

Spring 2021 / Volume 1 / Number 38

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ARIEL
MINISTRIES

How Should We Then Live?

Plus:

The Davidic Covenant
and God's Plan for Israel

The Jew as Enemy:
Controlled Anti-Semitism
in the Weimar Republic

Ancient Wisdom
About Covid-19 and Us

How Should Believers
Respond to Conspiracy
Theories?

Program of Messianic Jewish Studies



2021 SHOSHANAH CAMPUS

Ariel Ministries welcomes you to join us for a great time of growing stronger in the Messiah. Our summer program is designed to establish and strengthen believers in Yeshua through in-depth study of the Scriptures from a Messianic Jewish perspective. Learning is conveniently arranged in 1-, 2-, and 3-week modules with plenty of free time included in the schedule. Whether you come for only 1 week or the entire 8-week program, the Shoshanah Campus, beautifully nestled in the scenic Adirondack mountains of New York, will provide the perfect environment for a fun, relaxing, yet spiritual retreat for the whole family.

Week 1
OT Survey—Arnold Fruchtenbaum
Ephesians—Bob Morris

Week 2
NT Survey—Arnold Fruchtenbaum
First John—Bob Morris

Weeks 3-4
Bible Study Methods—Mottel Baleston
Zionism and the History of Israel—Mottel Baleston

Weeks 3-5
Jeremiah—Arnold Fruchtenbaum
Highlights of the Life of Messiah—Arnold Fruchtenbaum
Doctrine of the Last Days—Arnold Fruchtenbaum

Week 5
Galatians—Richard Hill
Spiritual Life—John Kantor

Week 6
The Life of Messiah—Arnold Fruchtenbaum

Week 7
The Doctrine of Humanity—Arnold Fruchtenbaum
The Jewish People in the Book of Romans—Mottel Baleston

Week 8
The Doctrine of Sin—Arnold Fruchtenbaum
Post Mosaic Jewish Holy Days—Mottel Baleston

Special Labor Day Program (Sept 3-6)

The Modern State of Israel in Bible Prophecy—Arnold Fruchtenbaum
Jews, Gentiles, and the Church—Mottel Baleston

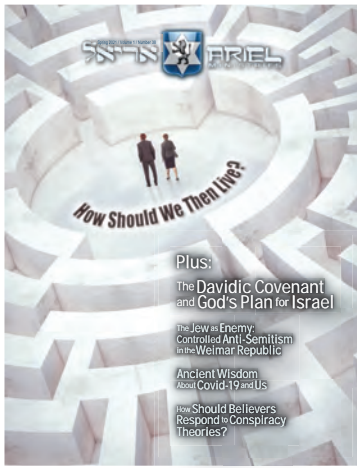
Israel in the Tribulation—Arnold Fruchtenbaum
Israel in the Messianic Kingdom—Arnold Fruchtenbaum

Weeks 1-8, Labor Day
Children's and Youth Program while parents are in main program.

July 3rd – August 27th
Labor Day Program September 3-6



Find out more at www.ariel.org or call 518-834-6057



20 Cover Story

The craziness of 2020 has caused many believers to start asking, “How should we then live?” Unfortunately, some of them have responded to the circumstances by taking on extreme positions and falling for the most surprising conspiracy theories. The articles in this magazine are intended to start a conversation about such positions. We are not claiming to have all the answers, but we would like to encourage our readers to prayerfully consider what they believe by comparing it to God’s Word and to historical developments.

08 Feature

In this article, Robert Dean Jr. examines the centrality of the Davidic Covenant in God’s plan for Israel.

14 History

Part 5 of Stuart Wallis’s series on the Spanish Inquisition details the Edict of Expulsion that forced all Jewish Spaniards to leave their country in 1492. With great compassion, the author describes the horror and injustice inflicted upon the Jewish people and their plight during this time.

20 How Should We Then Live

The dangers of conspiracy theories

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Historian Michael Kotsch examines the circumstances that led up to the Holocaust, detailing the tactics of manipulation that can be seen in today’s world as well.

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Dave James provides some guidance as to how believers should respond to conspiracy theories.

30 Spiritual Life

Believers should be alert for Messiah’s return. Yet, there exists a tendency to think one can pinpoint the return’s coming more specifically. Believers should be careful about this hope getting too specific, especially when it is built around conspiracy theories and issues tied to one-world organizations. Dr. Darrel Bock elaborates on the importance of keeping a balanced perspective and world-view.

32 Spiritual Life

Mottel Baleston provides some practical advice that helps every believer to navigate in an increasingly crazy world.

34 Theology

The church has been dealing with the rise of false teachers for millennia. Modern-day examples of this phenomenon include the rapidly-spreading New Apostolic Reformation. Robert Morris explains how to biblically combat false teachings.

36 Anti-Semitism

Olivier Melnick explains that taking care of the Jewish people and sharing the good news of Messiah Yeshua with them is a biblical mandate that is especially important in a time when conspiracy theories once again blame the Jews for the perils of this world.

38 Spiritual Life

In “I’m Going Fishing,” Tim Velasco encourages us to live a life dedicated to God.



08

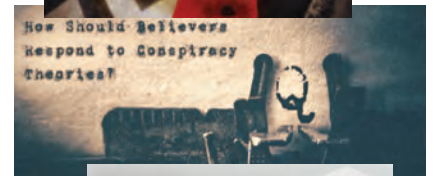


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“And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” Gen. 12:3

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Purpose Statement

Ariel Ministries exists in order to evangelize Jewish people and to disciple Jewish and Gentile believers through intensive Bible teaching from a Jewish perspective.

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PROPER THINKING IS NOT OPTIONAL!

This edition of the *Ariel Magazine* addresses the phenomenon of conspiracy theories in several articles. An honest analysis of what has happened in recent months globally and in the United States will reveal that there is a surprising increase in the willingness of people to spread unproven claims via social media and private chat groups. Sadly, the church especially has proven to be fertile ground for these theories.

If believers follow the flat-earth theory or are convinced that man never landed on the moon, it is one thing. But if believers think that there is a global cabal of devil-worshipping pedophiles whose goal it is to establish a totalitarian dictatorship and commit genocide by poisoning vaccines, there is a problem. The danger is that such theories are nothing but a new packaging for old anti-Semitic myths. Early in the pandemic, Flora Cassen—the Associate Professor of Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern studies and of History at Washington University in St. Louis—scoured the boards and websites of the dark web that mentioned COVID and the Jews. In an article published by *Haaretz* in May 2020,¹ she revealed that these platforms were filled with conspiracy theories accusing the Jews of triggering the pandemic. The primary lie was that Jews control the Chinese lab that allegedly created this coronavirus.

Another problem that arises from conspiracy myths is that they often go hand in hand with the relativization of the Holocaust. More and more COVID deniers compare themselves to Jews in the 1930s in Germany. They equate measures against the pandemic with the terror of the Nazi dictatorship. This trivializes Hitler's crimes.

In an op-ed published on January 28, 2021, World Jewish Congress Executive Vice President Maram Stern wrote:

"The attempt by ... coronavirus deniers to claim a victimhood equal to the victims of the Holocaust [is] particularly repugnant. Coronavirus deniers who compare themselves with Sophie Scholl or Anne Frank display an exaggerated self-importance and arrogance that lacks any reflective distance and at the same time demonstrate a relativization of the actual historical events. The singularity of the Holocaust is misused for self-satisfied stylization. In

such circles, demonstrators now tend to wear prominent yellow Jewish stars... I do not know what could be more shameful than to attack the history of suffering in the face of the ... survivors of Auschwitz, Majdanek, and thousands of other concentration camps and ghettos. It is epitomized by the lack of empathy, continued delusion, and cynicism."²

Responding to the increasing problem of the relativization of the Holocaust on Facebook, Bible teacher Mottel Baleston noted: "The concern that I have is people using the theme of the Holocaust to support their rants about some current political issue. To compare certain political figures or decisions to the Shoah requires a full suspension of logic and reality."

Addressing the phenomenon of conspiracy theories in a letter from 2020, Dr. Fruchtenbaum wrote, "I see myself as a biblicist and not a sensationalist, and I do not allow myself to be influenced by speculations that are not based on proven facts and acts." These are words to live by for all who follow Messiah Jesus.

Another life motto comes from Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." This verse is not merely some advice. The imperative form of *logizomai* ("think on") makes it a command. We *must* obey God and think of the things that are true, pure, and lovely. Proper thinking is not optional in the believer's life. But in a time that is often called the "post-truth era," how do we determine what is true, pure, and honorable?

The only thing that is absolutely true is God's Word. It alone is also truly pure, lovely, honorable, and so forth. Consequently, in order to obey Philippians 4:8, we must read God's Word.

In Messiah,

Christiane Jurik
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¹ Cassen, Flora. "Jews Control Chinese Labs That Created Coronavirus": White Supremacists' Dangerous New Conspiracy Theory." www.haaretz.com, Haaretz Daily Newspaper Ltd., 3 May 2020.

² Stern, Maram. "Shame." <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/oped--shame?print=true>.



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J. I. and Sharon Gabizon represent Ariel Ministries in Canada. Their projects include door-to-door evangelism of Jewish homes in Montreal and translating Ariel's manuscripts into French. Ariel Canada established a messianic congregation in Montreal called Beth Ariel.



Jackie Fierman

Jackie Fierman has been with Ariel Canada since January of 2005, traveling and sharing about the ministry and teaching Ariel material in Canada and the U.S.A.



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Sasha and Lilian Granovsky represent Ariel Ministries in Israel. The husband and wife team has been representing Ariel Ministries in Israel since October 2009. They are responsible for coordinating the translation of our manuscripts and books into Hebrew and Russian.



Ariel China

For safety issues, we must protect the identity of this branch. Please keep them in your prayers.



Ariel Germany

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Thanks to Manfred Künstler and his wife Hanna, Ariel Ministries has had a presence in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland since 1985. In 2002, the work was passed on to Georg Hagedorn who, eight years later, turned it into a full branch. Today, this branch is led by a team of brothers and sisters.



Ariel Hungary **Ivan & Rita Nagy**

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Ivan and Rita Nagy represent Ariel Ministries in Hungary. The husband and wife team has developed a Come & See website in Hungarian. They also host several home Bible study groups, teaching from Ariel's materials. Their goal is to make teachings available to Jewish and Gentile believers and unbelievers in Hungary.



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Paolo and Martina Speciale represent Ariel Ministries in Italy. The husband and wife team coordinates the translations of our manuscripts and books into Italian. Their goal is to share the Messianic Jewish perspective in Italy through live teaching, social media pages, and seminars.



Ariel New Zealand

Web: <http://ariel.org.nz/>

This branch is led by Johan Jansen van Vuuren, Nigel Christensen, Matthew Lord, Don Thompson, and John Cavanagh. For information about the many activities of this branch, please contact info@ariel.co.nz.



Ariel Ministries Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas

This branch is devoted to teaching the Word of God from a biblical Jewish perspective in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. We also travel throughout the United States. If you are interested in hosting a teaching session, symposium, or seminar contact us at dfw@ariel.org.

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Michael & Hannah Gabizon – Students (Montreal)

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Michael and Hannah Gabizon are missionaries representing Ariel Ministries in Canada. The young couple has actively been involved in teaching and discipling people through God's Word. Their goal is to identify other young people within their sphere of influence who may be interested in becoming involved with Ariel.



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Missionary and author John Metzger represents Ariel Ministries in North Carolina. He is a teacher and speaker who actively travels throughout the central and eastern part of the U.S., speaking at various churches and conferences.



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Gary and his wife Missy are the managers and camp facilitators of the Shoshanah campus in Upstate New York. Every summer they help host Ariel's Program of Messianic Jewish Studies.



Roberto Anchondo – Field Representative (El Paso, Texas, New Mexico, and Mexico)

Roberto Anchondo represents Ariel Ministries in parts of the Southwest regions of the U.S. and some cities in Mexico. He is currently discipling groups of men in the Jewish perspective. He also works with numerous churches in Mexico, teaching the importance of standing by Israel.



Jack Nakashima (Rock Hill, SC.)

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Jack Nakashima represents Ariel Ministries in Rock Hill, SC. Previously serving in Israel, he is now available to teach and disciple in the U.S.



ששחנה



SHOSHANAH

Salvation

Every summer, Ariel Ministries opens the doors to its School of Messianic Jewish Studies at the Shoshanah Campus in New York. People from all over the world come to study the Scriptures from a Messianic Jewish perspective, and we have yet to meet one person who walked away unchanged. But what do people actually do when they go back home? What do they do with the knowledge they acquired at Camp? Nigel and Ellie Bates, long-time “Camp Shoshanahites,” answered this question in a short testimony:

“In 2016, we began an outreach ministry to Jewish families in the Buffalo, NY, area. Over the years, we have had the privilege of handing out numerous sets of the *Tanakh* and *Brit Hadashah* and sharing the good news of Messiah Yeshua with many Jewish families. About three years ago, we were invited into the home of a lovely Russian couple, Michael and Molvina, who are both in their 90s, and spent the evening reading from the Scriptures, talking about Yeshua, and praying. Since then, we have been able to visit and talk regularly with them and have really become like family. Recently, Michael told Nigel that he knew Yeshua is his Messiah, and when Ellie asked him if he had accepted Him as his personal atoning sacrifice and Messiah, he said emphatically, ‘Yes, I have!’ We rejoice in this amazing miracle! We know our work is not yet done with this lovely couple, and so please pray that Molvina will also receive Yeshua as her Messiah and that the miracle of salvation through Yeshua will spread throughout their large Jewish family. Also, please pray for this ongoing Romans-1:16-ministry in the Buffalo area.”

