



Our Beliefs

Summary Statement

We stand by these basic Biblical truths:

- We believe in only one true and living G-d as declared in the Sh'ma (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 6:4), Who is Echad (one, a compound unity), and Who eternally and simultaneously and distinctly exists as G-d the Father (Abba), G-d the Son (HaBen Yeshua), and G-d the Holy Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) (Yesha`yahu [Isaiah] 48:16-17, B'resheet [Genesis] 1:1-2, Sh'mot [Exodus] 3:6, Mishle [Proverbs] 30:4, Ephesians 4:4-6).
- We believe in Messiah Yeshua's deity (Yesha`yahu [Isaiah] 9:6, Yochanan [John] 1:1-4,10-14), His virgin birth (Yesha`yahu [Isaiah] 7:14), His sinless life, His atoning death (Yesha`yahu [Isaiah] 53, Tehillim [Psalms] 22), His bodily resurrection, His ascension, and His future return in power and glory to rule the world from the throne of his ancestor David.
- We believe that the whole Bible – consisting of both the TaNaKh (so-called “Hebrew Scriptures”) and the Ketuvei HaShalichim (Apostolic Scriptures) – is the one and only inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of G-d (Tehillim [Psalms] 119:89, Mishle [Proverbs] 30:5-6, 2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- We believe in G-d's eternal covenant with Avraham, Yitzhak (Isaac), and Ya'akov (Jacob), and with Ya'akov's descendants forever. We therefore unconditionally stand with and support the Jewish people and the State of Israel, and hold fast to the Biblical heritage of our forefathers.
- We further believe that the Messianic Restoration Movement is the beginning of the fulfillment of the Biblical prophecies concerning the Restoration of Israel that will be completely fulfilled in the Messianic Age, when HaMelech Yeshua HaMashiach will reign physically on earth from His throne in Jerusalem, and that it is also the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecies in Zekharyah [Zechariah] chapters 6 and 9 concerning the Gentiles who will worship alongside the Jews in the Temple of HaShem (see especially 8:20-23), which will also be completely fulfilled in the Messianic Age.



Copyright ©1983, 1993-2009 Dr. Rickard (Ari) Levitt-Sawyer and Family Bible Ministries. All rights reserved. No portion of this document may be reproduced in any form, posted on any Internet web site, or translated into any language without the express written permission of the copyright holder except as specified herein. It may be reproduced on paper for your personal and/or group study as long as the following conditions are met:

1. If reproduced for *any* reason, it must be reproduced *exactly* “as is,” in its entirety, including all footnotes, references, and copyright markings.
2. If reproduced for group study, it must be distributed at *no cost to the recipient* beyond the reasonable and actual cost of reproduction.
3. It may *not* be reproduced in any form whatsoever, including electronic, for *any* form of profit.

To obtain permission for any other use, contact Family Bible Ministries, 1108 17th Street, Parkersburg WV 26101-4060, phone 304-481-3398, fax 304-966-0016, or email AriBenLevi@Yahoo.com.

Short Statement Of Our Beliefs

WE BELIEVE:

I. THE BIBLE, consisting of both the ancient Hebrew TaNaKh (an acronym for Torah [Law or, more accurately, Divine Instruction], Nevi'im [Prophets], K'tuvim [Writings]) and the later writings of the Shliachim (Apostles) — variously known as the “B'rit Hadasha,” “New Covenant,” or “New Testament” — is the only infallible and authoritative word of G-d. We recognize its divine inspiration and authority, and accept its teachings as our final authority in all matters of faith and practice (Deut. 6:4-9; Prov. 3:1-6; Ps. 119:89, 105; Isa. 48:12-16; Rom. 8:14-17; II Tim. 2:15, 3:16-17). Furthermore, we believe that to divide the Sacred Text into two “books” or “testaments” is error, and that the writings of the Shliachim should rightfully be included as an integral part of the K'tuvim. We object to the use of the terms “Old” and “New” Testament or Covenant, in that the word “old” suggests that which is obsolete or of less importance than it originally was, and the word “new” suggests that which supplants or has replaced something “old.” We hold that the Creator has one, and only one, standard of righteousness, the Torah, by which the conduct of all humankind will be judged.

II. G-D – We believe that the Shema, “Hear O Israel, the Lord our G-d, the Lord is one [echad]” (Deut. 6:4), teaches that G-d is Echad, and is so declared to be a united one, a composite unity, eternally existent in plural oneness [Gen. 1:1 (Elohim: G-d); Gen. 1:26 “Let us make man in our image”; Gen. 2:24 Adam & Eve were created to be as one flesh (basar echad)], that He is a personal G-d who created us (Gen. 1 & 2), and that He exists forever in three persons: Father (Abba), Son (Ha Ben), and Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh), as mentioned in Romans 8:14-17 (Father, Spirit, and Messiah/Son) and Matt. 28:18-20 (immersing in the Name [singular, one Name] of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

A. G-D THE FATHER (Abba) – John 6:27b; I Cor 1:3; Gal. 1:1; Rev. 3:5, 21; Jer. 3:4, 19; 31:9; Mal. 1:6; Matt. 6:9, 32; Luke 10:21-22;

John 1:14; 4:23; 5:17-26; 6:28-46; Rom. 8:14-15.

B. G-D THE SON (HaBen)

1. God *does* have a Son [Ps. 2; Prov. 30:4-6 (cf. Heb. 1); Luke 12:35-37; John 1:29-34, 49; 3:14-18].
2. The Son, named Yeshua (incorrectly transliterated as “Jesus”), meaning salvation, came to this world born of a virgin [Isa. 7:14 (cf. Luke 1:30-35)].
3. The Son is G-d (Deity), and is worshipped as G-d, having existed eternally [Ps. 110:1 (cf. Heb. 1:13); Isa. 9:6-7; Matt. 28:18-20; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-19; Rev. 3:21 (Heb. 1 – worshipped by angels); Rev. 4:8, 5:5-14].
4. This One is the promised Mashiach (Messiah) of Israel [Is. 9:6-7; 11:1; Dan. 9 (esp. verses 20-26); Isa. 53; John 1:17, 40-41, 45, 49; Mark 8:29].
5. He is the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star (Num. 24:17; Rev. 22:16).
6. He is our Passover, the Lamb of G-d (I Cor. 5:7; Rev. 5; John 1:29).

