A Representation of the Beliefs, Experiences, and Ideals of a Group of Jewish People Who Believe in Jesus

by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Ministry awarded by Wycliffe College and the University of Toronto

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to survey the beliefs, experiences, and values of a group of Jews who believe in Jesus. These experiences will be seen in personal journeys and in relation to the friends, families, and communities of this group. Anthropological categories emerged in the research, which have given meaning to this experience in its modern social and cultural setting.

Results show that these categories point to an association with what Paul calls the hardening of Israel (Romans 11). Paul understands this phenomenon as a warning (v25a), a mystery (v25b), partial (v25c), and temporary (v25d and v26a). My research attempts to understand hardening as a genuine and current experience, which I identify as part of what I call an Implied Social Contract (ISC).
Dedication

I first heard the term ‘Implied Social Contract’ from Moishe Rosen in 1983. It has engrossed me ever since. This research project is dedicated to Moishe.

zikhrono livrakha.

May his memory be a blessing.
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My mother has always wanted to introduce me as “my son, the doctor.” I did not become the kind of doctor she wanted, but I want to recognize her aspirations for me and her devotion to me.

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Toronto, Canada

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In a sense the converted Jew is the only normal human being in the world. To him, in the first instance, the promises were made, and he has availed himself of them. He calls Abraham his father by hereditary rights as well as by divine courtesy. He has taken the whole syllabus in order, as it was set; eaten the dinner according to the menu. Everyone else is, from one point of view, a special case dealt with under emergency regulations.

--C.S. Lewis

What we continually press upon Jews is that we believe Jesus is the Son of Man and Son of God, not in spite of, but because we are Jews. We believe that Jesus is the King of our people, the sum and substance of our Scripture, the fulfiller of our Law and Prophets, the embodiment of the promises of our covenant. Our testimony is that of Jews to Jews.

--David Baron

1.1 Stories of Contrast

Coming to faith in Jesus as the Saviour of the world, the Messiah, requires re-evaluating one’s worldview and the cultural assumptions that previously shaped the entirety of one’s life. This re-evaluation can be understood, through the words of educational theorist Edmund O’Sullivan, as a deep structural shift. It is a shift in which one undergoes the process of embracing, questioning, and critically assessing assumptions to accept a new worldview with new assumptions and understandings. Proclaiming Jesus as Saviour, however, does not always result in these deep structural shifts. We meet Gospel proclamation with unbelief, which brings about a solidifying of previously held structures and a hardening

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2 David Baron, The Ancient Scriptures and the Modern Jew (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1900), 337.
to Gospel proclamation. As someone who proclaims the message that Jesus is the Messiah, I am interested in how unbelief shapes worldview and culture, and how worldview and culture shapes unbelief. As a Jewish follower of Jesus who has spent much of my life as a missionary to my people, I am interested in how Jewish people respond to encounters with the Gospel. To understand this interest and the focus of the research presented here, I want to contrast my life story with that of Alan.

As an undergraduate in university, I was Jewish, agnostic, pragmatic and restless, and I was both intrigued and discouraged by the vastness and complexity of the universe. While its large scale was exciting, I was often left wondering about the significance of my life in the midst of such a huge universe. Was there something above and beyond the ordinary facts of life? Was there a real God who not only ordered the world but also cared about me?

I had religious training in Jewish literature, language, and history, and I was training to be an engineer. I was living out an action-oriented life dedicated to making the world a better place. This action-orientation came out of the foundational value of the Jewish world I was raised in, Tikkun Olam, which means “world repair” or “healing the world.” This term is commonly used to refer to the pursuit of social action and social justice, which suggests our shared responsibility to heal and transform the world.

The world I was raised in informed and shaped me. The synagogue of my youth puzzled, fascinated, centred and scared me. While it seemed to me that the pews were not for something as simple as sitting, they lent a definite grace to worship. The first thing I saw in our synagogue was a plaque engraved with a list of dead relatives. I wondered why we paid to write loved ones' names on that list, and why, on holidays, a lamp next to the plaque was
lit. Inside the sanctuary, I was awed by the majestic altar that seemed to command admiration and respect.

During services, I would stand up for certain parts and then sit down again mechanically. I wondered why God cared if we sat or stood and why we had to whisper in the sanctuary. I thought these rituals had something to do with keeping away evil spirits. It did not occur to me to ask; it seemed natural for “religious” things to be enigmatic.

Growing up in New York City, as I did, it seemed as if everyone were Jewish. When I was 11 years old, however, we moved to upstate New York, and I discovered that I was in a minority. My mother described that being Jewish was different. We were to have higher morals and stricter intellectual standards. She pointed out that many of the world's greatest achievers were Jewish: people like Albert Einstein and Jonas Salk. I learned about Tikkun Olam and our special calling to serve the world.

Despite holding on to the foundational values of my Jewish upbringing, the only God I could manage to believe in when I entered university was one who was far too busy coordinating the cosmos to concern himself with me. Accordingly, I saw little reason I should likewise concern myself with Him. I feared that having faith in a God who cared about the world and me would be intellectual suicide. At the same time, I began to assess if I agreed with Tikkun Olam. I remember asking myself the following questions: Are we simply to strive to be good people? Does nothing else matter? How good is good enough? How do we know if we are good enough? I knew enough to realize that the world was not “fixable.” While I accepted Tikkun Olam as a foundational value, I was restless.
At university, I became acquainted with C.S. Lewis. He seemed to describe what I was feeling: “There is something above and beyond the ordinary facts of men’s behaviour, and yet quite definitely real—a real law, which none of us made—but which we find pressing on us.”\(^4\) I began to wonder more about God. If God existed, was my unbelief akin to spiritual starvation? If God existed, was my unbelief a way of throwing away my birthright? I found myself re-evaluating what I had always assumed about my beliefs and my Jewishness. In retrospect, I recognized the deep structural shifts were beginning to take place. A respected friend challenged me to read the *Tanakh* and the New Testament (NT). At the time, I assumed that Jesus was the “God of the Gentiles” and that he was not relevant for Jews, but my assumption was challenged as I read the Scriptures for myself. Four questions came to mind as I read:

1. Did the text assert truth?
2. Was Jesus, in fact, the promised Messiah of the Jewish people?
3. Why was I both attracted and repulsed by the concept of *chosenness* that I found in Genesis 12:1-3?
4. Why was Abraham chosen, and did this chosenness have any bearing on me?

Starting with Genesis 3, the metanarrative of Scripture seemed to be telling me that God made a promise to be and do things for my people, and as a result of being and doing something for my people, He was being and doing something for the world. I concluded that the essence and hope of chosenness, as outlined in Genesis 12:1-3, was fulfilled in the person of Jesus, whom I saw proclaimed in the New Testament as the destiny of Israel. I concluded that if Jesus was the Messiah for anybody, he certainly was the Messiah for the Jewish

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people and the Messiah for me. He was the Saviour of the world and the fulfillment of my people’s destiny.

Becoming a Jewish follower of Jesus changed me. My worldview, with all its assumptions and understandings, went through a deep shift that continues to affect my life, including my vocation. Since concluding that Jesus was my Messiah, I have devoted my life to being a missionary to my people. I have served for 32 years with the Jews for Jesus (JFJ) organization—a Jewish evangelistic agency dedicated to bringing the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah into places where it considers a distinctly Jewish testimony is needed.
Alan

My experience is not the norm among many North American Jews. While some Jews become Jewish followers of Jesus, many people with whom I interact view being Jewish and following Jesus as a contradiction. My experience with Alan was like this.

Alan was spiritually hungry. Though he strongly identified as a Jew, he desired answers to lingering spiritual questions that preoccupied him. I spent quite a bit of time with him, shared my personal experiences with him, and told him why I thought Jesus was the fulfillment of Israel’s destiny and the unique Saviour of the world. I explained that he needed to put his faith and trust in Jesus, there were no easy answers to his questions, and to identify with Jesus is to identify with the cross where forgiveness of our sins gives us hope and purpose. While he engaged in these spiritual discussions, he knew that following Jesus was not popular in his community. Throughout these conversations I was confident that I had done my best—I even gave him a New Testament that he claimed to be reading. I became concerned, however, when I was unable to contact him for a couple of weeks. I received a letter from him explaining that he did not want to meet with me any longer. He explained that he had decided that, for him, “being Jewish meant not believing in Jesus.” He went on to recount the many atrocities done in the name of Jesus and described his desire to return and remain “open and ambivalent” in all matters of faith.

As with anyone, Alan’s worldview was a maze made up of underlying presuppositions deep within many unseen levels of thought. Anyone familiar with Jewish culture in North America today would not be surprised by Alan’s decision. Like any culture, the worldview of contemporary North American Jews is a complex intellectual arrangement that encompasses an array of presuppositions, including natural philosophy, fundamental
existential and normative postulates, as well as themes, values, emotions, and ethics. Within Jewish culture, these intellectual arrangements and assumptions offer coherence and a model of reality, provide answers to deep questions, yield emotional security and psychological reassurance, and act as a protective mechanism against other worldviews. And as in any culture, there exists substantial diversity among various communities regarding certain worldview beliefs. But through many years of experience, I have seen that even among diverse Jewish communities, there is one profoundly embedded tenet within their worldview. There seems to be an assumption that whatever else Jewish people believe, they cannot believe in Jesus. For Alan to claim that “being Jewish meant not believing in Jesus” is not atypical, but rather archetypal of Jewish responses to the message of Jesus.

Alan, in particular, was ambivalent about faith; he seemed both attracted to and repulsed by matters of faith, resulting in a constant struggle and balancing act. On the one hand, he believed that Judaism and Jewish values are important; but on the other hand, he did not want to compromise a secular lifestyle. Despite the appeal of a secular lifestyle, it was not Alan’s desire to keep this secular lifestyle that primarily made him re-think his desire to engage with me. Alan’s rejection of Jesus was, at its core, part of a deeply entrenched worldview belief, suggesting that to remain secure within Jewish culture, one must tacitly reject the Gospel. Accordingly, to acknowledge the Gospel of Jesus was to be rejected by Jewish culture.

I have witnessed countless similar responses from other Jewish people with whom I have worked through my ministry, and I think these responses are typical of a culture that has an integrated system of collectively shared interpretations of persons, things, and events.

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There seems to be overwhelming agreement within Jewish communities that to be a Christian is to stop being Jewish. There seems to be a strong aversion to the Gospel, and it is an aversion that solidifies the basic belief that being Jewish means not believing in Jesus. Again, Alan is not an anomaly in my experience—he is the archetype.

In my experience with Alan (and with others), I see that my story is not the norm. In my ministry, I see the need for deep structural shifts to take place to challenge the implication that believing in Jesus makes one a non-Jew. In other words, if, rooted in the Jewish worldview, there is the belief that being Jewish is anything but believing that Jesus is the Messiah, then bringing the message of Jesus effectively into this community means exploring and identifying this phenomenon as well as understanding how it is expressed and experienced in contemporary Jewish communities.

1.2 Research Problem

My ministry experience of Jewish resistance to the Gospel resonates statistically. Statistics reflect a worldview belief that being Jewish is anything but believing that Jesus is the Messiah. According to a 2010 Pew Research Center estimate, there are approximately 13.8 million Jews worldwide.6 Estimates of the number of Jewish believers in Jesus worldwide vary greatly. Christian researcher Patrick Johnstone estimates that there are 332,000 Jewish believers in Jesus worldwide.7 Anti-missionary organizations have speculated

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the number to be around 275,000. Moishe Rosen, the founder of JFJ, addressed this quantitative issue at the 2003 Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism (LCJE) international conference in Helsinki, Finland. Rosen said, “…when I look for them [Jewish believers] I don’t find them, and I’m sure the reason I don’t find them is because they are not there. At least not in the huge numbers we are given.” In the United States, there are 200,000 “Jews by choice” who identify as coming from a non-Jewish background.

Similarly, there are an estimated total 6.8 million Jewish adults and children in the United States and Canada. Estimates as to the number of Jewish believers in Jesus in the United States have varied from a low of 30,000 to a high of 600,000 (for all of North America). While precise numbers are difficult to evaluate, a conservative estimate of the number of Jewish believers in the world today is 50,000 to 90,000. These statistics show that an outsized majority of Jews are not believers in Jesus. Moreover, these data give statistical weight to the suggestion that Jews are resistant to the Gospel.

That Jews do not follow Jesus is assumed today in the majority of Jewish culture. Jews for Judaism is an organization designed to counter evangelistic efforts directed towards Jewish people. Their website indicates that their aim is to help Jews strengthen and rediscover Judaism. They provide counselling services, education, and outreach programs to all Jewish denominations. Their website states that Jews who believe in Jesus try to maintain a genuine form of the Jewish religion but are seen by most Christians and Jews to be practising forms of Christianity. Jews for Judaism maintains that Christian groups who

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attempt to convert Jews specifically target unaffiliated, unobservant, old and young Jews as well as the Russian Jewish immigrant community. The name of the organization itself seems to have developed intentionally from and in contrast to JFJ.

The following is a quotation from Jews for Judaism’s home page on their website. Keywords and phrases such as “deception”, “guise”, “severe growing problem”, and “free preventive educational programs” imply that outsiders working to bring the message of Jesus into the Jewish community—thereby introducing change—practise unethical behaviour:

Jews for Judaism is the only outreach and counselling organization dedicated to countering the multi-million dollar efforts of over 100 Christian missionary and cult groups that deceptively target Jews in Canada for conversion. These Hebrew-Christian evangelical groups, often referred to generically as “Jews for Jesus” or “Messianic Jews”, present Christianity in the guise of Judaism to attract potential Jewish converts. In direct response to this severe growing problem, JEWS FOR JUDAISM offers an extensive variety of free preventive educational programs, innovative educational materials and specialized counselling services that KEEP JEWS JEWISH and bring them “back home” to Judaism. JEWS FOR JUDAISM’s highly acclaimed counter-missionary work is endorsed by many rabbis, synagogues and teachers from the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox movements....

Here we see the clear view that Jews who believe in Jesus are not Jewish. They are perceived to be on the other side of the line, having left one group and joined another.

The belief expressed by Jews for Judaism is in the anti-missionary booklet by David Berger and Michael Wyschogrod, Jews and ‘Jewish Christianity.’ They use italics in their title as a way of stating that the terms Jewish and Christianity are mutually exclusive. They go on to say: “Judaism believes that Jews should be Jews and nothing else.” The implication is that Christianity makes one a non-Jew, thereby placing that person outside his

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or her culture. This tactic is used primarily as a defense mechanism. It encapsulates the belief that being Jewish encompasses anything but the belief that Jesus is the Messiah. This value is transmitted and protected by language, and if one were to violate such language, he or she would place himself or herself outside the culture. This self-removal is itself a violation of the essence of the culture, since staying in the culture protects its very existence.

While this is the majority experience, what about those Jews who do choose to follow Jesus within their Jewish community? What about their experiences and participation within the community? Statistically, they make up a small portion of the broader Jewish community. My experience indicates that being a Jew and a believer in Jesus are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, my experience shows that Jews who embrace Jesus find a new and renewed awareness of Jewish identity. I am interested in studying the experiences of these Jews who believe in Jesus.

There is a missiological need to understand the sociological and anthropological make-up of this community as well as to investigate the patterns of receptivity and opposition to the Gospel. I see little research on the experiences, demographics, and sociological makeup of this group. Studying a group like this will certainly illuminate these areas. Studying this group’s experiences within the broader Jewish community will show how, why, and what the resistance to the Gospel looks like both anthropologically and sociologically. Ultimately, studying a group of Jewish believers in Jesus will aid in producing a missiological strategy to reach Jews who do not believe in Jesus. This type of study helps bring integrity to the ministry of JFJ as it intentionally studies a particular group within the broader Jewish community.
1.3 Thesis Statement and Outline

As Alan’s story aligns with statistics and anti-missionary attempts, missiological issues begin to arise with my work and the larger work of JFJ. The Jewish community—in all its diversity—has found agreement in resisting the Gospel message. For JFJ to communicate the Gospel more effectively, we need a deeper understanding of this cultural dynamic of Gospel resistance. The goal of this thesis is to both understand this cultural phenomenon anthropologically and propose anthropological categories that explain the ways in which resistance to the Gospel manifests itself in contemporary Jewish communities. I will draw out missiological applications based on these anthropological categories so that we can design intentional and intelligent strategies for communicating to the Jews the transcultural message of Jesus—that being a Jewish believer in Jesus is entirely biblical and possible.

This thesis will present the results of a qualitative and quantitative research study (action-in-ministry) of the beliefs, experiences, and ideals of Jews who believe in Jesus. It will situate the study within a two-fold theoretical framework informed by biblical theology and a unique use of social contract theory. Within this two-fold framework, studying the beliefs, experiences, and ideals of a group of Jewish believers in Jesus will illuminate the compatibility of being a Jew and a believer in Jesus. Furthermore, examining the experiences of Jewish believers in Jesus within the Jewish community will provide useful anthropological categories to understand how Jewish communities encourage Jewish resistance to the Gospel message. In other words, in this thesis the two-fold theoretical framework will provide the context and impetus for the research study, and the research study will provide concrete anthropological categories that will illuminate the theoretical framework. As these anthropological categories identify, they will aid the work of JFJ in bringing the Gospel
message to Jewish people. To set this within my ministry, I will also outline my theology of ministry as it relates to my work with JFJ.

My thesis, then, will proceed along the following outline. First, I will set my research in the context of my ministry with JFJ by describing my theology of ministry (Chapter 2). In this chapter, I will use anthropologist Charles Kraft and theologians Stephen Bevans and Jung Young Lee, along with scriptural analysis, to show how my theology of ministry follows what I will call a go-and-tell paradigm. I present myself as a Jewish follower of Jesus in the various contexts in which my people find themselves. This chapter will serve as a way of providing the theological foundation on which the impetus for this study rests. Finally, I will relate in this chapter my paradigm to the theology of ministry of JFJ.

After outlining my theology of ministry in context, I will undertake the process of describing my two-fold theoretical framework by examining hardening as a biblical-theological category through scriptural analyses and by proposing that the Jewish community’s aversion to the Gospel is a social contract (Chapter 3). Showing how the idea of social contract is relevant and central to my theoretical framework will require three separate, yet interrelated, sections. First, I will identify the idea of social contracts as they exist in political theory. Then, I will augment the idea of the social contract anthropologically and culturally for my use. I will call this type of contract an Implied Social Contract (ISC). This type of contract is an agreement amongst a group of people that is never explicitly articulated in formal terms; certain behaviour is normative, yet there is no formal law governing such norms. Finally, I will use the ISC as a way to understand and frame contemporary cultural reflections on Jewish culture and the ways in which the Jewish community has found unity in its resistance to the Gospel. Concluding this chapter, I will bring together the theological
category of hardening and the ISC to illuminate how the ISC manifests itself as an unspoken norm within Jewish culture.

To explore what this looks like phenomenologically and to provide anthropological categories to the ISC, I will present my ministry-in-action research (Chapter 4). This chapter will present and analyze a research study I conducted about the beliefs, ideals, and experiences that a group of Jews who believe in Jesus have had with their Jewish communities. In this chapter, I will present my findings as well as outline my research project and methodology, based on John Creswell’s phenomenological method. Through studying the experiences, ideals, and beliefs of Jewish believers in Jesus, the ways in which the ISC functions will emerge from the data. I will use my observations to develop anthropological categories that can be applied to explain the contemporary phenomenon of the ISC found in Jewish communities. I will conclude the chapter by showing how these categories provide meaning and depth to the ISC, which I see as operative in Jewish Communities.

Why use a scientific model to study religious behaviour? My interest is in studying backgrounds and behaviour as a complex system. My purpose is to use this imaginative tool of emerging anthropological categories to see an order in the experience of this group of people. Taking this approach will help to:

1. Observe process in their experience;
2. Understand the context of their experience; and
3. Examine their experience of reorientation and reconciliation with the God of Israel and their Jewish identity.
I will conclude my thesis by drawing missiological conclusions from my action-in-ministry study (Chapter 5). These missiological implications will serve the JFJ organization and me by helping us develop communication and mission strategies to reach Jews with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. These missiological conclusions will benefit our work by aiding us in:

- Developing communication tools that are not syrupy, farfetched, or irrelevant;
- Resisting unsuitable culture-bound material by aiding us in producing material that is relevant to the message bearers rather than the recipients;
- Communicating beyond cultural boundaries concerning a more sophisticated culture group;
- Exercising critical judgment regarding material, methods, and projects used in the past; and
- Asking questions such as: “Does this work now?” and “Can we measure our success?”

Finally, it is important to close this introduction with one key definition that is operative throughout my work—the definition of a Jew. To define Jewishness is multifaceted and difficult. The question of who is a Jew is, as A.B. Yehoshua remarks, “a question that’s been dealt with and is still being dealt with not only by Jews but by non-Jews of all sorts, from admirers of the Jewish people to its bitterest enemies.”16 While I recognize the multifaceted nature of Jewishness, within this study I will use the definition that a Jew is a person who is part of an ethnic group descended from Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

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Chapter 2: Theology of Ministry and the Mission of Jews for Jesus

Unpacking my theology of ministry is important to this whole project, as it provides the theological foundation and impetus for my research while describing the framework within which the missiological implications of my research is carried out. In this chapter, I will carefully articulate my theology of ministry within my work at JFJ. To do this, I will describe my context and ministry specifically, and then I will articulate the theology of ministry that both informs my praxis and provides the impetus for this study through an appeal to Scripture, contemporary missiology, and anthropology.

2.1 Working with Jews for Jesus and the Church

My work with JFJ shapes my ministry practice and has informed my theology of ministry. Founded by Moishe Rosen, JFJ began as a result of what has been called the Jesus Movement, which took place in the United States around 1968-1973. Many of the youth within the Jesus Movement were Jewish. Out of this counter-culture movement, Moishe Rosen began developing progressive methods and principles for communicating the Gospel to Jewish people, ultimately bringing about the formation of JFJ. Today, JFJ’s mission remains the same, as is seen in our mission statement: “We exist to make the Messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people worldwide.”17 Because JFJ is a Jewish mission—not just a mission to Jews—our approach is distinctly Jewish. To maintain this distinctiveness, JFJ only employs missionary workers who are either Jewish or married to Jews. Moreover, we feel a duty to present Jesus in a Jewish context. Thus, we seek to understand contemporary Jewish communities and culture to communicate the Gospel, and

we are burdened to learn how to communicate the Gospel to those with whom we share a common history, literature, language, and attachment to a particular land.

In my ministry, then, I use thought-forms that are mutually understandable to Jewish people to communicate more effectively. To do this, I seek to understand the culture to which I minister so that the message of Jesus is heard. While I speak as a fellow Jew, my belief in Jesus places me on the margins of the Jewish community. However, I also understand that even though I primarily work for JFJ, my mission is never disconnected from the mission of the Church as a whole.

In addition to my work with JFJ, I am also a Minister-at-Large with the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA), which has its roots in Canada. CMA is an evangelical church denomination. It is a fellowship of Christians united in the need for proclaiming Jesus Christ as our Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. The CMA is founded as a society; not an ecclesiastical organization, but rather a mission organization and, more specifically, a mission-driven organization.¹⁸ Eventually, this society was recognized as a church, a mission society, and a renewal movement. Ministry remains its core focus, and it has a passion for the Gospel. Moreover, it seeks to export the Gospel in its many forms around the globe by supporting international workers in more than eighty countries.

My affiliation with CMA is both pragmatic and personal. It centres me in the evangelical spectrum in my commitment to world missions, and it is a professional credential that also links me to the modern missionary movement. CMA speaks as a missionary denomination; its ministry commitment resonates with my ministry praxis, as their commitment based on the Great Commission is found in Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8. These passages unify all that I do with JFJ and CMA as being missional in purpose.

2.2 Missional Ministry: My “Go-and-Tell” Paradigm

Because all that I do is missional in purpose, my work with JFJ follows what I will define as a go-and-tell paradigm. Contextually oriented to the listener rather than the sender, I present myself as a Jewish follower of Jesus in the various contexts in which my people find themselves. I show deference to the context of others before assuming that they will respect mine. Deference is a position that makes me vulnerable, but it is one that is deeply respectful of context. It also places me at the margins of both the Jewish and Christian communities. This margin is a categorical limit, beyond or below which belonging ceases to exist, be desirable, or be possible.

This paradigm is, at its core, a missiological one that focuses on contextualization. It is built on and shaped by Scripture and the insights of Charles Kraft, Steven Bevans, and Jung Young Lee. It is a paradigm that spurs me, as one who is sent, to tell the message contextually. To understand this paradigm will require unpacking the various elements that make up this theology of ministry.

a. Go-and-Tell: The Scriptural Commission

In the Great Commission, Gospel proclamation is a responsibility to discharge (Matthew 28: 16-20), not a right that is earned. Jesus commissions his disciples to go and tell the good news: He is the Messiah. Proclamation is a responsibility for all believers in Jesus. Similarly, Jesus’ words in Acts 1:8 is a paradigm for the expansion of the Kingdom of Christ. On the surface, Acts 1 primarily presents a geographic model for the spread of the Gospel. It means bringing the Gospel to the place where I live, or even going to a new place to spread
the Gospel. This geographic paradigm is what we most naturally think of when we initially read the Commission. It is a sociological/political paradigm—we proclaim the good news to those who are ethnically and racially similar to us as well as to those who are different, with whom we may have racial/ethnic friction. We also proclaim the Gospel to those who are poor and in areas where there are no churches—those who have been, in their words, “neglected.” The command to go to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts is not sequential. Thus, Matthew 28 and Acts 1 formulate the command to go and spread the Gospel geographically and sociologically to all people. The Gospel is good news that is to be told. The people of God, the Church, are called to go and tell the Gospel to the world as agents of change.

b. Go-and-Tell: A Countercultural Model

Telling is the counterpart to going. That we tell the news is fundamental, yet how we tell it is crucially important, demanding our awareness of context. Steven Bevans’ classic book, *Models of Contextual Theology*, judiciously examines what the terms *contextual theology* and *to contextualize* means, and it proposes six models of contextual theology. According to Bevans, contextual theology is not just a theological imperative (1 Corinthians 9:20ff), but it respects the sacred nature of context. It is, for Bevans, inevitable that theology is contextual because theology can never be distant from human understanding. Theology is from a context and expresses theological truths within that context. Telling is mindful of context.

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Scripture testifies to the contextual nature of theology and ministry, and it provides the foundation on which context rests. Jesus is the primary model for ministry; He offered Himself to the world at a specific time, social location, and cultural context. In Jesus, God shows the relevance and need for such strategy of situating ourselves in another’s “world” to communicate the Gospel. Likewise, His followers, those who represent His work in the world, must be faithful to their vocation as personal communicators of this divine revelation.

Within my context, this theology of ministry means that I must take seriously the context in which Jewish people live and experience God.²¹ To do this and understand “telling” in a contextual way, I and JFJ strongly utilize what anthropologist Charles Kraft describes as receptor-oriented communication to inform our praxis.²² Receptor-oriented communication entails the strategic use of contextualizing in a way that orients communication to the listener, utilizing a particular understanding of communication. Kraft builds on scholar David Berlo’s understanding of communication. Berlo distinguishes between messages and meanings: He says that meanings are not passed between people. As a result, the understanding of a person might not be what was intended by the communicator.²³

According to Kraft, the attachment of meaning to a message is a form of interpretation. When people evaluate what is said, they will evaluate whether what you say is legitimate. Such evaluation, made from the perspective of the evaluator, must exist within their context.²⁴ Kraft argues that it is imperative to attempt to look at the receiver’s

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²¹ Bevans, Contextual Theology, 14.
perspective when seeking understanding. For Kraft, God communicates this way. Kraft defines this as receptor-oriented communication.  

