

Winter 2019 / Volume 1 / Number 33



What Should We Think About the Jews as a
Chosen People?

Plus:

**The Law
of Messiah**

**The
Spanish
Inquisition**

Psalm 83

**In the
Eye of the Storm:
Messianic Believers
in Nazi Germany**

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MINISTRIES



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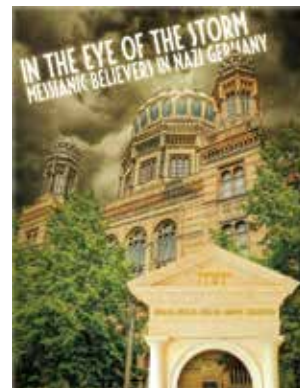
Many prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures accuse the various Arab states of perpetually hating Israel and the Jewish people. A passage that summarizes this sentiment is Psalm 83. Yet, as Jacques Isaac Gabizon shows, the perpetual hatred is met with God's eternal love, offering protection to His people and redemption to anyone who will hear.



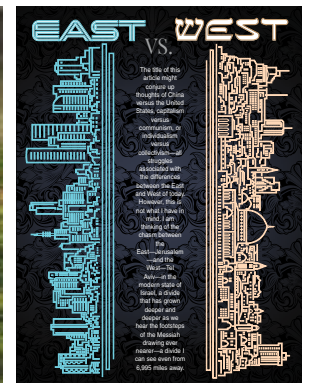
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Purpose Statement

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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Publisher

Ariel Ministries

Editor-in-Chief

Christiane Jurik

Copy Editor

Pauline Ilse

Contributing Writers

Stuart Wallis
John B. Metzger
Lilian Granovsky
Jacques Isaac Gabizon
Mottel Baleston
Olivier Melnick
Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum
Tim Velasco
Christiane Jurik

Art Directors

Jesse & Josh Gonzales
www.vipgraphics.net

Home Office Contact:

Ariel Ministries
11926 Radium Street
San Antonio, Texas
78216-2713
(210) 344-7707
homeoffice@ariel.org

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 792507
San Antonio, Texas
78279-2507



Everlasting Joy

God has blessed Ariel Ministries greatly this year. We are serving more brothers and sisters than ever through our branches and teaching material and have raised all the funds needed for our projects. Five books were published and several online courses launched. Our summer school at the Shoshanah Campus has seen more international students than ever before, with Italian and Hebrew being the rivaling foreign languages. All of this has been achieved through your prayers and support. We thank all who have contributed in any way this year!

2019 was also a year of goodbyes. We saw staff leave and new staff join the ministry, and some of our close ministry partners were promoted to glory. One of them was my father. He was a believer, but because he stayed in the Lutheran Church all his life, his knowledge of the Word was extremely limited. When I last saw him in June of this year, we spoke about heaven, and I realized he knew nothing about this place. So, when he passed away in July, three weeks after his 96th birthday, I asked the Lord, "Tell me, please, was he excited when he saw you? How did he react? Is he marveling at the beauty of heaven?"

Shortly after this prayer, my brother in Germany posted the verse of the day from my father's devotional on Facebook. It was Isaiah 51:11:

*And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

The NIV renders the second sentence as "everlasting joy will crown their heads," a translation I greatly appreciated at that moment. While I don't want to take the verse out of context, I can still apply it to my situation. I had received my answer!

God's *chesed*, His steadfast love, never ceases. His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning. Great, indeed, is His faithfulness. With this reassurance from Lamentations 3, we at Ariel Ministries would like to go with you into another year, confidently racing toward the glorious finishing line. Thank you for being by our side!

Blessings and Shalom in Messiah Jesus,

Christiane Jurik

Christiane Jurik
Editor-in-Chief
editorarielministries@gmail.com



Ariel Mission Branches & Representatives

MEET THE TEAM



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ARIEL BRANCHES



Ariel Australia **Chris & Lisa Savage**

Website: www.ariel.org.au
Email: info@ariel.org.au

Chris and Lisa Savage represent Ariel Ministries in Australia. Based in Victoria, they teach the Scriptures from the Jewish perspective in weekly and bi-monthly classes and day seminars.



Ariel Canada **Jacques Isaac and Sharon Gabizon**

Website: www.arielcanada.com
Email: info@arielcanada.com

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.



Ariel India **Bakul N. Christian**

Email: bakulchristian@yahoo.co.in

Bakul Christian represents Ariel Ministries in India and resides with his wife in Ahmedabad. He teaches Ariel's material all over the country and is responsible for the translations into the Gujarat language.



Ariel Israel **Sasha & Lilian Granovsky**

Email: sashag@ariel.org

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

Website: www.cmv-duesseldorf.de
Email: cmv-cmv@t-online.de

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**

Email: hungary@ariel.org

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.



Ariel New Zealand

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

This branch is led by Johan Jansen van Vuuren, Nigel Christensen, Matthew Lord, 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.

ARIEL REPRESENTATIVES



Michael & Hannah Gabizon – Students (Montreal)

Email: michaelgabizon@gmail.com

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.



John Metzger – Field Representative (North Carolina)

Website: www.promisestoisrael.org

Email: johnmetzger@ariel.org

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.



Gary & Missy Demers – Camp Representatives (New York)

CampShoshanah@ariel.org

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.



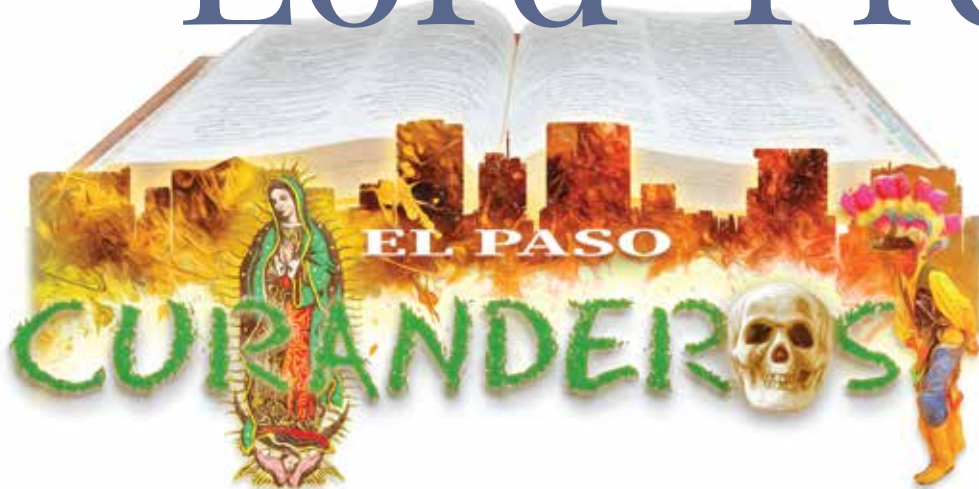
Jack Nakashima (Ohio)

Email: jacknariel@gmail.com

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



In the Midst of Pain and Sorrow, the Lord is Present



Ariel Ministries
Southwest
Roberto Anchondo

August 3, 2019 is a day that my beloved hometown of El Paso, TX, and the city of Juarez, Mexico, will remember. A gunman from Plano, TX, drove 650 miles to El Paso to kill Latinos. His final toll was 22 fatalities and 24 injured—residents from El Paso, Juarez, and other Mexican cities.

That afternoon, when I turned on my cell phone, I was facing texts that read, “Active shooter in El Paso Walmart and Cielo Vista Mall.” These messages were from friends who didn’t even live in El Paso. The shooter entered the local Walmart at 10:39 a.m., according to surveillance images, and I was just finding out. Local news was scarce on this matter. Friends and family were getting their news from CNN.

I experienced initial shock and turmoil. Active shooter in El Paso? How could this be happening in my hometown? So many people we know—family, friends, neighbors—shop there every day. Oh, Lord! What if any of our loved ones are among the victims? I went through my phone directory and called every person I could think of in El Paso and Juarez.

As the hours passed, family members began reaching out through social media, asking if anybody knew of their missing kin: grandparents, parents, a son, a daughter, a 15-year-old boy... That fateful night, the realization began to sink in: They weren’t coming home. The El Paso Police Department and other officials were not forthcoming with information for at least the next 24 hours as they secured the building and processed the crime scene.

The first surnames to be released among the deceased victims was Anchondo, a young couple. I have

many Anchondo family members whom I have never met. I wondered whether this couple could be related. According to my genealogy studies, the Anchondo descendants in the United States come from a Jewish forefather, who was forced to convert to Roman Catholicism and who migrated from Spain to Chihuahua, Mexico, and then to the USA. After making several inquiries, I discovered that the Anchondo couple was not related, but I still felt a strong connection to them. Come to find out, however, a high school classmate of mine was one of the victims murdered. This had hit home!

All I could think of was that I needed to be there with my people. I needed to mourn and lament with them, and God immediately opened doors for me. Several members of the Ariel Ministries Southwest team were willing to accompany me, and so we drove to El Paso in order to support the city in prayer, grief counseling, praise, and worship. We coordinated with Mexican and black churches to



A clear outpouring of love after the shootings



Roberto Anchondo and some local pastors are offering prayer

minister to the people at the memorial. I remember what my advisor, Pastor Jacques Isaac Gabizon from Ariel Ministries Canada, once said to me, "Sorrow and grief force us to examine life from a different perspective. We need to be attentive to what God wants to teach us through difficult times, things that He may not be able to teach us at other times." Most of the people's hearts at the El Paso memorial were open to God because of their pain.

However, the demonic forces were at work too! The cults were there spreading their beliefs. There were quite a few religious groups dancing and chanting (*Matachines*) with the figure of the *virgen de Guadalupe* ("the Virgin of Guadalupe"). This figure appeared to a Mexican peasant where the Aztecs used to worship a female deity. She is worshipped in Mexico and among the Hispanic people. She is just another apparition, a version of the Lady of Fatima. Overall, the sad thing about this is that this form of praying was sincerely accepted by the people in mourning, who do not know the truth, who do not know the Lord.

Also present were the *curanderos*. A *curandero* is a type of faith healer who uses incense, feathers, and smoke as a so-called cleansing ritual. This ceremonial practice involves chanting, which only serves to conjure demonic forces, inviting them to this location. People were actually in line to receive the "cleansing from the traumatic experience and/or curses" and to participate in the ritual. It was very difficult for me not to cry out. It took an enormous amount of self-restraint to hold my tongue and pray instead because the people were hurting, and I could not cause a disturbance at the memorial.

In the midst of this darkness, Yeshua's hand was present. Believers from all over the United States and Mexico came to minister to the people. I remember a brother who came from Alaska to minister to us. He had the God-given opportunity to pray for and witness to the Walmart employees who witnessed the killing.

I remember that when the Iron Curtain fell in the former Soviet Union, the believers who were in tune with our Lord went in, resulting in many Russians receiving Yeshua as their Savior. Unfortunately, the cults also rushed in. When Juarez, Mexico, was



Getting ready to give out Bibles to those who are hurting

the most violent city in the world, American churches left because they said it was too dangerous. The believers who stayed, or went in, were blessed with countless opportunities to minister the gospel. They were about their Father's business and led many to Him. Since the pain and suffering were so intense, almost everyone was open to the gospel. It was the easiest place on earth to administer the gospel. People all around would listen respectfully and receive God's Word. Sadly, with tragedy, new cults begin to emerge. The mass killings in Juarez opened doors to the worship of the *Santa Muerte*, "the Holy Reaper." And so, that same scenario was at the El Paso memorial. However, numerous Bibles were distributed. Believers from all over were busy working on behalf of the faith—praying, worshipping, and ministering in the midst of that spiritualism. This visit served to remind me that we must be wholeheartedly ready in and out of season (2 Tim. 4:2).

Praise be to our Lord and Savior, Yeshua HaMashiach, for comforting and shedding His light on us!



The team prayed with Walmart employees



Italy



We had the blessed opportunity to literally live the verse below while Rita Nagy from Ariel Hungary came to Italy. The Lord gave us the chance to meet and spend a blessed time of fellowship together.

*Behold, how good and
how pleasant it is
For brothers to dwell
together in unity!*

(Ps. 133:1)

It is precious to have brothers and sisters all around the world with whom we can share our love for the Lord and for the Jewish people and to have someone who understands the joys and sorrows of answering the call into ministry. It is so important to share ideas and to see how the Lord has been faithful in the lives of others.

We had the possibility to pray together, to encourage one another, and to worship together. It has been a gift.

We also had the chance to talk about the tour that upon the writing of this little article was still in the planning stages. Dr. Fruchtenbaum and Mottel Baleston were to visit Italy in October, and Rita's input in the planning of the conferences was very valuable. To our great joy, other sisters we met during our time at Camp Shoshanah this year had plans to join the conferences to support us. This is another facet of our love of being involved in the work of Ariel Ministries. We now have family all around the world!



Hungary

After the conference with Dr. Fruchtenbaum this year, we have been experiencing a somewhat calmer period in our ministry. We have time to prepare new topics and spend more time to serve the personal needs of our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

One of the very interesting topics this fall was a series about the Lord's Supper and the question: What is the Lord's table? Ivan taught three main points to the congregation:

1. What was the meaning of this expression "Lord's table" in the early church, and how did the expression receive an anti-biblical meaning so quickly?
2. Is there any connection between the "Lord's table" and the expression "breaking bread," and where do they come from?
3. In the context of 1 Corinthians 10-11, is the Lord's supper a Passover celebration?

