

NURTURING THE NATURAL BRANCHES



**A GUIDE FOR DISCIPLING
THE NEW JEWISH BELIEVER**

**By Rev. Fred Klett
PCA Evangelist to the Jewish People
Director of the CHAIM Ministry**

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A WORD ABOUT THE CHAIM MINISTRY

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OUR DIRECTOR, REV. FRED KLETT

Fred Klett is ordained in the Presbyterian Church in America. A graduate of Westminster Seminary, he now lectures there in Practical Theology. He was also trained by Jews for Jesus and served with InterVarsity and The Messianic Jewish Center in Philadelphia. He has been a full time missionary since 1984. Rev. Klett served as the North American Coordinator of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism from 1995-1999.

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CHAIM
P.O. Box 133
Glenside, PA 19038
(215) 576-7325

<http://www.chaim.org>
E-mail: chaim@chaim.org

INTRODUCTION

It is my hope that this guide will help equip leaders in Messiah's Church to more effectively nourish new Jewish believers in Jesus. The church greatly needs to grow in understanding the problems new Jewish believers face and the cultural issues involved in Jewish ministry. The church can only competently minister to new Jewish believers if there is a willingness to follow our Lord in His incarnation. God entered human culture and lived among those He came to minister to. The church can do no less if it will be obedient to the example of Jesus.

Gentile Christians generally have little concept of the cultural and religious obstacles new Jewish believers face when coming into the Church. One of the best accounts I have ever read illustrating this point was written in the book *Jews for Jesus* by Moishe Rosen, a friend and a mentor. Moishe's book is now out of print, but he has given permission for it to be reprinted here. You may find the humor here less than reverent, but it illustrates well Moishe's understanding at that time as a new Jewish believer. Enjoy!

My first few church services revealed an entirely new world. The music, for example, was radically different from chanting in the synagogue. All the hymns had a lilt to them, and I wasn't accustomed to Christian symbolism. They sang, "There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins; And sinners, plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains." The cheerful lilting melody seemed so unsuited to the graphically violent lyrics. And I didn't know who Immanuel was, but the poor guy seemed to be making a big contribution to the blood bank. I was as accepting as I could be, but it wasn't easy. Then I noticed there was an item in the church bulletin: NEXT SUNDAY: COMMUNION.

An usher in the last row had told us when arrived the first morning that if we needed any help, we should feel free to call on him. I think he was just being polite because, as I learned later, church services involve very little conversation among the listeners. The synagogue is much noisier. Even gossip during prayers is sanctified according to the Talmud. I also had to learn not to get up and walk around because Jewish tradition permits the congregation to enter and leave at will during the three-hour synagogue services.

So, not knowing any better, I said, "Psst!" in a rather loud tone and motioned the usher over. "What does it mean, "Communion"?" I asked.

"You're Jewish, right?" he answered. "It's a little like a Passover feast."

My eyes must have lit up at that. The Passover Seder usually involved a rather painless observance and then a huge repast. In my grandfather's house we traditionally started with chopped liver (and onions), hard-boiled eggs (and onions), pickled herring (and onions), and matzo-ball soup. Those were just appetizers. Next came the roast meats--poultry, kid, and lamb. And finally we had several kinds of dessert, including honey cake, sponge cake, and macaroons. Communion sounded terrific to me.

"How much does it cost?" I asked.

It doesn't cost you anything," he replied. "You just contribute anything you want to in the church collection plate."

That was a great improvement over the synagogue where we had to buy tickets for most of the big events, including the major holiday services and also were assessed a regular yearly membership fee. The bulletin said, "Prepare your hearts for Communion next Sunday," and so I asked, "Should I do anything to help out, maybe bring something?"
"No, it's all provided," he said.

"Where will it be held?"

"Right here in the sanctuary."

I looked around at the old oak pews but didn't see much space for tables. TV trays had just come into vogue, and I thought maybe they'd fix the place up with a few of those. Ceil and I ate a very small breakfast the next Sunday because of the huge meal we expected at the service. I sought out the usher during Sunday school and double-checked with him about the time and place, because I didn't want to miss anything. I suspected that, being Gentiles, they would serve bacon and ham and shrimp and other things that weren't kosher, but it still seemed like a nice idea, a real treat.

Ceil and I got seated in the sanctuary, and we began to sing songs about the blood again:

*Oh! Precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow;
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
-Robert Lowry*

That wasn't too appetizing, especially since I didn't understand the real import of the words. But to top it all off, when I looked up at the front of the church, I saw on a table what looked like white shrouds, with a lump where the feet would be and another lump for the head. I thought, "Gee, they're having a funeral today, too." It made perfect sense to me that they'd be having a funeral that morning because their customs were so different from what I had known. But up to that point I hadn't seen a dead body, and I had the usual terror of such things. And what did the pastor preach on? The body and blood of Christ: eating and drinking it.

I hate to tell you the thoughts that were going through my mind. I knew they couldn't have Christ up there under that shroud. And I knew deep down that these goyim weren't cannibals. I decided the body was probably just being kept there, and they would have the funeral later that afternoon.

"Psst!" I said and motioned my friend, the usher, over. "When are we going to have Communion? I'm losing my appetite a little bit."

Straining to be patient, he said, "It'll be in just a minute."

At the end of the service eight men dressed in dark suits went forward toward the shrouds. I didn't know the difference between deacons and other church officials at that point, and so I decided they were the pallbearers. They gathered around what I assumed to be the funeral bier, and I expected they would carry the body out before we ate. But two of them moved to each end of the covered object, and I could see they were waiting for a signal to lift the shroud. Oh, no, I thought. Suddenly the cover fell away, and there was nothing underneath except some little pots and pans.

"Psst! What's that?"

"Communion."

Communion! I looked around and saw there were about three hundred people to feed. I was totally dumbfounded. After certain prayers were said, each person was given a crumb of matzo. Then there were some more prayers, and a blessing was offered over the wine. Finally, the deacons passed around little glass thimbles filled with what look like wine. But when I drank it, yech, it was grape juice! I couldn't understand why they called it wine, and by now I was getting impatient.

"Psst!" I said to my usher. "When are we going to have Communion?"

"You've had it," he replied.¹

I thought, boy, these **goyim**, they give you a crumb of matzo and a thimbleful of grape juice, and they have the nerve to call it a Passover feast. Then they criticize us Jews for being stingy!

Getting accustomed to Christian practices and customs was not the easiest thing for me, but I learned little by little. I was used to liturgical Hebrew prayers which always began, "**Baruch ata Adonai. Elohenu melech ha-olam asher . . .**" or, "Praised be thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe . . ." I noticed several people in the Baptist church started their prayers with, "Dear gracious heavenly Father, we come unto you . . ." That must be the Christian formula, I decided, and so I memorized it. It was much easier than the synagogue service because everything in church was in English. But imagine my shock when someone dared to change the introductory prayer phrase at the next service!

It was as though I entered a strange new civilization, another planet, and had to learn all my traditions and values from scratch again. But it was enjoyable in a way because I believed Christ had died for me and had given me an access to God that I had always

considered impossible. What was not so enjoyable was trying to explain my newfound faith to my parents.

My method for informing them about my spiritual experience was thoroughly ill-conceived. I called a family meeting and waited until everyone was seated before I spoke.

"I've been studying the Bible lately, and I've decided that Jesus is really the Messiah," I began. "We've all been wrong, and I wanted to you to know that I'm going to believe in Him and follow Him and give my life to Him."

"What, you crazy?" My father growled...

"No, I really mean this," I replied. "We've all been misled in rejecting Jesus all these years. I really believe that."

My father is a proud man, and staging such an abrasive confrontation in his own house must have humiliated him. At any rate, he certainly got angry.

"You can just get out of my house!" he shouted. "And don't come back until you've given up this Jesus business!"

My life as their son the Christian, the social outcast and traitor to his people, had started more spectacularly than even I had expected.²

As Moishe illustrated so well, it isn't easy being Jewish and believing in Jesus, especially at the beginning. And there are so many new and unusual things to understand. This means discipleship is of great importance, especially for new Jewish Christians.

I. THE CENTRALITY OF DISCIPLESHIP

Jesus said: "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and *make disciples* of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 24:18-20). From the beginning Jesus' Great Commission charged the church to carry out both evangelism and discipleship. In fact, one could argue that discipleship was the very essence of the charge. Evangelism was simply the first part of the discipleship process. How much this differs from the "altar call" mentality of much of our evangelism today which primarily looks for a "decision to accept Christ" and often essentially ends there!

Needless to say, if you are reading this booklet you agree with the premise that discipleship is not an option – it is an imperative. You may, however, have some doubts as to whether discipling someone from a Jewish background is any different from discipling someone from a Gentile background – although Moishe's account should have convinced any doubters!

Any missionary will tell you that there are unique issues that need to be dealt with when individuals from the group he is reaching are discipled. If a culture has a problem with overt idolatry, issues related to that sin will need to be addressed. The Holy Spirit recognized this and inspired Paul to write concerning food sacrificed to idols³. Likewise, the books of Romans, Hebrews and Galatians all deal very specifically with issues pertaining to discipleship of especially Jewish, but also Gentile, Christians in that day, and our day as well.