C. G-D THE HOLY SPIRIT (Ruach HaKodesh)

1. Introduced in Gen. 1:2b.
2. In the TaNaKh, the Spirit of G-d came upon individuals during the times of our forefathers, like Moses, David (see II Sam. 23:1-3), and the Prophets, for the specific purposes.
3. In the Apostolic Scriptures, Messiah Yeshua, promised His disciples that “the Comforter” would come to them after He was gone, described as the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, 26), who was with them and would be in them. Yeshua further declared that the Spirit of Truth, would guide us into all truth and would glorify Him – the Messiah – not Himself (John 16:13-15). He empowers us (Acts 1:8). He seals us [Eph. 1:13; 4:30 (see

NIV and Jewish New Testament versions)]. If we have not the Spirit, we are not His (Rom. 8:9). He leads us and teaches us (Rom. 8:14-17). His indwelling enables us to live a G-dly life. Acts 2:38 says, “Repent, be immersed, and receive the Holy Spirit.”

III. MAN

- A. Created in the image of G-d (Gen. 1:26-27), but:
- B. Through disobedience, man fell from his first state and became separated from G-d (Gen. 2:17; 3:22-24). Therefore, according to the Scriptures, all men are born with a sinful nature (Ps. 14:1-3; 49:7; 53:13; Isa. 64:6; Rom. 3:9-12, 23; 5:12).
- C. Man’s only hope for redemption (salvation) is through the atonement made by the Messiah (Lev. 17:11; Isa. 53; Dan. 9:24-26; I Cor. 15:22; Heb. 9:11-14, 28; John 1:12, 3:36), resulting in regeneration by the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5), which is the new birth (John 3:3-8). For by grace we are saved through faith, it is a gift of G-d (Eph. 2:8-9).

IV. RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT

We believe in the resurrection of both the redeemed and the lost: the former to everlasting life and the latter to eternal separation from G-d, a state of everlasting punishment (Job 14:14; 19:25-27; Dan. 12:2-3; John 3:36; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 10-15; 21:7-8).

V. THE MESSIAH – The Redeemer

The Scriptures promise two “comings” of the Messiah:

- A. First coming as Messiah ben Yosef
 - 1. Promised in Dan. 9:24-26.
 - 2. Its purpose was to make an atonement for sin (Dan. 9:24-26; Isa. 53; Rom. 3:21-31; Heb. 9-10; John 3:16-17).
- B. Second coming as Messiah be David
 - 1. Promised coming *in the air* to receive the believers to Himself (I Thess. 4:13-18; John 14:1-6; I Cor. 15:51-57).

2. Messiah’s return *to the earth*.

- a. The Redeemer shall come to Zion (Isa. 59:20-21; Zech. 14:4).
- b. Israel’s spiritual redemption (Zech. 12:8-13:1; Rom. 11:25-27; Heb. 9:28; Jer. 31:31-40; the Renewed Covenant with Israel).
- c. Israel’s national restoration is to recover the remnant of His people Israel from the four corners of the earth, and restore the Davidic Kingdom (Isa. 11 – to re-establish the throne and kingdom of David, which will last forever) [Isa. 9:6-7 (cf. Luke 1:30-33); Jer. 23:3-8].

VI. ISRAEL IN PROPHECY

We believe in G-d’s end-time plan for the nation of Israel and for the world. A central part of Messianic Belief is the belief in the physical and spiritual restoration of Israel, as taught in the Scriptures. The greatest miracle of our day has been the re-establishment or rebirth of the State of Israel according to prophecy (Ezek. 34:11-31; 36-39; Hos. 3; Amos 9:11-15; Zech. 12-14; Isa. 11; 43; 54; 60-62; 66; Rom. 11:1-34) (see also Scriptures under V. THE MESSIAH).

VII. MESSIANIC BELIEF

- A. We recognize that all Jewish people (physical descendants of Avraham (Abraham) through Yitz’chak (Isaac) and Ya’akov (Jacob), whether through the mother’s or the father’s blood-line) who place their faith in Israel’s Messiah Yeshua continue to be Jewish according to the Scriptures (Rom. 2:28-29). Gentiles who place their faith in Yeshua are “grafted into” the Jewish olive tree of faith (Rom. 11:17-25), becoming adopted sons and daughters of Avraham (Gal. 3:28-29) and citizens of the Commonwealth of Israel, partaking equally with the natural-born children of Avraham, Yitz’chak, and Ya’akov in the Torah, the Covenants, and the Land of Israel.
- B. We observe and celebrate the Jewish Holy Days given by G-d to Israel, with their fulfillment in and through Messiah Yeshua. We believe that true “Biblical Judaism,” the faith of first

century Messianic Believers which we seek to practice, acknowledges the continuity of faith in the one true G-d, revealed throughout the Scriptures, and ultimately manifested in G-d's Son, Yeshua the Messiah. We believe that salvation has always been "by faith," and that works of law, or righteous acts, have never saved anyone (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 2:6; Eph. 2:8-9; Heb. 11:6, 39).

C. We acknowledge that the "Body of Messiah" is composed of both Jews and Non-Jews who have received Yeshua the Messiah as the Promised Redeemer. The "middle wall of partition" has been broken down and now we worship the G-d of Israel together (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:13-14), united as one Holy and Called-Out People in Messiah Yeshua.