Besides teaching about these things in our fellowship, Ivan received an invitation to a Chinese church in Hungary and was able to teach on this topic there as well. Last year, he did a Passover demonstration in that church which turned out to be a good starting point to teaching the Bible from a Jewish perspective.

Also this year, we attended a bi-weekly teaching series about interesting topics of the *Shulchan Aruch*, a codex of Jewish law. This was organized and taught by our Jewish friend Gabor, who allows us to use his apartment and art gallery for our Bible study and for the fellowship. We were the

only Gentile participants among the Jewish people, and we were able to make new friends with these wonderful people. May they all meet their Jewish Messiah very soon!

Another beautiful development is Rita's invitation to teach at the Jewish University Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest about theology and anti-Semitism.

Your prayers for our work among the Jewish people of Hungary are greatly appreciated!



Ivan Nagy teaching at a Chinese church in Hungary



Enjoying a time of fellowship after the teaching

As we grew up,

we used to think that there was only one New Year—that magical night that bridges the last day of the former year (December 31) with the first day of the new year (January 1). Starting with the Western New Year we grew up with in the Soviet Union, I will take you with me to the Middle East and what we call New Year's here. Then we will do another transition to the biblical New Year and will see what it is all about and if there is something that unites these new years, new beginnings, and new count downs. Follow me, dear reader!

People in Russia used to celebrate Christmas. After the Great Revolution (1917), however, the Bolsheviks declared and insisted that there was no God. Consequently, there was no Messiah and hence no reason to celebrate His birthday. However, we were allowed to celebrate New Year's. People still decorated Christmas trees and transferred Christmas traditions and elements to New Year's. But the foundation for the festivities was erased, and Soviet families would decorate the tops of their "New Year's trees" with red five-pointed stars. To replace the Western Santa, the Soviets invented Grandfather Frost, who comes with gifts to all the children. He always appeared with the Snow Maiden (his granddaughter).

We had few holidays in the Soviet Union. They were all political: the Day of the Great Revolution, Labor Day (International Workers' Day), and so forth. The only non-political holiday was New Year's. It was everyone's favorite!

By Lilian Granovsky

New Year



A little girl
decorating
a New
Year's tree



From
Russia
with love -
New Year's
greeting
card



A sample of the food served on New Year's in Russia



Men would thoroughly inspect the available trees, choosing the most “furry” evergreen they could find. With a look of triumph, they would bring the “forest beauty” home to their families. Women would buy so many gifts that it would have been enough for a modest wedding, and children would be called to order only by saying that Grandfather Frost does not bring gifts to naughty children.

All this holiday vanity was filled with a premonition of happiness, of miracles, of fun. The phone did not stop ringing. From the kitchen, you could smell the entrancing aromas of some “signature” dish prepared only once a year. The champagne was cooled on the balcony or kept in cold water in the bathtub, peacefully adjacent to the “basin” of *olivie* (the most traditional Russian salad for each and every holiday) and tangerines in a bag. New

clothes, hairstyles, gifts, sweets, and sparklers would be hidden until the appropriate time. The dishes would be cooked and ready to eat before 11 p.m., when traditionally you would start saying “good bye” to the old year.

With the first of the Kremlin Spasskaya Clock Tower chimes, listening to the congratulatory words of the political leader of the country, we would open Soviet champagne and drink with the last strike of the bell, having managed to make the most intimate wish. Then we would exchange gifts and proclaim ingenious toasts. We would be absolutely convinced that all the unpleasant things were left in the past, that the future was bright and joyful, and that everything would be as we wished.

The tree would twinkle with sparkles. The table was bursting with food.

Celebrities congratulated us from the TV screen, and the holiday would continue for more than one day. Sometimes, it lasted for a week—seven days of eating, drinking, and visiting friends. The hospitals would be full of injured, over-fed, and over-drunk people! It was everyone’s nightmare to have to go to the hospital during this holiday (and, really, on any holiday), as doctors, surgeons, and all medical staff were also celebrating and drunk!

This scenario is from our Soviet past. What happened with these traditions when we (almost one million people) immigrated to Israel? First, we were shocked to learn that Israelis do not celebrate New Year’s! They called that night, December 31, Sylvester, and we never really understood why.



Rosh Hashanah celebrations in Israel with Arnold Fruchtenbaum in the back and the Granovsky family in the front

They didn't have (and partially still don't have) the day off on January 1, but they have learned that any wise boss will give Russians the day off, as they will take it anyway. They would not come to work "in good shape" on January 1 after a night of dancing, drinking, eating, and visiting friends. The work day would be spent trying to "survive." Therefore, wise bosses and government departments, such as the IDF, give a day off, so people won't come to work drunk and too tired to fulfill their duties.

Thirty years later, the name "Sylvester" changed to *novyi god* ("New Year"). Finally! The Israelis greet us "Russians" with *S novim godom*, which means "Happy New Year." Just like Thanksgiving or Christmas, they "adopted" this foreign holiday and have started celebrating it as well. For some reason, they go to bars and restaurants, but "real Russians" stay home, gather around the table, and eat and drink the same things they grew up with in Soviet times.

Now, Israelis do celebrate their own New Year's, but they do so in Septem-

ber, calling the occasion *Rosh Hashanah*. Dr. Fruchtenbaum explains:

Rosh Hashanah means "the head of the year." While the feast is never called "Rosh Hashanah" in the Scriptures, it is the most common Jewish designation today. The expression is found in Ezekiel 40:1, but the verse does not refer to the Feast of Trumpets. The reason Jewish people call this feast "Rosh Hashanah" is because they believe that God created the heavens and the earth on this day. Therefore, this feast has become known as the beginning of the Jewish civil year.¹

Biblically, Rosh Hashanah did not designate the beginning of the new year. According to Exodus 12:2, the month of *Aviv* (which after the Babylonian Captivity was renamed *Nisan*) is *the beginning of months, the first month of the year* to the Jewish people. However, sometime during the Second Temple period, Rosh Hashanah took over the position as the head of the year.

What is the same between the Western New Year's festivities and Rosh Hashanah? Only one thing: that

people celebrating these holidays choose to believe that for some reason all bad things will stay in the old year and only good things will pass into the new one. This thought is included in the greetings exchanged on either day. They decorate the table with all kinds of superstitious elements that they believe will bring them that hope of new beginnings, while omitting the only true source of hope: the change, the security that comes only from faith in God, their Creator, their Lord, their Messiah.

Yeshua Messiah is the same yesterday, and today, yes and forever (Heb. 13:8). With Him, there is no new year or old year. He never changes, regardless of what year it is.

As this year is almost fully spent, several things come to mind: He has faithfully blessed us. As we look toward a new year, may we seek His Kingdom first! May we give glory and thanksgiving to Him. May we all walk in absolute, confident faith that His love for us will be unchanging through this coming year—no matter what challenges come our way. He is faithful, true, and loving! He values us beyond our imagination and beyond our own self-value. May we recognize this faithful, unchanging love.

¹ Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Feasts and Fasts of Israel* (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2019), 137.





What Should We Think About the Jews as a Chosen People?

In modern society, the claim that one race is above another is called racism. What is the origin of the Jewish people's belief that they are the chosen people, and how is it presented in the Bible? Furthermore, what effect has this belief had on the Jewish people collectively, on Israeli policies toward others, and on the response of other groups toward Israel?



There are few concepts in religion that are more emotionally loaded and misunderstood than the claim that the Jewish people are God's "chosen people."¹ In an era during which equality is a major issue, such a claim seems obsolete and offensive. As Jon Levenson observes, "Few religious doctrines have attracted more virulent criticism than the idea of the chosen people. Over the past several centuries alone, both Jews and non-Jews have judged this key tenet of classical Judaism to be undemocratic, chauvinistic, superstitious—in short, retrograde in every way that matters to the progressive mind."²

Indeed, this idea of "chosenness" has been said to be the root of anti-Semitism and to have spawned *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a notorious forgery that originated in czarist Russia and alleges a Jewish plot to achieve global domination. Furthermore, those who are calling for peace in the Middle East view this concept of chosenness as being inherently divisive and detrimental to attempts at reconciling the opposing factions in the conflict. For many religions this is an outdated concept, referring now only to a broken covenant relationship with God that has been superseded by more recent reve-



lations. How then are we to understand the Jewish claim to chosenness in the twenty-first century?

Because God's Word is everlasting and does not change, it is the only sure standard upon which we can gain an understanding of Israel, the Jewish people, and the Middle East conflict—no matter what the latest cultural opinion polls say.

According to divine revelation, Israel did not choose for itself the burden of being a chosen people. Nor was the application of the term intended to stir enmity or to imply that the unchosen are the enemies of God. Rather, God's intent was to produce humility and generate a servant people who would represent Him before the world and ultimately be the means to blessing all nations who come to the God of Israel through the Messiah of Israel (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:8).



Israel as the Chosen People in the Past

The Old Testament explains the concept of chosenness and affirms national (or ethnic) Israel as a chosen people. It provides the basis for Israel being afforded this special status as well as the purposes for Israel's chosenness. As we consider what the



Old Testament says, we can gain a better understanding of Israel's special relationship with God and its unique role in the world.

As we seek to understand Israel's status as a chosen people, we must first consider the biblical teaching of election. In doing so, we must make a theological distinction between individual election and national election. Individual election extends to any person and results in the salvation of that individual. By contrast, national election concerns only Israel and does not result in spiritual salvation (which only individual election can do) nor the physical deliverance of every member of the nation. Its aim is to guarantee that God's purpose(s) for choosing the nation will be accomplished and that the elect nation will always survive as a distinct entity. These purposes include an elect remnant of Israel obtaining national salvation (Rom. 11:25-27), experiencing physical restoration in its promised land (Ezek. 37:25-26), and realizing its role as a blessing to the nations (Zech. 8:23). This national election of Israel is the basis for its status as the chosen people.

It is a common misconception that the Jewish people's chosenness was based on some virtue they possessed or status they had achieved. In fact,

¹ These statements have been excerpted and edited from the introduction of the updated blog of Rabbi Alan Lurie, "What Does it Mean that the Jews are God's Chosen People?," *Huffington Post* (January 23, 2014). Accessed at: https://www.huffingtonpost.com/rabbi-alan-lurie/jews-gods-chosen-people_b_1079821.html.

² Jon D. Levenson, "Chosenness and Its Enemies," *Commentary Magazine* (December 1, 2008). Accessed at: <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/chosenness-and-its-enemies/>.



they were chosen by God *before* they existed as a people or a nation. Scripture reveals that Israel was chosen as a nation in the time of Abraham (see Gen. 12:2; 18:19)—before the birth of his sons Isaac and Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel). It was God's choosing of the *seed* of the Patriarchs that made them the chosen people before this people or nation existed.

The unconditional nature of Israel's election is emphasized in Deuteronomy 4:37: *because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants* [seed] *after them; and He brought you out of Egypt with His Presence, with His mighty power* (NKJV). In this verse, Moses stated that the basis of Israel's election was God's love for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom He had made a covenant, and He chose their descendants on the basis of that covenant relationship.

In Deuteronomy 7:6-8:1, Israel is declared to be "a holy people," not because of any innate righteousness on their own part, but because God has chosen them (7:6). God's choosing set Israel apart from other nations. She was God's *own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth* (7:6; cf. 26:18). Moreover, in Deuteronomy 7:7-8, Moses said that the basis for Israel's election was not due to its size (v. 7), for it was smaller than other nations, but because God loved Israel and established a covenant relationship with her founding

fathers (v. 8). Because of this covenant relationship, God delivered Israel from Egypt (Ex. 3:6-10) and set her above the other nations (Deut. 10:15). As a result, the people of Israel were obligated to obey God's commandments (Ex. 19:6) and to *circumcise their heart* (Deut. 10:16), which was a spiritual sign of personal faith and individual salvation.

While Israel was chosen on the basis of God's love, there were multiple purposes for God's election of Israel. We find the primary purpose stated at the outset of God's revelation at Mount Sinai in Exodus 19:6: *You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation*. While Israel's status as "a holy nation" was based on her election, the purpose for her election was to be "a kingdom of priests." Even though Israel had a priestly tribe (Levi), the nation collectively was to serve as a priesthood. The historical function of a priest was to represent man to God. Therefore, just as the tribe of Levi represented Israel before God, Israel was to represent the Gentile nations before God.

Another purpose for Israel's chosen status was so that she could be the recipient and recorder of God's revelation. It was for this reason Israel received the Mosaic Law (Deut. 4:5-8; 6:6-9; Rom. 3:1-2). Yet another purpose for her chosenness was so she could serve as a witness for the one true God. In Isaiah 43:10-12, Israel was chosen to proclaim to the Gentile nations that YHWH, the God of

Israel, is the one and only true God and Savior, and therefore all who seek salvation must find it exclusively in Him.

A final purpose for Israel's chosenness was to produce a lineage for the Messiah (Rom. 9:5; Heb. 2:16-17; 7:13-14). He would be born of the seed of Abraham and of the lineage of David (Mt. 1:1), bringing salvation first to Israel (Acts 3:26; Rom. 1:16) and then to the nations (Acts 13:47; Titus 2:11).