Within my ministry with JFJ, we strongly affirm the need to enter into the hearer’s frame of reference as we model God’s way of communicating to us in Jesus. To do this, we utilize Kraft’s conceptual framework. Because the Gospel message brings about deep structural shifts, receptor-oriented communication’s missiological goal is to communicate the message contextually while in a deeply transformative, countercultural way. Receptor-oriented communication listens to and interprets the environment within which the Gospel is presented, draws on common experiences, and uses culturally relevant language to communicate the good news of Jesus.

To “tell”, the one who “goes” must first listen and understand the context. The speaker is oriented toward the hearers. The one who goes is attentive not only to the way the message is heard within a particular context but also pays attention to any shared experiences that could be used for communicating the Gospel. Likewise, the one who goes is aware of how to communicate the Gospel in a contextual, yet transformative, way as the message will bring about deep structural shifts. As we utilize this strategy at JFJ, it is best defined by Bevan’s countercultural contextualization model because it seeks to challenge and refine the receiver’s cultural context. This kind of challenge and refinement may unavoidably cause offense. It does not offend because we seek to disparage customs or culture, but rather because, as Bevans notes, there is “always something in the communication of the Gospel that calls a particular human experience, a particular culture, a particular social location and

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26 Bevans, Contextual Theology, 117.
historical situation to judgment.”

This model draws on rich and abundant sources in Scripture and tradition. It recognizes that the Gospel presents an all-encompassing and alternative worldview.

One example of this countercultural, contextual approach to ministry that we try to embody can be seen in the slogan, “Be more Jewish—believe in Jesus!” Following Kraft’s receptor-oriented philosophy, we emphasize conversion not as abandoning one’s Jewish heritage and biblical foundations but as affirming this heritage by turning toward the God of Israel and His Messiah (Luke 24). The newly transformed person understands Jesus as the fulfillment of the narrative and destiny of the Jewish people (Matt. 5:17-20). Thus, the receptor’s experience, culture, and place in society are used as contextual communicators, yet they are also simultaneously challenged and changed. Counterculturally, the result for the new believer is a deep structural shift, since the fulfillment of the original Jewish hope is in Jesus. It is a communication device that is, admittedly, cognitively dissonant. The challenge that JFJ faces is communicating within this cultural framework to both affirm and challenge it by presenting Jesus as the fulfillment of Jewish destiny and the judge of all cultures and peoples (Matt. 25:31-46).

c. Go-and-Tell: Embodying Vulnerability

Even as JFJ works to communicate in a culturally relevant way, a common pattern experienced at JFJ is that when the Gospel penetrates Jewish culture through our receptor-oriented, countercultural communication, the culture goes into confusion, and opposition occurs. As noted in the introduction, resistance to the Gospel seems to be embedded in the Jewish cultural and ideological framework, and it is the principal intent of this study to

27 Bevans, Contextual Theology, 117.
28 Bevans, Contextual Theology, 124.
understand this reaction better. As our message calls for deep structural shifts to accept a whole new worldview, it brings with it strong resistance. Surrounded by a culture of rival worldviews that create rival certainties and assumptions about the world, this kind of radical transformation in thinking should characterize both the study and use of contextual theology in a local setting. The Gospel requires communicators who are both visible and vulnerable people who can listen attentively, humbly, and graciously. In other words, the speaker/sender’s character is of utmost importance.

An essential tenet of any theology of ministry that seeks to ‘go-and-tell’ augments the potential for harshness that can even accompany the receptor-oriented, countercultural model. Instead of being antagonistic, those who ‘go-and-tell’ must embody an attitude of vulnerability.29

Jesus is our example. Revealed as a vulnerable person, He suffered in commonplace ways. He lost loved ones, knew heartache, was moved to sadness; He was unappreciated, reviled, maltreated, and even betrayed. And we are now united to the One who experienced all that. So, paradoxically, new life in Christ comes as we share in the sufferings of Christ (Rom. 8:17). In Marin Luther’s sermon, “Two Kinds of Righteousness,” he says that we who are His are bound to Him perpetually. “Just as a bridegroom possesses all that is his bride’s and she all that is his—for the two have all things in common because they are one flesh (Gen. 2:24)—so Christ and the Church are one spirit (Eph. 5:29-32).”30

Vulnerability is at the heart of Scripture. In 2 Corinthians 6 there are many key concepts that characterize Paul’s ministry. These ideas embrace weakness, suffering, and affliction. There are other concepts, however, that contrast with these and that are frequently used such as power, joy, and boasting. Although seeming contradictory, these two sets of concepts have a foundational bearing on how one might learn to adopt an attitude of vulnerability.

There is pain and vulnerability that comes with communicating. Paul is detailed here in the way he speaks about the brokenness of the ministry worker. The gulf that exists between the task and the abilities of the servant seems insurmountable. Paul views ministry as the most insignificant activity conceivable when perceived through worldly eyes. This lowliness is intentional by design; it is a precondition of the worker for any authentic mission. Similarly, the supreme sign of Jesus’ credential of power was His submission to death—his only method of convincing and claiming human hearts.

In 2 Corinthians 6:8-10, Paul uses several clauses introduced by the words “yet” or “as if.” He affirms that the conditions he refers to are real and that it is normal for his ministry to be carried out under these conditions. Being unknown, weak and dying, disciplined, and in sorrow and poverty are the normal circumstances for his (and others’) ministry. Interestingly, the Corinthians authenticate his ministry as being Christ-focused and Christ-formed. The story is of a new kind of kingdom where the cross is a sign of victory.

This new perception of humility and glory profoundly affects our spirituality as workers in mission. The possibility of a Jewish person coming to the Messiah requires not only the weakness and humility of the one who comes to Christ but also of those of us at JFJ.
As the one sent tells the good news, it is important to remember that even a receptor-oriented approach cannot overcome the difficulty inherent in communication. Learning to be vulnerable speakers/senders who listen and tell includes knowing and accepting this ambiguity for the speaker and ambivalence in the hearer. As communicators of the Gospel accept a certain difficulty in communication, they must also be aware that even if understood, messages can create negative impressions within the receptors. These are the characteristics of the speaker/listener interaction. Understanding these complications should continue to encourage the sender/speaker to embody vulnerability.

Communication itself can be uncertain. For example, Scripture and the Gospel message are not ambiguous in the mind of God, yet they can often appear vague or unclear even with the aid of creed or doctrine. To be sure, concepts such as the Suffering Servant and Messiah are certainly clear in the mind of God, yet as we grapple with the specific texts and those who have gone before, we discover that these ideas contain elements of mystery.

When we think about this kind of receptor-oriented communication, we accept the potential for confusion in speaking and hearing. This difficulty is evident when trying to communicate the message of Jesus as the fulfillment of the hope of the Old Testament. As Abraham Heschel explains, the interpretation of prophecy is already “an exegesis of an exegesis.”\footnote{Abraham Heschel, \textit{The Prophets: An Introduction} (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), xiv.} The Old Testament Messianic vision is, at best, experienced as vague, uncertain, and ambiguous without the New Testament. Accepting ambiguity and embracing vulnerability shows respect for the testimony of Scripture as a demonstration of the human experience in response to the revelation of God.

In writing about local theologies and social situations, moral and social theologian Clemens Sedmak explains, “local theologies recognize that theology takes place within a
particular context.”32 Thus, when doing contextual, countercultural ministry, it is vital to consider the implications of stepping into the context of vulnerability. Vulnerability means being aware of the ambiguity embedded in all human experience.

Tradition and human experience can be equally ambiguous. Humans cope by using certain presuppositions grounded in certain cognitive orientations. These orientations become the foundation on which individuals understand, cope with, and integrate the ambiguities of the world.

Ambivalence is a psychological phenomenon. The human mind is averse to uncertainty from an early age and humans respond to uncertainty or obscurity by generating plausible explanations. The analysis of this phenomenon is illustrated in Maria Konnikova’s article, “Why We Need Answers.” Konnikova points to psychologist Jerome Kagan’s research that showed that uncertainty-resolution was one of the most important determinants of behaviour. This resolution was needed to achieve ‘cognitive closure.’33 Psychologist Arie Kruglanski coined this term.34 Konnikova writes: “The need for cognitive closure is a powerful force. But a need is neither a mandate nor an excuse.”35

The implication for ministry is clear to me. A message as transformative as the Gospel will cause deep structural shifts and thereby create uncertainty in the life of the receiver as he or she questions tightly held assumptions about the world. For receptor-oriented, countercultural mission to be effective, then, we at JFJ must accept this two-fold sense of ambiguity/ambivalence: our message can come across as unclear, and even when

32 Clemens Sedmak, Doing Local Theology (New York: Orbis, 2001), 95.
34 Konnikova, “Why We Need Answers.”
35 Konnikova, “Why We Need Answers.”
understood the message can create ambivalence. When we accept this reality, we can approach our mission with humility and vulnerability.

Another aspect of being vulnerable is the willingness to bear reproach. As we participate in the wider mission of the Church to fulfill the commission of Jesus, we know that for the Church to be above reproach, she must be willing to bear the same reproach as the Messiah. "So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured" (Hebrews 13:12-13). While we seek to minister and spread the Gospel in the most blameless, loving, and culturally appropriate ways, the Church must ultimately be willing to suffer the reproach of the world and to forsake all repute and renown in order to serve faithfully and follow Christ. Accepting this, making it central to our understanding of who we are as speakers, is essential to our mission of placing the hearer in a primary position and shaping our communication towards the listener. It makes us vulnerable.

d. Go-and-Tell: Located on the Margins

Using the receptor-oriented, countercultural approach in proclaiming the Gospel takes place from a certain location: the margins. The responsibility of going and telling the good news of the Gospel places the teller on the margins.

Scripture provides the foundational model: Jesus. He spent His entire life on the margins. As human beings, we want centrality, not marginality. But Jesus calls us to the margins; in Scripture one becomes a disciple by picking up his or her cross: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Mark 8:34). To be a follower of Jesus, then, places one on the margins.
Jung Young Lee\textsuperscript{36} has helped me see the paradigm defining marginality. He demonstrates how marginality is central within mission and ministry. First, Lee argues that there is something called the “creative core.” Lee argues that those who communicate the Gospel must not assume that people are at the creative core—that those who hear the Gospel understand or resonate with the same categories as the communicator. The margin is the place where people find themselves. The practitioner of contextual theology wants to find the place on the margin where people live and think.

The creative core is different from the core of centrality that people naturally seek. The core of centrality is the place where they understand the language, where they feel safe and accepted. The creative core is not a movement from the margins to the centre; instead, the new ‘centre’ is at the margin.

The creative core moves us to the margin where man is reconciled with God; God, in the Messiah Jesus, was reconciling the world to himself (2 Corinthians 5:19). I have modified Lee’s diagram for my purposes. In it we can see that this process does not seek to “dominate but harmonizes margins with coexistence.”\textsuperscript{37}

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\textsuperscript{36} Jung Young Lee. \textit{Marginality}. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1995.  \\
\textsuperscript{37} Lee, \textit{Marginality}, 98.
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It is through this proposed praxis that we can move away from the centre of centrality for both the missionary and the receptor (mission field) and move towards the where the margins meet: the Creative Core. This is where there is the most effective transmission of information – this is where we find a shared narrative that opens us to the possibility of vulnerability, brokenness, and accepting ambiguity/ambivalence. It is contextual theology that is truly local in a shared human story. When we engage in the praxis of vulnerability, brokenness, and ambiguity/ambivalence from the margins of marginality, we engage who we are with what we say. I would say that this praxis empowers and endows Christian ministry.

Receptor-oriented, countercultural ministry does not take place from a position of power. We at JFJ understand that the speaker does not come in over and above the culture, but he or she works within the culture on the margins inviting others in vulnerability to come and share a new story. We do this in a contextual way. But even as we embrace receptor-
oriented communication, we continue to remember that we do this from the margins. It is where Jesus lived, and it is the location we inhabit as well as the place to which we invite others to come and live.

**e. Go and Tell: Resisting Ennui**

What sustains me in Christian vocation? It is a sense of divine calling, a passion for Jesus Christ and his Gospel, a love for people, a desire to help others flourish spiritually. I also try to have a clear understanding of my boundaries and capacities. What happens when I am unable to engage in satisfying activity? *Ennui*, in the form of spiritual numbness, can descend. It is tempting to abandon difficult ministry and settle for predictable management of the status quo. I believe this temptation is a fact of life in a vocation where there are no balance sheets, no tangible proof of work, and often few results to show for much work.

Philosopher Blaise Pascal echoes this sentiment when he writes: “We seek rest in a struggle against some obstacles. And when we have overcome these, rest proves unbearable because of the boredom it produces.”38 Pastoral Theologian Derek Tidball describes how even well-intentioned Christian leaders can become victims of the routine nature of ministry. In his book *Skillful Shepherds: An Introduction to Pastoral Theology*, Tidball suggests that Pastors, insulated from outside forces, may turn into managers rather than shepherds.39 Without a sense of purpose, the work of the pastor can produce *ennui*.

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C. S. Lewis sensed the possibility of losing delight in the Lord on account of the work of ministry. Lewis describes this danger to a recently converted man who was pondering the possibility of studying theology to become an ordained minister:

I think there is a great deal to be said for having one’s deepest spiritual interest distinct from one’s ordinary duty as a student or professional [person]. St Paul’s job was tent-making. When the two coincide I should have thought there was a danger… that what is boring and repellant in the job may alienate one from the spiritual life…Someone has said ‘None are so unholy as those whose hands are cauterized with holy things’; sacred things may become profane by becoming matters of the job.40

To prevent this boredom from sneaking into my ministry, I try to cultivate an awareness of a personal ascetic before God. What are the identifying markers of my vocational holiness? My vocation as defined by my theology of ministry requires a vow of stability, similar to that of St. Benedict. In his paper, “The Vow of Stability,” theologian Gerard Schlabach describes this vow of stability as the medicine for boredom and a cure for ennui.41 Anchoring oneself in this vow will help the worker from measuring success by the values of our secular age.

There are also ordinary means of grace such as praying, taking time for worship and rest, regularly receiving the Lord’s Supper and searching the Scriptures to hear the Lord speaking. In the Jewish tradition, it is the principle of Kiddush HaShem, “sanctification of the name,” which embraces the sanctification of God’s name by being holy in the

commonplace. To embrace this ascetic means that my home is my temple, my kitchen is my altar, and my meal is my sacrifice.

2.3 The Story: What we Go-and-Tell

I describe the core of my theology of ministry as ‘go-and-tell.’ The content of what we share, however, remains unexplored. Thus, in this section I will briefly outline the content of the message that JFJ and I seek to share.

I maintain that truth is rooted in story—not in systems, creeds, doctrine, or apologetics. Scripture is the story by which the Jewish people traditionally understood their lives. It is not an anthology but a single story with an ending. Throughout Scripture, we see the parallel stories of humanity and God. The characteristic of the living God is that He speaks and wants to be understood. This characteristic sets him apart from all others gods who are, *ipso facto*, idols. We know this God by knowing His story. The story of Scripture has a hero—the God of Israel, who makes Himself known in the context of shared stories, ambiguities, and vulnerabilities. Scripture is also simultaneously the story of a people. A people are chosen to be the bearer of His purpose, chosen for suffering, agony, and conflict. It is a story of brokenness—not one person remains untouched by the effects of human rebellion against God. It is the story of how our rebellion has impacted every part of our lives: our relationship with God, with others, and his creation. This story insists that God will not leave us until He has won us back. He reaches us in our brokenness.

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Genesis 12 marks a crucial turning point in the biblical narrative. The chosenness of Israel and the idea of Israel as a blessing is introduced. We are presented with the start of the linking of a people to the God who takes initiative.⁴⁴ There is something astonishing in the story as Abraham is promised to be “the father of a multitude of nations.” Through Abraham, God takes the initiative and begins the road of inviting all people to participate and draw hope in a story. Genesis 12 marks the start of Israel and God’s redemptive history.

In the context of the Gospels, the Jews were home, the exile had ended, but they were not home. Something was incomplete; the world and Israel still needed to be redeemed. There was hope for the *consolation of Israel* (Luke 2:25-35).

The crucifixion of Jesus must have been the devastation of that hope for His followers. This seems to explain why the two disciples on the road to Emmaus were arguing so vigorously. As biblical scholar N.T. Write describes: “They had been traveling up a road that they thought was leading to freedom, and it turned out to be a cul-de-sac.”⁴⁵

The Gospel accounts show us that Jesus’ followers thought that the ending was going to happen with Jesus, when, clearly, it had not: “We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel” (Luke 24:21).

The response from Jesus was to tell the story of Moses and the Prophets to show that within the historical promises, there was a pattern: “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). This was the correct story. In this story was this truth: The Kingdom was here.

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⁴⁴ See Chapter 3 for issues concerning rival interpretations of Genesis 12.
2.4 Implications of Theology of Ministry

How, then, are we to communicate the correct story? For me, it is primarily through putting into practice my ‘go-and-tell’ theology of ministry. Hurling systems or creeds at people will either crush them or drive them away. Of course, mission and evangelism are never a matter of throwing doctrine at the listeners, and most paradigms work in far more holistic ways through praxis, symbol, and story as well as through what many think of as straightforward expositions of truth. What a ‘go-and-tell’ paradigm shaped by receptor-oriented communication insists is that we must adapt our mission to the listener and include living the true Christian praxis of brokenness, ambiguity/ambivalence, and vulnerability.

We must tell the story of God, Israel, Jesus, and the world as the true metanarrative—the story of our brokenness, ambivalence, and vulnerability. The story we tell, the grand metanarrative of God’s redemption of the world, begins with an elect people who become the vehicle of God’s liberating program of blessing for all the families of the earth. The destiny of my Jewish people is in this story. Within my ministry, God’s story is not just any story but our story—a story that yearns for culmination in Jesus the Messiah of Israel and Saviour of the world. He brings to fulfillment all that arises from human yearning and questioning.

We tell the story in a way that places the hearer first. Thus, the receptor-oriented, countercultural approach that I have developed within the ‘go-and-tell’ paradigm means that the Gospel is brought into the Jewish community in a way that respects and takes seriously the Jewish experience, social location, various cultural manifestations, and social change located in this culture.46 My theology of ministry, which is shaped and shared by JFJ, requires a thorough understanding of the context in which Jewish people live and experience

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46 Bevans, Contextual Theology, 15.
God. I need to understand, through study and investigation, why there is resistance to the Gospel among Jews and how this resistance manifests itself in lived experience. This understanding cannot remain abstract. My experience and understanding of Gospel resistance must be concrete. I must use this experience and understanding to shape and inform my receptor-oriented communication so I can be honestly contextual and countercultural.

If I am to present myself as a Jewish follower of Jesus in the various contexts in which my people find themselves, my theology of ministry requires that I thoroughly understand the context. This theological unpacking of ‘go-and-tell’, then, provides the foundational impetus for this study. It is also the ministry within which the implications of this study are put into practice.

47 Bevans, Contextual Theology, 14.
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

The previous chapter outlined my theology of ministry and showed how it provided a foundation for the necessity of understanding the concrete ways that Jewish communities resist the Gospel message. Before moving on to presenting my study and the anthropological categories it presents (Chapter 4), I need to unpack my two-fold theoretical framework that informs and grounds my research study.

3.1 Biblical Theology: Hardening as a Missiological and Theological Category

My two-fold theoretical framework is grounded in a missiological and theological approach to the biblical theme of hardening, particularly as Paul articulates it in Romans 11. While this is an important foundation for my research study, it is important to note four things. First, my utilization of hardening is complex. Taking a biblical category and applying it to contemporary contexts can be seen as a prejudicial judgment, not the least because it is open to the criticism of being anachronistic and because it identifies a contemporary phenomenon with something that by its nature (written in a different time and context) was different. I understand that this can be contentious; it is not done simply or easily. Judgments are made on different sides and the acts of God may be interpreted as morally offensive. I am one who assumes the full gravity and earnestness of all who take part in today's debates regarding the ancient text’s application to the modern world. And, as I will suggest, hardening is not to be interpreted in an angry manner; it can be moderated and still maintain the weight of the biblical teaching. Second, I bring to the text the presupposition that Paul’s assertions deal with the complex nature of the Jewish resistance to the Gospel in his day along with the presupposition that this complex nature remains germane today. Thus, Paul’s statements need not stay rooted in the past. I take Paul at his word and assert that Paul is
speaking missiologically, contemporarily, and eschatologically. Paul wrote about the subject of hardening just as Moses and the prophets spoke about hardening. This theme of hardening forms an important foundation for my study of and interaction with the topic. My assertion is that hardening is manifest and experienced in particular ways within the contemporary Jewish community. Third, my reading of this text rests on and draws support from commentators and history while seeking to move into a fresh area: tackling what hardening might feel like or look like today. I seek to draw support from what I see Scripture presenting to its readers with a specific understanding of its continuity for today. I do not want to be prejudicial and judgmental. I have a worldview informed by Scripture and the premise that Scripture serves as a lens to help understand a particular contemporary phenomenon.

I am using a particular hermeneutic as I approach this text. It is a hermeneutic that is ancient and modern. It is missiological and assumes that God speaks conclusively and plainly about his ways and his works in Scripture. I get there by letting Scripture interpret itself to us from within. The Holy Spirit, who inspired the writers, teaches the Church, and the intention of the writer does not run counter to anything else in the canon. This is the position of historic traditions: Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, and of evangelicals and other conservative Protestants. There are variances on the place of the Church and human reason in the interpretive process, but there is general agreement concerning this basic hermeneutical position. Fourth, to deal with the complexity of the application and to ask how Romans 11 applies to the contemporary predicament of Jewish resistance to the Gospel, I will amplify the interpretive tradition as I develop hardening as a biblical and theological concept to grapple with what contemporary hardening feels like and looks like. For all of its depth and insight, the history of interpretation of this text does not deal with hardening as a real
mechanism inside a contemporary community, something that has a life of its own. This understanding of hardening is foundational in my experience. It theologically and missiologically addresses the question of why, for all its diversity, the contemporary Jewish community remains resistant to the Gospel.

Having addressed some of the important theoretical and potentially controversial issues, I will unpack hardening as a theological and missiological category by understanding hardening in Romans 11 first within its scriptural context and then by analyzing theological commentators on the topic. Finally, I will conclude by seeking to understand the missiological implications of this text.

a. Hardening: Romans 11 in the Biblical Narrative

In Romans 11, Paul describes hardening as a reality “until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in” (v25). Within the narrative of Scripture, Paul’s use of the term is *intramural* in that he follows in the tradition of the prophets who spoke as family, as insiders, to people who preferred not to listen. Even though his use of the term is *intramural*, he applies the term in a unique way by utilizing it specifically to describe the Jewish response to the Messiah. Drawing on Old Testament (OT) usage, he describes hardening as a warning (v25a), a mystery (v25b), partial (v25c), and temporary (v25d and v26a). In this text, Paul weaves together hardening and the concept of blindness.

In the OT and the literature of Early Judaism, the concept of hardening occurs frequently.48 In the OT three Hebrew words from the roots *ḥzq*, *qšh* and *kbd* are used to indicate the hardening of the heart that mysteriously occurs as a result of an interaction between God’s hardening and making one’s own heart hard. Hardening is part of God’s

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redemptive plan. Within Romans 11, Paul seems to be specifically drawing on the OT ideas of hardening present in Deuteronomy 29:4 and Isaiah 6:9-10, 29:10. Paul’s quotation of Isaiah 6:9-10 is a common practice within the NT. It is quoted in every one of the Gospels, the book of Acts, and in Romans (cf. Matt. 13:14; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40; Acts 28:26; Rom. 11:8). Isaiah 6:9-10 states: “Go and tell this people: ‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving. Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed’” (Isaiah 6:9-10). The other writers of the NT pick up on this passage to address the state of being blind to the working of God. Paul too references the passage to highlight a people blind to the working of God: Israel.\(^49\)

His use in this text, however, is distinctive. The form of the Greek word ‘hard’ that Paul uses in 11:25 only occurs three times in the New Testament (Rom. 11:25; Mark 3:5; Eph. 4:18). In Romans 11:25 Paul uses the particular noun, πορόσις, for hardening that has the sense of covering with a thick skin, like a callus. The sense is also of something that is petrified or insensible. Something has formed that is making the hearts of Israel impenetrable by the Gospel. The word is used two other times in the NT in the same way. In both instances, it refers metaphorically to the hardness of heart rooted in misunderstanding (the hard-heartedness of the Jewish witnesses to Jesus’ ministry and the hard-heartedness of Gentiles alienated from God, respectively).

\(^{49}\) See Craig A. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive: Isaiah 6:9–10 in Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation*, JSTOTSup, ed. David J.A. Clines and Philip R. Davies, vol. 64 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1989), 203. He examines the spiritual blindness of Israel in its original setting, and then he traces its translation and use in Qumran, the Septuagint, rabbinic literature (e.g., the Targum and Peshitta), the New Testament, and in later rabbinic and Christian literature. His work is very helpful for tracing this key text and its chronological understanding.
Within the NT, the other common Greek root, *sklērynō* is also used to denote a state of spiritual implacability. To be ‘hard’ is to be unresponsive to God. Paul himself, for example, uses this alternative verb in Romans 9:18. This use has a slightly different nuance from the noun in Romans 11:25, which denotes hardness being the result of misunderstanding rather than being unyielding. Looking to Paul’s specific reference to the hardening of Israel in Romans 11, his choice of a noun in this passage gives a more vivid picture of hardening as the heart being covered by a thick skin. The thick skin represents misunderstanding and unwillingness to learn and is also something that may protect the wounds and brokenness underneath.

Paul adamantly proclaims that the hardening is temporary. When a scab protects a wound, it eventually falls off after serving its function. The indication is that this invisible theological state is a phenomenon that manifests itself visually in ethnic Israel in resistance and opposition to the message of Jesus. This resistance is temporary and does not mean that Israel has forfeited her place as the people of God according to the covenant.

Paul’s use of hardening in Romans 11 is also unique because of the way he connects to the concept of blindness and mystery. “Blindness” is the major theme of Romans 11. After emphatically insisting that Israel is not rejected in verses 11:1–2a, Paul offers the remnant as proof of this in verses 2b–5. In verses 6 and 7, Paul speaks of the remnant chosen by grace and the rest being “hardened.” It is this that gives significance to the remnant; this is the calamity from which the remnant is saved, and he cites biblical evidence from the Law (v8), the Writings (v9), and the Prophets (v10). In verses 11–24, after insisting that Israel has stumbled but has not fallen, Paul explains the reason the majority of Israel has been
“blinded.” Finally, in verses 25–32, he answers the question of how long the blindness will last and what its outcome is.

Paul connects the theme of Israel’s blindness to his description of hardening in verse 25: “I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.” Paul is tying the hardness of Israel to the purposes of God. However, the origin of hardening is unclear. What is the origin and purpose of hardening? Previously in Romans 9:18, following his citation of Exodus 9:16 and the mention of Pharaoh, Paul dealt with the issue of Israel’s accountability: “So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.”

Another major part of Paul’s unique treatment is the way he addresses the nature of the “mystery” of Israel’s hardening in Romans 11:25 The Greek word for mystery, mystērion, refers to “divine secrets now revealed by divine agency.” Because this is a word that refers to something that has only recently been revealed, some interpreters believe it refers to the teaching concerning Israel’s blindness itself. For example, biblical scholar John F. Walvoord notes: “By this word [i.e., “mystery”] reference is made to a doctrine which had not been revealed prior to the New Testament revelation but which is now fully made known.”

