

The first believers in Yeshua ("Jesus") were a Jewish sect known as "Nazarenes" or in Hebrew "Netzarim" (Acts 11:19; 24:5). The "church father" Jerome (4th Cent.) described these Nazarenes as those "...who accept Messiah in such a way that they do not cease to observe the old Law." (Jerome; On. Is. 8:14). And elsewhere he writes:

"Today there still exists among the Jews in all the synagogues of the East a heresy which is called that of the Minæans, and which is still condemned by the Pharisees; [its followers] are ordinarily called 'Nazarenes'; they believe that Messiah, the son of God, was born of the Virgin Miriam, and they hold him to be the one who suffered under Pontius Pilate and ascended to heaven, and in whom we also believe." (Jerome; Letter 75 Jerome to Augustine)

The fourth century "church father" Epiphanius gives a more detailed description:

"But these sectarians... did not call themselves Christians--but 'Nazarenes,' ... However they are simply complete Jews. They use not only the New Testament but the Old Testament as well, as the Jews do... They have no different ideas, but confess everything exactly as the Law proclaims it and in the Jewish fashion-- except for their belief in Messiah, if you please! For they acknowledge both the resurrection of the dead and the divine creation of all

things, and declare that G-d is one, and that his son is Yeshua the Messiah. They are trained to a nicety in Hebrew. For among them the entire Law, the Prophets, and the... Writings... are read in Hebrew, as they surely are by the Jews. They are different from the Jews, and different from Christians, only in the following. They disagree with Jews because they have come to faith in Messiah; but since they are still fettered by the Law--circumcision, the Sabbath, and the rest-- they are not in accord with Christians... they are nothing but Jews.... They have the Goodnews according to Matthew in its entirety in Hebrew. For it is clear that they still preserve this, in the Hebrew alphabet, as it was originally written." (Epiphanius; Panarion 29)

Nazarene Judaism maintains a belief in Yeshua as the Messiah. We believe that Yeshua did not come to create a new religion, but to be the Messiah of the old one (Judaism). We do not leave the Jewish identity, heritage and culture to "convert" to a new or foreign religion. To some the concept of Jews believing in Yeshua and practicing Judaism to a contradiction in terms. The common wisdom is that on the one side you have Jews and Judaism, and on the other you have Gentiles and Christianity. However in the first century there were literally hundreds of thousands of Jewish followers of Yeshua (Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 6:7; 9:31; 21:20) they were zealous for the Torah (Acts 15:19-21; 21:17-27) and

met in synagogues (James 1:1, 2:2). The big question then was, had Yeshua come for the Gentiles as well (Acts 10; Acts 15). The greatest paradox in history eventually occurred, for today people question how one can follow Yeshua and remain Jewish.

Today we are seeking to put Yeshua back into the context of first century Judaism. Nazarene Judaism is a spiritual renaissance, a revival, a return to the pure faith of first century Nazarenes. A return to the Tenach and to the root of the olive tree (Rom. 11).

As the prophet Jeremiah tells us:

"Thus says YHWH, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it: And you shall find rest for your souls...." (Jer. 6:16)

Twelve Point of the One True Faith (Eph. 4:3-6)

Does yours pass the test?

"by their fruits you shall know them"
(Mt. 7:20)

1. Is the only true faith . (Eph.4:3-6)

Comments: There is only one true faith. Christianity and Judaism are not both true faiths (one replacing the other). One of them is the one true faith, the other is a false religion)

2. Was once and for all time delivered to the set apart ones. (Jude 1:3; Jer. 6:16)

Comments: The one true faith that was once and for all time given in not a new “replacement faith” which replaces an older obsolete faith (as Christianity maintains that it has replaced Judaism).

3. Is a Jewish faith (a form of Judaism)

(Jn. 4:22; Zech. 8:23; Acts 25:8; Rom. 3:1-2)

4. Is the “Sect of the Nazarenes”

(Acts 24:5, 14)

5. Is a Tanak (Old Testament) based faith

(Acts 17:11; 2Tim. 3:16)

Comment: The “Scripture” referred to in these verses could only be the “Old Testament” because the “New Testament” had not been completed yet. The true faith does not contradict the Tanak and can be verified by the Tanak.

6. Is a Torah observant faith.

(Dt. 31:12; Mt. 5:17-19; Rom. 3:31; Rev. 12:17)

7. Proclaims Yeshua (“Jesus” of Nazareth) as the Messiah.

(Deut. 18:15-19; Mt. 16:15-17; Rev. 12:17)

8. Proclaims the Deity of Messiah

(Rom. 10:9, 13 = Joel 2:32; Jn. 19:37=Zech. 12:10; Phil. 2:10-11=Is. 45:23)

9. Abstains from Babylonian Customs and practices. (Is. 48:20; Jer. 50:8;

51:6; Zech. 2:6-7; 2Cor. 2:14-18; Rev. 18:4)

10. Knows and proclaims the name of

YHWH (Yahweh). (Ex. 9:16; Is. 52:6; Ps. 9:10; 91:14; 99:3; 145:21; 148:13; Mal. 3:16)

11. Proclaims the eventual reunion of the two Houses of Israel. (Jer. 3:18;

Hosea 1-3; Ezek. 37:15-22)

12. Proclaims the seventh day

Sabbath.

(Ex. 20:8-11; Heb. 4:9; Luke 4:16 with 1Jn. 2:6)

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What is Nazarene Judaism?