

Learning How not to Befriend Our Older Brother

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It is of paramount importance that all of those engaged in fostering reconciliation between the two disparate houses of Israel recognize the extensive damage done to the Jewish people over the centuries by attempts to convert them to Christianity.

In no way should we support any missionary activities, as without question these more than any other are the greatest singular obstacle to the reunification of the Two Houses of Israel. For the Jew to try to convert the Christian and for the Christian to attempt to convert the Jew is only going to continue the chasm of suspicion that already exists between the two parties. Therefore any missionary activity on the part of either party should be opposed vigorously, as it is entirely counterproductive to reconciliation ever taking place. Any attempt to do this will set the process of coming together back by a mile. For a Jew especially, any attempt by a Christian believer to convert him will immediately conjure up all the ghastly history of past Christian intolerance, hatred and persecution.

Those believers who feel compelled to witness of their faith with the express purpose of trying to either persuade or convert any Jew to their way of thinking is subliminally implying that his faith is superior to that of the Jew. This implication is a gross insult to the Jew, who holds his own 2000 year old faith in high regard. This Christian sense of superiority is immediately picked up by the other party. It would be best for those people to stay away from the historic dialogue between Ephraim and Judah that is beginning to show its first highly sensitive and most tender green shoots.

What we need to realise is that the animosity between our peoples is already 3,000 years old, as it dates back to the secession of the Ten Tribes from the House of David in the days of kings Rehoboam and Jeroboam. With this kind of fraught history behind us, reconciliation appears well-nigh impossible, yet with good will on both sides and with a great deal of Divine assistance it can be done. Not only that, but if the word of prophecy is to be believed it will be done!

To borrow a phrase from Dale Carnegie, we need to learn, **“To win friends and influence people.”** One of the first rules in his famous book by the same name is that one must show himself friendly. That means that proselytizing is a big “NO, NO.” One does not make friends by implying that the other person is wrong. This is not a friendly act in any area of life. Yet, when we imply that the other has his religion all wrong we are treading on holy ground, and the chasm between the two houses of Israel will widen to an irreconcilable depth.

To be successful in our endeavour to befriend Judah, our older brother, we first of all need to show him proper respect. The truth is that on the basics of our faith we have lots in common. After all, we both worship the God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob. We both honour the Scriptures of the Tanach. We are both greatly enamoured and at times greatly comforted by the Psalms of David. Both of us are also looking out in high expectation for the Messiah of Israel, and the restoration of the Whole House of Israel that He will bring. The best strategy for the restoration of the fallen tabernacle of David is for us to concentrate on the things where we agree, the things that bind us together, as the children of Israel. This way we can be agents for true reconciliation.

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