Since Paul has already quoted Isaiah 6:9–10 earlier (Rom. 11:8), he is not saying that the fact of Israel’s hardening and blindness to the Gospel is the mystery. (The mystery is God’s missiological purposes.) In Romans 11:25, Paul uses the phrase “lest you be wise in your own estimation” to indicate his motive for desiring that the Gentile Christians in Rome

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50 James D. G. Dunn, Romans, Word Biblical Commentary 38B (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1988), 678.
should know this mystery: if they know it, they are less likely to succumb to the temptation to be wise in their own eyes, to be conceited about any supposed superior wisdom. Thus, the mystery is connected to God’s missiological purposes. Paul is concerned that his readers understand the unanticipated three-step process: first, a remnant of Israel is saved; then, in addition, a remnant of Gentiles is being saved (along with the Jewish remnant currently being saved); until, finally, when the full number of these Gentiles is saved, “all Israel will be saved” (Romans 11:26). The content of this mystery is spelled out in these three interconnecting statements about God’s dealings with Israel: (1) that a partial hardening has happened to Israel; (2) “until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in”; and (3) “thus all Israel will be saved.”

The hardening of Israel does not afflict the entire nation, for “there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice” (Rom. 11:5). So any talk of the nation’s blindness must be tempered. This blindness of Israel is also temporary; it will only last until “the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.” In some way, God is using the blindness of Israel for His purposes in the world. This temporary blindness will usher in not only “the fullness of the Gentiles,” but also the salvation of the entire Jewish nation.

Hardening in Romans 11 is a circumstance that is reversible (vv11–24). The spiritual implacability denoted by hardening is not a permanent condition. On this view of the matter, the condition of hardening is one that can change through the work of God’s grace. As Paul puts it in Romans 11, those among the Jews who are hardened (v7) have not stumbled “so as to fall beyond recovery” (v11). By their faith, they can be restored again to the olive tree, to the people of God (v23). And this faith, as the argument of Romans has made plain, is faith
in Christ and the good news that he has brought (see e.g. 3:22, 26; 10:8–13). Hardening is not the final act of condemnation in Romans 11.

b. Hardening: Theological Interpretation of Romans 11

In recent theological and missiological approaches to the text, the primary focus has shifted away from the chosenness of Israel and salvation to God’s missiological purposes in the world. Biblical theologian Herman Ridderbos maintains that because of hardening Israel was destined to stumble so that Gentiles might increase but also that all might rise by the grace of God. Stumbling is not about destining to judgment, but it is about God’s historical purposes. Paul’s reference to Jeremiah 18 is in anticipation of the resolution of his argument in Romans 11. The concern is not the doctrine of salvation but the future of Israel.52

Theologians Jim Sibley, Krister Stendahl, and Andrew Das highlight this emphasis on missiology in their analysis of Romans 11. Sibley asserts that Paul does not deal with the subject in connection with the doctrines of eschatology or election but in connection with the mission of the Church.53 Sibley writes: “Romans is Paul’s final account of his theology of mission.”54 In speaking of Paul’s focus in Romans, Stendahl concludes: “It is missiology, not soteriology.”55 Similarly, Das claims: “God’s eschatological plan revolves entirely around Israel.”56 While God’s purposes in mission are in Romans 11, it is bound up with the nature of the Gospel itself and has a direct bearing on the mission of the Church. Paul’s concern in Romans is not with the chosenness of Israel but with God’s missiological purposes in the world. Paul is claiming that Gentile believers have been grafted in (Rom. 11:17-25) and

52 Herman Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline of His Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 46.
54 Sibley, “Blindness of Israel,” 41.
55 Krister Stendahl, Final Account (Cambridge, MA: University Lutheran Church, 1993), ix.
made “fellow heirs of the same body and partakers of the promise in Christ by the Gospel” (Eph. 3:6).

N.T. Wright suggests that Paul is telling the Church that somehow this hardening is part of the plan of God. Wright says that this proposal is a scandalous idea. According to Wright, Paul grounds his argument in the notion that the idea of hardening is carried forward from a discussion of Pharaoh to the discussion of Israel in exile. The hardening of Israel is a part of the saving purposes of God. Where did Paul get this idea? Wright says that rejection is what happened to Israel’s representative, Jesus the Messiah. Paul draws on the OT background of the mystery of hardening to describe the Jewish rejection of the Messiah, specifically the OT ideas of hardening present in Deuteronomy 29:4 and Isaiah 29:10.

According to biblical scholars C.E.B. Cranfield, Douglas Moo, and James Dunn, Paul speaks of the mystery of hardening so that the Gentiles in Rome might understand God’s purposes and plans and not feel wise, superior, and proud or puffed up in their own eyes. It is not, according to Cranfield, simple disobedience; rather “a divine hardening is involved.” Cranfield does not say if Israel’s disobedience is a cause or result of hardening. It is part of the mystery. Cranfield, then, similarly articulates the hardening of Israel as a part of the saving purposes of God. Cranfield calls this hardening “the unbelief of the greater part of Israel.” Moo likens the hardening of Israel to a great drama in which Israel and the Gentiles take different opportunities on the podium. Paul wants to be sure that there is no doubt what the Gentiles in Rome learn: This theological mystery has a concrete purpose. They cannot
think too highly of themselves in comparison with the Jewish people (v25a).\textsuperscript{61} The hardening of Israel is a part of that plan and has as its climax the salvation of Israel. For Dunn, Paul does not indicate when or how this mystery of God’s plan is revealed, but only points to the mystery of God’s purposes. Dunn makes an interesting point about this revelation in saying that he “may have been aware that what he was about to say would strain credibility.”\textsuperscript{62} Furthermore, for Dunn, Paul indicates that hardening is a continuing state until the fulfillment of God’s purposes.

Biblical scholar Robert Jewett indicates that Paul intends to guard against haughty or prideful behaviour by the Gentiles, but he also deepens the context in which Paul utilizes the concept of mystery. He makes a convincing argument concerning the mystery. He says that this term is used widely within the Greco-Roman religion, local mystery religions, and various branches of early Christianity. It is a term that is related to a kind of limited access to divine knowledge.\textsuperscript{63} Jewett interestingly says that Paul’s use of the word was a way that he could overcome insider favouritism.\textsuperscript{64}

Paul is speaking of the conclusion of a process, and only at the conclusion of this process, marked by “the fullness of the Gentiles,” will “all Israel be saved.” Thus, the mystery is how the blindness of Israel and its hardening relates to God’s missionary purpose. Paul wanted his readers to understand this truth.

My use of hardening follows these interpretations and informs and grounds my study. I contend that there is no stridency in stating that Israel continues to resist the message of

\textsuperscript{61} Douglas Moo, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans} (Eerdmans Publishing. Grand Rapids 1996), 718-719.
\textsuperscript{64} Jewett, “Romans,” 698.
Jesus. That ethnic Israel has resisted and survived is perplexing and seems is related to this phenomenon. The nature of hardening takes God’s role and human responsibility seriously. Hardening serves a bewildering purpose: not only does it keep my people away from the Gospel, but it has also served as a safeguard. The Jewish people have survived ethnically and with an ancient tradition intact. Paul’s caution must be taken seriously.

Paul wants to focus missiologically on God’s redemptive plan in the world. Similarly, he does not want those who understand the Gospel to become haughty or proud. No one in Rome should have an attitude of superiority towards the Jews.

A remnant of Jews has always believed in Jesus as Messiah of Israel. Most of Israel is resistant to this message, but Israel’s place is not forfeited. The mystery is that the situation is not permanent.

What remains missing is a study of how hardening looks and feels within this community. While it is not automatically negative, hardening is a resistance to something. It is an opposition, a misunderstanding, and it operates within communities. My interest in this study is to understand what this phenomenon looks like today. The biblical and missiological category of hardening is a theoretical framework to understand this phenomenon. In this case, I want to examine the experiences of Jewish people who believe that Jesus is the Messiah and try to see if those experiences relate to what Paul writes in Romans 11.

3.2 Biblical Theology: Jewish Theological Reflection

Current Jewish engagement with the idea of Jews’ relationship to the Gospel is to defend the Jewish denial of Jesus, which is indispensable to a separate Jewish identity.
Jewish writers Joseph Klausner, David Klinghoffer, and David Novak, as well as the recent statement *Dabru Emet* are all excellent examples in contemporary Jewish scholarship.

**a. Joseph Klausner**

In the mid-twentieth century Jewish historian and professor of Hebrew literature, Joseph Klausner, defended the Jewish repudiation of Jesus because Jesus jeopardized Jewish civilization.\(^\text{65}\) Klausner reads Jesus’ words as an abstraction of religion and ethics separated from the rest of community life. He writes: “Jesus came and thrust aside all the requirements of the national life. . . . he ignored them completely; in their stead he set up an ethico-religious system bound up with his conception of the Godhead. . . .”\(^\text{66}\)

Klausner argues that Jesus “did not come to enlarge his nation’s knowledge, art and culture, but to abolish even such culture as it possessed, bound up with religion. Jesus ignored everything concerned with material civilization; in this sense he does not belong to civilization.”\(^\text{67}\) This is the principal reason for the rejection, and “two thousand years of non-Jewish Christianity have proved that the Jewish people did not err.”\(^\text{68}\)

**b. David Klinghoffer**

Contemporary Jewish thinker David Klinghoffer starts with the presupposition that Jews must reject Jesus. He attempts to show how Jesus did not fulfill Jewish Messianic expectations. According to Klinghoffer, Paul radically rejected Torah Judaism and invented a new missionary religion when Paul accepted Jesus.


\(^{66}\) Klausner, *Jesus*, 390.

\(^{67}\) Klausner, *Jesus*, 373-375.

\(^{68}\) Klausner, *Jesus*, 391.
Klinghoffer argues that in rejecting Jesus, the Jews became identified via their rejection. Their hardening, then, defines a people.69 “If the Talmud, Maharal, and Martin Buber are right, does this mean that Jewish essence is, at its heart, merely a negation?”70 Klinghoffer argues: “The Jewish rejection of Jesus was the founding act of Western Civilization.”71 He notes that it suited God’s purposes in the establishment of Christian culture: “It served God’s purpose that there be a unique religion, acknowledging Him, for the people who spread out from Europe.”72 For Klinghoffer, the rejection of Jesus gave us western values. He also sees an eschatological seed in the Jewish rejection of Jesus and the Christian worship of the God of the Jews that will sprout at the end of days to reunify people in God’s service.

c. David Novak & Dabru Emet

David Novak, the chair of the Jewish Studies Department at the University of Toronto, emphasizes the contradictory differences between Christianity and Judaism. These differences are evidenced in Novak’s work and the Dabru Emet, “Speak [the] Truth,” which Novak signed. Dabru Emet was published September 10, 2000, in the New York Times.73 The document affirms, as Novak did in a lecture at Wycliffe College, the theological differences between these two religions.74 The document also points out the areas of agreement. “Christians know and serve God through Jesus Christ and the Christian tradition.

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69 Klinghoffer’s statements reminded me of an encounter I had within my own ministry. Several years ago I was talking to a Jewish man about Jesus’ claims to be Messiah of Israel. After a while, this man said, “Look, we Jews reject Jesus because we are Jews, and being Jewish means that we reject Jesus.”

70 David Klinghoffer, Why the Jews Rejected Jesus (New York: Doubleday, 2005), 216.

71 Klinghoffer, Why the Jews Rejected Jesus, 217.

72 Klinghoffer, Why the Jews Rejected Jesus, 219.


74 David Novak, “Did Paul want to Start a New Religion.” Public Lecture, Wycliffe College at the University of Toronto (October 2014), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPSgQrXMZ84.
Jews know and serve God through Torah and the Jewish tradition. That difference will not be settled by one community insisting that it has interpreted Scripture more accurately than the other; nor by exercising political power over the other. Jews can respect Christians’ faithfulness to their revelation just as we expect Christians to respect our faithfulness to our revelation. Neither Jew nor Christian should be pressed into affirming the teaching of the other community.”

What is significant in this document and Novak’s work is that resistance is a good thing; it maintains something about the mysterious destiny of Israel that is present in Romans 11 and indicates a common ground between Christians and Jews even amidst the theological differences that divide the two communities.

But questions remain, especially as I build my framework and engage in my ministry. What does hardening look like? How do we identify it? To answer these questions, we need to move to the second part of my two-part framework.

3.3 Implied Social Contract

I have identified the biblical and missiological theme of hardening. Now I move to the second part of my two-fold theoretical framework: the Implied Social Contract (ISC). This part of my framework builds on and assumes the hardening of Israel and seeks to unpack how this hardening could be conceived sociologically and historically within Jewish communities. This second part will fill out the theoretical framework that I utilized in my research study as well as show the need for the more specific anthropological categories that my study uncovered to explain modern Jewish antipathy to the Gospel.

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Before defining the ISC and theoretically examining how this sociological phenomenon arose, we need to address concepts that are important to our formulation. First we need to look at the connection between worldview and culture formation. Second, we need to understand Social Contract Theory.

a. Worldview and Culture

In Chapter 2 when we unpacked my theology of ministry, I argued that people develop assumptions and presuppositions (deep structures) as a way to deal with the ambiguities of the world. These assumptions and presuppositions serve to give people cognitive closure. Basic presuppositions are yoked to a fundamental social coping mechanism. These interpretations preserve each group’s orientation, language, and culture as sacred and unique.

I try to understand how these presuppositions operate within the lives of individuals and communities through the contemporary philosophical concept of ‘worldview.’ James W. Sire provides a helpful definition:

A commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions) which may be true, or entirely false, which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.76

In his book, Worldviews in Conflict: Choosing Christianity in a World of Ideas, Ronald Nash defines ‘worldview’ as a “conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge

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76 James W. Sire, Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a Concept (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 122.
reality.” Worldview, according to Nash, is a mechanism for protecting ‘in-groups’ from external threats. This in-group protection mechanism establishes a social hierarchy that enables them to dominate. This in-group protection results in rival communities with competing worldviews. You cannot see these rival certainties, but they manifest themselves in separate communities that retreat into the shelter of their certainties.

Worldviews are by nature complex and contain a wide variety of commitments, conventions, and moral conclusions. They do not arise out of thin air, but most of us do not reflect systematically on our worldview. Worldview is a tacit lens by which we observe and comprehend the world. Worldviews are passed down and shaped by cultures. Culture, as missiologist Lesslie Newbigin states, is the “…sum total of ways of living developed by a group of human beings and handed on from generation to generation” For Newbigin, culture is wide and deep. Similarly, Charles Kraft sees culture as an interconnected ‘coping and preserving mechanism based on a worldview.

One important nuance to Newbigin and Kraft comes from David Wells’ sociological description of natural groupings: social units that transmit cultural and social values. These, he argues, provide orientation and stability in thought, expression, and sensibility within a given culture. There are minority groupings that form within a majority culture to maintain cultural values of the minority. These small groupings are important when talking about people or ethnic groups who do not have a dominant culture but exist as many different communities with several shared cultural values—such as Jewish communities. The

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77 Ronald H. Nash, Worldviews in Conflict: Choosing Christianity in a World of Ideas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 16.
78 Nash, Worldviews in Conflict, 19-20.
transmission of deep structures—assumptions and presuppositions about the world, morality, etc.—that form complex worldviews comes through cultures and natural groupings of people. It seems as though hardening towards the Gospel is something that is passed down through diverse Jewish communities via their cultural commitment that to be Jewish is not to be a follower of Jesus.

**ii. Social Contract Theory**

Defining worldview commitment theoretically and sociologically—by our biblical exploration—is best done through a unique application of Social Contract Theory (SCT). SCT is a political theory first defended by Thomas Hobbes. Originally SCT speaks about what authority the state has over its people. The view is that the commitment that citizens make to the state is dependent on this contract. More recently SCT gained traction from John Rawls. Some philosophers have argued that SCT is an incomplete picture of our moral and political lives.\(^8^2\)

Hobbes is concerned with the possibility of social contracts that lift society out of endless conflict. Hobbes argued that citizens would voluntarily give up their liberties to a government that had the power to enforce a Social Contract.\(^8^3\)

Modern versions of SCT assign a more expansive role beyond the state. The very notion of justice is itself a general social “contract” or agreement.\(^8^4\) Rawls writes about SCT as an agreement on societal demeanour: “To combine into one conception the totality of

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\(^8^4\) Freeman, “Original Position.”
conditions which we are ready upon due reflection to recognize as reasonable in our conduct towards one another.”

What does SCT have to do with modern-day Jewish communities? It provides a basic theoretical framework that can be transformed to articulate sociologically contemporary Jewish aversion to the Gospel. Thus, if we remove its primarily political meaning and take social contracts to be at work in the formation of communities, there are implied social contacts operative at the level of worldview formation. And, within Jewish communities there is a very specific Implied Social Contract: “Jews don’t believe in Jesus, for if they do, they are no longer Jewish.”

How this came about and what it looks like are essential to my work and the work of JFJ. The rest of this chapter will examine how the ISC has arisen within Jewish communities as an essential component of self-definition and why it is so important today. My action-in-ministry research presented in Chapter 4 is a research that goes beyond the historical and theoretically oriented sociological survey and provides anthropological categories to the ISC. The remaining part of this chapter will explore the ISC by surveying Jewish history after Christ, the Church’s increasing stridency towards Jewish people, and contemporary Jewish culture as under threat. The goal is to show how the ISC could have arisen in Jewish culture and how this device is one that defines Jews as not believing in Jesus and, similarly, to believe in Jesus causes one to step outside the given definition of a Jew.

This self-definition serves a very particular purpose: self-preservation. The implication is that espousing Christianity makes one a non-Jew, effectively placing this person outside the culture. This value is transmitted and protected by the ISC, which, if

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dishonoured, places one outside the culture—a violation of the essence of the culture. In other words, staying in the culture protects its current and future existence. This language and culture substantiate a worldview; also it ultimately protects the ‘in group’ from threats from outside groups. This ‘in group’ protection mechanism establishes a social hierarchy that enables the ‘in groups’ to dominate, and this language of certainty creates a cognitive certainty that manifests itself in rival communities. You cannot see these rival certainties, but they manifest themselves in separate communities when they retreat into the shelter of their exclusive certainties. The not seen establishes the seen to foster and preserve distinct thought and discrete groups.

Figure 2: Self Preservation as Rival Certainty Diagram

c. Survey of Jewish History After Christ: The Family Fight

Within the century following Jesus’ death and resurrection, the claim of his Messiahship met with varied responses in the Jewish community. This early history began a long and intense theological reflection on the boundary between Jews and believers—both Jewish and Gentile. As Christianity became predominantly Gentile, Jewish believers in Jesus
became a less dominant voice in theological reflection. Christian theological reflection on the Jewish rejection of Jesus began to focus on the Christian inheritance of OT promises. This focus had an interesting effect—one that could be characterized as a hardening of Christians towards sharing the good news with Jews. This section will briefly outline some of the major themes in Jewish and Christian history and literature as they relate to why Jews today could define themselves by not being Christians.

When relatives fight, they do so with a passion and intensity that is foreign to outsiders. The NT is a sort of intramural fight in which Jesus expresses who he is dynamically in his passionate, anxious language of care. His message is far from being a diatribe against the Jewish people. However, instead of being a resolved ‘family fight,’ many saw the NT as the start of a relational divorce; thus, by the second century a boundary had formed between Jews and Jewish believers in the Messiah. For believers—Jewish and Gentile—Jewish non-believers became an enemy to be refuted and converted.\(^{86}\) Likewise, Jewish leadership developed a necessary competing exegesis and attempted to construct a protective boundary of social and cultural beliefs.\(^{87}\) Many interpreters have inherited this boundary and assented to it without explicitly agreeing to its details.

The process of cultural and religious separation began immediately after Jesus’ death. The crucified Messiah fragmented the inner logic between the Jews and Jewish followers of Jesus. Jewish-Christian scholar Jakob Jocz says that this occurred “because in the view of His followers Jesus was the Messiah, the implications were such as made their religious existence within Judaism impossible.”\(^{88}\) For the early followers of the Messiah, there was no consciously planned action to initiate any schism within Judaism. The early Jewish believers

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tried, for many years, to maintain their existence within Judaism, but they were slowly and systematically excommunicated from their culture. The religious leaders called them the *minim*, “slanderers,” in a benediction that was inserted into the synagogue liturgy only a generation after the destruction of the Temple: “And for slanderers let there be no hope and let all wickedness perish as in a moment....”

The early Jewish Christians were cursed as enemies of Jewish culture and values.

The Bar Kokhba revolt (132-135 CE) began when Rabbi Akiba declared General Bar Kokhba the Messiah. The Jewish Christians knew they could not fight for Israel under a false Messiah and were therefore at a crossroads. Jocz identifies the Bar Kokhba revolt as forcing Jewish Christians to make one of three decisions: (1) return to the synagogue in secret; (2) enter the Gentile Church and assimilate, or (3) stand in a close relationship to the Church while holding some personal Jewish features. Whatever the individual decisions, it became clear that distinctive elements of a Jewish culture present in the body of Christ were disappearing. After the Roman army had defeated this political uprising, Jewish national life began to disintegrate, coinciding historically with the rapid growth of Christianity, particularly among the Gentiles. For Jewish leaders, a response was needed to this crisis resulting from the triumphant rise of Christianity to power.

The rift deepened theologically as the early church fathers presented the NT as the crown and culmination of the OT. At the same time, the fathers of classical Judaism were responding by presenting the Mishna (the Oral Tradition) as the crown and culmination of the OT. Each group misunderstood and mistrusted the other and reacted against the increasingly sophisticated teachings of the other. This misunderstanding manifested itself in

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90 Jocz, *Jewish People*, 190.
anger and intolerance on the Christian side and a cultural and religious defense mechanism on the Jewish side.\textsuperscript{91} Judaism and Christianity evolved together. It does not seem to be an overstatement to say that Christianity created Judaism and Judaism created Christianity.

The fragmentation continued as a genre of literature called \textit{Adversus Judaeos} became prevalent in the second century. One text from this genre is the Epistle of Barnabas, a theological tractate used as an anti-Jewish polemic. In chapter 13, the writer inquires as to who is the heir of God’s covenant. He concludes that “our” people (not the Jews) should be first and the heirs of the covenant.\textsuperscript{92} Similarly, as Conservative Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser points out, in Justin Martyr’s Dialogue with Trypho, Justin assumes that the sins of the Jewish people caused the destruction of the Temple.\textsuperscript{93} Such destruction, according to Justin, was retribution for the Jewish guilt in Jesus’ death. This notion of Jewish guilt prevailed, and by the third century, many Jews were being forced to convert and assimilate or face death.

In reflecting on this type of persecution in contemporary Jewish history, Richard Rubenstein says that the Holocaust arose out of cultural ambivalence toward the Jewish people. He calls this ambivalence an enigma since most Europeans and Americans are spiritual and cultural heirs of a religious tradition in which its incarnate deity is Jewish. The catch, according to Rubenstein, is that the ill fate of the Jews in history is used as “primary datum to prove the truth of Christianity from its inception.”\textsuperscript{94} Consequently, Jewish suffering in the name of Jesus has thus become a self-fulfilling prophecy with the following cyclical

argument: *Jewish people are persecuted because their religion is wrong, and their religion is wrong because they have been persecuted.* The notion that God has abandoned his elect is the start of this self-fulfilling prophecy and has been the interpretive lens used by each community for its purposes. I have developed an illustration of these phenomena:

![Figure 3: Model of Self-Fulfilling Prophecy](image)

In my experience, Jewish people see Pharaoh and Haman as the spiritual fathers to Adolph Hitler, an heir of Christian hatred to the Jews. The Holocaust, in their view, is the culmination of hatred towards the Jews. The Holocaust becomes, for many Jews, an additional stumbling block that further spurs their defense mechanism against the culture of the Gospel and the messenger of the Gospel, Jesus the Messiah. Scholar Rosemary Reuther takes this sentiment further by maintaining that New Testament Christology is tacitly anti-Jewish. She asks if it is possible to purge Christianity of anti-Judaism without, at the same
time, pulling the roots out of the Christian faith: “Is it possible to say ‘Jesus is Messiah’ without, implicitly or explicitly saying at the same time ‘Jews be damned’?” Her question is perplexing if one sees Jesus as the Messiah. For her, the Christian Gospel has changed to bad news, and it is this change from good news to bad news that seems to be at the heart of the dilemma.

**d. Historical Overview: The Church’s Missiological Hardening.**

The brief historical survey above shows how Jews historically defined themselves over and against Christians after the time of Christ. Christian reflection on this rejection historically has tended towards presenting it negatively—as the result in God’s cursing of Israel. Through this reflection, an interesting and troubling tendency arose: the Church became missiologically hardened towards the Jewish people. Christian reflection, then, is also a deeply unsettling and troubling contributor to the Jewish aversion to the Gospel. Paul’s uncertainty about Jews who do not become Christian and the idea of hardening as temporary is largely lost in the subsequent centuries of Christian history. The blessing for the nations turned into a curse for the Jews.

This tendency was present even in the early Church. The Epistle of Barnabas says: “God has abandoned the Jews for the Gentiles.” As Rabbi Bosker argues, the apologist Justin Martyr transforms the meaning of circumcision from a sign of God’s permanent and indestructible Covenant into its opposite. For Justin Martyr, it is a sign of rejection. From the fourth century on, the story of Abraham was primarily interpreted allegorically. Anthony the Great, for example, allegorized the call and migration of Abraham. The story was now

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96 “Epistle of Barnabas.”
97 Bokser, “Justin Martyr.”
applicable to anyone who undertook a spiritual pilgrimage. Likewise, Didymus the Blind connected Abraham’s journey and obedience to Jesus’ call to “follow me.” Saint Ambrose interpreted Abraham anagogically as the command to leave behind one’s disordered appetites. Saint Caesarius of Arles allegorized the call of Abraham even further by combining it with the sacrament of baptism. He sees the command to leave one’s family as a command to leave behind one’s vices and sins after baptism.98

These thinkers advocated that if God has abandoned the calling of the Jews (and, therefore, rejected the Jews), the Church should too. In their writings, Church historians Hilary and Eusebius introduced the pagan world to this version of Jewish history. John Chrysostom expressed similar theories with much greater violence from his pulpit at Antioch. In eight sermons delivered in 387 C.E., he speaks with acrimony and lack of restraint unusual for his time.99

This tendency continues with Augustine.100 He wrote:

The Jews are the most worthless of all men. They are lecherous, greedy, and rapacious. They are perfidious murderers of Christ. They worship the Devil. Their religion is a sickness. The Jews are the odious assassins of Christ and for killing God there is no expiation possible, no indulgence or pardon. Christians may never cease vengeance, and the Jew must live in servitude forever. God always hated the Jews. It is essential that all Christians hate them.101

101 Augustine as quoted by Dagobert D. Runes, The Jew and the Cross (New York: Philos 1965), 73.
Similarly, in Bede’s *The Greater Chronicle*, there are a few negative comments on the subject of the Jews. Bede saw the story of Abraham’s children as people who were chronically belligerent and recalcitrant.102

The transition from the Patristic to Scholastic period did not bring much change. Thomas Aquinas wrote:

Were all Jews to recognize the truth, they would cease their stubborn insistence on continuing to exist as an identifiable people and become an integral part of the new Israel—the Church—which is God’s new covenant partner in the world. The disappearance of the Jews from the world would be no theological loss because their place would be taken by the new people of God.103

The Church is considered the new people of God. The importance of the Jewish people is defined by their hardening. As they have become hardened, the Jews no longer bear the blessing of God and have become cursed.

