

# **The Story of The King’s University’s *One New Man—To the Jew First* Vision**

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In the 1970s, the Lord poured out His Spirit on Israel and a large number of Jewish people, mostly in their twenties, became believers in Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Rather than assimilating into Gentile churches, these “Messianic Jews” wanted to identify as Jews, live as Jews, lift up the name of Yeshua (Jesus) within their local Jewish communities, and they established Messianic Jewish congregations to make this possible. Within a decade, Messianic Judaism went from being a blip on the North American religious scene to being a vibrant grassroots movement fueled by a new generation of Jewish believers.<sup>2</sup>

It was during this time that Pastor Jack Hayford began leading The Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California. The Jesus Movement was in full swing and hundreds of Jewish followers of Jesus began attending Pastor Jack’s church. In addition to teaching in a way that affirmed Jesus-believing Jews, as Jews, at The Church on the Way, Pastor Jack backed the planting of Messianic synagogues in Los Angeles.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Ray Gannon, who established one of these synagogues, remembers Pastor Jack’s staunch support for the growing Messianic community:

The Church on the Way was just taking off when we started doing Jewish evangelism in greater Los Angeles. About half of the Jewish people we disciplined were culturally comfortable to attend churches. For the balance we provided Messianic synagogues to meet their spiritual, cultural and social needs. Many of our Beth Emanuel regulars in our chain of multiplied Jewish home Bible studies across Los Angeles attended The Church on the Way, particularly before we moved into the synagogue model (November 1973). Jack was always supportive of me and the Jewish expression of our commonly shared Jewish saints...He was very happy to have many hundreds of Jewish believers in his church but always was supportive of our Temple Beth Emanuel Messianic Synagogue located just 5 miles away. When I introduced Jack as a speaker for the (Mike Evans) Shechinah 1976 conference at USC, I introduced him as the man with the largest Jewish ministry in America. At that time some thought perhaps 500-1000 Jewish people visited

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from David Rudolph, “Count Zinzendorf, Pastor Jack, and Messianic Jewish Revival,” in *The Pastor & the Kingdom: Essays Honoring Jack W. Hayford*, ed. Jon Huntzinger and S. David Moore (Southlake: Gateway Academic and TKU Press, 2018), 92-116.

<sup>2</sup> The Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) was formed in 1979 with nineteen member congregations, and the International Alliance of Messianic Congregations and Synagogues (IAMCS) followed in 1986 with fifteen member congregations. In 2021, these two umbrella organizations represent more than 200 Messianic synagogues. There are an additional 300+ congregations around the world that are independent or linked to smaller Messianic Jewish networks. See David Rudolph, “Messianic Judaism in Antiquity and in the Modern Era,” in *Introduction to Messianic Judaism: Its Ecclesial Context and Biblical Foundations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 30-31.

<sup>3</sup> See S. David Moore, *Pastor Jack: The Authorized Biography of Jack Hayford* (Colorado Springs: David C Cook, 2020), 23, 255-60, 283-84.

his congregation each week...Ari and Shira Sorko-Ram had met at The Church on the Way...David Stern likewise attended Jack's teachings at The Church on the Way in those early days until he finished Fuller (MDiv) and went to work with Jews for Jesus...Jack has been nothing but a great friend to Jewish ministry in all the 45 years I have known him.<sup>4</sup>

Why did Pastor Jack become a champion of the Jewish people and the Messianic Jewish community in particular? He addresses this question in his essay "Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity," published in *Unity: Awakening the One New Man* (a volume representing a collaboration of Gentile Christians and Messianic Jews).<sup>5</sup> Here Pastor Jack offers three insights that contributed to his "approach in partnering with" Messianic Jews:<sup>6</sup> (1) Gentile believers have a primary mission to love, affirm, and stand with the Jewish people; (2) The Church needs to embrace Messianic Jews in order to become *One New Man*; and (3) One must be awakened by the Holy Spirit to these spiritual truths.

### **A Primary Mission to the Jewish People**

The Church on the Way was situated in an area where almost half a million Jewish people lived. Consequently, many Jewish people visited the Church and Pastor Jack invited them to "open their hearts" to Jesus the Messiah:

Among the 75,000 decisions made for Christ at The Church on the Way, I know that hundreds have been made by Jews...It might be a surprise to learn that during those years, I never asked anyone to "become a Christian" when I gave an invitation. I never said I wasn't asking that; I think most Gentile Christians presume that was what I was doing because they know I am not ashamed to be called that. The reason I didn't use those words was because I knew that there were always Jews who came to our church—they might be brought by people with whom they work, or by other Jews, perhaps relatives. In the Jewish mindset, "becoming a Christian" means something it doesn't mean to the average Gentile. While for Gentiles, it is an issue of faith, to a Jew, it can seem to be an issue of sacrificing one's individuality, heritage, and ethnicity.<sup>7</sup>

Pastor Jack developed a profound sense of mission to love and care for the Jewish people in this setting where he pastored hundreds of Jews.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, during the course of this Jew-Gentile ministry at The Church on the Way, he came to a growing awareness that Jewish people were in a unique covenant relationship with the God of Israel that required affirmation by the Gentile Christian world, "The heart of God is clearly committed to all peoples, but there is a distinct

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<sup>4</sup> From personal correspondence with Ray Gannon, 10 May 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Jack Hayford, "Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity," in *Unity: Awakening the One New Man* (ed. Robert F. Wolff and Don Enevoldsen; Chambersburg: Drawbaugh, 2011), 17-32.

<sup>6</sup> Hayford, "Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity," 20.

<sup>7</sup> Jack Hayford, "Ready for the Wedding" (2014), 1. Online: <https://www.jackhayford.org>.