Doctrinal Summary

(As stated in our Constitution)

This congregation is founded upon the conviction that the Bible, as the literal written Word of HaShem, is sufficient for all matters of faith and practice, and that the answers to all questions of church policy and procedure are to be found therein. The Bible, therefore, as interpreted by the Elders in accordance with a systematic methodology as specified below, shall be the true Constitution of this church. The following Doctrinal Summary is offered as a brief overview of the major points of doctrine to which this congregation subscribes. The Elders of this congregation, as guided by Ruach HaKodesh and in keeping with valid evangelical Biblical scholarship, shall create and maintain a separate document to be known as *Doctrinal Guidelines for Congregation B'nei HaMelech*, which is included by reference as a part of this Constitution.

Section 1 — Concerning the Bible

We believe that the complete Bible consists of both the ancient Hebrew TaNaKh (an acronym for Torah [Law or, more accurately, Divine Instruction], Nevi'im [Prophets], K'tuvim [Writings]) and the Ketuvei HaShalichim (the writings of the Shliachim [Apostles] — also known as the "B'rit Hadasha," "New Covenant," or "New Testament" — and that in its original autographs — those originally hand-written by the Shliachim and Nevi'im — it is the literal written Word of HaShem, absolutely inerrant and infallible in relation to any subject with which it deals, and is the only infallible and authoritative word of HaShem.

We believe in the verbal (all the words of the Bible) and plenary (all the parts of the Bible) inspiration, dual authorship, and protected transmission of all Scripture, so that in the Bible is to be found the full and sufficient source of all divine revelation. Therefore, no other writings, "prophecies," or other supposed revelations are to be accepted as divinely inspired or authoritative. All teachings and all knowledge, whatever the source, are to be understood and interpreted in the light of the sacred Scriptures.

We believe that the Bible is to be properly interpreted only through the enlightenment of Ruach HaKodesh [the Holy Spirit] and understood in its literal, natural, histor-

ical, grammatical, and intended sense; that in order to be correctly understood and interpreted, it must be understood and interpreted from the perspective of its original recipients; that since the original recipients of the Sacred Text were Jews living within Tabernacle/Temple/Synagogue milieu, it can be only correctly interpreted when viewed from the perspective of Tabernacle/Temple/Synagogue Judaism as it existed from the Exodus through the dispersal following the destruction of the Second Temple; and that it is to be accepted as the full and final authority over the Believer's faith and conduct, including all matters of congregational polity, policy, and procedure (Deut. 6:4-9; Prov. 3:1-6; Ps. 119:89, 105; Isa. 48:12-16; Rom. 8:14-17; II Tim. 2:15, 3:16-17)

Furthermore, we believe that to divide the Sacred Text into two "books" or "testaments" is error, and that the writings of the Shliachim should rightfully be included as an integral part of the K'tuvim. We object to the use of the terms "Old" and "New" Testament or Covenant, in that the word "old" suggests that which is obsolete or of less importance that it originally was, and the word "new" suggests that which supplants or has replaced something "old." We hold that the Creator has one, and only one, standard of righteousness, the Torah, by which the conduct of all humankind will be judged.

A. Torah

The word “Torah” is best translated as “Divine Instruction” rather than “Law,” even though it contains both civil and ecclesiastical laws for the Commonwealth of Israel. The term “Torah” may refer to either the Five Books of Moses, the entire TaNaKh (Hebrew Scriptures), or the whole Bible (including the Ketuvei HaShalichim), depending on usage. Our use of the word “Torah” never refers to the Talmud (the “Oral Tradition” or “Oral Torah”) but, while we do not consider the Talmud or any other commentary on the Scriptures as the Word of G-d, we believe that the writings of Oral Tradition, such as the Talmud, the Mishnah, and the Midrash Rabbah, also contain further insight into the character of G-d and His dealings with His people. In the Diaspora we do not practice those parts of Torah which require residence in the land, a theocratic civil government, and/or a consecrated Temple on Mount Moriah. We disagree with those who teach that obedience to Torah is required only for ethnic Jews, and we believe that HaShem has but one Standard of Righteousness by which every member of the human race will be judged — His Torah. We therefore believe that obedience to Torah is incumbent upon all believers in Messiah, including “the Church.”

B. The Ketuvei HaShalichim

We believe that the Ketuvei HaShalichim (Apostolic Writings, commonly and erroneously known as the “New Testament”) were inspired by Ruach HaKodesh (see immediately above), written under the direction of Ruach HaKodesh by Torah-observant Jews, in the Jewish language (Hebrew and/or Aramaic), and were directed to an almost-exclusively Jewish audience. We believe that they were then translated into Koine Greek for transmission to the non-Jewish Messianic Believers in the Diaspora, and that much of the error in modern translation and interpretation comes from the attempt to understand the Apostolic Writings with a Greek (or Western) mindset and ignore the clearly Hebraic (Eastern) nature of the original text. In order to correctly understand them, we must therefore interpret them from the perspective of the Jewish audience to whom they were written.

Section 2 — Concerning G-d

“*Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad* ... Hear, O Israel, *ADONAI* is our G-d, *ADONAI* is one.”

We believe that there is only one living and true G-d, an

infinite and intelligent Spirit Who is the source of all being and meaning; a compound unity Who eternally exists in three Divine Persons: HaAbba (the Father), HaBen (the Son), and Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit), one in essence and attributes, yet three in distinct Person, work, and purpose; each of Whom possess all the attributes of absolute Deity and is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, personal, and perfect in wisdom, power, holiness, righteousness, justice, goodness, truth, mercy, and love.

We believe that Abba is all the fullness of HaShem invisible (John 1:18); HaBen is all the fullness of HaShem manifested (made visible in any form] (John 1:14-18); Ruach HaKodesh is all the fullness of HaShem acting immediately upon the creature (1 Cor. 2:9-10).¹⁸

Section 3 — Concerning Yeshua HaMashiach

We believe that Yeshua HaMashiach is the second “Person” of HaShem, eternally existing as HaBen, Who always has been and always will be fully G-d. We believe that He is just as much G-d as though He had never become man, and just as much man as though He had never been G-d. We believe that He created, upholds, and sustains the entire universe solely through the power of His sovereign will.

