



Cults, Missionaries & Assimilation

What are YOU doing to stop the silent holocaust??

*By Rabbi Ariel Bar Tzadok
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The other day, one of my students asked me this question. Being that Yeshivat Benei N'vi'im and KosherTorah.com are mainly devoted to teaching the PaRDeS/Kabbalistic teachings of Torah, why then do I devote essays and articles to addressing cults, missionaries and the like, which [in my student's eyes] have nothing to do with Torah spirituality?. "You couldn't be more wrong", I told him.

The reason for these cults being so successful in trapping Jewish souls is due to the fact that the Jewish leadership here in the United States and abroad have never successfully addressed the issue of the lack of Jewish spirituality in the mainstream of Jewish life. They have also never gone on the offensive and tackled these cults and missionaries. These groups are more dangerous than any Arab terrorist band.

The Arab enemy, we can recognize from a distance, keep an eye on them, and be prepared for their attacks. In other words, their motivations are clear – and deadly. The cults and missionaries are another story: Many a time they are the proverbial Wolf In Sheep's Clothing, who appear as though they wish to embrace Judaism when at the same time, like a dibbuk (demon), all they wish to do is take over the body (the Jewish forms) and infuse it with another soul (one in the image of their own beliefs). To put it simply, these groups wish to change Jewish teachings and pervert the essence and spirit of Judaism.

These groups follow in the same spirit of Shabtai Tzvi, the false Kabbalistic messiah of the 16th century, who ruined the lives and fortunes of tens of thousands of innocent, naïve Jews. To this day, over 300 years later, public instruction of Kabbalah is still held suspect as a result of Tzvi and his fiasco. It is therefore the job of the Kabbalist, more than anyone else, to fight the battle against all those who would pervert the Jewish soul; for who more than the Kabbalist understands the spiritual contamination being spread by these so-called "new age" groups?

These new cults, like the oldest cult of them all, started by J. C. and Paul, are destined to fail. But, if we do not do our share, then with their fall many of our own Jewish people will fall with them. For the sake of Jewish unity and the honor of HaShem's holy Name, we

must fight this. We must reach out and bring back to Judaism our fallen Jewish brothers and sisters. With HaShem as our ally and Torah as our guide, we can reach out to the disenfranchised of our people. We can show them JEWISH love, care and belonging, and show them the joy, honor, and personal fulfillment that comes with being a Jew.

We have suffered for years from the likes of Jews for Yeshu. No matter how liberal a Jewish congregation becomes, I have never seen one open its doors to become Christian. As liberal as some Reform and Conservative groups become, I believe that the strong line defining the difference between a Jew and a Christian is as much there as it is in the Torah observant communities of the Orthodox. Why should these liberal congregations care so much??

Some say that these liberal groups throw out so many other things, so why shouldn't they be sympathetic to becoming Jews for J? The answer: Because they still have a Jewish neshama (soul). They can instinctively feel that becoming a Christian in any size, shape or form contaminates the soul, and cuts that soul off from the rest of Israel. Yes, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed with the liberal, western congregations; but at least they are still Jews.

In the past thirty years or so, new, more subtle forms of idolatry have been popping up; and because they are not the traditional forms that Jews have been fighting all along, these new forms make inroads with some of the members of these liberal congregations – even amongst some of their Rabbis. Even some pseudo-Orthodox have been taken in by these new cults. I am speaking of the eastern meditation groups and new age philosophies. Unbeknownst to the Jewish people involved with such groups, these groups too rape the Jewish soul and place its center somewhere outside of Torah and Judaism. Poison is poison, no matter what bottle it is packaged in.

I have heard from a number of people that they have “come back to Judaism” at the advice or direction of some Hindu or Buddhist spiritual leader. I ask them, “How have you come back? In other words, what are you doing that is Jewish?”. They tell me that they wear a kippah and a talit katan. They enjoy praying and enjoy the holidays.

And Kabbalah? They love that!! That is where they feel most at home. I accept this from them at face value, but I proceed with some questions. “Tell me, I ask you, do you study Torah?” They always say “yes”. I ask what they are studying – “Do you study Jewish history, Jewish culture, Jewish traditions, and Jewish Law?” They usually respond “Yes, but...” Their real involvement is with “Jewish Spirituality”. Right away my warning light goes off.