Just as national Israel's chosenness had a *purpose*, there was also a divinely designed *program* that would support and perpetuate the promises made to her as a chosen people. This program consists of the four biblical covenants made by God to Abraham and his descendants after him. These covenants begin with the Abrahamic covenant, the wellspring of the other three covenants and the basis on which the Messiah came to bring redemption to Israel (Lk. 1:54-55, 68-73). The three promises in this covenant of a land, a seed, and a blessing (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:17) became the basis for three separate covenants: the land covenant (Deut. 30), the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7), and the new covenant (Jer. 31-33).

These covenants were unconditional ("I [God] will...") and unending ("forever") and form the basis for God's preservation of the Jewish people through time, their return to the land of Israel, the future rule of Messiah, and Israel's future physical resto-





ration and spiritual blessings in the kingdom of God. Due to the chosen people's national sin (idolatry and defection from God—see Isa. 30:1, 9-14; 31:6-7), they did not experience the fulfillment of all the provisions promised in these covenants—and those that they did experience were temporary. This lack of fulfillment has made some people wonder whether Israel's past rejection of God and His Messiah has cancelled their chosen status and replaced them with another chosen people (the church).



Israel as the Chosen People in the Present

Proponents of covenant theology teach that to a lesser or greater degree, God's biblical covenants to Israel are now being fulfilled in, by, or through the church. Their view of God's covenants controls how they interpret the nature, extent, and application of the biblical covenants made with national Israel. Some covenant theologians argue that these covenants were made with the church from the very beginning (elect Israel = the church in the Old Testament). Others concede that the covenants were originally made with national Israel but contend they have now been transferred to the church. As for national Israel, all that was promised either has already been fulfilled or has been forfeited through Jewish unbelief. Even covenant premillennialists, who



see a future for ethnic Israel, believe that Israel will ultimately be amalgamated into the church.

This view, popularly stated, asserts that Israel *was* a chosen people in the past but was disinherited by God due to the people's rejection of their Messiah. Therefore, the church has replaced Israel under the new covenant and has become the new chosen people. Replacement theology maintains that because the church is the new Israel and has spiritually inherited Israel's covenants, modern Israel and the Jewish community have no special relationship with God that constitutes chosenness.

Is this, in fact, what the New Testament teaches? Should we make a theological distinction between Israel in the past and Israel in the present? What are the practical and political consequences of such a theological position? To answer these questions, we must look more closely at the four unconditional covenants God made with Israel in the past and determine if their legal language could allow for God's promises to be cancelled and transferred to a different entity.



An Overview of the Biblical Covenants in the Present

In the New Testament, the term "Israel" is used a total of 73 times, with the vast majority of instances referring only to national ethnic Israel. The three exceptions are Romans 9:6, 11:26,



and Galatians 6:16; however, a strong case can be made for these also referring exclusively to ethnic Israel. Based on the New Testament usage of "Israel," we can conclude that the church is never called a "spiritual Israel" or "new Israel." The term "Israel" is either used of the nation or the people as a whole, or of the believing remnant within it, but is never used of the church in general or of Gentile believers in particular.

For that reason, we can know that national Israel continues to be God's chosen people. Whether or not the people are functioning within the purpose of their chosenness, if they exist as a distinct ethnic people, the covenants that were unconditionally promised to them must in some sense continue to operate in the present time. An overview of this present function of the covenants will help us realize this fact.

First, the biblical covenants were made exclusively with the Jewish people, designated as Israel. This is stated in Romans 9:4-5. In that passage, not only is the emphasis on their ethnic identity ("fathers...flesh"), but on their *present* possession of these covenantal promises as well. If the writer, the apostle Paul, had understood that the rejection of Messiah by national Israel (as represented by its leaders), which had occurred 20-plus years earlier, had caused it to forfeit these promises, he would not have used the present tense in that statement. This demon-



strates that the New Testament understood Old Testament “elect Israel” as ethnic (no Gentiles included), distinguishing it from the church, which is inclusive of both Jews and Gentiles.

Second, the content of these covenants, which are legal contracts, must be interpreted literally if they are to be fulfilled as originally given in the context of a particular people (the Jewish people) and a particular place (the land of Israel). Since, as stated above, these covenants were made exclusively with Israel as an ethnic and national people, they must be fulfilled with them alone. This is not to say another entity (the church) could not *participate* in them (under the new covenant, cf. Eph. 2:11-22; Rom. 11:17-24), but that their fulfillment must take place as originally intended. In contract law, both parties must unambiguously understand the terms of the contract before agreeing to them. This is called “a meeting of the minds.” Israel could not have understood God to have promised her something that would be fulfilled by another people (the church). God could not have intended something different than what He promised without stating it or letting the people continue in their misunderstanding. This would constitute deception, rendering the contract null and void, and God has told Israel that He cannot lie but will always do what He has promised (Num. 23:19).

Third, the covenants God made with Israel are eternal and are not

conditioned by time. The eternality of the covenants is stated variously as “forever” (Gen. 13:15; Ex. 32:13; 2 Sam. 23:5) or “forever and ever” (Jer. 7:7; 25:5; cf. Ps. 48:14) or “everlasting” (Gen. 17:7-8,19). While the basic Hebrew term used here (*‘olam*) may have the sense of undefined time, the one defining it in context is God, who is called “God the Eternal” (*Ei ‘olam*—Gen. 21:33) and has an unlimited view of time with respect to the fulfillment of His legal obligations (Ex. 15:18; Deut. 32:40; Ps. 90:2).

While, as stated above, nothing over time can change the terms of the covenants (literal fulfillment with Israel), fulfillment *can* be delayed or postponed. The fact that a covenant is made at a specific point of time does not mean that all the provisions of the covenant must go into effect immediately. Some can, but others may not—even for centuries. For example, Abraham was promised a son through Sarah but had to wait 25 years before that promise was fulfilled. Other provisions were not fulfilled until later in Jewish history, such as the deliverance from Egypt, which was also part of the covenant (Gen. 15:13-16). Finally, other provisions are still future and have not yet been fulfilled, such as Israel’s ownership of and settlement in all of the Promised Land (Gen. 15:18; Ex. 23:31; Deut. 11:24; Jos. 1:4; 13:1). Under the present condition of Israel’s discipline for disobedience, fulfillment must wait until that time in the future when Israel repents as a nation at the

coming of the Messiah (Zech. 12:10-14:11; Mt. 24:30-31; Acts 3:19-26; Rom. 11:25-27).

Fourth, God’s covenants with Israel are unconditional, which means their fulfillment is totally dependent upon God. Even though these covenants include conditional aspects, these aspects are not the basis by which the covenants will be fulfilled. While Israel’s failure to meet the conditions within these covenants has resulted in divine discipline, the covenant promises cannot be abrogated (Jer. 30:11; Rom. 11:11-15). This fact was clearly stated in Scripture to assure Israel that even when it was exiled to foreign lands on account of divine judgment, God would still fulfill His promises by regathering Israel to the land and restoring her relationship to Him (Jer. 29:14; cf. Deut. 30:4; Ezek. 11:17; 36:24; 37:21,25; 39:28). There is no clearer statement of this fact than in Psalm 89 with respect to the Davidic covenant (esp. verses 3-4, 28-29, and 30-36).

In addition, God has guaranteed the fulfillment of the covenants to Israel not for their sake, but for the sake of His own reputation (Ezek. 36:16-32). For this reason, Israel’s present disobedience has not changed the past promises, for God has not changed, the chosen people (Israel) have not changed, and the chosen place (the land of Israel) has not changed. Final fulfillment for Israel will be within “God’s kingdom program [which] was the outworking of His





eternal and unconditional covenants with Israel.”³



The Operation of the Biblical Covenants in the Present

All four biblical covenants are not only still in effect, but also still operative at the present time. The church does indeed have a relationship to these covenants, but it is not the relationship that is described by covenant theology. Today, Israel is a scattered nation, but still a nation. Just as Israel remained distinct in Egypt, the Jewish people have remained distinct throughout the church age. No other nation that lost its national homeland and became dispersed for centuries has ever survived as a distinct entity. Rather, wherever those nations were scattered, they intermarried and disappeared into a melting pot. Not so with the Jews, whose distinctive history is still easily traceable. The fact that the Jews have continued to survive as a people—in spite of so many attempts to destroy them—shows that the Abrahamic covenant (inclusive of all the other covenants) is still operative.

The land covenant revealed that the land would be desolate (Isa. 6:11; 33:8) and that a final worldwide regathering would follow a similarly worldwide dispersion (Deut. 4:25-31; 30:1-9; Jer. 33:10-22; Ezek. 36:3-24).



While the final regathering is still future, the global scattering is a present fact and has been so since AD 70. Within the confines of the church age, there has been no truly independent government in the land since AD 70 until recently. It has been overrun many times and ruled by many powers (Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Turks, and Britons), but always ruled from somewhere else, especially under Arab occupation (Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, Amman, etc.).

Though the land was renamed *Palestine* by Hadrian in the second century AD, there never was a Palestinian state with a Palestinian government. The first time an independent government was set up in the land since AD 70 was in 1948 with the state of Israel. This modern return to the land is in keeping with the promise of the land covenant. Therefore, the history of the land of Israel reveals that the land promises have and are being fulfilled—demonstrating that the land covenant is still working itself out with the chosen people. Never in history has Israel possessed, dwelt in, and settled in all of the Promised Land. However, the land covenant guarantees that someday it will (Ezek. 37:25-26; 45:1-8; 47:13-23).

The Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7:8-16) offered four eternal promises: a house (vv. 11,16), a throne (vv. 8,13,16), a kingdom (vv. 12,16), and a



descendant (vv. 12,13,14-15). The fact that Yeshua the Messiah, *the son of David* (Mt. 1:1; Lk. 1:32; cf. Rev. 5:5), is David's eternal descendant and is now seated on a throne at the right hand of God (Ps. 110:1) shows that this covenant is still functioning. Messiah is not currently ruling from the Davidic throne over the physical kingdom of Israel (note that the throne of David was on earth and the throne of God is in heaven), but the very fact Messiah has yet to sit upon the throne of David to rule over Israel confirms that the status of the chosen people has been maintained.

As for the promised kingdom, God stated this provision in 2 Samuel 7:10. It is evident from Israel's present experience in the Middle East conflict that this promise has not yet been fulfilled but will be in the future (Jer. 33:14-17,19-22). Therefore, this covenant must remain in operation until its fulfillment.

The new covenant (Jer. 31:31-33:26) was made between God and Israel as the means to the fulfillment of the covenantal promises. The major feature of this covenant was Israel's national salvation, inclusive of every individual Jew. This covenant was signed and sealed by the shedding of Yeshua the Messiah's blood. While this provided the basis for individual Jewish salvation, the national salvation of Israel awaits a future fulfillment, with Israel's national

³ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 9.



repentance and acceptance of Yeshua when He comes to bring national redemption and restoration (Zech. 12:10-13:1,8-9; 14:4; Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 11:25-27). While the church has a relationship to this covenant, this is a uniquely Jewish covenant and therefore can only be fulfilled by a future national salvation of Israel. However, its present outworking, witnessed in the individual salvation of a Jewish remnant and their indwelling by the Holy Spirit within the church (Rom. 1:16-17; 9:27-29; 11:1-5; 10: Acts 2:1-4), gives assurance that the promised national salvation (Ezek. 36:24-32) will take place.

In addition, the fact that the Abrahamic covenant is still operational is confirmed by the fact that the blessings and curses promised in Genesis 12:3 continue to be experienced by the world's nations based on their relationship to Israel. Those who have opposed or oppressed Israel have fallen, and those who have harbored and protected Israel have risen. This ongoing blessing or judgment of the nations affirms the continual functioning of the Abrahamic covenant during this era of the new covenant.



Still the Chosen People

Some have been confused by the fact that the Jewish people are in partial possession of the Promised Land yet are not in a spiritual relationship with

God, per the conditions stated within the covenants. This confusion is removed when we recognize that the prophets spoke of two international returns: the first a regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment (Ezek. 20:33-38; 22:17-22) during the tribulation (Mt. 24:15-21), which will be followed by a second regathering in faith in preparation for the blessings of the Messianic age (Isa. 11:11-12; Ezek. 36:22-24). The restoration of the Jewish state is a fulfillment of the prophecies that spoke of a regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment. The fact that prophecies are being fulfilled with the modern state of Israel shows that Israel continues to remain God's chosen people.

As we have seen, the biblical covenants contained two types of promises: physical and spiritual. The physical promises were, and still are, limited to Israel and will be fulfilled only by Israel, which is an aspect of chosenness. Another aspect of chosenness is that the spiritual blessings of these covenants would be mediated by Israel to the Gentile world. By faith, Gentiles can become partakers of the Jews' spiritual blessings, but they are not takers-over, as replacement theology teaches. All the spiritual benefits are now being shared by the church (comprised of both Jews and Gentiles), but the still-future fulfillment of these covenants with regard to Israel indicates they remain in operation today and Israel is still the chosen people.