During the Reformation, Calvin offered an intriguing perspective on Genesis 12:3. Calvin did not want the Church to seek a blessing in Abraham himself, but rather wanted the expression of verse three to be used about Christ. He wrote: “Here the Jews petulantly object, and heap together many testimonies of Scripture, from which it appears, that to bless or curse, in any one, is nothing else than to wish good or evil to another, according to him as a pattern.”104 Luther argued that “Abraham is merely the material that the Divine Majesty seizes through the Word and forms into a new human being and into a patriarch.”105 He explained that as “the Jews are extravagant in their praise of Abraham…They suppose that in

this way they bring great honour to their race, but they are shameful liars, for their leader and ruler Joshua manifestly refutes them (Josh. 24:2).”

He compared this praise to the praise that the monks have for the saints. In response to the scattering of the Jews, their oppression, and their lack of government, Luther claims that they are not a nation as promised by God in Genesis 12, but in fact, are cursed:

Therefore let the miserable Jews confess that they are not the true seed of Abraham, that is, that they are in error and are under God’s wrath because they oppose the true religion; or we ourselves shall drive them to the blasphemy of maintaining that God is a liar. For what middle ground can there be?

This attitude carried on after the Reformation in Puritan thinker, Jonathan Edwards:

It seemed therefore an exceeding unlikely thing to the Jews that this was the Messiah. They could not believe it; they could not imagine that he that made no greater appearance was he in whom “all the families of the earth were to be blessed” [Genesis 12:3]; that he was to be the light of the world, the Savior of mankind, the fountain of everlasting blessedness and glory to all God’s people. They could no more conceive of or expect any such thing, than they expected to see oil and honey flowing out of the flinty rock.

This brief historical survey shows the way in which the Christians traditionally came to understand the result of the hardening of the Jews to Jesus. The promise to Abraham becomes the promise to the Church. The message of Abraham becomes a universal message involving the Church and the Gospel. The Jewish understanding of Abraham focuses on the Jewish people as his descendants as heirs to a narrow tradition.

For Christians, in general, there tends to be a re-interpretation of Abraham and a strong emphasis on the negative results of the Jewish rejection of Jesus that leads to an identification of Israel as no longer blessed. Again, the blessing for the nations in Genesis 12

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106 Luther, *Luther’s Works*, Volume 1, 246.
107 Luther, *Luther’s Works*, Volume 1, 262.
is turned into a curse for the Jews. Contrasting this is the Jewish positive interpretation of the denial of Jesus as Messiah. The history of Christian and Jewish reflection is rich and varied and cannot be dealt with completely here, but it is important because what can be observed is that there is a mutual hardening taking place. While Israel has been hardened to the Gospel, the Church has been hardened to Israel. The Church’s hardening is not the hardenings specifically articulated by Paul in Romans 11:25, but it is a particular type of hardening towards Israel. It has been hardened in a missiological way. This kind of missiological hardening has turned *The Great Commission* into *The Great Omission*. The assumption is that the Jewish people cannot and will not respond to the message of Jesus.

In my ministry, I have met some who say that Israel has been *unchosen* and that the covenants are no longer in place. I think a type of hardening takes place towards her. Has Israel been cut off? Does the unbelief of the Jewish people mean that they have forfeited their inheritance from Abraham? I would argue that God still takes pleasure in making his presence known to the Jewish people. Scripture comforts us here: God takes pleasure in making his presence known even among a rebellious people (Psalm 6:1-3; 83:1) The Tabernacle itself pointed to God's provision and His presence-He sojourned with the Jewish people in the desert. God made my people wander for 40 years because of our lack of faith-but He did not cause us to wander alone. He takes pleasure in making his presence known even in rebellion.

Certainly there are Jews who have always believed that Jesus is the Messiah of the world and redeemer of Israel. Today the vast majority of Jews reject these claims. While much of Christian history has condemned Israel for this, there are more recent thinkers like Mark Kinzer and others who see this as part and parcel of God’s plan. Kinzer sees the ‘no’ to
Jesus as a ‘yes’ to the covenant thereby interpreting hardening as imposed by God as a way for God’s redemptive plan to be realized.¹⁰⁹

While complex, the position of the Church and its self-articulated relationship to Israel as hardened could serve as a factor in contemporary Jewish aversion to the Gospel and the development of the ISC. The Church’s theological reflection has created an alternative worldview, a competing exegesis with a rival certainty with inherent truth claims. The variety of interpretations of Genesis 12 poses as a fascinating example of this.

As indicated in Chapter 2 and implicitly indicated in the survey of Christian theological literature above, Genesis 12 marks a momentous turning point in the biblical narrative. The chosenness of Israel and the idea of Israel as a blessing is introduced in this passage. We meet a people, learn their history, and see the God who takes the initiative in the entire enterprise. The variety of interpretations of Genesis 12 demonstrates a clash of worldviews rooted in rival certainties.¹¹⁰

In the thought surveyed in this chapter, Abraham was a major figure throughout Christian theological history. Theologians established the pattern of connecting Abraham with the election of the Church. Early second-century authors such as Barnabas, Ignatius, Aristides, Marcion, Heracleon, and the author of the Gospel of Philip were all Gentile Christians. They all used Abraham to affirm Gentile inclusion and to question Jewish inclusion. Justin Martyr used Abraham to argue for Jewish exclusion from the promises of God, redefining these promises as applying to Gentile Christians.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Mark Kinzer, Postmissionary Messianic Judaism: Redefining Christian Engagement with the Jewish People (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2005), 308.
¹¹⁰ Andrew Barron, “Understanding the Blessings of Abraham as Rival Certainty,” Reading Class with Dr. Glen Taylor (University of Toronto: Unpublished, 2013).
The ongoing theme of election is part of Jewish and Christian tradition. The connection to Abraham is a point of controversy and a point of camaraderie. Both groups associate with him, but it is with Isaac that God makes the covenant. The claim that God chose a particular people is now a bond and barricade. Within these conflicting viewpoints from Jews and Christians, apologists and polemics are often locked into rival certainties.

These rival certainties are based on multiple, specialized presuppositions that are grounded in intellectual orientations. This orientation becomes the basis by which individuals understand, cope, and integrate together the ambiguities of the world. This history of interpretation of Genesis 12 provides an illustration of Rival Certainty and Polarized Argumentation. These two coping mechanisms are part of Jewish and Christian interpretations and orientations. These understandings preserve each group’s positioning, language, and culture as sacred and unique. They substantiate a worldview that favours the internal logic of each community. The thought leaders of each community provide distance between the Christian Church and the Jewish community. The ISC provides the foundation for this internal logic: to be a Jew is not to be a follower of Jesus. It is a defining mark, a certainty that is maintained against rival certainties. And, while the reason for the formation of the ICS is complex, it has formed in part within the context of responding to the rival certainty present in Christian theological articulations concerning the place and destiny of Israel.

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112 Ishmael is not disowned, but rather he inherits only the promise (not the covenant), while Isaac inherits both promise and covenant. Not all peoples (or monotheists) are descendants of Abraham.
y. Jewish Culture in the 20th Century

Beyond the rival certainties polarizing Jews and Christians, Jewish culture since the Enlightenment has been a culture faced with confusion, growing religious ambivalence, pluralisation, and secularism. Among Israeli Jews, studies indicate that there is a pervasive ambivalence to religious observance.\textsuperscript{113} In the United States, intermarried couples are a growing segment of the community. Intermarriage rates have increased fourfold from 1971-2001. The 2001 American Jewish Identity Survey (AJIS) reported 51\% and 81\% of all cohabiting Jews were living with Gentile partners.\textsuperscript{114} There is fear that Jewish civilization and culture is under assault.

Contemporary urbanization has, as well, posed a significant threat to Jewish communities. Jewish neighbourhoods—a vital component of the religious and social networks needed to transmit the values of Jewish culture—are being assimilated as a result of these forces of anonymity and individualism. This experience is unprecedented in Jewish history. At no time in history have Jews in North America been so safe and successful. Here, Jews have become socially integrated on all levels. Weighty questions arise as a result:

• How can Jews be Jewish in America?
• Can you be loyal to tradition or choice or both?
• Does the covenant make a difference?

But even as this urbanization threatens Jewish culture, it also protects it. In large cities throughout the world, there is a growing emphasis on needing to tolerate significant numbers of people of different cultural and religious backgrounds. This mentality creates a pluralistic

\textsuperscript{113} See Shlomit Levy, Hanna Levinsohn and Elihu Katz. A Portrait of Israeli Jewry: Highlights from an In-Depth Study (Jerusalem: Gutman Center of the Israel Democracy Institute, 2012).
environment that is valuable for promoting Jewish cultural survival. To preserve and protect the culture and the language against such assaults, Jewish people form natural groupings—social units that transmit cultural and social values and provide orientation and stability for thought, expression, and sensibility within a given culture.115 Natural groupings help Jewish people speak about the same things in the same ways. The forces of modernity and urbanization are breaking these groupings down.

Theologian John Barkley has helped me understand these modern forces in his article, “Paul Among Diaspora Jews: Anomaly or Apostate?” 116 He compares Paul’s transformation of Jewish tradition with other Diaspora Jews in their responses to Hellenization. The power of the dominant culture in North America (much like the power of Hellenization) brings assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation. Sometimes there is a confluence of all three. Accompanying these forces are forces of cultural resistance. These categories apply today.

Barkley examines the practice of these ancient Diaspora Jews within each category. He also examines Paul’s logic in his theological stances and religious practice. Barclay concludes that Paul assimilated, but he was less acculturated and less accommodated. Barkley writes: “The study of Paul’s theology and self-descriptions matter less in social terms than his treatment at the hands of his fellow Jews. Jewish hostility and synagogue beatings probably indicate that Paul was consistently repudiated as an ‘apostate’ despite his continuing loyalties to the Jewish people.”117 Barclay says that Paul uprooted a form of Judaism for the sake of Gentile churches.118

117 Barclay, “Paul Among Diaspora Jews,” 120.
118 Barclay, “Paul Among Diaspora Jews,” 120.
While Barkley’s focus is primarily on Paul and Hellenization, his categories can be helpfully applied to the choices faced by modern Jewish communities as they interact with and respond to the forces of modernism and urbanization. Assimilation is the participation in distinctively non-Jewish cultural and social structures in all aspects of life. To assimilate is to be socially integrated, and it can range from intermarriage to participating in holidays, educational activities, vocational choices, and causes outside the Jewish community. To be assimilated is to have a good portion of one’s social life bracketed by a non-Jewish world.

Acculturation is a kind of cultural modification. It adapts to and borrows traits from the larger culture as a result of sustained interaction. For Jewish natural groupings, this means utilizing scholarly resources from the conventional culture and being familiar with the rhetoric of secular culture. It means knowing one’s roots but receiving education and language skills in an area that is different from traditional Jewish education. Accommodation is the most complex category: it has to do with self-expression and self-understanding inside a larger group. This larger group is not part of one’s heart-culture. Thus, Jewish people who accommodate use adaptation strategies to reduce social differences. It results in the capacity to express oneself according to his/her Jewish culture inside a wider non-Jewish culture.

As these options emerge, and as Jewish natural groupings seek to maintain themselves within the broader culture, the broader culture poses a significant challenge because deeply embedded in Jewish history is the need to survive and preserve itself. Jewish philosopher, Simon Rawidowicz, argues that Jewish survival is always under threat. In his essay, “Israel – the ever-dying people,” he articulates that Jewish survival should be a grave concern.119 The Jewish people seem to be fated to disappear. They have been exiled and

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exterminated in dozens of lands. Tyrants have decimated Jewish populations, and yet as Jewish people seem to be ever dying, they continue to live and prosper.

The secret to Jewish survival is the determination to survive and preserve tradition. Self-preservation, Rawidowicz argues, is the prime value of Jewish culture. The threat to Jewish survival is seen in many Jewish people who are not actively religious but who view Judaism as important.

Jacob Bernheim remarks that this fragmentation within the culture between Jewishness and Judaism is a source of confusion. He explains that Jewishness is not about Judaism; it is about how to defend Judaism without compromising one’s identity as a secular Jew. Jews are concerned with maintaining Jewish identity. Christianity is apostasy—a fundamental denial of Jewish morals, values, and experience, and thus a threat to Jewish survival. This is the price: a loss of identity. The modern Jew is on a slender edge of cultural assimilation and religious rejection.120

Enhanced by pluralism that is characteristic of Jewish culture are these values of survival. In his work Christ and Culture, Richard Niebuhr sees this type of pluralism as necessary for the realization of “possibility” that is inherent within that particular culture. According to Niebuhr, pluralism within a culture facilitates personal and corporate growth while achieving the common good through toleration.121 Contemporary Jewish communities work towards maintaining Jewish identity amidst the cultural assimilation promoted by pluralism. Maintaining this identity becomes primarily focused on sociological issues.

The value and sociological focus of survival become even more central in the aftermath of World War II. The historian of religion Jacob Neusner expresses what he thinks

120 Bernheim, “Modern Jewish Identity,” 322-334.
is the central thesis of American Judaism: The fetish of the Holocaust. Neusner does not want to ignore the Holocaust – he wants it to be put in perspective.

In his book *Stranger at Home: The Holocaust, Zionism, and American Judaism*, Neusner explores the issue he believes to be at the very heart of American Judaism. He explores how two events remote from the experience of most American Jews have become foundational to Jewish worldview: The Holocaust and the creation of the state of Israel. He scrutinizes the paradox of a central story generated out of events never observed and a place never visited by the majority of American Jewry. This book provides insight into the search for a new identity. It is the search for tradition in the midst of modernity.122

In his article, “American Jews Must Stop Obsessing over the Holocaust,”123 religious studies scholar Shaul Magid draws on Neusner’s views to argue that there is an obsolete quality to the obsession with survival. He wants Jews not to be obsessed with building Jewish homes, but homes that are places of dignity and justice.124 Magid sees the obsession of many American Jews with Jewish survival as a secular obsession.125 Religious Jews rely on the notion of nezah Yisrael, the “Eternity of Israel,” as a divine promise. Assimilation succeeds in emptying the content of the promise but not the desire. The desire for survival in purely ethnic terms is secular. Magid quotes Neusner: “One may well suspect, therefore, that the reason American Jews who are actively engaged in Jewish community affairs lay such heavy

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125 Magid, “American Jews.”
emphasis on Jewish ethnicism is that they have left little other than a visceral ethnic consciousness (and a diminishing one at that).”

Because the survival of Judaism is pre-eminent within its value system, pluralism (religious and cultural) is tolerated as a means of achieving and securing this survival. It is this survival impulse that informs a mentality designed to separate that which is Jewish from non-Jewish culture. Jews and Gentiles have their respective cultures and religions, and the two should never meet. The violation of this separation impulse is a violation of the prime value of the culture—self-preservation.

Since Jewish culture today incorporates the ideas and aspirations of people from all walks of life from all corners of the globe, it is noted that there is no such thing as one, monolithic, and homogeneous Jewish culture. However, there are general habits, beliefs, customs, and values, which are passed on and transmitted within natural groupings. These natural groupings are both bolstered and challenged by pluralism, yet what remains constant across Jewish communities is self-preservation and survival. Since the Enlightenment, its desire to survive has become even more prevalent and has driven Judaism’s self-definition away from focusing on its religious beliefs and more towards defining itself by exclusion. This self-preservation is in the mechanism of the ISC.

As the effects of secularism, modernity, urbanization, and pluralism compound, dependence on the ISC increases to create a self-preservation mechanism. The ISC provides a common, unifying language of unbelief that preserves the scattered natural groupings so that Jewish social and cultural values might be transmitted. In the ISC, Jewish culture has an integrated self-preserving, self-coping, and self-defending worldview mechanism that can preserve and transmit culture as it faces the forces of modernity and urbanization.

126 Jacob Neusner as quoted in Magid, “American Jews.”
vi. ISC as Mechanism of Self-Preservation and Survival

The ISC functions within Jewish culture as a self-preservation and self-definition mechanism not only in response to the rival certainty of Christianity but also to the rival certainty of modernity:

Judaism transmits the values of survival, and this ethnic survival is protected by religious pluralism. This diversity is seen as an absolute good in contemporary culture. This religious pluralism is protected by urbanization. The values of urbanization emphasize privacy and individuality. These dense environments are dependent on tolerance, broad-mindedness, and patience. All of this is shaped by modernity. In other words, modernity ensures ambivalence, which supports urbanization and promotes religious pluralism, ultimately protecting Jewish survival with the cultural language of the ISC. Natural groupings are threatened by these forces, and the ISC offers a protection and preservation mechanism. This is illustrated in the figure below:

**Figure 4: Effects that Create Self-Preservation**
The model above illustrates this assault: as the effects of Secularism, Modernity, Urbanization, and Pluralism compound, dependence on the ISC increases to create a self-preservation mechanism.
With the ISC as the mechanism that ensures Jewish cultural survival, again it must be stated that there is no such thing as one Jewish culture. However, the ISC provides a common way to preserve a common Jewishness without determining the particularities of each Jewish community. It ensures the survival of Jewish culture(s) through the affirmation that to be Jewish means that one cannot believe in Jesus; belief in Jesus makes one no longer Jewish.

One way the ISC functions in facilitating self-preservation is through language. As noted earlier, Lesslie Newbigin states that culture is the “sum total of ways of living developed by a group of human beings and handed on from generation to generation.”\(^\text{127}\) Language, for Newbigin, is an integral part of a culture as it is handed down. The clearest way for us to see through this Jewish cultural defense mechanism is to look at the language of this conversation. Since, as Newbigin suggests, language helps a culture to transmit values, to cope, and to give shape and meaning to life, it has become a primary defense tool for modern Jewish culture in its self-preservation.

Today, most Jewish people are indoctrinated against the Gospel through the implicit and explicit language concerning Jesus and the Gospel: to believe in Jesus is defined as a belief that is contrary to its culture and contrary to the teachings handed down to its people.

Although there is a negative commitment towards the person of Jesus that many Jewish people seem obligated to uphold, Jewish scholarship, on the other hand, resigns itself to religious pluralism while simultaneously affirming that Jews, to remain Jews, cannot believe in Jesus as Messiah.\(^\text{128}\) Remaining Jews, then, means Jewish people opt for a way of

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127 Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks*, 3.
life rather than conceding to a set of beliefs.\textsuperscript{129} In other words, the conversation within Judaism tends to centralize around the cultural obligation of not being a Christian. The ISC is communicated and transmitted in these conversations. It is a worldview-forming mechanism that Jewish people have implicitly adopted. While it is never explicitly articulated in formal terms, certain behaviours and presuppositions are implied as normative, but there is no formal law governing such norms.

David Brickner is the current Executive Director of Jews for Jesus. He has done significant work in identifying this tendency in Jewish communities. He notes Jewishness defined broadly within the Jewish community: It is a fact of social development, education and identification, and sometimes, a matter of religious affiliation. When it comes to the specifics of Jewish identity, even the leaders of the community disagree.\textsuperscript{130} Even amidst the diversity, there is a more narrow definition of Jewish identity that is accepted: “This definition gives the appearance of religious or spiritual content but in reality amounts to identity by negation as the community finds central meaning in statements like: we are Jews because we don’t believe in Jesus; we are Jews because we celebrate Passover, not Easter; we are Jews because we celebrate Hanukkah, not Christmas.”\textsuperscript{131}

Jewish identity comes through the ISC in the form of a disavowal that prohibits faith in Christ thereby making opposition to the Gospel a given. As missiologist Robert L. Mongomery notes:

\textsuperscript{131} Brickner, “Jewish Resistance.”
Receptivity toward an outside religion will be low if adherence to it is regarded as bringing about a sense of loss of a valued aspect of social identity, such as ethnic or national identity and perhaps a religious identity closely associated with them…Becoming attached to a religion, coming from the outside, is perceived as rejecting one's own ethnic group or cultural heritage.132

Jewish people do not see Jewish believers in Jesus as those who have followed principles. Brickner comments: “They see Jewish believers in Jesus as traitors to themselves, their family, their people…they see them as traitors to their very survival. And survival is paramount in the Jewish community.”133

The ISC operates within diverse Jewish communities as cultural language communicates the implicit message that to be a Jew means aversion to the Gospel. The ISC is a device that serves the community’s need for self-preservation. It operates as a powerful source of Jewish common identity and survival in the midst of rival certainties.

3.3 Conclusion and Analysis: The Missiological Importance of ISC

Jewish history has pooled with contemporary forces to transmute Judaism into a religion of survival. A profound impact on the Jewish receptivity to the Gospel has resulted. In connecting the need for preservation with what we have identified as the ISC, Brickner provides a key missiological insight: “Preservation of Jewish identity has become the highest and the only non-negotiable religious ideal. Couple that fact with the conviction that Jews cannot believe in Jesus and remain Jewish, the syllogism leads to the highest possible form of Gospel resistance in the social realm.”134 He continues:

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133 Brickner, “Jewish Resistance.”
134 Brickner, “Jewish Resistance”.
For Jews, the invitation to Christ appears to come, not from merely an alien culture, but from a culture that is perceived as hostile. Moreover, Jewish identity and faith in Jesus are considered mutually exclusive by the Jewish establishment. That means that for a Jew to accept Christ he or she must violate that part of his or her conscience that has always accepted the equation that becoming a Christian equals betraying the Jewish people.\textsuperscript{135}

In my involvement of contextually engaging Jewish community and culture, I have seen and experienced what we have identified as the ISC: \textit{Jews don’t believe in Jesus, for if they do, they are no longer Jewish.}

Throughout 33 years of ministry, I have seen how this device of excommunication by definition is an important defense mechanism for many Jewish people against the Gospel message. As part of this contract, most Jewish people are socially indoctrinated against the Gospel, and many will use this contract, consciously or not, to create a kind of intellectual barrier. The Gospel is irrelevant and seen as a threat to Jewish values; it is something essentially outside the Jewish faith. The Jewish value of self-preservation is what keeps people inside, and the Gospel is understood to undermine this self-preservation. Accordingly, the contract provides a kind of barrier to maintain clear social and cultural boundaries.\textsuperscript{136} It seems that there has been and remains a significant hardening to the Gospel in many Jewish communities. This hardening of hearts manifests itself in a particular way: it is the very certainty by which Jewish communities seek to define themselves.

This phenomenon within the Jewish community presents anyone who wishes to minister to the Jewish community with significant challenges. It is a particular problem for JFJ. While sociological and theological analyses are helpful, understanding nuances and

\textsuperscript{135} Brickner, “Jewish Resistance”.

\textsuperscript{136} I overstate here for effect. The situation is not black and white, and thus, I must qualify my diagnosis. This is obviously not the case for all Jews in all places at all times. Of course, there are fluctuations and exceptions, and the complexity of the Jewish community is not easily categorized.
finding ways to communicate require more concrete categories. Assuming that hardening of Israel is manifested as the ISC, what does this look like in the context of everyday communities? In this chapter, I worked to establish hardening and the ISC as a two-fold theoretical framework by broadly surveying a variety of themes related to theology, history, and sociology. But this framework begs for concrete anthropological categories that can incisively describe the way in which hardening as manifested in the ISC looks like within contemporary Jewish communities. There remains a need to understand how Jewish people hear the Gospel, what their experiences are, what they believe, and what their aspirations are. For JFJ to think critically, we need to understand and categorize these experiences. We aspire to have a sense of what God is doing and how we can come alongside in a real and tangible way. Specifically, this means we need to take a deeper look at how families, friends and communities have responded to their fellow Jewish community members’ faith in Jesus.

Furthermore, even as the ISC is operative, the Jewish community is changing rapidly, in more ways than one; the challenge to communicate relevantly to the various generations is growing every day. Thus, there is a need to understand this contemporary situation. What happens to Jewish people when they respond in faith to Jesus, and how does this affect them socially and culturally? The data of the research will address these issues and seek to understand the generational shifts in our movement. Within our diverse mission community, disagreement exists as to methodology and the use of resources. Serious research is needed to identify these shifts and how they apply to methodology. Anthropological categories are necessary. If we want to develop receptor-oriented, cross-cultural ministry effectively (see Chapter 2), we need to have as firm a grasp on these forces as is possible.
Chapter 4: Research Study (Action-in-Ministry)

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will present my research and the anthropological categories that arose from my research. For this research, I assumed the theoretical framework proposed in Chapter 3. While I assumed the framework of the ISC and hardening, I let the categories emerge. I have based my framework and assumptions on what I see as the historical destiny and role of my people. I am under the conviction that God made promises to Abraham and as a result of these promises God would bless the world. The thing God would ultimately do is to send Israel the Messiah in the fullness of time, in fulfillment of His promise to Abraham. Jewish people ultimately fulfill their destiny in the Gospel, but they have historically resisted this message. The point of my research is to articulate this resistance anthropologically and to develop tools of communication that are sensitive to the outcome of the research.

The purpose of this study is to survey the beliefs, experiences, and values of a group of Jews who believe in Jesus. These experiences are seen in personal journeys in relation to the friends, family, and community of this group. Anthropological categories have emerged in the research, which has given meaning to this experience in its modern social and cultural setting.

I advocate that these categories point to an association with what Paul calls the *hardening* of Israel (Romans 11). Paul’s understanding of this phenomenon is as a warning (v25a), a mystery (v25b), partial (v25c), and temporary (v25d and v26a). My research attempts to understand *hardening* as a genuine and current experience, which I identify as part of what I call an *Implied Social Contract* (ISC).
As a result of this study I would like to:

1. Codify the beliefs, experiences, and values of a group of Jews who believe in Jesus;
2. Understand what the ‘hardening of Israel’ looks like by categorizing the experiences of a group of Jews who believe in Jesus;
3. Explore how one generation’s experience compares with another, and
4. Develop a critical missiological strategy that takes into account the data I have researched.

4.2 Research Methodology

a. Methodology: Hermeneutic Phenomenology

The methodology of this research study is best classified broadly as a methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology. This type of methodology draws from John Creswell’s *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. He states that phenomenology “…looks to understand and interpret the ‘essences of experiences about a phenomenon’ through the data of ‘statements, meanings, meaning themes, [and] general description of the experience.’”\(^\text{137}\) According to Creswell, these issues are subsumed into the methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology, which conducts research into “…how people interpret their lives and make meaning of what they experience.”\(^\text{138}\)

Within this study, I approached my role as that of a dynamic interpreter of the phenomena under investigation. Bracketing my experience for the sake of objectivity was not necessary.\(^\text{139}\) I have been through the same experience and can engage and relate. I am able to be thoughtfully involved with the participants in reflecting on their lived-out experiences of the phenomenon.

\(^\text{138}\) Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 65.
\(^\text{139}\) Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 59.
My role within the study was to be a narrator who engaged with the participants and interpreted their experiences as they explained them. To aid my self-reflection and interpretation, I kept reflective notes during of the study to keep an on-going dialogue with myself in the midst of the research. In this dialogue, I draw back to the hermeneutical circle, which Michael Jenkins describes:

1. Action in the world leads to a jarring experience.
2. Our overall understandings are shattered, and we reflect on the need for new ones.
3. We turn to the Scriptures with new questions.
4. This leads to a new level of action.
5. The scope of the action widens. This required reflection concerning the texts in their constituent parts and in their wholeness. The work would flow from analysis to synthesis, from deconstruction to reconstruction, from reformation to transformation.¹⁴⁰

I used the hermeneutical circle as a way to challenge and integrate my data into my theoretical framework of the ISC and the hardening of Israel.

b. Methodology: Assumptions and Expectations

Before outlining the research and data itself, it is important to outline my assumptions and expectations. Some of these expectations are indicated in the development of my two-fold theoretical framework, but it is important to make my working hypotheses as evident as possible. One important assumption to highlight again is the way in which I read Scripture as a lens to understand contemporary phenomena. I would argue that the application of Paul’s articulation of hardening is not anachronistic. My understanding of hardening has formed my own missiological and theological assumptions. This application need not be negative; instead when placed into its proper missiological context, it is rich and meaningful.