<sup>8</sup> Jack Hayford, "Seeing Israel and the Jews Through the Eyes of God" (26 April 1995), 11. Online: <https://www.jackhayford.org>.

covenant commitment of His love and purpose for Israel.”<sup>9</sup> In addition to God’s irrevocable covenant with the Jewish people, Pastor Jack understood from Romans 11:17-21 that Gentile believers were dependent on the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Jewish people were the “root system” on which Gentile believers stood:

“And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, ‘Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.’ Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either” (Rom 11:17-21). Verses 17 through 21 of Romans 11 says, in effect: You would be wise, then, as a Gentile believer, to note that your root system comes from the Jews. It would be both foolish and mindless not to acknowledge that there is an accountability in that relationship that holds you dutiful to care, to pray for, and to support them. Not because of their perfection (any more than God has loved you or me because of our perfection), but because it is of a divine order of things.<sup>10</sup>

For these reasons, Pastor Jack came to regard love and care for the Jewish people as a “primary mission” of The Church on the Way and [The King’s University](#). This ethic in turn became part of the DNA of these institutions:

I hold *all* Jews in deep respect, no matter what their spiritual convictions may be. My belief is that our primary mission as a local congregation as well as an educational center training leaders for ministry in today’s Church, is to love, affirm, and stand with the Jewish people and Israel...<sup>11</sup>

Pastor Jack asserted for more than forty years that love for the Jewish people should lead to condemning antisemitism of all kinds, including replacement theology:

...some Christians oppose prophetic promises regarding the restoration of national Israel. There is a line of teaching called “Replacement Theology”...Replacement Theology is essentially a theological system that says when the Jew rejected the Messiah at the time of Christ, that God broke covenant forever with Israel, and now His covenant with all mankind is solely through the Church...Replacement Theology holds then that the Church, only the Church, is Israel today.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Jack Hayford, “Understanding God’s Purposes for Israel” (2 July 2000), 1. Online: <https://www.jackhayford.org>; cf. Jack Hayford, “The Jews: God’s Chosen People” (29 April 2001), 3, 6-7. Online: <https://www.jackhayford.org>.

<sup>10</sup> Hayford, “Understanding God’s Purposes for Israel,” 2.

<sup>11</sup> Hayford, “Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity,” 20.

<sup>12</sup> Hayford, “Seeing Israel and the Jews Through the Eyes of God,” 34. Cf. Moore, *Pastor Jack*, 257. Cf. Michael J. Vlach, *The Church as a Replacement of Israel: An Analysis of Supersessionism* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009); R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996). See Online: <https://www.post-supersessionism.com>.

Pastor Jack drew attention to the direct correlation between antisemitism and the growing anti-Zionist movement among Jesus believers today.<sup>13</sup> What is needed, Pastor Jack argued, is sincere repentance, including representative repentance,<sup>14</sup> for the long history of replacement theology and Christian antisemitism that culminated in the Holocaust. Pastor Jack called Gentile Christians to stand on the biblical promises of God’s irrevocable covenant with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and, *ipso facto*, to stand with the nation of Israel:

First, I want to predicate everything that follows by saying that when we speak about our commitment to stand against anti-Semitism and to take a pro-Israel stance, it is not because everything is always done perfectly by the Israeli political or military system. Neither is it because we hold anti-Arab attitudes—we don’t...From the time of Abraham, the land of Israel (*eretz Yisrael* in Hebrew) has been given to the Jews as “an everlasting covenant” (Genesis 17:7-8; 26:3-5; 35:11-15). Deuteronomy 28-30 reveal the conditions of obedience, penalties of disobedience, and promises of forgiveness and restoration regarding the covenant.<sup>15</sup>

Pastor Jack traveled to Israel more than 40 times,<sup>16</sup> leading tour groups, and made a practice of walking through the length and breadth of the land, marked off by four altars of stones that he set up in the north, south, east and west, which serve as symbols of intercession for the nation.<sup>17</sup> He also gave vision and voice to the importance of all followers of Jesus praying for the peace of Jerusalem:

Our prophetic intercession...praying for Israel, was based on this...that the peace of Jerusalem cannot ultimately be found any other way than through prayer, which is why God in His eternal Word has said, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” [Psalm 122:6]. Secondly, that Israel’s return, not only to her land, but to her God, is essential for peace.<sup>18</sup>

As co-chairman of the Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem,<sup>19</sup> Pastor Jack encouraged Christians to take the One Percent Challenge, that is, to devote 1% of each day—14 minutes—to pray for the Jewish people and the state of Israel.<sup>20</sup>

## **The One New Man**

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<sup>13</sup> Hayford, “Seeing Israel and the Jews Through the Eyes of God,” 31-32.

<sup>14</sup> Hayford, “Seeing Israel and the Jews Through the Eyes of God,” 38-39.

<sup>15</sup> Hayford, “Understanding God’s Purposes for Israel,” 1. Cf. Gerald R. McDermott, *Israel Matters: Why Christians Must Think Differently about the People and the Land* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2017); Gerald McDermott, ed., *The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel & the Land* (Downers Grove, IVP Academic, 2016).

<sup>16</sup> Moore, *Pastor Jack*, 257.

<sup>17</sup> Jack Hayford, “A Pilgrimage to Secure Boundaries” (8 January 2003), 18-32. Online: <https://www.jackhayford.org>. Cf. Moore, *Pastor Jack*, 283-84.

<sup>18</sup> Hayford, “A Pilgrimage to Secure Boundaries,” 22, 24. Cf. *Ibid*, 28.

<sup>19</sup> Pastor Jack served on the board of directors of a number of organizations that advocate for the Jewish state, including the Fellowship of Israel Related Ministries (FIRM) and the Israel-Christian Nexus of which he was a co-founder.

<sup>20</sup> Steve Strang, “Jack Hayford Predicts Persecution for Christians Who Stand With Israel,” 7 February 2015. Online: <https://www.charismanews.com>.

A second insight that contributed to Pastor Jack partnering with Messianic Jews was his vision for the *One New Man* made up of Jews and Gentiles in Messiah (Eph 2:11-22). For centuries, Gentile Christians have widely held that the *One New Man* is composed of former Jews and Gentiles.<sup>21</sup> However, Pastor Jack maintained that the *One New Man* reflects a continuing relationship of interdependence and mutual blessing between Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus,<sup>22</sup> the natural and grafted-in branches of the Romans 11 olive tree. *The Church is fully and authentically the One New Man only when it is made up of Jewish and Gentile followers of the Messiah who are affirmed in their respective identities.*<sup>23</sup> This means that Gentile Christian leaders should extend the right hand of fellowship and welcome Messianic Jews:

...every effort should be bent toward helping the whole Body of Christ recognize, embrace, and receive Messianic Jews with understanding...<sup>24</sup>

Pastor Jack modeled this hospitality. As mentioned above, from the 1970s he championed the Messianic movement in the Los Angeles area by supporting Messianic synagogues, and affirming the Jewish identity of hundreds of Jewish believers in Jesus at The Church on the Way. Pastor Jack maintained that Messianic Jews remained part of the covenant calling and destiny of their people, Israel:

