

“Hebrew 101” Hebrew Christianity – Messianic Hebrew



Greetings from HomeWorship 101™

***"Cause me to hear your loving kindness in the morning,
for in You do I trust;
Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk,
for I lift up my soul to You."***

- Psalm 143:8

In this article we are going to explore the real meaning of the word “Hebrew.” The problem is that the word Hebrew is mostly defined by ethnicity, but more importantly it also has a spiritual meaning that has largely been ignored or forgotten. Religious labels are soooo problematic, until now I have resisted using religious names to describe my teachings because for one, I do not fit perfectly into any category, and two, because it can be a turn off to many people because of the countless bad examples or bad experiences they have had in religions. If someone asks if I belong to a church, I proudly say I am a Protestant (a protesting Christian) , but usually that is not good enough and they continue to ask, what kind of Protestant or what denomination do I belong to? Then I say I was raised a Lutheran, but now my area of study is Biblical Archeology and I keep to the ancient ways of the faith, the way Christ and the Apostles practiced it (and I also practice the ancient ways of healing). That answer usually evokes either a blank stare because they do not understand what I just said and I sound like an elitist or nervousness because they think I have become a Jew – either way it’s not easy being me.

To help make my point regarding the real definition of Hebrew, allow me a moment to share with you some excerpts from an email discussion I had with a Christian lady who has been discovering the ancient roots of her faith – you might relate to some of her perplexity. She found my website and had some questions. In her note she called herself a Jewish Christian. When I receive a letter like that I like to challenge their thinking and ask why they chose that label (Jewish Christian). This was her response:

“...let's move on with my lingering question about what label I would put on myself? (I don't like labels either, but people always ask what my denomination is - especially here in the South. I never was exposed to this question as a former Boston Catholic).

First, I'm Christian because I follow Christ. But, if I use Hebrew language to refer to Yahshua, I am a Messianic believer, so I can conclude that I am a Messianic Christian.

I was calling myself a "Jewish Christian" b/c Jesus (Yahshua) was Jewish? Correct? But then, a church lady said if I'm Jewish, then I'm automatically Hebrew. This confuses me b/c I thought Hebrews were the Ebers, or Arab. I thought Hebrew was an ethnicity? I am Caucasian, not Arab. Confused yet? So, am I a Hebrew?”

It was a good answer, and her heart is in the right place. She has been called to YHWH's higher spiritual learning and she is trying to rightly discern the truth (2Tim.2:15). Here was my response:

“...I often say language can be maddening - this is one of those times. The real question is, is YHWH-GOD, Hebrew? You have opened a door to a fascinating study - to some at least. I'll relay some of the ethnic highlights. Technically there were no Arabs during the time of Abraham, and no one was called Hebrew either (Gen.ch.11-25). Abraham was not an Arab, he began what we call today the Arab people through his first son Ishmael with his Egyptian maidservant Hagar (Gen.ch.16). Today's Hebrew ethnic lineage began with Noah, to his righteous son Shem (Caucasian), and on to Abraham, (who were all called gentiles but worshipped with what might be

called Hebrew customs they learned from YHWH and Melchizedek). From Abraham's second son Isaac by his wife Sarai, were born the twelve tribes of Israel who were collectively called the Hebrews (Gen.ch.25-36).

In the beginning the Israelites worshiped as Abraham and Isaac taught them. Moving ahead in time to their Egyptian captivity, the Israelites lost much of their spiritual knowledge during their many years of enslavement. Eventually YHWH raised Moses (who was a Hebrew), to free them and reeducate them of their ancient roots (Book of Exodus). After Moses, for about 450 years, they worshipped and lived, as YHWH taught and ruled them. Eventually they rejected YHWH's rule and elected an earthly king and then things slowly went bad 1Samuel ch.8.

The 12 tribes of Israel plus the one Temple priestly tribe were broken up into two groups, the northern 10 tribes and the southern 3 tribes (2Chr.ch.10-12). Later in time, the northern 10 tribes were conquered and removed from their land (Books of 1&2 Kings and Chronicles). (What happened to them and who they might today is speculation, some say they eventually settled into Europe. For example, the Tribe of Dan migrated to Denmark, etc. Do a web search for the "lost ten tribes of Israel" if you have a European heritage you might be closer to Hebrew than you think.) Only the southern three tribes collectively known as the Judeans or Jews kept their original identity. When they returned from their captivity in Babylon they drifted from the foundational Hebrew traditions they had from Moses and added onto YHWH's Laws as they developed the Jewish rabbinical religion we know today (Book of Ezra, Lamentations). Starting to see the big picture?"

The Christian lady responded:

"...I am drawing graph Abraham (Hebrew) > Isaac > 12 tribes > Moses. Is this correct? Where does Moses come from? I can conclude that they are all Hebrew b/c Abraham was Hebrew, knowing that the 12 tribes are Biblical referred to as Hebrews while in Egypt. I've been taught that HEBREW means "crossing over" as coming out of Ur."