Hardening is oppositional intensity. It is a response that can be emotional or impassive and is often indifferent to reason. It can be powerful and visceral, or it can be unsympathetic and apathetic. It has to do with a degree of insensitivity to another person’s decision. *It is important to keep in mind that hardening can be a defence mechanism that is not meant to harm but to protect culture.* Hardening is a coping mechanism. Hardening can be reflexive, or it can be premeditated. Hardening is meant to keep ideas, concepts or truths that seem foreign to a culture on the *outside* of a culture.

The other important expectation to highlight, rooted in my theoretical framework, is that I anticipated the reality of the ISC based on a theoretical exploration of culture and worldview formation as well as my own experiences. Furthermore, as the research project mainly focused on the experiences of Jews who hear and respond to the message of Jesus, I anticipated, through reflective and evaluative interviews, to test my theory of the ISC. I expected that the quantitative and qualitative data could be analytically surveyed and scrutinized for key components. And as key components arose, I anticipated being able to assimilate them to make ensuing interviews more productive through the process of what Creswell calls, “constant comparative analysis.” \(^{141}\) It was my expectation that recurring themes and issues would emerge while descriptive words would show patterns of beliefs, understandings, and ideals. Categories would emerge from the data, which would bring the data into a relationship with the respondents. \(^{142}\)

I hoped that meaning would occur through an ongoing time of reading, reflective writing, and interpretations. I expected my research would provide significant statements and

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\(^{141}\) Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 54-55.

clusters of meanings, and I also expected to re-interview a subset of these people and thereby engage in a cycle of interpretation and reflection. I expected that an analysis of these statements and meanings would yield common themes and patterns of anthropological categories, and I hoped that my critical research would impact and change my organization’s (JFJ) structures and strategies.

With all of these expectations in mind, the purpose of this study was and is to aid those of us involved in a wider like-minded community to understand critically our evolving movement and to provide resources and stimulate strategies for outreach, fellowship and edification.

c. Limitations of the Study

The Jewish people do not exist within a monolithic structure with a hierarchical leadership. We are complex and diverse, forming many different native groupings. My research focused on a small group of people. To offset some of the limitations of this study, I utilized previous studies on Jewish believers in Jesus as background information and for comparison and assessment at the data analysis stage. These recent demographic studies have helped me show distinction and contrast.

There is also a limiting factor concerning the concept of hardening that I seek to understand in a contemporary setting. As stated in Chapter 3, Paul uses this word in a distinctive way. I asked respondents to tell me of their experiences about friends, family and community in relation to this phenomenon. I explained to them my reading about this word, and then I asked for a subjective sense of what the experience was like in relation to the categories and themes that rose out of previous groups. Some respondents responded easily and some with more difficulty. Measuring the oppositional intensity of hardening objectively
is difficult. This limitation is overcome by getting a feel for the whole and the trends in the group.

Another limiting factor of my research was that I only focused on Jewish believers in Jesus. As I studied the experiences of this group as well as determined their sociological and demographic makeup, my focus on this group meant that I did not ask Jews who do not believe in Jesus about hardening or the ISC. My utilization of two studies on the broader Jewish community offsets this limitation: “Portrait of Jewish Americans” (Pew Research, 2013) and “American Jewish Population Estimates” (Steinhardt 2012). These studies were able to provide genuine insight into the broader Jewish community. However, neither study addresses the ISC or hardening explicitly.

d. Research Design and Preliminary Analysis

The research study went through six distinct phases and drew three groups from an initial pool of participants. Data analysis and reflection took place at every stage of the research study. All data was collected using the online web-based research tool Survey Monkey. This particular tool proved valuable as it was able to make certain that the interaction between the respondent and the questionnaire remained dynamic and discreet. While several quantitative questions were asked, particularly to Groups 1 and 2, my phenomenological approach focused on two major open-ended questions concerning hardening:

1. What have you experienced regarding this phenomenon in relation to your Jewish family, friends and community?

2. What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of this phenomenon?
I asked open-ended questions.\textsuperscript{143} I focused attention on gathering data that would lead to a textural and structural description of the experience of hardening, which then would aid in understanding the common experiences of the participants.\textsuperscript{144} It also, particularly with Group 3, allowed participants to actively engage in the hermeneutical circle by participating in defining hardening.

**Group 1**

The first phase was carried out from June 1, 2013, through December 1, 2013, and was a broad study of Messianic Jews in North America. This study has been published in the Journal *Mishkan*.\textsuperscript{145} The study questions and results are in the appendices. The Group 1 research is copyrighted by Jews for Jesus and is used with permission. This was under the supervision of my ministry base. This provided background to further qualitative research. This study was a follow-up to a similar study conducted in 1983 by JFJ. The 2013 study involved a sample of 1,567 respondents and, like its predecessor covered a variety of aspects through quantitative questions. It also asked the participants to answer a series of narrative questions.\textsuperscript{146} The study participants replied to e-blast publicity that went to a group of Jewish believers in Jesus in North America. This study was done on *Survey Monkey*.

Through this study we explored:

1. The representation of the experiences of a group of Jews who believe in Jesus.
2. How this group of Jewish people experienced cultural influences during their decision to follow Jesus.
3. How one generation and their experience compares with another.

\textsuperscript{143} See Appendix 1-5.
\textsuperscript{144} See Appendix 6.
\textsuperscript{145} Andrew Barron and Bev Jamison, “A Profile of North American Messianic Jews”; *Mishkan* 73 (Jerusalem: Caspari Center for Biblical and Jewish Studies, 2015).
\textsuperscript{146} See Appendix 1-6.
Qualitative questions covered observance of religious traditions, Jewish and general beliefs and values, and Jewish identity. Unlike previous studies, a new section of analysis covered the respondents’ experiences as they heard and responded to the Gospel. My research was unique as I compared this study with those of the previous study (Jews for Jesus, 1983), the Pew study (“Portrait of Jewish Americans,” Pew Research, 2013) and the Steinhardt study (“American Jewish Population Estimates,” 2012).147

Group 2

After initial coding and analysis of the narratives from Group 1, which looked for key themes in the narratives, participants for Group 2 were chosen based on the following:

1. Age; I specifically looked for people between 25-40 and 50-65. I wanted to interview those affected by the counterculture movement of the 1960s and the next generation.

2. The diversity of experiences.

3. Deep thinking, both intellectually and spiritually, through transformation experiences.

4. Significant transformational understanding of their relationship with God, self, and congregation.

The group was asked in the fall of 2014 to participate in the research. Then in November 2014, a new survey was designed and sent out to the 32 primary participants who comprised Group 2. All of these participants were part of Group 1. They were given the research question and some general details about the study. Those solicited for this research were asked to sign a letter of consent to participate in the study as they began the process. They were informed that they were welcome to withdraw from the study at any time. They also were informed that any data that they had contributed up to that point would be included in the study, but its origins would remain anonymous. There were no participants who withdrew

147 See Appendix 1.
from the study. The participants in the study either chose or were given pseudonyms to protect their privacy. The collection of data (electronic and paper) has been kept private at my home, on either my laptop computer’s hard drive or on my email account.¹⁴⁸

I explored quantitative questions covering such topics as age, family background; education, religious observance, and vocation with the online tool Survey Monkey.¹⁴⁹

I gathered the surveys via email. I began some initial coding of the data. I read the responses, made notes, and developed further questions based on those responses.

**Group 3**

After I collected the narratives from Group 2, I again performed some initial coding of the data and continued to look for key themes in the narratives. Then I took these themes and presented them to the participants at the next stage of the research: interviewing the participants. In February of 2015, I interviewed 24 participants from the group of 32 to be able to compile a large amount of data, and to produce results, showcasing a wide-range of perspectives.

I did this via telephone and in-person interviews. In each interview, I asked the participants to give a further, more detailed description of their experiences, adding some depth to themes already noted in the narratives. The participants helped interpret and shape some of the data and categories; this allowed them to tell more stories. They aided me in finding the whole picture and in generating the axial coding for the thesis. During the interviews, I took notes to help keep track of certain aspects of their narratives that I wanted

¹⁴⁸ See Appendix 6.
¹⁴⁹ See Appendix 1-5.
to consider and also to review for further clarification. Their responses allowed for some further axial coding and helped me to demonstrate that I had ample data.\(^{150}\)

In this phase, I used grounded theory/research, allowing the participants to become active in the coding and interpretation of the data. The specific method of grounded theory that I appropriated was axial coding, which explores the interrelationship of the categories/themes. As researcher John Creswell states concerning analysis within research methodology:

> In this phase of analysis, the researcher creates a coding paradigm, or theoretical model that visually portrays the interrelationship of these axial categories of information. A theory is built or generated. At the broadest level of analysis, the researcher can create a conditional matrix. This matrix is an analytical aid—a diagram—that helps the researcher visualizes the wide range of conditions and consequences related to the central phenomenon.\(^{151}\)

The central phenomenon for this study was the hardening of Israel. At this stage, the participants also became grounded researchers, helping shape and interpret the categories and interconnections between them. I engaged the participant-researchers with vignettes from other participants’ narratives and allowed them to retell or expand their narratives. I allowed the narrators to engage in dialogue with one another’s stories. The participants in Group 3 were also asked to define hardening.

At the end of this process, I took the coded data gathered and started the final stage of coding and interpretation. This stage used the methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology. I interpreted the data and tried to present a coherent narrative regarding the experiences of my respondents.

\(^{150}\) See Appendix 1-5.
\(^{151}\) Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 151.
e. Analysis of Data

Reflection and analysis accompanied each stage of the research. Creswell provided the procedure that was used for conducting qualitative inquiry: “In triangulation, researchers make use of multiple different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence. ... Typically, this process involves corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective.” 152 The primary and secondary participants, as well as my personal reflection notes, helped me triangulate the data through each stage of the process. Narrative data also served to highlight where significant areas needed further reflection. I wanted to saturate the data regarding the central phenomenon of hardening.

The goal of the analysis is a solid description that accurately captures and communicates the meaning of the lived-out experience for the informants studied. A solid description is one that captures the experience from the perspective of the informant in its richest complexity. The idea of this ongoing process underlies my hermeneutic thinking for this interpretive effort. 153

The challenge for the interpretation of the study was to integrate the particular theological, doctrinal, and existential details of the particular narratives into a coherent collective narrative of the participants’ experiences. I sought to bring the particular and the general into a story that was summarized and grouped around themes.

152 Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry, 202.
The challenge has been to relate each of the narratives of the particular participants while simultaneously weaving them into an overall meta-narrative of the other participants. I often encouraged the participants to enter the story-telling, letting them speak for themselves. They may, at times, be speaking as a representative of a larger group, or they may, at other times, be expressing something unique to their particular experiences, which add a distinctive facet to the whole picture of the phenomenon. The experience of the individuals and participant groups will help to explore the effects of hardening. To gain clarification and validity, I engaged Group 3 participants in the process of narrative formation.

The analysis goes through the following phases:

**Phase 1: Developing the Categories of Information**

As a result of the interviews, I gathered the following data:

1. A list of significant statements
2. Clusters of meanings

**Phase 2: Connecting the Categories**

Through an analysis of the quantitative backgrounds and significant statements, I was able to illustrate the common experience of the participants. I have presented:

1. A representation of the beliefs, experiences, and ideals of a group of Jewish people who have this common experience in resisting hardening (Rom. 11:25).
2. How this group of people experience cultural influences from the larger community as a result of this decision.
Phase 3: Building a Story

The data from Group 1 and 2 were surveyed and scrutinized for key components that integrated to make ensuing interviews more productive. I connected the codes and categories that exhibited my theory of ISC.154

The three survey questions and information letters and consent forms are in the appendices. The participants had access to a protected password and anonymous online form. Survey Monkey provided the user with the ability to analyze clusters of meaning and significant statements. These statements and themes were used to write a description of what the participants experienced. The influence of contexts and settings was surveyed. From these descriptions, composite descriptions were presented. These descriptions enabled the reader to understand more completely the experience. I subsequently interviewed a group of 25 respondents from each age group for clarification and validity. I wanted to be sure that my research findings accurately reflected the situations of the respondents and were supported by the evidence. This triangulation was checked. It established validity in my studies by analyzing the research question from multiple perspectives.

4.3 Results of Group 1&2

From the data and narratives, I performed some initial coding of the data and continued to look for key themes. Emerging from this data were patterns displayed among different demographic groups. Through my analysis of how one generation’s experience compared with another, the data began to show how the ISC impacted Jews who believe in Jesus in different, yet significant ways. Finally, hardening emerged as a category, which was experienced as the main stress point for respondents after coming to faith in Jesus.

154 McKenna, Experience Research Social Change, 143.
Over 75 percent of those 50 and older reported that both parents were Jewish. But for those born after 1980 (33 years and younger), just under 33 percent came from households with two Jewish parents.

Lifestyles, values and identities of most of our respondents continue to show efforts to maintain a connection to Jewish tradition, on the one hand, and choice, on the other. The results showed a broad consensus that reflected a commitment to Jewish character, culture, and continuity. Respondents had a wide-ranging Jewish disposition. Over 90% felt an association with Jewish tradition, observed some Jewish practices and life-cycle rituals, and marked at least some of its festivals. Jewishness and identification with the wider religious, social, and cultural characteristic of Judaism remained important to respondents. Many wanted to participate in Jewish traditions while remaining part of the wider culture. Concerning Jewish Associations, respondents participated in more organizations than the respondents of the study of the Messianic Jewish community in 1983. Furthermore, respondents of our study participated in Jewish Associations much more than the broader Jewish community does. For all age groups, some participation increased after coming to faith.

There was some significant trending in the last three decades away from Jewish believers self-identifying as ‘Hebrew Christians’ in favour of identification as ‘Jewish believers’ or ‘Messianic Jews.’ However, the sharpest decline since 1983 was in the use of ‘Hebrew Christian,’ followed by a smaller decline in the self-identification of ‘Jewish Christian.’ Interestingly, 28% are happy to identify simply as ‘Christian.’ The nomenclature preference and religious observance levels among these Messianic Jews indicated a continuing identification with the Jewish people. The Jewish value of Tikkun Olam (repair of
the world) showed a significant increase in those in group 1 and 2 after coming to faith in Jesus. The increase here was the most notable among all the values examined.

Responses to the questions about how respondents first heard the Gospel and what attracted them to the Gospel underlined the significance of individual interaction. Furthermore, after accepting the Gospel, the significantly largest number attended a community church—our name for non-denominational or loosely organized denominational movements. The study indicated that churches and Messianic congregations have a significant impact. Results also showed that more respondents attended a Messianic congregation than traditional (Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian), Baptist, or Charismatic congregations. 5% percent indicated attendance at both a Messianic congregation and a Christian church. Overall, our responses indicated that the Messianic Jewish community, congregations and ministries are making new and dynamic efforts to provide fellowship and service opportunities to young Messianic Jews.

Interrmarriage is increasing, and our results showed a need for critical thinking in this area. However, the results also showed that intermarriage, having only one Jewish parent and attendance at a church rather than a Messianic congregation, did not appear to decrease Jewish identity or even Jewish practices.

Respondents experienced pressure or stress points after coming to faith in Jesus. The older group of Messianic Jews experienced quite a bit more opposition than younger respondents. The major pressure points for my respondents concerned what their faith decisions would mean for relationships in the Jewish community. The older group
experienced quite a bit more external pressure than younger respondents. When asked to characterize their experience of hardening, the most typical answers were:

- “Death”
- “Loss”
- “Apathy”
- “Identity separation”
- “Tribal”
- “When I was in the synagogue I was the Christian - when I was in the church, I was the Jew”
- “Hardening is seen in both directions - I was opposed by my Jewish family and by my church family”

In conjunction with the narrative that began to emerge, I did an initial analysis of the results and discerned the following sociological patterns among the participants. I found the Messianic Jewish community in North America to be more similar to the American Jewish community than to the general US population in demographics such as Jewish dispositions, education, and occupation.

- **Occupation:** In general, respondents are overrepresented in education credentials and professional and specialized vocations. The changes we observed were reasonably proportionate and stemmed from an aging population. This community is more like the Jewish community than the general community as we observed in Group 1. The older group had a more diverse vocational experience, and the younger group was more oriented to professional and technical vocation.

- **Circumstances:** Again we observed more diverse experiences in the older grouping. This group had less access to other Messianic Jews and Messianic congregations. The older group had more exposure to the church at large as a doorway by which information would pass. The younger group had more interaction with relatives, a distinctive of ‘second generation’ messianic Jews.

- **Education:** Messianic Jews interviewed showed a commitment to education that trended higher than in the general population and at par with or greater than in the wider Jewish community. Similar patterns emerged here as with occupation. Changes we observed were generational as the older group had less access to post-secondary education and the younger group had more stable and uniform access to educational resources.
• **Actions:** There were remarkably similar results are here between Groups 1 and 2. We still see, as expected, a stronger push-back and resistance in the older group. The younger group explored more options in a social context.

• **What Helped Convince Participants of the Truth of the Gospel?** Results were more similar than different between the generations. The older generation trended towards books and literature, and the younger generation tended towards personal interaction.

• **Labels and Nomenclature:** Results here were very similar in Group 1 and 2. The use of the term *Hebrew* and *Jew* came out of the daily lexicon in the 70s in North America.

• **Jewish Upbringing:** Here we observed, as we would expect, trends typical in the North American Jewish community. The younger group is more represented in Reform or secular upbringing, and the older group experienced a more traditional religious rearing. There is more decline in Conservative Judaism than in Reform or Orthodox. There is a marked increase in secular background.

• **Dissuasion and Opposition:** We asked these questions in different ways, but the results were similar here and as well with the scatter graphs. The older generation had immigrant parents and came from backgrounds that have been much less assimilated, acculturated, and accommodated into North American life. The presence of Messianic Jewish identity causes tribal confusion resulting in opposition and pressure—issues that tug at people’s hearts across the groupings.

• **Experiences:** The older generation experienced a wider variety of oppositional experiences, but the younger community, as a percentage, still experiences those same oppositional forces, some of which were reported malicious. The older generation reports more opposition from family.

As the narrative emerged, the need to analyze participants’ relationship with culture arose.

Overall, the data showed that the respondents in Group 2 were highly assimilated (socially integrated) but relatively less acculturated (acquired resources of a different culture) and accommodated (employing another tradition in self-expression). They witnessed to
finding truth in Scripture that they believed was consistent and coherent. They did not find this same coherence in their culture. They reported that they often felt like strangers in their interaction with Jewish and Christian communities.

4.4 Results of Group 3 Interviews

After initial coding of the data, key themes and significant statements arose in the narratives from the surveys of Groups 1 and 2. These themes arrange themselves around the following anthropological categories:

1. Language
2. Family
3. Prestige/Honour
4. Status/Role
5. Alliance and Groupings
6. Sanctions
7. Shame/Guilt
8. Hardening
9. Assimilation
10. Acculturation
11. Accommodation
12. Implied Social Contract

I added a field called ‘Implied Social Contract’ and explained to the respondents my understanding of the term. It seemed to me to be a good way to explain what was happening to many respondents, and I looked for their insights. I took these themes and presented them to 24 participants in Group 3 in the context of my interviews.

To illuminate the responses, two graphs are used. First, scatter graphs are used to record each response in relation to friends, family and community. Second, trend analysis graphs are used to tie each category (friends, family, and community) together so patterns, if any, emerge. The x-axis on each graph shows the age of the respondent and the y-axis shows what I call ‘level of hardening.’ I asked the respondents to explain their relation to friends,
family, and community as they thought about these themes. When I asked these questions about the level of hardening, I expressed to them my reading of Paul in Romans 11. I asked them about their experience of that category in a contemporary setting, and whether it applied to them. The particular level of hardening, within each interview, related to several of the categories listed in 1-12 above. Respondents reflected on the intensity or passion related to new experiences of difficulty, oppositional relationships, resistance, and trouble.

After this reflection, a number was assigned on a scale. As I spoke with Group 3 about their experiences, I asked them to provide a level of oppositional intensity on a scale of 1-10 as they reflected on their lived experiences. ‘1’ would be non-existent, and ‘10’ would be intolerable. In the remaining portion of this chapter, I will report the results as they relate to the anthropological categories that emerged out of the narratives. I will also identify the anthropological category in reference to its sociological definition. I explained my understanding of these categories to the respondents. I wanted to clarify the way in which the anthropological category is used and how the experience of hardening was reported as it manifested in these categories. It will also report the answers given to the final question I asked Group 3: ‘What is hardening?’ Finally, I will do some brief analysis before moving onto the missiological implications in Chapter 5.

a. Language

Languages have a deep connection to the thought and culture of the people who speak them. Every language divides up the world differently. Writing in the Interdisciplinary Journal of Linguistics, Dr. M. Ashraf Bhat says that language shapes belief and can be used
as a control mechanism.\textsuperscript{155} In the book, \textit{Language and Control}, Fowler et al. argue that language-use reflects the worldview of its users and serves to preserve social patterns and ideologies. They argue that language and communication are keys to how we organize and define society and culture.\textsuperscript{156}

For my purposes language is a powerful tool of self-preservation. To define Jews who believe in Jesus as no longer Jewish or no longer part of the community is to excommunicate by a simple device of classification or definition by using language. The conventional and normal impulse is to stay with people who are part of your group, who speak your language, and who understand your worldview. We do not want to be outsiders. To those Jewish people considering the Gospel, this tool is a powerful deterrent. The Jewish community uses language as a self defense mechanism to preserve who is \textit{in} and who is \textit{out}.

In this study, language emerged as a means used to control other people’s behaviour and sometimes to control their values. The language in my study is experienced as a means of social control. Language is a great force of socialization, an integrated component of culture, a symbol of social and cultural identity, and a mode of communication and representation.

What arose through my study is what I define as the language of hardening—this language uses the device of definition that says ‘you are not Jewish;’ ‘you are not part of the tribe;’ ‘you are a Christian,’ to those Jewish people who believe in Jesus. Language is used


here as a device of exclusion and functions as a worldview transmission device. When the ISC is contradicted, the Jewish community responds with the language of hardening.

b. Family

Families are a foundational anthropological category. Families teach convention and control and norms of behaviour. It is the place where we first learn to praise and to criticize. Families provide us linkage to the past and help us to define common language and social norms.

Within the interviews, the family emerges as an agency of social control. Scatter results indicate spiking of hardening intensity in the 30 and 55 age range. What we observed was an increase in hardening that is consistently increasing in all age groups in relation to how the relationship with family is perceived within the family unit and in relation to friends and community. Hardening here is in relation to faultfinding, veiled disappointment, superficial uneasiness, and antagonism. In the trend analysis, Family and Friends are duplicated.

Figure 5.1: Family
c. Prestige/Honour

In social sciences, the notion of prestige describes the symbolic, heightened status given to individuals and social groups by desirable traits and achievement. Honour is a kind of exchange, strongly interconnected with community and relationship.

Our results observed issues surrounding prestige spiking in the 30 and 60-year-old respondents. It was a modest source of hardening and increased in older respondents.

Mockery, flippancy, and concealed suspicion were common experiences in this area for older respondents. Two respondents in professional societies experienced hardening that resulted in the loss of opportunities that they had merited. Two respondents said that they were ignored and not taken seriously.
Thus, exclusion and marginalization were sometimes the results of hardening. The fear of losing honour is a value associated with relative prestige. Respondents saw it as related to self-estimation and rank. Hardening here is related to a loss of status and prestige.

Figure 6.1: Prestige

Figure 6.2 Prestige
d. Honour

Honour is a value related to prestige. It is an estimation of rank in society. Our results showed a more modest hardening over age groups. We observed a spike around 30 and late 50s. One respondent felt she lost religious status. The majority of respondents felt ambivalent towards this topic and that their experiences were mostly not affected by honour.

![Figure 7.1: Honour](image1)

![Figure 7.2: Honour](image2)
e. Status and Role

Status is position in a social pattern. Gottfried Lang’s article, “The Concepts of Status and Role in Anthropology: Their Definition and Use,” identifies the way in which individuals participate in a number of patterns of behaviour in relation to other individuals who may have different statuses. There are certain expectations in societies related to status and roles. Lang says that “a status is a kind of social stereotype, a part that we play in the drama of life.” Roles and statuses are complex: we occupy many statuses and roles at the same time. Statuses and roles are assigned and achieved.

Our results show some spiking of hardening among those in 30 and 60-year-old age groups. The general trend is toward a more pragmatic understanding of status. Most respondents experienced acceptance into the family dynamic after varying periods of distress.

![Figure 8.1: Status/Role](image)

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158 Lang, “Concepts of Status,” 206.
159 Kraft, Anthropology for Christian Witness, 379.
f. Alliances, Identity and Grouping

Identity was traditionally understood in terms of personality features that were more or less fixed. Today identity is seen as something that can change many times in a lifetime. In this study, we utilized the concept ‘identity’ in the context of ‘ethnic or religious identity’.

Jews are a tribal people. Even in secular societies this sense of tribe is personal and passionate. Charles Kraft says that the idea of belonging to a group is crucial. Results show that respondents who came to faith in Jesus caused a disturbance in the group. Disturbances within particular groups came about as changes in one person’s perceived identity caused strain to the alliances that made up the groups.

Our results showed some spiking of hardening among those in the 30 and 60-year-old age groups. We observed a consistent rise in hardening in this area in older respondents. We note that family and community hardening are more substantial. The respondent’s friends

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tended to be ambivalent. Many lived through the experience of being the ‘elephant in the room’.

There were many layers of complexity in responses here. Respondents felt neither here nor there. Many respondents were simply tolerated, felt like outliers, experienced pulling and pushing. Some experienced a feeling that they weren’t themselves; they were strangers.

Figure 9.1: Identity
g. Sanctions/Social Control

Sanctions play an important role in social control as the pressure to conform, especially in religious matters. As anthropologist Edward Green describes, in some cultures the fear of gossip “or a severe beating does not compare with the fear of an avenging spirit or fear of a curse.”\textsuperscript{162} There are secular and religious sanctions. Religious sanctions can go deeper in seeking to regulate attitude.\textsuperscript{163}

Within our study, we saw a breakdown in systems of social control because of secular assimilation. Most experienced passive or emotional control. We observed spikes in the 30 and 60-year-old age groups. Of the 24 participants in Group 3:

- 2 experienced being disowned

\textsuperscript{162} Edward C. Green, “Social Control in Tribal Afro-America,” in \textit{Anthropological Quarterly} vol. 50 no. 3 (July 1977), 107-116.
• 2 experienced religious control

• 3 lost job opportunities

• 3 were uninvited to family/community events

• 5 experienced psychological control such as:
  o ‘You cause us pain’
  o ‘You are hurting your grandparents’
  o ‘You will not be able to marry a Jew’
  o ‘You are a Gentile’

![Social Control Graph]

*Figure 10.1: Social Control*
h. Shame and Guilt

The Chinese idiom says: “People want ‘face’ as a tree wants bark.” One’s ‘face’ refers to how we value people. We could use other words like ‘deference’ and ‘standing.’ Shame and guilt are often social control mechanisms used by people with prestige, or by whole communities, to control group conformity to certain values. Charles Kraft notes that societies employ both shame and guilt as mechanisms of social control. Furthermore, societies that are group-oriented—such as Jewish communities—use shame more often, whereas individualized cultures use guilt more often. Cultures differ as to what is considered commendable. Our results showed spikes around the 30 and 60-year-old age

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165 Kraft, Anthropology, 417.
166 Kraft, Anthropology, 417.
groups. Psychological responses were most prevalent as sanctions. Some examples of the psychological shaming our participants reported are as follows:

- “You are retarded”
- “You cause us pain”
- “You are hurting your grandparents”
- “You will not be able to marry a Jew”
- “You are a Gentile”
- “You are disloyal”

The responses above are closely related to the experiences of social control. However, these responses were in the minority. Most shaming was of an unspoken mockery or sarcasm.
i. Hardening

I explained my definition of what hardening was to the respondents, and I asked them what their experiences were in relation to friends, family, and community. The respondents were able to reflect on a variety of positive and negative experiences. The cluster of more intense negative response was in the group approaching 60 years of age. More people expressed that the fear of their family, friends, and community becoming hardened toward them was worse than the actual experience of hardening.

