

Jewish Missionary

As a Jewish “missionary” (I know, that’s a “dirty 4-letter word” in Judaism), but 1st century Jewish Pharisees were zealous “missionaries.” Here is what Yeshua the Messiah said about them.

Matt. 23:15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

Don’t think this was just a bias opinion espoused by Christians or Messianic Jews by ripping what Yeshua said out of context:

“Most Jews today may not be aware of it, but Judaism has a long history of not only welcoming, but encouraging gentiles to become Jewish.” – Sue Fishkoff “Try It You’ll Like It, Should Jews Proselytize?”

Not only that, but Ms. Fishkoff also said:

“Jewish proselytizing was so successful, it is estimated that by the first century C.E. fully 10% of the Roman Empire was Jewish, close to 8 million people.” – (ibid)

So what I am doing is nothing new, it is just “renewed,” it has not been practices actively on a large scale by Jews in approximately 2000 years that to today’s Jews it seems new and even a tactless stolen tactic from Christianity.

Yet I must follow the example of Rav Sha’ul. Sure he spoke in synagogues, and got kicked out of as many as I have churches, but he went also to secular intellectual gatherings (Acts 17). And how he also did whatever he could culturally to reach out to the Gentiles without compromising the standards of Torah (I Cor. 9: 19-22). He also fathered, or at least parentally guided “Messianic” Synagogues some of which had a mix of Jewish and Gentile congregants in attendance. He was a bridge to bring Gentiles to the Torah and Messiah and to bring Jews to understand that in Messiah, Gentiles are accepted. He bridged the two worlds without blending the fabric and or compromising the Torah.

So what I am doing is actually more traditional than the way Jews are sharing Judaism with Gentiles today; if you can even call it that.

“Jews only stopped open proselytism because of pressure from Christians and then Muslim rulers, beginning in 407 C.E. when the Roman Empire outlawed conversion to Judaism under penalty of death.” – (ibid)

What I mean by converting and proselytizing is that if; 1. Someone wants to become a Torah Obedient Gentile by attaching themselves to Judaism via the acceptance of her people Israel, her God and the obedience to Torah thereby becoming a part of the Commonwealth. This was the way it was done from Sinai until after the time of the Maccabees. 2. If someone wants to officially convert via circumcision and or Hatafat Dam Brit (women only have to have a mikvah/baptism). This became the institutional standard in mainstream Judaism after the time of the Maccabees.

We see that later, and even up till the modern day, Jews as a whole have taken a, “if they want it, they know where to find us,” approach to proselytizing. To be perfectly honest, I can’t blame them. Jewish history is rife with betrayals from gentiles, who were thought to be allies, friends and even converts to which open proselytizing has become a thing of the distant past.

The approach today in Orthodox Judaism is if a Gentile comes wanting to convert, they are discouraged at least 3 times. They feel that if they are discouraged at least 3 times and they still return even after being rejected at least 3 times; then they must be serious about wanting to become a Jew. I feel there is definitely some wisdom and merit in this. This method weeds out a lot of people who have ulterior motives or are simply not as serious as they think they are about converting. I add this approach with my own open proselytizing as well. See, being a Jew isn’t all roses and rainbows and a walk in the park. I want people to know fully what they are in for. I want to make sure their interest in Judaism isn’t just puppy love or a passing fad. I want to make sure that they are not simply in love with the idea of being Jewish.

Yes, we Jews are “God’s Chosen People” but this doesn’t give us some special prestigious privileges in this world. On the contrary, this is a great privileged burden and responsibility to uphold and represent the Almighty God, His Torah and His Messiah in this dark world. God’s standards which we proclaim are not popular with the world at large. People actually are somewhat threatened by it. As a result we have had riots and pogroms staged against us. We have been persecuted via the Inquisition and the Holocaust. This is just a few things we Jews have endured through history. Even though we are not herded into synagogues and

burned alive today, we tend to suffer from racism and anti-Semitism as other people groups such as Blacks and Native American's to name a few. We do not live and conduct our lives like the Average Joe does. We eat, dress and have traditions and customs that are different from the world as a whole because of the Commands of God through His Torah. This makes us stick out like a sore thumb and at times makes us a target for ridicule. And most people enamored with Judaism don't take this into consideration, nor are they ready to handle it when it comes knocking at their door.

Yet today's equivalent in this field of Missiology is that the Gentile Christians know who the Living Torah is, and Jews know what the Written Torah is. To reach each group I must convince the Gentile Christians of the Truth that the Written Torah hasn't been done away with and that it is not just for the Jews but for them also, and I must convince the Truth to the Jews that the Living Torah, Yeshua the Messiah, is the Living Manifestation of Torah and is not the Michael Angelo / Leonardo DiVinci Jesus that did away with the Torah that the Christians often naively portray.

Israel was originally blessed to be a blessing, and the reason they were taken into captivity is not only because they sinned, in some way forsaking Torah, but also because they didn't reach out and share the Torah and the hope of the Messiah with the peoples around them. They hoarded the Torah for themselves and because they took their freedom and Torah for granted, God allowed it all to be taken away from them. As a result they were taken into captivity. They realized that the old saying is true, "You don't know what you've got, till it's gone." This caused Israel to repent and to start living right in the midst of the pagan nations to which they were taken captive to. In this way they became the "missionaries" God always intended them to be.

Today many Jews do not live in the Land of Promise, and they faithfully live a Torah Observant life where they are, whether living in America, Canada, Iran, or wherever. Many of us were born in exile, maybe for the very purpose of being missionaries to the Goyim (Gentiles). Only thing is we need not only to live it, but tell it as well, as was done in the 1st century. For the time being we live in a world of relative freedom and peace, and for now we do not have to fear persecution and can share the Faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3) freely. It is me and my Jewish brethren's responsibility to do so.