

FAQ VOL II

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MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS

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Frequently Asked Questions

VOLUME II

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Frequently Asked Questions, Volume II is a multi-year work in progress. Please note how the text may be corrected, updated, or amended, before final publication. Page numbers are also likely to be altered.

Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as *TWOT* for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)
CJSB: Complete Jewish Study Bible (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
ESV: English Standard Version (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: Greek New Testament
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: New Jerusalem Bible-Koren (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: King James Version
Lattimore: *The New Testament* by Richmond Lattimore (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
LXX: Septuagint
m. Mishnah
MT: Masoretic Text
NASB: New American Standard Bible (1977)
NASU: New American Standard Update (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: New English Bible (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: New English Translation of the Septuagint (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: New International Version (1984)
NJB: New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic (1985)
NJPS: *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (1999)
NKJV: New King James Version (1982)
NRSV: New Revised Standard Version (1989)
NLT: New Living Translation (1996)
NT: New Testament

OT: Old Testament

REB: Revised English Bible (1989)

RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)

t. Tosefta

Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament

Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*

TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*

TLV: Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version (2014)

TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)

TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition

v(s). verse(s)

Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*

Vul: Latin Vulgate

YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)

WMB: World Messianic Bible (2020)

Millennial Generation

Blogcast, 15 May, 2019

Is it possible for those in today's Messianic movement to be able to communicate with those of the Millennial generation?

What is the common stereotype which many possess of the Millennial generation—broadly those who were in high school or college around the Year 2000? Much of what we have been conditioned to believe about Millennials, is that they are self-absorbed, entitled, and soft bleeding hearts for social justice causes. It is thought that Millennials have had too much just handed to them, and as a result they are unwilling to roll up their sleeves and do an honest day's work.

Perhaps many in the Millennial generation do not want to work hard, and are shallow people who have had too many privileges and not enough responsibilities. But surely there are some in the Millennial generation, who do work hard, but whose values on a whole host of issues utterly confound those who preceded them among the Baby Boomers. Why is there often a breakdown in communication between Millennials and others—even among the Millennials who are stable people, who eat right and exercise, who went to college, who pay their bills, and who have careers? In matters of faith, why is there a growing gap on significant theological and spiritual matters?

Those of the Baby Boomer generation, the children of the World War II generation, experienced some of the same things which Millennials are presently experiencing with them. The counter culture of the 1960s, the sexual revolution, the drug scene, and hippies, were all a response to growing up in a 1940s and 1950s Christian American culture. The fathers and mothers and pastors and Sunday school teachers, which many grew up with, were perhaps unwilling to answer questions and talk to younger people about the issues which mattered to them. It is obvious in retrospect that Baby Boomers had questions about sex! Too frequently, rather than engaging with such questions, younger people found themselves dismissed, or even rejected, by the World War II generation, when their parents and spiritual leaders should have been more understanding. Either the questions raised by the Baby Boomer generation were not important to their parents or spiritual leaders, or the questions raised were inconvenient. And in typical human fashion, what middle aged adult ever wants to admit that they might be limited in their understanding of certain issues—much less that they might ever be wrong?

Today's story about Millennials is not that much different. Because of shifting dynamics of our Information Age, people who have grown into adulthood the past two to three decades—have definitely been asking questions which their parents and spiritual leaders have not wanted to see raised. While many Millennials frequent the coffee house scene, and in their relative comfort embrace socialism and LGBTQ, following the proverbial crowd—still others have had to reason through the changes in Western society, and make some kind of informed decision. No person has been unaffected by these changes. Even those who would be regarded as conservative in their values, supporting a Biblical worldview and traditional marriage, among other things, are still most likely to sit to the left of their parents and grandparents on a number of issues.