Galatians 3:28 says that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. Replacement Theology argues that there is not any distinction anymore...*But in Romans 1:16, there the apostle Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to the Jew first and also to the Greek (or to the Gentile)." There he is dealing with individuality... There is equality, but there is still individuality. You don't lose your ethnicity; the integrity of this distinction is maintained in Scripture.* But many believers, listen, many believers don't know that this debate exists in the Church and some have allowed themselves to believe that Jews are just like everybody else. Well, what is the significance of that? The significance of that posture will be that when God begins to move among the Jews in a unique and distinct way, there won't be any capacity to respond to them in that way because those who regard distinction as lost refuse to recognize that there are covenants and prophecies that are made that have bearing on the Jews, not only as an ethnic people, but as a people of national destiny...<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> "Chrysostom could speak of the 'two' becoming 'one' in ways that appear to eradicate any possibility for distinct Jewish identity. Calvin understood this passage to be teaching that maintaining Jewish ethnic identity was antithetical to the gospel of Christ. The twentieth century saw the rise of 'third race' concepts, involving the claim that Christians form a new 'race' of people in distinction from the 'races' of Jew and gentile. The translators of the RSV (followed by NRSV and ESV) added the phrase [in Eph 2:15] 'in place of the two,' implying that the new humanity is to be understood as a 'replacement' of distinct Jewish and gentile humanity. However, these constitute over-readings of the text in question...although there is a 'new humanity,' there is no reference to the replacement of Israel" (Lionel J. Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians after Supersessionism: Christ's Mission through Israel to the Nations* [Eugene: Cascade, 2017], 143).

<sup>22</sup> Hayford, "Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity," 28.

<sup>23</sup> Hayford, "Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity," 18-19, 28-30. Cf. 1 Cor 7:17-24. See David Rudolph, "Paul's 'Rule in All the Churches' (1 Cor 7:17-24) and Torah-Defined Ecclesiological Variegation," *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* 5 (2010): 1-23.

<sup>24</sup> Hayford, "Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity," 20-21.

<sup>25</sup> Hayford, "Seeing Israel and the Jews Through the Eyes of God" 35-36. Italics mine.

Because of God's ancient and irrevocable covenant with Israel, Pastor Jack regarded Messianic Jews as "elder brothers and sisters" in the Lord whom he sought to "honor," and with whom he sought to "pursue the unity of our fellowship in Yeshua."<sup>26</sup> One of the most far-reaching ways that Pastor Jack championed Jew-Gentile unity was through his support for Toward Jerusalem Council II (TJCII), an initiative to pursue repentance and reconciliation between the Jewish and Gentile wings of the Church:

The vision is that one day there will be a second Council of Jerusalem that will be, in an important respect, the inverse of the first Council described in Acts 15. Whereas the first Council was made up of Jewish believers in Yeshua (Jesus), who decided not to impose on the Gentiles the requirements of the Jewish law, so the second Council would be made up of Gentile church leaders, who would recognize and welcome the Jewish believers in Yeshua without requiring them to abandon their Jewish identity and practice.<sup>27</sup>

Pastor Jack was one of the first to support TJCII. Rabbi Marty Waldman, who had the vision for this initiative, traveled to Israel in March 1995 to seek Pastor Jack's wisdom in the matter. At that time, Pastor Jack was teaching at a Messianic Jewish leadership conference in Jerusalem hosted by Maoz Ministries and sponsored by The Church on the Way with more than 200 Messianic Israeli leaders in attendance.<sup>28</sup> After one of the sessions, Rabbi Marty went up to Pastor Jack and said, "Dr. Hayford, the Lord has given to me, what I believe, could be a very important vision. May I share it with you?" Rabbi Marty recounts, "His response was, 'Let's have lunch tomorrow.' The next day I had lunch with Jack and his wife and presented him with a written copy of the vision. He read it, then turned to me and responded, 'Marty, this is from God.' We talked about it during lunch and he offered his 100 percent endorsement... Jack made that commitment to TJCII even before we had formed a TJCII Executive Committee! I returned from Israel feeling confident that the vision of TJCII was indeed a vision from the LORD."<sup>29</sup>

Pastor Jack was the opening speaker for the first TJCII consultation in 2003. In 2009, through Pastor Jack's leadership as President of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (which represents globally more than 66,000 churches [including a number of Messianic Jewish congregations]<sup>30</sup> in 140+ countries),<sup>31</sup> ICFG became the first larger denomination to

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<sup>26</sup> Hayford, "Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity," 32.

<sup>27</sup> Toward Jerusalem Council II, "Who We Are." Online: <https://tjcii.org/about-us>. See also Peter Hocken, *The Challenges of the Pentecostal, Charismatic and Messianic Movements: The Tensions of the Spirit* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 111-12; Peter Hocken, *Azusa, Rome, and Zion: Pentecostal Faith, Catholic Reform, and Jewish Roots* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2016), 133-61, 199; Daniel C. Juster, "Messianic Gentiles and the Gentile Christian World," in *Introduction to Messianic Judaism*, 139-42.

<sup>28</sup> "... our congregation made a gift of in excess of \$25,000 to assist in making possible that conference that occurred in the middle of March, just a little over a month ago. So you prayed and you gave, and we gave the report last week" (Hayford, "Seeing Israel and the Jews Through the Eyes of God," 7). Cf. *Ibid.*, 5, 19-20.

<sup>29</sup> *Toward Jerusalem Council II: Vision, Origin and Documents* (TJCII, 2010). A month later, Pastor Jack referred to Rabbi Marty and his vision in his teaching "Seeing Israel and the Jews Through the Eyes of God," 19-20. Cf. Moore, *Pastor Jack*, 259.

<sup>30</sup> The denomination also has an association for leaders of Foursquare Messianic congregations, "The Foursquare Rabbis Caucus is the voice of the Messianic Movement within the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. Our mission is to encourage and network messianic leaders and congregations. We facilitate teaching the Jewish roots of Christianity and God's heart for Israel and the Church. Our desire is to expand the awareness of the Jewish Messiah in the world today" (<https://foursquaremessianic.wixsite.com/frchome>).

