

The Modern Messianic Movement

In order to properly address the topic of The Modern Messianic Movement for those who are not familiar with it, it will be to their benefit for us to begin with a little background on the development of both Gentile-Christianity and Jewish-Christianity.

Jewish-Christians have been around in one form or another since the New Testament. Yet, from early on there seems to have been varying forms, which began to take shape. With some of the Jewish-Christians assimilating into Gentile-Christianity and its Hellenized theology, though most of them did not.

Most of Gentile-Christianity based their theology predominantly on the writings of Paul. Sadly, this was done with a degree of selective suppression of the rest of the New Testament writings as well as much of the Old Testament. This is mentioned in 2nd Peter.

2nd Peter 3:15-17 NIV

- (15) Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation,
just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you
with the wisdom that God gave him.
- (16) He writes the same way in all his letters,
speaking in them of these matters.
His letters contain some things that are hard to understand,
Which ignorant and unstable people distort,
- (17) Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this,
be on your guard so that you may not be carried away
by the error of **lawless** men and fall from you secure position.

In the Book entitled **A HISTORY OF THE JEWS** by Solomon Graysel, the author discusses the teachings of the Apostle Paul.

The results of Paul's Teaching – It is not what happened to Paul personally that is important, but rather what happened to Paul's teachings. Even while he lived, ample evidence proves that the people to whom he preached had misunderstood him. He had spoken in terms of high and noble idealism, of charity, of personal righteousness. He urged men to believe in Jesus firmly and, believing in so perfect an example of godly living, begin to lead a godly life themselves. Such righteous people could have no difficulty in meeting the day of God's judgment. They would surely survive it, and when the day of resurrection came, such people would surely be permitted to live again and forever. **But most of the people who listened to Paul remembered only the connection between believing in Jesus and meriting God's mercy and ultimate resurrection. They skipped the middle step – the need to live godly lives. Thus, faith in Jesus came to be the only and entire basis of the religion adopted by the**

pagan Christians, while the Judeo-Christians, who lived in Palestine, continued to observe Jewish law.

But it was the **pagan Christian attitude which won** in the end. Many pagans who had admired Judaism either openly or secretly now had a chance to adopt a form of Judaism which appealed to them. It is not at all strange that Christianity spread most easily and rapidly in those cities in which Jews had lived for a long time, so that people were already acquainted with their life and religious ideas....

One reason we are looking at Gentile-Christianity is because of its relationship to the Jewish-Christian community. Over the centuries there have been a number of those of Jewish ancestry, which have converted to the Hellenized form of Gentile-Christianity.

This makes up one of the two types of individuals who have been considered to be Jewish-Christians throughout history. These are, generally speaking, the only Jewish-Christians who are considered to be **“TRUE”** Christians by the Gentile-Church. While the other type of Jewish-Christians are frequently considered to be some sort of Apostate Heretics!

This second type of Jewish-Christians are the ones that would be described as practicing a more Observant Messianic form of (pre-Talmudic) Judaism. They are the ones which historically have been considered by most of mainstream Gentile-Christianity to be Apostate Heretics. Yet, throughout the centuries they have been documented to have been in various countries including Spain, France, Italy, Bulgaria and the rest of Europe, plus Africa and Asia; and later spreading to North, Central and South America as well.

In Spain for example, Messianic or Jewish-Christians have had a long and very well established presence for many centuries. However when Catholicism regained control of Spain from the rule of the Moslems, it did not take long before the presence of Jewish-Christians gave rise to the Spanish Inquisition. From its start in 1492, in time the Inquisition spread to the Spanish Colonies in the New World. Over the centuries, as time passed, the Inquisitions in one country after another began to slowly come to an end; until finally the last remnant of the Inquisition was only still to be found in South America. Finally, at least officially, it did come to an end; but not until 1968.

When the Spanish Inquisitions started in 1492, the Jews who did not believe that Jesus was a Messiah were expelled from Spain; while those who did believe in Jesus were not expelled. A substantial number of these Jewish-Christians, not only believed that Jesus (Yeshua) was the suffering Messiah (Messiah ben-Joseph) but also still held on to the both their Hebraic theology and practices, of Observant Messianic pre-Talmudic Judaism, at least to one degree or another. Therefore the Gentile-Church considered them to be Apostate Heretics. For any Christian, whether Jewish or not, to hold to any Hebraic theology and/or practices was perceived to be as such a great threat to The State Religion and therefore to The State itself, that they were hunted down, tortured and killed!