So, getting back to my original question, (Am I Hebrew), the curve ball is that Abraham is ethnically ARAB from what I have studied (descendent of Eber). If this be true, then ethnicity is NOT tied into being HEBREW, if HEBREW truly means "crossing over" and does not mean ethnicity?"

That is where she opened my eyes. I never thought about the meaning of Hebrew outside of its ethnic identity and she got me thinking...

Definition of Hebrew, from Easton's Bible Dictionary:

A NAME APPLIED TO THE ISRAELITES IN SCRIPTURE ONLY BY ONE WHO IS A FOREIGNER (Gen. 39:14, 17; 41:12, etc.), or by the Israelites when they speak of themselves to foreigners (Gen. 40:15; Ex. 1:19), or when spoken of and contrasted with other peoples (Gen. 43:32; Ex. 1:3, 7, 15; Deut. 15:12). In the New Testament there is the same contrast between Hebrews and foreigners (Acts 6:1; Phil. 3:5).

Derivation.

(1.) The name is derived, according to some, from Eber (Gen. 10:24), the ancestor of Abraham. The Hebrews are "sons of Eber" (Gen. 10:21).

(2.) Others trace the name of a Hebrew root-word signifying "to pass over," and hence regard it as meaning "the man who passed over," viz., the Euphrates; or to the Hebrew word meaning "the region" or "country beyond," viz., the land of Chaldea. This latter view is preferred. It is the more probable origin of the designation given to Abraham coming among the Canaanites as a man from beyond the Euphrates (Gen. 14:13).

(3.) A third derivation of the word has been suggested, viz., that it is from the Hebrew word 'abhar, "to pass over," whence 'ebher, in the sense of a "sojourner" or "passer through" as distinct from a "settler" in the land, and thus applies to the condition of Abraham (Heb. 11:13).

I responded to the Christian lady:

"Bingo! In more of a cumbersome manner this is what I was pointing to. My original question to you was, "is YHWH-God Hebrew?" Hebrew's original meaning was to cross over, meaning all those who believe in YHWH-GOD become Hebrew when they choose to walk the ancient spiritual path to YHWH's Heaven. Satan is the god of this world (2Cor.4:4) and the Believers of all ethnic and or national groups (Caucasian, black, oriental, Arab, whatever), become Hebrew when we cross over or pass over from the evil this world teaches, murder, hate, self indulgence, sexual perversion, to the world of our CREATOR, which is world of love, kindness, personal discipline and self reliance. In other terms, accept and believe in our CREATOR YHWH and then learn of HIS plan for our redemption (the Messiah). Then learn and accept our part of HIS Covenant with humanity. By HIS Covenants, YHWH promises us eternal life, etc.(1Pet.1:4), in return we leave the moral teachings of this evil murderous, lying world and cross over to YHWH's world and discipline ourselves to live a GODLY life (the golden rule, the commandments, love and kindness). The more precise spiritual definition would be to say, one is Hebrew, if one believes in YHWH-GOD our CREATOR, one is a Hebrew Christian or Messianic Hebrew if one who believes in Jesus or Yahshua as YHWH's Messiah-Christ. The home worship customs I teach come from Noah (most likely began from Adam through his righteous son Seth and on to Noah), then on to Abraham and the Patriarchs, Moses, Yahshua and the Apostles, because they are the ancient Hebrew traditions they learned from YHWH and Melchizedek (1Cor.11:2)."

The Christian lady asked:

"So, if Jesus was a JEW (b/c to be a Jew means from the tribe of JUDAH), and I am a Jew b/c I am grafted into the commonwealth of Israel by the blood of Yahshua/Jesus, then Yahshua was a Hebrew either because he was Arab? Or, was He Hebrew b/c He was a descendant of Abraham who was a Hebrew? Or was He Hebrew b/c He was Jewish, being from the tribe of Judah? Or Jewish b/c He followed the Hebrew righteous LAWS OF YHWH?????"

I responded saying:

"No not a Jew or Judean, I would say you are grafted into the Hebrew tree of life? You might also have some Hebrew ethnicity because your European bloodline might be traced back to one of the lost 10 tribes of Israel. Jesus was an Orthodox Jew, but He has birthright duties to perform that His Believers are not obligated to be part of. Prophecy says the Messiah would come from the birth line of King David - the Judeans. Yahshua/Jesus was, and had to be, an orthodox observant Jew, because HE will come to reform their "Jewish" nation and religion, and that can only happen from within the Judean nation (they will never listen to the reformation ideals of a gentile).

Besides, why limit yourself by calling yourself a spiritual Jew? In the future Millennium under the Messiah, the job description for Israel is more of an earthly rule. The Messiah will gather all the tribes back together again and reform them to be a model nation on earth. They (the Israel nation) will teach the other nations of the world, community life the Messiah's way. The Christians/Messianic faithful have a more universal job description because they will help the Messiah rule all of His Kingdom, heaven and earth."