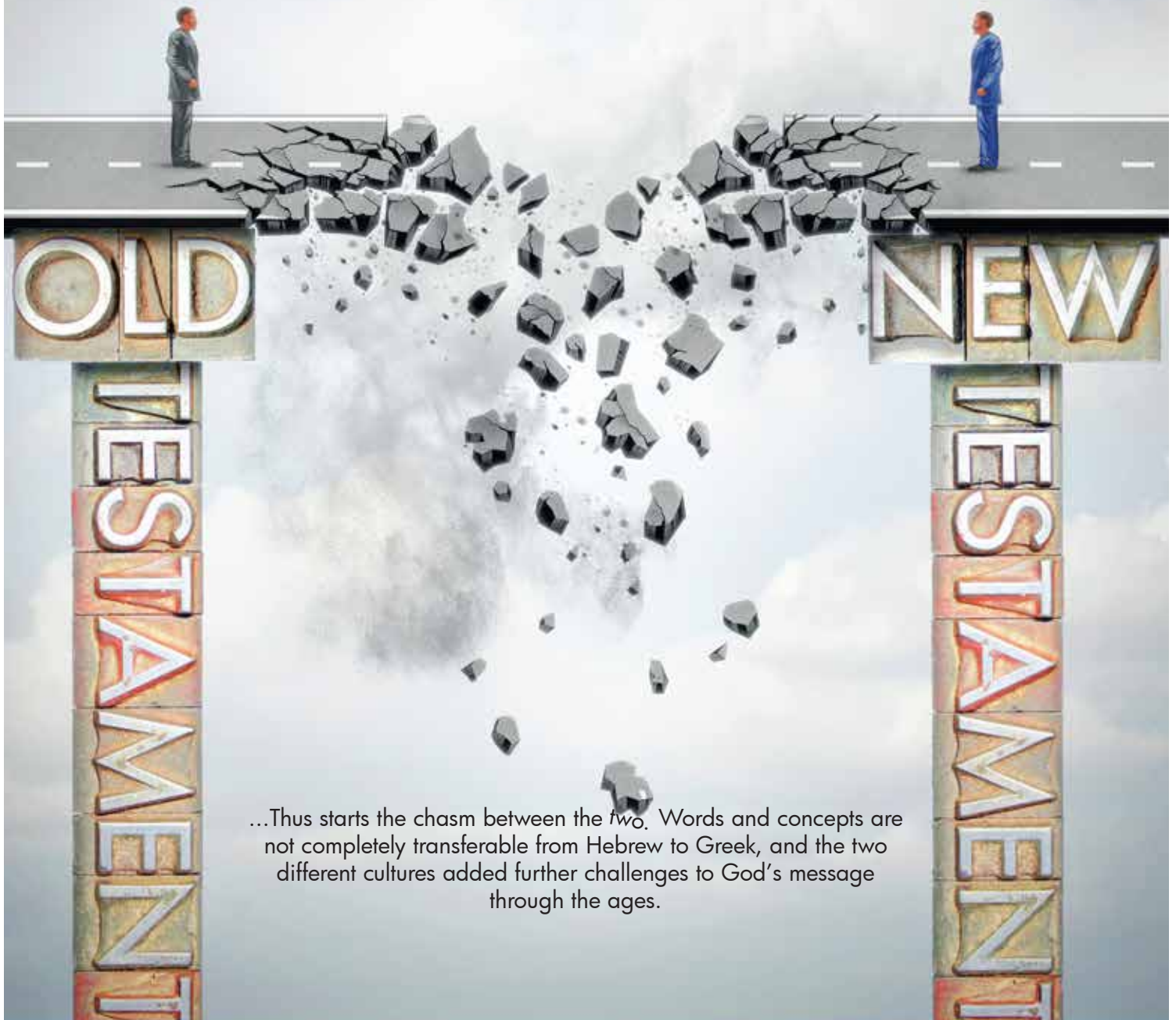
In the final analysis, despite Israel's present discipline and the problems posed by the Middle East conflict, Israel continues to be the chosen people because the world has not yet experienced the international peace, prosperity, and blessing that the Jewish people were chosen to bring to mankind (Isa. 2:2-4; 60:5-14; Zech. 8:23).



This article is based on a chapter the author wrote for *What Should We Think About Israel?*, an excellent book by Randall Price, published this year by Harvest House Publishers. The text was slightly edited to better fit the format of this magazine.

How Christian is Christian Anti-Semitism?

By Olivier Melnick



...Thus starts the chasm between the two. Words and concepts are not completely transferable from Hebrew to Greek, and the two different cultures added further challenges to God's message through the ages.



There is a recurring accusation, especially within Jewish circles, that the New Testament is anti-Semitic. The justification for such an accusation is found in 2,000 years of Jewish history that have been punctuated by a myriad of anti-Semitic acts—many of them apparently rooted in Christianity and its teachings. So, the question bears asking, how Christian is Christian anti-Semitism? Furthermore, is the New Testament anti-Semitic?



It is really unfortunate that our Bible would be divided into two parts. Things would be a lot simpler if we looked at the whole counsel of God from Genesis to Revelation. But separated by what is known as “the 400 silent years,” we have the Jewish Scriptures (written in Hebrew and Aramaic) and the Greek Scriptures (written in Greek).

Thus starts the chasm between the two. Words and concepts are not completely transferable from Hebrew to Greek, and the two different cultures added further challenges to God’s message through the ages.

Nobody can deny that the coming of Yeshua onto the scene changed everything. The Jewish leadership of His days felt threatened, intimidated, and at times humiliated. The guardians of the Mosaic Law were being challenged by one who came to fulfill that law and never broke one of its commandments. Additionally, even though He first came for His own according to the flesh, He included Gentiles. It wasn’t long before the very Gentiles, who had been excluded but were now grafted in, started to take over and slowly forced the erosion of Jewish traditions within Christianity. By A.D. 325 at the council of Nicaea, much of the Jewishness of Christianity had disappeared or was being further diluted into a faith that couldn’t relate to its own roots any longer.

The early Church Fathers had started to deviate from a literal, historical/grammatical approach of the Bible. Their allegorical interpretations slowly led them to see Israel as a demonized people who had been replaced by the church. The uneducated masses gladly followed suit, and the Jews started to become a burden and a

dead weight wherever they could be found. It would take until the Holocaust to have a people group attempt to radically and systematically eradicate European Jewry. Jews had become vermin, a sub-human race, and as such, total annihilation was the only solution. It was “The Final Solution to the Jewish Question” as Nazi Germany expressed it euphemistically. All or most of it, when you ask Jewish people, was done by Christians. But was it? An honest approach to the issue would prove otherwise.

The New Testament is a very Jewish book.

From the very first words of the first book in the New Testament, everything is Jewish as it records the genealogy of the Jewish Messiah: The record of the genealogy of Yeshua the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. (Mt. 1:1-2). The audience is Jewish; the writers are Jewish.¹ The context is Jewish, and much of the geography is Jewish. As a matter of fact, it is nearly impossible to fully understand the richness of the New Testament without reading it in its Jewish context. Most believers spend their whole life reading the Bible in “black and white” until they look at the Jewish perspective and all of a sudden the same story appears in “color and HD.”

The New Testament uses strong language.

How do we reconcile words like “your father the devil” (Jn. 8:44)? They are

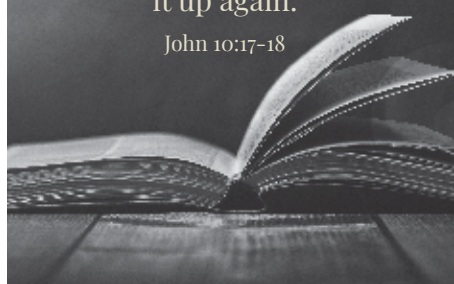
indeed very strong words directed at Jewish people. Those accusatory words were definitely used in the New Testament to describe the hypocrisy and sin of some of the Jewish leaders, contemporaries of Yeshua. They were accurate words, but what has been missed and has led to much damage is the fact that they were used to denounce people who happened to be disobedient sinners first and Jewish second. Their ethnicity didn't really play a role in their guilt. This is what we could call the "Great Christian Departure." The church started to connect Jewishness to the sins of the early (Jewish) believers although it was unrelated, and before long, being Jewish was a crime.

The Old Testament also uses strong language.

Why is it that when similar language is used to describe the disobedience of Israel in the Law and the Prophets, nobody—especially in the Jewish community—has a problem with it? In

For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.

John 10:17-18



Deuteronomy 9:7, Moses calls the Jewish people "rebellious." Is he anti-Semitic? In Deuteronomy 9:13, God calls them "stubborn" and wants to kill them all. Is God anti-Semitic? Nonsense! Ezekiel calls Israel "stubborn and obstinate" (Ezekiel 3:7). The descriptions are perfectly in line with the actions of the children of Israel described all throughout the Tanach, and they are no different than those of the New Testament, except that they come from the Jewish Scriptures, prior to Yeshua's first coming, and somehow, that makes them acceptable. Is there a double standard here?

The Jews didn't kill the Messiah.

The most common accusation against the Jewish people that continues to this day is that of deicide (the killing of God). Jews the world around continue to be called "Christ-killers" by Christians and non-Christians alike. There are two problems with that accusation. First, even if some Jewish people were guilty of the crucifixion of Yeshua (and they are not), it would never make sense to paint with broad strokes and render all Jews of all times guilty of the same crime. By the same logic, all Germans would be Nazis and all Muslims would be terrorists. This is ludicrous! But more importantly, Yeshua gave His own life in obedience to the Father (Isa. 53:10), as we read in John 10:17-18: For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My

Father. So, in reality, we all share the guilt without exception (Acts 4:27).

Context is everything.

The very fact that many early Christians took the Scriptures out of context and allegorized much of them doesn't make the New Testament anti-Semitic. It simply makes it misinterpreted and misapplied. Can Christians be anti-Semitic? I think that history speaks clearly on that matter; yes, they can! But are they anti-Semitic because they follow the teachings of Yeshua of Nazareth? Absolutely not! Two thousand years of Scripture-twisting by the church to accommodate and justify atrocious behavior against the Jews have left a bloody stain on mankind in general and the church in particular. But it is not based on anything taught in the Bible.

So, it is fair to say that Christian anti-Semitism is not Christian at all. If one takes the Bible literally, all have sinned and fall short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23). "All" means Jews and non-Jews alike, without exception. Christian anti-Semitism is simply anti-Semitism committed by Christians who read their Bible improperly and use it as an excuse to ostracize and demonize the Jewish people. The Christians who paint—with broad strokes—the Jewish people as a sub-human group are wrong, as are those Jewish people who—with broad strokes—claim that all Christians and the New Testament are anti-Semitic. It is time to keep things in context and approach God's Word with humility and sincerity.

¹There is a debate whether Luke was Jewish or not.



THE JEWISH QUESTION AND THE RISE OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN 14TH CENTURY SPAIN, PART 1

By Stuart Wallis

How does anti-Semitism develop? Why does it continuously raise its ugly head? And most importantly, what is the church supposed to do about this hatred toward God's chosen people? Stuart Wallis answers these questions in a four-part series, beginning in this edition of Ariel Magazine with an introduction into the history of the Spanish Inquisition.





On October 27, 2018, 46-year-old Robert Bowers walked into the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and opened fire on the Jewish people attending Shabbat morning services during a baby-naming ceremony. “All Jews must die!” he yelled. Prior to the shooting, Bowers, a professed Christian, made several anti-Semitic comments on social media.

On April 27, 2019, 19-year-old Timothy Earnest entered the Chabad synagogue of Poway, California, on the last day of Passover armed with an AR-15 style rifle and began shooting, killing one and injuring the rabbi, a child, and another person. Earnest, too, proclaimed to be a Christian and left a seven-page letter spelling out his reasoning for his actions. In his letter, he spewed stereotypical hatred for the Jewish people, whom he blamed for killing Yeshua, controlling the media, and being responsible for white genocide. “They deserved to die!” he reasoned.

In July of 2019, federal investigators arrested an alleged neo-Nazi and charged him with making anti-Semitic threats as well as a threatening video in which he is seen shooting randomly, as if practicing for a future massacre of helpless victims. Kelsey, whose religious beliefs are unknown, claims that “everywhere the Jews go in the world they cause trouble.”

What is going on? Are these three recent occurrences incidental or are they a trend? Two of these alleged killers claimed to be Christians. What are we to do with these claims? These are only some of the questions that I and others are asking. Anti-Semitism

is nothing new. It has been around since God called Abram to be the father of the Jewish race, but today it may occur in the name of Messiah.

In the first century, prior to Acts 10 and the conversion of Cornelius, the vast majority of believers were Jewish—they were the evangelists to the world. In Acts 4, when we find the apostles John and Peter preaching Messiah openly, they were commanded by the Sanhedrin to no longer preach in the name of Yeshua. John and Peter defied the orders and said they could not stop preaching about what they had seen and heard. The two, as well as the other apostles, were often beaten, imprisoned, and even martyred for preaching Yeshua.

Current events and this biblical account steered me to a premise question and a journey through history leading to the dark past of the faith I profess. My question 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?” Violent anti-Semitism at the hands of nominal Christians had to have had a beginning. What I found was both disturbing and enlightening.