Nigel and Ellie Bates





The Work of a Field Rep

What do Ariel's field representatives do all day?

We asked Jack Nakashima, and he sent the following report:

"In November 2020, we launched Ariel Fellowship in Rock Hill, SC. For years, there had been a small Messianic ministry in town, but the leadership had left. We believed the Lord would have us establish a new work, rooted in the ethos of Ariel Ministries. We contacted one of our supporting congregations, and they graciously granted us use of their facilities. As we meet on Erev Shabbat, and they on Sunday, there is no conflict between our schedules.

Our emphasis is on teaching, but we have two foci. The first is to teach about things related to the Jewish people. For instance, we want to share information about evangelism issues, cultural sensibilities, and traditions. We also explain what modern Israel is like and speak about biblical archaeology and Bible backgrounds. The second focus is also our main priority, and that, of course, is Bible study. We have started with the book of Revelation, which—as readers of this magazine are well aware—is deeply rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures. We study verse by verse rather than follow the structure of *The Footsteps of the Messiah*. However, Dr. Fruchtenbaum's book remains a primary resource along with my own commentary *Revelation: A Basic Guide*, which highlights the connections to the *Tanakh*.

It may seem strange to start a fellowship in the midst of a pandemic, but our area has not been hit hard. It has also been a blessing to get together and study God's Word. Our group is small, but we have some wonderful people including a family that we met at Camp Shoshanah. There has been some talk about recording the sessions or creating a Zoom group. At this time, that is not our intention, but if enough people are interested, then we will consider it. If you would like to join us, please contact me at JackNAriel@gmail.com."

Ariel's School of Messianic Jewish Studies—Online

The Lord continues to bless this new division of Ariel Ministries with steady growth in enrollment and course offerings, as well as with academic and technological advances. The fourth and final course in the "Life of Yeshua" series is now available, as well as new courses on eschatology and the book of Revelation. All of our new courses now include additional features such as curriculum built upon at least two required textbooks per course, thus providing an even richer learning experience. We have also begun to incorporate photos, charts, and other images in the video lecture presentations that will enhance visual engagement. Many of these images provide archaeological insights. Filming for the book of Acts is well underway and promises to be one of the best courses yet produced. In addition to all of this progress, we will be implementing new online educational software that gives us the potential to do some remarkable things in our online courses in the future.

We are thankful to the hundreds of believers around the world who have taken a step of faith and are now taking Ariel Online Courses. We are thankful to God for the financial support provided by the sacrificial giving of many believers, without which none of this would be possible.

— Dr. Mark Adler





Ariel's Study Bible

For a few years, I put the burden of writing Jewish Study Bible on the back burner simply because I did not believe I was equipped for such a mammoth, biblically technical task. In December of 2016, however, I visited with Dr. Fruchtenbaum concerning this topic, and to my surprise he gave me his blessings. Ever since, I have been working on this Study Bible in one way or another. The goal has been to parallel the biblical text with Dr. Fruchtenbaum's written material, emphasizing its Jewish frame of reference and background. Another focus of this work is on God's past, present, and future covenantal relationship with Israel, emphasizing the covenants and dispensations as well as the inter-relationship between the authors of Scrip-

ture. In order to achieve this, I made identifying the covenants easier by color-coding them:

Abrahamic Covenant—highlighted in yellow

Land Covenant—written in blue font

Davidic Covenant and seed passages—written in red font

New Covenant passages—written in green font

Furthermore, in order to set apart prophecies that relate to the tribulation period from other prophecies, I have **changed the font** to make them stand out. There are many footnotes explaining the text, and there are text boxes to highlight important biblical material.

So far, I have worked through the Torah, the historical books, and the

Major and Minor Prophets. That leaves me with the poetic books, of which I have worked through Job, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. Currently, I am working on Psalms and Proverbs. My prayer is that average believers who read and study the Scriptures will be able to do so with understanding and clarity. It is also my prayer to present a dispensational Study Bible to help deter replacement theology.

— John B. Metzger



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 Missionary and author John Metzger represents Ariel Ministries in North Carolina. He is a teacher and speaker who actively travels throughout the central and eastern part of the U.S., speaking at various churches and conferences.

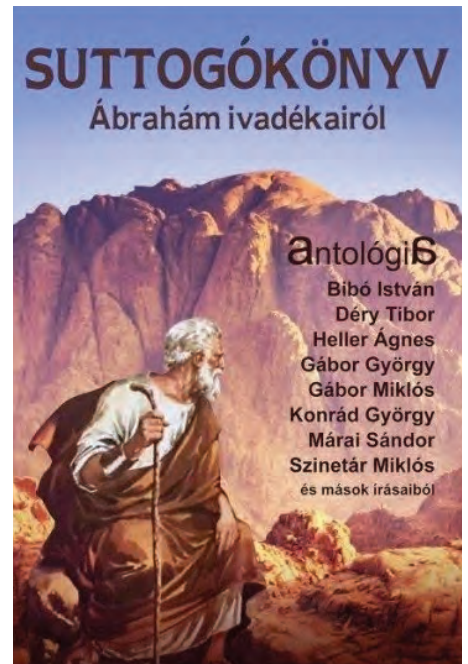


Hungary is one of those countries that still has a substantial number of Holocaust survivors. It is therefore no wonder that our Hungarian branch has unique opportunities to reach these Jewish people and invite them to seminars and celebrations of the biblical feasts. After one such invitation, one lady started attending the Nagys' Zoom meetings on a regular basis and has even asked her son, who lives and works in Israel, to attend one of the sessions with her. May God open her heart to the good news of His Son!

The Nagys have also been asked to share their expertise in non-religious venues such as conferences and by writing chapters for books. Rita, for example, was invited to present a paper during a conference dedicated

to the renowned Holocaust historian Professor László Karsai. In addition to his position at the University of Szeged, Professor Karsai is Director of the Holocaust Center of the Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives and Head of the Yad Vashem Research Group in Hungary. He led the team of historians that organized Hungary's first permanent exhibition on the Holocaust, which is on display in Budapest. The conference dealt with the topic of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, and Rita presented a paper she titled "The Idea of the Christian Nation and Its Enemies: The Theological Argument of Antisemitism in the Discourse of the Parliamentary Representatives from 1938 to 1941 in Hungary."

Iván was asked to write a chapter in an anthology titled *Whispering Book – About Abraham's Descendants*. This work deals with the Holocaust and contains testimonies by well-known Hungarian Jews and essays by philosophers, actors, and other celebrities. Iván felt quite honored to have been asked to contribute to this work.



Coming Soon

Area Occupied
by Israel after
the Conquest
(Joshua 12-13)

Joshua Northern Campaign



In this new commentary, Dr. Fruchtenbaum details the rapidly moving historical narrative of the book of Joshua and comments on it from a Messianic Jewish perspective. His work is replete with visual aids for the reader, such as maps, charts, and tables. The result is a handy, up-to-date commentary on a fascinating period in the history of the Jewish people.

ARIEL'S BIBLE COMMENTARY



THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



*Exposition from a
Messianic Jewish Perspective*

ARNOLD G. FRUCHTENBAUM
TH.M., PH.D.



THE CENTRALITY OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT



IN
GOD'S PLAN
FOR ISRAEL

By Robert Dean, Jr.¹



Secular historians generally misdirect their readers by claiming that Herodotus was the father of history. Yet, Moses predated Herodotus by ten centuries. The Hebrew Torah written by Moses is the first collection of books that gives structure to human history and provides the key to interpreting this history. Ancient pagan civilizations mired in the muck of polytheism held a cyclical view of history—an endless repetition of cycles with no real beginning, no direction, no purpose, and no resolution. Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks (including Herodotus), and Romans all held to this meaningless view of history. But history with no overall meaning implies that the personal histories of individuals also have no meaning or value. The revelation of God breaks through this darkened state of endless, aimless cycles with the disclosure that He created the human race with meaning, value, and purpose.

God blessed only five individuals in all of human history with personal covenants:

1. Adam (through the Creation Covenant in Gen. 1:28-30; 2:15-17; Hosea 6:7; and the Adamic Covenant in Gen. 3:14-19)
 2. Noah (The Noahic Covenant, Gen. 9:1-17)
 3. Abraham (The Abrahamic Covenant, Gen. 12:1-3, 7; Gen. 15:1-21; 17:1-21)
 4. Phinehas (The Covenant of Peace, Num. 25:10-13)
 5. David (The Davidic Covenant, 2 Sam. 7:12-16; 1 Chron 17:11-15)
- The introduction of sin through Adam's disobedience to God corrupted every-

thing. From that point we learn that God oversees human events with a plan to resolve this corruption to His glory. The above covenants, along with the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-33), provide the indispensable framework for understanding God's plan for the human race, history, Israel, and the final resolution of the problems of sin and evil in the distant future.

That divine plan was first alluded to in God's statement to the serpent who deceived Eve into eating the fruit: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel" (Gen. 3:15).² The term "seed of the woman" describes a future descendant who would destroy the evil plans and purposes of the serpent (later identified as Satan in disguise in Rev. 12:9; 20:2). Tracking the descendants of the woman through the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 and tracing the word "seed" through God's covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:9) point to Abraham's descent from Eve (Gen. 11:27) through Noah and his son Shem.

In His covenant with Abraham, God promised three things: a seed, a land, and a blessing (Gen. 15:1-21; 17:1-21). God promised Abraham "descendants," which translates the Hebrew word for "seed," *zera'*. *Seed* is a collective noun. Although collective nouns appear in the singular, they may have either a plural meaning ("seeds," "descendants") or a singular meaning ("seed," "descendant"). In His covenant with Abraham, God promised to him descendants, a great

nation (Gen. 12:2), innumerable as the dust of the earth (Gen. 13:16), the stars of the sky (Gen. 15:5; 22:17), or the sand on the seashore (Gen. 22:17). To these descendants, God would give a land (Gen. 12:7) with specific geographic boundaries (Gen. 15:18; 17:8; Deut. 32:8). They were also commanded to be a blessing to the nations, and the greatest blessing would come through one seed: the Messiah (Gen. 22:17).

In the Abrahamic Covenant, we learn three important truths for history:

1. God has chosen to bless the world through the descendants of Abraham.
2. He has promised these descendants a specific piece of real estate.
3. He will bless those who bless them and curse those who curse them.

Thus, we learn that human history will turn on God's blessing through the Jewish people.

God reconfirmed this covenant after Abraham passed the test of being willing to sacrifice Isaac, as described in Genesis 22:16-17. Verse 17 is usually translated similarly to the NKJV: "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants [seed] as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants [seed] shall possess the gate of their enemies." Twice in this verse the word for "seed" is translated as a plural. The first time, it is clearly a plural because it is further defined by the phrase "stars of heaven." But the second time is different. In the phrase "your descendants shall possess the gate of their

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² Scripture quotations are taken from the NKJV. The word "Christ" has been replaced with "Messiah."



enemies,” the English plural pronoun “their” translates a Hebrew singular pronoun. The line should read: “Your seed will possess the gate of *His* enemies.” Paul refers to this in Galatians 3:16: “Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Messiah.”

COMPARING THE ABRAHAMIC AND THE DAVIDIC COVENANTS

God graciously granted David a covenant similar to the covenant with Abraham and as an expansion on the “seed” promise of that covenant. It is the basis for the worldwide blessing that will come from the redemptive work of that seed. By comparing the two records of the Davidic Covenant, we find three eternal promises:

- *An eternal house/dynasty (2 Sam. 7:11, 13a, 16; 1 Chron. 17:10)
- *An eternal throne (2 Sam. 7:13b; 1 Chron. 17:12b, 14)
- *An eternal kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12c; 1 Chron. 17:14)

These promises may be fulfilled only in a descendant who is by nature eternal. The eternality of this One is indicated in two prophecies. The first is Isaiah 9:6-7, where the appellation “Eternal Father” is given to this future King. It is better translated as “Father of Eternity,” meaning one who controls eternity. Only an eternal God can

control eternity. The second prophecy is Micah 5:2, which predicts the birthplace of this future Messiah. He is to be born in Bethlehem, the City of David, and His “goings forth are from eternity.” This was fulfilled in Luke 2:4-7.

There are seven parallels between the Davidic Covenant and the Abrahamic Covenant. These parallels demonstrate that the covenant with David expands on the seed promise of the covenant with Abraham.