On the other side of Europe, in Russia, the Jewish-Christians also had a long and very well established presence for many centuries. There are a good number of historical references to them. One of them can be found in: The **ENCYCLOPEADIA JUDAICA**.

In the ENCYCLOPEADIA JUDAICA by Keter Publishing House Jerusalem Ltd. Published in 1972, we find a fairly good investigation of Jewish-Christians under the topic of Judaizers, as they were frequently called in Russia and many other countries.

With the accession of Alexander II, the administrative pressure was alleviated and the authorities did not insist on the application of the law. Many of the Judaizers began to observe their religion openly. They were particularly numerous in the provinces of Voronezh and Saratov. With the manifesto issued on Oct. 17, 1905, which included freedom of religion for all the citizens of Russia, all the discriminatory legislation against the Judaizers and Sabbath observers was abolished....

All those who came into contact with the members of the sect, even their opponents, pointed out that they were mainly industrious peasants, moral, literate, charitable, and sober in their lives....

There is no information available on the lives of the Judaizers and their proselytes under the Soviet regime.

It appears that when it comes to what we are calling the second type of Jewish-Christians. The ones closer to the original form are the more Observant type of Jewish-Christians, they are also known as Messianic-Christians, Messianic-Believers or Judaic-Christians. Most people today and throughout history tend to agree with the assessment made by Jerome, some 16 centuries ago, as still being true today. Jerome stated: **“that while they are both Jewish and Christian, they are neither Jewish nor Christian.”** Even so, history reveals that various groups of Messianic-Jewish-Believers and their Gentile-Converts have been in continuous existence since the Common Era began. Frequently these groups were isolated and not aware of their counterparts scattered far and wide among the nations. As was stated earlier, the Observant Messianic forms of Jewish-Christianity has been documented to still be in existence through the centuries in country after country from Spain, France, Italy, Bulgaria and the rest of Europe; to North, Central and South America, as well as Africa and Asia. Once again, these are the ones we are referring to as the Second Type of the two groups (even though their beliefs and practices are much closer to the Historically First or Original type of New Testament Believers in Jesus).

So, with the first group being on the Hellenistic side of the fence, you have those who are preaching a different Jesus. Who they claim, has done away with BIBLICAL LAW! This declaration that: **“Jesus did away with the LAW!”** has become a major part of their foundational beliefs, as well as in most of Gentile-Christianity. But what did Jesus say?

Matthew 5:17-19 (NASB)

(17) **“Do not think that I came to abolish The Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.”**

(18) **“For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from The Law, until all is accomplished.”**

(19) **“Whoever then annuls one of the least of these Commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”**

Yet, by the time most Christians get to the end of the first sentence (or verse) that is exactly what they do think! ??? Even though Jesus told them NOT to think it! This just shows you how deep their Hellenized indoctrination has become! They think fulfill means abolished?

On the other hand we have the Second Group, these Observant-Jewish-Believers have always believed that Jesus was a Jewish Messiah and as such, could not do away with the LAWS OF GOD and still be the true Messiah! In doing so, they have remained steadfastly within the bounds of Historic pre-Talmudic Judaism.

So let us take a quick review of what has been covered, before moving on to the development of a **new Third Type**. Until recently, in the last century or so, generally speaking, there were only two distinctive types of Jewish-Christians. There were those who were totally Church-Acculturated and assimilated into the Hellenized form of Gentile theology and Culture. Who wanted nothing to do with the Jewish religion or culture; even though genetically they are Jewish. Then there were those who were the Jewish-Christians that maintained traditional Jewish theology and practices. Some of these may have chosen to attend at a regular synagogue, while some others chose to establish their own congregations. Still, some others occasionally attended both, from time to time. While those who were more isolated, would frequently opt for private prayer and worship in their homes. These individuals, more often than not, have more in common with Orthodox Judaism, than they do with Reform Judaism.

So you have one group with their primary attachment to the Gentile-Church and the other group having their primary attachment to BIBLICAL MESSIANIC pre-Talmudic JUDAISM.