Something Timothy Kelsey wrote stuck in my mind: “Everywhere the Jews go in the world they cause trouble.” The pejorative term used, along with the unbiblical falsehood that Kelsey is alluding to, is something that has arisen in every nation the Jewish people have called home: “The Jewish Question.” The Jewish Question, also called “The Jewish Problem,” was a term coined by Jewish historian

and author Lucy Dawidowicz in her epic WWII book, *The War Against the Jews 1933-1945*.¹ Although this term was coined by Dawidowicz, the question is not limited to her time. The central point of this question is: “What do we do with all of these ‘Jews’ in our land?” Throughout history, this question has been asked when the Jewish people of that nation reach a level where Jewish prosperity and control seemingly becomes threatening. Jealousy and fear are often the root cause of this question being asked; it goes far beyond the conventional accusation that the Jewish people are “Christ-killers,” as many past nations who have asked this question did not know Yeshua.

It is by no means a new question reserved for the 20th century and beyond, as it was first asked by the new king of Egypt in Exodus 1:8-10, *Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, “Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come, let us deal wisely with them, or else they will multiply...”* Evidence of the “Jewish Problem” is again found in the book of Esther, chapter three, where Haman creates an edict to eliminate the Israelites of Persia. Everywhere the Jewish people have gone, the same question arises. But neither the king of Egypt nor Haman were believers, so when was the “Jewish Question” first asked by a nation of professing Christians?

My study resulted in sorting through a litany of anti-Semitic writings by the hands of Christians nearly from the inception of the faith. Almost immediately after Constantine

¹ Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews: 1933-1945*, (New York, NY: Bantam Press, 1986).



decreed Christianity to be the national religion of the Roman Empire in A.D. 313, anti-Semitic rhetoric began to be written by some of the earliest Church Fathers. Jerome (A.D. 347-420) as well as John Chrysostom (A.D. 354-407) penned many anti-Semitic papers. Chrysostom especially railed against the Jewish feasts, wishing to rid the Christian world of those “perverse customs.”²

In centuries to come, more anti-Semitic writings were to be found, as well as periodic uprisings and violence against Jewish people; but what is found in 14th century Spain makes a clear pivot from rhetoric to action that led to wholesale killings of the Jewish people of Spain at the hands of Christians in the monumental massacre of 1391. This calamity resulted in what remains a dark stain upon Christendom: the Spanish Inquisition. This time and this place created the true watershed moment in Jewish-Christian relations.

How the Jewish people first arrived in Spain is often disputed, though once there, they multiplied rapidly. No doubt their arrival came shortly after the crucifixion of Yeshua. They experienced different levels of prosperity and persecution under the Visigoths, who controlled the Iberian Peninsula between the 5th and the 8th centuries, as well as the Muslim Moors, who inhabited the land from the 8th to the mid-13th century.

The gradual reconquest of the land by Christians did little to interrupt the rise of prosperity the Iberian Jewish natives enjoyed while under Moorish rule. When St. Fernando (Ferdinand III of Castile) conquered the city of



Black Death

Seville in 1224, he allowed the Jewish inhabitants of the city to retrofit four mosques into synagogues and granted them some prime land upon which to build their homes. However, for these conveniences Fernando imposed two strict conditions: The Jewish people of Spain would refrain from proselytizing among Christians as well as refrain from insulting the Christian faith in any way. Nevertheless, there was conflict between the Jewish people and their Roman Catholic neighbors.

Prosperity increased under Christian rule, allowing the Jewish people to freely multiply and thrive, culminating at the century's close with great power and wealth, nearly becoming a state within the state. By the beginning of the 14th century, the estimated total population within the Spanish kingdoms was 30 million.³ Based on tax

records, of the 30 million, approximately seven million were Spanish Jews. Although they were a minority, they acquired power and influence far above their numbers. They became so powerful in the state that the impositions earlier set by Fernando became impossible to enforce.

Ninety-one years before the massacre, the Jewish people of Spain controlled much of the finance and commerce, and they were virtually the only bankers. Moneylending—a practice forbidden by the Catholic Church at any rate of interest—became their main source of income. Considering the high risk of default, they loaned money at rates authorized by the kings of Navarre and Aragon of 20 per cent. In Castile, it reached 33 1/3 per cent. It is important to note that the moneylenders were permitted these high rates due to the risks and short-

² John Chrysostom, *Against the Jews, Homily I chapter 5*, (http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/chrysostom_adversus_judaeos_01_homily1.htm 2011).

³ William Thomas Walsh, *Isabella of Spain: The Last Crusader* (Pickle Partners Publishing, 2016), Loc. 3573.

age of coins,⁴ and the rates were often negotiated lower. Due to the church's restrictions on lending with interest, the Jewish bankers provided an invaluable resource and doubtless had no shortage of customers in this pre-Renaissance age.

Due to the Jewish moneylenders' great skill in the area of finance, kings would often do business with them, but in turn, the lenders often required heavy collateral or political concessions. One concession consisted of the farming out of tax districts. Now some of the wealthier Jewish moneylenders became tax collectors, adding their service fee on top of what was to be collected. Naturally, this did not sit well with the locals and peasants. What made matters worse, however, was that in addition to the taxes, they also collected the mandatory tithe to the church in those districts. Imagine the furor this created among the Christians.

The Jewish people of Spain were now in positions of power unlike any other time in the Diaspora. They had become practically untouchable. The lower classes of Spain hated what they considered to be pretentiousness and resented Jewish protection by the kings. They often protested to no avail.

About this time, the church in Rome began to take notice of what was occurring in Spain and attempted to prevent the Spanish government from employing Jewish people. It also ordered the cessation of all moneylending. But by then, it was too late. Not only were the Jewish people invaluable to the monarchies as moneylenders, but they were also so vital to the kingdoms in the fields of admin-

istration, science, medicine, math, astrology, and architecture that the cries of the lower classes fell on deaf ears.

The situation had reached a boiling point for the lower classes, and they were ripe for an uprising in search of a leader. The kingdom of Navarre in the north of Spain was the first to receive a foretaste of what was to come. In 1328, a Franciscan friar stirred a crowd to rise against the Jewish natives. Throughout the spring of that year, he incited the horde with his sermons, which precipitated the slaughter and pillage of the Jewish people of Navarre, killing as many as ten thousand.⁵

Resentment and hatred increased but were abruptly halted by the commencement of the Black Death, which claimed the lives of nearly 25 million Europeans. Although the Jewish casualties were just as high, it did not stop the populous from blaming the Jews, accusing them of poisoning the wells. This rumor resulted in rampant riots and murder.

After the devastation of the four-year plague, uprisings resumed and

would likely have come to Castile as they did to Navarre were it not for the rise of King Pedro the Cruel of Castile, who ruled from 1350-1369. Pedro ensured Jewish prosperity as king and is reported to have been Jewish himself. It was a widely accepted rumor that Pedro was substituted in the cradle for a girl by his mother, Queen Maria, who had been warned by the king that if she did not produce a son, he would kill her. Not only was his Jewishness believed by the citizens of Castile, news of his heritage reached Pope Urban V, who left no doubt to the truth of the claim by denouncing Pedro as a slayer of Christians and Moors.

Pedro gave his kinsmen total control of the government, financing his war with his illegitimate half-brother Henry II of Trastamara. Pedro provided protection for his brotherhood but was eventually overpowered by Henry II, who, after beheading his adversary, became the undisputed king of Castile. Henry, who was no friend to the Jewish people of Spain, cancelled all debt they held over Christians and Moors and imposed a heavy tax on them. This tax became so burdensome that some were forced to become slaves. Henry was no fool, however, as he saw the benefits of utilizing their skills in finance, medicine, and the like. But one thing was now certain: The Jewish people of Spain would no longer be allowed to live in the land as they once had.

Things became so violent for the Jewish natives that by 1388, under the rule of King John I, they were ordered to live separately from the Christians in districts appointed to



Ferrand Martinez

⁴ Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I (United States of America, The Macmillan Company, 1922) Loc. 1874-1885.

⁵ Ibid., Loc. 1929.



1391 massacre

them. These districts were called *Juderias*. The Jewish people were required to live in these ghettos and could only do commerce in the public square.

These new conditions were not enough for one fanatical Dominican friar, Ferrand Martinez. The Dominicans were now in charge of the Inquisitions already taking place in Europe. Perhaps feeling emboldened by his order's position and role, Martinez took it upon himself to solve the centuries-old "Jewish problem" in Spain. His sermons railed against and berated them, alleging they were an accursed and condemned race, wrongly applying the judgment inflicted by Yeshua upon the generation of Pharisees of Matthew 12. His oration was so toxic that attempts were made to silence his rhetoric by both the archbishop and the Pope. As the Catholic Church did not have, nor would she give, authority

to kill or terrorize those of other faiths, Martinez was commanded to cease his quest, which he defiantly ignored.

On June 9th, 1391, Martinez and his accomplices marked a day in history that would forever change the Spanish kingdoms. The mob attacked the Jewish inhabitants of Seville by storming the *Juderias*, killing all those who would not receive baptism. Thousands died in the massacre, but many more accepted baptism rather than face certain death.

In other cities, news of what was taking place in Seville quickly spread, sparking further riots and killings without pity for age or gender. Learning of the coming onslaught, many terrified Jewish victims-to-be sought clergy, clamoring for baptism rather than taste death. Although the estimates are often challenged and revised lower, by summer's end, as many as 50,000 Jewish victims were

slaughtered and upwards of one million received baptism.⁶

The year 1391 created a new class of people in Spain: Jewish converts to Christianity, labeled *Conversos*, or "New Christians." These New Christians were now obligated to follow Roman Catholic Church law and abandon any and all practice of Judaism under pain of torture, fines, imprisonment, and death. Naturally, many who accepted baptism did so only to escape execution and continued to live in the traditions of their fathers. That moved Catholic authorities to open investigations which examined these *Conversos*, with torture as one of the tactics of the Inquisition.

These events of Spain have had lasting effects on Jewish/Christian relations. Sadly, most Christians, even those who are true believers in Messiah Yeshua, are painfully ignorant of this period in time as well as many of the atrocities experienced by Jewish people by the hands of Christians. They, whose past actions haunt Jewish/Christian relations to this day, have produced an inherent distrust of followers of Messiah by Jewish people. The Crusades, inquisitions, pogroms, and the Holocaust are often considered by Jewish people to be acts done by Christians. Even the writings of Luther and Calvin, two leaders of the Reformation, contain anti-Semitic rhetoric. Those who haunt our present, mentioned at the beginning of this article, also committed their crimes in the name of Messiah. It makes little difference to Jewish people if those declaring Messiah are misguided or profess Him falsely. All

⁶ Walsh, Loc. 3617

Seville,
Castile
Spain



they hear is that the crimes were done, once again, under the banner of the cross.

Given the massacre in Spain, and the actions of the synagogue shooters in the US, it is thoroughly valid and dutiful to question the validity of their claims to Messiah. As true ambassadors of Messiah, it is our duty to condemn anti-Semitic rhetoric that is so often heard today among believers and unbelievers alike. The Jewish people have been a blessing in every nation they call home. These nations, too, have experienced blessings by their gracious treatment of them, fulfilling the promise given in Genesis 12:3. If we, as true Christians in this country, do not stand with the Jewish people

and condemn every future attack against them, not only will Jewish outreach continue to be hampered, but our nation's demise is soon to come. To be on the wrong side of the Jewish people is to be on the wrong side of God.

Our love for those without Messiah must never exclude the Jewish people. The forced conversions and forced baptisms by the Catholic

Church in 14th-century Spain did not aid in growing the body of Messiah; it likely did more to hurt the body. My prayer is that believers begin reaching out to the Jewish people and witness for Messiah through word and deed, attempting to mend those broken fences with a better knowledge of our past. Pray for our nation and for the Jewish people of our nation!



Stuart Wallis is an ordained pastor in Canby, Oregon, where he lives with his wife of 29 years and three of their five children. He received his bachelor's degree in Messianic Studies from Tyndale Biblical Institute and Seminary as well as an extensive education in Jewish Studies through Friends of Israel in New Jersey. This sought-after speaker may be contacted at stuartwallisministries@gmail.com.



LOVE ANTI-SEMITISM YES-HUA
 TENATIONS SOUTH-PEACE
 UNITY EVIL PATIENCE ANIMOSITY
 WEST EAST INTENTION NORTH

PSALM 83: ETERNAL HATRED

VERSUS

ETERNAL LOVE

By Jacques Isaac Gabizon



Many prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures accuse the various Arab states of perpetually hating Israel and the Jewish people. This hatred began with Ishmael and has been seething ever since. A passage that summarizes this sentiment is Psalm 83. Yet, as this article will show, the perpetual hatred is met with God's eternal love, offering protection to His people and redemption to anyone who will hear.