Those older respondents had an anticipatory fear of losing approval in the Jewish community, among friends and family. Anticipatory fear was unease that some experienced in anticipation of exposure as a Jewish believer in Jesus. The irony here is that, like every aspect of fear, anticipatory fear is contradictory. The attempts to avoid the anxiety make it stronger. Some respondents put off making a decision about Jesus, or if they did decide to follow Jesus they put off telling their friends, family, and community. They felt that in
avoiding these decisions and conversations to reduce anxiety, the anticipatory fear generated additional apprehension. The anticipatory anxiety that my respondents noted was greater than the actual anxiety they experienced when they confronted the situation that frightened them.\textsuperscript{167}

\begin{itemize}
\item[j. Implied Social Contract]
During the interviews, I asked Group 3 participants if they experienced the ISC—\textit{Jews don’t believe in Jesus, for if they do, they are no longer Jewish}. These results present a kind of anthology of all the categories. We see spikes again at 30 and approaching 60, and a consistent hardening that grows with older respondents. There was a consistent response that this contract was something real, yet undefined and vague. Many characterized it this way: “I was told by others what I believe was wrong, but they couldn’t tell me why.”
\end{itemize}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{ImpliedSocialContract.png}
\caption{Implied Social Contract}
\end{figure}

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4.5 Group 3 Results

To analyze the results of Group 3, I utilized theologian John Barkley’s three categories of assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation. Leaving behind Barclay’s particular argument and treatment of Paul but maintaining his categories in a contemporary setting, my results showed that all groups of respondents are highly assimilated and acculturated but less accommodated.

I have taken some liberties with the categories and placed them in a twenty-first century context and defined them in the following ways:

1. **Assimilation** is the use of non-Jewish distinctives in all aspects of life. Are respondents socially integrated, intermarried, and do they participate in holidays, activities and causes outside the Jewish community? Did they receive secular education, and do they work with non-Jews? Is their social life connected to a non-Jewish world?

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168 See John Barclay, “Paul Among Diaspora Jews: Anomaly or Apostate?” *JSNT* 60 (1995): 89-120.
2. **Acculturation** is the borrowing of resources or categories from another culture. Acculturation comes about as the result of regular contact. I asked this group if they have used scholarly resources from the conventional culture or were they familiar with the rhetoric of secular culture. I asked if they receive education and language skills in an area that is different from traditional Jewish education.

3. **Accommodation** is the most complex category. It has to do with self-expression and self-understanding inside a larger group. This larger group is not part of one’s heart-culture. People who accommodate use adaption strategies to reduce social differences. My respondents responded to questions about being able to express themselves according to their Jewish culture inside a wider non-Jewish culture. Did they feel the liberty to reinterpret the uniqueness of Judaism inside this non-Jewish culture? Was there any oppositional sense or antagonism from the common culture?

Our results showed a consistent and continuing loyalty to the legacy of Jewish heritage across the two generations of Messianic Jews. Results were similar to Group 1. Lifestyles, values, and identity of most of our respondents reflected efforts to maintain a connection to Jewish tradition; the results showed a broad consensus that reflects a commitment to Jewish character, culture, and continuity. Respondents had a wide-ranging Jewish disposition. Over 90% felt an association with Jewish tradition, observed some Jewish practices and life-cycle rituals, and marked at least some of its festivals. We also saw a continuing rejection of this allegiance in the broader community, which I identified as the ISC at work.
I asked Group 3 questions related to the phenomena of assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation. I defined these terms for them, and based on their answers, I created the following pie charts. Along with the pie charts, I analyzed their responses and came to general conclusions.

**k. Assimilation**

The individuals in Group 3 are assimilated individuals in that they were integrated into the majority society, but they have not abandoned the peculiar customs and practices of their minority community.

Those who were most assimilated were those whose social integration involved the abandonment of all Jewish social distinctives. This includes Jews who were married to Gentiles and failed to raise their children as Jews. It also includes those who were regularly involved in other forms of worship as well as those who abandoned Jewish food laws or regarded the Sabbath with indifference. We found some who were educated in secular schools but retained their Jewish practices. Others were those who worked alongside non-Jews but still preserved their Jewish family life and other key 'ancestral customs'. At the bottom of the scale would be those wholly confined to Jewish religious and social networks.

Interrmarriage, having only one Jewish parent and attendance at a church (rather than a Messianic congregation) did not appear to decrease Jewish identity or even Jewish practices. We can see this tension illustrated in Figure 13 below:
Figure 13: Assimilation of Jewish Distinctives

- Socially Integrated
- Intermarriage
- Holidays, Activities and Causes
- Secular Education
- Employment with non-Jews
- Professional, Social, Educational and Religious life confined to a Jewish community
I. Acculturation

The fully acculturated individual is one who has acquired all the resources of the language and literary heritage of the majority culture. Speaking English or having a westernized name may indicate only superficial acculturation. For example, I was given two names – Andrew and Abraham. One was for use on the outside (secular school), and one was for use on the inside (synagogue and home). This identity tension was part and parcel of living a Jewish life in North America.

The ability to speak English can open up more opportunities for deeper acculturation in reading, writing, and speech. We measured the degree of acculturation among Jews whose literature was surviving by the presence or absence of linguistic and rhetorical markers, by the level of advanced English education, and by the extent of their knowledge of the English literary and philosophical traditions.

Messianic Jews in all my groupings are overrepresented in a commitment to Western education that trends higher than in the general population and at par with or greater than in the wider Jewish community. English was the first language in 100% of respondents, and 25% had facility in Hebrew.

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169 Barclay, “Paul Among Diaspora Jews,” 95.
Figure 14: Acculturation

m. Accommodation

This category is the most complicated. It is different for a Messianic Jew to be familiar with the common cultural heritage than it is to employ that heritage to re-express the essence of one's Jewish life. Accommodation has to do with how Messianic Jews shape and enjoy and employ their understanding of their Jewish heritage.

Messianic Jews in all our groups applied different traditions in their faith forms and their interpretations of Scripture. We found the respondents in a variety of denominations, but we found them enjoying and using a wide variety of Jewish resources and outlets. We discovered them in Messianic congregations.
One may distinguish in general between integrative and oppositional trends in accommodation. There was a trend in older respondents toward a more oppositional stance, but the younger respondents showed a renewed enthusiasm for accommodating Jewish categories in expressing one’s Jewish life.

The Group 3 data showed that Messianic Jews think like Jews, read Jewish sources, and they interpret their sacred texts as Jews. The scale of accommodation concerns those whose accommodation entailed the loss or submerging of Jewish cultural uniqueness along their faith journeys. Some engaged in a reinterpretation of Judaism in the light of their acculturation, but most participants were careful to preserve its uniqueness, at least in certain respects. This scale shows that most Messianic Jews integrated or reinterpreted Jewish values and customs into their faith traditions.

**Figure 15: Accommodation**
From our analysis of acculturation, accommodation, and assimilation we observed that those with a high level of assimilation need not be well-acculturated. Jews who married Gentile spouses may have had good acculturation but nonetheless may have succumbed to social pressure to abandon Jewish customs. Conversely, some who were highly trained in the Western educational system, clearly belonging at the top of the acculturation scale, may have preserved their Jewish identity quite carefully mainly by keeping their primary relationships within the Jewish community. Thus, assimilation and acculturation did not necessarily go hand in hand. It is also important that acculturation is not identical with accommodation as one could build either bridges or fences between Judaism and the surrounding culture.

4.6 Reflections and Conclusions

What emerged throughout the interviews was the reality of what hardening looks like. Through anthropological categories, we observed the true, lived experience of the ISC in the lives of Jews who became believers in Jesus. Their experience of Language, Family, Prestige/Honour, Status/Role, Alliance and Groupings, Sanctions, Shame/Guilt served to give a concrete picture of the ISC. To a greater or lesser extent, the participants experienced the reality of being considered ‘on the outside’ because of their belief in Jesus. This hardening is expressed in a variety of ways, all of which give a greater picture to those who wish to minister to the Jewish community, especially an organization like my own (JFJ) which seeks to engage in receptor-oriented, countercultural ministry.

With the Gospel came a whole new identity. For many there was a new reading of sacred history, texts, and lineage. At the same time, the deep structural shift that occurred within their worldview caused respondents to become strangers to themselves. Many
expressed a kind of death to friends, family, and community. There was a sense of loss but a sense of peace.

Some of the most striking lived experiences:

- “I did the wrong thing but how did I know that”
- “An inner need to find something, but finding a wall”
- “I believed that I broke certain rules”
- “Hardening was like a death”
- “Hardening was avoided”
- “When I was in the synagogue, I was a Christian, and when I was in church, I was a Jew”
- “Inconsistent thinking”
- “I was pitied”
- “I felt shamed and ignored”
- “My family was listening, but not listening”
- “I was met with gatekeepers”
- “I was cherished while being made to feel a failure”
- “I felt my birthright sanctioned”
- “I wondered where I belonged”
- “I experienced a concealed suspicion”
- “I saw the world differently”
- “I believed something taboo, and I didn’t know why”
- “I was haunted”
- “I experienced contempt and disdain”
- “I was a pariah”
- “There was apathy and dismissal”

To reiterate, I saw that the lifestyles, values, and identity of most of our respondents reflected efforts to maintain a connection to Jewish tradition, on the one hand, and choice, on the other. The results showed a broad consensus that reflects a representative commitment to the wider Jewish character, culture, and continuity. We observed diversity and choice in patterns that reflect a commitment to the Jewish world in the face of the pressures of modernity. More than 90% felt an association with Jewish tradition, observe some Jewish practices and life-cycle rituals, and mark at least some Jewish festivals.
4.7 Comparison with Pew Research Center Study

The comparison between my study and the Pew Research Study, “Portrait of Jewish Americans,” reveals how the experience of Jewish believers in Jesus fits into the landscape of Jewish experiences in North America. The Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project found that despite the declines in religious activity, American Jews say they are proud to be Jewish. This was the first major survey of American Jews in more than 10 years. It found a rise in those who are not religious, those who marry outside the faith, and those who are not raising their children Jewish. Specifically, this study showed that the intermarriage rate has reached a high of 58% for all Jews and 71% for non-Orthodox Jews. Before 1970, only 17% of Jews married non-Jews. The study also reported that two-thirds of the Jewish population did not belong to a synagogue, one-fourth of the Jewish population did not believe in God, and one-third of the Jewish population had Christmas trees in their homes last year. The study also revealed that the percentage of ‘Jews of no religion’ has grown with each successive generation, peaking with the Millennials (those born after 1980), of whom 32% say they have no religion. Interestingly, even as they claim no religion, about half of this group celebrate Passover.

These statistics fit with the general trend toward secularism that is also occurring in the American population with increasing proportions of each generation claiming no religious affiliation.

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But Jews without religion tend not to raise their children Jewish, so this secular trend has serious consequences for what Jewish leaders call ‘Jewish continuity.’ Of the ‘Jews of no religion,’ who have children at home, two-thirds are not raising their children Jewish in any way. Contrast this to the ‘Jews with religion,’ of whom 93% said they are raising their children to have a Jewish identity.

The writers say that losses in numbers should not obscure the fact that most Jews identify as such. The current state of American Jewry is not as bad or as good as some feared. The anxiety that leaders have is that most Jews in the North America have lost touch with the history of our ancient people, culture, and homeland. The Jewish community in North America is the most successful and secure Jewish community in our history. Some might say that to achieve that, think they had to sacrifice Jewish values.172

After reading and comparing the studies, I coded the data of the Pew results by searching for significant anthropological themes and statements and noted similarities to the results of Group 1-3. The following sociological and cultural categories emerged from that coding:

- **Pragmatism:** This is a way that life is handled based on practical rather than theoretical considerations. Lifestyles, values, and identity of most of our respondents reflect efforts to maintain a connection to Jewish tradition, on the one hand, and choice, on the other. The results showed a broad consensus that reflected a commitment to Jewish character, culture, continuity in Messianic and non-Messianic communities

- **Not religious or biblically literate:** The Pew survey showed that 54% of the North American Jewish community seldom celebrates Jewish holidays and 22% never

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celebrate Jewish holidays. Among Messianic Jews, we observed a consistent and very significant increase in orientation across age groups towards the sacred texts. They found truth is consistent and coherent with the Scripture. They did not find this same coherence in their culture. They often felt like strangers

- **Pluralistic:** Judaism is oriented to orthopraxis. Religious Jews do have some common beliefs, but their concern is correct behaviour. There is a diversity of views and stands rather than a single approach or method of interpretation. When it comes to Messianic Jews, most non-Messianic Jews would say that this community believes incorrectly. In the non-Messianic community pluralism is at the heart of acceptance and tolerance of other religious practices and ‘ways to God’. In the Messianic community, there is a general agreement that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel and the fulfillment of the destiny of Israel and the sacred texts.

- **Secularized:** Today religion has lost social and cultural significance. As a result, the role of religion is more limited. Some see this as a positive step for society and for Jewish people as a whole. The Jewish community flourishes in open and tolerant environments that are celebrated in secular society. The Messianic community benefits from secularism, which allows for diversity, but we did observe in the scatter graphs some contradictory patterns of social control.

- **Syncretized:** This is the attempt to reconcile what seems like contradictory beliefs. The respondents had opportunities of which their ancestors could only dream. There are no threats to freedom. Messianic Jews expose themselves to language, learning, and science. Some came from backgrounds where questioning God’s inspiration of the Bible was ordinary. Today all Jews are still coming to terms with the idea of adapting to our world but holding onto the customs of our ancestors.

- **Ambivalence:** This is uncertainty in action or belief. Our respondents wanted to be able to choose how they could be Jewish. The idea that the Jewish people are chosen is strange to some. The Pew study showed most Jews are proud to identify as Jewish, and that this identity is not fueled by belief in God. To the contrary, many secular Jews are uncomfortable with theology and religious law. Messianic Jews have stronger bonds to the Jewish tradition and the sense of Jewish ‘belonging’ that it cultivates.

- **Indifference:** This denotes an absence of feeling or interest in Judaism while simultaneously advocating its importance. Some might say that Judaism represents a civilization that no longer exists and that a new Judaism needs to emerge that is not connected to the covenants but reflects modernity and innovation.
4.8 Results in Relation to Goals
   Through my coding and analysis of the data, categories emerged. Following Creswell’s methodology and engaging with the participants as a narrator who allowed them to speak and interpret their experiences for themselves, a narrative began to emerge that filled out the various ways in which the ISC impacted a group of Jews who believe in Jesus. Especially in Group 3, the ISC and the experience of hardening emerged as multifaceted and complex, ranging across and throughout various anthropological categories. The trend that emerged across the categories and age groups is that hardening exerts more influence and weight in the older group of respondents. Most parents of this older group were immigrants born in Eastern Europe. The institutional memory of these immigrants is closely linked with experiences of hostility towards Jewish communities that were tempered in the North American experience. This older group experienced more intense experiences of hardening because this institutional memory was closer at hand in the experience of family. The organic nature of hardening is revealed as it emerged across various anthropological categories and within the different self-interpreted experiences of participants. The ISC was experienced and expressed by many participants.

   My study also revealed the differences between the generations of Jewish believers in Jesus. While experiences overlapped, there were differences between the younger generation and older generation, particularly related to the broader generational differences within modern, urban culture. Messianic Jews in North America are more similar to the American/Canadian Jewish community than to the general U.S. population in areas such as Jewish dispositions, education, and occupation. Our preferences in labeling our religious observance levels and ourselves indicate a continuing identification with the Jewish people.
The diversity in the Messianic Jewish community reflects the diversity of the larger Jewish community.

This study and the initial data analysis and coding will provide ample ground for developing a missiological strategy, which is unpacked in the next chapter.
Chapter 5: Missiological Implications: Anthropological and Strategic Implications

“There is no point giving a man a rose to smell after you’ve cut off his nose.”
- Indian Proverb

“God made man because He loves stories.”
- Elie Wiesel 173

“Why do I have to cross over these social and cultural barriers if I want to believe that Jesus is my Messiah?”
-- Andrew Barron. 174

The broad study of experiences of Jewish believers in Jesus in North America produced several results. First, my study gave a sociological and anthropological picture of the Messianic Jewish community in North America. Their education levels, patterns of marriage, interaction with the broader culture, etc. all emerged from the study. The picture of the Messianic Jews closely related to the picture of the experience and commitments of Jewish communities in North America, which is seen when I coded significant anthropological themes based on my study and the Pew Research Study. However, my study of the experiences of Groups 2 and 3 revealed that although the Messianic Jewish community still participates in broader Jewish communities and identifies itself as Jewish, it experiences the negative consequences of the ISC in a variety of ways. I identified through coding the way the ISC manifests itself in all of the anthropological categories. The coding gave anthropological expression to the hardening that participants experienced. And, although the experience of hardening was different, it was a key part of the experience of Jewish believers in Jesus. Even as Jewish believers in Jesus experienced the effects of the ISC, my study revealed that their existence, self-identification, and participation in traditionally Jewish


activities disrupt the ISC. Jewish believers in Jesus show that it is not only possible to be Jewish and believe in Jesus, but that being a Christian ties them into a story that is Jewish. It makes sense to them and provides a renewed design for life. These Jewish people find that truth is rooted in the story of the Jewish people. The story of the Jewish people is in our Scriptures, and it is the story by which they understand their lives. In that story, they find the story of God who is known in the context of their lives.

For JFJ and my ministry, this study has several missiological implications as it proves the ISC and gives it anthropological categories. It showed, via the experiences of Jewish believers in Jesus, how those who violate one of the key coping and preservation mechanisms of the Jewish worldview experience and relate to their community. All cultures have boundaries. These boundaries define who is in and who is out. Who is in and who is out is the survival apparatus based on worldview identified by Kraft. This apparatus is a strategy for endurance. This integrated core of culture is the cement that holds things together. When this centre is challenged, perspectives on reality are changed.

I would say that missionaries blunder when they try to communicate using paradigms that don’t relate to the worldview of their receiving communities. At its core, the ISC assumes that Jesus and the church He represents are at odds with and antithetical to the Jewish experience, culture, and worldview. Belief in Jesus puts one outside the culture. However, we at JFJ assert that Jesus is central to the satisfaction of Jewish destiny, experience, culture and worldview. How, then, does our study help us avoid missionary mistakes while trying to bring about the deep structural and worldview shift? How does it help us uproot the ISC?

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5.1 Applications from the Study

I have made a statistical analysis of the experiences of a group of Jewish people who believe in Jesus. I have measured quantitative and qualitative dimensions of their experiences. Statistics are curious things. One could analyze the experience of a person in winter with one foot inside his house and the other outside the house. Percentages would say that a person in this situation should be perfectly comfortable. I have tried my best to produce the most reliable statistics and truest picture of these three groups of people.

Anthropological categories have emerged which has given meaning to the lived experiences of my respondents. I advocate that these categories point to an association with the hardening of Israel (Romans 11). My research attempts to understand hardening as a genuine experience that I identify as part of the ISC. Various people may or may not recognize themselves in this picture.

Our respondents varied in age group, in experience, in their self-assessments, but here are some of my conclusions:

1. The presentation and response to the Gospel have not drastically changed over the years. Personal contact, reading the Bible and various kinds of pressures from the Jewish community and family remain the steady ways in which the message of the Messiah is heard. We need to build relationships and make the Bible available while recognizing and addressing pressure points. I present nothing new here, but it bears repeating. Non-Jewish Christians should address the pressure points facing the Jewish community to whom they are trying to reach with the Gospel message.

2. More controversially, my study showed that intermarriage and attendance at a church rather than a Messianic congregation do not appear to decrease Jewish identity or even Jewish practices. Had we surveyed the Jewish believing community in 1930, we might have correlated intermarriage with a loss of Jewish identity. Some say that marrying a Jewish partner and involvement in a Messianic congregation is necessary for the maintenance of Jewish identity. Statistical results are only as good as their...
interpretations, and this finding bears further exploration, especially vis-à-vis the larger Jewish community’s experience.

3. Regarding the larger Jewish community, Messianic Jews in North America are more similar to the American/Canadian Jewish community than to the general U.S. population in areas such as Jewish dispositions, education, and occupation. Our preferences in labeling our religious observance levels and ourselves indicate a continuing identification with the Jewish people. While there is much diversity in the Messianic Jewish community, this also reflects the diversity of the larger Jewish community. We are, in our temperaments, dispositions, and activities, part of the wider community. Moreover, we actively seek ways of engagement in the community, for example, through synagogue attendance or participation in community activities and values. We seek this involvement even though the larger community continues to exert pressures away from Jewish consideration of the Gospel. A tension exists for the Jewish believer in remaining an ‘insider’ to the Jewish community and continuing to challenge our people prophetically.

4. It is important to compare our Messianic community to other settings in Messianic communities around the world to see what approaches we have to consider in cultivating our Jewishness—and in bringing the Gospel to our people worldwide.

5. Regarding hardening, I tried to show what this experience was like in my respondents’ lives. Oppositional intensity changed, but the notion that hardening most generally acted as a protection mechanism resonated with all respondents in Group 2 and in Group 3. This phenomenon manifested itself in the ISC in some manner across the age groups. It is important to see how hardening and the ISC continue to relate not only to communities in North America but also to other communities in the years ahead.

5.2 Applications for Ministry

Whatever approach is used it is important to find the right fit. My research is determined and conditioned by the Great Commission and Scripture and my theology of ministry which flows from that. My testing tool is this mandate, and it conditions my research.

The following broad applications are based on the research and my experience with JFJ:
• We have to spend more time with people with whom we disagree so that we can test and refine our propositions.

• We need to be less content with status quo and be challenged to change. I maintain that God enjoys human creativity, and we should be open to new platforms in communicating the message of Jesus.

• We should avoid platforms and materials that are syrupy, far-fetched, and irrelevant. We are trying to understand and bring meaning into the social context of our people. We must talk to Jewish people.

• We cannot lack the courage to face opposition. For many of our people who are dealing with certain aspects of the ISC, there is the real possibility of advocating for the rejection of one paradigm commitment to another. My research shows that levels of opposition will emerge, and the faithful ministry worker must be equipped to face these situations.

• We must avoid unsuitable culture-bound material. Our publications and platforms are to be oriented to those receiving the message.

• We must be able to communicate beyond cultural boundaries into a more sophisticated culture group. Urban Jews have 2.5 years more education than the general public.

• We have to stop thinking that the best or only way of communicating religious knowledge is through worship services. I am especially concerned about this in the case of cross-cultural contexts. More effective receptor-oriented communication takes place in homes, offices and campuses.

• We must exercise critical judgment regarding material, methods, and projects used in the past. We must ask questions like: “Do they work now?” and “Can we measure their impact?” Our research must be confessional and self-critical. We must admit to ourselves and to one another areas where we have failed and move on.

• The results of my research show that we would do well to admit honestly our results, shortcomings, and failures to those who support our endeavours. Less than 1% of our people agree with our message. Most are socially and culturally segregated from Jesus and his Church. Most do not employ the same categories when talking about sin, salvation, or saviour.

• The premises of the ISC are still very much part of the majority of Jewish people in North America. As the Pew Research indicates, approximately 60% of U.S. Jews say a person cannot be Jewish if he or she believes Jesus was the Messiah. JFJ must pay attention to this reality. Steve Moore makes significant comments
regarding limiting factors that nonprofit organizations like JFJ face when innovating. We are artificially insulated from market forces. I once heard our founder, Moishe Rosen, say, “It is easy to hit the side of a barn door and draw a circle around it and tell the world that you made a bull’s eye.” He was encouraging JFJ to be honest about our projects and their results. In the world that I work and live in we see very little return on many efforts. Moore makes important points here related to my conclusions:

- We cannot tolerate underperformance that makes it possible to prolong a project or initiative by generating activity without results. This is especially true if someone is skilled at communicating activity in a compelling way.
- We often find the justification to continue an initiative or even an entire organization based on the worthiness of the cause rather than the success of the initiative.
- The problem is that not all activity produces desired outcomes. Inevitably some of our initiatives will be underwhelming at best or failures at worst.
- We invested a lot of human and financial resources, which makes it nearly impossible to admit failure.
- We should not celebrate regardless of the outcome by spinning a creative story about the exciting activities we generated as if they were results.

We need to use appropriate speech. We need to adapt so that we are heard within the culture to which we are going. I don’t propose a new tactic, but it is a tactic applied anew. It is receptor-oriented communication.

Paul in Mars Hill is a good example of using appropriate and relevant speech and adapting the message of Messiah to one’s environment. In Acts 17 he brings the message, aware of his context; but he did not change the content of the message. He did handle the situation in Athens in a far different manner from how he would have tried in Jerusalem. He

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did not denounce idolatry. They did not know or did not receive the education that the veneration of images and idols and pantheistic gods was wrong. That would have been an appropriate message in Judea; that is the message of reproof. But, he taught within the hearer’s frame of reference by picking one of their altars and using it as a point of development. Sooner or later Paul was going to get back to showing that idolatry was wrong. And he does eventually do that. His communication is complete: he has an introduction, an explanation, and a conclusion. Our communication is to be tied to the consciousness of the hearers. This principle is at the heart of my theology of ministry.

Our study revealed that while Jews who believe in Jesus face opposition from the broader Jewish community, many maintain their Jewish identity. In this small group, there is a strong desire to maintain and strengthen the Jewish identity. We must be conscious about the ISC when we employ the go-and-tell story, but we must uproot the assumption within the ISC that to be Jewish is not to believe in Jesus. We must use our narratives as Jews ministering to fellow Jews. We need to find creative, meaningful ways to do this within the context of communities and friendships. We need to make sure we are continuing to assess and ask questions about the methods and materials we use. We need to be self-critical so that we can communicate the message more effectively. One way to do this is to advocate a focus on Genesis 12. This passage is not on the activity or passivity of the families of the earth but rather on the initiative and enterprise of God who invites all people to participate and draw hope in a story. Genesis 12 marks the start of both Israel and God’s redemptive history. The Jewish people and the history of all peoples are linked together by the God who takes action in this story of redemptive history.
Finally, the ISC is a way of looking at factors that influence a large number of people. 

*The heart of my theory is that changing this contract is possible.* Communication inside Jewish culture has its set of unusual and counterintuitive rules. Can the Jewish people radically transform this contract or belief? Is there an impetus that can come internally or externally? If we look closely at the results, we can see that social change is volatile and difficult. Changes in behaviour and belief can be contagious, and change can happen if there is a change in the narrative. Little changes have big effects. The following are a summary of what this means, missiologically, for JFJ:

1. Those who responded have always been a minority, often perceived with disdain or rejection.
2. When we persevere, we believe that God works despite our failures.
3. New methods and forms of communication on any number of platforms must be utilized. New and improved distribution of information is important. We must encourage research-based experimentation.
4. Many who labour do not live to see the fruit of their efforts.
5. We seek not to change Jewish culture but Jewish people.
6. The Church reaches Jewish people despite the social and cultural boundaries that exist.
7. We must bear with opposition and unbelief.