We believe that all manifestations of HaShem to man, whether in the Tanakh or in the Ketuvei HaShalichim, are in the Person of HaBen. We are therefore convinced that it was HaShem the Son (HaBen) Who walked in the Garden with Adam and Eve, Who appeared to and made the covenants with the Patriarchs, Who went ahead of Israel in smoke and fire in the wilderness, Who wrote the Mitzvot in stone with His own finger atop Mount Sinai, and to Whom the prayers and adoration of His Chosen People have been unknowingly directed for the past 4000 years.

We believe that without in any way ceasing to be fully G-d, He became also fully man, taking upon himself all of the human attributes except the sin nature. We believe that he was conceived of Ruach HaKodesh, born of the virgin Miriam, lived a perfect and sinless life, and accomplished our redemption through his death as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice,¹⁹ and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. We believe in His literal and bodily resurrection and ascension, and that now glorified He sits at the right hand of Abba where He carries

out His ministry as Kohen HaGadol (the Eternal High Priest) of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate on our behalf. We believe in His literal, bodily return to reign physically on the earth for a thousand years, and in His ultimate judgment over the living and the dead.

Section 4 — Concerning Ruach HaKodesh

We believe that Ruach HaKodesh is a divine Person Who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Possessing all of the attributes of Deity, He is fully G-d, and is therefore coequal to and coeternal with Abba and HaBen. We believe that with both Abba and HaBen, He was an active agent in the creation, and that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration and sanctification, immersing all believers into the Body of Mashiach (the Miqra), equally and permanently indwelling every believer, and sealing them unto the day of redemption. We believe that He is the Divine Teacher, Who inspired and superintended the writing of all Scripture, Who illuminates the interpretation of Scripture, and Who guides believers into all truth, assisting Believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures. We believe that it is the privilege and duty of all true Believers in Mashiach to be filled with and controlled by Ruach HaKodesh.

Section 5 — Concerning Angels

We believe that angels are created beings, not deity, and are not to be worshipped; that they were created by HaShem to serve and worship Him; that they are organized into different ranks and orders; and that there are now both holy and fallen angels.

We believe that holy angels are “ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation” (Heb. 1:14). They ministered extensively to Yeshua during His earthly life and ministry, and are involved in a general ministry to believers. Toward unbelievers, angels announce impending judgments, and will be actively involved in the judgments of the time of Ya’akov’s Trouble (the “Great Tribulation”).

We believe that HaSatan is also an angel, a cherub of the highest rank of all angelic creatures, that he sinned through the pride of self-will, and thereby became the author of sin and the cause of the fall of man. He is the open and declared enemy of both HaShem and man, and with his fallen angels (demons) is in a state of present and open warfare against HaShem and His saints. Some of the demons are presently being held captive “in

chains” in Sheol. They will all be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire, which was created specifically for HaSatan and his demons.

Section 6 — Concerning Man

We believe that man was originally created in the image of HaShem, by HaShem’s own hand and not by any process of evolution or natural selection, and was given the authority and ability to exercise dominion over the created world. Adam chose to disobey HaShem, and because of his disobedience Adam, all of his descendants, and all of his entire dominion fell under HaShem’s curse. Sin, sickness, and death entered the world; man became alienated from HaShem and inherited a sin nature, is totally depraved, possesses no spark of divine life, and, of himself, is utterly helpless to remedy his lost condition apart from the grace of HaShem.

Section 7 — Concerning Sin

The word “sin” is an archery term that means “to miss the mark.” Since the “target” is the perfect example set by Yeshua—that is, the very nature of HaShem Himself—then we believe that anything that falls short of that goal misses the mark and is, by the broadest sense of its definition, “sin.”

We believe that there are two classifications of sin:

- (1) original (imputed) sin, that sin nature which every human inherits from his/her father Adam, and
- (2) personal sin, the individual choices each person makes to either willfully or ignorantly disobey HaShem and His Torah.

We believe that all men and women are totally depraved, without personal merit, and completely unable to save themselves.

We believe that the penalty for sin is separation from fellowship, which takes one or more of three forms:

- (1) separation from HaShem (spiritual death);
- (2) separation from the visible Body of Mashiach through discipline and “excommunication” (which is to be practiced by the Elders [or Beit Din] of the local congregation solely for the sake of maintaining the purity of the Body of Mashiach and for producing the repentance and eventual restoration of the sinning brother or sister), and

- (3) separation from this earth and from the physical body through physical death. We believe that the physical illness and death of all earthly creatures is the direct result of Adam's sin, and that *some* physical illness and death is the result of personal sin.

Section 8 — Concerning Salvation

We believe that salvation is the free gift of HaShem brought to sinful man by the unconditional grace of HaShem and received solely by personal faith in the completed redemptive work of Adonai Yeshua HaMashiach. We believe that salvation comes by faith in the Person and completed work of Yeshua, *plus nothing else!*

We believe that because of the *fact* of the eternal, unconditional, and unilateral promise of HaShem, because of the *nature* of the Word and promises of HaShem, and because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of HaShem, all the redeemed, blood-bought, regenerate, and sanctified children of HaShem have entered into an unbreakable relational covenant with HaShem, are completely and permanently indwelt by Ruach HaKodesh, and are constantly interceded for by Yeshua HaMashiach, our Kohen HaGadol. We believe that they are therefore secure in Mashiach forever.