1. In Genesis 12:2, God promised to make Abraham’s name great. In 2 Samuel 7:9 (1 Chron. 17:8), God used the same words for making David’s name great.
2. Both covenants involve a land. God promised this land to Abraham’s descendants (Gen. 12:7; 15:18; 17:8). He reminded David that He had appointed a place for His people Israel to dwell with security and stability and that one day they would move no more (2 Sam. 7:10; 1 Chron. 17:9). That land is the location where He will establish a kingdom.
3. God promised innumerable offspring to Abraham, including kings (Gen. 17:7-8). He identified the blessing with one seed (Gen. 12:2; 22:17); therefore, He would provide royal offspring to David culminating in one seed (2 Sam. 7:11-16; 1 Chron. 17:13-14).
4. God promised to bless both Abraham (Gen. 12:2) and David (2 Sam. 7:29).
5. God declared Himself to be Abraham’s God and the God of his descendants (Gen. 17:7). Interconnected with that promise to Abraham was the assertion that the covenant was eternal and that the

land was included as an everlasting possession (Gen. 17:8). God also declared to David that Israel was His special people forever and that He was their God (2 Sam. 7:24).

6. God declared Himself to be the God of Israel in both covenants (Gen. 17:7-8; 2 Sam. 7:24).

7. Again and again, both covenants are affirmed to be eternal, based solely on the immutable character of God (Gen. 17:7; 2 Sam. 7:13, 16, 24-25, 29; Ps. 132:11-14).

Through the Davidic Covenant, God provided the seed to fulfill the promise of Genesis 3:15. This was the Messianic Seed, who would provide the redemption for sin. This was accomplished in the first advent of the Messiah. At the second advent, the earth will be cleansed, and Messiah Jesus will take the throne of David and establish and rule the kingdom for one thousand years.





THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT AFTER DAVID

David and the future writers of Scripture perceived the Davidic Covenant as the foundation for Israel's security, stability, and future salvation. In his final words, David affirmed his understanding that God had made an eternal or "perpetual [NET Bible]" covenant with him to provide order and security for the nation. In 2 Samuel 23:5, we read:

Although my house is not so with God,

Yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant,

Ordered in all things and secure.

For this is all my salvation and all my desire;

Will He not make it increase?

The Hebrew verb for "increase" means "to branch" or "to sprout." The noun form of this verb is *tzemach* and is a title for the Messiah connecting *the branch* to the lineage of David. We see this in phrases such as "the branch of the Lord" (Isa. 4:2), "my servant the branch" (Zech. 3:8), and "the man whose name is the Branch" (Zech.

6:12). There can be no doubt that the prophets of Israel connected the Messiah to the blessing of the seed of David.

Using the noun *tzemach*, Jeremiah connected this "branch of righteousness" to David (Jer. 23:5). This Davidic branch will reign and prosper and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth (Jer. 33:15). A synonym for *tzemach* is found in Isaiah 11:1: "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots." Isaiah described this branch in one of the more significant connections to the Davidic Covenant, one that highlights the glory of the future Messiah. The imagery is of the family of Jesse, David's father, being reduced to a stump or root-stock of a once noble tree. But from this apparently dead tree sprouts a green shoot, meaning that the line of David is restored in the future Messiah King. He will bring justice upon the humble and wicked alike as He extends His rule over the earth. Even the animals benefit from His rule as the curse is partially removed (Isa. 11:6-9). He is the Root of Jesse who will draw all Gentiles to Him (Isa. 11:10).

This same theme of the restoration of the house of David in the Messiah was also part of the message of hope by Amos, a contemporary of Isaiah. Following several chapters announcing the future judgment on Israel (Amos 2:1-9:10), the prophet shifted the focus to a future hope and the restoration of "the fallen booth of David" (Amos 9:11, NASB95). This prophecy is important for its intertextual connections back to the promises to David and even further back to the prophecy of Balaam the seer in its reference to the defeat of the

Edomites (Num. 24:17). Balaam foresaw a distant ruler of Israel who would come forth from Jacob. The term "scepter" in Numbers 24:17 connects Jacob's prophecy that the ruling authority would not depart from the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10) to the rule of the Messianic King (Ps. 2:9). Balaam foresaw a ruler coming out of Israel who would defeat Edom and Moab. This interpretation is found in the most ancient Jewish writings (*Midrash Rabbah, Devarim* 1:20), and Amos had the same view. The restored Davidic king will rule over the enemies of Israel, represented in the prophecy of Amos as Edom.

Hosea, a contemporary of Amos, offered the same Messianic hope (Hos. 3:4-5), and Daniel 7:10-14 confirmed it approximately two hundred years later. He foresaw that at the end of Israel's latter days, the Son of Man will approach the throne of the Father, the Ancient of Days, and will at that time be given the kingdom.

IMMANUEL: THE SIGN OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH (ISA. 7:1-14)

The sign of the virgin conception and birth is a confirmation and affirmation of the future security of the Davidic dynasty. The opening verses of Isaiah 7 describe a threat to the house of David. An alliance between Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the king of Israel threatened to defeat Ahaz and to set a non-Davidic puppet king on



the throne of Judah. God commissioned Isaiah to take a message to Ahaz to not be afraid because He would not allow this to happen. In Isaiah 7:13, the shift in pronouns from a singular “you” addressing Ahaz to a plural “you” addressing the “house of David” is the clue that the sign of the virgin conception and birth is to assure the house of David of God’s faithfulness to the Davidic Covenant. God would fulfill His covenant, and the Davidic line would not die out. This uniquely born child would be named Immanuel. Isaiah 9:6 further identifies Immanuel as the future Messianic King.

THE REFERENCES TO THE DAVIDIC COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The significance of the Davidic Covenant is emphasized throughout the New Testament, but primarily in the Gospels. The first book of the New Testament begins with the assertion that Messiah Jesus (*Yeshua*) is the Son of David. His genealogy from Abraham through David is not traced to demonstrate His legal claim to the Davidic throne (Mt. 1:1, 6, 17), as is often taught. Rather, tracing the line of Joseph through Jeconiah shows that

Joseph could not have been the biological father of Yeshua because of the Coniah curse. Coniah (Jeconiah) was so evil that God declared that no direct descendant of Coniah would sit on the throne of David (Jer. 22:30). The genealogy of Luke 4, on the other hand, ends with Mary, who was also a direct descendant of David, yet apart from Jeconiah.³

When the angel of the Lord announced Yeshua’s birth to Joseph, he addressed him as “Joseph, son of David” (Mt. 1:20). The angel thus emphasized the Davidic and Messianic qualifications of the child and quoted Isaiah 7:14 (Mt. 1:23) to show this child would be the promised Messianic King. When the angel Gabriel announced Mary’s pregnancy to her, he identified the child to be born as “the Son of the Most High.” He further stated that this child would be given the throne of His father David and that He would rule over the house of Jacob in a never-ending kingdom (Lk. 1:32). Then, at the angels’ announcement of Yeshua’s birth to the shepherds, they identified the location as the City of David and said that the child is Messiah, the Lord (Lk. 2:11).

Sixteen times in the Gospels, Yeshua is identified as the Son of David. The Messianic expectation of the people is expressed when they asked, “Could this be the Son of David?” (Mt. 12:23) and then addressed Him as the Son of David in passages such as Matthew 15:22 and 20:30-31. As Yeshua’s followers sang Psalm 118:25-26 to Him upon His entry to Jerusalem, they inserted “to the Son of David” and called upon

Him, “*Hosheannu*, Lord save us!” (Mt. 21:14-15). Matthew quoted this phrase twice to make sure his readers recognized its glorious significance. The blind man outside of Jericho addressed Yeshua as “Son of David.” (Lk. 18:38-39; Mk. 10:47-48). Even the Gentile Canaanite woman addressed Him by this title (Mt. 15:22).

It is in the role of the Greater Son of David—born of a virgin in Bethlehem, the City of David—that Yeshua the Messiah came the first time to offer to Israel the kingdom, but His own received Him not (Jn. 1:11). They rejected Him, reviled Him, and crucified Him. Yet, He rose from the dead and ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father to await being given the throne of David (Dan. 7:13-14). In the future, the Son of Man will be given “dominion and glory and a kingdom,” and “His kingdom shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:14).

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT AND THE RESURRECTION

In his sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Peter applied the Davidic promises to the resurrection of Yeshua. The climax of his message was that God raised Messiah up from the “pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it” (Acts 2:24). Peter then quoted Psalm 16:8-11. Verse 10 is the focal point: “For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy

³ For a thorough analysis of the genealogies in Matthew and Luke, see: Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Yeshua – The Life of Messiah From a Messianic Jewish Perspective* (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2018), pp. 25-31.

⁴ Cleon L. Rogers Jr., “The Davidic Covenant in Acts—Revelation,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 151 (1994): 74.



One to see corruption.” This could not have referred to David, for he was still buried in his tomb (Acts 10:29). Peter reasoned that David understood that one of his descendants would sit on his eternal throne and rule his kingdom forever. Yeshua is this Son of David who fulfilled this part of the covenant by rising from the dead. Since Yeshua is eternal, only He can rule an eternal kingdom.

Today, Yeshua is not sitting on David's throne. Following His ascension, He sat down on His Father's throne (Rev. 3:20c) at the Father's right hand (Ps. 110:1) and thus took up a position of authority and privilege, but not the position of a king (1 Kgs. 2:19; Ps. 45:9; Mt. 20:21; Mk. 10:37; Heb. 1:13).⁴ Only when Messiah Yeshua returns will He take the throne of David and establish the kingdom.

The apostle Paul related the resurrection of Yeshua to the Davidic Covenant by quoting Isaiah 55:3: “I will make an everlasting covenant with

you—the sure mercies of David” (Acts 13:34). God was promising that when the Messiah ruled, the Israelites would receive the blessings of the covenant with David. Just as Peter had done, Paul connected that promise to Psalm 16:10. Only an eternal king could rule over an eternal kingdom. Since David had died, this could not refer to him, but since Yeshua had risen from the dead, He could fulfill the promises of God to David. Paul explained that because of the resurrection, Yeshua was now in a position to take the throne of David and establish the kingdom in the future.

In Acts 15, James applied the prophecy of Amos 9:11-12 to the future. That prophecy promised a restoration of the tent of David in a future kingdom. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, James said, “after these things,” instead of “in that day” to give the passage a future focus. The “after these things” refers to after the events of this church age dispensation

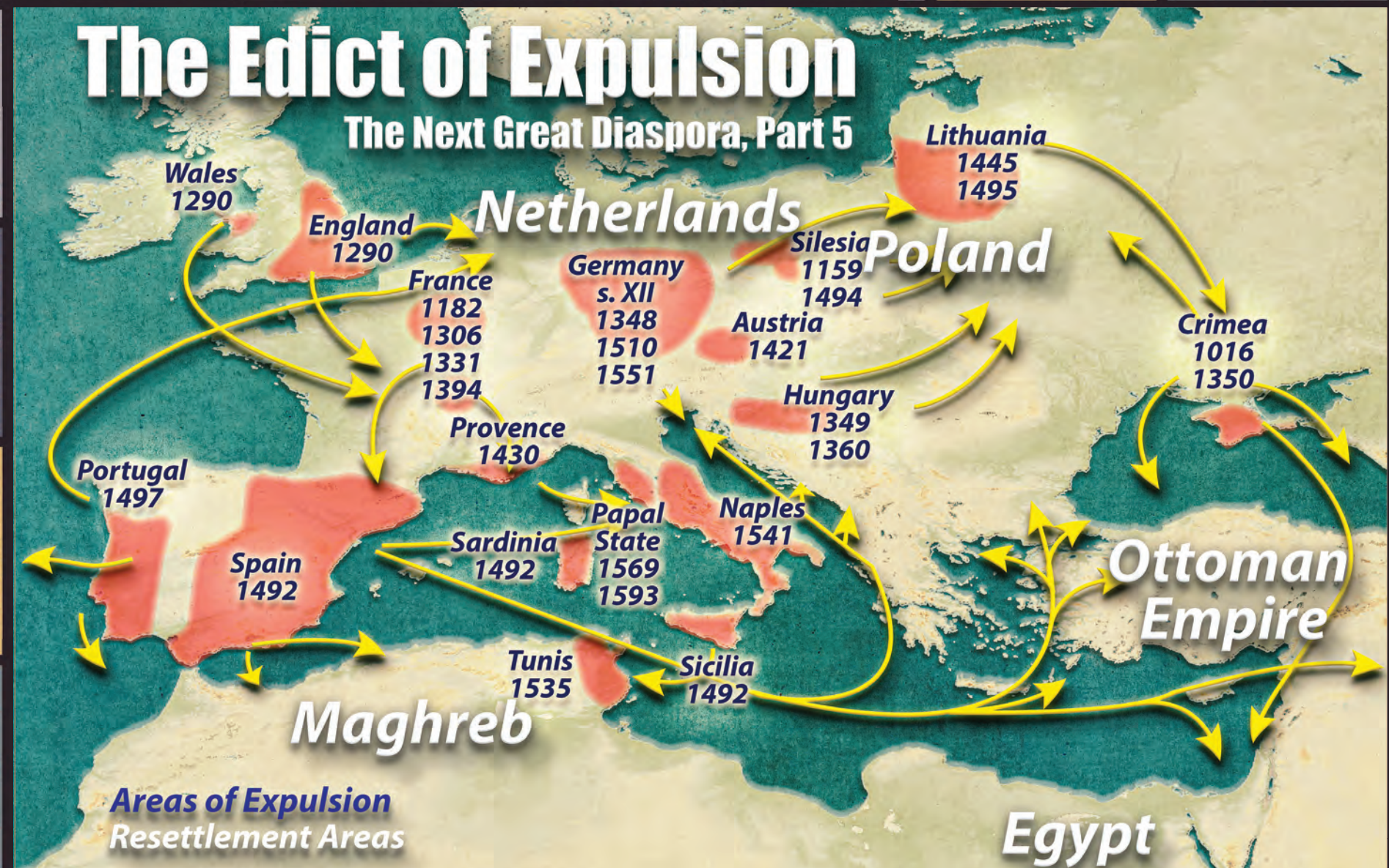
and especially the judgments on Israel in the tribulation. After the rest of mankind seeks the Lord, the Messiah will come and rebuild the tabernacle of David.