Then during the mid and latter parts of the twentieth century, a **new Third form** began to develop. Many of the younger generation, of Jewish background, who were brought up in the Gentile-Church, wanted to acknowledge and express their Jewish background. Some wondered why every other group of converts to Christianity were allowed to keep their unique culture and still embrace Christianity, while those of Jewish ancestry were discouraged from doing so? Other cultures freely expressed their background in and through their congregations, such as the "Black Baptist Church", "American Indian Church", Vietnamese Christians and many others could keep and express their culture, with the Gentile-Church's blessing and approval. But that was not so, at that time, for those of a Jewish background. Many of these Jewish-Christians wanted the same opportunities as other cultures had, to express their culture as part of their Christianity.

The younger generation was able to find some supporters for their desire for the reintroduction of Jewish-Culture into their worship services, from some individual congregations and a few denominations as well. This was especially true for some protestant groups who felt that their efforts to evangelize the world, was especially lacking, when it came to the Jewish Community. There needed to be an additional push to complete their efforts toward world evangelization. To fill in this one place where they felt that they were especially lacking and begin to evangelize among the Jews. So then, with this newly found support among some of the Gentile-Christians, for the reintroduction of Jewish-Culture into the worship services, of those who were of Jewish background, a **New Third form of Jewish-Christianity was born!**

In a relatively short period of time, this developed into today's **Modern Messianic Movement**. They have received backing and support from many different individual Christian

Churches as well as some Christian Denominations. This Modern Messianic Movement asserts that since Jesus was a Jewish Messiah, who was born in a Jewish land, which was foretold by Jewish prophets, and was found in the Jewish Scriptures, that acknowledging this did not make them a Gentile. They began to use some Hebrew terms rather than the traditional Christian terms. This along with the use of some items found in most synagogues and the profuse use of different types of Judaica (Jewish cultural items) to give more of the look and feel of a Jewish Congregation. Yet, much if not most of their theology was still that of the Gentile-Church; wrapped in a veneer of Jewish-Culture, **not theology**. Though they enjoy, and in some ways crave, the things of Jewish-Culture, they still more often than not, feel that for them to return to these Jewish-Cultural practices did not put them under any of the Obligations of the LAW.

Remember that a counterfeit of anything, must out of necessity, look at first glance like the real thing. Only with closer examination does it become evident that something is wrong. It does appear (whether they realize it or not) that they are trying to counterfeit the more Observant Messianic Jewish-Christians of history. Who had remained throughout the centuries, within the bounds of Historic pre-Talmudic Judaism. Yet, this counterfeit seems to be declaring, or at least implying, that they (the ones who make up The Modern Messianic Movement) are the more Original form of Christianity or Church!

Yet sadly, most of them are espousing a theology which claims they are not under any of the Obligations of the LAW, because like the Gentile-Church, they believe that Jesus did away with the LAW. And many, if not most, of them believe that those who believe otherwise would have to be some sort of an Apostate Heretic! Whether they realize it or not, they are in effect claiming, it is a sin to obey God and **keep His Laws and Commandments**.

It is difficult to understand how they can not see, that this part of their theology is declaring that it is a sin to obey God? Yet, most of them seem to be totally blind to this! They along with the rest of the Gentile-Church are preaching **Lawlessness** (or *Iniquity* in the King James). This is something that the New Testament rails against time and time again. Yet, most still can not seem to get it through their heads (or collective brains), that **Lawlessness means without the LAW!**

Matthew 7:21-23 (NASB)

- (21) "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."
- (22) "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'"
- (23) "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you, **DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS**.'"

Today the acceptance continues to grow among most Gentile-Christians toward these counterfeit Hybrid Messianic groups. This whole acceptance by the Church is because most (but not all) of the Modern Messianic Movement is still holding on to this hybrid theology, as the

central core of their tenants. A hybrid that keeps those parts of Gentile-Hellenistic theology, which is asserting that being under **THE LAW** is being legalistic (a polite way of saying to Judaize) and therefore is *a grave sin*. Even though much, if not most, of the Gentile-Church has come to accept that the act of expressing *Jewish-Culture* within their Messianic Congregations is just fine. As long as these individuals continue to teach that the “**Old Covenant**” required them to be in “**BONDAGE**” to **God’s LAWS**. And that they believe that the **LAW**, along with any obligation for obedience to it, has been **REPLACED** by a “**New Covenant**” of “**Grace and Freedom FROM The LAW**”. Since most (but not all) Modern Messianic Movement’s belief that faith in Jesus alone, is all that one needs for salvation, they (those of Jewish background) were allowed to have their Jewish Music and Jewish trinkets. As long as they also keep their concept of The Messiah, to that of the Hellenized perspective, which differs greatly from the concept of The Messiah found within Historic pre-Talmudic Judaism. Keep in mind that the Gentile-Church is not just pushing their Hellenized theology at the Jewish-Community, but to everyone from any background or culture, as part of their effort to Evangelize The World! With a Hellenized Jesus!