<sup>31</sup> See <https://www.foursquare.org>.

endorse the TJCII “Seven Affirmations” statement. This document declares:

Consistent with the principle established in the original Jerusalem Council of Acts Chapter 15 regarding respect for diversity in the Body of Christ concerning Jewish and Gentile identity, we do make the following affirmations:

- (1) We affirm the election of Israel, its irrevocable nature and God’s unfinished work with the Jewish people regarding salvation and the role of Israel as a blessing to the nations.
- (2) We affirm that Jews who come to faith in the Messiah, Jesus, are called to retain their Jewish identity and live as part of their people in ways consistent with the New Covenant.
- (3) We affirm the formation of Messianic Jewish congregations as a significant and effective way to express Jewish collective identity (in Jesus) and as a means of witnessing to Jesus before the Jewish community. We also affirm Jewish individuals and groups that are part of churches and encourage them in their commitment to Jewish life and identity.
- (4) We affirm our willingness as an ecclesiastical body to build bridges to the Messianic Jewish community; to extend the hand of friendship and to pray for their growth and vitality.
- (5) We affirm our willingness to share our resources with Messianic Jewish congregations, mission organizations and theological training institutes so as to empower them to fulfill their God-given purpose.
- (6) We affirm our willingness to be a voice within our own ecclesiastical structures and spheres of influence against all forms of anti-Semitism, replacement theology (supersessionism) and teaching that precludes the expression of Jewish identity in Jesus.
- (7) *Finally, we affirm that as Jewish and Gentile expressions of life in Jesus grow organically side by side with distinct identities that God will be glorified; that the Kingdom of Heaven will be advanced and that the vision of “the one new man” in Ephesians 2 will unfold as part of the original Abrahamic blessing to the nations.*<sup>32</sup>

Pastor Jack also spoke at reconciliation conferences where church leaders focused on healing the schism between Messianic Jews and Gentile Christians through representative repentance.<sup>33</sup> He also played a key role in the development of a Messianic Jewish Bible translation through his endorsement of the Tree of Life Version (TLV). The King’s University is a Founding University Sponsor of the version, and Jack Hayford Ministries hosted a TLV Bible Conference at TKU in 2015 that addressed Messianic Jewish translation issues. At a special chapel where the TLV was introduced, Rabbi Mark Greenberg, Chairman of the Board of the TLV, expressed the sentiment of many Messianic Jewish leaders when he thanked Pastor Jack for his decades long commitment to mentoring leaders in the Messianic community and for his support for the TLV:

The King’s University has chosen to stand with the Messianic remnant of Israel to help complete this Bible translation out of our loving bond in Yeshua. The King’s University chancellor, Pastor Jack, has been a spiritual father to many key Messianic Jewish leaders throughout the development of the Messianic Jewish movement. We are going back thirty years or more. His personal commitment to nurture Messianic leaders has been international in scope and multigenerational. Pastor Jack and The King’s University have

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<sup>32</sup> Online: <https://www.tjcii.org/#affirmations>. Italics mine.

<sup>33</sup> Hayford, “Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity,” 32

modeled divine service in their love and support for all Israel, and have established their faithful partnership with God as joint blessers of Israel (Gen 12:3).<sup>34</sup>

Of the many ways that Pastor Jack championed the Messianic Jewish community, arguably his greatest gift was in the area of leadership development. Pastor Jack not only mentored dozens of key Messianic Jewish leaders but he also established a [Messianic Jewish Studies program](#) at The King's University for the formal training of Messianic rabbis and Christian leaders who are called to be bridges between the Church and the Jewish people.

The story of how this educational program began is a testimony to Pastor Jack's love for the Jewish people and his commitment to serve the Messianic movement. On April 27, 2007, Pastor Jack taught a School of Pastoral Nurture for Messianic leaders in Van Nuys that was sponsored by Jewish Voice Ministries International (JVMI). More than forty Messianic Jewish leaders attended. In the middle of one of the sessions, after talking about the importance of Jerusalem, Pastor Jack turned to Rabbi Jonathan Bernis, President of JVMI, and said, "I really do feel Jonathan that we are supposed to be available for ongoing Messianic studies integrated into the things we are doing at The King's...I feel this profoundly and I don't know its implications."<sup>35</sup> Later he told Rabbi Bernis that it "was a prophetic moment of destiny that must be seized."<sup>36</sup> At the end of the meetings, Pastor Jack gave his Executive Vice President approval to work out the details with Rabbi Bernis and Dr. Wayne Wilks, with the goal of establishing a partnership between The King's College and Seminary (later renamed The King's University), JVMI and Messianic Jewish Bible Institute (MJBI).<sup>37</sup> Classes began that fall under the oversight of Dr. Ray Gannon, the first director of The King's Messianic Jewish Studies (MJS) Program.

Pastor Jack had the foresight to recognize that the Messianic movement would need to raise up hundreds of new leaders to serve the next generation of Messianic synagogues, and that Christian leaders called to be bridges between the Church and the Jewish people required specialized training.<sup>38</sup> As Pastor Jack put it, "The King's University has made a firm commitment to develop an extensive Messianic Jewish Studies program...By providing this platform for university-level biblical education for both Jewish and Christian students, they are blessing Israel while advancing the kingdom of God and the restoration of the world to God through Messiah Yeshua."<sup>39</sup>

## **Awakening by the Holy Spirit**

A third reason that Pastor Jack gave for partnering with Messianic Jews is that the Holy Spirit awakened him to the importance of this:

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<sup>34</sup> Mark Greenburg, "TLV & TKU Chapel" (2013).

<sup>35</sup> From Dr. Hayford's teaching on Friday, 27 April 2007.

<sup>36</sup> From an email that Dr. Wilks sent to the MJBI board on April 28, 2007 with the subject heading "MJBI Partnership with The King's College and Seminary."

<sup>37</sup> Subsequent to the conference, Rabbi Dan Juster became a key Tikkun/MJBI leader involved in the formation of the program.

<sup>38</sup> See David Rudolph, "The Rabbi as Pastor Theologian: Torah Scholars Qua Ecclesial Leaders in the Post-Biblical Jewish Context," Center for Pastor Theologians (CPT) Symposium, 12 October 2009. Online: <https://www.rabbidavid.net>.

<sup>39</sup> Jack Hayford, "TLV & TKU Chapel" (2013).