CONCLUSION

The promise to us today is that if we will receive Him, if we will trust in Him—the Messiah who takes away the sin of the world, the One whose goings forth are from eternity—believing that He died for our sins, then we will receive eternal life and become the children of God.

In the future, the Messiah of Israel will return to establish His kingdom. At that time, the remnant of Israel—all survivors of the tribulation—will turn to Him and call upon His name, and He will rescue them. At that time, He will return, establish His eternal kingdom, and sit on the now eternal throne of David in fulfillment of all God the Father promised in the covenant with David.





Expulsion of Jews (1100-1600)

This final installment of our series on the Spanish Inquisition picks up the narrative at a point in history when the Jewish people of Spain had been forced into Catholicism at the point of a blade. Judaism had become outlawed, and those who clung to their religion fell under the umbrella of the Inquisition, where they faced torture, imprisonment, and even death. Yet, even these threats did not suffice to make Spain “a pure Catholic nation,” and so only one piece remained: expelling the Jewish people.

The spoken language has yet to supply adequate words to describe the horror and injustice inflicted upon the Jewish people and their plight. What is described below is a woeful attempt to do just that. Out of compassion, many of the gruesome details will be avoided, but nonetheless, what the Jewish people experienced during the expulsion from Spain is nothing short of atrocious.

Tomás de Torquemada’s cruel, engineered plan to rid his nation of his imaginary contaminant had at long last come to fruition as the Jewish people of Spain were about to embark on the latest chapter of diaspora. This was a diaspora into the unknown, with torment and anguish lurking around every turn.

Apparently facing insurmountable pressure from religious leaders and left with no tolerable alternative, on March 31, 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella signed the Edict of Expulsion that ordered all Jewish people to leave the kingdoms of Spain or change their religion. Astonishingly, this edict remained in place until it was finally revoked in 1968. Although the edict (which runs approximately 1,600



words) does not specifically mention any reasons for the banishment, it does mention “the great damage” the Jewish people of Spain allegedly inflicted upon Christians. Despite going to great lengths throughout the centuries to keep Catholics from being influenced by the Jewish communities (such as segregation, identifying badges, and other reprehensible laws), constant communication between the Jewish people and the *conversos* was seen as a chief cause of this “damage,” leaving expulsion as the only remedy remaining. A significant portion of the edict describes the perceived “dangers” so feared by the Sovereigns:

We are informed by the Inquisitors and by many other religious persons, ecclesiastical and secular, it is evident and apparent that the great damage to the Christians has resulted from and does result from the participation, conversation, and communication that they have had with the Jews, who try to always achieve by whatever ways and means possible to subvert and to draw away faithful Christians from our holy Catholic faith and to separate them from it, and to attract and pervert them to their injurious belief and opinion, instructing them in their ceremonies and observances of the Law, holding gatherings where they read unto them and teach them what they ought to believe and observe according

to their Law, trying to circumcise them and their children, giving them books from which to read their prayers, and declaring the fasts that they ought to fast, and joining with them to read and teach them the histories of their Law; notifying them of Passover before it comes, advising them what they should observe and do for it, giving them and taking unto them the unleavened bread and the slaughtered meats with their ceremonies, . . . and persuading them as much as they can there is no other law nor truth besides it. Therefore, we, with the counsel and advice of some prelates, grandees, and cavaliers of our kingdoms and other persons of knowledge and conscience of our Council, having had much deliberation upon it, resolve to order all and said Jews and Jewesses out of our kingdoms and that they never return nor come back to any of them.¹

Although the edict was signed on March 31, 1492, it was not formally read in the Spanish kingdoms until May 1, leaving only three months for the helpless evictees to get their affairs in order. Many desperate pleas were made against the edict. Abraham Senior, a leading rabbi who was also significantly wealthy, made a financial plea to the Sovereigns on behalf of the Jewish people to persuade King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella to reverse the edict. According to legend, Torque-

mada, upon learning of the encounter, charged the meeting holding a crucifix and crying aloud, “Behold the crucified that the wicked Judas sold for thirty pieces of silver! If you approve that deed, sell Him again for a greater sum.”² Alas, all hope was lost.

Unlike the great exodus from Egypt where the Hebrews took all they could carry, this exodus was extremely restricted. The people were forbidden from carrying out of the country any gold, silver, or coined money. These items were specifically mentioned in the edict, but Ferdinand also included the phrase “nor other things prohibited in the laws of our realms.” What this meant exactly was left to the interpretation of any official, and as a result, many Jewish people were not allowed to take with them necessities to ensure their survival. Generational wealth and land had to be quickly sold off; otherwise, precious assets would be forfeited.

Great advantage was taken by the Catholics against the expelled. As the final days approached, land was purchased for pennies on the dollar or less. The market was overwhelmed with sellers who were at the mercy of unsympathetic buyers. An historian and priest of that time, Andres Bernaldez, recounts how the hapless victims were forced to sell a thriving vineyard for a handkerchief, a house for a donkey, and a workshop for a piece of linen or a loaf of bread.³ Debts owed to Jewish lenders were not paid, but anything owed by the Jewish debtor had to be paid by July 31. In order to generate some revenue, Ferdinand ordered that when Jewish property

¹ Jane S. Gerber, *The Jews of Spain: A History of the Sephardic Experience* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1992), p. 285. Original Source, Luis Suarez Fernandez, *Documentos Acerca de la Expulsion de Los Judios*.

² Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain* (London, England, Forgotten Books, 2012), Vol. I, p. 135.



was sold, the king would receive the equivalent of a full year's taxes, leaving the seller with little or nothing. Arrangements were also made to follow fleeing exiles into neighboring lands, and if any prohibited article was found on them, it would immediately be confiscated and returned to the Crown. To further the pillage, the sale of Jewish communal land such as cemeteries and synagogues was not permitted; rather, these properties were deemed Spanish land and seized by the Crown, where they were subsequently converted into Catholic churches.

The most heartless act was issued by Torquemada. He forbade any Catholic, after August 9, to have any communication with the banished or to give them food, shelter, or assistance of any kind. This pitiless act was for the purpose of eliminating any assisted sale of land the caring Catholic might conduct on behalf of the Jewish landowner post-exodus. Then Torquemada added a two-day grace period to the edict. This act extended the date of flight to August 2, which coincided with the Jewish date of the ninth of Ab, the sacred day of mourning the disasters of Jewish history.

Unrelenting Agony

Flight from their homeland was sadly only the beginning of the horrors to come for the Spanish Jews. The misery inflicted on the reluctant emigrants cannot be overstated or over-imagined. The masses sought refuge in Portugal, where they were told by King John II that they would be permitted to reside for only eight months and for a large fee.⁴ After admission into Portugal, those who



King John II of Portugal (1455-1495); painting by Veloso Salgado (1864-1945)

were unable to produce the necessary ransom for freedom were sold into slavery, often separating families in an instant. At the end of the eight months, only six hundred affluent families were allowed to remain. But after only five years, the king of Portugal demanded that they either convert to Catholicism or leave. Other refugees sought passage to the independent kingdom of Navarre, bordered by France to the north and Castile and Aragon to the south. As with Portugal, those who did find solace in Navarre were forcibly converted or forced to leave within a few short years.⁵

Other options of asylum were extremely limited. England and France had already expelled the Jewish people in centuries past and were unwilling to reverse their policies. Germany still blamed the Jewish people for the Black Death and refused to allow any to enter. Flight to

Italy was hindered by the nation's desire to keep them away, and those Spaniards who did escape to Italy overwhelmed the Jewish communities, who were unable to care for them. Therefore, most refugees became wandering vagabonds who entered into treacherous lands. Europe was no safe haven for them. Many were robbed and their wives and daughters violated. To magnify their suffering, others were ruthlessly murdered, their insides opened upon death in search of gold believed to be concealed in their stomachs.

Some Jewish refugees traveled by sea to North Africa, where many of them were murdered and thrown overboard after they were gutted and searched. Others sailed east, often drifting from port to port seeking acceptance. One account is given by a Genoese historian who saw the passengers seeking refuge in the Bay of Naples, Italy: "One might have taken them for spectres, so emaciated were they, so cadaverous in their aspect, and with eyes so sunken: they differed in nothing from the dead, except in their power of motion, which indeed they scarcely retained."⁶ Scores who did reach port were captured and sold into slavery and carried off to distant lands.

The only glimmer of hope was found in the nation of Turkey, which warmly welcomed the Spanish refugees. Sultan Beyazit II is famously quoted as saying, "How can you call Ferdinand of Aragon a wise king, the same Ferdinand who impoverished his own land and enriched ours?"⁷

³ Gerber, p. 138.

⁴ Lea, Vol I, p. 137.

⁵ Gerber, p. 139.

⁶ Gerber, p. 139.



Baptisms

Countless multitudes sought baptism rather than continue in the terrors of exile. One of the most crushing examples to those staunch in the ancestral faith was the conversion of the aforementioned Abraham Senior. The most compassionate and reasonable explanation for the rabbi's baptism is lovingly given by Haim Beinart, who believes this act was due to Senior's advanced age and financial status, adding that even in May of 1492, Abraham Senior had every intention of going into exile.⁸ Jane Gerber suggests that Senior's conversion was due to threats of death made by Isabella and her hopes that his conversion would lead to a domino effect of other converts following their mentor's lead.⁹

Proving true, the hopelessness of exile was more than many could bear, and many did follow Abraham Senior's example. It seemed reasonable to them that they seek a return to the nation they called home for a millennium, even at the expense of their faith. Consequently, a vast number sought to return to Spain and undergo conversion and baptism, but this was no easy task or guarantee now that they were considered unwelcome foreigners. The Sovereigns ordered that any returning Jewish person seeking conversion and reentry must beforehand send written word of their desire as well as substantial funds. The returnees were met at a port of entry where they paid the necessary

amount and were immediately baptized. Their baptism had to be notarized.¹⁰

The Numbers

It is impossible to calculate the number of victims of this edict. The estimations by scholars range from 160,000 to 800,000.

The rationale for the edict was a grotesque abuse of power and a senseless waste of precious life. The idea that Spain was too holy a land to be "polluted" by the presence of a Jew is enough to sicken any God-fearing person, but a more monstrous act was carried out by Pope Alexander VI in 1495, when he bestowed upon the king and queen of Spain the title of "Catholic Kings" for their expulsion of the Jewish people and their service to the faith.¹¹

A New Beginning

The decades following the expulsion created a predictable void in the nation of Spain. Spanish prosperity began to suffer without the contributions of the Jewish people. The resilient Jewish exiles who did find other lands in which to reside began to flourish once again. In the following century, many European nations began to reap the benefits of their Jewish inhabitants. The newly formed Dutch Republic became a major economic power in the seventeenth century due to the contributions made by the Jewish

people. Some Jewish exiles found new lives in England, which once again allowed Jewish habitation in the mid-seventeenth century. Still others made their way to the New World, arriving and settling at the port of New Amsterdam (modern-day New York), where they helped build a new nation.

In recent years, some recognition of the injustice has been realized by the Catholic Church. Although many Catholic leaders continue in ignorance and stubbornness, Pope John Paul II acknowledged in his Apostolic Letter (article 36)—without mentioning the Spanish Inquisition by name—that past leaders had committed a "violation of fundamental human rights by totalitarian regimes."¹²

Spain, too, has endeavored to atone for the immense suffering its nation has caused the Jewish people. In May 2011, the President of the Balearic Islands, Francesc Antich Oliver, openly recognized the grave



18th-century portrait of Sultan Beyazit II, who saved many Spanish Jews

⁷ Joseph Telushkin, *The Golden Land* (New York, NY: Harmony Books, 2002), p. 23.

⁸ Haim Beinart, *The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain* (Portland, Oregon: Oxford Press, 2002), pp. 460-461.

⁹ Gerber, p. 138.

¹⁰ Lea, Vol. I, p. 142.

¹¹ Lea, Vol. I, pp. 142-143.

¹² Pope John Paul II, "Tertio Millennio Adveniente (November 10, 1994): John Paul II." *Tertio Millennio Adveniente (November 10, 1994) | John Paul II*, Vatican, 2000, www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19941110_tertio-millennio-adveniente.html.



injustice committed against the Jewish people of Spain. Additionally, a law introduced in 2015 now allows Jews with Spanish ancestry to apply for citizenship. As many as 130,000 Sephardic exiles have applied.