What are the central concerns which must be addressed when it comes to discipling new Jewish believers in Jesus? What cultural pressures will come upon a new Jewish Christian, from both the unbelieving community and the believing community?

Realize that Jews who come to faith in Jesus come from a different culture than that of the North American Gentile world⁴. The Willowbank Report on Gospel and Culture, put out by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism, defines culture as follows:

"Culture is an integrated system of beliefs (about God or reality or ultimate meaning), of values (about what is true, good, beautiful, and normative), of customs (how to behave, relate to others, talk, pray, dress, work, play, trade, farm, eat, etc.), and of institutions that express these beliefs, values, and customs (government, law courts, temples or churches, families, schools, hospitals, factories, shops, unions, clubs, etc.), which binds a society together and gives it a sense of identity, dignity, and continuity."⁵

Jewish people, though diverse, have different beliefs, holidays, values, musical styles, customs, foods, institutions, vocabulary, etc. Jewish identity directly relates to the idea of becoming a Christian. Simply put, a Jew cannot become a Christian and still be Jewish, according to the common Jewish understanding. This means there are tremendous pressures placed upon the

new Jewish believers to do one of four things. First, there is the temptation to return to Judaism and to reject Christianity. Second, a new Jewish believer may reject all vestiges of Jewish identity and become culturally assimilated into the Gentile church world. Third, he may adopt a syncretistic form of Christian expression which seeks to satisfy Jewish concerns through keeping aspects of Jewish expression not compatible with a New Covenant faith. Fourth, he may be tempted to become chauvinistically Jewish, and even anti-Gentile, in an attempt to prove to the Jewish world that he has not become a Gentile.

This situation has not been helped by the fact that the church, by and large, has failed to adequately address the issue of how a Jewish believer should maintain a Jewish cultural identity and also be faithful to the New Covenant faith. In fact, the church has often failed to deal with Jewish culture and has sometimes sought to repress it. Many times Jewish believers have been required to give up being Jewish altogether. How unfortunate that at one time Jewish Christians were required to swear: "I renounce absolutely everything Jewish, every law, rite and custom".⁶

We do not formally require such an oath today, but often in effect we enforce it. I am aware of a new Jewish believer who was informed by his church elders that he could no longer celebrate any Jewish holidays in his home now that he is a Christian. This brother dutifully obeyed, even though his church celebrated Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and other such extra-biblical holidays! Imagine how you would have felt if you had been asked to give up Christmas, Easter, the Fourth of July, and Thanksgiving as a brand new believer in Christ. You may have been willing to do it, but you probably wouldn't have liked it. You would have alienated your family, brought unnecessary conflicts to your home, and erected obstacles to your witness.

This matter is extremely important if we consider the prime cultural value within the Jewish community: the preservation of the community. Whatever being Jewish may be, the overwhelming majority of Jewish people will affirm "I was born a Jew, I'll die a Jew." The external pressures on the Jewish people have necessitated a strong commitment to Jewish survival, and becoming a Christian is seen as a threat to that survival. A Jew who believes in Jesus is considered a "meshummad," one who has destroyed himself spiritually. He is viewed as being a traitor to the Jewish community and to the six million Jews who died for their heritage. In this context you must see how important it is for Jewish believers to maintain a Jewish identity. Belief in Jesus must be presented *at least* as no threat to Jewish survival. Better still if it were to be seen as preserving Jewish identity!

Clearly there are aspects of Jewish cultural and religious life which are simply incompatible with New Covenant Faith, just as there are elements of Western culture and church tradition which are also incompatible, though we hate to admit it. Yet, cultures needn't be destroyed – they can be recycled and brought into submission to the Messiah. This must be considered when discipling the new Jewish believer. Discipleship means submitting all areas of life to the Lordship of Jesus, including one's personal and cultural identity. Discipleship doesn't destroy personal and cultural identity – it reshapes one's identity to conform to the image of Messiah.

II. HOW "JEWISH" CAN A JEWISH BELIEVER IN JESUS CONTINUE TO BE?

This is, in a way, a strange question and one which shows how far the tables have turned since the early days of Christianity. The original question was: "Do Gentiles need to become Jewish by being circumcised and keeping kosher in order to follow our Messiah?" Italians and Chinese who come to faith in Jesus aren't asked to stop being Italian or Chinese. One doesn't lose one's ethnic background when one comes to trust in Jesus. Rather, one's ethnic background is submitted to the Lord and comes under his rule. One's ethnic identity can be made into an idol, as can anything else. The question of Jewish identity is a bit complex, but what do the scriptures say? Let's consider a passage dealing with cultural identity as in relation to the Law.

The Jerusalem Council of Acts chapter 15 addressed the issue of whether or not Gentiles were required to keep Jewish ceremonial law. We read there:

"Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, 'The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses.' The apostles and elders of the church met to consider this question. After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: 'Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. **God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.** Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.' The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. When they finished, James spoke up: 'Brothers, listen to me. Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: 'After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things' (Amos 9:11,12) that have been known for ages. **'It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.** Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.'" (Acts 15:1-21)

What can we learn from this passage? Here are a few key points:

1. All believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, are saved by faith in the same New Covenant promises brought in Jesus. God makes **no distinction** between Jews and Gentiles, but purifies the hearts of all through faith.

2. We do not want to put any unnecessary obstacles in the way of people who need salvation. James tells us: "**We should not make it difficult.**"

3. While the ceremonial aspects of the Law are no longer required, things such as circumcision, kosher laws, etc. (see Romans 14:20 where we are told: "All food is clean, i.e. "kosher"), the moral aspects of the Law still remain. People need to be called to turn from idolatry, adultery, cruelty, and violence.

4. The inclusion of the Gentile believers was a part of the fulfillment of the promise of God to rebuild the fallen house of David. That is to say, they became part of the Messianic restoration of the Davidic dynasty spoken of by the prophet Amos.

Here we have the answer as to how "Jewish" the *Gentile* converts are *required* to become. This gives us wisdom towards answering the opposite question of how "Jewish" *Jewish* believers are *allowed* to be? Here are corresponding insights:

1. Jewish believers are saved the very same way as Gentile believers, through faith in Jesus. Since there is **no distinction** between Jews and Gentiles in this regard, Jewish believers do not need to be circumcised and keep kosher to be saved either. (See Galatians 2:15-16.)

2. We should not make it difficult for Jews to come into the community of faith. What serves the cause of the gospel is of central importance. We do not wish in any way to hinder people from coming to faith in Jesus. This is a key point in our text and one which speaks to practical matters, not just purely "doctrinal" matters. Whatever we decide in regards to Jewish believers, we do not wish to put any unnecessary difficulties in the way. (See 1 Cor. 9:20-23.)

3. Since both Jewish **and** Gentile believers are under the **same** New Covenant and God makes no distinction, both have the **same obligation** to follow the **moral** precepts and commands of that covenant (not to earn salvation), but **no believer, not even a Jewish believer**, is required by God to follow the ceremonial aspects of the Law. (Hebrews 8:13 tells us that the Mosaic Covenant is obsolete. Romans 14:14 states that no food is unclean in itself and 14:20 says all food is clean. "Clean" and "kosher" are the same thing. This comes out in the modern Hebrew translation of Romans 14 where the words for clean and unclean food are the same Hebrew words used in Leviticus 11 describing clean and unclean food.)

4. Since the inclusion of Gentiles is in fulfillment of the promise of the spiritual glories of the Messianic (restored Davidic) Kingdom, Jewish and Gentile believers should express this unity in their lives together as believers. Ephesians 2:11-16 is very explicit about this. (See also Galatians 3:28-29)

So we can clearly say Jewish believers are not saved by keeping the Old Testament ceremonial law (or the moral law either, for that matter) and they are *not* required to follow the ceremonial law at all. But, the question today comes up, "But are Jewish believers *allowed* to circumcise their children, keep kosher, and celebrate Jewish holidays in order to be able to continue to

witness to the Jewish community?" We can put this another way: "Are Jewish believers in Jesus *forbidden* from keeping the Old Testament ceremonial law?"

This is a difficult question, but there are some key scriptures to examine in this regard. Paul tells us:

"Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings (1 Cor. 9:19-23).

There should be no surprise that what Paul wrote harmonizes perfectly with what was decided in Acts 15. Paul had an overwhelming concern for evangelism which included a deep desire for reaching his own Jewish people. (See Romans 1:16, 9:1-5, and 10:1!) He is clear in teaching that under the New Covenant we are under Christ's law, not the ceremonial aspects of the Old Testament Law. Yet he also seems to indicate there may be a place for observing some of these no longer required aspects of Mosaic Law *for the sake of winning the lost*. This is consistent with what James said in Acts 15: "We should not make it difficult" for people to turn to God. So whether or not a Jewish believer keeps certain ceremonial aspects of the Old Testament Law must take into consideration whether this facilitates or hinders Jewish people coming to embrace the gospel.

We see this worked out in Acts, where we have examples of Paul keeping aspects of the ceremonial law as a witness to the Jewish community:

"Paul wanted to take him (Timothy) along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek" (Acts 16:3).

"Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because of a vow he had taken" (Acts 18:18).