This was a wonderful discussion for me because these days it is rare to have a real eye-opening Biblical revelation that stirs the spirit, and I hope it helped you too. Let's review, the original meaning of Hebrew means to cross over – from Satan's teachings to YHWH's teachings, from Satan's world of today to YHWH's world of tomorrow. The first peoples to reject Satan and truly accept YHWH were Noah, Abraham and so on but in time the meaning of Hebrew took on the ethnic meaning of the first people to accept YHWH, the major point that is being missed in the true definition of Hebrew is that in reality

whether you are Caucasian, oriental, black, or mixed race, it doesn't matter, all become Hebrew when they accept YHWH and begin their journey of crossing over into HIS World/Kingdom (Gal.1:12-13).

~ Identity Crisis ~

**The Bible gives us a simple rule,
“Do not go beyond that which is written,...” 1Corinthian 4:6
Unfortunately, what is simple is rarely understood.**

In 1972, the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America decided to officially adopt the name Messianic Jewish Alliance of America...

- <http://www.chosenpeople.com/main/index.php/jewish-roots/304-messianic-congregations-and-the-modern-messianic-movement>

As I said, religious labels are soooo problematic, but does it have to be so complicated. I don't have that much energy to sort it all out that is why I just go back to the basics and call my teachings "101" – before the mishgoss of religion, let's review the simple basics of Hebrew 101. As I said above, when one comes to belief in YHWH then one become a Hebrew – anyone, any race, any nationality, because that person is committing themselves to a different way of life (the crossing over begins). After belief in our CREATOR, comes the knowledge of HIS Covenants (promises) with humanity. The next step in YHWH's theology is to learn about HIS plan of redemption via HIS Messiah; it is a reoccurring theme in HIS Covenants. Then, after much study, accept HIS Messiah, who we call Yahshua / Jesus.

Since the beginning, acceptance of the Messiah has always been controversial, because it is a pivotal point in YHWH's plan of redemption for all humanity (and Satan hates that), without the Messiah YHWH's plan of eternal life for humanity would collapse (Satan would love that). We know the bloody Church history Satan has caused in returning to Biblical teachings, so fast forward to modern times, the discovery of Biblical archeology, the regathering of Israel, and the beginning of the Hebrew roots movement. Today, there are some long running debates and tensions (last hundred years or so), between the modern "Hebrew Christians" and "Messianic Jews," allow me to add my "simplified" two cents to the discussion. I would call the Christians who come to learn of their true Hebrew roots, eventually leaving their standard - Roman Catholic based - Christian traditions behind and start adapting the customs of keeping the Holy Days of Leviticus ch.23 and the other traditions I teach, Hebrew Christians. Jews who come to believe in their Messiah Yahshua I would call Messianic Hebrews because there is a difference, they might leave their problematic rabbinical teachings behind, but they still hold to some of their Jewish traditions that are not Biblical (Yahshua highlighted them in the Gospels). But that doesn't mean we cannot be friends with our older brothers and sisters in the faith – eventually Yahshua will set straight their (and our) path – no one really has a perfect theology, at best, we all continue to learn until the FATHER calls us home (Rom.11:16-18).

Send me an email and tell me what you think, I am interested in your opinions on this issue. In my Holy Day newsletters for this year I will continue to define the true meaning of Hebrew, because the annual Holy Days teach us about YHWH's Kingdom, HIS Covenants, HIS plan for humanity, and show us the way of how to cross over from this short lived evil world of Satan to YHWH's eternal world of peace, love, and righteousness.

~ Enjoy the Journey of Learning ~

In some past articles/newsletters have already been defining some of the differences between Christians who study their Hebrew roots and Jews who come to believe in the Messiah.

For more information see:

- [Christian Passover,](#)
- [Messianic-Judaism Messianic-Christian,](#)
- [Judaizers of the Faith](#)
- [The Messianic Movement](#)
- [Ancient Path of YHWH](#)

***"Any intelligent fool can make things bigger and more complex.
It takes a touch of genius --
and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction."
-physicist Albert Einstein (1879-1955)***

I specialize in making the complex simple, or religion without the mishegoss, but if you really like long winded, confusing scholarly studies, doctrine, and dogma, I'll include some of the more prominent links for Hebrew Christianity.

- <http://www.bible.ca/d-christians-are-hebrews-etymology.htm>
- <http://www.rickross.com/groups/messianic.html>
- http://mcu.edu/papers/mess_jud.htm
- <http://philtar.ucsm.ac.uk/encyclopedia/judaism/messiah.html>
- <http://www.messianicassociation.org/ezone08-messIDcrisis.htm>
- <http://www.ariel.org/ga.htm>

Please remember to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and for all those who stand with Israel (Ps.122).

Take care. Peace and blessings, Errol.

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