In an act of gratitude for the many Jewish physicians who aided Spaniards in years past, a monument was erected in a park called *Judizmendi* in the northern Spanish city of Victoria. The land was dedicated for this purpose by the residents of Victoria shortly after the expulsion in 1492.

These acts demonstrate rightful culpability and that forgiveness is being sought.

Where We Have Been

The Catholic Church and the nation of Spain are not the only ones who need to confront the evil past of anti-Semitism. The original question I posed at the beginning of this series was, “How did our world go from persecuting and killing Jewish believers who came to faith in Messiah in the first century to now persecuting and killing Jewish people in the name of Messiah in the 21st century?”¹³

As we have discovered, Jewish hatred is without end where sinful man needs only an imaginary spark to ignite the flame of bigotry. Whether it is famine, pestilence, poverty, misfortune, or any calamity, the Jewish people are always the nearest and most convenient scapegoat—one that receives no sympathy. In the 14th and 15th centuries, Spanish jealousy of the Jewish people “justified” using the Catholic religion’s Inquisition as a weapon. While Yeshua, the Jewish

Messiah, brought freedom to the world, the medieval Catholic Church instilled fear upon the unbeliever and forced conversions upon the hated race. In doing so, it distorted the clarity of the gospel, causing irreparable harm to Jesus’ name and the Great Commission treasured by our faith. The Spanish Inquisition was bad fruit from a poisonous tree.

Where We Go

It is my prayer that we as believers in Yeshua grasp the atrocities done to the Jewish people in His name so that we can move forward in a way in which Yeshua is glorified and magnified in our lives and the lives of others. Gentile believers have a responsibility to know the wrongs of church history so that they do not repeat them and play as pawns in the continued spiritual war against the Jewish people. Although none of us today is responsible for the evils of the Spanish Inquisition, we are, however, culpable through ignorance. We should feel a sense of remorse for the actions of the past in order to better understand and appreciate what the Jewish people have experienced and continue to experience.

After more than a decade of Jewish studies and more than two years of studying the Spanish Inquisition, what I have learned has brought me sorrow and disgust for what has been done to the Jewish people in the name of Jesus. It is no wonder that many in the Jewish community are distrustful of believers. It is only through knowledge and compassion that a new approach to building

relations and trust can be achieved.

When we study history, events that were once only general knowledge become real and personal. It is my hope that these articles have removed the veneer of these historical figures and that you have appreciated and understood their humanity. They were real persons with flesh and blood, hopes and dreams, who experienced love, fear, and pain, who wanted to worship and leave better futures for their children. The evil committed during the Spanish Inquisition destroyed the physical and spiritual lives of countless Jewish generations.

With these articles, I also pray that we realize a new-found compassion for what the Jewish people have experienced and an understanding that many atrocities continue to this day. Rising up against anti-Semitism is the duty of every believer, and knowledge of this history should instill a righteous anger when we see it rear its ugly head. Anti-Semitism disgraces our faith and our Lord; it is our shameful past, but it need not be our future. Although history’s wrongs cannot be righted, a new beginning based on love and trust is desired and can be realized.



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¹³ *Ariel Magazine*, Winter 2019/Volume 1/Number 33, p. 21.



How Should We Then Live?

The craziness of 2020 has caused many believers to start asking, “How should we then live?”

Francis A. Schaeffer (1912-1984) made this a well-known question when he titled both a book and a film series this way. Schaeffer’s work inspired a generation of evangelicals to adopt a well-balanced, biblical worldview and to live out its convictions with faith and courage. Unfortunately, 2020 seems to have revealed some rather unhealthy responses to global developments, and “How should we then live?” was often answered by believers taking on extreme positions and falling for the most surprising conspiracy theories.

The following articles are intended to start a conversation about such positions. We are


not claiming to have all the answers, but we would like to encourage our readers to prayerfully consider what they believe by comparing it to God’s Word and to historical developments. One of our authors posed a new question and asked, “What if one conspiracy theory were to prove to be more than a theory? How does this affect my personal walk with the Lord?” Another important set of questions is, “What is my personal calling? How should I live out this calling in times like these?”

We pray that our articles provide food for thought and encourage you to define what “How should we then live?” means to you.

THE JEW AS ENEMY

Controlled Anti-Semitism in the Weimar Republic¹

By Michael Kotsch



The deadly anti-Semitism of the German National Socialists did not come out of the blue. On the one hand, there were the centuries-old prejudices against the Jewish people in Europe. Because they were easily recognizable as an independent people group, the Jews often became scapegoats in difficult times. On the other hand, in the 19th century, numerous European states developed a pronounced nationalism. Such a strong group identity requires a firmly defined external image from which it is then possible to easily distance oneself. Apart from neighboring nations, Jews were particularly suited to serve as such an enemy image.



After the defeat of the German Empire in World War I in 1918, the Weimar Republic was created in Germany. Politically, it was not a stable government. The lost war, the international isolation, the immense reparation payments, and the global economic crisis of the 1920s significantly limited the government's options for action. Many Germans mourned the loss of the empire and of national pride. During this period, communists and nationalists in particular fought for power in German cities. An important propagandistic move of the National Socialists was the defamation of established media, which was paired with the offer of alternative interpretations of history and politics in their own publications. Increasingly, "the Jews" were declared the central enemy of the Germans.

FUSION OF ENEMIES

During the period of the Weimar Republic, some politically interested Jews organized themselves into liberal and socialist parties. However, only slightly more than forty out of a total of 1,795 members of parliament between 1919 and 1933 were of Jewish origin. The increasing numbers of nationalistic and National Socialist members of parliament in the German Reichstag in the 1920s led to an increase in anti-Semitic statements made by politicians publicly. Jews were regularly blamed for social problems and for real or alleged misguided political developments.

In the election campaigns of 1919 and 1920, revolutionaries were called

"Jewish Bolsheviks," and the press as well as many politicians warned of an alleged "Jewish supremacy." The Treaty of Versailles, which was quite



Realizing the power of pictures, Nazi propagandists used photography as a tool of manipulation. Above, Hitler is seen during the Berlin Motor Show of 1935. He was presented as "the protector of the car industry."

disadvantageous for Germany, was portrayed as being the result of a global Jewish conspiracy. The Weimar Constitution was criticized as having been drafted by "the Jew" Hugo Preuss. In fact, the German democracy was claimed to be nothing but "a Jewish republic." When the Independent Social Democrats stood up for Jews persecuted in Poland and the Soviet Union, they were openly chastised for it by people such as Protestant theologian Reinhold Mumm from the German National People's Party (DNVP). Among other things, they were accused of having invented the pogroms only to be able to bring as many Jewish foreigners as possible to Germany.

In debates over German reparation payments, moderate politicians were defamed by nationalist members of parliament as agents of the "Jewish high finance from Wall Street." Frequently, when a politician defended treaties made with foreign countries, individual members of parliament loudly shouted "Jew" into the plenary hall. To the right-wing extremists, the German Democratic Party (DDP) in particular was regarded as the epitome of an entity that supported and defended the detested republic; it was ostensibly full of Jews.

In 1929, Ernst Graf zu Reventlow (NSDAP) sat in parliament and longed for the end of the republic under "Jewish leadership." He then demanded that the Jews be made recognizable so that they could be better distinguished and separated from other Germans. In the early 1930s, the DNVP advocated for the expulsion and deprivation of rights of German Jews. When Fritz Löwenthal, a delegate of the Communist party, accused the NSDAP of its defamatory policies and involvement in violent riots, he was dismissed with statements such as, "You with your crooked nose! Impertinent Jew-boy!" and "Jew-boy out!"

Over the years, the National Socialists created a very effective fusion of different enemy images that were difficult for the public to unravel. Instead of many different and sometimes competing dangers, only one single enemy of the German people was propagated. Based on the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," a narrative

¹ This article was translated from German into English by Christiane Jurik. Please contact Ariel's Publishing Department (editorarielministries@gmail.com) for the author's numerous sources and extensive bibliographic data.



was developed according to which a secret Jewish government was making use of American industrialists, stock exchange traders, communists, socialists, and freemasons to take over the world. Those who spread this conspiracy theory took advantage of the indoctrination that had started in the 1920s, and they claimed that behind all of these groups was the same deadly enemy: the Jew. There was, of course, no evidence for this theory, especially since the freemasons wanted nothing to do with communists and the Jews were brutally persecuted in the Socialist Soviet Union. In the end, however, this unlikely theory prevailed in the minds of many people, not because of its good arguments, but because it was repeated over and over again and because it was so seductively simple. Every personal, economic, and political threat could be explained in this way, apparently to the satisfaction of a broad audience.

LÜGENPRESSE

Alfred Rosenberg was the most important propagandist and ideologist of the National Socialists in the 1920s. He contributed to a newspaper called *Völkischer Beobachter* (*Nationalist Observer*) and during his work there coined an expression that would have an immense impact on the spread of Nazi ideology. The term was *Lügenpresse*, which may be translated as “lying press.” In an aggressive campaign that started in 1921, Rosenberg attacked the German government for its course to try to work with former wartime enemies. He especially targeted the Jewish politician Walther Rathenau, who would eventually become the Secretary of State of

the Republic. Because of their pragmatic policies, Rathenau and other members of parliament were portrayed as “vicarious agents” of Germany’s enemies who were spreading lies and false news to the detriment of the general population. Rosenberg said that nothing else could be expected from a “Jew.” The established media that reported on the real political situation was repeatedly and sweepingly defamed as *Lügenpresse* organized by the governing parties. Allegedly, these politicians and their media no longer reflected the will of the German people. In the name of the “German people,” Rosenberg then presented his Nazi propaganda. The fact that reality often looked different and that Rosenberg mostly spoke not “in the name of the people” but rather in the name of a nationalist minority did not change anything about the success of this strategy. In fact, Rosenberg’s aggressive reporting was so successful that Rathenau was murdered in 1922 by two nationalistic students.

In the year of Rathenau’s assassination, Adolf Hitler began collectively criticizing all leftist newspapers as *Lügenpresse*. He claimed that with their reporting during World War I, Jewish liberals had decisively weakened the German will to fight. According to Hitler, the media were not supposed to be committed to the truth but to the political goal of “the people.” He demanded that the press align itself to “psychological effectiveness” and not to the most reliable reproduction of reality.

In 1933, when the press reported attacks on Jewish people, the National Socialist politician Hermann Göring also spoke of the *Lügenpresse* and

said that such reports were based on lies. Even when acts of violence, such as the destruction of Jewish stores and the desecration of synagogues and Jewish cemeteries, were very obvious and verifiable, Göring denied them as propaganda of the “Jewish-Marxist *Lügenpresse*.” In the course of time, the term *Lügenpresse* was used interchangeably with the likewise negatively charged term “Jewish press.”

Hitler saw in “the Jew” the “blood poisoner” of the German people, whose goal was to weaken the more viable Aryan race by intermarriage. For Joseph Goebbels, a Nazi politician and later Reich Minister of Propaganda, “the Jew” was an incorri-



Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946) was the chief ideologist of the Nazis in the 1920s and coined the expression *Lügenpresse* (“lying press”).

gible worshiper of money willing to harm his people as long as it served his private advantage. In Goebbels’ speeches, “the Jew” was always negative and “the Aryan” only positive. Goebbels claimed that the Germans had become a subjugated nation of slaves who would be paying interest to foreign Jews for eternity. Therefore,



they had to free themselves from this slavery. With this remark, Goebbels sweepingly declared Germany's enemies of World War I to be Jews.

Once all free media had been banned or politically assimilated in Nazi Germany, foreign journalists were regularly called "hate press" or "lying press." One example is when French journalists drew attention to the military expansion plans of the Nazis. It was promptly spread that 90 percent of all Paris newspapers were under "Jewish influence" and that the newspaper editorial offices were made up of "over 70 percent" Jews. It was suggested that such media should not be believed.

DEHUMANIZATION

In the 1920s, many Germans still exhibited empathy for the Jews, who were increasingly discriminated against. In order to dampen this empathy, a method of dehumanizing Jewish people was introduced. The Jews were regularly depicted with a scornful grin on their faces. They were portrayed as ugly old men who were stalking young pretty girls. There were also caricatures of courts whose presiding judges were fat, greedy bankers. These images were intended to arouse anger and disgust and create distance. "One need not feel pity for such people" was conveyed in this way. With thousands of repetitions in the media, it soon no longer mattered that these caricatures had little to do with the Jews living next door.

In the next phase of the representation, Jews lost all resemblance to human beings. They were portrayed as secret and evil world rulers. In association with the Genesis account of the fall of man, "the Jew" was depicted as

a hypocritical and dangerous snake, often adorned with a typical Jewish symbol such as the Star of David. Another favorite depiction was "the Jew" as a giant spider trying to entangle peaceful Germans or the entire world in its web. Especially popular was the image of a giant octopus sitting on the globe and possessively embracing the world with its arms. This was a catchy symbol for the alleged Jewish world domination. More rarely, "the Jew" was also portrayed as a vampire who fed on the blood of the simple German citizen. Constantly bombarded with such images, even the most empathetic person no longer felt pity for Jews who were discriminated against because Jews were now perceived as a subliminal threat and as human animals.