I do not ask what is Jewish spirituality, I ask what is unspiritual in Judaism. What response do you think I get 99.99% of the time? Halakha! Jewish practice is “so boring”,

they say. And Jewish history, with all its emphasis on the negativity of the past? It is such a “drag”. Their response tells me that something here is not kosher.

Before we dig up the trefa (non-kosher), let us review a little of Jewish history. As is clearly known in Kabbalistic tradition, the secret teachings of the Torah were just that – secret, for a thousand years after the destruction of the Temple. Even Maimonides was not privy to knowing the secrets of Kabbalah until the last years of his life, only after all his great codes were written.

So for over a thousand year period, during the frightening persecutions in Europe, the Crusades, etc... what gave the people the hope to survive? What knitted the people together as a cohesive community for 1,000 years, and this in every part of the world?? Why didn't the people as a whole take the easy way out and become Christians in the west and Muslims in the east?? What was the secret of Jewish survival??

One hint: Kabbalah was secret all during this time, so it wasn't Kabbalistic spirituality (in its present form) that gave the people the tenacity to remain Jews and proudly so.

The answer? That which gave Jews a sense of purpose and identity, the power that allowed Jews to survive the worst pressures and tortures to convert, the hope that allowed the Jews to survive in face of horrendous economic hardships and more, was none other than the TALMUD. In other words, Kabbalah did not save the Jewish people – Pshat (Jewish Law) did!!!

Pshat saved the Jewish people from extinction in exile. The authors of the Mishna and Gemara were all prophetic Kabbalists. They knew very well how to prepare the Nation for our long, bitter Edomite exile. And the proof is in the pudding: it has been some two thousand years, and anyone still connected with the most holy of Kabbalistic texts, the TALMUD, is still today a Jew.

I wonder, is there any connection between the TALMUD, and being a Jew?? Think about it. And then think about this: Every Kabbalist without a single exception has been a well-learned Rabbi. All Kabbalists in union agree that Kabbalah must be learned either together with, or only after, the study of Pshat. Even the most staunch supporter of Kabbalistic learning, Rabbi Haim Sofer of Jerusalem, a master Kabbalist in his own right and author of the Sephardic law code Kaf HaHaim writes (155:12) *“It is forbidden to study the books of Kabbalah if one is empty of the learning of the Poskim (Halakhic discussions)”*.

A point must be made here. The Rabbis who started what the missionaries call “Rabbinic” Judaism were all master Kabbalists of the prophetic school. Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakai, Rabbi Akiba, Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, as great as they were in Pshat were

even greater in Sod (Kabbalistic/Merkava study). Why then did they not provide a more spiritual path for Jews to follow instead of this “ritualistic, boring” (G-d forbid) old halakha?

This attitude reveals the difference between the sacred and profane: the Talmud and halakha, all of it is a vessel. A vessel is meant to hold light. Without the vessel the light cannot shine. Throughout the Talmud, the halakha is called gufei Torah (the body of the Torah), and the kabbalah is the neshama of the Torah. A body without a soul is dead; a soul without a body is a ghost. Kabbalah and halakha need one another; they are two parts of the same Torah.

Now, what does this have to do with cults and missionaries? It has everything to do with them. I have seen many a member of eastern mystical cults, followers of a guru, rush to Kabbalistic sources so as to find some similarity between Judaism and their eastern involvements; and when the two do not go together as these would want, they twist and turn the Jewish meanings of things so as to coincide with the eastern teachings of their cult.

In this process the spirit of Judaism is raped and killed; what is left is a 21st century Gnosticism. A Jews for Buddha, or Hind-Jew cult is born. The major problem with this is that these people are not sincere seekers of Judaism who just do not have sufficient knowledge of Torah. As one member of one of these cults put it to me, “Our center of worship will never be the synagogue, it will always be the dome” – a reference to the place where they perform their Hindu practices.

Kabbalah as it is taught by the non-authoritative teachers, aside from being illegitimate, is also incomplete. The Etz Haim, in the name of the holy Zohar, outlines the teachings of the Shattering of the Primordial Vessels. It is taught in the beginning chapters of Sefer Etz Haim that the seven lower sefirot of the world of the Nikudim did not emanate in proper alignment, in relation to the Lights above them. Instead of coming out in columns of right, left, and center to achieve balance, they all came out one after another in a straight line. Being that they were not properly in the right place to receive the descending light, they missed receiving that which they were supposed to receive. Some of the light they did receive, but the absence of the whole led to imbalance. The vessels were not able to handle the imbalance. The light which they had received, due to their imbalanced alignment, was too much for them. It is said that the vessels then shattered and fell, and the light became entrapped in the fallen vessels. This was the creation of evil. It awaits for mankind to release them through the observance of the mitzvot, for only by providing the correct vessels can the rectified light have a place to go and shine properly.