"Then they said to Paul: `You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, so do what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. **Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the**

law. As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality.' The next day Paul took the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them" (Acts 21:20-26).

Here is the "apostle of liberty" performing Jewish rites, and significantly, in the last case, arguably *years* after having written Galatians! This is the same apostle who said: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value" (Gal. 5:5) and "Brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. As for those agitators (the circumcision party), I wish they would go all the way and castrate themselves!" (5:11-12).

Was the great Paul living in opposition to what he was teaching? Were the apostles in Acts, including Paul, caving in to Jewish pressures? I think not. These weren't men who would back off on a matter of principle. They continued preaching even when forbidden to do so by the highest Jewish authority (Acts 4:19-20). Rather, they recognized they should "not make it difficult" for people to turn to God. They should not put up any unnecessary roadblocks. It was not required for Gentiles or Jews to keep the Jewish Law, neither was it forbidden for Jews to keep ceremonial law. If it served the gospel, fine, if not, not fine.

J. Gresham Machen, founder of Westminster Seminary, wrote:

"Paul was not the man to insist upon blatant disregard of Jewish feelings where Jews were to be won to Christ. It must be remembered that Paul, according to his Epistles, did not demand that Jewish Christians should give up keeping the law, but only required them not to force the keeping of the Law upon the Gentiles. No doubt the observance of the Law by Jewish Christians was to be very different in spirit from their pre-Christian legalism; they were no longer to regard the Law as a means of salvation. But after salvation had been obtained, they might as well believe that it was God's will for them to live as Jews; and Paul, according to his Epistles, had no objection to that belief."⁷

In Galatians Paul said he opposed Peter when he separated himself out from Gentile believers and did not eat with them. Here again, the guiding principle is whether keeping Jewish practices helps or hinders people coming to faith. In this case it hindered the gospel, certainly as it was preached to the *Gentiles*. (Similar behavior could also get in the way of reaching secular and less observant *Jews* today!)

Admittedly, we don't live in first century Jerusalem in the shadow of the earthly Temple, as they did. How do we apply this in our time?

First we need to mention that there are aspects of the ceremonial law which would be totally

improper to perform today, other than perhaps just as a demonstration for the sake of illustrating a teaching. We need to be very careful here. If one were to make a movie portraying first century Jewish life, it would be permitted to "stage" sacrificing a lamb in order to portray how it was done in Temple times, but to sacrifice a lamb during the Sunday morning service at your local church – or even at home in the back yard – would be another matter altogether! No Jewish believer should sacrifice a chicken at Yom Kippur, as do some Orthodox Jews. Certainly one must always seek to act in accord with what is commanded in the New Covenant. Sacrificing a goat or lamb as an offering to God would be improper – even in the privacy of one's own home! God doesn't want such sacrifices any more – He has provided the final sacrifice of His Son. The sacrificial system has been fulfilled. We must always have this in mind. This is a key part of the gospel message: Jesus has perfectly fulfilled the Law, both in terms of obeying its every command and in taking upon himself the penalty for disobeying it. Whatever we do, we must not contradict this truth.

There is another important principle to consider. The great theologian Charles Hodge said:

"Nothing can bind the conscience that is not commanded or forbidden by the Word of God."

Freedom of conscience is an important doctrine.⁸ Hodge brings in two additional concepts regarding Paul's circumcision of Timothy and his words on circumcision to the Galatians.

"The first is, that a thing indifferent in itself may become even fatally wrong if done with a wrong intention..." and "no matter what our intention may be, we sin against Christ when we make such use of our liberty, in matters of indifference, as causes others to offend."

Hodge harmonized Paul's practice in Acts and his teaching in Galatians in this way:

"The sin was not in being circumcised, but in making circumcision a condition for our justification."⁹

The motive behind what we do is extremely important, and, I think we should add, so is the motive others *perceive* we have in doing what we do. We must not in any way give people the impression that it is God's requirement that we keep either the Old Testament ceremonial law or Rabbinic customs, either. Secular and less observant Jews may not at all be attracted to the idea of keeping kosher. I have a secular Jewish friend who is very much opposed to the idea of circumcision.

Let's consider a few cases and see how these principles can be put into practice:

A new Jewish believer in Jesus was brought to me for advice. She was from an extremely Orthodox Jewish background. Her husband and extended family were all very orthodox. Should she continue to keep kosher laws? None of her family would even eat from her dishes

or accept food cooked in her oven if she did not follow the strictest kosher practices. Should she continue to keep kosher in deference to her family? Or would keeping strictly kosher confuse the gospel and communicate to her family that we need to keep kosher in order to be acceptable to God? How could this dilemma be solved? I told her to certainly keep kosher in order to maintain family relationships, *but while doing so to tell her family she was not doing it for God but for them, because she loves them and wants them to visit her*. In this way she would not "make it difficult" for them to believe and she would be "all things to all people" without obscuring the truth that we are saved by grace. She could even relate that Jesus makes us kosher (clean). However, for someone from a secular Jewish family which has never kept kosher (this is most of the Jewish community) to start keeping scrupulously kosher after coming to faith in Jesus, could convey a confusing message and could *also* "make it difficult" for family members to believe!

A second case was recently related to me by a very fine, very conservative, Presbyterian pastor. I offer it as an example of how one Reformed pastor handled a situation. Let me say again first that this is a very difficult area. Not everyone may agree with how he handled the case, but he was trying to be faithful to the New Covenant while not unnecessarily offending an unbelieving family. A member of his congregation is married to an unsaved Jewish man. The Jewish family wished the baby girl to undergo the Jewish naming ceremony (the female equivalent of the "brit" or circumcision for males). Was the wife to go along with the husband's wish to have the child go through this traditional Jewish rite? Would this compromise the gospel? Some advised her to avoid this Jewish practice. Their approach had the danger of offending their unsaved Jewish relatives. It would be contrary to the philosophy of James and Paul to erect an unnecessary obstacle to belief. Others told her to go ahead with it and not to worry. My pastor friend wisely advised her to go along with the ceremony, but to request that some of the wording which was inconsistent with New Covenant faith be changed or deleted. In other words, the Jewish practice needed to be recycled in conformity to the truth of Christ, but could still be kept for the sake of not hindering the gospel's impact on her family. (Incidentally, in a situation where at least one parent is Jewish, why not administer baptism in such a way as to bring out the Jewishness of the New Covenant faith?)

Binding the consciences of Jewish believers and forbidding them to keep certain Jewish practices can be legalistic. Do we *force* people to eat pig meat? Apostolic example seems to *permit* Jewish customs provided they are not contrary to the gospel. Motive is all important, as is whether or not a practice obscures or contradicts the gospel.

Jewish holidays are a key part of Jewish family and community life. A Jewish believer who abandons Jewish holidays is seen as no less than abandoning his family and community. This is contrary to the teaching of James that we should "not make it difficult" for people to turn to God and Paul's principle that we should become "all things to all men" in order to save some. We must not discourage Jewish believers in Jesus from continuing to express a Jewish identity – as a matter of fact, we should encourage them in this, as long as the proper perspective is maintained.

We can't go wrong if we follow Paul's teaching: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks, or the church of God – even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. Follow my example, as I follow the example of Messiah" (1 Cor. 10:31-11:1).

III. SOME BASICS IN DISCIPLING NEW JEWISH BELIEVERS

1. Get To It Immediately!

Effective and immediate discipleship is critical for the new Jewish believer. Many times Gentiles come into church fellowship or attend a home Bible study for quite a while before they are truly born into God's family. Somewhere in the process of an extended period of discipleship they become regenerated. We don't always have the luxury of this extended process with interested Jewish people in our midst.¹⁰ The recidivism rate for Jews who profess faith is high due to family pressure, religious opposition, and cultural alienation. It is a dangerous myth that Jews who come to faith are always the strongest and most dynamic believers.

In addition, new Jewish believers don't have any church background and may become prey to aberrant groups and strange theologies. Remember, to a new Jewish believer the church is a very confusing entity. Jewish people often don't understand the differences between Protestants and Catholics, let alone between Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists – add to the mix liberals, conservatives, charismatics and non-charismatics within these bodies and you can begin to understand the quandary many new believers are faced with! It is important that somebody bright, caring, sensitive, and theologically astute takes an interest in the new believer.