ANTI-SEMITIC PRESS

Dietrich Eckart published a weekly anti-Semitic newspaper called *Auf gut deutsch* ("In good German"). Gottfried Feder and the aforementioned Alfred Rosenberg also contributed to this publication. In his articles, Eckart regularly criticized the Weimar Republic and propagated racist anti-Bolshevism and anti-Semitism. Again and again, he called for the end of "interest bondage" and "system parties" and the prohibition of racially mixed marriages. In the process, Eckart coined the slogan "*Deutschland erwache*" ("Germany awaken"), which was later adopted by the Nazis. Eckart's newspaper reported positively on the assassination of Matthias Erzbergers, the treasury secretary of the Weimar Republic, who was called a liberal. Later Eckart became the editor-in-chief of the NSDAP party or-

gan, *Völkischer Beobachter* ("Nationalist Observer").

A large readership was reached by the weekly newspaper *Der Stürmer*



Der Stürmer ("The Attacker") was a weekly German newspaper published from 1923 to the end of World War II by Julius Streicher. The paper offered alternative interpretations of history and politics to those who had become suspicious of the established press.

("The Stormer/Attacker"), founded in 1923 by Julius Streicher. Particularly popular were heavily exaggerated stories of sexual misconduct. In almost every issue, there were detailed reports on rape, trafficking of girls, and similar crimes, which were generally attributed to the Jews. For a long time, the journalists of *Der Stürmer* complained about the Jewishness of Berlin. Indeed, 30% of all German Jews did live in this city. In the 1920s and early 1930s, Berlin had a flourishing avant-garde art scene and culture. Because avant-garde was devalued by conservative cultural critics as being "un-German," "decadent," and a "typical Jewish product," Berlin was described as the "bubo of the Reich." Writers such as Lion Feuchtwanger, Kurt Tucholsky, Erich Mühsam, Ernst Toller, and Alfred Döblin were regarded as Jewish and as representatives of a destructive intellectualism. In



response to this ostensibly “degenerate art,” Alfred Rosenberg wrote and published his highly anti-Semitic books *The Trace of the Jews in the Course of Time* (1919) and *The Crime of Freemasonry: Judaism, Jesuitism, German Christianity* (1921).

However, the National Socialists did not limit themselves to print products. From 1927 onward, the NSDAP produced propaganda and entertainment films that were particularly suitable for conveying political content. Early on, Hitler noted that pictures and emotionally charged stories could influence people much more easily than books and newspapers, which appealed more to the intellect. Moviegoers identified very easily with “the German heroes” and detested “the evil Jewish creeps.”

When they came to power in 1933, the Nazis also took advantage of radio, which was another fairly new platform that could be used to spread propaganda. In addition to pure entertainment, political content was regularly broadcast, and current events were interpreted from the party’s point of view. At that time, Jews were already prohibited from working in the media.

In the 1920s, Hitler had stressed the importance of using exaggerations when presenting news, as they left a more lasting impression on the listeners or readers. Black and white statements were understood as being preferred to more subtle nuances, and he also introduced the method of reinterpreting religious terms for one’s own purposes. Furthermore, he was convinced that as long as the criticism of one’s political opponents (such as Jews, liberals, and Communists) was repeated often enough, the people

would eventually believe it regardless of how far-fetched it was.

Nazi journalism was not so much about correctly describing reality as it was about discrediting politics in general and stirring up dissatisfaction with current politicians and the current social situation. In the challenging years of the post-war period and the



This campaign ad from 1920 was created by the conservative Christian Social Party of Vienna, Austria. The text says: “German Christians save Austria!” The poster depicts the dehumanization of the Jewish people.

world economic crisis, this was an easy task. Particularly effective was the exaggerated presentation of scandals, which were presented as typical of the rejected “system” and the “incapable Republic.” The boundaries of decency and common sense were overstepped so often that many people became accustomed to hearing arbitrary claims and outrageous insults. The loud and sometimes even shrill tones of the Nazi propagandists led many people to trust the party because this party seemed to be the only one that was free of scandals. Furthermore, it seemed to be the only political organization that recognized the alleged dangers for Germany and that was willing to fight the threats with

a tough approach.

There were publishers who tried to fight the ever-increasing spread of anti-Semitism in Hitler’s Germany. One was the Jewish *Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* (“Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith”), and the other one was the interdenominational *Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus* (“Association for the Fight against Anti-Semitism”). But neither their factual statements nor their articles that critically dealt with Nazi ideology in newspapers such as *Freie Meinung* (“Free Opinion”) were met with great response.

WARNING FOR TODAY

Unfortunately, all over the world, we witness developments in the media and in politics that are comparable to what happened during the Weimar Republic. Believers should recognize this danger and meet any tendency of ideologization with truthfulness and credibility. However, even today, such attempts often generate less enthusiasm than simple and catchy slogans that present a convenient scapegoat who can be blamed for all problems. Therefore, it is important for believers to study history and learn from it.



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How Should Believers Respond to Conspiracy Theories?

We live in an age of conspiracy theories, of which there is seemingly an inexhaustible supply. A conspiracy theory has been defined as “an attempt to explain harmful or tragic events as the result of the actions of a small, powerful group. Such explanations reject the accepted narrative surrounding those events; indeed, the official version may be seen as further proof of the conspiracy.”¹ A *Christianity Today* article put it this way: “A conspiracy theory is generally just a grand explanation that is essentially trying to identify various pieces that don’t look like they fit together, but they do. And this is all done to explain some phenomena that we’re experiencing.”² Some of the more well-known conspiracy theories surround things like the assassination of John F. Kennedy, chemtrails, Freemasonry and the Illuminati, UFOs, the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the Deep State, and of course, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic.

The purpose of this article is not to debate the relative merits of any of these conspiracy theories,

but rather it is to focus on one that is having a negative impact on the church perhaps more than any other in recent memory: QAnon. While there are many skeptics who doubt that much, if anything, related to QAnon is based in reality, a dramatically growing number of people range from believing parts of it might be true to fully embracing every aspect of it and building on it with their own theories and speculations.

QAnon has been explained as “the umbrella term for a sprawling set of internet conspiracy theories that allege, falsely, that the world is run by a cabal of Satan-worshiping pedophiles who are plotting against Mr. Trump while operating a global child sex-trafficking ring.”³ According to the article, QAnon followers believe that these pedophiles include politicians such as Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey and Tom Hanks, and religious figures such as Pope Francis and the Dalai Lama.



How It All Started

In October 2017, an anonymous user put a series of posts on the mostly anonymous message board *4Chan*. The user signed off as "Q" and claimed to have a level of U.S. security approval known as "Q clearance." Apparently, this refers to a Department of Energy security clearance needed to access top secret information on nuclear weapons and materials. These messages have continued and are known as "Q drops" or "breadcrumbs." The person (or group of people) writing the messages uses cryptic language that includes slogans, pledges, and references to the "Deep State" that is out to destroy President Trump. The "Anon" in QAnon stands for "anonymous," and so Q's followers are called "Anons." A catch phrase that is frequently used by these followers as a sort of a signal is "WWG1-WGA"—"Where we go one, we go all"—meaning that Q followers are in this together.

On October 28, 2017, someone who identified himself as "Q Clearance Patriot" started a thread titled "Calm Before the Storm," referring to a meeting of military leaders that President Trump had said was "the calm before the storm." *The Storm* is a QAnon term referring to what adherents believe is the upcoming arrest, imprisonment, and even execution of

thousands of suspects, including those in government who are part of the Deep State.

An August 2018 *Washington Post* article referred to Q as a renegade informant who might not even exist. The text goes on to state: "From somewhere in the vast and mysterious 'deep state,' a dissident agent rises up to give the people cryptic clues about how their heroic president will push back the forces of evil and make America great again."⁴ The author later notes, "Whether Q is an individual, a group, a spoof, or an exercise in political mischief-making, the QAnon phenomenon fits neatly into centuries of the history of movements that construct elaborate conspiratorial explanations of why the world is in such trouble and how it might triumph—or collapse."⁵

Some Anons have suggested that Q is President Trump himself or that he is JFK Jr., who faked his death and will come back on the scene. These and other speculations by the followers of Q play into the distrust of politicians, big government, and the rich and powerful.

Another plausible account of Q's origin, as reported by *The Federalist*, is that it was originally a hoax created "as a harmless troll to 'get people thinking' [that] quickly spun into a mythical persona whose cryptic words developed into a full-fledged conspiratorial worldview for a growing audience."⁶ According to this scenario, two

individuals going by the handles "Microchip" and "Dreamcatcher" admitted to researching and developing a list of various topics that would get a reaction from committed Trump supporters. Then "Q 'researchers' [would] work these suggestive questions and fringe ideas into more complete ideas, filling in the gaps with their imaginations and thoughts from other conspiracy theorists."⁷

Did Any of Q's Predictions Come True?

Q's first posts wrongly predicted Hillary Clinton's imminent arrest. He has also claimed that North Korea's Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un is a CIA puppet and that the former DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz hired a hitman to kill Seth Rich. There are further claims that mass shootings in the U.S. have been false-flag attacks planned by the international cabal. Furthermore, QAnon adherents believe that Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, George Soros, and others are plotting a coup and that they are also members of a child trafficking ring that has been exposed by something called "Pizza-Gate." Another common theme is that the Rothschild family leads a satanic cult. This last issue, along with others involving Jews like the Bilderberg group, have led some to

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/conspiracy-theory> (accessed on 11/20/2020).

² <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2020/may-web-only/conspiracy-theories-qanon-bible-christians-jesus.html> (accessed on 11/20/2020).

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-qanon.html> (accessed on 11/20/2020).

⁴ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/the-mystery-of-q-how-an-anonymous-conspiracy-monger-launched-a-movement-if-he-even-exists/2018/08/01/> (accessed on 11/20/2020).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ https://thefederalist.com/2018/10/29/trolling-fleecing-co-creator-q-hoax-explains-dangerous-evolution/?fbclid=IwAR1MLtbV1u5am3pHDZb-lu0f80SBowN0MUHKBQWV_28knk14CF7sUUIGx8g (accessed on 1/12/21)

⁷ Ibid.



charge QAnon with anti-Semitism. One of the reasons that QAnon is so dangerous is that there is just enough truth to the messages to pull people in so that they then accept the many errors it espouses. However, few QAnon proponents actually research the drops, and the average follower is neither equipped nor inclined to fact-check all the details. Also, there is such a “wow-factor” to the claims made by QAnon that many just take them at face value.

This is similar to what has happened with *The Harbinger* and other books by Jonathan Cahn. Many of his readers got pulled in because they failed to do the necessary research. However, when I did my own research into Cahn’s theories, I found that he had mishandled the Word of God, misrepresented historical facts, and manipulated statistical data. My guess is that similar deep research into QAnon would yield similar results.

QAnon and the Church

Unfortunately, QAnon has gained traction even with believers. Some of them suggest that developments such as President Trump’s impeachment and Jeffrey Epstein’s death are leading to a climax that includes *The Storm* and something called *The Great Awakening*.

In an article titled “The Evangelicals Who Are Taking On QAnon,” the writer observed, “One thing we can say about Q is that he, she or they are highly unoriginal, mining conspiracy theories as ancient as the anti-Semitic blood libel.” She went on to say, “If

you’ve been around the corners of evangelical America as I have, it’s apparent that Q is at least a student of, and perhaps an adherent of, the conspiracies that have long permeated conservative evangelical culture.”

One of the most dangerous things I have read in my research regarding the conspiracy theory is the book *QAnon and 1000 Years of Peace*. The author (known as *Redpill*, referencing *The Matrix* movie) believes that President Trump is part of QAnon’s *Great Awakening* and talks about a *Freedom Force Battalion* and a *Q Army* that is going to destroy all global evil in order to establish Messiah’s kingdom. This book is essentially a commentary on the book of Revelation in light of QAnon, and the author shamelessly allegorizes literally every single biblical detail. Unfortunately, she represents a growing faction that interprets the Bible through the lens of QAnon conspiracy theories, often mixing biblical concepts with New Age and occultic ideas. Consequently, cult watchers are keeping their eyes on QAnon because some adherents are becoming quite militant in these cultic beliefs, and even some otherwise discerning believers are getting caught up in it as well.

I think one reason some believers get caught up in conspiracy theories is that certain recent developments really are strange and difficult to explain. Of course, because of biblical prophecy, we know this is all going somewhere as the stage is set for the rise of the Antichrist and his global religion and government. We all tend to hate living with uncertainty, so if a theory seems to provide explanations or even just raises questions, then some latch on to those ideas, even to the point of ignoring obvious problems.

The Believer’s Response

As believers, we need to be very careful not to fall into the trap of trying to interpret the Bible in light of current events. We are to make sense of our world by handling the Word of God correctly as our final authority.

Another way to stay balanced is to ask ourselves the “So what?” question. Even if a given conspiracy theory were true, what difference would it make in my day-to-day life? Would it or should it change my life and ministry? In almost all cases, such theories, if proven true, would not change anything, so we need to trust the Lord for how this is all going to work out and stay faithful to Him in the meantime as we minister to others.