The story of Scriptures is the story by which I seek to understand my life and the life of my people. The truth is rooted in this story. It is a story that helps me face my ordinary duties. It is the story of God who makes Himself known in the context of our lives. It is a story of brokenness and a story of a chosen people who bear his purpose. We share in the sorrow of God’s work.
The conflict is not between a Christianized culture and a Jewish culture. God has not purified one culture to impose it on another. We also cannot go to the other extreme and have an unrealistically positive view of Jewish culture and Judaism. Jewish people must capture as much as possible their cultural heritage. The missiological breakthrough that is needed is the centrality of the story of God among my people. Within the framework of my people, God chose Abraham and made promises to him. Jesus is the end to the hope given to Abraham. He fulfills the destiny of the Jewish people. A Christian is one whose story is oriented to the Messiah of the God of Israel. This story is faithfully Jewish.
Bibliography


APPENDIX 1: Group 1 Background Survey Results

1. Introduction to the Study

In North America, there are Jewish people who have come to faith in Jesus as Saviour of the world and as the Messiah of Israel. We were interested in surveying a group of Jewish believers in Jesus to understand their lived experience.

From June 1, 2013, through December 1, 2013, I carried out a broad study of Messianic Jews in North America under the auspices of Jews for Jesus (JFJ), my ministry agency. This study was a follow-up to a similar study conducted by JFJ in 1983. The 2013 study involved a sample of 1,567 respondents and, like its predecessor, covered a variety of aspects through quantitative questions covering age, family background, education, religious observance and vocation.

The purpose of this study was and is to aid those of us involved in the wider messianic community. Our challenge is to critically understand our evolving movement; to provide resources and stimulate strategies for outreach, fellowship and edification.

Through this study we explored:

1. The representation of the experiences of a group of Jews who believe in Jesus
2. How this group of Jewish people experienced cultural influences during their decision to follow Jesus
3. How one generational experience compares with a different generational experience

Qualitative questions covered observance of religious traditions, Jewish and general beliefs and values, and Jewish identity. A new section of analysis covered the respondent’s experiences as they heard and responded to the Gospel. The distinguishing range of this study and a comparison of its findings made with those of the previous study (Jews for Jesus, 1983) the Pew study (Portrait of Jewish Americans, Pew Research, 2013) and the Steinhardt study (American Jewish Population Estimates, 2012).

2. Key Findings of Comparative Data

In 2013, the Pew Research Foundation published their report on American Jews. The report contained valuable comparison data for the American Jewish community and, where appropriate, the general U.S. population.

The report indicated that American Jews are proud to be Jewish and have an awareness of belonging to the Jewish people. Nevertheless, it indicated that Jewish identity is changing in America. One in five Jews (22%) now describe themselves as having no religion. Furthermore, the percentage of U.S. adults who say they are Jewish when asked about their religion has declined by about half since the late 1950s. The number is currently a little less than 2%. The number of Americans with direct Jewish ancestry or upbringing who consider themselves Jewish, yet describe themselves as atheist, agnostic or having no religion, is rising; it is now about 0.5% of the U.S. adult population.
The changing nature of Jewish identity stands out sharply when we see results analyzed by generation. Ninety-three percent of Jews in the aging generation identify as Jewish by of religion; just 7% describe themselves as having no religion. By contrast, among Jews in the youngest generation of U.S. adults, 68% identify as Jews by religion, while 32% describe themselves as having no religion and identify as Jewish on the basis of ancestry, ethnicity or culture.

This shift in Jewish self-identification reflects broader changes in the U.S. public who increasingly shun religious affiliation. The share of U.S. Jews who say they have no religion (22%) is similar to the share of religious “nones” in the general public (20%), and religious disaffiliation is as common among all U.S. adults ages 18-29 (32%) as among Jewish Millennials (32%). Sixty-two percent of Jews say being Jewish is mainly a matter of ancestry and culture while 15% say it is mainly a matter of religion. Even among Jews by religion, more than half (55%) say being Jewish is mainly a matter of ancestry and culture, and two-thirds say it is not necessary to believe in God to be Jewish.

Compared with Jews by religion, however, Jews of no religion are not only less religious but also much less connected to Jewish organizations and much less likely to be raising their children Jewish. More than 90% of Jews by religion who are currently raising minor children in their home say they are raising those children Jewish or partially Jewish. In stark contrast, two-thirds of Jews of no religion say they are not raising their children Jewish or partially Jewish—either by religion or aside from religion.178

The Steinhardt Social Research Institute (SSRI) produced an expansive study of the Jewish population in North America in 2012. There are an estimated 6.8 million Jewish adults and children in the United States: 4.2 million adults self-identify as Jewish when asked about their religion. Nearly 1 million adults consider themselves Jewish by background and other criteria. There are an estimated 1.6 million Jewish children among adults who self-identify as Jewish by religion. Just over 1 million (24%) are aged 65 years and older. They are more than twice as likely as other Americans to be college graduates. The portrait of American Jewry described by the 2012 SSRI findings is of a population, at least numerically, in ascent.179

3. Abstract of Findings

The statistics from this survey are compared with the previous survey of Messianic Jews in 1983 as well as other available demographic data. Messianic Jews in North America have a wide-ranging Jewish temperament. Messianic Jews say they are proud to be Jewish and have an awareness of belonging to the Jewish people. A majority consider themselves part of the Jewish people, based on nomenclature preferences and lifestyle. More than ninety percent felt an association with Jewish tradition, observe some Jewish practices and life-cycle rituals, and mark at least some of its festivals. Seventy-five percent of respondents married people who are not Jewish.

178 Pew, 7-8.
179 SSRI 7-8.
Lifestyles, values, and identity of most of our respondents reflected efforts to maintain a connection to Jewish distinctiveness and tradition, on the one hand, and choice, on the other. The results showed a broad consensus that reflects a representative commitment to the wider Jewish character, culture and continuity. This finding relates to SSRI’s findings, which state: “Jewish identity is complex and fluid.” Messianic Jews and their families express their Jewishness in a variety of ways. Furthermore, the relationship of the Messianic Jewish community to the North American culture at-large and the Jewish community in particular often reflected a myriad of different options.

We found that Messianic Jews often sought to orient themselves in new and refreshing ways to their Jewish community. We observed some increase in Shabbat activities and observances, interest in Hebrew, interest in the state of Israel, and participation in Jewish issues that affect Jews around the world. Many respondents also become more generous in their attention and resources to issues of Jewry. Most significant was the increased awareness in their interest in giving to Jewish causes, going to Israel and Tikkun Olam. Tikkun Olam is a Hebrew phrase that means "repairing the world" (or "healing the world") and advocates a communal responsibility to heal, repair and transform the world.

One way of explaining this phenomenon is through socio-psychologist Bethamie Horowitz’s research about major issues and problems facing the Jewish people for more than two decades. Horowitz states: “Jewishness unfolds and gets shaped by the different experiences and encounters in a person’s life. Each new context or life stage brings with it new possibilities. A person’s Jewishness can wax, wane, and change in emphasis. It is responsive to social relationships, historical experiences, and personal events.”

Regarding hearing and responding to the Gospel, our results showed, as expected, that the most common way for someone to hear the Gospel in the Jewish community is through direct conversation. Tables 14, 15 and 16 show that many respondents first heard the Gospel in the marketplace. However, our study also indicated that there has been growth in the numbers who hear the Gospel in a church, a Messianic congregation, and in conversation with a relative.

An equal number of respondents responded positively and negatively when they first heard the Gospel. The median age in which Jews first hear the Gospel was 17 and the median age in which that person became a Messianic Jew was 22. Across the age groups, we saw that this five-year period was typical. We also observed that older responders responding to the Gospel trended in a negative way whereas younger respondents exhibited similar but less severe reactions.

Jews who hear the Gospel confront issues of loyalty to community, culture, family, and friends. They think about the Holocaust and are afraid of change. As these people think about Jesus and his relationship to the Jewish people, they read the Tanakh and the New Testament.

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180 SSRI, 24.
They confront the words of our prophets, and they read books and talk to God and their friends. Many become convicted of sin.

We saw a consistent representation of the influence of the Bible, New Testament and prophecy across age groups. *The Late Great Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsey is not significant among responders under 50. C.S. Lewis is the best-represented author of influence across all the age groups.

Our survey showed an overrepresentation of Messianic Jews regarding education credentials, professional, and specialized vocations. This overrepresentation indicated in Tables 10, 11 and 12. Respondents were underrepresented in the Northeast and overrepresented in the South, Midwest, and West.

**4. Quantitative Results**

**FAMILY BACKGROUND**

The survey opened with a question about the background that defines the respondent as Jewish. More than 75% of those within the fifty and over age groups reported having both parents Jewish. For those born after 1980, just under one-third came from households where both parents were Jewish. A likely influencer here is the larger number of second generation Messianic Jews in the youngest respondents, reflecting mixed marriages of Messianic Jewish parents.

**Table 1: Family Background**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>18+</th>
<th>21+</th>
<th>30+</th>
<th>40+</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both Parents Jewish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Jewish</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Jewish</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LOCATION

These questions involve the location of the respondents. More populous states and larger Jewish population centres have the highest number of Messianic Jews. California and New York have the largest communities, followed by Texas, Illinois, and Florida. The DC metro area also represents strongly. Our results are compared with the Brandeis study, which provided population estimates for the major population centres. These tables show Messianic Jews overrepresented in the West and Midwest and South and underrepresented in the Northeast.

Table 2: Location of respondents by state

[Diagram showing location of respondents by state]

182 SSRI, 16.
### Table 3: Location of Respondents by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>JB2013</th>
<th>Pew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Location of Respondents by Region**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4 Major Jewish Population Centres**
MARITAL STATUS

The variation between married and single respondents reflects the expected larger number of those who were never married among the 29-and-under populations. The small numbers of widows and widowers is also a reflection of the age categories on the whole.

Table 5: Marital Status
INTERMARRIAGE

These results show that the intermarriage rate is higher in the Messianic Jewish community than in the categories listed in the Pew study. There was a slight increase from the JFJ study in 1983 to 2013; however, this increase was not as much as in other categories in the general Jewish population. Table 7 indicates a small change in the intermarriage trend among second generation Messianic Jews.

Table 6: Intermarriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jewish %</th>
<th>Gentile %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NET Jewish</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No denomination</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JB1983</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JB2013</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Intermarriage with Decadal Comparatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>18+</th>
<th>21+</th>
<th>30+</th>
<th>40+</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gentile Believer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Believer</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentile Unbeliever</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Unbeliever</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intermarriage with Comparatives
AGE GROUP

The majority of the respondents were older though there was still a reasonable representation of the younger groups as well. The Pew study had a more even distribution across their chosen age categories, while the 1983 and 2013 JFJ surveys reflect the evolution and growth of the movement, with more pronounced spikes in each survey.

Table 8: Age Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>JB2013</th>
<th>JB1983</th>
<th>Pew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>65+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>50-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>30-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>18-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The gender of the respondents is evenly distributed: 52.4% female and 47.6% male. The ratio varied slightly with the decade grouping. 49% of American Jews are male, 51% female, the same as the total U.S. population.

Table 9: Gender
OCCUPATION

We compared 2013 with 1983 results to obtain a fuller picture of the occupations of respondents. In both studies, a wide-range of vocational options was given. Table 10 is a comparison made using the categories provided in the Jewish believer surveys. It shows that the Jewish believer population has a higher representation in the Management, Science, Business, and Arts categories than the general population. Table 11 normalizes the responses to compare them with categories used in a survey by the U.S. Census Bureau. It also indicates an increase in some of these vocations from the 1983 to 2013 report. Some of this additional increase is probably the result of increased representation in the higher age brackets.

Table 10: Occupation 1983 vs. 2013

Occupations with Comparatives
Table 11: Occupation and U.S. General Population

Table 11: Occupation and U.S. General Population

EDUCATION
The commitment to education by Messianic Jews is more significant than in the general population and at par or greater than the wider Jewish community. I show this in Table 12. We also compared the education levels indicated in Pew survey and the 1983 survey with the most recent survey and US general population.
### Table 12: Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Grad Degree</strong></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BA/BS</strong></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Some College</strong></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High School or less</strong></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education with Comparatives**
AGE WHEN FIRST HEARD GOSPEL

The median age for first hearing the Gospel was 17 and the median age for becoming a Messianic Jew was 22. Table 12 breaks the age down by decade. As expected, the average age rose with each decade, but across all decades, most people had heard the Gospel by age 25. However, there were still some respondents who did not hear the Gospel until later in life. And, while the medians were 17 and 22, the averages were significantly higher, indicating that people do respond to the Gospel even when hearing it for the first time at later ages.

Table 13: Age and the Gospel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>First Heard the Gospel</th>
<th>Believed the Gospel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40+</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age When First Heard Gospel
CONTEXT AND THE GOSPEL

These questions asked the source of and context in which the respondent first heard the Gospel broken down by decade. As expected, the most common way for someone to hear the Gospel in the Jewish community was via direct conversation. However, there has been growth in the numbers who hear it in a church, a Messianic congregation, and in conversation with a relative.

The 1983 and 2013 surveys asked the source and context question in different ways. Although the questions were asked differently in the two surveys, personal interaction arose as an issue of primary importance in both surveys. The 2013 survey indicated that conversations with friends, relatives, or strangers accounted for the majority of the means of hearing. Congregational settings, Messianic congregations or churches were the next most prevalent. The 1983 survey also indicated that people were the strongest influence. Tables 15 and 16 show the results.

Respondents in the 2013 survey were asked to provide narrative here as well. The results indicated that older participants’ response to the Gospel trended in a negative way, whereas younger respondents exhibit similar but less severe reactions. Tables 17 and 18 look at the nature of the response. We see actions taken and the relationship of convincing to conversion. These are categories that applied to narrative responses. In doing this, we tried to capture the essence of participant’s initial reaction to the Gospel. We observed a mixture of positive and negative responses across the age groups. Table 18 specifically reports answers to the question that offered respondents multiple options about actions taken after hearing the Gospel. The trend indicates respondents attempting to refute or confirm, using the Bible and friends as resources. Each response was well represented across the age groups.

We ask questions about what finally convinced participants of the truth of the Gospel. In this question, participants were able to select multiple options. The results recorded in Table 19. We observed, again as in Table 18, responses represented across the age groups.

Finally, we asked which books or movies influenced participants. We show these results in Table 20. The Bible, New Testament, and prophecy are most significant across age groups. *The Late Great Planet Earth* is not significant among the responders under 50. C.S. Lewis is the best-represented author across the age groups.
Table 14: Context and the Gospel

Contact with someone previously unknown
Directly from Scripture
Public event / presentation
In a Messianic congregation
Tract or other Gospel literature
Other online source
Social media
Email

Contact and the Gospel
### Table 15: First Heard the Gospel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public event / presentation</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a church</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a Messianic congregation</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct conversation with relative</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct conversation with friend</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with someone previously unknown</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract or other Gospel literature</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directly from Scripture</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other online source</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16: Initial Attraction to the Gospel 1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search/Quest/Truth</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book/Lit.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supernatural intervention</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conviction/Holy Spirit</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life crisis</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio/TV/Movies</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afterlife/Fear</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideals/Condition of world</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Initial Attraction to The Gospel (1983)
Table 17: Nature of Response when you first heard the Gospel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Response</th>
<th>&lt;30</th>
<th>30+</th>
<th>40+</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not for Jews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very young</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't remember</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skeptical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confused</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mind before heart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why didn't they tell me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shock surprise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear conviction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nature of Response to the Gospel
Table 18: What Actions did you take after you heard the Gospel?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>21+</th>
<th>30+</th>
<th>40+</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read the Bible</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked further to the person from whom you heard the Gospel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked God to show you what was true</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended a fellowship group or congregation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked to friends about what you had heard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read other Christian materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended a Bible Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sought to demonstrate that the Gospel wasn't true</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked to a rabbi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actions in Response to the Gospel**
Table 19: What helped to convince you of the Truth of the Gospel?

- Conviction / Holy Spirit
- Bible
- Personal contact
- Supernatural intervention
- Life changes
- Book / Literature
- Group
- Radio / TV / Movies

Convincing and the Gospel
Table 20: What Book or Movie influenced you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book/Movie</th>
<th>60+</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>40+</th>
<th>30+</th>
<th>21+</th>
<th>18+</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Testament</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Great Planet Earth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT Prophecies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mere Christianity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case for Christ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left Behind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence That Demands a Verdict</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betrayed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus of Nazareth</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus Film</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Than a Carpenter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y’shua</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thief in the Night</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cross and the Switchblade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other CS Lewis books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael, Michael Why Do You Hate Me?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy Swaggart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Dobson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Hal Lindsey books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity is Jewish</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godspell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Stanley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOMENCLATURE

The study asked how Jewish believers in Jesus identify themselves. Table 21 below indicates the results of this question in comparison to the 1983 report. The results indicate that there has been some significant trending in the last three decades away from “Hebrew Christian” towards identification as either “Jewish believer” or “Messianic Jew.” For this question, respondents were allowed to choose more than one option.

Table 22 shows these results across the decades, which revealed a consistent pattern of claiming some label that maintains Jewish identity. Respondents were able to select multiple options.

Table 21: Nomenclature Comparing 1983 to 2013

Nomenclature Comparing 1983 to 2013
Table 22: Nomenclature by Decade

Nomenclature by Decade
ACTIVITIES AND WORSHIP

The next section shows the wide variety of ways that Messianic Jews participate in the Jewish world. Before and After questions were asked to ascertain if any orientation and participation in the Jewish world changed. We also attempted to see if commitments to the Jewish world altered after a making a decision. We observed a consistent pattern of respondents taking a renewed interest in participating in and relating to their Jewish world in a variety of ways and with a variety of commitments. We also observed diversity and choice in patterns that reflect a commitment to the Jewish world in the face of the pressures of modernity. More than 90% felt an association with Jewish tradition, observed some Jewish practices and life-cycle rituals, and marked at least some Jewish festivals. The following grouping of tables indicates the various actives and worship practices we surveyed.

Overall, participants indicated that they were oriented to and participating in Jewish life in a more substantial way than respondents to the Pew study. These results recorded in Table 23 compares respondents in 1983 and 2013 to the Pew study.

We also observed a trend across age groups towards more participation in Jewish life. Table 24 shows by decade how the celebration of holidays impacted after becoming a Messianic Jew.

We also asked respondents to list what activities they participate in on a regular basis in their Messianic Jewish life. In this question, respondents were able to choose more than one activity. Table 25 shows these results and shows that there was an even response across age groups. Respondents were asked to speak to their participation in synagogue life outside the Messianic Jewish community. Table 26 shows the results. What we observed is that patterns indicated an orientation, especially in older respondents, away from this practice. We did see, however, a consistent pattern of Messianic Jews in all age groups participating in and worshiping at local synagogues.

Participants were asked to indicate the celebration of Shabbat in the home through the lighting of Shabbat candles. We record results in Table 27. We observed a consistent increase in orientation across age groups towards this practice. There was also an increase in the general observance of Sabbath. We record participants’ answers to the question on Sabbath observance in Table 28. Here again, there was a consistent increase in orientation towards this practice across age groups.

About the study of Hebrew, we also observed consistent orientation towards this practice across age groups. Table 29 indicates the answers we received to the question concerning the study of Hebrew.

We asked a specific question about participation in campus groups. Respondents showed a consistent pattern of participation in older and younger ages (Table 30). We do see little or no involvement in the older decades. One of the reasons for this, we speculate, is that these groups were not available to older respondents or that the older groups participated in more
extemporaneous and impromptu groupings. Respondents under 30 trended towards participation in campus groups.

We observed many other practices that seemed to increase, without providing specifics, after conversion such as accessing and reading Jewish media, (Table 31), observing traditional Jewish food observances (Table 32), practising the Jewish value of Tikkun Olam (repair of the world) (Table 33), giving to Jewish causes (Table 35), and traveling to Israel (Table 36).

We did observe a decrease in participation in Jewish community centres, and without providing specifics, across age groups towards this practice (Table 34).

We also asked participants to list the churches or congregations they attended to get a more concrete sense of congregational affiliation and present attachment. We then grouped the responses to make a more meaningful comparison. In most cases, the type of church or Messianic congregation was reasonably clear. In most cases, the denomination was reasonably clear from the name, but in some cases we made some assumption about the category. We grouped Messianic congregations, Baptist churches, and charismatic churches into their category. The traditional category included Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and similar denominations. The community category included community churches, non-denominational churches, and some of the more recent “movements” in which non-denominational churches have emerged as affiliated congregations in multiple cities. Five percent of respondents indicated attendance at both a Messianic congregation and a Christian church of some other denomination. Table 37 shows the breakdown of the respondents’ answers.
Table 23: Celebration of Holidays Comparatives

Celebration of the Holidays
Table 24: Celebration of Holidays Decadal Before and After Becoming a Messianic Jew

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>After</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or older</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>159</td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

Celebration of Holidays
Table 25: Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>21+</th>
<th>30+</th>
<th>40+</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at a church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Bible Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer in a service capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership in a church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong to a small group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at a Messianic congregation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor a missionary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in congregational leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in short term missions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Sunday School class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership in a Messianic congregation</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider my home to be my church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Sunday School</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activities
### Table 26: Synagogue Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 or older</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 or older</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Synagogue Attendance*
Table 27: Shabbat Candles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>After</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 or older</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or older</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td>21-29</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>55</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Shabbat Candles
### Table 28: Observing Shabbat Customs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or older</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
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Table 29: Study Hebrew

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Joining Campus Groups
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Jewish Media
Table 32: Keeping Kashruth

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Keeping Kashruth
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Tikkun Olam
Table 34: Jewish Community Centre

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Table 35: Giving to Jewish Causes

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Table 36: Going to Israel

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Table 37: Fellowship Affiliation

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5. Qualitative Analysis

Introduction

Qualitative results are more elusive than quantitative results. Narrative responses to the survey questions were broken down into common themes and significant statements. This breakdown yielded patterns. In assessing and analyzing this part of the research, we examined narratives that showed patterns of experiences in relationships and pressures related to the decision-making experience. We tried to develop categories of information that would lead to an understanding of the common experience of the participants.

Questions of Pressure

We asked a series of questions about the types of pressure participants felt when making their decisions to follow Jesus. We asked about the source (Table 38) and the type of pressure felt (Table 39).

As expected, family rejection was the most often-cited item, with related items of community rejection, cultural pressures, and disloyalty (see Table 38). Also, the most frequent mention of the Holocaust was among the age groups for children of Holocaust survivors, with a smaller incidence in the age groups of their grandchildren. Some of the following informal comments represented common themes concerning the internal and external pressure from families. These are weighted across age groups but clustered in the above 50 group.

- **Loss of important relationships:**
  - “It became a battle between the comfort of my life and a good relationship with my family or choosing Jesus.”
  - “My dad and I were already in a strained relationship; this most likely would make it worse.”

- **Direct rejection:**
  - “When I first went to Church, mom kicked me out of the house and made me choose either to leave the Church or leave the house… .”
  - “Since I come from a very powerful family, I was concerned they would try to have my children taken out of my care through legal channels, but I was prepared to face any judge since freedom of religion is our right.”
  - “My family cut me off and mourned my death. They wanted nothing to do with me for a while; then after eight months or so they accepted it, but not happily.”

- **Fear of telling family:**
  - “I had a huge fear of my dad finding out.”
  - “Was afraid to tell my parents, family members.”

- **Fear of disappointing family:**
  - “My dad was always rich in his Jewish beliefs, and I feared disappointing him, but what I felt in my heart was true. My mom was raised Jewish, but she went into a New Age belief that bordered on cultish.”
“I only knew of one family that was Jewish believers while growing up. They were considered the ‘weird family’ in the neighborhood. I felt like I would be considered the black sheep of my family and that they would be disappointed in me.”

“I didn't want to disappoint my parents.”

- Ridicule from family:
  - “When I finally got the courage to tell my dad, he laughed at me and said that belief in Messiah and heaven is like being on drugs. My family thinks I am nuts, but they are still my family.”

Participants also revealed that they were involved in a complex pattern of relationships that were affected by this decision-making process. Respondents were able to cite multiple sources of pressure. Within these questions, we would define *community* as the formal Jewish community and family of the respondents. Based on the number of responses, we still see similar patterns in all age groups.

Concerning the type of pressure felt, the conviction of sin was a commonly felt pressure (Table 39). Within grouped narrative responses, concerning pressure, family reaction and conviction of sin were the most prevalent expressions seen in the stories (Table 40).

Table 38: Source of Pressure
Table 39 Type of Pressure
<table>
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<td>40+, 62</td>
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<td>30+, 33</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21+, 22</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18+, 0</td>
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<td>Conviction of sin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>45</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Fear of changes to your path in life</td>
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*Type of Pressure*
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<td>Holocaust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two cultures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 41 indicates the response of participants concerning their narrative responses. In this table, one can observe that older age-groups indicated the largest percentage response to being pulled between a variety of social and cultural values.

**Table 41: Internal Pressure as a Percentage**
We provided respondents multiple choices concerning the relationships that changed. There was an even distribution among age groups in these expressed changes.

**Table 42: Changes in Relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>21+</th>
<th>30+</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider social circle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues at work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changes in Relationships
Table 43 shows the same data as Table 42 in a different format. Across age groups, we observed a consistent pattern based on the number of responses. Responses varied based on the closeness of the relationships.

**Table 43: Changes in Relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>18+, 3</th>
<th>21+, 42</th>
<th>50+, 143</th>
<th>60+, 174</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate family</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close friends</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider social circle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish community</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues at work</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School community</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 44 indicates the responses we received when we asked for a narrative response. We observed more significant patterns in older respondents about family and orientation to a community. Respondents categorized as having a ‘new perspective’ not only sought to change old relationships but make new ones. They looked at existing relationships differently.

**Table 44: Relationship Changes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>&lt;30</th>
<th>30+</th>
<th>40+</th>
<th>50+</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family rejection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>40+</td>
<td>30+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social rejection</td>
<td></td>
<td>5+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td>10+</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over time acceptance</td>
<td></td>
<td>10+</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community rejection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knew from early</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relationship Changes
Table 45 indicates the response to the same question as Table 44 presented in different form.

**Table 45: Relationship Changes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Changes</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family rejection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social rejection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over time acceptance</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community rejection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knew from early</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Conclusions

Our data addressed a wide range of complex phenomena. Our aim was to improve critical thinking on strategies, practices, and knowledge of the environments in which we work. We hope that this study will stimulate conversation and new efforts to understand the attitudes and behaviour of North American Messianic Jews. Qualitative questions on peer and community pressure are open to competing narratives. We hesitate to conclude that Messianic Jews are either not welcome or not interested when it comes to continuity with family and institutions or how one affects the other. It is clear that both these forces are at work.

Through this study we explored three matters:

1. The representation of the experiences of a group of Jews who believe in Jesus
2. How this group of Jewish people experienced cultural influences during their decision to follow Jesus
3. How one generation’s experience compares with another

This survey is a snapshot of a dynamic process. Because the Messianic Jewish community is changing so rapidly, the problem of relevant communication and generational change develops with it. Can we measure successful communication in less obvious and less quantifiable but equally important categories? People are to be treated as people, not as things; they are to be respected and consulted, not simply dominated. Potential innovations are to be advocated politely, not mandated rudely, even when the power of the change agents is considerable. The following contains some of our initial conclusions after this study in comparison with other studies.

1. Assimilation and Communication

Our results indicate that the Messianic Jewish community in North America is assimilating and accommodating to twenty-first century culture but has not acculturated itself. These Messianic Jews see Jewish religious and cultural forms as an important means of identification. Many want to participate in them while still being part of the wider culture. Jewishness and identification with the wider religious, social, and cultural characteristics of Judaism are important, but most want choice. The statistics reveal that being Jewish and identifying with Jewish values and causes are important, but so is being part of the wider culture of choice.