As long as this mixture of theologies continues within most of The Modern Messianic Movement, it will most likely continue to be considered outside the boundaries of the *true* Jewish-Community at large. This is precisely what the Church Leaders want, and why many of them continue to support various Messianic Ministries. With the hope of converting as many as possible in the Jewish-Community, as well as, some in the Gentile-Community to the traditional form of their Hellenized **LAWLESS** theology. Even when the manner of this expression has been infused with the addition of a uniquely Jewish flavor, as in the case of The Modern Messianic Movement, where there is only (in most, but not all cases) a thin veneer of Jewish-Culture. This veneer is the sugar coating, expressly designed to attract Jewish individuals and/or any Gentile who may be trying to get closer to the God and the theology of the original followers of Jesus. In doing so these Churches (and the Messianic Groups that they sponsor) are sadly, more often than not, trying to actually substitute **Jewish-Culture** for (pre-Talmudic) **Messianic Jewish-Theology and Observance!**

Ironically, many of the individuals who are drawn to the Jewish-Culture are drawn there because they had a desire to understand the LAWS OF GOD and how they could become more obedient to Him. However, they are met with a major stumbling block when they find themselves drawn into many (but not all) of the Modern Messianic-Congregations. Since many, if not most, of these Congregations teach that Jesus did away with all of that! Sadly, since in the majority of cases these Congregations, which are using Jewish paraphernalia, have reduced these items to nothing but props, that are being used to aid them in the promoting of their Hellenized form of theology, immersed in Jewish-Culture. This is somewhat similar, at least in some ways, to what Jesus spoke of in the book of Matthew.

Matthew 23:5 (NASB)

(5) “**But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries, and lengthen the tassels of their garments.**”

Because most of them are aware of this verse in Matthew 23, usually they will avoid doing these two *specific* things; however, they end up doing the very same thing in a different manner or misuse other things from the Jewish Religion and Culture in a similar manner. These Modern Messianic Individuals, more often than not, only want to have the look and feel of being

Jewish. Even though many things in Jewish-Culture have their roots in Biblical Observance, when miss-used they become only a prop or trinket, to help give them the look and feel, which they wish to exhibit to others, as Jesus (Yeshua) pointed out in Matthew 23:5.

For example:

When Modern Messianic Congregations disavow the LAWS OF GOD and then choose to use a Tallit, Hebrew Prayers, and the like, in their services anyway. By doing so, have they or have they not, reduced that which had been intended as a Mitzva, into something which is nothing more than a symbolic show, to declare that they are being Culturally-Jewish. The intent seems to be to give their services a Jewish look and feel, in order for them to express their Jewish-Culture, rather than Biblical Jewish-theology and Obedience to GOD'S LAWS and Commandments.

Second example:

Years ago, at one of the so-called, Modern Messianic Congregations, some of the attendants were having a dispute with the head of the Congregation. It was concerning the food being served. The fact that several items that had been set out in the kitchen were not only Rabbinically unkosher, but they were also BIBLICALLY unkosher - ham, hotdogs with pork, etc. Several members were quite offended by this, commenting that it was by no means appropriate for them to have even been brought into the building. They also told the leader of the Congregation that it was especially inappropriate when there was a Mezuzah on the door post. The leader of the Congregation responded that the Mezuzah did not matter, because it did not contain a Scroll! The empty Mezuzah was obviously not there for the intent of being kosher, or for the intent of truly attempting to obey God. But rather, to just give the look and feel, of being observant and kosher; while knowingly being **un**-kosher and **non**-observant. They were, in other words, only adopting Jewish-Culture, rather than being respectful and making a true effort at being Biblically Observant.

