

Maize Plant Discipleship Syllabus

I tell you that unless a grain of wheat that falls to the ground dies, it stays just a grain; but if it dies, it produces a big harvest — Jesus, John 12:24

Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, refers to his own mission using the simple metaphor of a seed entering the ground and dying, in order to produce a large harvest. Grown throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the maize plant provides a similar, highly recognisable metaphor.

Metaphor of the Maize Plant

Good seed sown in good soil, stimulated by sunshine and refreshed by rainfall produces dynamic growth and a good harvest.

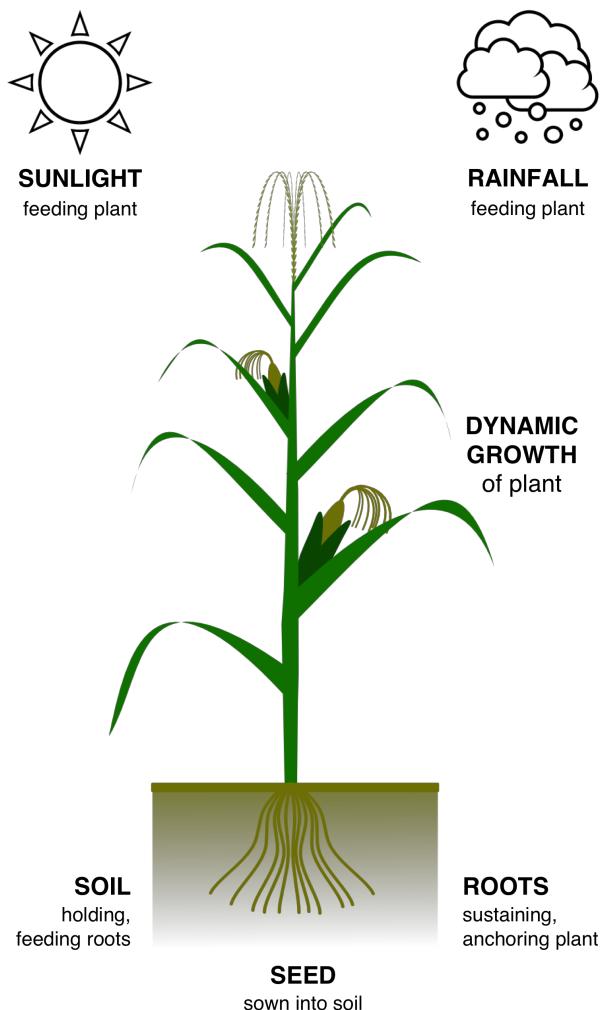
Messianic communities also need to be rooted in good ground that allows them to draw on vital, spiritual *nutrients*, to be stimulated by the revelatory *light* and to be refreshed by the living *water* of the Messiah's Spirit.

This creates the *dynamic growth* of messianic community, anchoring it against the withering winds of false teaching and sustaining it amidst the excessive heat of trials, temptations and vocational responsibility.

Figure 1 portrays these basic components of the maize plant metaphor.

Syllabus Structure

The Maize Plant Discipleship Syllabus incorporates a Facilitators' Handbook and 16 modular Handbooks, themed to symbolically reflect the maize plant metaphor by referring to the imagery of soil, roots, growth, sunlight and rainfall.

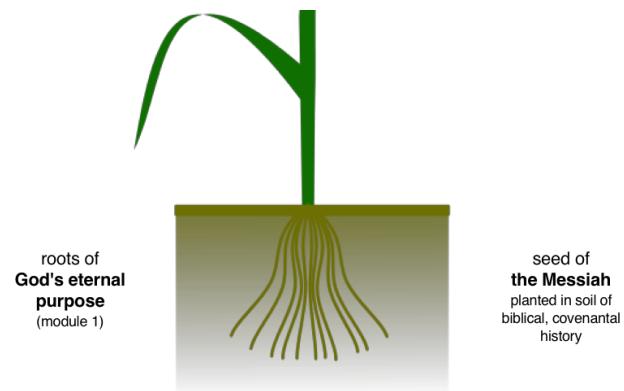


- **Soil and Roots** representing the biblical, covenantal community, context and vocation of Israel (Module 1)
- **Maize Plant** representing messianic community and its dynamic spiritual growth and multiplication (Modules 2 to 9)
- **Sunlight and Rainfall** representing essential spiritual disciplines, which stimulate and sustain the growth of messianic community (Modules 10 to 16).