CARPE HUMILITY ATTACKING
 PUNISHMENT HISTORY PRIDE
 DESTROY FORGIVENESS
 LAMB OF GOD RECONCILIATION



Ishmaelites



Philistia





Psalm 83 speaks of a set of ten nations that will come together to make a covenant. In verse 4 of the psalm, the Spirit recorded their intentions: *Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more.* These nations are different from the ones that are seen attacking Israel in Ezekiel 38-39. The ten nations in Psalm 83 are the immediate neighbors of Israel. The prophecy brings people from the south, west, east, and north of Israel together and showcases what other prophets described as eternal hatred. The beauty of Psalm 83 is that it contrasts this eternal hatred with God's eternal love. This love is stronger than death, and it is calling every one of these nations to come to God. While they say, *Let us come and destroy*, Asaph, the author of this psalm, says, *That they may seek Your Name, O LORD* (v. 16). The nations are being misled by some passion they cannot explain, and so we also pray with Asaph, *That they may seek Your Name, O Lord.* This conduct is being like Yeshua, for while on the *Tav*, on the cross, and suffering as no other man has ever suffered, His thoughts were for others, for their welfare, for their salvation.

The extent of the nations' mysterious animosity is seen in the first five verses of Psalm 83. This is a psalm of lament, as Asaph sees this coalition of nations ready to attack Israel and calls on God to respond. In verse 1, he addresses Him as *Elohim*, a plural name, before making a threefold request: *do not be silent, do not hold your peace, do not be still.* This is followed by God's name *El*, which is in the singular. It is as if the author was calling on the fullness of God to come

and protect His people; and God, when He comes to the aid of His people—whether it is the nation of Israel or the individual believer—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit rise as one, as the *echad* of Deuteronomy 6:4.

Often, evil seems to grow without restraint; it looks like it is winning, plotting, and doing whatever it wishes. But this is only an illusion, for God is in control, restraining evil and eventually wiping it out completely. Evil interprets God's patience and eternal love for weakness. Therefore, the nations in this psalm are bragging loudly, but *El* is coming back. The name *El* speaks of the power of God. Asaph is calling on the almighty God.

In verse 2, the Spirit tells us that the nations are making a *tumult*. In Hebrew, the word "tumult" means to "cry aloud," "to mourn," and "to rage." The verse continues: *those who hate You have lifted up their head.* There is a noteworthy progression in this verse from hatred to the raising of heads, the exaltation of the self. This is where a lack of love leads. These nations act just like their leader, who still wants to take God's place. He is not mentioned here by name, but the Hebrew reveals who he is. The Hebrew word for "head" is *rosh*, and the way the verse is written is unusual. It may very well suggest the name *Rosh* found in Ezekiel 38, the head, the *great prince* who will lead the war against Israel, because in the original language, the verb "lifted up" is plural, while *rosh* is singular. Grammar would require the verse to read: *they lifted up their roshim*, plural for "heads," but it says, *they lifted up Rosh*, singular and without an article. Hence, the translation could read: *they lifted up this one*

Rosh, making a direct connection with the great chief Gog, who is at the root of this instigation of rage against God and His people. It is as if all these nations worked together toward one goal under one leader.

The name *Rosh* is also seen in the first Messianic prophecy, in Genesis 3:15, where it says: *He [the Messiah] shall bruise Rosh, And you shall bruise heel.* If *Rosh* is a name, *heel* must also be a name, because the noun is also missing an article. In Hebrew, the word "heel" is *rakev*, the root of the name Jacob; and so, while the Messiah will bruise the head of *Rosh*, *Rosh* will bruise Jacob's (or Israel's) heel. What a great summary of the history of the Bible!

Verse 3 of Psalm 83 is beautifully designed, stating that these nations *have taken crafty counsel against Your people.* The expression "crafty counsel" means that these nations will craft a secret, confidently plotting against Israel. Their confidence may be the result of their numbers. After all, these are ten nations coming together against one. Yet, the Spirit responds to their confidence by speaking of Israel as His *sheltered ones*. Other translations render the expression as "treasured ones." One hides a treasure and shelters it, and so the verse may be translated as: "those who are hidden in Your secret places." While the forces of evil secretly devise plans to kill Israel, God will shelter His people.

The intention of the nations is seen in verse 4: *"Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more."* The world has been conspiring against Israel for a very long time. This can be seen in all of Scripture, and it can be seen in the two thousand years



of Jewish Diaspora. In more recent times, such as in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973, nations got together and pronounced these very words while planning their attacks on the newly birthed nation. The difference in Psalm 83 is that it speaks of an assembly of nations never seen before in history. We know of no period when all these nations gathered together in order to cut Israel off from being a nation. However, we are facing a wave of anti-Semitism that will prepare the way for this attack. This anti-Semitism is different than previous forms of anti-Semitism. Phyllis Chesler writes: "What's new about the new anti-Semitism is the speed and frequency at which anti-Semitic thoughts and deeds are displayed and repeated over and over again, 24/7, around the world."¹ Aided by the internet, politicians, the media, and many others spread unfiltered propaganda on a daily basis. Like the ten nations in Psalm 83, they see many people rising up against Israel and think that victory is at hand. Thus, they plot against God's treasure but only to their own demise. This new anti-Semitism is even creeping into evangelical churches through replacement theology. But Psalm 83 is a powerful short chapter that denounces all these attempts and brings out God's great love and protection of Israel. Verse 4 expresses nothing but

the world's wishful thinking, for in Jeremiah 31:35-36, the Lord has already confirmed that such a thing will never happen. God compares those who try the impossible as a hungry man who dreams of food (Isa. 29:8). In the Scriptures, He is called "the God of Israel" 203 times. Furthermore, the Word says that the names of the twelve tribes of Israel will be engraved on the gates of heaven forever. Israel is here to stay.

Verse 5 notes that these nations *have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee*. In normal times, these nations would not have agreed on much at all. Like the Pharisees and the Sadducees, they have a strong animosity toward one another. However, in their hatred of the Jews, they come together in one accord. Hatred is not a good glue. The subjects will eventually turn against each other.

Verses 6-8 reveal the identity of the nations who are saying such silly things. They are *the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagrites; Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assyria also has joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot*.

The first nation mentioned is Edom, which is today's southern Jordan. Edom was always among the fiercest

of Israel's enemies. In rabbinic writings, Edom has become the name of all the enemies of Israel, and the rabbis even called Rome "Edom." The book of Obadiah is devoted to the Edomites, their pride, their wisdom, their riches, and their fall. We do not know when this book was written, and we know even less about the author; but it has become a very contemporary book, for it speaks of the final judgment of Edom and closes with the second coming of the Messiah. Of all the nations mentioned in Psalm 83, Edom is the closest to Israel. The father of Edom was Esau, the twin brother of Jacob. Throughout history, Esau tried, and is still trying, to regain his eldership. Edom's thoughts toward Israel are laid out in Ezekiel 35:10 and 36:2. Edom wants the land and claims the ancient heights. Therefore, Edom represents all those who claim ownership of the land. Obadiah 10 predicts the demise of Edom, stating: *For violence against your brother Jacob, Shame shall cover you, And you shall be cut off forever*. Edom will disappear and with it the spirit of Edom—the desire to possess Israel—will be gone forever and ever.

In Psalm 83, the tents of Edom are paired with the Ishmaelites. It is impossible to figure out who this people group is today but not impossible to see the strong connection with

¹Phyllis Chesler, *The New Anti-Semitism* (Jerusalem, Israel: Gefen Publishing House, 2015), 107.







CARE HUMILITY ATTACKING PUNISHMENT HISTORY PRIDE DESTROY FORGIVENESS JOY LAMB OF GOD RECONCILIATION

Edom. Originally, the Ishmaelites were roaming the southern part of Israel. Genesis 25:18 notes that they expanded their influence through all of Israel. But how can we understand their mention in Psalm 83? It is possible that like Edom (whose father Esau tried to regain his position as firstborn), the Ishmaelites (whose father Ishmael also lost his position as firstborn) is trying to regain his place. Edom and the Ishmaelites together sum up the argument of Israel's neighbors today that they were there first, that the land is theirs, and that the covenant was made with Ishmael and not with Isaac. The God of the Bible, however, disagrees. After all, it is His land.

In Psalm 83, the Ishmaelites and the Hagrites are in the plural, perhaps to indicate their influence over all the Middle East. The Hagrites descended from Hagar, the mother of Ishmael. These two nations may represent the great influence and conviction of those in and around Israel who claim that Israel is a usurper and that the descendants of Isaac and Jacob are invaders. The Hagrites are believed to have lived to the east of Gilead, which today is central Jordan.

Also in modern central Jordan is the next nation mentioned: Moab. While less fierce than Edom, the Moabites were often at war with Israel,

and the people today occupying their place have kept the same hatred.

Then comes a group of three: Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek. This brings us to the north of Israel. Gebal is in Lebanon, north of Beirut. This indicates Lebanon's participation in the coming wars against Israel. Ammon is today's northern Jordan, vis-à-vis the West Bank. The name of the capital of Jordan, Amman, comes from the name "Ammon." At the time of David, the city was known as Ammon. The third nation mentioned is Amalek. Like Edom, the Amalekites were also descendants of Esau. In contrast to the other nations in the land, they were spread out and inhabited a vast territory. After separating from the Edomites, they were in Ephraim (Jdg. 12), at Ziklag (1 Sam. 30), and finally in the Negev (Num. 13). Haman was an Amalekite. At the time of Josephus, in the first century, the Amalekites were called "Idumea," for Edom. Herod was called an Idumean.² The Ammonites and the Amalekites often partnered against Israel. Their hatred against Israel became a type of the same hatred we find today.

Then comes *Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre*. Philistia is the Gaza Strip, where we find one of the fiercest enemies of Israel, Hamas. Tyre represents southern Lebanon; Hezbollah primarily operates from that

part of the country. Hence, here we have the most vocal enemies of Israel, Hamas and Hezbollah, together. Hamas is a group of extremist Sunni Muslims, while Hezbollah is a group of extremist Shiite Muslims. The conflict between these two factions divides the Middle East, yet their hatred of Israel unites them—a fact that Psalm 83 predicted some 3,000 years ago.

Finally, verse 8 states that *Assyria also has joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot*. While Assyria primarily covers Iraq and parts of Syria, in Ezra 6:22 the Persian king Darius was called the *king of Assyria*. Hence, in Psalm 83, Assyria may well represent Iran. The country is mentioned not as an extra nation, but as the tenth nation, closing the circle. It is more like the leader, the instigator. Ten is usually the number of the perfection of divine order. Here, it is turned into a number of evil. Psalm 83 says that *Assyria helped the children of Lot*. In Hebrew, the verse reads: *they have been an arm to the sons of Lot*. The children of Lot are Moab and Ammon. Today, Iran helps the north, the west, and now the east, but we have known it for 3,000 years. Psalm 83 is that "contemporary."

These are the ten neighbors of Israel that will unite in a war against the Jewish people. What follows is a

²Antq. 2.5-6.



series of six examples of people in history who rose against Israel and fell, with the six punishments for these nations:

⁹ *Deal with them as with Midian,
As with Sisera,
As with Jabin at the Brook
Kishon,*

¹⁰ *Who perished at En Dor,
Who became as refuse on the
earth.*

¹¹ *Make their nobles like Oreb and
like Zeeb,
Yes, all their princes like Zebah
and Zalmunna,*

¹² *Who said, "Let us take for
ourselves
The pastures of God for a
possession."*

¹³ *O my God, make them like the
whirling dust,
Like the chaff before the wind!*

¹⁴ *As the fire burns the woods,
And as the flame sets the moun-
tains on fire,*

¹⁵ *So pursue them with Your
tempest,
And frighten them with Your
storm.*

¹⁶ *Fill their faces with shame,*

Six is the number of man. It was the number that marked the height of Goliath who was destroyed by a single stone. It is the number of the Antichrist at its fullest: Three times 6, when he thought he was God. The examples are mentioned because the nations involved said the same thing as those ten nations: *Let us take for ourselves The pastures of God for a possession* (v. 12). The expression "pastures of God" refers both to Israel and to Jerusalem. The nations still want to take for themselves the land that God has given to His people.

There will be several sets of ten nations that will participate in future attacks on Israel. There are the ten nations mentioned in Ezekiel. These are nations north, south, east, and west of Israel. Another ten nations are mentioned in Psalm 83. They also come from the four corners, but these are very close to Israel, even within the land of Israel. Two other sets of ten nations are mentioned by Daniel and John. Daniel 2:41 speaks of ten toes and Revelation 13:1 of the ten horns of the beast. Combining the numbers, there are a lot of people who will come against Israel. While they show their eternal hatred and want to make war with heaven, God in turn shows them eternal love until they have consumed every attempt of grace and judgment follows. Love demands that sin be judged, either on the *Tav* (the cross) or by the unbeliever himself who will assume this judgment. But God's eternal love is shown until the very end, even at Armageddon.

Yeshua is the Lamb of God. In the book of Revelation, He is called the "Lamb" 28 times, and the word is used exclusively of Him. However, the Greek word used in Revelation is different from the word used in the Gospels. It is *arnion*, which means "a little lamb." Revelation 17:14 speaks of the moment when Yeshua will come to stop the wars against Israel. He will not come as a soldier but as an *arnion*, a little lamb, surely to offer the blessing of salvation for the last time. We read in this verse: *These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them* (Rev. 17:14a). A lamb is usually defenseless. Therefore, the nations will misinterpret His coming as a lamb for a sign of weakness, but it will be an act of grace, offering them salvation up

to the very last moment. At the same time, the verse clarifies who the lamb really is: the *Lord of lords and King of kings*. Hence, the fact that Yeshua is called "lamb" in Revelation is yet another sign of His great patience and love, even toward His enemies. Such is our God, full of love, compassion, and patience.

