



MESSIANICS

A CULT



# IS THE MESSIANIC HEBREW ROOTS MOVEMENT A CULT?

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This article will discuss the Messianic Hebrew Roots movement, the growing hostility towards it from various Christian sects, and answer the charge as to whether or not the Messianic Hebrew Roots movement is a cult.

The Messianic Hebrew Roots is a movement that advocates the return and adherence to the first century walk of faith and obedience to the Torah (law) [1]. The Hebrew Roots movement seeks a better understanding of the culture, history, and the religious-political background of the time period which led to the core differences with both the Jewish and Christian communities [2].

The Messianic Hebrew Roots movement is not so much a denomination, but rather the mindset held by non-denominational believers who emphasize the Hebrew roots of the Messianic-Christian faith and who seek to emulate Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ) as much as humanly possible (1 John 2:6) [3]. Messianic Hebrew Roots believers consist of Jews and Gentiles who together worship Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus the Christ).

## **JEREMIAH 18:15:**

**Because My people have forgotten Me, they have burned incense to worthless idols and they have caused themselves to stumble in their ways, from the ancient paths.**

## **JOHN 4:23-24:**

**“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”**

Mainstream Christians who continue in lawlessness, observing pagan-based holidays, and worthless traditions, rather than returning to the ancient paths to worship God in spirit and truth, often become defensive concerning their faith and are resistant to change and correction. Some have lashed out at the Messianic Hebrew Roots movement, branding it a cult.

cult:

- A system of religious veneration and devotion directed toward a particular figure or object.
- A relatively small group of people having religious beliefs or practices regarded by others as strange or sinister.
- A misplaced or excessive admiration for a particular person or thing [4].

By the standard definitions of a religious cult, the Messianic Hebrew Roots movement does not fit the description. It could be said that Messianic believers have “religious beliefs or practices regarded by others as strange,” but by that broad definition everyone could be accused of belonging to a cult. By that standard, everyone who was not a Catholic in the Dark Middle Ages was therefore a cultist heretic. Messianic believers do not have any excessive admiration towards a particular figure, object, person, or thing, other than Yeshua (Jesus). Catholics who excessively admire their pope and other figures, and Christians who replace Christ by putting their messenger first in proclaiming their declared faith (Calvinists, Lutherans, etc.), do demonstrate an excessive admiration for a particular person. Mainstream Judaism rejects the Messiah, but keeps the law; mainstream Christianity accepts the Messiah, but rejects the law; the Messianic faith rightly accepts the Messiah and keeps the law.

**MATTHEW 5:17:**

**“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”**

A major difference that the Messianic Hebrew Roots faith has with mainstream Christianity is that mainstream Christians believe that Jesus Christ came to do away with the law and start a new religion; whereas Messianic Hebrew Roots followers believe that Yeshua Messiah did not come to do away with the law or start a new religion, He came to further clarify the law and fulfill the role of the Messiah foretold by the prophets of the already established faith.

**1 JOHN 2:6:**

**He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**

To walk just as Yeshua (Jesus) walked means to strive to live as He lived, to obey the Torah (the law), all of it - just as Yeshua (Jesus) did, as best as one can. Mainstream Christianity advocates, to various degrees, that the law is done away with. Mainstream Christianity teaches that the ‘Mosaic’ laws, the dietary laws (which they classify as ceremonial laws), the Sabbath, and God’s Leviticus 23 feasts (often referred to as Jewish holidays), do not need to be obeyed or observed. Christianity has replaced God’s feasts with pagan-based holidays, adopting paganism into their faith.

A mainstream Christian, when confronted with the non-Scriptural, pagan-based origins of much of his or her faith, will often defend them by saying, “God knows what’s in my heart.” God does not ask that we worship Him based on what’s in our heart (Proverbs 28:26; Jeremiah 17:9); He requires of us that we worship Him in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24).

**JEW HATRED**

There are various Christian individuals who continually say vile things against the Messianic faith; against Jews who have accepted Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ) as Lord, Messiah, and Savior and against Gentiles who keep the law (Torah), calling them Judaizers. Historically there were Jews killed for refusing to convert to Christianity, while today there are some Christians who hate the Jews even *after* they have accepted Yeshua (Jesus) as their Messiah. It seems there are some people who will always irrationally hate the Jews no matter what they believe or do.

If Yeshua (Jesus) were to speak to common, typical mainstream Christians today, some of whom criticize the Messianic Hebraic Roots faith as a cult, He might say something like this:

**JOHN 4:22:**

**“You [CHRISTIANS] worship what you do not know [FALSEHOODS THROUGH PAGANISM]; we [MESSIANICS] know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.”**

Many Christians, who do not want to change their law abolishing, pagan-based ways, label the Messianic Hebraic Roots movement a cult. They believe that the Scripture-based foundation of the Hebrew Roots Messianic faith is erroneous, while blindly proclaiming that the pagan-based roots of the mainstream Christian faith are right!

denomination:

A recognized autonomous branch of the Christian Church [5].

denomination synonyms:

sect, church, CULT, faith community, body, persuasion, religious persuasion.

By definition, ALL CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS ARE CULTS, to a greater or lesser extent. Denominational Christian church organizations will not be corrected by Scripture, so in practice these churches behave as cults. Christians adhering to the denominational teachings of their particular branch of Christianity are following the cult teachings of the denomination that they belong to, and not necessarily Scripture.

The Messianic Hebrew Roots movement is not a cult. For Jews, it is the acceptance of Yeshua (Jesus) as their Messiah. For Gentiles, it is a shedding of Christian falsehoods and pagan practices; a return to the ancient paths (Jeremiah 18:15) of the roots of the faith to worship God in truth; and an acknowledgement that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

1. “What is the Hebrew Roots Movement?,” Our Father’s Festival!, June 25, 2016, < [http://www.ourfathersfestival.net/hebrew\\_roots\\_movement](http://www.ourfathersfestival.net/hebrew_roots_movement) >.
2. “What is Hebrew Roots exactly,” House of David Fellowship, 2012, < <http://houseofdavidfellowship.com/qanda.htm> >.
3. Vander Els, Matthew, “What is Hebrew Roots,” FOUNDED IN TRUTH MINISTRIES, Jan 31, 2016, < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNWOqOzq1B4> >.
4. ‘Cult,’ Oxford Dictionaries, © Oxford University Press, 2016 < [http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\\_english/cult](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/cult) >.
5. ‘Denomination,’ Oxford Dictionaries, © Oxford University Press, 2016, < [http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\\_english/denomination](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/denomination) >.