These thoughts came to mind within the past month, due to the untimely death of Rachel Held Evans, who in her life journey came to identify as a Christian progressive.¹ Many certainly liked her, others strongly disliked her, and others found her theological and spiritual journey as something to take note of. *I was one of those who had been following her for a number of years.* (I have picked through her 2012 book *A Year of Biblical Womanhood*.) I do not believe that the story of Rachel Held Evans was one of someone rebelling against the system, but of someone who believed that there were severe flaws in the system, and made choices—whether you agree with them or not—on the basis of how the system responded to her.

The story of Rachel Held Evans is the story of many people I know, and even a few I attended seminary with. She was raised in a hyper-conservative to fundamentalist American Christian home. She went to college and started asking questions. Quickly being dismissed by various people in control, who were not too interested in reasoned dialogue, she started changing her mind on some big issues. Once being told that the universe was only 6,000 years old, she then started to believe that God used evolution over millions of years to create human beings. Once being told that only males could lead in the Body of Messiah, and seeing examples of females leading in the New Testament, she became a strong supporter of women in ministry. Being dismissed and rejected by many in complementarian evangelicalism because of supporting male-female equality, she later embraced concepts such as homosexual marriage being Biblically acceptable.

This is a common pattern for young people who are raised in a hyper-conservative environment, where discussion of multiple sides of an issue is prohibited, and then such people find themselves out in the world. When they do find themselves in the world, they come to the conclusion that there were flaws in the system in which they were raised, and they seek answers to their questions from those willing to discuss the issues. And God forbid that their parents or their pastors or their Sunday school teachers ever admit to being limited, or even wrong, on at least a few aspects of the issues which matter to younger people!

¹ Her obituary can be accessed at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2019/05/04/rachel-held-evans-progressive-christian-author-who-challenged-evangelicals-dies/?utm_term=.0e1b619b94db>

I myself have had to work through the very same issues which Rachel Held Evans had to work through. Fortunately, I was not raised in a hyper-conservative home, where questions regarding the Book of Genesis, or men and women, were immediately shut down, and I had to just accept the dogma of my parents. Unlike Rachel Held Evans, I would still be considered at least a small “c” conservative on many issues, but I definitely changed my mind on a few things as I went to college and then to seminary. Being in the Messianic community since 1995, I certainly know how many people in the Messianic community hold to hyper-conservative and fundamentalist views, and that my own personal ideology embraces a conservative ideology where open discussion on issues, **without fear of reprisal**, is permitted. Understanding why people believe what they believe is imperative, so truth can be genuinely discovered.

In much of today’s Messianic community, if somebody says that they believe in the Big Bang or that females can be leaders in the Body of Messiah right alongside of males, then it is possible that such people are going to be dismissed, or even silenced. Dismissing such people—and like Rachel Held Evans, see them move to the progressive Left—is not at all what you want to see. Dialoguing with those with whom you might disagree, and how they came to such conclusions, is what needs to be done. *Not a single one of us wants to be accused of being a member of the Thought Police.* Also, being humble enough to recognize that we might need to alter our opinions, because we might have been a little too rigid on certain issues, is quite significant.

In evangelical Protestantism, it has been historically encouraged that we all have minds and reasoning capacities given by God, and that on non-salvation issues we can certainly have constructive conversations. Throughout the history of Judaism, asking questions on any issue, Biblical or otherwise, is strongly encouraged. Because of how Jews have been persecuted and discriminated against in history, Jewish people are some of the strongest proponents of free speech and open dialogue! Today’s Messianic community needs to recognize this, particularly as the Jewish community we want to reach with the good news of Israel’s Messiah, is not at all known for being that conservative. If we cannot discuss controversial issues among ourselves, then how can we hope to be able to discuss such issues with progressive and liberal Jews, as they consider Yeshua of Nazareth?

As we prepare to enter into the 2020s, we all need to do better when it comes to the communication lines between Baby Boomers, Millennials, and those who will come after. How we learn not to be dismissive, but instead in a mature and reasonable way, discuss the issues which matter, will not be easy, but it will be vital.