



## **SPIRITUAL DECEPTION MATTERS LIBRARY**

### **HEBREW-CHRISTIANS**

#### **A. Definition**

They are Christians who do not practice Judaism. Jews who have accepted the notion that Jesus is their savior have accepted another religion and have removed themselves from the Jewish communal fold. Most Jews who have converted to Christianity understand this significant change.

There are those who call themselves a variety of names such as: Hebrew-Christians, Messianic Jews, Completed Jews, and Fulfilled Jews. They falsely claim to be part of the Jewish community. SDM uses the term Hebrew-Christians. This appellation emphasizes the Christian and non-Jewish nature of this movement. Hebrew-Christians hold traditional Evangelical Christian beliefs.

#### **B. Background**

It is extremely disconcerting to us that the conversion of the Jewish community has been, and continues to be, the focus and fulfillment of the spiritual needs of millions of people. For centuries, attempts have been made to convert the Jewish people to Christianity. In the past, these efforts have resulted in the Crusades, the Talmud Trials, and the hostile acts which insisted on conversion at the pain of death in numerous countries in Europe. The Jewish community has always resisted these attempts at forcible conversion.

However, those seeking to convert Jews to Christianity have changed their tactics in recent decades. Rather than force Jews to live as Christians, the Hebrew-Christian movement has created a religious setting that supposedly allows – and even encourages – Jews to retain their Jewish identities while at the same time embracing Jesus. In short, they have redefined Jewish custom and practice, and joined them to the beliefs of Christian fundamentalism, thus corrupting true Jewish belief. Their tactics are subtle and insidious.

### C. Who Are They?

There are more than 600 Christian missions targeting the Jewish people. More than \$150 million a year is allocated by various Evangelical and fundamental Christian groups, including the Lutheran/Missouri Synod, Intervarsity and the Campus Crusade for Christ. This situation has been exacerbated by the public announcement of the Southern Baptist Convention. Hebrew-Christians are in reality members of the Evangelical Christian community. Moody Bible College in Chicago grants an accredited B.A. in Jewish Evangelism (i.e., how to missionize Jews).

### D. What Do They Believe?

Every Hebrew-Christian holds the following beliefs which are common to the Evangelical Christian community:

- Every human is sinful and separate from God.
- Jesus was the Messiah promised to the prophets.
- Jesus died for each individual's sins.
- The only way to become accepted by God is through the confession of sins, and the acceptance of the belief that Jesus died for the individual and is the Messiah.
- Failure to find God's acceptance results in eternal separation from God and punishment in Hell.
- It is the responsibility of every Christian to spread this message and to actively encourage conversion.
- Jesus will return (Second Coming) to usher in the final messianic era.

### E. Principal Missionary Organizations

- **Apple of His Eye Ministry** - Founded by the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church. It is active in different parts of NYC.
- **Assemblies of God** - This is one of the largest Christian denominations in the world. Through its Board of Home Missions, it has established approximately 40 churches which utilize Jewish motifs in their services for the express purposes of enticing vulnerable Jews. The tactics and rationale for the Assemblies of God's outreach is explained in their video, *Twice Chosen*, designed to raise funds from church members for the conversion of Jews.
- **Chosen People Ministries** - This is the successor organization of the oldest missionary group in the United States, the American Board of Missions to the Jews. Started in North Carolina, it is developing a global network of missionary projects and has opened a center in Flatbush, Brooklyn, NY.
- **Hope of Israel** - This was established to entice recent Soviet immigrants through ESL programs, summer camp programs and Sabbath programs.
- **Jews for Jesus** - This group is the best known and most public of the Hebrew-Christian groups. It was founded in 1973 by the Rev. Martin (Moishe) Rosen, a Jew who underwent conversion and was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1956. In addition to its many programs, it spends millions of dollars a year in

aggressive advertising billboards, full-page newspaper ads, transportation centers, college campuses, and in major immigrant communities. It also has a musical group, *The Liberated Wailing Wall*.

- **Messianic Jewish Alliance of America** - This was founded in Philadelphia by Rev. Joel Chertoff. Each year it sponsors conferences which are the largest national gatherings of Hebrew-Christians. They have a Hebrew Christian rock and folk group, *Kol Simcha*.
- **Messianic Jewish Movement International (MJMI)** - This was founded by Rev. Manny Brotman. The MJMI pioneered many of the deceptive tactics discussed in our manual. The first Hebrew-Christian "synagogue" was established in Washington, DC in 1974 under the spiritual leadership of "Rabbi" Brotman.
- **In Search of Shalom.com** – A web-based organization which features stories of individuals in search of peace. It presents itself as "a secure and anonymous way to have a live conversation with a real person from any place and at any time about faith."

#### **F. What are Hebrew-Christian Misrepresentations?**

The Hebrew-Christian movement has been creating pseudo-Jewish structures for the purpose of making Jews more comfortable. They have established Messianic "synagogues", a youth movement, religious schools, day care centers and yeshivas. They have "ketubot" (wedding certificates) and use certificates of "Mikveh" instead of the Christian Baptismal certificate. There are several Christian or Hebrew-Christian divinity schools that ordain messianic "rabbis" and "cantors."

If you enter a typical Hebrew-Christian religious establishment, the traditional Christian symbols will be totally absent. A Cross is not visible and the name of Jesus will not be mentioned, only the Hebrew equivalent, Yeshua. The congregational leader will call himself "Rabbi". Kiddush will be chanted, Kaddish recited and Shabbat candles lit. Christmas and Easter are not celebrated. Instead Hebrew-Christians have co-opted the Jewish holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Hanukah and Passover. They misuse the themes of these holidays to support their claim that Jesus is the fulfillment of Jewish life.

#### **What are examples of Hebrew-Christian misappropriation of Jewish ideas and symbols?**

Q: Why do we break a Matzoh on Passover?

A: Because his [Jesus'] body was broken.

Q: Why do we divide the middle matzoh into two parts and hide some of it until the end of the seder?

A: Because his face was hidden from us.

Q: Why do we eat the afikomen at the end of the seder?

A: Because he will come to us again.

## G. Who Is Most At Risk?

- **Teens and Young Adults** - Teens are engaged through contemporary music, free concerts, open dances and coffee houses. They are enlisted in people's homes, in schools or in places of worship and on the street by other teens or trained missionaries. Young adults are engaged basically in the same ways as well as at work, at the gym, and in social settings.
- **Seniors** - Seniors are visited in hospitals or nursing homes and are entertained and engaged by volunteers at publicly supported senior programs. Meals, companionship and a sense of being part of a caring community are attractive to this group. Seniors are also promised their children will be cared for, if they fill out a will donating their assets to the Hebrew-Christian organization.
- **Children with Special Needs** - The National Jewish Adoption Network indicates many Hebrew-Christian families are adopting children who are deaf, handicapped or who have Down's Syndrome in order to "bring them closer to Y'shua [Jesus]."
- **Russian Jews** - The Hebrew-Christian movement has made considerable inroads with its evangelical crusade for Jewish souls in the Former Soviet Union as well as targeting Russian Jews in Israel and North America. Contact is made through ESL (English as a Second Language) courses, financial aid programs, and friendship groups. A number of North American evangelical organizations have opened full-time branches and are sponsoring missionary pilgrimages and Hebrew-Christian Outreach Music Festivals.
- **Israelis** - They are more at risk than most North Americans believe. The absence of options for their religious expression, coupled with the presence of contemporary music as part of the missionaries' religious services, serve to attract secular Israelis searching for a spiritual connection to the Hebrew-Christian groups. There are at least 44 Hebrew-Christian institutions in Israel.