

QUESTIONS EVERY CHRISTIAN OR MESSIANIC SHOULD INVESTIGATE

Introduction

Since we each must give an account for ourselves and ideally should be able to explain one's faith, I have wrestled with some difficult questions over the years all of which cumulated in this eye-opening year of 2020 vision. This, like all my thought-provoking articles, are not an attack against an individual person, but rather it is exposing what I now see is a false ideology called Christianity, specifically what God labels as idolatry, and moreover, an invitation to dig into the Holy Scriptures for oneself while pondering, praying, and pursuing such critical concepts.

Naturally, when people can't explain or can't overcome such objections, they become angry at the person exposing error or at the very least challenging their belief, not realizing the person, such as myself, typically is motivated by love to do so. After all, iron sharpens iron. Nevertheless, I understand the mentality, the passion, and emotion of the Christian, as I, too, was appalled and even angry upon learning such truths below – first, at the person or people sharing, and then, more appropriately my anger became directed at Christianity or idolatry in general for propagating such blatant and now obvious to me fallacies. Though I readily admit, I know not all of God's truth, for none of us can, today, I am in complete peace (Psalm 119:165), more in love with God and others than ever and daily learning to surrender to God, His will, and His Spirit of Holiness. It has been a long process of truth-seeking that eventually led me to the LORD when I thought I would be leading others to Him! You could say it's been a journey of flip-flopped faith, though certainly not my intention when I picked the name "Flip Flop Fellowship" for my ministry. God clearly has a sense of all-knowing humor. It is my prayer these questions, as well as my various articles and testimony, spurn you, dear student of the Bible, to continue to seek Abba Father and His will for you with all your being and by continually comparing and examining your will and theology to His as defined in His Holy Scriptures. But I both confess and warn, it is not easy to lay our idols down.

As always, much love, shalom, and blessings! ~Carrie Renee Turner, 10.5.2020

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QUESTIONS & BIBLICAL FINDINGS

1) What criteria did God give the Israelites regarding how to discern a false prophet, false teacher, or false messiah?

FACT: In Deuteronomy 13, God specifically instructed the Israelites to beware of and test a person based off two criteria:

i) Does the person implore the Israelites to worship any other person, thing, or other gods as “God” for God alone is to be worshiped – not His son, not anybody, or anything but God; and

ii) Does the person teach that God’s instructions being God’s law or Torah is done away with, old, irrelevant? For Israel is only to obey God and His instructions, not man’s, not Paul’s, not Jesus’ commands, nor any rabbi’s or pastor’s, but God’s alone.

2) What are the Jews, Israel, or Twelve Tribes of Israel chosen for? “Chosen” to do what exactly and why?

FACT: Israel, being the Twelve Tribes, specifically the Jews, are chosen to make God, His name, and His Torah known. Jews are chosen to be the light of the world, to set the captives free, so that all the world may also experience salvation. Jews are chosen as God’s “servant” (Isaiah 41:8-10; 42:1,6; 43:1; 44:1-2,21-23; 45:4; 48:20; 49:3; 50:10; 52:13) or commissioned to instruct the world in Torah, which the Scriptures define as light itself (Psalm 119:105,130; Proverbs 6:23; Isaiah 62:1-2 torch), the way of salvation or righteousness, and moreover, living a lifestyle of loving God and loving others. According to the prophets, eventually, in the World-To-Come/Messianic Era, Jews are elevated and honored while some are specifically commissioned to help teach Torah to the world as the world “learns righteousness” (Isaiah 26:9-10). For the overall picture of Israel’s rescue, resurrection, reunion, and restoration, as the beacon light to the nations explore the following: Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 6, 7:6-8, 26:17-19; 2 Samuel 7:23-24; Psalm 105; Isaiah 2:1-5; 26:1-12; 32:16-20; 33:20-24; 35:1-10; 42:6-7; 48:17-19; 49:6; 51:4-7; 52:1-2; 62:1-12; 66:5-24; Jeremiah 29-31; Zechariah 8, 12; Ezekiel 44:23-24; Amos 9:11-15; Obadiah 1:15-21; Micah 4:1-5; Joel 3; Zephaniah 3:8-20; Daniel 12:3; Hosea 14. Nearly every prophetic book foretells this glorious outcome for the children of Israel, the servant(s)!

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3) Throughout the so-called “Old” Testament, God’s abundant grace is prevalent (as well as balanced justice between mercy and judgment, depending on unintentional and intentional sin). If both Jew and Gentile can be forgiven by simply repenting and striving to keep God’s commands (the ones that apply to them), why did Jesus have to die for people’s sins?