Not long ago, a Jewish student, Michael, came to faith out of a New Age background. He was a month away from graduating college. Knowing how important discipleship is for new Jewish believers, I made myself available to him as much as possible. He was preparing for final exams and graduation, so time was limited. We had several 2-4 hour sessions together. I provided some good Christian books for him to read and a good basic Bible study booklet for new believers. We attended church twice together, and he attended a Bible study near his campus. When it became time for him to return to his home state, I found a good church near his home affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America. He began attending and met with the pastor. Things seemed to be going well when he called me. He had some questions about the mode of baptism and about charismatic gifts, but he seemed to be approaching issues with a clear head. I sent him a few things to read on these topics. He was attending the church and was involved with the young singles group. At this point my wife and I went away for several weeks. Michael's father, not a believer and from a Jewish background, began to make life difficult for my young friend so he decided to move in with his mother and step-father. He found a new PCA church in his area, met with the pastor and attended the young singles group. When visiting a local campus he met people from an aberrant and cultic "Christian" group, one which doesn't deny the Trinity, but teaches baptismal regeneration. They were very persuasive and had what looked like an almost apostolic zeal and commitment. After returning from our trip, we found out our young friend has gotten involved with them. I suspect the cultic group appealed to his idealistic nature, but their demanding style reinforced the problems he had with his over-demanding father who he could never seem to please. The other churches continued to keep up with him and were very faithful, though Michael often refused their calls. He did not return my calls either. Michael became depressed and confused. He checked into a hotel,

refused to let anyone in for three days, and then threw himself out of the window... He had attempted suicide the winter before I met him. Apparently his emotional problems, problems he seemed to be getting over, returned with a vengeance when he got involved with the cultic group. Both of the pastors attended the funeral. Michael's maternal grandparents are believers, as is a Jewish cousin. Michael's mother says he lead her to faith before he died. She now attends church. After the Jewish funeral the Christians present met in the parking lot and encouraged each other. All seemed to be confident he was a true believer, including the pastors. Michael's grandmother was convinced he was with his Lord. Though recriminating thoughts come easy at such times, I believe I was faithful in following up Michael after his profession of faith, and I am very grateful for the churches and the pastors who were in touch with him even during the week before he died. In this case I believe all involved made a good-faith effort to follow up Michael with discipleship. Why God allowed this to happen is a mystery. Other than involving him in a full-time communal live-in situation, I'm not sure what more could have been done. Michael's story reinforces the importance of discipling new Jewish believers.

New believers, perhaps especially new Jewish believers, are prey to all sorts of influences, traps, and snares. Of course, God is sovereign, but humanly speaking a few weeks can make a great deal of difference. Waste no time in making sure new Jewish believers are properly disciplined. Even if you do everything you can and are faithful serious problems obviously can still arise.

2. Be Sensitive!

New Jewish believers have unique struggles. Many are lonely and wonder: "Am I the only one?" Many experience family rejection and misunderstanding by the church. Many feel out of place in church. Some suffer financial setbacks, such as loss of tuition money or inheritance, because of their new faith. The New Covenant community must be there to provide emotional support in more than superficial ways. To the other extreme, don't fawn on Jewish Christians or treat them as a trophy or extra special believer. This may cause offense, or worse – an inflated ego! Often new Jewish believers, who know very little about the Bible, are treated as Old Testament experts!

Because synagogue membership and attendance are taken lightly in the Jewish community and because many Jewish believers are culturally at odds with the church, an inordinate number of Jewish believers are not in regular fellowship anywhere. Jewish people were often constrained to sing Christmas carols in school, but left out the words "Christ" and "Jesus". Coming into a Gentile setting where foreign and previously avoided terms are frequently used is a strange situation for new Jewish believers! A Jewish oriented New Covenant congregation or a supplemental Jewish oriented fellowship and support group goes a long way in helping new Jewish believers.

Avoid repeating jokes about Jewish people, even those you may have heard from a Jewish friend. What may be appropriate for a Jew to tell a Jew may not be appropriate for a non-Jew to tell a Jew. If you want to appreciate Jewish humor better, get a copy of [The Joys of Yiddish](#)

by Leo Rosten, Pocket Books, NY. This book contains Jewish humor, not jokes where Jewish people take the brunt of the joke. Be very careful to avoid Jewish stereotypes or remarks which could be construed as anti-Semitic. Some Christians who are not necessarily anti-Semitic at all may still have some stereotypical views of Jewish people and use phrases which Jewish people find offensive. (This can also work in the opposite direction! Derogatory views of Gentiles may also need to be overcome by Jewish believers.)

3. Anticipate Family Conflict

God often works in families. We should expect Jewish family members to come to believe, too. However, Jewish Christians often experience tremendous family pressure against their faith. Parents are hurt and feel they failed to properly raise their child. Family members must be informed in a very sensitive way. It must be emphasized that the new believer has not departed from his Jewish heritage or his sense of Jewish identity. He is still Jewish. He has not become a Gentile now that he has found the Jewish Messiah! Two extremes must be avoided here. First, a Jewish believer may approach his family with the typical emotional zeal that new believers tend to have. Encourage Jewish believers to prayerfully and thoughtfully share their faith after they are well grounded. On the other extreme, some Jewish Christians don't *ever* share Jesus out of fear of the reaction they will get. Much prayer and wise counsel is needed here.

Common Jewish family approaches to dealing with Jewish believers in Jesus are a trip to the rabbi, a trip to the psychiatrist, and a trip to Israel. The sequence and extent to which these measures are resorted will vary according to the religious commitment of the family. All of these should be avoided. Even the trip to Israel may be part of a Jewish tour group which will include involvement with a rabbi and others who will put tremendous pressure on the new believer. After there has been growth and maturity in the faith, any of these interactions could be a wonderful opportunity to witness; but they could be dangerous to the faith of a new believer.

Even very secular Jewish families may strongly oppose the new believer. Almost twenty years ago I had the privilege of leading a young Jewish woman to faith. She had been involved in Eastern religions and had gone through a difficult divorce. We disciplined her, and she married one of my closest friends. Her family is very secular and agnostic, yet they were very unhappy about this sister's newfound faith in Jesus. They refused to come to her wedding because she was marrying another evangelical believer and the wedding would reflect their faith. Over the years they have come to accept the couple, but talking about religion is still taboo. Another very secular and liberal-minded Jewish friend has told me he would disown any of his children if they were to become Christians.

Some Jewish parents *have* disowned children who have become Christians – some may have a funeral. Parents may threaten students that they will withhold tuition money if the new believer insists on attending Christian fellowship. The church must be prepared to step in and become a new family. If family relationships can be maintained, family members may

eventually resolve themselves to the situation and, again, some will come to faith themselves.

4. Encourage Jewish Believers To Stay Jewish

Encourage Jewish believers to cultivate a believing *Jewish* identity rather than becoming assimilated into Gentile Christian culture. This is very important as far as continued witness to friends and family is concerned. Of course, there are aspects of Judaism which may not be consistent with New Covenant faith, but Jewish holidays can be celebrated in a way which honors Jesus as their ultimate expression. (This issue was addressed more fully above.)

The Jewish community may try to get Jewish believers in Jesus to become more observant of rabbinic practices. The sole authority of the Scriptures must be established. However, as we saw above, there is a place for keeping certain Jewish customs, not out of obedience to God, but out of deference to family sensibilities.

Perhaps a word is needed about the movement called "**Messianic Judaism.**" This is a diverse movement with many fine people involved. It ranges, on one extreme, from those who would advocate an expression of Jewish culture in Christian life and worship in order to be more effective in witness to the Jewish community, to those, on the other extreme, who teach that Jews who believe in Jesus are not Christians at all, but are a separate entity with additional promises from God and duties toward God in terms of the Law. There is reason to be very concerned about the latter extreme. Some are beginning to emphasize the kosher and Saturday Sabbath laws, not for salvation, but as an expression of obedience to God. One prominent Messianic Jewish leader, who I count as a friend, is responsible for theological education within the movement. I asked him very carefully if he believes Messianic Jews are obligated to keep kosher, not for salvation, but in the same way all believers are obligated not to steal, not to lie, etc. He very clearly told me that Jews who believe in Jesus are to keep kosher in obedience to the will of God and they are sinning if they do not. While he maintained that salvation comes through faith alone, his answer on the kosher question greatly disturbs me. It reflects his faulty view of the continuity of the covenants, the unity of the people of God, the newness of the New Covenant, and the fulfillment of all the promises given to Israel through Jesus alone. Galatians 3:14-16 states clearly that *all* believers, Gentiles as well as Jews, become heirs to the promises through faith in Jesus Christ.

Messianic synagogues are being established all over the world. There is not space here to adequately evaluate both the positive and negative contributions of this movement. Yeshua (Jesus) is being proclaimed as Israel's Redeemer and Lord. I rejoice in the gospel going out in a Jewish context, though I have serious reservations about aspects of this movement. Familiarize yourself with the Messianic Jewish group in your area (if there is one) and find out what their distinctives are. You may learn something and you may be able to share some of your insight as well. Certainly we are all working together for the same Lord and the same gospel. Messianic Jewish congregations are filling a need for New Covenant congregations with a Jewish cultural orientation. Jewish believers frequently feel more comfortable in a Messianic Jewish setting. Jewish oriented home fellowships and support groups within the

church can also fill this need, as can churches which are willing to make Jewish believers feel at home and welcome. We have sponsored a Jewish oriented fellowship group in our home for over ten years in order to help meet the needs of Jewish believers within the church. Feel free to contact us for more information about this approach.

5. Be Prepared For Professional Opposition

Family members will sometimes become suddenly observant of Judaism or darken the rabbi's door for the first time in years. A new believer may be overly zealous and tempted to meet with a rabbi in order to share his faith. This is not a good idea. What he will usually find is that the rabbi is much better equipped to refute belief in Jesus than the new believer is to proclaim it. Sometimes the "rabbi" will be a professional anti-missionary. It is best to make sure the new believer is very well established in his faith before meeting with his rabbi, and then, if at all, he should agree to meet only with his own family rabbi and then preferably with his pastor or another mature believer along as well.