Third example:

An individual who had (and may still have) a Messianic Ministry, went with some people to a Denny's Restaurant to get something to eat late one evening. This individual was not only wearing a Kippah but also had attached a set of Tzitzit on his belt. When it came time to order, he ordered ham and eggs, and laughed about it. Several people with him were incensed since he was symbolically trying to make the point that he was an Observant Jew by his apparel. This aggravated those who were with him, because they did keep pre-Talmudic kashruth. Even though they had some business they needed to do with this individual, nevertheless they told him that if he did not take off the kippah and tuck in the tzitzit that they would not stay. He reluctantly complied, though he looked

somewhat perplexed and seemed to think that it was totally unreasonable for them to insist on it. This is just one more example of being Culturally-Jewish in appearance, without the desire to be Observant or Obedient to God.

Forth example:

A different Messianic Minister invited several people to his home to listen to a couple speak. He said that this couple had been instrumental in developing part of the Messianic Movement. They had been secular early in their lives but had found Jesus. The Messianic Minister said that over time they had been very important in the development of the Modern Messianic Movement.

This was to be held on a Friday night. After the talk, the Messianic Minister told those present at his home that they had literature by this couple for sale in the other room, for those who might be interested, and he encouraged every one to purchase as much as possible to help support the couple. This was after sundown on Friday night, it was Shabbat. They were earnestly trying to sell things to those that had come to hear the speakers. Some of those attending the talk considered themselves **BIBLICALLY OBSERVANT MESSIANIC BELIEVERS and Observed The Sabbath**. Understandably they were troubled by this. This couple who claimed to have been an important part in the development of the New Messianic Movement had no problem with the sale of these items, at all. They were openly thankful for the push to purchase their literature. Over and over again, Jewish-Culture is used as a **non**-Observant replacement for basic Biblical pre-Talmudic Jewish-Theology and Observance.

And the examples could go on and on!

Why ? ? ? ? ?

Matthew 23:5 (NASB)

(5) **“But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; ...**

Today, in the case of the Modern Messianic Movement, could it also possibly be due to a sub-conscious fear? Since most, of those who were originally involved in the development of the Modern Messianic Movement started out in the Gentile-Church. Could it be that they still have a remnant of the historic fear among the Churches (who support and have influence with most, if not all, of the Messianic Congregations and Ministries) that if the Modern Messianic Movement becomes truly Observant, it will no longer be a part of the Church. It will have returned to a truer form of, not only, pre-Talmudic Messianic-Judaism but they will have also have returned to The Original Form of Christianity. If this is so, the terrifying thing about this for them is that it would make it so much more clear and obvious that Gentile-Christianity, as espoused by the Church for around 2,000 years, was based on a huge **ERROR?** This generates a fear sometimes conscious but more often sub-conscious that they would eventually have to admit to themselves, that they have been clinging to a counterfeit form of Christianity, since their very beginning? Though some bits and pieces of the Christian theology, which they espouse, may well be correct, that becomes the very

thing that helps put the sugar coating on the rest of the Errors; thus, making it a more convincing and palatable Hellenized Counterfeit.

A quick review will show how early this difference between the Gentile-Christians and the Jewish or Judaeo-Christians had become firmly established. We can see that even at the time of St. Jerome who lived more than 1600 years ago it was already firmly established.

St. Jerome was born in Stridon in 347. He went to Rome as a student where he learned Latin and studied Christian Theology. He later made a revision of the Latin Bible, based on the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament and the Septuagint, translating much of what became the Latin Vulgate. Jerome died in 420 near Bethlehem.

During the late fourth and early fifth centuries Jerome had decided to spend the later part of his life in and around the Holy Land. During this time (if not before) he came in contact with many of the Judaeo-Christians of the region. Jerome noted that the religion practiced by these Judaeo-Christians was dramatically different from the Gentile-Christianity which he and the rest of those in the Roman Empire practiced!

Probably one of the most concise and short assessments of this difference was made in a single short comment about the Judaeo-Christians. Referring to Judaeo-Christians, Jerome said:

“Being both Jewish and Christian, they are neither Jewish nor Christian!”

The basic difference in the Judaeo-Christian Theology and Gentile-Christian Theology can be seen in the New Testament BOOK OF ACTS. In how the Judaeo-Christians viewed the **Commandments and Laws of God**, versus how the Gentile-Christians would later view them.

Acts 21:20 (NASB)

(20) ... “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for THE LAW; ...”

For many years after the Crucifixion of JESUS, those who had been taught by JESUS, in person, for years during JESUS’s ministry, were still keeping the LAWS OF GOD that applied to them! Also, *don’t forget*, the New Testament shows that JESUS had appeared to many, if not most, of these people in Acts 21:20 after His Resurrection; teaching and instructing them on how to proceed in the Faith.