I was “born again” already but was “blind” to the truth of the principle that reveals the *spiritual* indebtedness *all* believers owe to the Jews (see Rom. 15:15-17). Though I had received Christ, as well as having received His call into pastoral ministry before I entered college, I was in pastoral ministry nearly 15 years before I began to see how unaware I was. The implications of my spiritual obligation to prioritize our call to *first*, love, honor and thus *reach out* to God’s ancient people, the Jews. I was “blind though born again,” not even “seeing” the many basic biblical statements that forthrightly reveal that my faith in Jesus Christ had brought me (a) through *their* promised Messiah (see Gal. 3:26-27), (b) into an intended unity *with believing Jews* in the Body of Christ (see Gal. 3:28), (c) uniting us with them in faith first seeded by *Abraham* (see Gal. 3:29) and, (d) by faith in Christ alone, apart from the law, *grafting me* into the single root system through which eternal life flows—from the Messiah (see Isa. 53:2-6).<sup>40</sup>

Pastor Jack concluded that a spiritual “awakening” was necessary to see these truths about the *One New Man*:

... the biblical call to the One New Man will only *ultimately* be received by a Holy Spirit-begotten awakening of a Gentile believer’s “inner man.” Reasoned teaching is valuable, but prayerful availability to the Holy Spirit, as the One Jesus said would “lead you into all truth,” will determine the depth and practical commitment anyone brings to a One New Man lifestyle. This is not because the subject is without intellectual or theological footings, but because it is *spiritual* truth. It will only realize a passionate response in our lifestyle where *hearts* invite the Holy Spirit—as they prayerfully open the Word and openly engage conversation and fellowship with Messianic leaders.<sup>41</sup>

Pastor Jack fervently maintained for half a century that unity in the Church and the global spread of the gospel would only be realized when we, like Peter in Acts 10-11, are awakened by the Holy Spirit to what God is doing today in forming his *One New Man* made up of Jews and Gentiles in Messiah, who remain in their respective callings. Pastor Jack gives the charge, “*If any one of us—but better, each one of us—will open [up] to the Lord’s purpose to give rise to [the] One New Man, revival will spread and Messiah Jesus will be glorified through His Church.*”<sup>42</sup>

### **Pastor Robert and *To the Jew First***

Robert Morris, Senior Pastor of Gateway Church, actively served on The King’s University Board of Trustees with Pastor Jack for ten years (2007-2017) and came to regard Pastor Jack as a spiritual father.<sup>43</sup> In 2014, the Lord spoke to both men about the future of TKU, prompting a decision by the board to move the main campus from Van Nuys, CA, to Southlake, TX, and for the university to partner with Gateway Church. This passing of the baton from Pastor Jack to Pastor Robert led to The King’s University expanding its vision “to love, affirm, and stand with

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<sup>40</sup> Hayford, “Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity,” 26.

<sup>41</sup> Hayford, “Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity,” 21.

<sup>42</sup> Hayford, “Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity,” 28-29.

<sup>43</sup> Robert Morris, foreword to *Pastor Jack*, 11; Moore, *Ibid.*, 281-82.

the Jewish people and Israel.”<sup>44</sup> As Dr. David Moore puts it in *Pastor Jack: The Authorized Biography of Jack Hayford*, “The King’s University would increasingly reflect Hayford’s strong support of the Messianic Jewish community...Robert Morris and Gateway shared the same commitment to the Jewish people as Jack, something that only served to strengthen their bond.”<sup>45</sup>

When Pastor Robert founded Gateway Church in 2000, a multi-campus congregation that today has over 100,000 people in attendance each weekend, he decided that Gateway would be committed to the principle of *To the Jew First*. This is how Pastor Robert explains this biblical teaching to Gateway staff and members:

I want to share with you another founding principle, a core principle, here at Gateway Church and we call it *To the Jew First*. It comes out of Romans 1:16 where Paul says, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes.” Then it says this (because many people stop there): “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” So what we believe is that we are to take the gospel to the whole world, *but there is an order that God set up, and that is to the Jew first*. Jesus went to the house of Israel first. Everywhere Paul went, he went to the Jew first. So when Gateway Church started, the very first year of existence, we started giving to ministries who were taking the gospel to the Jew first. We set aside ten percent of everything that came in to go to missions, and then we set aside ten percent of that ten percent, the tithe of the tithe, to go to ministries that take the gospel to the Jew first...That’s why Gateway is so blessed. Ever since we started, we’ve given to missions and we’ve taken the gospel to the Jew first. And when we’ve done that, God has blessed us to be able to take the gospel all over the world.<sup>46</sup>

For Pastor Robert, *To the Jew First* is not only a principle of God’s order for sharing the gospel but it also has implications for how we read the Bible. Our Chancellor describes his own journey in this regard:

I was taught replacement theology in Bible college [the idea that the Church has replaced the Jewish people as the people of God] and I didn’t know any different. It wasn’t until Wayne Wilks at Shady Grove Church, in an elders meeting, began to take us Scripture by Scripture to show us that God still had a place in His heart, and a plan, for the nation of Israel. Once you see it in Scripture, it changes everything. Just a while back I was with one of the largest churches in the world and the senior pastor said to me, “What’s the most important thing you can share with us?” I just immediately said, “Take the gospel to the Jew first: Romans 1:16.”<sup>47</sup>

As a little exegetical background on Romans 1:16, when Paul says that the gospel is “to the Jew first,” he fires the first shot in his attempt to push back against the idea that the Church has replaced Israel. Paul’s words—to the Jew first—should be understood in the wider context of his defense of Israel’s ongoing covenantal relationship with God—a defense that begins in Romans

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<sup>44</sup> Hayford, “Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity,” 20.

<sup>45</sup> Moore, *Pastor Jack*, 283.

<sup>46</sup> Robert Morris, “Gateway’s Priority for Israel. Lesson 1: To the Jew First.” Online: <https://www.centerforisrael.com>. Italics mine.

<sup>47</sup> GOD TV interview with Pastor Robert Morris, Dallas, 5 February 2020.

1:16, continues in chapters 2–3, climaxes in chapters 9–11, and concludes in chapter 15. The expression “to the Jew first” is Paul’s rallying cry for the continued prioritization of Israel in the life of the Church.<sup>48</sup>

Paul’s principle of “to the Jew first” should raise the following questions for Gentile Christians: Do I have a sincere love for the Jewish people? Has replacement theology shaped my understanding of the gospel? When was the last time that I shared with a Jewish friend about Jesus the son of David? Is Jewish ministry a priority of my church? Do I encourage Jesus-believing Jews to retain their Jewish identity as a matter of calling, or to assimilate for the sake of being “one in Christ”? Do I have relationships with Jewish followers of Jesus? If so, are these relationships characterized by interdependence, mutual blessing and mutual humbling? Do I give to Jewish charities and advocacy organizations? Do I fight antisemitism in the Church and the public square, or look the other way? Do I regularly pray for Israel and the well-being of the Jewish people worldwide? All of these are spheres of life that will be impacted when we experience Spirit-led vision to bring the gospel to the Jew first as Paul taught.

Since 2014, Pastor Robert has made *To the Jew First* a core principle at The King’s University. As TKU’s Chairman of the Board, and now Chancellor, he has expanded the ways in which this DNA is reflected in the life of the university. Here are some marks of how this principle has become woven into the fabric of who we are as a Christian university under Pastor Robert’s leadership.