Conclusion

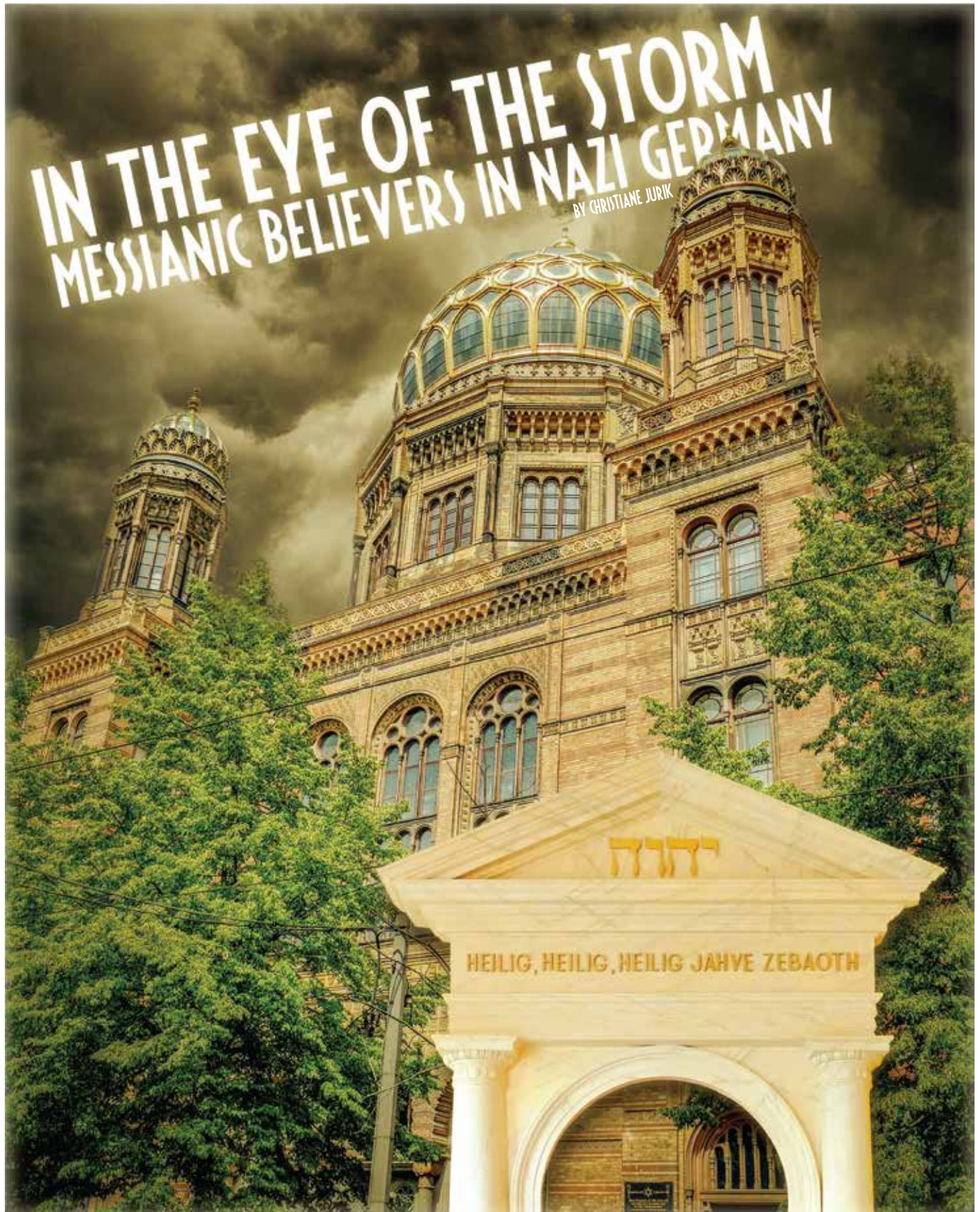
Psalm 83 proves that anti-Semitism is hatred against the God of the Bible. Israel's enemies in verse 2 are called *Your enemies*, God's enemies. Those who plot against Israel *hate You*, meaning God. The equation is simple: Anti-Semitism is an attack on God, and it is the result of hating the God of the Bible. The question for believers is: What do we do with all this information? How can we put it to use, and what is expected of us?

The author of Psalm 83 listed the ten nations that will come against Israel. Then he listed six punishments that will in turn come on these nations. In verse 16, he ends with a prayer and says, *That they may seek Your name, O LORD*. God sends punishment as an act of grace, for He could wipe whole nations out with a word. Yet, He is persistent and wishes that they would wake up and repent. As believers, we ought to pray for the people who hate Israel. We ought to speak the words of Yeshua who said, *Forgive them for they do not know what they do* (Lk. 23:34). We need to pray that they accept the love of God in their lives so that they will see and grasp the truth about God. Love is a choice and a learning process. Let us accompany those who hate Israel in this process.





By Christiane Jurik





Above the rooftops of Berlin's center shines once again the golden dome of the New Synagogue.

This year, Ariel Magazine published an article by the president of Chosen People Ministries, Dr. Mitch Glaser. In the article, Dr. Glaser answered the question whether Polish Jews had someone – anyone – who would have told them about their Jewish Messiah during World War II. This question has haunted me ever since. What about the Jewish people in the eye of the storm, in Germany itself? What was their spiritual condition going into the Holocaust? Was there someone – anyone – in the “slaughterhouses” of Europe who would have shared the good news of Messiah Jesus with them?

To answer the question, I undertook a trip to Germany and, accompanied by my 19-year-old son, started my research in Berlin. Above the rooftops of the city's center shines once again

the golden dome of the New Synagogue. The history of this building has been a powerful mirror of Jewish life in Germany for the last 150 years. Built in the second half of the 19th century, the synagogue allowed up to 3,200 people to come together and worship their God. Because of its Moorish style and resemblance to the Alhambra in Spain, it was an important architectural monument until fanatical thugs set fire to the beautiful building in the Kristallnacht of 1938. Two years later, the Nazis confiscated the rooms that were still usable. Finally, in 1943, the synagogue took a near fatal blow during Allied bombings. After the war, the district of Berlin that is home to the New Synagogue fell into the hands of the Soviet occupying forces, who only kept the main façade of the building as a memorial. The rest of the structure was torn down. Today, the rebuilt synagogue houses Berlin's *Centrum Judaicum* and is open to visitors. Next to it is a famous Jewish restaurant called



The rebuilt New Synagogue houses Berlin's Centrum Judaicum.

“Hummus and Friends.” My son and I ate lunch there after visiting the synagogue, and when I asked him what he thought, his answer was short, but oh so true: “All I can think is, ‘In your face, Hitler! You didn't win.’”

The New Synagogue is one of many impressive signs of Jewish life in Germany. Yet, there was another good reason to start my research in Berlin: The most prominent ministry whose goal it was to share the gospel with the Jewish people was headquartered in that city. Called *Gesellschaft zur Förderung des Christentums unter den Juden* (Berlin Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews), this ministry began its work in 1822. Sanctioned and financially supported¹ by King Friedrich Wilhelm III, the work among German Jews, especially in the eastern provinces of Prussia, was sincere. It went beyond the attempts of the “forced” conversions one of my ancestors and innumerable other Jews underwent. In order for this ancestor of mine to be able to become a professor of one of Germany's most renowned universities, he had to be baptized. So, he chose “the lesser of the two evils,”² as he wrote in his memoirs, and became



The Israeli restaurant Hummus and Friends is located right next to the New Synagogue.

¹Christopher Clark, “Missionary Politics. Protestant Missions to the Jews in Nineteenth-Century Prussia.” in *The Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, Vol. 38 (1993), 33.

² The word “evils” is referring to Catholicism and Lutheranism.



a Protestant. He was baptized by the queen of Bavaria, Caroline of Baden, and took on the surname Neumann (Newman) because he felt it adequately expressed the fact that he had successfully freed himself of the “shackles” of religion and ancestry.

This sentiment was typical for German Jews. Many of them wanted nothing more than to assimilate into the culture around them. Many Jewish people killed in the Holocaust were surprised that they would be counted among this people group. Having served in World War I, they saw themselves primarily as Germans and then as Jews.³

In any case, the newly founded Berlin Society was not interested in

nominal conversions. Its goal was to indeed share the good news of the Jewish Messiah with the Jewish people and to “win them to the truth by teaching them as the Lord and His apostles have taught.”⁴ Hence, the focus of the ministry was on tools that had proven to be successful in the past, namely, “the distribution of the New Testament and those religious writings that are useful to bring them to the conviction that Jesus is the Messiah, promised and prophesied by the Old Testament.”⁵ Missionaries, on the other hand, were only to be sent if these texts, distributed in German, Yiddish, and Hebrew, didn’t achieve the goal. The first baptisms orchestrated by the society in Berlin took place

in 1822 with 60 German Jews publicly declaring their faith in Messiah. This was followed by 19 baptisms in 1830; 73 in 1831-34; 32 in 1836; 39 in 1837; 22 in 1838; 13 in 1840, and so forth.⁶

Why are these numbers even important, considering how small they were? According to the Berlin Society, there was a noticeable burden on the Jewish community of the day. On December 24, 1837, an anonymous author published 28 elegies that reflect Jewish forebodings of the darkest kind. Only a few sentences from his writings will demonstrate this sentiment:



The epitaph shall read: Here rests a Jew on foreign soil. He had a longing, he was afflicted, and he endured. His suffering and his sorrow are his trophies. – I heard anxious moaning, the sound of lamentations, a woe. A frightened whimpering, a muffled groaning, such pain-stricken noise! – A fearful whisper seems to rise from the soil, met with dullness coming from heaven. The winds bring to me the lamentation, and the trees pass on whispered woes. – The fire that you have lit will devour you. But they will finish their acts of destruction because the old world is doomed for ruin. A building will be erected; it is the high court. One man will know his duty; it is the hangman. Then a new generation will rise and will only find graves, for heaven will be a grave where they have buried God and the saints. Then a terrible lamentation will fill the earth.⁷

³ See “Frequently Asked Questions.” *Shoah Research Center*, yadvashem.org. Accessed 9/5/2019.

⁴ Friedrich Weichert, “Die Anfänge der Judenmission,” in Hans von Arnim, Walter Delius, *Jahrbuch für Berlin-Brandenburgische Kirchengeschichte*, Vol. 38 (Berlin, Germany: Christlicher Zeitschriftenverlag, 1963), 113.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 132-33.

⁷ Ibid., 135-36.



The Jewish Museum Berlin includes the installation *Shalekhet* ("Fallen Leaves") by Menashe Kadishman. More than 10,000 faces with open mouths, cut from heavy round iron plates, cover the floor of one of the rooms of the building reminding the visitor of the Holocaust

It is hard not to recognize the eschatological undertone of these elegies. However, with hindsight, it is equally hard to not recognize the foreboding of the horrific mass extermination that the Jewish people would suffer in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany.

Historically, most baptized Jews in Germany joined the Lutheran Church. There, even those who were true believers in Yeshua were mostly met with indifference; sometimes with suspicion; or worst, with anti-Semitism. In order to avoid this treatment, some Jewish believers started looking for places of worship where they could stay among themselves. In 1901, the Berlin Society purchased a property in



one of the most urban boroughs of the city, called Prenzlauer Berg. The ministry not only moved its headquarters to the building but soon started construction work of what became known as the *Messias Kapelle* ("Messiah Chapel"). Three days before Christmas of 1902, the chapel opened its doors to the Jewish believers of Berlin.

While the goal of the Berlin Society had been to offer a haven for Jewish believers, its work was closely affiliated with the Lutheran Church. In fact, the chapel officially belonged to the union of Protestant churches that also included the Confessing Church, whose most famous member was Dietrich Bonhoeffer. However, in 1930, the Lutheran Church revoked its support of the work of the Berlin Society and withdrew its pastors from the chapel. From then on, the Messias Kapelle was run by laymen.

In 1935, the Lutheran Synod forbade the baptizing of Jewish people. One of the pastors in Berlin expressed the general sentiment: "I am convinced that the family who told me it would be a horrible thought for them that the hand that baptized a Jew would touch their child is not alone."⁸

Yet, not everyone obeyed the new directives of the Synod. The Messias

Kapelle at this point separated itself completely from any state-run institution and in turn became the most important place of Messianic baptism in Berlin. According to the baptismal records of the time, over 700 German Jews got baptized there in the years between 1933 and 1940.

On November 11, 1938, during the Kristallnacht, the Messias Kapelle and the seat of the Berlin Society were trashed by the Nazis. Still, it would take until January of 1941 for the ministry and the chapel to be officially closed permanently. Ten months later, the first deportation of Jewish people began in Berlin. Records prove that of the 700 Jewish believers who had been baptized in the Messias Kapelle after 1933, 86 were hauled off to the ghettos of Lodz, Riga, Minsk, and Warsaw. Only two of them survived the Holocaust. It is unknown what happened to the rest of the congregation.⁹

Today, the Messias Kapelle is a rare memorial of the work of ministries such as the Berlin Society. The chapel is hardly visible from the outside. In fact, the building is inconspicuously nestled between other houses that look very much the same: painted light grey, or maybe beige, with tall windows and large wooden entryways that lead into dimly-lit foyers. Only a modest plaque above the door notifies the passerby that this house is different and that behind its walls hides a historical treasure of courage and faith.