We believe that before the foundation of the world, for His own purpose and for His own glory, HaShem foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified all those who are to be redeemed; that is, "predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son" and adopted "as sons through Yeshua HaMashiach to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will." The Scriptures refer to these individuals as His "elect," all of whom have had their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life from before the foundation of the world. Although HaShem sovereignly elects some to salvation and glory, paradoxically the election of the saved in no way demonstrates that HaShem is responsible for the damnation of those who are not elect to salvation. The Scripture makes it quite clear that it is not HaShem's will that any should perish. We believe that the Scriptures clearly teach that "whosoever will" may come to saving faith in Yeshua HaMashiach. We also believe that the Scriptures just as clearly teach that "the elect" were chosen from before the foundation of the world. We believe that from man's limited perspective he perceives that he has a measure of "free will," but that from HaShem's perspective HaShem is absolutely and completely sovereign,

and is thus in total control of every event that occurs in time, space, and eternity. Although HaShem receives all of the glory and honor for all those who are saved, He in no way is to blame for any who are lost. We believe that these facts are in no way paradoxical or contradictory, only that they can only be properly understood from HaShem's perspective.

We believe that it is the privilege of all Believers in Mashiach to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation and their freedom from "bondage" to the *eternal penalties* imposed by Torah through the testimony of HaShem's Word which, however, clearly forbids the use of that liberty as an occasion to sin. Though free from "bondage to legalism," we believe that every person is yet accountable to the standard of righteousness that HaShem has defined in His Torah. We believe that all mankind, and especially Believers in Mashiach, are obligated to obey all the mitzvot (commandments) of Torah except for those which are specific to life in Eretz Israel, or those which require the presence of a Holy Temple on Mount Moriah. However, we believe that no man has ever been, or will ever be, saved or counted as righteous through observance of or obedience to Torah, but only through faith in Him who is the Giver of Torah, plus nothing else.

We believe that at the moment of salvation, each person is literally transformed into a "new creation" which the Bible also refers to as a "saint" or "holy person" (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) — that is, a person who has been "set apart" ("sanctified") by HaShem to be His precious possession and to serve His specific purpose.

We believe that sanctification is a "setting apart" of the believer unto HaShem and that it consists of three steps or stages in the believer's life: positional sanctification, progressive sanctification, and ultimate sanctification. We believe that all Believers in Mashiach should live in obedience to Torah and in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord, and that separation from all religious apostasy and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations is commanded by HaShem. We believe that the Torah is the standard of righteousness by which each "saint" is to conduct his/her life.

Section 9 — Concerning the Miqra

We believe that there is only one true and universal Miqra, which is the Body and Bride of Yeshua HaMashiach, and that it is a spiritual organism, of which Yeshua

HaMashiach is the Head,²⁰ and that it is made up of all the redeemed [“born-again”] persons of all ages.

The Hebrew word מִקְרָא (“miqra”) means “the called out ones” and is translated in the TaNaKh as “assembly” or “convocation.” It first appears in Exodus 12:16 and is used eleven times in Leviticus, where it is translated as “holy convocation” and refers to the entire nation of Israel gathered to worship HaShem. It appears an additional seven time in Leviticus, where it again unfailingly refers to the nation of Israel. In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the TaNaKh) it is translated as “ekklesia,” an accurate translation which means “the called out ones.” The word is carried over into to Ketuvei HaShalichim, where it again is used to refer to the assembly of Messianic Jews worshipping HaShem. When the Ketuvei HaShalichim were translated into English in 1611, the translators of the King James Version arbitrarily, and with absolutely no etymological basis, changed the word from “convocation” or “assembly” to a totally unrelated word, “church.”

We believe that the Miqra is now, and has always been, a uniquely Jewish “organism” into which Gentiles who come to faith in Israel’s King Messiah are grafted, and are thereby adopted as children of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya’akov, and as such become joint heirs of, and joint participants in, the Covenants, the Torah, and the Land of Israel.

We categorically reject as heresy the traditional “Christian” notions that Yeshua HaMashiach or the Shliachim ever intended to “start a new religion” and that Ruach HaKodesh instituted something “new” on the day of Pentecost. To those present, the Pentecost experience was clearly a reenactment of the events at Sinai when HaShem first gave the Torah to Israel, and served as a visible sign that Ruach HaKodesh was “writing Torah on the hearts” (Jer 31:33) of the Talmidim in fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32, exactly as it was interpreted to the assembly that day by Kefa.

We believe that the establishment and continuity of local congregations (also called assemblies, synagogues, or [erroneously] “churches”) is clearly taught and defined in the Ketuvei HaShalichim, that the members of this one spiritual Body are directed by Adonai Yeshua to associate themselves together in local congregations, which are to be true communities of Believers, not just

organizations, and that those local congregations should willingly cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the true Faith, once for all delivered to the Saints.

We believe in the autonomy of the local congregation, composed solely of true Believers in Mashiach, free from any external authority or control, with the right to be totally free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations outside of that local congregation.

We believe that each local congregation, through its Elders [or Beit Din] and their interpretation and application of the Scriptures, is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation with other congregations, as well as being the sole judge of all matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government (remembering that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation without the illumination of Ruach HaKodesh).

Section 10 — Concerning Authority in the Miqra

We believe that the one and only supreme authority for the Miqra is Adonai Yeshua HaMashiach, and that the order, discipline, and worship are appointed through His sovereignty. As we believe the Bible to be the literal written Word of G-d and the only true and reliable source of His revelation for His Body, we hold the Bible, and the Bible only, to be the ultimate and final source of authority for all matters of faith, practice, and polity.

We believe that the Biblically-designated shepherds serving immediately under Yeshua and directly over the congregation are called Elders, Overseers, or Pastors. We understand that the term “Elder” refers to the man’s spiritual maturity and position within the family of G-d, “Overseer” refers to his responsibility and G-d-ordained authority to rule benevolently over the family of G-d, and “Pastor” refers to his shepherding responsibility to lead, guide, feed, protect, and care for the well-being of the children of G-d, to whom Yeshua HaMashiach referred as His “sheep.” We believe that Elders are called, ordained, and specially equipped by G-d for His ministry, and that they are spiritual gifts given by G-d to the Miqra. We accept the ancient tradition of referring to Elders of Jewish ancestry as “Rabbi” and attribute no greater distinction to that title than to the title Elder or Pastor.

