

Think Like a Jew

(Intro Slide) When a Christian mind comes to an understanding of the Name, the Sabbath and the Torah, an enormous transition takes place. The Greco-Roman mindset gradually dissipates and a Hebraic mindset emerges. This is often a frightening and yet wonderful experience that carries with it highs and lows.

The highs come from the freshness of the revelation that begin to flow and the lows usually from the failure of old friends and acquaintances to share in these same blessings. What was once a haven of religious freedom of expression becomes a constricting force that eventually causes one to leave their former place of worship and go to a place not yet fully understood. **(Slide)** “Yahweh ... said to Avram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.’” (Genesis 12:1) Every convert goes through the Avrahamic process to a greater or a lesser extent. Yahweh didn't usher Avraham to a life of luxury and paradise, but to a life of uncertainty, disharmony, trials and tests. In the end Avraham didn't even see the full manifestation of the Promise he was given. His blessing would outlive him and his sons. Right up to the very end, Elohim commanded Avraham to remove a portion of his own flesh from a very critical and delicate part of his anatomy. He even finished his life estranged from his wife and buried her.

Even before this, the trauma of having to kill his only son should have been his tipping point. What sane person would leave early to go to a place and kill, disembowel and incinerate his own son?

We often forget to count the cost of the path we have chosen? **(Slide)** “**And whoever does not carry their execution stake and follow me cannot be my Talmid. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish. Or, suppose there is a king who is going to war with another king, doesn't he sit down first and consider whether he can engage the twenty thousand of the other king with his own ten thousand? And if he decides he can't, then, while the other king is still a long way off, he sends messengers to him to ask for conditions of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be My Talmid.”** (Luke 14:27-33)

But isn't his yoke meant to be easy? “**For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.**” (Matthew 11:30) How do we reconcile this? Is it like carrying our own execution stake or is it like carrying a light yoke? Very easily. How do you think Avraham felt after he passed the test of *The Akedah* (The offering up of Yitzach)? He would have felt such triumph at knowing He did the Father's will to the letter. After each successfully navigated peril, regardless of its earthly consequence, nothing in the world supersedes the feeling of knowing beyond

any shadow of a doubt that Yahweh is with you 100% and He is pleased with you. The burden one feels when he knows he failed, because he lacked trust, especially near the end of his life, when his body is failing him and he can't change the past, is heavy. Years of basking in one's wealth and success means nothing when one realises he is going with nothing to the next world. That burden is truly heavy.

So many pursue the path of least resistance, forgetting that nothing beautiful is born without toil. The prosperity doctrine collapses if we were to ask the following people the six-million-dollar question. Is this walk simply a meal ticket to a good life? If we ask Noach if his life was easy, what do you think he'd say? I think he'd say no! It wasn't easy, but it was worth every effort in the end, because the path I chose saved the whole world. Ask Sha'ul HaMelech if his life was easy, ask Shmu'el (Samuel) if his life was easy, in fact ask any prophet of Israel if their lives were easy. Ask David HaMelech, ask Shlomo HaMelech, ask Esther, ask everyone of Yahshua's very own talmidim if their lives were easy. Were Yahshua's parents lives easy? What about Ya'akov HaTzadik (James the just)? What about Sha'ul (the Apostle Paul)? He was denied sleep, starved, beaten with rods, stoned, flogged, shipwrecked, imprisoned and threatened by bandits, his own countrymen, Gentiles and even fellow Netzarim.

What got everyone of these righteous men through? The martyr Stephen would almost certainly answer, trust! And he'd be right! But how is that trust correctly arrived at?

Knowing the religion and nationality of King Messiah Yahshua is the key to understanding him in his most accurate context. It's about stepping into the mind of a Jew and listening to his words within a purely Hebraic framework.

Did Yahshua himself think his own countrymen were a lost cause? Let's see. **(Slide) "You Samaritans (in other words you foreigners) worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews." (John 4:22)** And when he said, **"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20)** And when he said, **"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moshe's seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you..." (Matthew 23:2-3a)**

Did he consider the Pharisees and the Scribes of the Torah a lost cause? His harsh language and rebukes toward them testify alone to the answer being a resounding no!" **"Do not speak to fools, for they will scorn your prudent words." (Proverbs 23:9) "Do not rebuke mockers or they will hate you; rebuke the wise and they will love you." (Proverbs 9:8)** Yahshua and Yochannan used their harshest language against the Pharisees. Yahshua accused them of hypocrisy and pretentiousness, and pronounced upon them a succession of woes (seven in all) culminating in this terrible, climactic statement: **"Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of**

your fathers' guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?" (Matthew 23:31-33)

It's interesting to note that the most standout or righteous members among the Pharisees carried views toward Yahshua and his talmidim that ranged from optimism to full-blown support.

(Slide) The great Sage Gamaliel said this to his fellow Jews about the Netzarim: "Leave these men alone! Let them go! (Acts 5:38)" **(Click)** And Nicodemus said to Yahshua, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from Elohim... (John 3:2)" **(Click)** And Joseph of Arimathea a "...prominent member of the (Sanhedrin) Council... (who) went boldly to Pilate and asked for Yahshua's body...And being granted it bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in linen, and placed it in a tomb. (Mark 15:43,46)"

(Click) And Sha'ul himself maintained his identity as a Pharisee when he declared, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. (Acts 23:6)" And well that he should because this word, *Perushim* in Hebrew meant, "Holiness Ones."