Soil and Roots

Module 1. The foundation of the entire syllabus: a panoramic overview of scripture, revealing God's unchanging, eternal purpose.

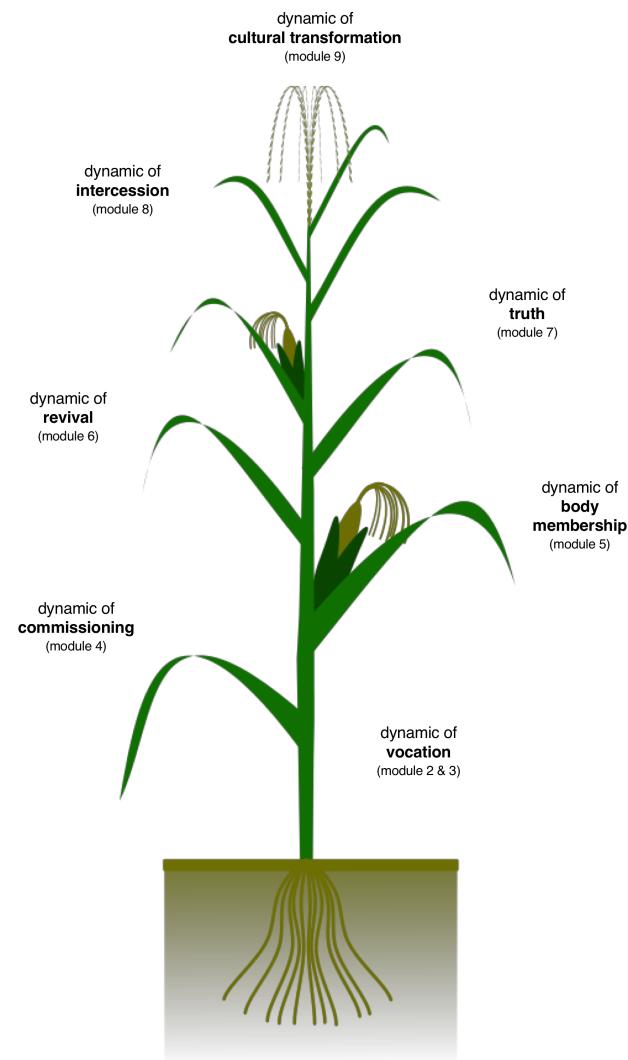
- **God's Eternal Purpose** *the Messiah is the Seed that enters the soil of the biblical, covenantal history of the people of Israel, in order to die and ultimately produce a great harvest of people—a messianic covenant community—from amongst the peoples of the earth.*



Maize Plant

Modules 2 to 9. Messianic dynamics produce the characteristic development, growth, structure and fruit of messianic community.