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Being Careful about Conspiracy Theories

By Dr. Darrell Bock

One of the things that having a vibrant eschatology can mean is that believers are to be watchful for the possibility that Messiah Jesus may return at any time. In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus called us to be looking for His return (Mk. 13:33-37). We should be alert for His return. Yet, there is a more challenging side to this call. There exists a tendency to think one can spot the return's coming more specifically. One should be careful about this hope getting too specific, especially when it is built around conspiracy theories and issues tied to one-world organizations. When the disciples asked Jesus in Acts 1:6 if this was the time when the kingdom would be restored to Israel, He replied that this was the Father's business and was not for them to know. If the apostles could not know it, it is likely neither can we. In the mean-

time, the call of the disciples was to be witnesses for the gospel. Our call is the same.

Keeping the balance between these teachings about alertness and yet not knowing specifics is important because too many believers are drawn into speculations that may have nothing to do with God's plan and may not be true. The result is undercutting the call Jesus gave us: to be His witnesses and to pursue the truth.

I wish to consider three reasons one should exercise care in looking for and predicting about the end, especially when it comes to conspiracy theories.

The History of Prediction on these Conspiracy Theories Is Poor. It Impacts Our Credibility.

I remember in the 1960s as I was growing up, the conspiracy of the day was the Trilateral Commission. Sometime after that, the one-world government was identified as being the then ten-nation European Union. If you go back in history on the predictions about who is the Antichrist, the list is long and so far completely wrong. It runs back for centuries with numerous suggestions. If such predictions were a batting average, it would be 0.000.

This history should give us pause about being able to figure out the specifics. The Scripture's call is to be faithful and alert, but we also should be very careful about predictions that have a history of being wrong. When we make such predictions over time and they consistently turn out to be wrong (and some people know that history), we undercut our credibility on other issues that we care about—like sharing the gospel.



Vetting Is Important Given the Amount of Disinformation that Circulates.

There is much disinformation around. We all know this. Information should not be believed simply because it appears on the internet or reinforces what we already think. People seeking to divide us place such disinformation before us. Their goal is to further those divisions by deflecting us and gaining our attention. Often, they play off of what many already believe. This means we have to be discerning about the information that is out there and check out its credibility.

One of the most recent conspiracy sources is QAnon. It is structured in such a way that checking it out is problematic. It is said to originate from an intelligence source inside the government, but gaining access to real intelligence in order to check out QAnon's claims is hard because that access is so restricted. Moreover, a person with genuine intelligence clearance is not supposed to be sharing this intelligence in a public way. This fact alone makes me skeptical that this source claim is genuine. If the person or the people behind QAnon had the access they claim to possess, the intelligence community would be shutting them down, especially if this community is as configured and as hostile as the source claims. Everything about this is suspicious. The source and most of its claims can simply not be checked.

If this is the case, then what is circulated is quite likely not correct nor a reflection of reality, but is posted simply to promote a cause regardless of the facts.

The Result: We Undercut Our Credibility for the Things that Matter Most.

So what is the impact of spreading theories that (1) may not be true and (2) are actually hard to trace down as accurate? The impact is multiple.

First, if we are spreading things we do not know are true and likely are wrong, we risk engaging in slander. These theories often attribute things to people about their motives and intentions. If they are not so, then by sharing these things on social media or the Internet, we have contributed to the damaging of someone's reputation. This is not only libelous, but also not Christ-like. Therefore, such widespread claims should be handled with care, as spreading them without actually checking things out damages not only others but us.

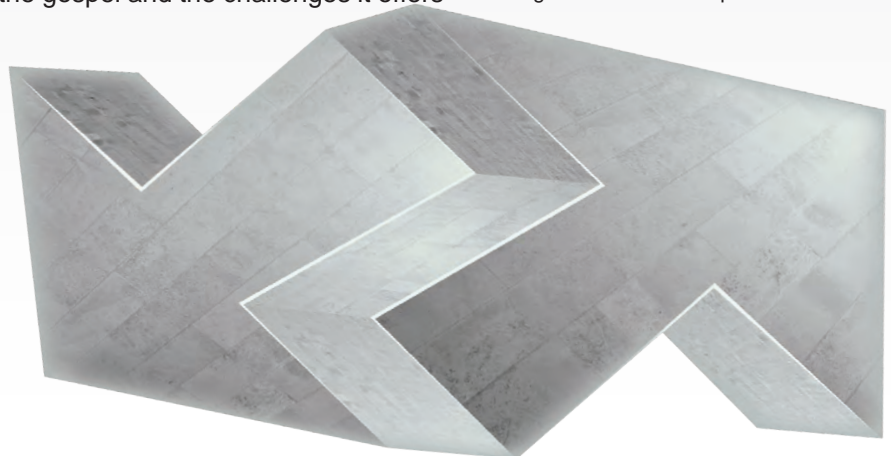
Second, a result is that our credibility is at risk. As believers, our credibility is extremely important to protect because we claim to call others to God's truth. The thing that matters the most is the gospel. If we prove to be less than credible in allegations we circulate and share, then how can we expect to be believed when we share the gospel and the challenges it offers

to people about the need to acknowledge sin paid for by the Savior?

Third, the result of engaging in speculation ourselves is that other things we share will also be seen as speculative. That is not a category into which the gospel should fall. This is why embracing conspiracies, much less spreading information about them, is problematic. In the end, it can undercut what we care about reflecting most: God's care for the world as expressed in the gospel.

So, how do we stay alert before Jesus comes as Scripture calls us to do? Luke 12:35-37 tells us. It is to live faithfully before the Lord in the meantime. The servant the Lord blesses is the one "whom his master finds at work when he returns" (Luke 12:43). We honor God not by speculating about things we may not really know, but by being the people of God He has asked us to be. We do this in part by being careful about what we hear, see, and spread about conspiracies because if we are wrong about conspiracies, we risk being seen as wrong on the things that matter most.

Dr. Darrell Bock is Senior Research Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary and the author of over forty books. He serves on the boards of Wheaton College and Chosen People Ministries.





Ancient Jewish Wisdom About Covid-19 and Us

By Mottel Baleston

As a new believer in Messiah many years ago, I enrolled in a class held at the local Jewish community center and designed for adults to improve their fluency in Hebrew reading and speaking. My goal was to be better able to read the original Hebrew text of the Scriptures and communicate my faith in Yeshua. The rabbi who was our instructor used a mix of reading, conversation, and Hebrew songs to improve our fluency. The song we sang most was “Kol Ha’Olam Kulo.” Well known in Jewish circles, this song is adapted from an old Hasidic melody with the Hebrew words written by the famous Rabbi Nachman of Breslov.

The Hebrew sounds this way: *Kol ha’olam kulo, Gesher tzar me’od. Veha’ikar lo lifached k’la.* Translated, it means: “The whole world, its entirety, is a very narrow bridge, and the most important thing is to have no fear at all.” The idea is that the world we traverse in life can be a scary place at times.

If you traverse a narrow bridge and allow yourself to gaze over the side, you can become paralyzed. You freeze; your legs quake. So, too, it is with this life. If we overthink the journey our Lord has set us on, we can become paralyzed by possibilities that never occur and get thrown off the course that God most desires for us.

The past year of 2020 brought us a pandemic that has killed over 1.5 million people worldwide so far and from which we have seldom gotten a break. The news media and local officials sounded alarming and ominous warnings. Terrorism continued in many parts of the globe. The United States saw much racial division, strife, rioting and urban destruction under the banner of various causes as well as the ugliest presidential election in memory, one that tore apart communities and even divided families. New threats against our religious liberties appeared regularly, and the values that formed our society were being discarded by many with little thought about



what would replace them. For many believers, one of the worst parts of these developments was the separation from extended families and the fact that many churches and congregations of believers stopped meeting in person in areas where the pandemic was severe.

For some, the greatest difficulty was that the COVID-19 shutdown removed us from the human structures that define our identities.

If that was true for you, it certainly is understandable. Our pre-COVID lives were taken up with families, jobs, responsibilities, and our connections with the community of believers. Those activities have become our identity. But if you really think about it, while those activities are important, they are not how God views us. The apostle John says of us, “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are” (1 Jn. 3:1). Friends, our primary identity in God’s sight—again *primary*—is that we are his daughters and sons. Forever. Please, read that again.

Did this change as a result of COVID-19? Did the temporary restrictions on the number of people inside church sanctuaries in some areas cause us to lose our identity as His children? Of course not! That’s why it is so important to keep reminding ourselves of basic biblical truths: The God who created our universe also gave us His Word to guide us and sent His Son the Messiah. He HAS (past tense and continuing) brought us into His family forever: “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things

present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39).

The Hebrew psalmist reminds us:

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.” (Ps. 46:1-3)

“A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand; But it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the result of the wicked. Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; for He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up.” (Ps. 91:7-16)

We who have seen the fulfillment of the arrival of the promised Messiah and who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit have an even better position than the Old Testament psalmist from which to appreciate the care of God for us and our position in Him. We have the very words of Messiah Himself: “In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, for I have overcome the world” (Jn. 16:33).

Get Going and Do Good Works!


As our world slowly tries to shake itself of the COVID-19 plague, how should we then live? First, we are to be secure in our primary identity as the children of God. Our eternity is secure with Him, for that is our family identity. Second, we are not to cower in fear. Certainly, we should make wise preparations and understand the times, but we should also take advantage of the opportunity to do what Messiah has commanded us: “For we are his workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). Get going and do the good works that God invites us to do: help a neighbor; be an example of what it means to live a Messiah-centered lifestyle; and encourage, support, and pray for those in leadership of our congregations. All these things will bear eternal fruit.

So, back to the narrow bridge illustration we began with. We do have a path to walk. Sometimes, that path is easy and carefree. Currently, it is narrow and fraught with potential dangers. Do we dwell on that which is ninety-nine percent likely to not happen? How foolish! Instead of looking over the side and becoming paralyzed with fear, we follow these words:

“Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith . . . dwell upon Him . . . so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.” (Heb. 12:1-3)



HOW TO COMBAT FALSE TEACHING



The church has been dealing with the rise of false teachers for millennia. Modern-day examples of this phenomenon include false prophets such as Paula White and the rapidly spreading New Apostolic Reformation (NAR). How do believers recognize false teachers? How can they combat heresies?



A false teacher can inflict confusion on millions of lives. Therefore, followers of Yeshua must know how to identify and deal with false teachers, especially those in our local congregations. In 1 Timothy 6:3-5, Rabbi Shaul (the apostle Paul) outlined three key indicators of a false teacher:

If anyone advocates a *different doctrine* and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is *conceited* and *understands nothing*; but he has a *morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words*, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and *constant friction* between men of *depraved* mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of *gain*.¹

Rabbi Shaul encourages believers to look for three points in a teacher:

1. Examine the teacher's doctrine carefully and thoroughly to see if it is biblically sound. A "new discovery" that has been hidden from all previous teachers often indicates a false teacher.

2. Watch for the character qualities that expose a false teacher: conceit, lack of understanding, a tendency to stir up conflict, depravity, love of money, and a perverse interest in controversy or disputes.

3. Note the teacher's effect upon the local congregation. Do you see envy, strife, abusive talk, or suspicions?

When believers witness lack of character, unsound doctrine, and negative effects on a congregation, they can be

sure that there is a false teacher in their midst. They are to carefully and prayerfully respond in accordance with Scripture.

RESPONSE TO FALSE TEACHING

There are four things the church can do in response to false teachers.

1. Study, Study, Study

The first line of defense against false teaching is to immerse oneself in Scripture. When believers are drenched in truth, the false will become apparent. God designed the Bible to be our daily guide: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105; 19:8; 43:3; Prov. 6:28).

2. Prohibit False Teaching

Rabbi Shaul encountered many false teachers in the early church and wrote to Timothy and Titus with specific instructions for dealing with such people. In 1 Timothy 1:3-4, he wrote:

As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may *instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies*, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.

Rabbi Shaul's word "instruct" is a command and means "to *announce* what must be done."² In other words, Timothy was to prohibit all false teaching. According to Matthew 18:15, believers are to initially confront a false

teacher lovingly, privately, and one-on-one.

3. Expose False Teaching

If the false teacher refuses to listen to the private conversation, the next step is to expose his or her error to the church. Rabbi Shaul discusses apostasy and false teaching in 1 Timothy 4:1-5 and ends by stating in verse 6, "*In pointing out these things to the brethren*, you will be a good servant of Messiah Yeshua, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine, which you have been following." The word translated "pointing out" means "*instruction* as to what should be done."³ This step of informing the church about the false teacher is consistent with Yeshua's teaching in Matthew 18:16-17a: "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church."

4. Refute False Teaching

As he discusses the qualifications of church leadership, Rabbi Shaul states in Titus 1:9 that leaders must hold fast "the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to *refute those who contradict*." This step of refuting a false teacher mirrors Yeshua's words in Matthew 18:17b: "And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." At this point, the church is to courteously remove the unrepentant false teacher from the life of the local congregation.

The stakes are high. If a congregation fails to deal with a false teacher in a biblical manner, his teaching can potentially destroy an untold number of lives.

¹ All Scripture references in this article are quoted from the NASB with emphasis added.

² J. P. Louw, E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1996), electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 425.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 413.