FACT: God has always eagerly forgiven people who authentically repented. His grace has always been available well before Jesus arrived. See Deuteronomy 4:29-31; 1 Kings 8; 2 Samuel 12 (Did King David have to make a sacrifice for forgiveness of his sin?); Isaiah 1:16-17; 42:6; 43:25; 44:22; 45:22,25 ; 49:10; 55:6-7; Psalms 24:3-6; 25:6,10; 30:5; 32:1,5; 34:22; 36:5,10; 37:18,29,34,37-40; 51:1-4, 7-9 (really all of Psalm 51); 68:19; 72:12-14; Psalm 103; 119:118,132,155-156; 146:17-20; 147:11; Micah 7:18-20; Book of Jonah (notice even the Gentiles had to repent- repent from what? Did they have to have a blood sacrifice for forgiveness?). If interested in more passages, I penned another article entitled “Always Have Been Saved By Grace,” which can be provided to you if you’d like.

4) Since forgiveness has been and still is granted without any blood sacrifice and by simply repenting, why did Jesus need to spill his blood as a sacrifice?

FACT: God forgave people with or without blood sacrifices and /or if they only offered other items instead of blood sacrifices such as flour, money, or jewelry when a temple was in place. See passages above in #3 as well as Leviticus 5:11-13 (flour), Exodus 30:15-16 (money), Numbers 31:48-52 (jewelry). The sin sacrifices were a tangible act in order to teach them to not forget God’s instructions/His law like requiring your kid to sacrifice their electronics when they disobey for sin has consequences – best to learn to obey Abba Father/God for our own good (Deuteronomy 5:29; 6:24-25; 10:12-13). To learn more, I wrote another article, entitled “Why Jesus Didn’t Die For Anyone’s Sins (but his own),” which can be furnished upon request.

5) Why would the unknown authors of the gospels claim Jesus is God’s one and only son (John 3:16) when Scripture reveals the twelve tribes of Israel/the Jewish people (and their descendants) are God’s sons and daughters; therefore, God has many sons?

FACT: When God speaks to the Israelites/Israel/Judah through a prophet as recorded in the Bible, or when the prophets in the Bible refer to God, God is occasionally identified as Father, inferring He has many sons and daughters – see Deuteronomy 32:6; Isaiah

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64:7 (64:8 in Christian Bible); Jeremiah 3:19. Similarly, God says in Isaiah 56 that non-Jews/Gentiles/foreigners who choose to enjoin themselves with God and His holy covenant (meaning Torah) by willingly obeying it (Judaism refers to this as “Jews-By-Choice”) are considered “better than sons or daughters” indicating the naturally born, chosen Jews are sons and daughters while the “Jews-By-Choice,” or adopted if you will, are even more honored and also brought to Mt. Zion upon being literally saved, regathered, or resurrected. Also, see Psalm 82:6 and even Jesus referred to his audience of Jews also as sons in John 10 when quoting Psalm 82:6. And yet the mysterious author of John* made it seem like Jesus is the one and only begotten son of God a few chapters earlier in John 3. In other words, Jesus was one of God’s many children.

As a sidebar, Judaism teaches God’s Holy Spirit “ruach hakodesh,” or God’s nurturing presence, in Hebrew known as “shekinah,” is the female aspect of God. The two are one: Father & Mother, creating and comforting many sons and daughters. It should also be noted that Judaism teaches both Jews and non-Jews are all God’s children, for everyone is made in God’s image, and born pure with God’s divine spark within.

6) Why would God instruct one of His sons, much less God’s other kids, to believe God would offer His child as a sacrifice when God specifically told His kids never to offer their children as sacrifices, for that is something only the pagans do?

FACT: God often instructed the Israelites to not mimic other religions such as offering their children as sacrifices to a god(s), or as a form of worship, and labeled such behavior an abomination. See Leviticus 18:21, 20:3; Deuteronomy 12:29-32; 18:10; 2 Kings 3:27, 16:3, 17:17; 2 Chronicles 28:3, 33:6; Jeremiah 7:31; Ezekiel 16:20-21; Psalm 106:35-38.

7) Why would God instruct one of His sons (Jesus), to die for the sins of the world as the New Testament claims when God already informed Israel/Jews that no person can die for another person’s sins?

FACT: According to the following passages, no person can die for the sins of another, only their own sins, including in Jeremiah 31, the only Biblical reference of the “New Covenant.” See Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18:1-32 (also, notice in v.21-23 & v.30-32 God’s grace); 33:12-20; Jeremiah 31:29-30; Psalm 49:7 (no one can redeem another’s sins by death).

8) Why are we still teaching each other about who the One True Living God is if we are currently in the New Covenant?