Yet today most, if not all, of Gentile-Christianity claims that JESUS did away with **THE LAW** and instituted “**Grace**” as the only means for the True Believer to become saved and receive ETERNAL LIFE!

However, *as was previously pointed out*, many if not most of these believers in Jerusalem, mentioned in the BOOK OF ACTS, had the privilege of being taught by THE MESSIAH, face to face, during His earthly ministry. As well as having had the advantage, and the blessing, of having JESUS appear to them after His Resurrection, to explain what all of this meant and how to properly worship God as a True Believer in Jesus (Yeshua)! These Believers in the book of Acts **never** refrained from offering Animal Sacrifices while there was still a Temple nor did they stop adhering to any of the LAWS OF GOD, which applied to them individually!

The question is: “Were these Judaeo-Christians *wrong* to follow JESUS and worship GOD in the manner that He, JESUS, taught them to worship?”

Or, NOT?

Most people believe that after JESUS’S - DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION - that the Animal Sacrifices stopped. Or at least they think, the Disciples and the other followers of Jesus quit engaging in them. By the day of Pentecost (when most believed the Church began) the practice of offering Animal Sacrifices were no longer being practiced by the followers of Jesus. At least that is what most Christians believe. Most Christians believe, Animal Sacrifices were now finished, and to continue them would be improper.

The question is now, are they correct? After Pentecost did the followers of Jesus quit keeping the LAWS OF GOD? Did they believe that Jesus, by fulfilling the LAW, had somehow abolished GOD’S LAWS or at least had done away with their obligations to keep them? Did they sincerely believe, that because of the DEATH OF JESUS ON THE CROSS, the need for Animal Sacrifice was abolished and/or done away with?

If so, wouldn’t the New Testament show this? Or does it indicate something very different? As strange as it may sound to most Christians it actually does not assert this. On the contrary, it shows that the New Testament believers were still offering Animal Sacrifices and keeping the rest of the LAWS OF GOD (sometimes called the Law of Moses, because God transmitted them through him). As we will see, some 18 to 20 years after the Crucifixion of Jesus, those who had been taught by Jesus in person for years during Jesus’s ministry, were still keeping the LAWS OF GOD and offering Animal Sacrifices, which are part of the LAWS OF GOD. Jesus had appeared to many of these people after His Resurrection to teach and instruct them how to continue on in The Faith. Following His guidance, they were still keeping the LAWS OF GOD and offering Animal Sacrifices! However, some had been spreading lies about Paul, saying that Paul was telling the Children of Israel who were living among the Gentiles, to no longer keep GOD’S LAWS!

Acts 21:23-24 (NASB)

(23) “Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow;
(24) take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses in order that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the LAW.

We see that Paul had earlier also taken a similar vow, as these four men had.

Acts 18:18

(NIV)
(18) ... Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because of a vow he had taken.

(NASB)
(18) ... In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow.

Paul is either starting the vow or he has accidentally been defiled and is renewing or restarting the vow! In Numbers 6:2-21 you will see the Nazarite vow is set forth and it is

required to shave ones hair in order to start the renewal processes of the vow. As we see in the latter portion of this quote, Animal Sacrifices are required to complete the vow. Paul is there to offer the appropriate Animal Sacrifices for himself, to fulfill his vow. And he is encouraged to also pay for, four others to complete their vows as well (apparently by purchasing the needed Animals, for the Sacrifices, which the others needed to complete their vows).

So here we have Paul along with the four others, which he was helping financially, are all in the Temple and in the process of offering the appropriate Animal Sacrifices. In the middle of all of this, Paul is arrested and eventually he is shipped off to Rome.

As was pointed out earlier, many if not most of the believers in Jerusalem had the privilege of being taught by Jesus, face to face, during His earthly ministry. As well as having had the advantage and the blessing of having Jesus appear to them after His Resurrection, to explain what all of this meant and how to proceed in The Faith. These believers never stopped keeping the LAWS OF GOD or refrained from offering Animal Sacrifices!

Acts 21:20 (NASB)

(20) ... “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for THE LAW; ...”