Section 11 — Concerning Leadership in the Miqra

We specifically reject any idea of apostolic or prophetic succession through which the offices of Apostle and Prophet are present in the Miqra today in the *technical* sense of those titles. We do, however believe in the continuance of all four *functions* fulfilled by the Elders as recorded in Ephesians 4:11, namely:

- Apostles (in the generic sense), or Emissaries, which we understand to refer to Traveling Elders, those elders whom G-d has called to travel from place to place as messengers or missionaries;
- Prophets (also in the generic sense), or Preaching Elders, whom G-d has called to specialize in preaching the Word of G-d;
- Evangelists, or “Gospelizing” Elders, those Elders who have been called to specialize in presenting the Gospel (the death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and bodily return of Yeshua HaMashiach) to the unsaved; and
- Pastor/Teachers, also called Shepherding Elders or Ruling Elders, those Elders whom G-d has called to fulfill a shepherding ministry over a local assembly of believers.

We believe that the pattern clearly established in the Bible is that there are to be multiple Elders in every local congregation, whenever possible. The number of Elders is not specified in Scripture, but we believe that there should be a sufficient number of Elders to effectively meet the spiritual needs of the congregation and to efficiently conduct the ministry of the Miqra. We believe that the duties of the Elders include, but are not limited to, the following activities defined in Scripture.

- Their primary duty is to give themselves fully to study, prayer, and the ministry of G-d’s word.
- They are to lead G-d’s people by their example in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity.
- They are to benevolently rule over the local congregation of Believers and, when necessary, they are to rebuke and exhort with all authority.
- They are not to be dictatorial in their leadership, but are to be to the congregation as a loving father is to his family.
- They are to equip the saints to do the work of ministry.
- They are to pray for the sick and visit those in their time of need.

- They are to oversee the entire ministry, willingly and eagerly, knowing that when Yeshua, the Chief Shepherd, appears they shall receive a “crown of glory that does not fade away.”

We believe that all Elders must initially meet and then maintain rigid spiritual qualifications, and that G-d will hold them strictly accountable for both their actions and their attitudes as leaders over His Miqra.

Elders are called and specifically gifted by G-d (Eph. 4:11-13) for a lifetime of service to Him and to His people (Rom. 11:29).

They are to be *appointed* for the congregation by the other Elders (Titus 1:5), *not elected* by the congregation.

If a spiritually qualified man, believing that He has been called by G-d, expresses his desire (1 Tim. 3:1) to commit himself to a lifetime of service as an Elder, his abilities, qualifications, and knowledge of the Apostles’ doctrine (1 Tim. 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9), as well as the fact of his calling, must be carefully examined by the Elders. After careful examination of the candidate, extensive prayer, and thorough deliberation by the Elders (1 Tim. 5:22), having determined the candidate’s call, willingness, and ability to enter a lifetime of service, the Elders may appoint and ordain the candidate as an Elder, thus providing confirmation to both the local congregation and to the Miqra at large of the LORD’s ordination of the new Elder.

Section 12 — Concerning Activities of the Miqra

We believe that the four essential *continual* activities of the community of faith are to be:

- (a) devotion to the teaching of the Shliachim,
- (b) constant fellowship both at and away from the meeting place,
- (c) the breaking of bread (frequent communal meals and participation in the “Lord’s Supper” as practiced in the Passover Seder), and
- (d) prayer without ceasing (Acts 2:42), and that personal evangelism and spiritual and numerical growth of the assembly will be the inescapable result of these activities.

We believe that Yeshua has established two memorials which are to be faithfully and frequently observed by the Miqra until His bodily return: immersion of Believers (mikvah) and the Lord’s Supper.

A. Water Baptism (Mikvah)

We believe that the act of baptism or mikvah (immersion in water) is in no way a condition of salvation, nor any part of the salvation process (see Section 8—Salvation). We believe that immersion in water is an outward demonstration of the inner change that has *already taken place* in the life and heart of the new Believer in Messiah. It is a demonstration of Ruach HaKodesh's immersion of the believer into the Body of Mashiach, which results in salvation and positional justification. In its form, it is a graphic picture of Yeshua's death, burial, and resurrection, and expresses the Believer's identification with Mashiach. We believe that a desire for immersion in water should be the immediate response of all those who have been truly "saved" (Acts 2:37-41; 8:12; 8:35-38; 9:11-18; 22:16; 10:47-48; 16:14-15; 16:25-34; 18:8; 19:1-5). For this reason, it is also called "Believer's Baptism."

Just as the Scriptures clearly teach that it was (and still is) faith and not circumcision which brings salvation to the sons of Israel, so it is faith and neither the water itself or the act of immersion which brings salvation to the Believer in Mashiach. However, just as circumcision is the sign of Israel's participation in the Original Covenant, so water baptism (mikvah) is the sign that the Believer in Mashiach participates in the "Renewed Covenant." The "traditional" Jewish community had (and has) the right to assume that all male Jews would submit to the rite of circumcision as a sign of identification with that community. In the same way, we believe that the community of Messianic Believers has the same right to assume that all Believers will submit to the rite of mikvah as a sign of identification with our community.

We therefore require obedience to the ordinance of mikvah (immersion in water) after the salvation experience, as a condition of formal membership in and identification with this congregation.

We recognize the right of each Believer under grace to disagree with us on any doctrine that is not essential to salvation. Having defined mikvah as something to be highly desired but not absolutely essential to salvation, we defend the right and responsibility of each Believer to decide for him/herself whether to be obedient to that ordinance. Therefore, any blood-bought child of G-d who disagrees on this point is certainly welcome to fellowship with this congregation. However, we urge in the

strongest possible terms that all Believers in Mashiach who have not previously done so, submit to this ordinance in obedience to the Lord.