### *University-Wide Curriculum*

All TKU undergraduate students are required to take *To the Jew First*, a three credit course. On the graduate level, the MDiv program incorporates the learning outcome, “Demonstrate a knowledge of the heritage, traditions and practices of the global Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements, *including a vision for healing the schism between the Church and the Jewish People.*” We have a similar learning outcome for the MPT program.<sup>49</sup>

### *MJS Program Mission*

The Messianic Jewish Studies program seeks to provide the highest standards of education and ministry training for rabbis and teachers in the Messianic Jewish movement, and for Christian leaders who are called to be bridges between the Church and the Jewish people.

### *MJS Academic Offerings*

The King’s University offers the following accredited degree plans that focus on Messianic Jewish Studies:

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<sup>48</sup> See David Rudolph, “To the Jew First: Paul’s Vision for the Priority of Israel in the Life of the Church,” *Kesher: A Journal of Messianic Judaism* 37 (2020): 11-25.

<sup>49</sup> “Explain the heritage, traditions, and practices of the global Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements, *including a vision for healing the schism between the Church and the Jewish people.*”

Bachelor of Biblical and Messianic Jewish Studies (BBMJS)  
 Master of Practical Theology (MPT-MJS)  
 Master of Divinity (MDiv-MJS)  
 Doctor of Ministry (DMin-MJS)

In addition, we offer the following accredited degree plan that focuses on [Antisemitism and Jewish Advocacy](#):

Master of Practical Theology (MPT-AJA)

Our course offerings include:

<b>Undergraduate MJS Courses</b>	
To the Jew First	Hebrew I
The Jewish Festivals in Messianic Context	Hebrew II
Jewish Customs and Ceremonies	Hebrew Exegesis
The Shape of Messianic Jewish Theology	Studies in the Torah
History of Messianic Judaism	Studies in the Prophets
Messianic Apologetics	Studies in the Writings
The Land of Israel	The New Testament and Second Temple Judaism
Geography of Israel Study Trip	Matthew in Jewish Context
Geography of Jordan Study Trip	Luke-Acts in Jewish Context
Biblical Archaeology and Apologetics	John in Jewish Context
	Romans in Jewish Context
History of the Jewish People	Galatians in Jewish Context
Antisemitism and the Holocaust	Jesus, Paul and Torah
The New Antisemitism	
	Survey of Rabbinic Literature
Introduction to Judaism	Jewish Ethics
Introduction to Synagogue Worship	Messianic Non-Profits

<b>MJS Graduate Courses</b>	
Jewish Practices in Messianic Context	Hebrew I
Messianic Jewish Theology	Hebrew II
Messianic Jewish Spirituality	Hebrew Exegesis
Messianic Judaism in Antiquity and the Modern Era	Tanakh: The Beginnings of Judaism and the Jewish People
Messianic Jewish Apologetics I	
Messianic Jewish Apologetics II	The New Testament as Jewish Literature
	Studies in Matthew and Early Judaism
Studies in the Land of Israel	Studies in Luke-Acts and Early Judaism
Israel Study Trip	Studies in John and Early Judaism
Jordan Study Trip	Studies in Romans and Early Judaism
Studies in Biblical Archaeology and Apologetics	Studies in Galatians and Early Judaism

History of Judaism and the Jewish People	Introduction to Rabbinic Literature
Studies in Antisemitism and the Holocaust	Introduction to Midrash
Studies in the New Antisemitism	The Talmud
Jewish-Christian Relations	Studies in Jewish Ethics
Engaging Antisemitism in the Church and Public Square	
Righteous Gentiles and Christian Zionism	The Basics of Synagogue Worship
	Leading Messianic Worship
Messianic Jewish Pastoral Care	Studies in the Jewish Calendar
Pastoral Care Internship I: Counseling and Prayer	Shabbat and Weekday Services
Pastoral Care Internship II: Serving Through the Stages of Life	Services for the High Holy Days and Festivals
Roles of the Messianic Rabbi	Key Events in the Jewish Life Cycle
The Rabbi's Personal and Professional Relationships	
Congregational Growth and Development	Messianic Jewish Non-Profits

<b>MJS Doctoral Courses</b>	
Jewish Identity and Continuity	Messianic Jewish Preaching and Teaching
Messianic Jewish History, Theology, and Practice	Messianic Jewish Ethics
Messianic Jewish Communal Boundaries	

In 2021, The King's University established **The Center for Israel and Jewish Studies at TKU** to promote the academic study of Israel and the Jewish people. The Center showcases all of our academic offerings and activities that intersect with Jewish-Christian relations, Messianic Jewish Studies, Antisemitism and Jewish Advocacy, and Land of the Bible.<sup>50</sup>

### *MJS Program Distinctives*

The King's University MJS program is unique in the following ways:

- TKU has the world's largest accredited Messianic Jewish Studies program with over 180 students.
- We are the only accredited MJS program that offers *both* undergraduate and graduate degrees fully online.
- The Bachelor of Biblical and Messianic Jewish Studies is accredited by Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) and The Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). Our graduate and doctoral degrees (MPT-MJS,

<sup>50</sup> In Fall 2022, TKU will introduce undergraduate and graduate concentrations in Land of the Bible.

MPT-AJA, MDiv-MJS, DMin-MJS) are accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), the gold standard in seminary education.

- We are one of three seminaries that the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) has approved for *Smikha* (Rabbinical ordination) training and *Madrikh* (teacher) certification. Of these three, TKU is the only one that is accredited.
- The King's University is the only educational institution in the world that offers a Bachelor of Biblical and Messianic Jewish Studies, a Master of Practical Theology with a concentration in Messianic Jewish Studies, a Master of Practical Theology with a concentration in Antisemitism and Jewish Advocacy, and a Doctor of Ministry with a concentration in Messianic Jewish Studies.
- We offer undergraduate and graduate degrees with concentrations in Land of the Bible.
- The Dallas-Fort Worth area is a hub of Messianic Jewish ministries and our students serve at Gateway Jewish Ministries and in local Messianic synagogues. These include Sar Shalom, Baruch Hashem, Eitz Chaim, Sukkat Shalom, Beth Sar Shalom, among others.
- Well-known Messianic Jewish leaders—such as Jonathan Bernis, Dan Juster, and Michael Brown—recommend TKU's Messianic Jewish Studies program.
- We are a Bible-centered program with a focus on the Holy Spirit.
- We provide solid teaching in areas where the Church and the Jewish world are in tension, such as: the Jewishness of Jesus; Jewish context and interpretation of the New Testament; Paul and the Torah; the history of the relationship between the Church and the Jewish people and how we can heal this schism within the people of God that has lasted for almost 2000 years; the Jewish roots of the Christian faith and how to restore them; Jewish identity and continuity; God's prophetic plan for Israel and the nations; how to evaluate replacement theology; Messianic Jewish history, theology and practice; the Jewishness of the gospel and how we can share with Jewish people the good news that Israel's Messiah has come, and to do this in a way that communicates our deep love and respect; God's vision for the Church being a table fellowship of Jews and Gentiles in Messiah; how to engage antisemitism in the Church and the public square.
- Our students have access to the resources of a mid-size ATS seminary, including a financial aid office and scholarships that MJS students can apply for, such as TKU's annual \$10,000 Israel's Hope Scholarship.
- We are the only accredited MJS program in the world where there is a university-wide commitment to a *One New Man—To the Jew First* vision and a partner church that champions this.