Professional Jewish anti-missionaries conduct seminars on how to refute Christian teaching on campus and in Jewish community centers and synagogues. There are books, tapes, videos, and Internet resources produced for this purpose available from organizations such as Jews for Judaism and Outreach Judaism. Anti-missionaries keep a computer data-base of Jewish believers in Jesus all over the United States using information obtained from family and friends. Major Jewish publications from time to time have advertisements from anti-missionary groups offering help to troubled families. There are hot-lines in place. It is not at all unusual for new Jewish believers to come in contact with this sort of material. Much of the material looks plausible to someone who has not had a theological education, so it is best for a new believer to steer clear of approaching these materials, especially unassisted.

Anticipate the common Jewish objections and the anti-missionary arguments. Apologetic concerns are extremely important, as is prayer! See the Appendix for the section on Answering Jewish Objections.

6. Specific Theological Issues

Certain concepts are not unfamiliar to nominal Christians, but these may be very difficult for new Jewish believers to understand and accept. There may be struggles with doctrines such as the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, Sunday worship, justification by faith, and the reliability of the New Testament, especially the Pauline Epistles. In addition, Jewish believers may struggle with Jewish teachings about the kosher laws, sabbath, or the authority of the rabbis. We have produced a booklet written for Jewish believers explaining Sunday worship. In the future we hope to produce more materials dealing with doctrinal issues. For more secular Jews, issues such as evolution, liberal views on morality, politics and abortion will also be obstacles. Great wisdom is needed to know what battles to fight and when. For Jewish people in general, the agenda of the Christian Right is viewed as foreign and possibly dangerous. Be patient.

New Jewish believers will immediately be exposed to various forms of dispensationalism and sensationalistic prophetic interpretation. There may be a strong attraction toward these things since end times speculation can seem very exciting and tends to overemphasize the significance of national Israel. Unfortunately those of us who are Reformed and Covenantal in theology have not always responded well to dispensational teaching. We need to avoid doing theology from a reactionary position. Theology should primarily be driven by a desire to be faithful to the Scriptures rather than driven by a reaction against error. True, we must address error, but we must approach the issues carefully and with precision or our reaction can carry us into a polemical position unbalanced in the opposite direction.

There are some good materials out there which deal with all of these areas. Anticipate these questions and be prepared to answer them from both the New Testament and the Hebrew Bible.

7. Specific Life Issues

Few Jewish people attend synagogue regularly. Even among members, weekly attendance is low. According to studies done in the Philadelphia area¹¹, and different areas will vary, only 41.2% of Jewish people are synagogue members. Of those who are members, 9.4% attend weekly, 13.8% attend once or twice a month, 56.6% attend a few times a year, and 20.2% never attend! Also, in the synagogue one may wander in and out or talk quietly during the service and not be out of order! Sometimes new Jewish believers may carry over some of their synagogue habits into the church. Baptism and formal church membership are very big steps for new Jewish believers. Synagogues require the paying of annual dues in order to join. You may need to explain churches operate differently. Again, be patient.

New believers will struggle with how to approach Jewish customs. The section above called "How Jewish Can a Jewish Believer in Jesus Continue to Be?" should be of some help here. There is always the temptation to cave into family pressures (don't speak of Jesus, don't fellowship, don't get baptized), to continue synagogue attendance (participating as a secret believer), etc. We must carefully steer between the Scylla of syncretism and the Charybdis of unnecessary abandonment of Jewish culture. It is a complex problem.

Cultural pressure will cause much temptation towards syncretism during times of mourning. In Jewish tradition, mourners are required to pray the "Kaddish" for deceased relatives, especially parents. Though some don't see it this way and the actual words of the "Kaddish" are mostly a praise of the Creator, some understand praying Kaddish as a prayer for the dead. It is interesting to note that one prays the Kaddish for one's parents for only eleven months, rather than for a full year. This is because even the worst scoundrel enters his reward after a year, so one doesn't want to imply one's parent requires the full year. Praying the Kaddish is thought to help the departed through this period similar to purgatory. The Kaddish itself is a beautiful Aramaic prayer. The only objection that a Christian might have to the actual words of the Kaddish is that it implores God to establish His Kingdom soon. We know that in Messiah the Kingdom has already come, yet we also pray in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come." Jewish liturgy expresses that God's kingdom has come in so far as those who submit

to God as King are in His Kingdom. One can take the Aramaic word "establish" as meaning making the Kingdom fully manifest in the world in an outward and final sense. This is essentially the same as the meaning in the Lord's Prayer. The words of the Kaddish are not in themselves problematical. However, the context and motivation is all important. Certainly a prayer should not be prayed in order to help a deceased relative. One cannot join non-believers in prayer, either. Nonetheless, due to the sensitive nature of times of mourning, this would not be a good time to make a big issue of this and add to the grief of the family. In general, during a time of mourning I believe a Jewish believer in Jesus should participate in the funeral and mourning customs to the greatest extent possible without compromising his faith. This could mean quietly standing there while certain prayers are recited. Such an occasion probably isn't a good time to say much about the gospel, unless the family is unusually open and asks to know the reason for the hope we have.

Realize that new Jewish believers from secular backgrounds may not be familiar with the mores and cultural standards of the evangelical church or understand that certain language may be offensive. A number of years back a young Jewish college student came to faith at our dining-room table. He immediately had all sorts of questions as to what he should do now that he believes. As I drove him home, he asked me if he could still read Playboy Magazine now that he wants to follow Jesus. I explained to him about adultery and how Jesus described visual lust as adultery of the heart. The bottom line, I explained, is that because of this, Playboy is not something disciples of Jesus should read. My young friend's response was: "Well, he rose from the dead. Who the #\$%&@ am I to disagree with him!" His sentiment was right, but I can never quote him verbatim from the pulpit!

8. Get Personally Involved. Share Your Life.

Discipleship must go beyond a weekly meeting for Bible study. Someone may need to take a new Jewish believer in, perhaps literally, but at least socially. Sometimes there will be family rejection, so a new family must be established. If a Jewish believer is fired from the family business or gets tuition cut off, there may be financial problems. Certainly the church cannot meet every financial need, but our deacons should be there to help those with serious problems. Naturally, much wisdom is needed in dealing with these deaconal concerns. In Nineteenth Century London there were special houses, factories, and schools set up for Jewish converts. We probably don't need to go that far, but the body of Messiah must provide for new believers both socially and practically. Another point: someone should make sure the new believer isn't alone during holidays. Again, discipleship must go beyond a strictly "religious" context and must be willing to bring a new believer into family and community life.

CONCLUSION

When it comes to discipling new Jewish believers, we need sensitivity, diligence, wisdom, and patience. We know that sanctification is a process and that it takes time to instruct new believers in the "whole counsel of God." There are special issues that arise with any category of disciple, and there are specific issues that come up frequently with new Jewish believers.

This guide is not the exhaustive or final word on this issue, but it is the hope of the author that it will serve the church of the Messiah in ministering to those "natural branches" God is grafting back into the tree of believing Israel. May the question of how to disciple new Jewish believers become more and more on the mind of God's people as an ever increasing number of the physical descendants of Abraham come back into the household of faith.

APPENDIX 1: ANSWERING JEWISH OBJECTIONS

I. General Principles

- A. Jewish objections to Jesus are not usually theological. They are traditional, cultural and sociological. Some questions may be a smoke screen to avoid considering Jesus.
- B. Many of the same general apologetic issues that come up in dealing with secular Gentiles are also relevant to Jewish work, but we will not focus on these here.

II. Deal with root assumptions.

- A. Romans 1: Realize that the heart of man suppresses truth.
- B. John 11:45-53; 12:9-10: There can be obstinate unbelief no matter what the evidence.
- C. Understand the Biblical View of Man's Assumptions:
 - 1. Genesis 3:1-6: At the root of man's sin is his decision to judge for himself. In a Jewish context, this means the authority of the Messiah, his apostles, and the New Covenant is set over against the perceived authority of the rabbis and rabbinic law.
 - 2. Psalm 14:1: Ungodly assumptions are foolish. There is no basis in them for truth, knowledge, morality, or meaning.¹²
 - 3. Proverbs 1:7: Only in God and His word do we have a basis for knowledge.
 - 4. Ecclesiastes 12:8, 13 & 14: All other systems of thought are foolish.
 - 5. Acts 17:16-33: Ungodly assumptions must be challenged when evidence is presented.

III. Answer the questioner rather than the question. This is the methodology of Jesus.¹³

- A. Mark 7:1-13 Learn to turn unfair criticism around as a positive witness. This is "spiritual judo," using the momentum of an attack to present the truth.
- B. Mark 11:27-33 You can answer a question with a question when they really don't want to know the answer anyway.
- C. Luke 10:25-37 Jesus speaks of "The Good Samaritan." He uses a story to get to the heart of the matter.
- D. Luke 20:20-26: Jesus is aware of the trap and traps the trappers.

