



## Messian Dread Interview

This is the transcript of an interview conducted by E-Mail between the reggae artist Messiah Dread and Asa (selector @ [rootsreggae.net](mailto:rootsreggae.net)) in the second week of September 2001.

A : To start off with please describe yourself, where you are from e.t.c

M : I live in the northern part of the Netherlands, in a small town. If I get on my bicycle I drive in the woods or in natural environment, which is a necessity for my inspiration. Publishing and making music has always been a part of my activities, and I believe Jah has lead me to where I am now, situated on the Internet, trying to provide the reggae community with good music in different ways. I make my own music, and promote a lot of other musicians as well through my site. And I gather links to legally downloadable reggae or Dub music.

A : When did you first start listening to reggae music?

M : I started listening, like listening to it day and night, when I discovered the dub vibe. I was 16 years old at the time, and I liked reggae music when I got introduced to it by a friend, because it was freedom music. That is what I could feel. And my stomach started turning around when I heard Linton Kwesie Johnson's "5 nights of bleeding", on his Dread Beat And Blood Album. That was the first serious track presented in a drum and bass style, in a dubwise style, that I ever heard.

A : What is it about reggae music that appeals to yourself above all other forms of music?

M : Reggae Music has a different beat than most other popular music, the music was like invented and worked out by a reasonably small group of people. I am talking about the

artists in Jamaica, many albums are played by a combination of artists like Sly and Robbie, Horsemouth, Deadly Headly, and so there are more. Studio Bands laying down riddims on tape, later to be used by singers, toasters, Dub mixers and so on. That culture you can feel. When you listen to it so much, because it is freedom music, even when you can't understand the language, it becomes your own. It becomes like your family. It gives you strength, encouragement, it has kept me from doing bad things and going to the wrong direction.

A : You are well known on the internet for your works, and have recently had one of your songs used on the Tanty Records compilation 'Roots of Dub Funk'. Do you plan to release any records/CD's in the future?

M : Yes, I am currently working creating a track from Alpha and Omega's Show Me A Purpose, I'm also working on the re-creation of some pre-Internet tunes of mine. Like a recently released a track called Heroin, which I wrote back in the 1980's.

A : Continuing on the usage of the internet to promote your works..how do you feel the net has benefited yourself as an independent artist?

M : The internet has been my main distribution tool, because it is a good way of working for me. Because I like to publish, and write, and make music, I was very happy to be on the Internet when I came, and I saw everything getting bigger, especially when it comes to artists promoting themselves over the Internet. I'm happy that I am experiencing this all, to be there almost since the start. It has benefited me with an audience, for example, and this audience I am very grateful to. They encourage me to continue this work, to work very hard on improving the style, the sounds, everything. Because I am in pretty close contact with my listeners I am also in the position to take their opinion along in my creations. It benefits for me, as an artist, and also for the audience, who can interact with artists.

A : What advice would you have for any up and coming reggae artist who wished to use the internet to promote their music?

M : Don't be too satisfied with yourself and with what you make too much. Don't expect the Internet to be a magic tool. If you want to promote your music over the Internet, you got to invest a lot, and I mean a lot, of time. I think there is also a difference in promoting the music over the Internet and being an Internet artist. The best, ofcourse, is to have a combination. I am an Internet artist, in the sense that i spend at least two hours every day communicating with listeners, visitors, newsgroups, and so on. Maybe that is like live performance, but then online. And many times it is 3 or 4 hours. This is very important. Be where you must be. And don't be there to promote your music, be there because you must be there.

A : What do you feel is the future of reggae music firstly in the Netherlands and secondly Europe and the rest of the world?

M : In the Netherlands, I see that I get some attention by national magazines and thing,

for which I am very happy. I think that some people will be attracted to Dub music by my tunes, because I have seen this happen. But I don't think I will cause any DUB revolution. Through the Internet, a global DUB community comes to exist, I think will also be fruitful because of the motivation and the nice vibes under each other. I see, that DUB is influencing a lot of styles as well, contemporary artists say that they listen to DUB music, so I think on one hand you will see a big influence of the DUB vibe in popular music. As for Reggae, I think that Reggae and Dub are a little too much separated from each other, that is not so nice. So what we must work on, is to get DUB and REGGAE more connected again, for it is good that DUB is influencing many styles, for it will improve that styles :- ) but it sometimes tends to stray of the reggae beat too much, and that makes it less powerful in my opinion. Reggae will stay, because it is freedom music and I haven't heard a better freedom music still. People all over the world are still listening to Bob Marley. Some are listening to Mozart and thing, the guy lived centuries ago, but they still listen. This will also happen to the reggae beat. But it is the responsibility of every new generation to keep the flame burning, to keep the reggae groove intact.

A : Totally unrelated to reggae, which is your all time favourite film?

M : I don't have one, but I recently saw "Revelation" and "Tribulation", apocalyptic films which were quite entertaining as well as having this truth foundation.

A : Any final words you would like to add?

Yes, as we're having this interview, babylon is burning because soldiers of hate were destroying the tower of babylon so to speak, and many people were killed. This is a time to be conscious, to study the prophesy. Bob Marley studied scriptural prophesy, he spoke that babylon will fall. I would be suprised if babylon would still be here in 40 years.

Final note by Asa : This interview was concluded on the 11th of september 2001. The same day that the United States of America suffered the largest attack to civilians and the military on main land America since the Civil war.

Untill we as **humans** regardless of religous, political and cultural differences can learn basic respect not only for each other but also for mother earth, then in the words of HIM Haile Selassie 'There will be war...'

Many thanks to Messian Dread for the interview