These eastern mystical and pseudo-kabbalistic groups are causing the breaking of the vessels to happen all over again: by their not emphasizing and teaching the importance of halakha, they are causing the vessels (i.e. their individual bodies and minds) to be unprepared to receive the holiest light of them all, i.e. the Kabbalah. What happens is that they compromise two diametrically opposed spiritual systems and bastardize the two. Thus again the light becomes trapped in a vessel that is not right for it. This is the Kabbalistic definition of a cult.

We must be on the lookout for these groups, and hold them up to the light of true Torah scrutiny. No, we are not out to malign anyone or hurt anyone, but we are out to defend and safeguard Judaism, and keep it Jewish for our children and their children after them. Around the time of the Second Temple, cults were widespread, and we survived them all (except one – Christianity). Now these cults are widespread again, suckling off of Judaism and stealing our young.

Recently I read a report of a Jew for J. minister who had “saved the soul” of an ordained “Haredi” Rabbi. Now, this is not a story that one hears every day, but when I heard the details – that this “Rabbi” was only a teenager – I again see their treachery in manipulating Jewish youth, and twisting open and making imbalanced personalities.

We have to face the facts!! Crisis faces the international Jewish community! As never before, Jewish people are being lost!! Sixty years ago, one third of the Jewish people were wiped out in Europe. Today, another holocaust is taking place, and most people are just sitting back and watching it happen!! This message that I am sharing with you is for all Jews, no matter where you are physically or spiritually. As a community, we are in danger; and our worst enemy this time is not from the anti-Semites outside us. Our worst enemy comes from within our very own midst.

Apathy and assimilation: these are the Hitler and Mussolini of our day. How many thousands (or more accurately, tens of thousands) of wayward Jews have joined all sorts of these outlandish cults? Be they the 60s-oriented eastern mystical or “new age” cults, or the worst of them all – the so-called “Jewish-Christian” cults, these groups are stealing our children (and our money), most times with great deception, and all times with horrible loss to us.

We can no longer permit ourselves the luxury of sitting back and feeling good that someone else is doing the work. We all have a communal responsibility to pitch in and fight. I don't care how left-wing some of you might be; “left-wing” and “right-wing” are Gentile definitions. We have no room for them in our Jewish circles. We can no longer tolerate this nonsensical attitude that everyone can just do what they want. This is spiritual anarchy, the result of which is only too obvious in American and western society today.



Jewish people want to belong. The disenfranchised Jew in your community is one who would find great joy and fulfillment in the Torah of HaShem and His mitzvot. Why are YOU letting him die of spiritual starvation? Don't say "what can I do?"; the armchair Zionists said the same thing during WW II while our six million brothers and sisters were being murdered in Europe. Must we look back in another two generations and see the victory of our anti-Semitic enemies that will come about due to our weakness? Rise up and do something!!

Our own assimilation into cults and secular living will do more to decimate us than what all our enemies have been able to do. I ask you, are you a part of this?? What are you doing to stem the tide of assimilation? Are you reaching out to the Jewish members of your neighborhood? Are you willing and able to challenge the missionaries and other anti-Semites who claim that they are the real Jews and that we are "false Jews descended from the barbarian Khazars"?

If you don't care, then you are already lost. Your soul is dead within you. If this is the case, I have nothing further to say to you.

But, if a fire burns within you by these words, if something is kindled, and you are getting upset by reading these words...then GOOD!! This means you are not dead yet, and that you must rise up and become a soldier in HaShem's army. You can pick up the mantle of Jewish pride and honor.

Do not say "what can one man (or woman) do?" Do not underestimate the power of HaShem to use you as He knows best. Learn about Judaism. Teach Torah, Join with other Jews. Explore your heritage. Be who you are. Be who you are destined to become – a nation of priests; a nation that unites physical living with spirituality, and thus brings Heaven to earth.

This is the real meaning of the coming of Mashiah, when the whole world will have risen above the need to be cultish, and the weakness of being taken advantage of by them. On that day will HaShem be one, and His Name one.