IV. Address false rabbinic religious assumptions:

- A. Elenctics is a word which means the unmasking of sinful undercurrents in all non-Messianic religion systems. We should first focus on some of the positive areas of contact, those areas in the Jewish culture where we find a testimony of God, but eventually we need to move on to those areas where the rebellious nature of man has obscured and suppressed the truth of God.
- B. The nature of God is diminished in unbelieving thought. Demonstrate from the Old Covenant Scriptures the nature of God, his personality, holiness, justice, etc. Rabbinic thought tends to emphasize the transcendence of God and minimize the imminence. Aristotelian thinking has come into Judaism through men like Maimonides.
- C. The sinfulness of man is diminished in unbelieving thought. Man's nature, actions, the universality of sin, and God's punishment need to be established from the Old Testament. Rabbinic Judaism denies original sin and sees man as able to keep the Law.
- D. Rabbinic Judaism claims the rabbis are the authorities God has established to interpret the Bible and lead Israel. It is best to avoid any criticism of Jewish leaders, but, if this issue comes up, **tactfully** show how even the prophets and priests of Israel were at times wrong (Jeremiah chapters 2, 5, 6, 10 and Ezekiel chapter 34). The Oral Law of the rabbis, according to Orthodox belief, was given at Sinai along with the Written Law, yet the Oral Law makes reference to rabbis living over a thousand years later. Even if there are any extra-biblical traditions which go all the way back to Mosaic times, this doesn't mean they are divinely inspired or that later traditions have divine inspiration, either.
- E. Discuss the possible rebellious motivations of the human heart behind these false doctrines.

APPENDIX II: SOME SPECIFIC JEWISH OBJECTIONS

1. *You can't be Jewish and believe in Jesus.*

- a. The prior issue of who is a Jew must be addressed. There are various conflicting views. Consider the root assumptions. The issue is: Who is Jesus? If Jesus is indeed the Jewish Messiah, you deny your Jewishness if you reject Him!

2. *Jews don't believe in the Trinity. The Messiah is not considered God, so how can a man become God?*

- a. Christians do not believe in three gods. God is a complex unity.
- b. You have it backwards. A man didn't become God, but God became a man.
- c. In the Old Testament God dwelled among his in a temple of stone and wood. In the New Covenant he dwelled among his people in a Temple of flesh and blood. See 1 Kgs. 8:27.
- d. You can refer to the Angel of God in Genesis 32:30-32, Exodus 33:21-23, Judges 13, etc. Also see Daniel 7:13-14.
- e. The Hebrew word for God, Elohim, is in the plural. Jewish mysticism has arguably had some awareness of the tri-une nature of God, though it has had a deficient view.

3. *Prove to me that Jesus is the Messiah.*

- a. The whole plan and history of redemption, beginning with Genesis, points to Him. (Covenant theology helps here!)
- b. Specific prophecies such as Isaiah 53, Isaiah 9:6, Micah 5:1, and Jer. 31:31 point to him.
- c. The resurrection is an historical event.
- d. Gentiles are being brought in, fulfilling Isaiah 9:7, 49:6, 55:3-5, etc.
- e. Nothing can prove it to you if you presuppose it impossible. Ask God to give you wisdom and an open mind.
- f. Personal testimonies of Jews who have come to faith may also have some value.

4. *Jesus did not do what the Messiah was to do.*

- a. Challenge rabbinic root assumptions about this. If all guns and bombs were eliminated, people would still kill with sticks and stones. Peace comes from a renewed heart.
- b. The Messiah isn't finished conquering yet! Jesus brought a spiritual and progressively expanding kingdom with future aspects remaining. Daniel 2 says the Messiah's kingdom had to come after the four kingdoms mentioned, the last being Rome. It would expand gradually.
- c. The restoration of the Temple is found in the body of believers (Compare Ezekiel 47:1-12 and John 7:38, 1 Peter 2:4-10, and Rev. 21:22-22:5). Also see the book of Hebrews.

5. *Isaiah 53 refers to the sufferings of Israel.*

- a. Many ancient rabbis interpreted it as Messiah. There was belief in two Messiahs: a conquering Messiah and a suffering Messiah. Messiah was even seen as a leper in Jewish tradition. The Talmud uses the name "The Leper Scholar" and quotes Isaiah 53 to refer to the Messiah in Sanh.98b. See also Mid. Ruth Rabba 5:6 and Pesikta Rabbati pp.161a-b. Maimonides is quoted as citing Isaiah 53 to refer to Messiah in The Fifty Third Chapter of Isaiah According to the Jewish Interpreters by Neubauer and Driver, Ktav Publishing House, Inc. NY, NY 1969, Vol. II pages 374-375. Also see Zohar 2:212a.
- b. Many modern rabbis claim Isaiah 53 refers to the sufferings of Israel. **But has the awful treatment of the Jewish people really been God's plan for atonement?** Can anyone really claim that the suffering of the Jewish people, however undeserved and unjust, has been God's plan to atone for sin?
- c. The figure described in Isaiah 53 *willingly* suffers. It says: **"the Lord makes his life a guilt offering" for his people.** In the Vilna Ghetto and other places the Jewish partisans bravely fought the Nazis.
- d. The figure in Isaiah 53 is guiltless and sinless. Israel is not. See Isaiah 1 and 6. Israel did not die, get buried, and rise again!
- e. The person in Isaiah 53 dies for the sins of Israel, just as the servant of Isaiah 49:6, called Israel, restores Israel. The pronouns make it clear this person suffers for Israel. The verbs are not really "past tense" since this is not the nature of ancient Hebrew. "The Hebrew verbal system is altogether different from the verbal system of the Indo-European languages with which one is familiar. The Hebrew verb describes the action as complete or incomplete, whereas the verb in Indo-European languages is temporal in character....The student must remember that perfect and imperfect indicate not time but state of action."¹⁴
- f. Root out of dry ground "shoresh" (v. 2) is Messiah. Compare Is.11:10. Also Jer. 33:15.

6. *What about all the persecutions of the Jews by Christians?*

- a. Recognize that there have been terrible persecutions carried out by those professing to be Christians, but this is not a basis to reject Jesus himself. This is the classic logical fallacy of "Argumentum Ad Hominem", rejecting something because of *who* holds it. Don't reject the Jewish Messiah because of what some Gentiles have done in his name!
- b. Satan's ploy - what better way to deceive the Jewish people into not believing?

7. *How can I believe after what went on during the Holocaust?*

- a. This is an extremely sensitive area, and many Jewish people have lost family members in the Holocaust. Some may have a problem believing in God at all due to this event. However, if there is no God, would they like the idea that the Nazis got away with it any better? If there is no God and no judgement, the Nazis go unpunished. We may not understand why God allows certain things to happen, but there must be a reason. Of course, mankind is to blame for inhumanity to fellow men, but we know God is still sovereign. He is also good. There is a dilemma. Ultimately, we have a choice between a reason we don't yet know or understand, if God exists and no reason at all, if God doesn't exist. In the death of Messiah we see man's responsibility, the sovereignty of God and the goodness of God displayed. Judas betrayed the Messiah to the Roman and Judean authorities who transgressed justice, yet this was all God's gracious plan for our salvation. God brought a great good out of an evil. We therefore have a basis to believe He will also bring all things to an ultimate good, even though specific events may be evil at present.
- b. Without God, there are the problems of pleasure and goodness. How do we account for pleasure and goodness? Is good really good if there is no God? Where does pleasure come from? Does pleasure have any meaning apart from thankfulness to the one who has given mankind pleasures?
- c. Evil is the result of temporal action on the part of creatures, and will one day be overturned in the plan of God. God can make a creature's evil deed fit into His ultimately good plan. Evil will one day be dealt with and overturned by a just God.
- d. Be careful here. There may be an underlying emotional scar which is the real issue. Deal with that in compassion.

8. *The New Covenant is anti-semitic.*

- a. What is not often brought out is that **the same sort of criticisms can be leveled against the Tenach (Old Testament)!** For instance, could not this statement be considered anti-semitic: "The ox knows its owner, and the ass its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people does not understand. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity,

offspring of evildoers, sons who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged"? Consider also this text: "For the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah have done nothing but evil in my sight from their youth; the sons of Israel have done nothing but provoke me to anger by the work of their hands, says the LORD. This city has aroused my anger and wrath, from the day it was built to this day, so that I will remove it from my sight because of all the evil of the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah which they did to provoke me to anger – their kings and their princes, their priests and their prophets, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem." The first passage is from Isaiah chapter 2 and the second is from Jeremiah chapter 32. Is the Hebrew Bible anti-semitic, too?

9. *The New Covenant is full of errors.*

- a. Just as there are answers to objections to the authority of the Tenach, so there are also answers to criticism of the New Covenant. Various books and commentaries which have answers to specific items.
- b. Another common problem is the misunderstanding of the use of the word "fulfilled" in the New Covenant, especially in Matthew. Often "anti-missionaries" fail to recognize the Jewishness of the gospels. Sometimes almost midrashic forms are used by New Testament writers. Matthew portrays Jesus as the faithful embodiment of the intention of God for the nation of Israel, the ultimate messianic king. He therefore "fulfills" the *purposes* of God as expressed in Israel and the king of Israel. It is therefore quite proper (and even somewhat rabbinic!) to quote passages in a way consistent with this perspective. The real question is not whether Jesus "fulfills prophecy" in some sort of preconceived mechanistic fashion, but rather is he indeed the definitive expression of the hope of the prophets.