### *MJS Faculty, Staff, and Gateway Partners*

In 2014, Gateway Church hired **Dr. Wayne Wilks**, President of Messianic Jewish Bible Institute (MJBI), to serve also as Pastor of Gateway Jewish Ministries. Dr. Wilks, one of the founders of TKU's Messianic Jewish Studies program, helped to oversee the transition of the program from Van Nuys to the Southlake campus. In addition to leading the annual Israel Study Trip, since 2019 Dr. Wilks has served at TKU as Special Assistant to the President for Church & Jewish Relations. In 2020, he became Executive Pastor of Church & Jewish Relations at Gateway Church. In this capacity, he stewards the heart and vision of Pastor Robert and Gateway Church for Israel and the Jewish people, and oversees the alignment between Gateway Jewish Ministries,

Gateway Center for Israel, and The Center for Israel and Jewish Studies at TKU. Dr. Wilks’s staff includes Terri Cooke, Associate Director of Church & Jewish Relations.

In 2015, The King’s University hired **Dr. David Rudolph**, a second-generation Messianic Jew and ordained UMJC rabbi, to serve as Director of Messianic Jewish Studies (MJS) and Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies. In 2021, Dr. Rudolph was appointed Director of The Center for Israel and Jewish Studies at TKU.

Also in 2015, Gateway Church hired **Dr. Greg Stone**, a Jewish believer with a Doctor of Ministry in Messianic Jewish Studies from The King’s University, to serve as Associate Pastor of Jewish Ministries, a ministry that “exists to proclaim God’s love to the Jewish community and connect Christians to Israel and the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.”<sup>51</sup> In 2017, Dr. Stone became Pastor of Jewish Ministries at Gateway and teaches TKU’s “To the Jew First” course every semester. The Gateway Jewish Ministries staff also includes Greg Rosenberg, Associate Pastor of Jewish Ministries; David Simon, Associate Pastor of Jewish Ministries; and Melody Conaway, Coordinator of Jewish Ministries.

In 2016, TKU hired **Tali Snow**, a second-generation Messianic Jew, to serve as Coordinator of Messianic Jewish Studies. In 2021, Tali was appointed Coordinator of The Center for Israel and Jewish Studies at TKU.

In 2019, MJI was adopted into Gateway Global Jewish Ministry in order to create Gateway Center for Israel (GCFI). GCFI has a mission to guide pastors and other church leaders into a healthy understanding of Israel and the Jewish people. **Nic Lesmeister**, President and CEO of MJI, was hired to serve as Director of Gateway Center for Israel. In addition, Pastor Nic teaches a course on “The Land and State of Israel” at TKU. GCFI staff also includes Sam Arnaud, Associate Pastor of Church & Jewish Relations; Sarah Hermeling, Associate Pastor for Jewish Partnerships; and Sara Gillespie, Coordinator of Church & Jewish Relations.

In 2021, TKU hired **Dr. Jason Moraff**, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, to teach and provide administrative support for the MJS program.

We are also blessed to have a number of adjunct and resident faculty members who teach Messianic Jewish Studies concentration courses at TKU. About two-thirds of these scholars are Jewish believers:

Dr. Seth Klayman	Dr. Jim Greenberg	Dr. Ray Gannon
Dr. Jennifer Rosner	Dr. Shawn Moir	Dr. Inna Pikman-Chats
Dr. Vered Hillel	Dr. Jeffrey Seif	Dr. Brian Tucker
Rabbi Dan Juster	Dr. Joel Liberman	Dr. Joel Willitts
Dr. Michael Brown	Rabbi Barney Kasdan	Dr. Laura Hunt
Michael Gabizon	Dr. Carl Kinbar	Dr. Stuart Chepey
Rabbi Russ Resnik	Rabbi Vladimir Pikman	Dr. Boyd Luter
Dr. Michael Schiffman	Dr. Sarah Hall	Dr. Aaron Crider
Rabbi Joshua Brumbach	Dr. H�el�ene Dallaire	

Only God could have orchestrated this healthy and collaborative working relationship between The Center for Israel and Jewish Studies at TKU, Gateway Center for Israel, and Gateway Jewish Ministries.

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<sup>51</sup> Online: <https://gatewaypeople.com/ministries/jewish-ministry>.

## *TKU Statements and Endorsements*

In 2016, The King’s University endorsed the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) “Statement of Faith” and “Defining Messianic Judaism Statement.” That same year, the university also signed the Toward Jerusalem Council II (TJCII) “Seven Affirmations Statement,” as Gateway Church did in 2015, thus formally rejecting replacement theology and affirming Jewish identity and calling.

In 2019, the King’s University Board of Trustees developed a “Statement on the Church and the Jewish People” that was incorporated into the university’s “Statement of Faith.” It reads as follows on the TKU website:

### Basic Statement

We believe in Israel’s irrevocable election and affirm the calling of Jewish followers of the Messiah to remain true to their identity as Jews (Rom 11:28-29; 1 Cor 7:17-20; Acts 21:17-26).<sup>52</sup>

### Expanded Statement

The King’s University affirms that we worship the same God as the Jewish people and that we inherited from them our understanding of monotheism—the very foundation of our faith (Deut 6:4-5; Mark 12:26-31; Luke 1:68)—because faithful Jewish witnesses have transmitted this knowledge to the world since the time of Abraham.

We owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Jewish people in general and in particular to the thousands of first-century Jews who believed that Israel’s messianic expectations were being fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the son of David (Matt 1:1; Rom 1:3; 2 Tim 2:8). They recognized Jesus as both Messiah and Lord, becoming incarnate to extend the promise of Israel’s salvation and blessing to all the families of the earth. We also owe those Jews our gratitude for bearing witness of their understanding in a continuing chain of events that resulted in the turning of millions of Gentiles to faith in the God of Israel, a reality that continues to the present day.

We appreciate that the salvation which we cherish is “from the Jews” in the words of Jesus, a Second Temple Jew (John 4:22). We also acknowledge that our understanding of salvation as God’s plan of redemption and restoration of the universe comes to us from the Jewish people.

We are indebted to the Jewish people for our understanding that the God of Scripture expects His covenant people to be witnesses to Him. We recognize that this call emerged from Abraham’s vision to be a blessing to “all peoples on earth” (Gen 12:1-3), and that it was expanded in the witness of Jesus’ Jewish followers in response to His commission: “Make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19).

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<sup>52</sup> Online: <https://www.tku.edu/about-tku/mission>.



We at The King's University uphold a vision for healing the schism between the Church and the Jewish people. We acknowledge the painful and tragic history between Christians and Jews, wherein the Church for nearly two millennia became complicit in verbal hostility and in continuing violence, discrimination, and harassment directed against God's chosen people. Moreover, this persecution of the Jewish people was frequently church-sponsored and fueled by supersessionism—the view that the Church is the new Israel and replaces the Jewish people as the people of God. We renounce such attitudes, actions, and theologies, and we resolve not to repeat or to condone them or to remain silent in the face of them now or in the future.

We recognize that the Jewish people remain in relationship with God through the eternal covenant that He made with Abraham and his descendants (Rom 9:4-5). We understand that God's gifts and calling to Israel are irrevocable because of God's faithfulness (Rom 3:1-4; 11:1, 28-29). We believe that the Church is a body of Jews and Gentiles in Messiah who are called to live out a God-given relationship of interdependence and mutual blessing (Rom 11:11-25; 15:7-27). At The King's University, we celebrate this unity in diversity. Gentile believers do not need to become Jews or take on Jewish lifestyle to walk in the ways of the Lord (Acts 15). However, Jewish followers of Jesus are called to remain true to their identity as Jews (1 Cor 7:17-24; Acts 21:17-26). We encourage them to stay involved in the Jewish community and to be a blessing within it. If a Jewish person has not participated in the Jewish world, we invite them to explore this part of their identity.

As a Christian university, we benefit from the input of Jewish scholars and rabbis into our understanding of the faith of Abraham and the Scriptures. While we seek to make disciples of all nations, we share our understanding and our beliefs with the Jewish people as dialogue within the Abrahamic family of God.

We wholeheartedly affirm that Yeshua is and will forever be the son of David, the King of Israel, and the Savior of the world (Rev 22:16; John 4:42). As the Jewish Messiah, He came "first" to His own people and thousands of first-century Jews followed Him (Mark 7:27; Acts 3:25-26; 21:20). Because of the enduring covenant relationship between God and Israel, we agree with the Apostle Paul that the gospel—the message of God's powerful plan to rescue everyone who trusts in Him—should be presented "to the Jew first" (Rom 1:16; 2:9-10; Acts 13:44-46; 14:1; 17:1-4, 10; 18:4-6; 19:8). Moreover, we at The King's University want to share this life-giving story of Israel's Messiah with all Jewish people, and explain it with love, respect and honor.

While many in the Jewish world regard Messianic Judaism to be deceptive under the reasoning that a Jew cannot believe in Jesus and remain a Jew, a perspective that emerged out of the legacy of hatred between Christians and Jews over the past two thousand years with its consequent parting of the ways, we affirm the apostolic witness that Jews who follow the Messiah of Israel remain Jews (Acts 21:39; 22:3).

We support in word and deed the right of all Jewish people to exist as Jews with complete self-determination—free from any form of political, economic, social, or religious intimidation, coercion, or persecution.

We stand in solidarity with the international Jewish community against anti-Semitism, anti-Judaism, and any other threat that may be directed against the personal well-being of Jewish people or their individual and corporate existence. While many Jewish leaders regard Messianic Judaism to be such a threat, we believe that the commitment of Jewish followers of Jesus to remain faithful to their people and heritage, and to raise their children as Jews, contributes to Jewish continuity.

We support and will defend the right of the Jewish people to the sovereignty of the nation of Israel and to their historic homeland conveyed to them by God’s covenant with Abraham.

Finally, we do not pretend to speak for all followers of Jesus. We speak only for ourselves as participants in ongoing Christian-Jewish dialogue at The King’s University.<sup>53</sup>

In 2020, Gateway Church adopted a similar statement entitled “What We Believe About Israel.”<sup>54</sup> Gateway Center for Israel also makes available perspective papers on: To the Jew First, Messianic Judaism, Replacement Theology, The Church and Jewish Identity, Unhealthy Theologies of Israel, and The Jewish Foundations of Christianity.<sup>55</sup>

## **A Gift from God**

The King’s University is a great option for Jewish believers who want to be in a university/seminary environment that is spiritually vibrant and supportive of their Jewish identity. It is also a go-to place for Gentile Christians who want to gain a Messianic Jewish view of Scripture and theology, worship, family, synagogue life, ethics, education, and ministry. From the fourth century until the eighteenth century—a period of 1400 years—the world was without a Messianic Jewish community, and the Church lacked an opportunity to learn from Messianic Jews and Messianic Judaism. All of that has now changed with the restoration of the Jewish wing of the Church and educational initiatives like The King’s University Messianic Jewish Studies program. Thanks to the legacy of Pastor Jack and Pastor Robert, who instilled a *One New Man—To the Jew First* vision within the DNA of our school, The King’s University has become a learning community of Jews and Gentiles in Messiah who relate to one another in a spirit of interdependence and mutual blessing as we affirm each other in our respective callings. This is not something to take for granted but rather something to treasure and cultivate as a gift from God.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Online: <https://www.tku.edu/about-tku/mission/the-church-and-the-jewish-people>.

<sup>54</sup> Online: <https://gatewaypeople.com/about/position-papers>.

<sup>55</sup> Online: <https://centerforisrael.com/papers>.

<sup>56</sup> Pastor Jack wrote in his journal on 4 January 2003 that the Lord said to him, “I told you *Why* to begin the Institute/College, and I told you *TO* found the Seminary. Further, you have named them both as Mine. So be

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assured—I will sustain what I have ordained: I will guard & keep what is Mine” (Moore, *Pastor Jack*, 272, 365 n. 12).