of short term gratification. To some extent, we are all still doing this.

As a reader of these essays, you experienced an extraordinary change when you accepted Yeshua (Jesus) as Messiah. Slowly, our minds have been regenerated, as we sought more godly ways. We became equipped with something new and exciting to help us along in our life journey.

For some of us, this meant we now had the means of success in the world. With the backing of the Almighty, we could achieve worldly prominence beyond

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

what was previously possible. To one degree or another, we found this new backing helpful. The Bible was a true guide, prayer was genuinely productive, and we developed fresh ways of deciding things.

At first this was self-oriented. Later, we wanted to serve in the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Now we were in conflict. Our spiritual apparatus and fleshly desires sometimes made our goals and purposes confusing. Now our quest is to know how to make increasingly wise choices.

For many of us, there has come to be a crystallized method of thought to help organize perplexing issues. So much swirls around us that needs to be considered. There are the economic, social, political, familial concerns – and others. It may be helpful to realize that we can somewhat simplify by removing all other matters, other than what is the spiritual thing to do, i.e., “What does the Lord want me to do at this time?” It is amazing how this simple reference can help us sift through what seems like a muddle.

Even if we commit to this seemingly simple overriding criteria, we can still be left perplexed. How complex our personal challenges can be! Let’s examine some suggestions as how God’s will can become clearer. Many people have boiled it down to a few criteria.

SCRIPTURES

Every word of God is pure...a shield unto them that trust in Him
(Proverbs 30:5).

Here is our anchor! To do something in violation of specific recommended Biblical advice or prohibition is so dangerous, we have to consider this our first and primary screen. However, it can appear that there is more than one Biblical precept which could be applicable. This doesn’t mean the Scriptures are ever in disagreement, but there needs to be a subjective understanding of which verses are more applicable to our particular situation.

PRAYER

In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God (Philippians 4:6).

This is the primary way our spirit communes (as in communicates or dwells) with the Holy Spirit. In secular terms, this aspect of our lives as believers could be called “intuition.” This can serve as an arbitrator if our Scriptural application remains unclear. When we are in God’s Spirit and focused on Him, that’s when

we know the truth. Issues can seem one way to us during the week, but it can be helpful during worship to ask ourselves how a decision seems at that time.

When possible, waiting can be valuable. Godly ideas and purposes will gain strength, while extraneous matters will weaken over time.

COUNSEL

Where there is no counsel, the people fall, but in the multitude there is safety (Proverbs 11:14).

This source of wisdom has the advantage of perspective. We can benefit from the knowledge, understanding and wisdom of the godly people in our lives we have come to respect. If a person hasn’t acquired a cadre of friends and mentors, perhaps this needs developing. Others might see through the fog more easily, as their own interests are not at stake. Usually, a pastor or elder in a local congregation is at or near the top of such a list. If we cannot value such a person as a source of friendship and advice, maybe we should consider finding another house of worship.

It is easy to fall into the trap of allowing our congregational leaders to make our decisions for us. After all, they are supposed to be coaches and helpers. But they can’t become rulers in our lives.

PROVIDENCE

And now, behold we are in Your hands, do to us whatever seems good and right to you (Joshua 9:25).

Basic to our faith is confidence that there is a plan and we’re in it. Our trust is very valuable to God. Among the many promises dear to us is the one where the Scriptures tells us that every circumstance is working towards our ultimate benefit, even if we can’t perceive it at the moment (Romans 8:28).

The flow of events can sometimes be a guiding hand which offers us objective direction. If there is something that would prove disastrous for our fate, we exercise our faith that our Lord would have some circumstance to prevent our doing great damage to our destiny. On the other hand, we can observe when events sometimes seem to be fostering a certain direction that didn’t have to turn out in a particular way.

DIRECTION

To trust in only one of the four above-mentioned indicators of God’s intention can be dangerous. Seasoned believers have learned to utilize all of these forms

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