10. *Why don't Christians keep the Law like Orthodox Jews?*

- a. Do Orthodox Jews really keep the Law? Do they stone to death sabbath breakers, sacrifice animals, marry the wife of a departed brother to raise up children for him, etc.? In reality, neither Orthodox Jews nor Orthodox Christians follow the Law exactly as written. Christians come to the Law as interpreted by Jesus and his apostles while Orthodox Jews come to the Law as interpreted by the rabbis. Who is more consistent with the overall teaching of the Torah? Jesus is.
- b. God promised a New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34) "not like the covenant I made with their forefathers...I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts." We seek to keep the heart of the Torah and Torah's moral principles. We take the law seriously. Jesus brought out the deeper meaning of the Law in Matthew 5-7. Messiah brought a new priesthood (Psalm 110:4), so there was a change in the Law. See Hebrews 7:12.

11. *Judaism is not a proselytizing religion.*

- a. This is not true historically. During the first five centuries A.D., Judaism sought pagan converts. See also the Book of Jonah! (Some branches of Judaism do now seek Gentile converts. This is a recent development.)
- b. If Judaism is true, it should be! Why keep a good thing to yourself?
- c. You are trying to convert *me* to *your* point of view!

12. ***Evangelism is anti-semitic.***

- a. All orthodox Christians believe the words of Jesus when he said, "I am the way, the truth, the life, *no one* goes to the Father but through me." This means Jesus provided the *only* atonement, or "kappura" that is acceptable to God today for payment for the sin which separates us from the Holy One. Jesus or "Yeshua" (which means "salvation") is God's final and ultimate provision for the sins of Israel and all the world, the fulfillment of all the Levitical sacrifices for purification from guilt and uncleanness. He is the ultimate Passover Lamb who brings freedom from the bondage to sin and death (rather than Egypt) and leads us into the promised land of the blessings of eternal life and a renewed relationship with our righteous Creator. Should we not tell everyone about this new Passover lamb? We call all people to do t'shuvah, to turn from our own ways and own opinions, and to follow God's Messiah. Given these presuppositions one can see why we wish to tell all people about what God has done through Jesus. If he is indeed the only way to a restored relationship with the Creator it would be anti-semitic not to tell the Jewish people of God's offer of mercy and forgiveness.

13. ***I'm happy and satisfied and don't need anything.***

- a. You can be in need and not know it. There are many everyday examples of this.
- b. Scratch where they itch. Perhaps they aren't really so happy and satisfied. Expose them to the Light. The people on the Titanic were happy and satisfied, too – for a while.

14. ***The Rabbis are appointed by God as the authority to interpret the Scriptures.***

- a. Here is a key issue, that of rabbinic authority. The Talmud can be used in a positive way to show interpretive tradition, but its authority as inspired revelation must also be challenged. (See what Deuteronomy 4:2 and 12:32 say about adding to the Torah!) According to Jewish tradition, the Oral Law (Mishnah and Talmud) were given at Sinai along with the Written Law, but when you read the Mishnah and Talmud you find they contain arguments by rabbis over 1,000 years later, so exactly what parts were supposedly given at Sinai? Read the Mishnah and Talmud side by side with the New Testament, and you will see which is more consistent with the Old Testament. See Appendix 1, section IV above.

- b. There really is no historical or Biblical evidence for this point of Orthodox Jewish dogma.
15. ***The Messiah is not a very important idea; you can't find the expression 'the messiah' in the Hebrew Bible.***
- a. All priests and kings were, in a sense, "messiahs" since they were "anointed" of God. Yet the prophets foresaw an anointed one par excellence who would come and bring knowledge of God to the world. (Maimonides thought it important enough to say "He who does not believe in a restoration or does not look forward to the coming of the Messiah denies not only the teachings of the prophets but also those of the Law and Moses our teacher...") But peace cannot be achieved either instantaneously or through force. Only when the human heart is renewed can righteousness prosper. This is what Messiah came to do and why obedience to him and submission to his Torah is proclaimed throughout the world.
 - b. The 13 Articles of Judaism, written by Maimonides, see Messiah as a key principle.
16. ***Where in the Bible does it say to believe in Messiah?***
- a. Nowhere specifically, but it does say to believe God. If God says Jesus is Messiah, we are to believe it and submit to Messiah's rule. This certainly means we are to trust Messiah; and that is what it is to believe, to trust God's promises.
17. ***There is no God. I believe in science.***
- a. What is the necessary philosophical basis for scientific research? Science presupposes an ordered intelligible universe. If there is no Creator, there is no basis for such an assumption. (See Appendix 1)
 - b. Where will science lead us without morality to guide us? Where do we get morality?
18. ***Judaism stresses living a righteous life; you have "easy believe-ism".***
- a. Read the book of James. Jesus called us to repent!
19. ***How can you believe in the virgin birth? Doesn't Isaiah 7:14 refer to someone born in Isaiah's day?***
- a. It can be argued that Isaiah 7:14 *may* possibly have a more immediate fulfillment and also a more ultimate fulfillment in Christ. "Fulfilled" can mean "bring to ultimate expression". Immanuel was a sign that God was present with his people to deliver them. There are three children mentioned by Isaiah: Shear Yashub (A Remnant Shall Return), Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (Quick to the Plunder, Swift to the Spoil) and

Immanuel (God is With Us). These children were *symbolic children* according to Isaiah 8:18. Passages like Isaiah 9:6-7 push the reader forward to look for a more ultimate Immanuel.

- b. Read the Patriarchs regarding the birth of Isaac and Jacob, and the sons of Israel. God stepped in miraculously to bring about the births of Abraham's descendants. If the son of Abraham, Isaac, was miraculously born, wouldn't we also expect the ultimate Son of Abraham, the Messiah, to also be miraculously born?

20. *Jews don't believe in "Original Sin".*

- a. David believed in it according to Psalm 51:5 and so did Jeremiah according to Jer. 17:9.
- b. So what? You are still a sinner no matter how "unoriginal" your sins may be! (A flippant answer can be appropriate if the question is in fact a diversion!)

21. *God wouldn't send me to Hell; I haven't done anything that bad.*

- a. Have you kept the Ten Commandments? Have you loved God with all your heart and have you loved your neighbor as yourself?
- b. The problem here is a deficient view of the holiness of God. Consider the episode of the Ark of the Covenant falling from the cart (2 Samuel 6:7) and the demands of Law (Deut. 5 & 6). Isaiah said: "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear" (59:2) and "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are as filthy rags" (64:6).

22. *What about all the denominations?*

- a. Explain the basic unity of New Testament faith.
- b. Divisions are due to the sinfulness of man. (Isn't it amazing that God causes the Kingdom to still progress in spite of us!)

23. *The Bible can be interpreted to mean anything you want it to mean.*

- a. Explain the concept of grammatical/historical exegesis.
- b. Why is it that people don't say that of other literature? We don't hear people say: "The newspaper can be interpreted to mean anything you want it to mean." There are some more difficult passages, but the basic message is clear. Mark Twain said, "It's not what I *don't* understand in the Bible that bothers me. It's what I *do* understand!"¹⁵

- c. Tell me how you interpret this! (Give specific passages like: John 3:36)

24. *The genealogies of Jesus are not reliable.*

- a. A common criticism involves the genealogy of Jesus. Much has been written on this subject, and there are a number of possible solutions to the issues often raised. Let me just say that the basic problem is ignorance of ancient near-eastern genealogical forms. Genealogies can be constructed in various ways for various purposes. Skipped generations, alternate names, etc. are common. If you look at the Talmud Pes. 62b, you will find similar difficulties were recognized by the rabbis. Mar Zutra said there were four hundred camel loads of exegetical interpretations of the material between the names Azel in 1 Chronicles 8:38 and Azel in 1 Chronicles 9:44! (Pes. 62b) If someone raises this sort of question, he probably has been in contact with professional anti-missionary materials.

25. *Doesn't the curse on Jehoiachin disqualify Jesus?*

- a. This is another anti-missionary question. Some have said that the curse on Jehoiachin in Jeremiah 22 precludes Jesus from being Messiah since he is descended from Zerubbabel, who is, in turn, descended from Jehoiachin. Yet none other than Maimonides himself said that the curse was removed through repentance (see his Mishneh Torah, book one, the section on repentance, "T'shuvah" chapter 7 section 6, or page 80 in A Maimonides Reader edited by Isadore Twersky). A medieval midrash, Sefer Zerubbabel, even called Zerubbabel himself the Messiah! Furthermore, Joseph Klausner (The Messianic Idea in Israel, p.552) says Zerubbabel is viewed as the Messiah in Haggai and Zechariah. Indeed he *was* the messiah for that generation! (See below).
- b. Examine the passage in question. "As I live, says the LORD, though Jehoiachin the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the **signet ring** on my right hand, yet I would tear you off and give you into the hand of those who seek your life, into the hand of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchanezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Babylonians. I will hurl you and the mother who bore you into another country, where you were not born, and there you shall die. But to the land to which you will long to return, there you shall not return." Is this man Jehoiachin a despised, broken pot, a vessel no one cares for? Why are he and his children **hurled out and cast into a land which they do not know**? O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the LORD: "Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed *in his lifetime*; for *none of his offspring* shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David, and ruling again in Judah" (Jeremiah 22:24-30).
- c. The rejection of Jehoiachin is described in terms of a cast-off **signet ring**. This is the very same language used by the prophet Haggai to describe the *restoration* of favor to Zerubbabel! "I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel," declares the

LORD, "and I will make you like my **signet ring, for I have chosen you**, declares the LORD Almighty." Also consider the prophecy of Zechariah. Clearly Zerubbabel is God's chosen Davidic heir just as Joshua is the chosen high priest. (See chapters 3 & 4, and Haggai 2:1-5) Joshua and Zerubbabel are "the two who are anointed (messiahs) to serve the LORD of all the earth" (Zech. 4:14). God accepted Zerubbabel. What right do anti-missionaries have to reject him?