B. The Lord's Supper

We believe that the so-called "Lord's Supper" is a memorial activity in which the Miqra shares symbolically in the body and blood of Mashiach, and that it is an integral part of the annual Passover Seder, as instructed by Yeshua HaMashiach. As the Master was sharing his final Seder with his Talmidim, He instructed that they were to do "this" (the Passover Seder) in memory of Him.

C. Stewardship

We believe that the rule for giving by Messianic Believers is twofold: (1) that the work of the ministry be adequately supported; and (2) that the needy (within the Body of Mashiach) be provided for. We reject the "social gospel" which teaches that the primary function of the Body of Mashiach is to be a "social welfare institution." We believe that giving is therefore to be done: (a) cheerfully; (b) in proportion to G-d's prospering; (c) into a private fund ("put aside") at home from which fund the Believer makes distributions according to the direct leading of Ruach HaKodesh; and (d) presented to the Elders regularly when the congregation meets for corporate worship.

Every believer should be a faithful steward of *all* his resources (time, talent, Spiritual gifts, finances, and other material possessions) for the furtherance of the Gospel at home and abroad. We believe that the example in the Ketuvei HaShalichim that we are to follow is that the congregation is to deliver their gifts to the Elders for distribution according to the direction of the Lord. We further believe that a Believer relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made.

Since the primary responsibility of the Elders is to give themselves fully to study, prayer, and the ministry of G-d's word, we believe that it is G-d's plan for them to earn their living from that activity (1 Cor. 9:14; 1 Tim. 5:17-18) to the fullest extent the congregation is able to provide.

D. The Miqra and Civil Government

We believe that G-d has ordained all authority consisting of three basic institutions: (1) the home; (2) the

Miqra; and (3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to G-d and governed by his Word. G-d has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the Miqra, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblical spheres of responsibility under G-d.

We categorically reject as totally unbiblical, as well as patently unconstitutional, the false and arbitrary concept commonly referred to as “the separation of Church and state,” and believe that the only true form of government acceptable to G-d is a Theocracy. We embrace the literal and historical interpretation of the founding documents and the intention of the founders of the United States that the only valid government is that government whose G-d is the LORD. Further, we reject as false and Satan-inspired the interpretation of the Constitution’s First Amendment by the United States Supreme Court that there is to be a “wall of separation between the Church and the State,” and support the obvious intention of the literal wording of the Amendment which provides protection of the Body of Yeshua HaMashiach from the interference of secular government.

We therefore believe that the Body of Mashiach owes allegiance to the civil government in all areas except those which infringe upon our allegiance to our Savior and only Sovereign Lord Adonai HaMelech Yeshua HaMashiach and to our obedience to His clear commands, precepts, and principles.

E. Discipline in the Local Congregation

We believe that the Bible requires the Elders of the local congregation to lovingly discipline the children of G-d for the purpose of their instruction and restoration to full fellowship. We also believe that the Scriptures clearly teach that the Elders are to stand firm against all forms of false doctrine and to firmly rebuke those who would lead the Elect astray.

F. Missions and the Miqra

We believe that G-d has given the Miqra a Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who trust in Adonai Yeshua HaMashiach. As ambassadors of Mashiach, we

must use all available means to go both to this nation and to the foreign nations with the Good News of the Kingdom of Yeshua HaMashiach.

G. Denominationalism Within the Miqra

We believe that there is only one true and universal Body of Yeshua HaMashiach. We believe that within the Body of Mashiach there is room for differences of opinion concerning nonessential doctrines and polity, and that Believers of similar preferences in the nonessential areas should fellowship together. However, we are firmly convinced that any form of strife, jealousy, or spirit of unhealthy competition, or any form of divisiveness either within or between any congregations of the Lord’s Elect is an abomination before the Lord.

Section 13 — Concerning the Future

A. Mashiach’s Earthly Kingdom

We believe that the world will experience the seven years of strife and tribulation known as “Ya’akov’s Trouble” and that the return of Yeshua HaMashiach will be related to that strife. However, we are not convinced that Scripture clearly indicates whether His return will be before, during, or after that period, and we therefore take no particular doctrinal position on the matter.

We believe in the return of Adonai Yeshua HaMashiach to the earth just as He went, in Person and in the body in which He was crucified¹⁹, now glorified, coming on the clouds of heaven, with all His Saints, and with power and great glory to establish the Millennial Kingdom, to bind HaSatan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests on the whole creation, to restore a united Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of G-d’s covenant promises, to bring the whole world to the knowledge of G-d, and to personally and bodily reign over the whole earth for a thousand years from His throne in Jerusalem.

We believe that the Temple and the Priesthood will be restored, that the sacrifices will be practiced as a memorial reminder that our redemption has come only through the shed Blood of the Lamb, and that all the nations of the world will come to the Temple in Jerusalem to observe the Feasts of the Lord under the tutelage of their teacher Israel.

We believe that King David, resurrected and glorified, will reign over Israel as Mashiach’s co-regent, and that Father Avraham, resurrected and glorified, will rule over

all Eretz Yisrael from the Nile River in the west to the Euphrates River in the east.

B. The Final Rebellion and Judgment

We believe that following the release of HaSatan at the end of the Millennium, he will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the Saints and against Jerusalem, and they will be destroyed by fire from heaven. HaSatan will then be cast into the Lake of Fire, where the Beast and the False Prophet live in eternal torment. All of the remaining dead will then be resurrected to stand before the Great White Throne, where the books of their lives will be opened and they will be judged according to their deeds. However, regardless of their deeds, “since not one was found ever having been written in the Book of Life, he was cast into the Lake of Fire” (Revelation 20:15, literal).

The elements of the earth will then be dissolved with a great rushing sound and G-d will create a completely new heaven and earth. The new Jerusalem will come down out of heaven and will be the eternal dwelling place for all (and only) those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, where they will enjoy eternal fellowship with G-d and with one another. Having fulfilled His redemptive mission, Adonai Yeshua HaMashiach will then deliver up the kingdom to G-d the Father.

C. The Eternal State

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are at death absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection when, with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment.