Since the vast majority of today’s Christians are sincere, and believe in what ever their denomination teaches, many Christians have in recent times been convinced that expressing Jewish-Culture in a Messianic-Congregation is fine. As long as these Messianic-Believers understand that THE LAW is not applicable or valid for people today, who wish to serve God (whether Gentile or Jewish). As was pointed out earlier; it seems that one of their foundational fears is a (sub-conscious or conscious) terror that if THE LAW was not abolished and done away with, then the Gentile-Church would have been built on a **LIE**. Not only would they have to deal with the thought of all the historical wasted time and effort put into espousing their foundational false beliefs. But even more terrifying is what that would mean for them when they stand before God. Obviously, there cannot be two right sides of this issue, one must be right and therefore one must be wrong. Since they have been evangelizing and witnessing their Hellenized message throughout the entire world for 2000 years, how can any of them now admit to themselves that they were all wrong? They would not want to think about all the millions of people they had also led down that same WIDE path?

Luke 13:23-24 (NASB)

(23) **And someone said to Him, “LORD, are there just a few who are being saved?”**
 (24) **“Strive to enter by the narrow door; for MANY, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.”**

Matthew 7:13-14 (NASB)

(13) **“Enter by the NARROW gate; for the gate is **WIDE**, and the way is **BROAD** that leads to DESTRUCTION, and MANY are those who enter by it.”**

(14) "For the gate is small, and the way is **NARROW** that leads to **life**, and **FEW** are those who find it!"

Matthew 7:21-23 (NASB)

- (21) "Not everyone who says to Me, '**Lord, Lord,**' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."
- (22) "Many will say to Me on that day, '**Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?**'"
- (23) "And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you, DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.**'"

Even though the Modern Messianic Movement has been manipulated far more than most of its followers could have ever imagined. There are those few individuals who have come to realize that something was just not quite right. At first glance, it looked like it might be something closer to The Original Jewish-Christianity. But the more they experienced the underlying theology with its "wishy-washy" observance at best, the more they became convinced that something was rotten and it was not in Denmark. As usual, these are the ones who put serving the God of the Bible FIRST, and seeking HIS truth, not man's manipulation of the truth. After a while many of them would become so uncomfortable, they could not justify remaining part of most (but not all) of these Modern Messianic Congregations. Many times they do not fully understand why they cannot stay; they simply know something just is not right.

Occasionally something might occur that would be the final straw, the one that broke that old camel's back. Often that straw would generate conflict. Which would generate anywhere from a somewhat mild to a very intense dispute with the heads of the Congregation. Sometimes, there would be declarations as to why that individual, or family, was choosing not to stay, and that would on occasion result in a split in the Congregation; with the leaders of the Congregation declaring, those who questioned them, to be nothing but divisive troublemakers.

In other cases, when these more observant individuals had simply sought to encourage the Congregation to become a little more of a Torah Observant body, the leadership would 'Excommunicate' them, so to speak. Yes, those who had actually dared to point out certain scriptures were accused of subverting the Minister's leadership and were removed from the Congregation. Even going so far in one instance as to declare to such individuals, emphatically: "We are telling you to leave and **NEVER** come back!"

Hopefully many of those who are involved in the Modern Messianic Movement will, in time, grow in their depth of desire to be in a more obedient relationship with their Creator. In doing so, may they finally see the light and begin to transform their own local Congregations into one that seeks to be more reflective of the ORIGINAL Obedient and Observant one. The One to which Jesus (Yeshua) had returned to after His Resurrection and taught them (The New Testament Believers) how to carry on! He reinforced their Theology and Observance in Person! Their

descendants both physically and theologically continued to follow the instruction given to them both before and after The Resurrection by Jesus (Yeshua) in Person! They were the ones who were referred to as the Second Type of Jewish-Christians earlier in this booklet.

With God's help, perhaps the Modern Messianic Movement will transform itself into a truly Torah Observant Messianic Movement. Though in many cases there will be a need to replace the Congregational leadership. In doing so, they will most likely lose the support of most of the Gentile-Church.

May all of those who are truly sincere, gain the courage and strength to endure the ensuing disapproval and vigorous attacks of the **"Hellenizers"**! Which will, no doubt, once again come their way; for surely they will be swiftly attacked and accused of having become those dreaded **"Judaizers"** of the past, and they will be considered by most, as having become Apostate Heretics?

But if their hearts have truly turned to God, with **ALL THEIR MIGHT**, the result will transform them into a Congregation of Torah Observant Messianic Individuals! Then the slanders should not matter much at all. Actually, in many cases, that which is intended as slander will end up being worn as a badge of honor!

Who was it that said?

"If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you!"