Jewish Suffering, God, and the Christian Community

By Olivier Melnick

“And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

Gen. 12:3

This edition of the *Ariel Magazine* asks the question how believers should live in an increasingly hostile and difficult world. Olivier Melnick reminds us that taking care of the Jewish people and sharing the good news of Messiah Jesus with them is one biblical mandate that never falls out of season.

Jewish suffering is not a new concept. While it is true that anti-Semitism hasn't remained the same over the centuries and has morphed from theological anti-Judaism in theory to racial anti-Semitism in practice, it is still a tragic witness of Jewish suffering. An unfortunate factor in this suffering has been the wrong interpretation of the Scriptures as they pertain to Israel. It has led to an exponential increase in hatred of the Jewish people and the passing of many anti-Jewish laws. But what does the Bible really say about Israel, the Jewish people, and their relationship to believers in the Jewish Messiah?

The foundational Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3) establishes a biblical mandate for the world's relationship with Israel and the Jewish people, especially in verse 3: “And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” So, how are believers to respond to anti-Semitism and conspiracy theories that target the Jewish people? Do they remain silent and simply pray for Israel, or can more be done?



In order to answer these questions, one needs to understand who the God of the Bible really is.

God Allows for Evil to Exist

As much as we struggle with it, God has the right to allow evil in this world, but He never condones it. God never creates evil, but He can control it (Rom. 8:28). A sobering example of this is found in the story of Job. God allowed Satan to tempt and hurt Job beyond what most of us could ever endure, yet His Word reminds us in Job 34:12, "Surely, God will not act wickedly, And the Almighty will not pervert justice." In the end, Job's faithfulness and endurance were rewarded.

God Can Turn Bad into Good

Another aspect of God is His ability to turn events that were meant to be destructive into positive developments. The story of Joseph and his brothers reminds us of how a family tragedy was averted. God ended up protecting the Jewish people in Egypt and grew them into the nation that would eventually be delivered by Moses and travel back to the Promised Land. All of Joseph's brothers' lies built upon one another towards an apex of deception until in Genesis 50:20, Joseph simply stated, "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive."

God Expects Us to Love Our Enemies

The plot thickens as believers under the new Law of Messiah are com-

manded by Yeshua Himself to love their enemies (Mt. 5:43-44). This is what constitutes the big difference between all other world religions and Christianity. It is a tall order, one which even a mature believer will struggle with at times. Praying for our enemies is crucial, but we are never intended to blindly ignore their actions against us or the Jewish people. We must keep things in check.

Nothing Is Outside of God's Control

When bad things happen to the Jews and the perpetrators appear to get away with their evil actions, we must remember that nothing escapes God or even takes Him by surprise. This should really encourage us.

Anti-Semitism comes from Satan, God's archenemy, as he indoctrinates the world against Israel and the Jewish people. Is God defeated or overwhelmed? The Bible answers this question in Deuteronomy 31:8: "The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." Isaiah 14:24 again reassures us that God has our backs: "The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, 'Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand.'"

God Wants Us to Press On for His Kingdom

In the midst of all this hatred against the Jewish people, the gospel does not change, nor does our mission. Some will argue that the New Testament is anti-Semitic and refrain from

using it to share the good news of the Messiah with Jewish people. However, it can easily be proven that the strong statements of rebuke made against Jewish people in the New Testament were made against sinners rebelling against God. They happened to be Jewish and were not rebuked for their Jewishness, but rather for their sinful actions. The enemy will gladly keep us busy arguing all of those things, because in the meantime, we stop sharing the message of hope and salvation in Messiah (Rom. 10:14, 17). There is a kingdom coming ruled by King Messiah. Zechariah 8:20-23 tells us that it will be great news for all and especially for the Jewish people.

As believers we have a mandate, and a mandate is not a choice. We have an obligation to provide for our Jewish friends, protect them in times of turmoil, and promote the good news to them unashamedly and yet tactfully aware of Jewish history in relation to the Christian church. It is a delicate balance of speaking up, getting involved, and trusting God.



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The life of Peter the apostle as recorded in the Bible is a source of great comfort and encouragement to us in our walk with the Messiah. Peter is uniquely relatable because his life is replete with moments in which we can see ourselves walking in his sandals. From being the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit in the declaration, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"¹ (Mt. 16:16) to the superficially mundane yet deeply insightful statement, "I am going fishing" (Jn. 21:3) to his later fearfully hypocritical conduct as recorded by Paul in the letter to the Galatians (Gal. 2:13), Peter's life is full of highs and lows and everything in between, just like ours. Yet, its overall trajectory is firmly fixed in the direction of the Messiah's upward call. Join me as we explore some applications and implications of these three notable events in the life of this relatable giant of the faith.

The Great Confession

Located at the foot of Mount Hermon, Caesarea Philippi is the source of the Banias—a tributary of the famous Jordan River and a place of considerable natural beauty. It is also the perfect location for the object lesson that followed Peter's great confession.² Peter, with the insight given by God the Father through the Holy Spirit and in the presence of the living and breathing incarnate Word from God, spoke the truth of who Messiah is. He recognized and proclaimed as a spokesman for the other disciples that Yeshua is in fact the Messiah promised to Israel. However, what later followed this high point is one of the most stinging of rebukes recorded in the New Testament: "Get behind me,

Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man" (Mk. 8:33). Peter in the Spirit knew who the Messiah was; but in his flesh, he failed to grasp Messiah's plan and purpose and longed for something more in line with his partial understanding.

Those of us who have been blessed through the teachings available through Ariel Ministries must not forget that the primary goal of the ministry is to evangelize and disciple our Jewish brothers and sisters.³ Simply getting smarter and making others smarter has never been the ultimate goal. When we fail to share the gospel and focus only on what we know, we are acting with partial knowledge, much like Peter did after his great declaration. I believe that every great declaration of the nature, deity, and works of the Messiah needs to be followed with

a clear gospel presentation: Sin is our problem, Messiah is the answer, and the recipient of this information has a responsibility.

I know very well from experience that "can opener theology" doesn't work. Here is what I mean. We don't open people up like a can of soup and shove as much Yeshua as we can into them, hoping for the best. What people need to see from us is genuine love that can only come from the Holy Spirit as we share in the very nature of God, and He is love. I am reminded of the words of H. A. Ironside:

A holy minister of Christ is a tremendously effective weapon in the hand of God. Paul believed the gospel. He knew what it had done in his own life, and he proclaimed it with absolute confidence to others. He never sought simply to amuse or astonish his audiences, but he stood before them in all the





holy authority of an ambassador for Christ, representing the high court of Heaven. Consequently, his word was with power.⁴

Let's follow this example.

Unsuccessful Fishing Trip

Another notable event in the life of Peter seems quite mundane on the surface: "I'm going fishing" (Jn. 21:3). Of course, we know from the context that Peter had recently denied the Lord he had vowed to die for and was in a deep spiritual crisis. He naturally longed to return to something he had competence in after such a great failure. We can throw stones at him and chastise him as I have heard some do, but the truth is that there have been a few times in my life following failure when this is exactly what I wanted to do: return to something I was competent in, something I knew how to do. What I just love about the Word of God and about Peter is that what happened is not what Peter wanted or expected, but what he needed. Following that statement, he worked all night at what he was good at and caught nothing (Jn. 21:4-5)! Later, when Peter realized it was the Lord who was speaking to him from across the lake, he did not turn his back to Him in sullen dejection but flung himself into the water and swam to the shore as fast as he could to Him. This must be us! We can take time off when failure or fatigue comes or we can return to the familiar, but after tasting life with Yeshua, nothing will

ever satisfy in the same way. When failure comes, swim to Him!

Hypocrisy

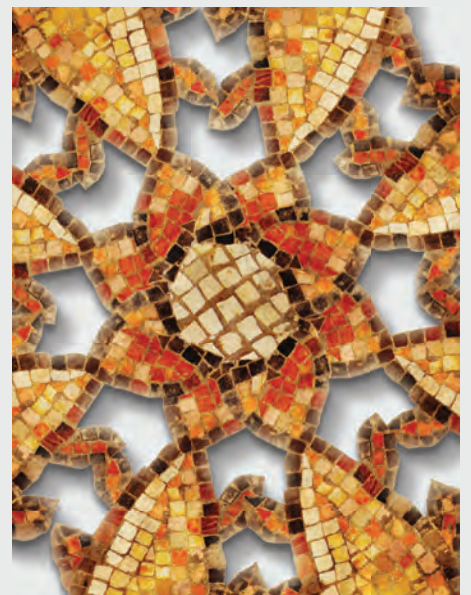
The final example in the life of this man of God called Peter is one that is sadly disappointing but a huge encouragement to me. In the book of Galatians, Paul made this statement:

But when Cephas [Peter] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas [Peter] before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?" (Gal. 2:11-14)

Even after eighteen years of discipleship, of experience, and of walking in fellowship with his Messiah, Peter failed yet again! Rather than focusing on the failure, I would like to focus on how Peter responded to this confrontation. Paul did not detail Peter's response in his letter, but we know what Peter said about Paul. The letter to the Galatians was written around 48 A.D., and most scholars agree that 2 Peter was written around 67-68 A.D.

just prior to the death of Peter. Twenty years after that public confrontation, Peter did not harbor resentment but spoke these words: "Just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him" (2 Pet. 3:15). Peter counted Paul as a beloved brother, certainly a fruit of the restoration of grace Paul taught in Galatians 6:1.

I would like to conclude by reminding you, dear reader, that indeed nothing can separate us from the love of God in Messiah Yeshua, our Savior and Lord (Rom. 8:38-39). Like Peter, our lives can sometimes be filled with great moments in God's service followed by rebukes and disappointments. We can long at times to go back to a life that is easier and simpler, especially as we see our country fling itself away from the Lord. However, like Peter, we will not find what we are looking for there because our true life is in Him!



¹ Unless noted otherwise, all Scripture references are taken from *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016).

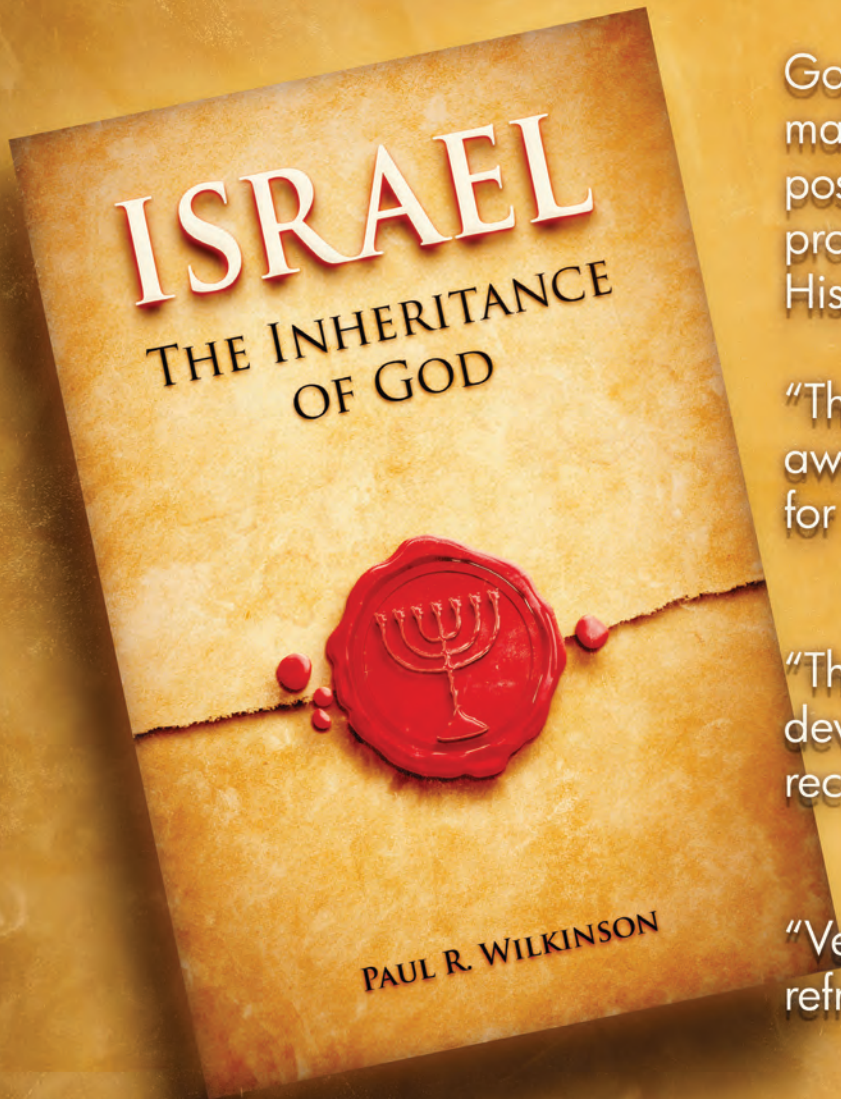
² Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Yeshua, The Life of Messiah from a Messianic Jewish Perspective* (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2017), Vol. 2, pp. 581-582.

³ Of course, this mandate also encompasses our Gentile brothers and sisters in accordance with Yeshua's great commission!

⁴ H. A. Ironside, *The Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations on the Word of God* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1994), p. 314.

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