Section 14 — Miscellaneous Other Doctrines

A. Creation

We believe that the creation account as described in the

first two chapters of the book of Genesis is to be accepted as factual, historical, and perspicuous; that all things in the universe were spoken into existence from nothing by G-d in the six days^[21] of special creation; and that this knowledge is foundational in the understanding of every fact and phenomenon in the created universe. We reject the theory of random spontaneous evolution as not only unbiblical but also intellectually untenable.

B. Human Sexuality

We believe that G-d has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, or pornography are sinful perversions of G-d’s gift of sex.

C. The Sanctity of Life

We believe that human life begins at the moment of conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion therefore constitutes the unjustifiable, inexcusable taking of unborn human life.

Simply stated, abortion is the murder of an infant.

We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well being of the mother are acceptable.

While we believe that all human life is sacred, given by G-d and to be revoked only at His pleasure, we believe that capital punishment is clearly taught in the Scriptures, so that evil may be put away from among G-d’s people. (Deut. 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:19; 21:21; 22:19-24; 24:7)

Section 15 — Authority of this Article

Neither this Article nor the *Doctrinal Guidelines for Congregation B’nei HaMelech*, which is included by reference as part of this Article, exhausts the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that both this Article and the *Doctrinal Guidelines* accurately represent the teaching of the Bible, and are therefore binding upon all members as the rule of faith and practice.

Notes

1. משיח *Mashiach* is the Hebrew word for “anointed.” The English form of this word is “Messiah” and the Greek form of the same word is “Christus,” or “Christ.” Israel anointed three classes of people: prophets, priests, and kings. As Messiah serves His people as their Prophet, Priest, and King, He is Ha-Mashiach, The Anointed One.
2. מִקְרָא *Miqra* is the Hebrew word for “convocation” or “sacred assembly,” suggesting to be called out for that convocation or assembly, hence also “called out.” The Greek word for this assembly is *ekklesia* *ekklesia*, which is *mistranslated* in the English New Testament as “church.” Beyond the human traditions of the Gentile translators, there is absolutely no grammatical support of any kind for translating *ekklesia* as “church.”
3. אֲדֹנָי *Adonai* is Hebrew for “Lord” and is used both as a title for one’s master and as a title of respect used in place of the Sacred Name hwhy YHWH — *Yeshua* is his given, or proper, name, and means “YHWH is salvation” or “YHWH saves” — *HaMashiach* is Hebrew for “the Messiah.” Nobody who ever knew Him in the flesh ever called Him “Jesus” or “Jesus Christ.”
4. מִצְוָה *mitzvah* is Hebrew for “command,” “commandment,” “precept,” or by inference “good work.”
5. Unless otherwise specified, all Scripture references in this Constitution are quoted from the *Hebrew Names Version* of the Bible.
6. גוֹי *goy* (plural, *goyim*) is Hebrew for “nations,” usually used for anyone who is not an Israelite, therefore “Gentiles.”
7. תַּלְמִיד *talmid* (plural, *talmidim*) is Hebrew for “scholar” or “disciple” — one who learns — specifically one who learns at the feet of another and who strives to become like the teacher.
8. רוּחַ *ruach* is Hebrew for “wind,” “breath,” “mind,” or “spirit,” and often refers to the Spirit of G-d. רֹחַ קֹדֶשׁ *Ruach HaKodesh* is Hebrew for “the Holy Spirit.”
9. מְשֻׁלְּחִים *Shliachim* is Hebrew for “those sent forth” or “emissaries,” and signifies a person who is sent forth as a representative with the full authority of the one doing the sending. The Greek equivalent is *αποστολος* *apostolos* from which we get the word “Apostles.” in the State of Israel, their foreign ambassadors are called *Shliachim*.
10. אָבָא *Abba* is Hebrew for “Father.”
11. הַבֵּן *HaBen* is Hebrew for “the Son.”
12. רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ *Ruach HaKodesh* is Hebrew for “the Holy Spirit.”
13. יְרוּשָׁלַיִם *Yerushalayim* is Hebrew for “City of Peace” or “Jerusalem.”
14. יְהוּדָה *Yehudah* is Hebrew for “Judah.”
15. שֹׁמְרוֹן *Shomron* is Hebrew for “Samaria.”
16. אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל *Eretz Yisrael* is Hebrew for “the Land of Israel.”
17. The Diaspora, or dispersion, refers to all Israelites (descendants of Avraham, Yitzhak, and Ya’akov) living outside of Eretz Yisrael.
18. Paraphrased from Boardman, cited in *Great Doctrines of the Bible*, by William Evans. Chicago: Moody Press, 1912, 1949, p. 28.
19. Within Messianic Judaism there is considerable debate as to the form of the instrument upon which Yeshua was executed. We happen to believe that the instrument was in the form of the traditional Roman cross with a cross-beam, but we view this as a matter of opinion rather than of doctrine. We find no fault with those who prefer the term “execution stake” as less offensive to Jewish persons.
20. I fully understand that “conventional” Christian theology teaches that the “Church” came into existence at Pentecost and will cease to function in its present capacity at “the Rapture,” and that the “Church” therefore consists of all the saints of the present age, and I faithfully taught that doctrine for over thirty years. My recent studies of the Scripture have left that teaching in some doubt in my mind for the reasons outlined in our article on the word “church.”
21. We do not pretend to know, nor do we believe that it is important for us to know, whether the period of time included in the “six days of creation” was equal to six periods of 24 hours each, according to man’s current calculation of time. Since the Scripture specifically refers to “the evening and morning” of each day, we assume that literal days are intended. Current understanding of Einstein’s Theory of Relativity holds that time as we know it is relative to the position and circumstances of the observer. HaShem, Who is the Creator and Author of Scripture, exists outside the dimensions of time and space, and mankind has no way of knowing what “six days” means from HaShem’s perspective. What is important is that HaShem said it, and we therefore accept it as Truth without having to fully understand it.