- d. The whole context is the impending Babylonian captivity, a rejection of Israel as the people of God. Hosea 1:8 says they are not his people. Yet God restored Israel again to favor. Could not the judgement on Jehoiachin be seen in the same light?
- e. Do the phrases "in his lifetime" and "none of his offspring" necessarily indicate permanent rejection of his line or could they indicate only a temporary rejection of his immediate offspring?
- f. Could some of the possible variables in the construction of genealogies mean the descent from Jehoiachin may not be strictly "genetic" anyway?
- g. God made the curse and He has the authority to remove it. Jesus removes *all* curses (Mt.3:17). The curse on Jehoiachin was a subset of the curse on Adam.

26. *God does not require human sacrifice; as a matter of fact, He forbids it!*

- a. True, He forbids us from making such sacrifices, but that does not forbid Him! There are many things God can do that we cannot do.
- b. Genesis 22 shows that God has the right to ask for such a sacrifice, and this "binding of Isaac" in Jewish writings is said to be a type of human sacrifice. According to Jewish tradition, the soul of Isaac actually left his body and this act of Abraham was meritorious for all the Jewish people! (See The Midrash Says, Vol I, The Book of Beraishis, Rabbi Moshe Weisman, 1980, Benei Yakov Publications, pages 197-205.)
- c. God had the right to demand the death penalty for sin. (See the Law of Moses.)
- d. God described the judgement of Egypt as a sacrifice in Jeremiah 46:10. It says: "For the LORD God of Hosts is preparing a sacrifice in the northland, by the river Euphrates."

(These are some of the common Jewish objections. The list is by no means exhaustive.)

APPENDIX III: A MESSIANIC DISCIPLESHIP CHECKLIST¹⁶

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Work # _____

_____ Birthday / /

Discipler _____

Date / /

Assessment of Areas of Growth

Biblical Teaching

God*	The Nature of God (An Infinite Personal Spirit)	[]
	Relationship of Creator to Creature	[]
	The Holiness, Justice and Love of God	[]
	The Tri-unity of God	[]
Messiah*	His Deity and Humanity	[]
	His Purpose in Coming	[]
	His Atonement	[]
	His Resurrection	[]
	His Return	[]
Salvation*	Why Needed	[]
	How Received	[]
	What is faith?	[]
	What is Justification?	[]
	What is Sanctification?	[]
	The Holy Spirit and Sanctification	[]
Sacraments*	Spiritual Gifts	[]
	Doctrine of Baptism	[]
	Doctrine of the Lord's Supper (Fulfilled Passover)	[]
Law/Grace*	Relationship of These Concepts	[]
	New Covenant View of Ceremonial Law	[]
	Unity of Jews and Gentiles in New Covenant Community	[]

Scripture*	Inspiration of the Bible	[]
	Understands How the Bible Fits Together	[]
	Understands Unity of God's Redemptive Covenants Through History	[]
The Rabbis*	Question of Rabbis' Authority	[]
	Believer's Relationship to Judaism	[]
World View*	Developing a Biblical World View	[]
 <u>Biblical Practice</u>		
Sacraments	Has Been Baptized	[]
	Understands Communion	[]
Prayer	Consistent Personal Prayer Life	[]
	Able to Pray Spontaneously	[]
	Able to Pray with Others	[]
	Understands Priorities in Prayer	[]
Repentance*	Necessity of Repentance	[]
	Understands What Repentance Is	[]
	Seeks Daily Repentance	[]
Bible Study	% of Old Testament Read	[]
	% of New Testament Read	[]
	Practices Daily Bible Study	[]
	Memorizes Scripture	[]
Fellowship	Attends Weekly Services	[]
	Involved in a Fellowship Group	[]
Family	Has a Healthy Family Life	[]
Society	Is a Law-Abiding Citizen	[]
	Votes	[]
Work	Is Employed or Seeking Employment	[]
	Has a Biblical View of Work	[]
Money	Supports the Work of the Lord Regularly	[]
	Handles and Budgets Funds	[]

Sex	Has a Biblical view of Sex	[]
	" " " Marriage	[]
	" " " Dating	[]

Identity	Has Reconciled Jewishness and Jesus	[]
	Is Developing a New Covenant Jewish Identity	[]

Messianic Witness

Evangelism	Able to Share Basic Gospel	[]
	Able to Give Personal Testimony	[]
	Has Done Street Evangelism	[]

Apologetics*	Knows Messianic Prophecies	[]
	The Resurrection	[]
	Science and Evolution	[]

Missions	Has a Vision for World Missions	[]
	Seeks the Lord's Will in This Area	[]

Family	Has a Burden for Unsaved Family	[]
	Has Told Family of Faith	[]

*Note:

All categories *without* asterisks are either checked or left blank.

For categories *with* asterisks, rate by number: (4) Is able to teach this point (3) Understands and believes (2) Believes but doesn't really understand (1) Understands but doesn't believe

APPENDIX IV: SOME RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR NEW JEWISH BELIEVERS
(General apologetic works and other Christian literature are also useful, of course.)

Betrayed, by Stan Telchin, Chosen Books (A man sets out to disprove faith in Jesus, but becomes a believer.)

Christianity is Jewish, by Edith Schaeffer, Tyndale Press

The CHAIM New Covenant Passover Haggadah, by Rev. Fred Klett, published in-house and available from CHAIM

Christ in the Passover, by Moishe and Ceil Rosen, Moody Press

Covenants, by O. Palmer Robertson, Great Commission Publications

The Fall Feasts of Israel, by Mitch and Z'hava Glaser, Moody Press (An excellent work)

The Jewish Holidays and Their New Covenant Implications, by Rev. Fred Klett, published in-house and available from CHAIM

The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, by Alfred Edersheim, Hendrickson Publishers

The Jewish People and Jesus Christ, and The Jewish People and Jesus Christ After Auschwitz, by Jacob Jocz, Baker Book House

The Jews for Jesus Growth Book and **Questions and Answers**, available from Jews for Jesus (very helpful).

Shabbat: A New Covenant Perspective, by Rev. Fred Klett, published in-house by CHAIM

Stand Firm, by Eliezer Maas, published by AMF International (deals with apologetic issues a Jewish believer may face)

Testimonies of Jews Who Believe in Jesus, edited by Ruth Rosen, available from Jews for Jesus

Y'shua, the Jewish Way to Say Jesus, by Moishe Rosen, Moody Press (Messianic prophecies in a Jewish style.)

FREE!

CHAIMTIMES, the CHAIM newsletter, P.O. Box 133, Glenside, PA 19038 (215) 576-7325

ENDNOTES

1. Obviously there were problems here such as lack of fencing the table, etc., but the account is still helpful.
2. Moische Rosen with William Proctor, from the book Jews for Jesus, pages 28-31, (c) 1974 by Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, New Jersey
3. See 1 Corinthians chapter 8
4. If you have any doubt about that, you only need watch several episodes of the television program "Northern Exposure" and observe the struggles of Joel Fleischman, a New York Jewish doctor and the only Jew in town!
5. Willowbank Report, page 7
6. See Rausch, David A. A Legacy of Hatred, Moody Press 1984, page 24.
7. The Origins of Paul's Religion, by J. Gresham Machen, Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids, MI, (c) 1925, August 1978 edition, pages 92-93.
8. Perhaps Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 are also relevant to our consideration of the ceremonial law.
9. Systematic Theology, By Charles Hodge, James Clarke & Co. Ltd, London, 1960 edition, Vol. III, pages 262-264).
10. Of course, we know God is sovereign in saving and preserving his elect, but I don't believe this means we ignore other factors.
11. From the Summary Report of the Jewish Population Study of Greater Philadelphia, published by the Federation of Jewish agencies of Greater Philadelphia, (c) 1985.
12. See works by Cornelius Van Til and Francis Schaeffer.
13. I am indebted to Jews for Jesus street campaign training for these insights.
14. A Beginner's Handbook to Biblical Hebrew, by Marks, John H., and Rogers, Virgil M., page 21, Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, (c) 1958
15. This is an approximation or paraphrase of what he said.
16. I am indebted to Steve Scaffone for the basic format of the checklist. I simply adapted it for new Jewish believers.