We would say these results show that resources must be brought to bear in these areas that respect a significant cross-cultural approach. This approach attempts to look at things from the point of view of the receptors. The doctrine of sociocultural adequacy – of focusing on the receiver’s cultural perspective – helps us appreciate the essential validity of other peoples’ ways of life, and their basic assumptions and worldviews.

2. Worldview Clash and Ethnic Cohesion
Messianic Jews find truth that is consistent and coherent with Scripture. They do not find this same coherence in their culture.

The Pew study indicates that most Jewish people are attracted to Jewishness and choice. Many are ambivalent about faith and already admit to the existence and tolerance of competing worldviews. Given this ambivalence, how do we explain this constant and consistent pressure within and without on Messianic Jews from the Jewish community?

Ethnic cohesion is an elusive factor, perhaps made up of some combination of pride in one's cultural heritage and determination to survive. Its presence often keeps people struggling to maintain their sociocultural existence, even in the presence of great pressure to change. The breaking of such cohesion results in the loss of the will of a people to continue living as a viable social entity. Tampering with this cohesion leads to, in the language of Jewish culture, a kind of confusion. To reject the Gospel is to be accepted within this culture and, likewise, to accept the Gospel is to be rejected by the culture.

3. Messianic Jews and Conventional Jewish Values

Even with the minor differences in how the questions were framed across the various studies, these results show that the Messianic Jewish community in North America is more similar to the American Jewish community than to the general U.S. population in demographics such as Jewish dispositions, education, and occupation. The nomenclature preference and religious observance levels among these Messianic Jews indicate a continuing identification with the Jewish people. The diversity of the Messianic Jewish community is the diversity of the larger Jewish community. Messianic Jews are, in their temperaments, dispositions and activities, part of this wider community. These Messianic Jews often seek out ways to be part of the wider Jewish community and to share in Jewish values.

4. Hearing the Gospel

Responses to the questions about how Messianic Jews first heard the Gospel and what attracted them to the Gospel underline the significance of individual interaction. The more recent study also indicated that churches and Messianic congregations are having a larger impact.
5. Intermarriage

There is a need for fresh thinking in the area of intermarriage. If, as suggested by NJPS, approximately half of the general Jewish population marries non-Jews and three-fourths of Messianic Jews marry non-Jews, how many of the children of these families will claim Jewish identity? The intermarriage situation is dynamic. Taglit is an organization that brings young Jews to Israel. Their web site claims that “more than 500,000 young Jewish people from 66 countries have received the gift of a free trip to Israel.” This experience offers the opportunity for young Jewish people to meet others of marriageable age. This changes the course of participants’ behaviour and exposure to Jewish life. In the general Jewish community, Taglit-Birthright Israel is altering marriage and family patterns.

We see this as well, in the Messianic Jewish community. Congregations and ministries are making new and dynamic efforts to provide fellowship and service opportunities to young Messianic Jews which alter marriage and family patterns. We see this in our intermarriage statistics.

6. Pressure

These qualitative results show that the older group of Messianic Jews experienced quite a bit more external pressure than younger respondents. This older age group is comprised of second generation North Americans whose immigrant grandparents and parents lived in a more secure but less stable social and cultural dynamic.

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183 Kosmin et al., 1991.
185 Saxe & Chazan, 2008; Saxe et al., 2012.
References


United States Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, Report DP03: "Selected Economic Characteristics, 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates".
Appendix 2: Group 2 Analysis Selected Results

Introduction
After I had collected the narratives from Group 1, I performed some initial coding of the data looking for key themes in the narratives. Then, in November of 2014, I designed a new survey for 32 primary participants. I specifically looked for people between 25-40 and 50-65. I was interested in interviewing participants who were part of the counterculture movement of the 1960s and the next generation. All of these participants were part of Group 1. This survey was done on Survey Monkey.

Abstract of Conclusions in Group 2 Study
Initial data showed differences between the younger and older generations, a desire among all generations to maintain their Jewish identity, and an experience of hardening in one or more areas of their life from the broader Jewish community after they became believers in Jesus. Jewishness and identification with the wider religious, social, and cultural characteristic of Judaism were still important. Many members of the group wanted to participate in Jewish forms while still being part of the wider culture. Even though the respondents desired to be a part of the broader culture, the respondents found their worldview
primarily shaped by tradition. They expressed that they found truth consistent and coherent with the Scripture. They did not find this same coherence in their culture, which often made them feel like strangers.

Regarding experiencing opposition and hardening from the Jewish community, the older group of Messianic Jews experienced quite a bit more opposition than younger respondents. The major pressure points involved what it would mean for relationships in the Jewish community. Infidelity to the Jewish community was especially a point of pressure for the 50+ age-group. Pressure points, especially regarding community, factored less significantly among younger generations. A smaller group of 24 was asked more specific questions about their experiences. The smaller group manifested the following responses:

- Social control
- Systems of social control break down due to secular assimilation; most experienced passive or emotional control across age groups.
- Prestige
- Shame and guilt

I also asked this smaller group to reflect on hardening. I told this group about my reading strategy about Romans 11 and the hardening of Israel. I asked them if they experienced anything like that and these were the responses. Hardening to them was:

- “Death”
- “Loss”
- “Apathy”
- “Identity”
- “Separation”
- “Tribal”
- “When I was in the synagogue, I was the Christian. When I was in the Church, I was the Jew.”
• “My family is not my people and my people are not my family.”

Hardening was seen as a complicated coping mechanism that flows both from respondent to the community and from the community to the respondent. Of the 24 people in the group:

- 2 were disowned
- 2 experienced religious control
- 3 lost job opportunities
- 3 were uninvited to family/community events
- 5 experienced psychological control such as: “You cause us pain, you are hurting your grandparents, you will not be able to marry a Jew, and you are a Gentile”

Table 46: Occupation
Table 47: What Were the Circumstances in hearing the Gospel?
Table 48: Education

![Education Chart]

Table 49: What types of action did you take when you first heard the Gospel?

![Action Chart]
Table 50: What helped in convincing you of the truth of the Gospel?

Table 51: What label(s) do you prefer for the Jewish believing community?
Table 52: What type of Jewish upbringing did you have?

Table 53: Did you experience any direct attempts to dissuade you from believing?
Table 54: Did you experience any other kinds of opposition to your becoming (or remaining) a believer?

Table 55: Did you experience any of the following?
Table 56: Did you experience any of the following types of internal pressure?
Qualitative Results

1. Family Experiences
Younger Grouping: These experiences ranged from the disappointment of family to more intense hostility. Moderation in resistance was as a result of chronological distance from the Holocaust and also as the Jewish community became less religious. This generation deals with the challenges of interacting with extended family.

Older Grouping: None of the older respondents indicated that it was a casual thing to tell their families. Some of them dreaded it and postponed it. Some participants were very enthusiastic but got more of a backlash than they anticipated.

2. Larger Jewish Community
Younger Grouping: Half of the respondents reported little involvement with the larger Jewish community. Four people encountered hostile reactions and two others self-selected an escape from interaction out of fear that they would be received with hostility. The rest of them had some interaction, but had some stability with a Messianic congregation and often other believers in the family.

Older Grouping: Four respondents skipped the question and four of them replied that they didn’t have strong ties to the Jewish community. The rest of the participants indicated some level of challenge – rejection, hostility, being asked to talk to the rabbi, or even being afraid to try to interact.

3. Outside Community
Younger Grouping: One person skipped answering the question and six respondents reported positive or neutral experiences. Three people reported negative responses or loss of friendships. The remainder of them reported that people thought it was strange, but eventually became accepting and worked it out over time.

Older Grouping: Three people skipped this question. The remainder of the respondents answered with some level of detail. Three participants reported that their friends and outside community were supportive and three reported primarily negative reactions. The remainder of the respondents reported reactions that were mixed, with some pushback.

4. Social barriers, pressure from the larger Jewish community
Younger Grouping: Two people skipped the question and three of them said there was not any pressure without further comment. Two more participants answered the question but indicated they were not active in the Jewish community by the time Jesus was an issue. Three respondents indicated that the barriers arose later because of being in Jewish ministry and thus in contact with the Jewish community (and in contention with them) because of it. Four
others described staying away out of the certainty that they would not be welcome though they would have liked to participate. The remaining three respondents mentioned some form of prejudice or exclusion on the part of the Jewish community for belief, or witnessing, or both. One of them mentioned that those differences were lost amidst the adjustment of having moved to Israel.

Older Grouping: Three respondents skipped the question, and two people explicitly said ‘no’. Two respondents indicated that they didn’t have much or any involvement with the Jewish community, so it wasn’t an issue. One participant was away at college and out of contact with the Jewish community. The remaining half of the respondents in this group indicated some issues with the Jewish community over belief or witnessing, with the consequences ranging from feeling unwelcome to much more active hostility. One person indicated that it was a rabbi, more than the community, who tried to exert control through pressure.

5. Cultural barriers and opposition to the values of the community

Younger Grouping: Two respondents skipped the question and seven respondents said ‘no’ or ‘none.’ Two participants mentioned the issue of liberal vs. conservative values. One person mentioned a difficult adjustment to being in Israel, and two others mentioned the holidays and either tension with family or how it was “different” celebrating with non-Jews.

Older Grouping: Three respondents skipped the question, and two people said none, and one person said ‘I can’t recall.’ Five participants described changes they felt were for the good in their lives, even though there were differences in values – positive experiences with the Christian community and with their new beliefs. Four others focused more on the awkwardness or feelings of being out of step with their people.

6. Change in social grouping

Younger Grouping: Two respondents skipped the question and four responded with a ‘no.’ Three participants framed their answers regarding the loss of some existing relationships. Five others indicated changes, but in a more positive light of being drawn to believers, often while still maintaining some relationship with family and previous community.

Older Grouping: One respondent skipped the question and one person said N/A due to becoming a believer during childhood. One person referred to the answer from a previous question. All others indicated some change. Nine participants indicated a significant shift toward friendships with other believers, in most cases Gentile believers. Most respondents indicated that the change was very rapid, but for a few it took a little longer to fit in and warm up to the change. Three people mentioned the tensions in the previous relationships, but most were focused on the positive in the new relationships. Most respondents did not dissociate completely from the Jewish community for the long term, but the relationships were rebuilt over time.
7. Change in Status or role in the Jewish community
Younger Grouping: Eight respondents reported minimal or no involvement with the Jewish community. Two participants reported a significant change. Three people reported that the relationship with the Jewish community was present but was more secular or cultural or human rights-oriented. Two people reported they were there only as a child or baby, and two respondents skipped the question.

Older Grouping: All but one person answered the question, with two people indicating specific changes. Several others mentioned participation in the Jewish community, but most of them said that they “didn’t have any status.”

It appeared to me that respondents may have interpreted the question to be asking only about positions of high status within the community.

8. Change in Status in General Community
Younger Grouping: All respondents said ‘no.’

Older Grouping: Three participants skipped the question and nine of them reported little or no change. Two respondents reported significant status change. Three people reported that they experienced changes that had more to do with tension than status.

9. Social Control
Younger Grouping: Eleven respondents said no, and two of them skipped the question. Of the remaining four respondents, one person indicated losing all friends, one person indicated family pressure, one person indicated some teachers in high school ‘made fun of her’ but it stopped after she complained. Another person indicated more extensive pressure from the Jewish community to “return to your roots”.

Older Grouping: Two respondents skipped the question and three of them said ‘no’. Four participants described pressures more specifically related to sharing their faith. Four people mentioned relatively strong pressures from family and/or community. Finally, others mentioned mild pressures but not anything they would consider rising to the level of social control.

10. Change in Social Stability
Younger Grouping: Four respondents indicated a change for the better. One person indicated internal instability. One person indicated the loss of entire circle of friends. The remaining two people either skipped the question or indicated ‘no’ or ‘not really.’

Older Grouping: Three respondents indicated more stability and nine said ‘no’. One person reported the loss of a summer job and three reported moderate adverse reactions, but not what they would consider rising to the level of loss of social stability.
11. Peer Pressure
Younger Grouping: There were four significant answers (others replied ‘no’ or skipped the question and there was not much reference to previous answers). One respondent indicated pressure from professors at school for mentioning faith and God. One person mentioned pressures from a secular Jewish friend who thought Jews for Jesus was a cult. One participant mentioned difficulties getting a job because of Saturday congregational commitments along with difficulties in participating in school plays over moral issues. Another person mentioned losing all friends and spending months in solitude.

Older Grouping: Seven respondents gave answers and two respondents made reference to prior answers. The answers given included three references to parents and parents’ friends, two people who reported awkwardness or surprise on the part of Jewish friends, one person reported pressure from peers for believing in God at all, and one other person reported that his/her child got expelled from Hebrew School.

12. Outside pressure
Younger Grouping: Thirteen of seventeen respondents skipped the question, said ‘no’ or ‘not applicable.’ Two participants referenced prior answers. One said there was pressure to make a real commitment, and one person said that he/she was defiant by nature and outside pressure would have only encouraged him onward.

Older Grouping: There were six answers other than a straight ‘no.’ Two standard types of pressure came in the form of official opposition from rabbis or anti-missionary organizations. One person said he/she was so focused on following the Lord that he didn’t notice any outside pressure. One other participant said there was pressure, but more towards atheism and convincing him not to follow any religion or belief in God.
Appendix 3: Group 1 Survey

Jewish Believer Survey 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Background:</th>
<th>□ Both parents Jewish □ Mother Jewish □ Father Jewish □ Other (please specify) _______________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>□ 17 or younger □ 18-20 □ 21-29 □ 30-39 □ 40 – 49 □ 50-59 □ 60 or older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status:</td>
<td>□ Married □ Widowed □ Divorced □ Separated □ Never Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Male □ Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If married, is your spouse:</td>
<td>□ A Jewish unbeliever □ A Gentile unbeliever □ A Jewish believer □ A Gentile believer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education:</td>
<td>□ Less than high school diploma □ High school diploma or GED □ Some university, but no degree □ Associate Degree □ Bachelor’s degree □ Master’s degree □ Doctoral degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation:</td>
<td>State/Province __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Country: __________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hearing the Gospel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How old were you when:</th>
<th>You first heard the Gospel? _____ You became a believer: _____</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did you first hear the Gospel?</td>
<td>□ Public event / presentation □ In a church □ In a Messianic congregation □ Directly from Scripture □ Direct conversation with relative □ Direct conversation with friend □ Contact with someone previously unknown □ Tract or Gospel literature □ Email □ Social media □ Other online source □ Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What was your response when you first heard the Gospel? _______________
<p>| What type of actions did you take after you first heard the Gospel? | □ Talked to friends about what you had heard  □ Talked to a rabbi  □ Talked to the person from whom you heard the Gospel  □ Attended a Bible study  □ Attended a fellowship group or congregation  □ Read the Bible  □ Read other Christian materials  □ Asked God to show you what was true  □ Sought to show the Gospel wasn’t true |
| Did you experience pressure from: | □ Your family  □ Your peers at work  □ Your peers at school  □ Your friends  □ Your community |
| What types of internal pressure did you experience? | □ Fear of disloyalty to the Jewish community  □ Fear of disloyalty to your upbringing  □ Cultural barriers  □ Conviction of sin  □ Fear of changes to your path in life |
| Please explain the above situations |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What helped in convincing you of the truth of the Gospel?</td>
<td>□ Personal contact □ Group □ Conviction / Holy Spirit □ Bible □ Book / Literature □ Radio / TV / Movies □ Supernatural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please comment further about the book, movie, website, etc. that was instrumental in you becoming a believer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During your consideration of the Gospel, did you experience changes in any of these relationships?</td>
<td>□ Immediate family □ Extended family □ Close friends □ Wider social circle □ Jewish community □ School community □ Colleagues at work □ Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please comment on any changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After you became a believer, did you experience changes in your relationships with:</td>
<td>□ Immediate family □ Extended family □ Close friends □ Wider social circle □ Jewish community □ School community □ Colleagues at work □ Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please comment on any changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What labels do you prefer for the Jewish believing community?</td>
<td>□ Christian □ Hebrew Christian □ Jewish Christian □ Jewish believer □ Messianic □ Messianic Jewish □ Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these activities do you participate in?</td>
<td>□ Attendance at a Messianic congregation □ Attendance at a church □ Consider my home to be my church □ Membership in a Messianic congregation □ Membership in a church □ Belong to a small group □ Attend a Bible study □ Attend a Sunday School class □ Teach Sunday School □ Other volunteer service □ Serve in congregational leadership □ Sponsor a missionary □ Participate in Short Term Missions □ Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What congregation / church do you attend?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Jewish practices did you observe before you became a believer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend synagogue</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observe Jewish holidays</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light candles on Friday night</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Hebrew</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participate in campus Jewish group (e.g. Hillel)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Join a Jewish community centre</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observe Sabbath</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observe Kashrut</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest in Tikkun Olam</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep up with Jewish media sources</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to Israel</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financially give to Jewish organizations</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Jewish practices did you observe after you became a believer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience as a Jewish believer?
Appendix 4: Group 2
Survey

Thanks for taking the survey the first part will ask for measurable information about you and your background. The second part will help me to understand what your experience was in hearing about and coming to faith in Jesus.

Question 1-15 will only take a few minutes

1. Please enter the survey number you were given

2. Family Background
   - Both parents Jewish
   - Mother Jewish
   - Father Jewish
   - Other (please specify)

3. Marital Status
   - Married
   - Widowed
   - Divorced
   - Separated
   - Never Married

4. If you are married, is your spouse
   - Jewish Unbeliever
   - Gentile Unbeliever
   - Jewish Believer
   - Gentile Believer

5. What is your gender?
   - Male
   - Female

6. What is your age?

7. Age Group
   - Younger
   - Older
8. What is your type of occupation (please select one even if currently retired or unemployed)?
   Professional
   Technology
   Teacher
   Manager
   Sales
   Clerical
   Craft
   Transport
   Operatives
   Service
   Labour
   Student

9. What is your level of education?
   Some high school
   High school or GED
   Some college
   Bachelor’s degree
   Master’s degree
   Doctoral degree
10. What year did you?
First hear that Jesus was Messiah of Israel and Saviour of the World?
Become a believer?

11. How did you first hear the Gospel?
- Public event / presentation
- In a church
- In a Messianic congregation
- Direct conversation with relative
- Direct conversation with friend
- Conversation with someone previously unknown
- Tract or Gospel literature
- Directly from Scripture
- Email
- Social media
- Other online source
Other (please specify)

12. What types of action did you take when you first heard the Gospel?
- Talked to friends about what you had heard
- Talked to a rabbi
- Attended a Bible study
- Attended a fellowship group or congregation
- Talked further to the person who shared the Gospel with you
- Read the Bible
- Read other Christian materials
- Asked God to show you what was true
- Sought to demonstrate that the Gospel wasn’t true
13. **What helped in convincing you of the truth of the Gospel?**

- Personal contact
- Group
- Conviction/ Holy Spirit
- Bible
- Book / Literature
- Radio / TV / Movies
- Supernatural intervention
- Life changes
- Other (please specify)

14. **Please comment further about the book, movie, or person who was instrumental in you becoming a believer**

15. **What label(s) do you prefer for the Jewish believing community?**

- Christian
- Hebrew Christian
- Jewish Christian
- Jewish believer
- Messianic
- Messianic Jewish
- Other (specify)

16. **What type of Jewish upbringing did you have?**

- Orthodox
- Conservative
- Reform
- Secular
Narratives about your experience

The next section should take about 30-45 minutes - please give a full description of your experience as it happened. Include thoughts, feelings, images, sensations, and memories. A stream of consciousness is fine. Include a description of the situation in which the experience occurred. I realize that there will be some overlap, but each section deals with a particular part of your experience.

17. Please describe your Jewish upbringing

What was it like?
We would like to learn about your experience as you heard about who Jesus really is, and how you considered this information and came to believe in Him.

18. What was it like when you first heard about Jesus as Messiah and Saviour? (had you "always known" or was it new and surprising information? Who or what brought it to your attention? What was the situation of your life at that time?)

19. What was it like as you considered the Gospel message further and came to believe in Jesus as Messiah and Saviour?

20. What was your experience like in relation to your immediate and extended families?

21. What was it like in relation to the larger Jewish community?
22. What was your experience in relation to the "outside" community? (e.g., workplace, friends, classmates)
Social and Cultural Challenges

23. Did you experience any direct attempts to dissuade you from believing?
Yes
No

If yes, please explain further

24. Did you experience any other kinds of opposition to your becoming (or remaining) a believer?
Yes
No

If yes, please explain further

25. Did you experience any of the following?
Losing a job in the community
Losing a volunteer position
Being kicked out of home
Being kicked out of synagogue
Being asked to leave a school (day school or Sunday School)
Loss of financial support from family
Breakup with girlfriend or boyfriend or fiancé
Loss of friends

Any other item not mentioned here that you want to list
26. **Did you experience any of the following types of internal pressure:**

- Feeling of disloyalty to your heritage
- Feeling of disloyalty to family
- Fear of what your family would think

Any other item not mentioned here that you want to list?
27. What social barriers, if any, did you experience? By this we mean what you experienced in relation to the larger Jewish community with regard to any prejudice.

28. What cultural barriers, if any, did you experience? Did you feel you were in opposition to the values of your community?

29. Did you experience a change in social grouping? Did you experience change with friends, family, and coworkers?

30. What was your status and role in the Jewish community before you heard the gospel? Did your role or position change?

31. Did your status in the community change? This may be standing or prestige related.

32. What elements of social control, if any, did you experience? Did you experience opposition? Did you experience dissuasion?

33. Did you experience a change in social stability?

34. Did you experience peer pressure? This may be pressure to reconsider your decision or pressure relating to job or educational opportunities.
Did you experience any outside pressure?
Appendix 5
Group 3 Survey Discussion Questions

Name
Age

Section I

All questions are in relation to your friends, family and community. Please measure the level of opposition, difficulty or resistance with 1 being the least and 10 being the most.

What did you experience in terms of

1. Language

2. Family

This is defined by traditions of common descent, culture, and ideology.

3. Prestige

These are desirable traits and achievement. Individuals and groups who enjoy high prestige are usually respected, esteemed, admired, and/or deferred to. Prestige is related to status, and both concepts denote standing in society.

4. Honour

Honour is value that is associated with relative prestige. It is related to self-estimation and rank. It is also related to society’s acknowledgement of this claim to rank or deference and respect.

5. Status/role

A status is a kind of social stereotype, a part that we play in life. Role is the characteristic of status.

6. Alliances/Identity/Grouping

This ‘groupness’ is crucial to people. We are made for relationships. Most non-western cultures see the group as more real than individuals.
7. Social Control

These are sanctions or mechanisms of regulation.

8. Shame and Guilt

A social control mechanism used by people with prestige to or by whole communities to conform to certain values.

9. What is hardening

What was the experience like for you?

10. Implied Social Contract

This is an agreement among a group of people that is not spelled out but assumed to be true.

Section II

I asked about levels of assimilation, acculturation and accommodation.

Assimilation

1. Professional, social, educational and religious life confined to the Jewish community
2. Employment with non-Jews
3. Secular education
4. Holidays
5. Intermarried
6. Socially integrated

Acculturation

1. Heart language
2. Language of education
3. Facility of language of non-Jewish culture
4. Familiarity with rhetoric of non-Jewish culture
5. Scholarly expertise in non-Jewish culture

Accommodation

1. Submersion of Jewish cultural uniqueness
2. Reinterpretation of Judaism preserving some uniqueness
3. Integrated into common culture
4. Antagonism to common culture
5. Oppositional to common culture
Appendix 6: Consent Form

Project Title: A REPRESENTATION OF THE EXPERIENCES OF A GROUP OF JEWS WHO BELIEVE IN JESUS

Investigator: Andrew Barron

1. I, ________________________________, am willing to take part in a study conducted by Andrew Barron, Doctor of Ministry candidate at the Toronto School of Theology. This study will be conducted as an online survey. I understand that I may subsequently be interviewed by phone or Skype to better understand my lived experience. This subsequent one hour interview will help Andrew Barron make sure that the research findings accurately reflect your situation and are supported by the evidence.

2. I understand that I will fill out a survey on surveymonkey.com. My identity will remain confidential.

3. I am willing to have Andrew Barron interview me for approximately one and a half hours after I complete the survey. I understand that, following the interview, I may be contacted once by telephone if clarification is needed.

4. The interview will not be recorded and will focus on my unique experience, thoughts and feelings regarding my journey in following Jesus in a Jewish context.

5. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw at any time without penalty. I understand that I am free not to answer any question(s) or to discuss anything I do not wish to disclose.

6. I understand that the data will be coded and analyzed by Andrew Barron with the purpose of generating an understanding of this phenomenon. All the data will be discussed anonymously. Should I be directly quoted in the written thesis or an article,
a pseudonym will be used and any specific identifying data will be altered to protect my identity. Moreover, any persons I mention during the interview will be provided with pseudonyms should they be mentioned.

7. All written material will be kept private and secure during the study.

8. I know that no remuneration will be offered to respondents for participation in this study. I understand that a written summary of the research findings will be made available to me upon request when completed.

9. I understand that the data will be retained for archival purposes. I also understand that the data will remain confidential and encrypted.

10. I understand that if I am interviewed, that data will be destroyed after the thesis is accepted.

I have read this statement and I consent to participate in this study. If you have questions, please contact me at andrew.barron@utoronto.ca or 416-453-8301. You may contact the Ethics Review Board at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273, if you have questions about your rights as participants. My thesis advisor is Dr Victor Shepherd and he may be contacted at victor.shepherd@sympatico.ca or 416-226-6620 x6726.

Participant’s Name: ______________________
(Please Print)

Participant’s signature: ______________________

Date: ______________________

Researcher’s Signature: ______________________
Appendix 7: Ethics Approval Letter

Ethics Approval Letter

PROTOCOL REFERENCE # 30454
July 7, 2014
Dr. Glen Taylor Mr. Andrew Barron
WYCLIFFE COLLEGE WYCLIFFE COLLEGE
Dear Dr. Taylor and Mr. Barron:
Re: Your research protocol entitled, "A representation of the dogmas, experiences, and ideals of a group of Jewish people who believe in Jesus"
ETHICS APPROVAL Original Approval Date: July 7, 2014
Expiry Date: July 6, 2015
Continuing Review Level: 1
We are writing to advise you that the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education Research Ethics Board (REB) has granted approval to the above-named research protocol under the REB's delegated review process. Your protocol has been approved for a period of one year and ongoing research under this protocol must be renewed prior to the expiry date.
Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events in the research should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.
Please ensure that you submit an Annual Renewal Form or a Study Completion Report 15 to 30 days prior to the expiry date of your current ethics approval. Note that annual renewals for studies cannot be accepted more than 30 days prior to the date of expiry.
If your research is funded by a third party, please contact the assigned Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.
Best wishes for the successful completion of your research.
Yours sincerely,
Sarah Wakefield, Ph.D. Dean Sharpe
REB Chair REB Manager
Appendix 8: Confirmation of Study Completion Report

PROTOCOL REFERENCE # 30454

June 30, 2015

Dr. Glen Taylor       Mr. Andrew Barron
DEPT OF NEAR & MIDDLE DEPT OF NEAR & MIDDLE
EAST.CIVILIZATIONS
EAST.CIVILIZATIONS  FAC OF ARTS & SCIENCE
FAC OF ARTS & SCIENCE

Dear Dr. Taylor, Mr. Andrew Barron,

Thank you for submitting the study completion for the protocol entitled "A representation of the dogmas, experiences, and ideals of a group of Jewish people who believe in Jesus". Your file is now officially complete as per Tri-Council Policy Statement guidelines and you are therefore not to engage in the research activities contemplated under the protocol. If appropriate, you may spend any remaining research funding on eligible non-protocol related activities.

Congratulations on the completion of your study, and thank you for taking care to observe the process and standards of ethics review.

Office of Research Ethics