FACT: According to the only chapter in the Holy Scriptures that refers by name a “New Covenant,” found in Jeremiah 31, no one will need to inform one another who God is for all will know Him (see verse 34). Incidentally, most Christians seem to not notice what the ambiguous author of Hebrews pens in chapter 8:13, which says while referring to the so-called “old” and “new” covenants, “Now what is *becoming* obsolete and growing old *is ready* to vanish away,” inferring the “old” covenant isn’t obsolete or done away with yet because the New Covenant hasn’t manifested just yet since not everyone knows God and Torah, thus, there is no world peace (Isaiah 2; Micah 4). Equally fascinating, is the New Covenant isn’t activated until there is a New Jerusalem, New Heavens, and New Earth – hence, all the references to “Behold, I *will do* (future tense) a NEW thing...” Isaiah 43:19. More accurately stated, the prophets indicate there will be a RENEWED covenant, RENEWED earth, RENEWED Jerusalem, etc. How interesting God is referring to do a “new thing” upon literally saving Israel/Jews from oppression and restoring all Jews/Israelites to the land of Canaan/Israel.

9) Why in the New Covenant / World-To-Come / Messianic Era (the future, whatever you want to call it) are there still sacrifices if Jesus was the final sacrifice? Moreover, how can Christians honestly believe another man, namely Paul, when he says God’s laws are a curse (Galatians 3:10) and not to be obeyed when God said His instructions, laws, teachings, commands are eternal, for our benefit and blessing (Deuteronomy 4:40, 6:24-25, 10:12-13; 1 Kings 2:3-4; Psalm 19, 119; Isaiah 48) and the future of the world?

FACT: Ezekiel chapters 36-48 describe both a resurrection of Israel, regathering of Jews to the land of their inheritance, and restoration of Israel. These magnificent events are described in nearly all the prophetic books of the Jewish Bible. To some extent, this has started to unfold effective 1948 but hasn’t manifested nowhere near its entirety just yet. In this future era, there is a unique temple established along with sacrifices led by the ruler/prince including not just the praise sacrifices, but sin sacrifices as well (see specifically Ezekiel 43-45). Additionally, Zechariah 14:16+ informs us in the future, after God literally physically saves Israel from their enemies, all the remaining survivors of the nations must participate in bringing sacrifices to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, or what is known in Hebrew as “Sukkot,” in order for it to rain, or put another way in order for them and their economy to survive. Sukkot is in the Fall (September/October on the Gregorian calendar) and is the initiation of the rainy season.

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In fact, as I pen this, it is Sukkot, a festival of rejoicing, for one day, it will indeed be a whole new world full of joy and peace! To learn more about the Feasts of the LORD, read Leviticus 23. Also, in Isaiah 65-66 God describes the future and how He wants to be worshiped, as participating in the Sabbaths and festivals of the LORD in the New Heavens and New Earth (a.k.a. New Covenant). Furthermore, Zechariah 8 tells us Gentiles will be clinging to Jews to learn more about God and Torah one fine day, which also has already started to manifest. In other words, God's laws are not just of the past, but the present, and the future!

10) There are many prophetic writings about Israel's grand future, but none stating one must believe in the future Messiah to be spared from hell. Why would the "New" Testament and Christianity be all about propagating one must "believe" in a man named Jesus as Messiah in order to be spared from hell and go to heaven when there is absolutely no prophecy in the Hebrew Bible stating such things? If true, you would think God would have said something earlier.

FACT: Search the prophets out for yourself, you will not find any prophetic word stating anyone must believe in a Messiah to be saved. But what you do read in Amos 3:7 is God does nothing without revealing it to His prophets first. Numerous verses in Tanakh, especially in the Book of Isaiah, state there is literally only one being as God with no one else to assist God (Isaiah 43:25, 44:6, 45:5-6,14,18,22-25, 46:9, 47:4, 48:12, 49:23,26, 50:10, 60:16; Hosea 13:4). In fact, Isaiah also writes in 27:9, "*Assuredly, by this alone shall Jacob's sin be purged away; this is the only price for removing his guilt: that he make all the altar-stones like shattered blocks of chalk...*" In other words, the only thing God asks is to remove idolatry from the Jewish heart, home, and nation...to repent and turn from false gods not to adopt yet another one (Jesus)!