What would Sha'ul say about the Jews, his fellow countrymen? **(Slide)** "What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of Elohim." (Romans 3:1-2)

"Has Elohim cast away his people? Elohim forbid...Elohim has not cast away his people which he foreknew" (Romans 11:1-2).

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to Elohim for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Romans 10:1). He further testified, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Romans 9:2-3).

Sha'ul like the Prophet Yonah was willing to die and be forsaken if it would mean that all Israel would be saved. Yonah avoided Nineveh, because he knew the Ninevite's t'shuvah would eclipse the conduct of his brethren at that time.

Avraham's son Yitzchak was willing to give up his own life if it meant Yahweh would accept his descendants even though that in the natural there would be none if he was to be killed.

Moshe carried the same conviction. He himself was willing to have his own name erased from the Torah if all Israel would be saved. **(Slide)** "But now, please forgive their sin--but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written." (Exodus 32:32)

Queen Esther felt the same way, risking her own life if it meant that all the Jews would be saved.

And King Messiah Yahshua himself perfected this mindset, this desire to sacrifice himself so that many would be saved. **“There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.” (John 15:13)** The correct mindset of anyone, whether he came from the Gentiles or from the Jews is to have a heart for the salvation of others over themselves. This is the correct and rightly divided mindset of a true Jew.

It's the mindset of the first Hebrew, Avraham, who's kindness and selflessness knew no bounds. No other individual in history would eclipse the enormity of this man's standout traits except of course the Messiah. From the beginning and traced through the path of the remnant to the very end is the trait of sacrificial, I would die for you love, that is the hallmark of Jewish thinking, which completely aligns with Messiah's thinking. There is no distinction! But we are assured that not all Jews would be lost. There has always been an unsevered line of righteous Jews existing in some part of the world! How do I know that? Because the earth hasn't yet spun off its axis and exploded into dust. But more than that. The Word says, **“In the same way also at this time there is a remnant left in The Election of kindness.” (Romans 11:5)** Whenever Jews get slaughtered en-mass the world hovers close to destruction.

For too long we've painted the Jews with the same tarred brush. Sure, there were detractors. The Word said that Messiah would come to his own and they would reject Him. **“He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.” (John 1:11)**

Does rejection of Messiah by Jews or anyone else not nullify his power. Not in the least. “What if some were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness nullify Elohim's faithfulness? Not at all! Let Elohim be true, and every human being a liar.” (Romans 3:3-4a)

When is the Ger T'shav going to realise that the authors of the Bible were recruited from an exclusively Jewish genepool! When are we going to realise it was by their blood being spilled that the Torah made it from Sinai to here?

Enmity still divides us and it robs us of perfect vision. The jealousy and rivalry over both houses causes both houses (Israel and Yehuda) to have their share of stumbling.

Too often comes up the cry, ‘Why is the term “Jews” used in many Orthodox publications and not “Israel”?’ The answer is that the term Jews or Yahudim is a retrospective term, given to the dominant tribe that despite its sins maintained the working of the Torah while all others abandoned it. This is why Jews use the term “Jew” instead of “Israel” in many places where they had not yet been divided from their brethren, because of the Northern Tribes desertion under Yereboam.

Is the term Jew considered a redundant one in this era of returning lost sheep? Not at all? Why is that? Well there is an interesting verse in The Book of Revelation that says, **(Slide) “I will make those who are of the synagogue of HaSatan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars--I will**

make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.” (Revelation 3:9) Now many read this verse and wrongly equate synagogues with being dens of wickedness and in so doing, they overlook an amazing declaration in this passage. Why would the so-called New Testament care who is a real Jew and who isn't if the term Jew is now redundant? The term “Jew” became an overarching title when this royal tribe remained in Yehudah with Benjamin and the tribe of Levi, while the Northern Tribes adopted the collective name Yisrael and left. Sure the Ten Northern Tribes grievances against Shlomo HaMelek (King Solomon) were valid, but a full departure and the setting up of a competing faith was over the top.

In a time to come both factions will reunite as brothers and the progeny names of all the Tribes will be restored. Nothing that was elaborately set up by the Almighty will be lost forever. In fact, the scattering, which began as a curse will end as a blessing as all nations will host a remnant to the very four corners of the world so the ingathering may be proclaimed to all.

This is may wish! That this congregation not join in the mindset that we are better than the Jews because of our faith in Messiah. But rather show them love and work on our on righteousness, knowing that without it will not even assure our salvation.

I'll ask you this question: You walk into any given Orthodox Synagogue in NSWs and watch those in attendance and then come to Netzarim Antoecie and see those in attendance here and then ask yourself who looks more serious about their religion. I tell you it will be any other Synagogue every time. Most Nazarene shuls have less punctuality and consistency of attendance than members in outlaw motorcycle clubs. You don't dare to miss or call in late to a clubhouse meeting at the Gypsy Jokers or the Comancheros.

What do we have to do?

(Slide) “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.” (John 15:12-13) When we internalise this love we want to always be doing our very best. The true Jewish mindset is to have a heart for others over ourselves. To think like a true Jew is to think of the wellbeing of our neighbour over our own.

Don't polarize Yahshua from his forerunners. They, though being nothing more than ordinary men and women, all participated in mankind's salvation, though it was orchestrated by Yahweh.

Did Avraham leave his home for his own benefit? No, he left to save the world and he surely did, just like you.

End of Lecture One