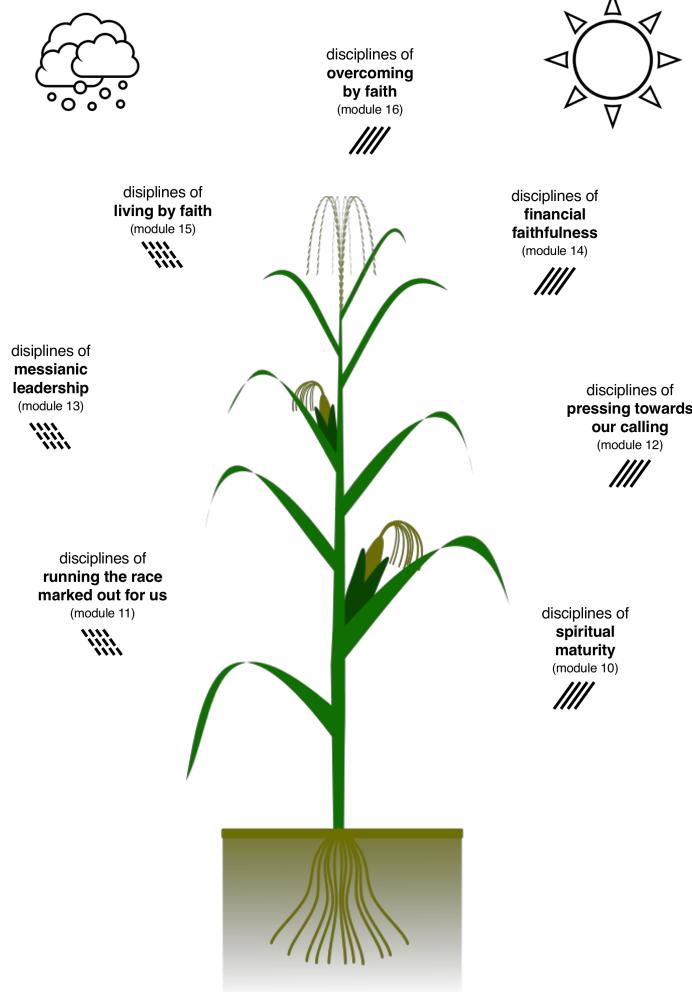
- **Dynamics of vocation: the Gentiles** *the historical development of the Messianic Community's vocational mission to bless the nations of the world*
- **Dynamics of vocation: the Jews** *the special responsibility of the Messianic Community towards the Jewish people.*
- **Dynamics of commissioning** *strategic and structural dynamics of messianic commissioning and community growth.*
- **Dynamics of body membership** *dynamics of membership, commitment and spiritual maturity within the body of the Messiah.*
- **Dynamics of revival** *a cycle of spiritual activities representing the dynamics of revival, leading to a spiritual harvest.*
- **Dynamics of truth** *encountering truth, as we walk in practical, covenantal faithfulness towards God's revelation, wisdom and direction.*
- **Dynamics of intercession** *the priestly vocation of the Messianic Community to be a house of prayer for all nations.*
- **Dynamics of cultural transformation** *the call to work amongst and on behalf of the nations, towards cultural transformations that signal the presence of God's kingdom.*



Sunlight and Rainfall

Modules 10–16. Seven characteristic *disciplines* that enable messianic communities and disciples to receive the revelatory *light* and living *water* of God's Spirit—without which we become spiritually weak and incapable of producing good fruit.

- **Disciplines of spiritual maturity** three stages of encounter and growth in spiritual maturity of messianic disciples and communities.
- **Disciplines of running the race** motivations, qualities and disciplines for living an enduring life of service."
- **Disciplines of pressing toward our vocation** identifying and excelling in our personal vocation, through deepening our relationship with the Messiah.
- **Disciplines of financial faithfulness** a biblical perspective upon financial faithfulness, wealth and poverty.
- **Disciplines of messianic leadership** the qualifications, motivations and characteristics of faithful messianic leadership.
- **Disciplines of living by faith** seeing with eyes of faith enables us to endure times of testing and purification and to embrace challenge as an opportunity to experience God's faithfulness.
- **Disciplines of overcoming** confronting idolatrous, cultural strongholds in the power of the Spirit and discerning strategies that make room for a transformative encounter with God's overcoming power.



Format

Each MPD module *Handbook* contains four interrelated *Studies*, incorporating:

- Scripture Readings
- Topical Sections and Summary
- Questions for Group Discussion

The format is designed to facilitate reflective learning and group discussion—so that Maize Plant Discipleship relies simply upon facilitators willing to co-ordinate study groups and discussions.