Additionally, you will find a very different definition of salvation unfolds. Plainly said, in the Bible, salvation is a literal, physical experience, not a spiritual mental ascent, while both salvation and righteousness are repeatedly linked with obeying God's commands, His laws, His Torah, His Voice, as it applies to that individual (God's laws apply to different people groups, genders, and residences, such as those living in the land or Israel compared to those living outside of Israel's boundaries). Whereas many passages infer or directly state those who disregard God's laws are considered wicked (Psalm 50; Psalm 119), without knowledge, and will perish (Hosea 4:6). You will not find in the Hebrew Bible, the Tanakh, the law, and the prophets where salvation is merely a mental belief in a Messiah, but rather reward is based on your conduct, the exact opposite of what the New Testament, namely Paul, teaches. If believing in a

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Messiah would be so critical and imminent, to be saved, why didn't God reveal as much through any of the prophets over the span of all those years? And why would Jews need to be "saved," as evangelicals teach, when Jews are already chosen, and commissioned in a very important role now and in the future, according to the prophetic writings? Notice in the prophetic writings throughout Tanakh (what replacement theology labeled as "Old Testament"), all end with Israel wins, Israel is resurrected, reunited, and restored. The Jews teach the world, while the nations are shocked to discover they got it wrong (Jeremiah 16:19-21; Isaiah 52:15-53:1) Any and all sins of Jews are forgiven, without any mention of the requirement of believing in a Messiah, especially one named Jesus/Yeshua. Interestingly, the prophet Isaiah accurately predicted the name of a messianic figure (government leader), who was not Jewish, that is King Cyrus in Isaiah 45, but never once predicted the name of the so-called Jewish Messiah. The fact is, throughout the Tanakh, an anointed government leader is not the focus. God is the focus and His desire or instructions to bring heaven to earth through action is the repetitive message. To love God and others are a series of actions defined in Torah, as well as what God defines as not loving Him and others, and repeated throughout all of the Haftarah (the prophets). Christianity peddles fear through concepts of heaven v. hell, and some sects of Christianity push the modern doctrine of the rapture to heaven while the once gracious Jesus suddenly pours out his wrath on everyone else, which seems like an oxymoron. Judaism focuses more on the here and now, loving God and others, while understanding every soul ends up in Sheol to be further refined, and eventually judged based on if and how they brought heaven (Torah) to earth in their customized mission for their lives. In other words, on how well one loved God and others in God's unique plan for their lives. One common denominator the Jewish and Christian Bible share is the emphasis of bringing heaven to earth through charitable acts. Both religions excel at doing good deeds to serve and bless others, but have different motivations in doing so, generally speaking. Christianity's views on eschatology appear to be the biggest motivation in following Jesus – to spare themselves and others from peril. In other words, many Christians dwell in fear and fear others will burn in hell for all eternity, which propels them to "spread the good news of the gospel" and serve others, hoping the lost will come on board; conversely, liberal and conservative Jews focus on their actions, and studying Torah, while trusting God is good, reasonable, just, and in control – even through persecutions and peril.

11) In the early 1990s, did you believe David Koresh when he claimed to be Messiah? His followers claimed he performed miracles and was prophetic. He and presumably his followers were writing manuscripts to spread his good news, his message. Would

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you put your trust in him? How about if he and or his roommates, who all tragically and unnecessarily perished, claimed he WAS actually God? Many of them died for their faith. Does that make their faith accurate and theologically sound? Would you pick up your cross and follow him? On what criteria do you judge a person and their message? Is not the Hebrew Bible, the law and prophets, the foundation for which all are to be judged? Hence, the very label “the law.” Did you know there have been several individuals, Jewish and non-Jewish, who claimed to be the Messiah throughout history? What makes you put your trust in Jesus, or more accurately, Paul since Christianity is mostly based on Paul’s message and spiritual experience of seeing Jesus in the sky allegedly? Did Jesus, Paul, or other Apostles entice you to worship someone or something other than God, or worse, did Jesus or his followers indicate Jesus WAS/IS God; therefore, replacing God or elevating oneself to be as God or as part of God? Did Jesus, Paul, the other Apostles, or any of their followers, then and now, instruct you to disobey God by not keeping His law? Why do some, if not all, denominations of Christianity claim everybody should keep the 10 commandments, but not the one about Sabbath or worshipping other gods?

FACT: Every Christian, whether Catholic or Protestant or even Messianic Jew/Gentile, knows that according to the writings of the New Testament, Jesus, but especially Paul as well as the other Apostles and the unknown authors of the gospels, elevated Jesus to be God (John 1), for Jesus to be worshiped and obeyed (Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2; Colossians 2), as well as instructed their audience, their disciples to disregard God’s laws (Galatians 3) or at the very least, the church instructs congregants to disobey most of God’s laws, the eternal law (Psalm 19, 119:142,152,160; Isaiah 2) of then, now, and the future. Hence, eternal. So, with all that said, back to Deuteronomy 13, what were the two criteria God specifically said to watch out for? See #1.

“Choose this day whom you will serve.” Joshua 24:15.