Unfortunately, the chapel has not been turned into a museum, nor is it accessible to tourists. When I stood in

⁸ Hildegard Frisius, et al., *Evangelisch getauft – als Juden verfolgt* (Berlin, Germany: Evangelisches Landeskirchliches Archiv in Berlin, 2008), 374.

⁹ "Die Messias Kapelle in Berlin- Prenzlauer Berg, Kastanienallee 22. Ein Gedenkort Für Deportierte Christen Jüdischer Herkunft." *Evangelisches Landeskirchliches Archiv in Berlin*, Evangelische Kirche, 2019. Accessed at: landeskirchenarchivberlin.de.



The worship hall of the Messiah Kapelle is now being used as an office. However, the original purpose is still clearly discernable. This was a place where hundreds of Messianic Jews worshipped their God in Germany's darkest time.

front of the building on a beautiful sunny day in May of this year, it was quite early in the morning. Mothers were hurriedly walking their kids to school, baristas were serving steaming cappuccinos, and street cleaners were washing away the dirt of the previous day. A construction worker came and opened the door to the building. I stepped inside behind him, driven by the desire to see what had happened to this place that once served my brothers and sisters in the Lord as a place of worship during history's darkest time. I quickly realized that I had no way of getting past the entrance door. This was not a public place. Just when I was about to give up, a young woman came in, pushing her bicycle past me. I stopped her. "Excuse me," I said, "would you

know anything about the Messiah Kapelle? I have come from the United States to see it. Is there any way to get inside?" The request surprised the woman, but she quickly said, "Certainly. Please follow me."

It turned out that the company she worked for—a marketing and PR firm—now owned the place. The lady led me past a few beautiful rooms flooded by warm sunlight, through a door, and into the worship hall. Words cannot express the emotions that overcame me. The gorgeous room, maybe two stories high, still had an altar, and behind it was the ark, which resembles the marble relief of a Temple. Above it, I read the German words: *Heilig, heilig, heilig, Javhe Zebaot* ("Holy, holy, holy Yahweh Zebaoth"). Like a golden crown, the Hebrew letters *YHWH* rest on this quote from Isaiah 6:3.

An old typewriter was decoratively sitting on the plain altar. The lady quickly removed it, noticing the cam-



While most of the building that houses the Messiah Kapelle has been rebuilt, the entrance hall still has the original art work on the ceiling. Above the arch, it says, "Peace to the one entering."



The German says, "Holy, holy, holy Yahweh Zebaoth."

era dangling from my neck. She said, “I think there is something else that should be placed on the altar instead,” before taking off. A few minutes later, she returned, obviously struggling under the surprising weight of a small wooden box. I quickly came to her aid and realized she was carrying what might have been meant to remind the Jewish worshipers of a portable *Aron Kodesh*.¹⁰

The very large windows let in a lot of light, and while the modern furniture and office tables, the computers, and the cow hides on the floor were supposed to create a hip ambiance, I could still see them—the Messianic believers, huddled together in their pews, anxiously listening for the sound of heavy boots storming the building. They would worship their God and

sing praises to Him for sending His Son to save their souls, all the while knowing that their faith in Messiah would not save their physical lives. Some of these people carried the gospel message, the good news of the atoning death, burial, and resurrection of Yeshua, into the ghettos and concentration camps. They would have continued to worship their God

wherever they were, for He alone offered words of truth and comfort in a time when being one of His chosen people could cost you your life. To these unsung heroes, I imagine the Lord saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord.” (Mt. 25:21)



¹⁰ “Holy Ark.”



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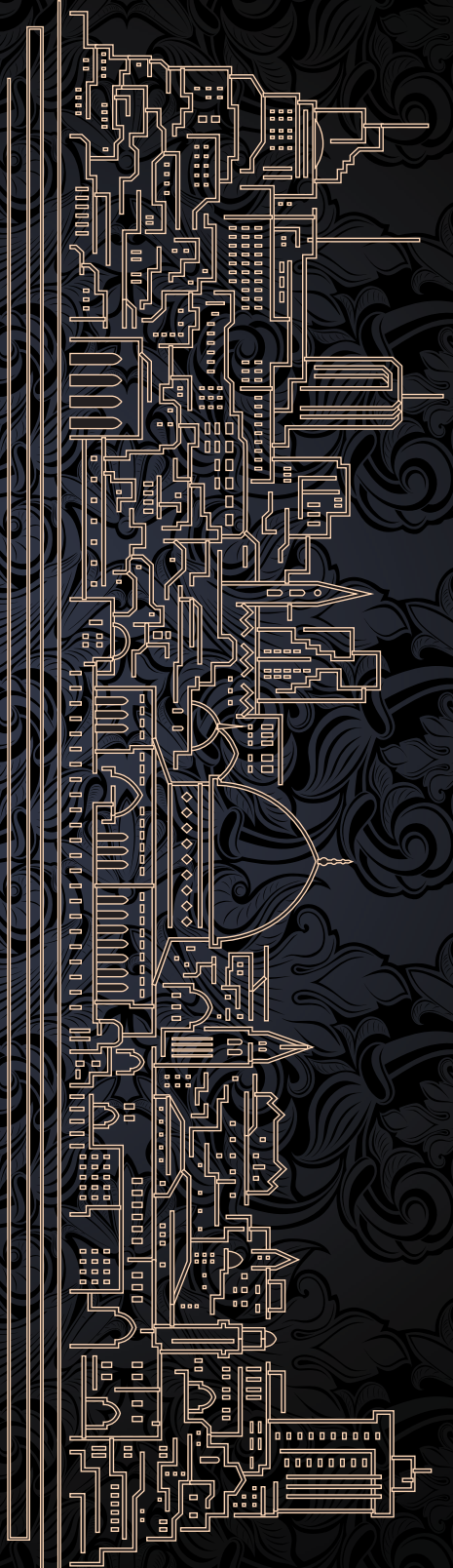
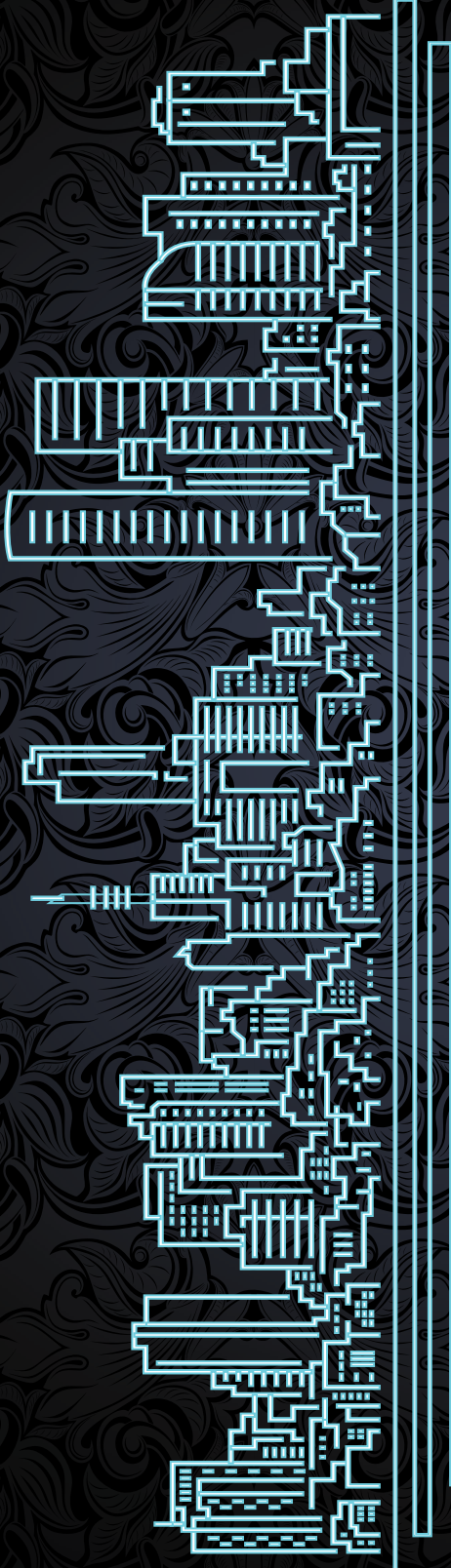
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EAST VS. WEST

By Tim Velasco

The title of this article might conjure up thoughts of China versus the United States, capitalism versus communism, or individualism versus collectivism—all struggles associated with the differences between the East and West of today. However, this is not what I have in mind. I am thinking of the chasm between the East—Jerusalem—and the West—Tel Aviv—in the modern state of Israel, a divide that has grown deeper and deeper as we hear the footsteps of the Messiah drawing ever nearer—a divide I can see even from 6,995 miles away.



There is a saying in Israel that if you want to work, you go to Haifa; if you want to play you go to Tel Aviv; but if you want to pray, you go to Jerusalem. How typical it is for us in our humanity to think this way—to assign places where certain things are to be done, to label and carefully put each activity into its proper place? It is good and orderly, clean and neat. But in many ways the Scriptures tell us a different story.

It seems the God of the Bible is constantly expanding our horizons. Just as we think we have Him all figured out and just as we put Him in His proper place, like Samson escaping the traps of the Philistines once again (Jdg. 16:14), He bursts forth in strength and glory. Indeed, great is the LORD, and worthy to be praised (Ps. 18:3). The heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain Him (2 Chron. 2:6)! Yet, as believers in Yeshua He lives in us (2 Cor. 1:22). This is what I think the psalmist means when he said, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it!” (Ps. 139:6). Yet, it is.

Today, in Israel, and indeed in the whole world, a line between good and evil is being drawn in the sand. On one side are those who openly call good “evil” and evil “good” (Isa. 5:20), and on the other are those who cling to the promises of God (Josh. 23:8; Ps. 119:31) and His marvelous grace as

seen in the Holy Scriptures. Although we may wish to create artificial divides geographically or otherwise, there is no place one can go and escape the reach of our mighty God and His power to save (Ps. 139:7). From a gay bar in Tel Aviv to the heart of Mea Shearim¹ in Jerusalem, God desires that all be saved (1 Tim. 2:4).

Torn between these two opposing poles, between East and West if you will, stands the growing Messianic community in Israel today. Our God has placed them there to be salt and light in a rotting and dark world, to bring the hope of God’s redemption for those who may think themselves too far gone, and to bring His grace to those who insist on earning their own way into the kingdom of God by what they do.

Moses sought refuge in Midian (Ex. 2:15), and there God provided him a wife and taught him humility and service. David sought refuge among the Philistines for a time (1 Sam. 27:1) and there composed some of the psalms and learned how to serve well an unholy, earthly master. Peter in Joppa (Acts 9:43), in the house of a man considered to be unclean, was confronted with his lingering works-based thinking, only to find the Spirit of God in a most unlikely place: the heart of a Gentile centurion (Acts 10:44).

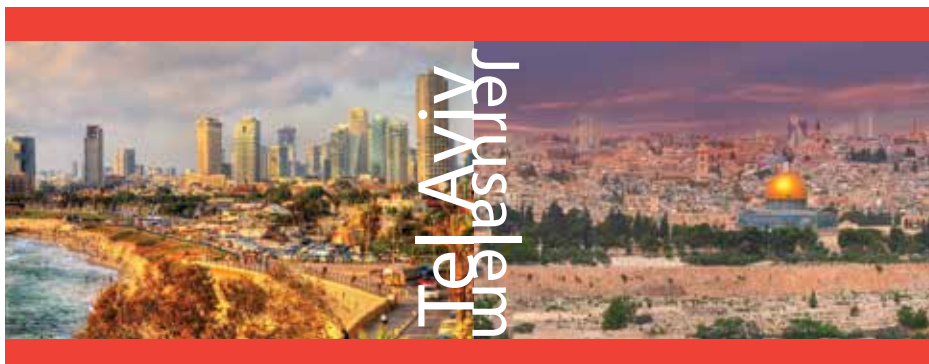
I ask myself: What artificial barriers have I set up in my heart? What orderly, clean, and neat cubby holes have I placed people in—people made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27)? Whom have I placed in the “west” of my mind, too lost to be found? And whom have I placed in the “east” of my mind, too righteous in their own eyes to see divine grace? I can tell you openly and to my shame that I have, at times, considered some to be too far gone and others too self-righteous to know God! Oh Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner (Lk. 18:13)!

So, what should we do (Acts 4:37)? How should we live?

Devote yourself to good, solid teaching (Acts 2:42); much of it is available free of charge at the Ariel website. Stay in fellowship and do not forsake meeting together in a Bible believing church (Heb. 10:25). And pray, pray, and then pray some more (Lk. 18:1). Ask the Lord to soften your heart, empty your shelves, and open your eyes to what is near—to those whom He has placed in your life right now that are perhaps unnoticed as of yet. And please, pray for our brothers and sisters in Israel. Support Ariel’s workers in the land of the Bible (<http://ariel-israel.org.il/>) by contacting our branch directly at gransl@smile.net.il.² They need your help and covet your prayers. Remember the saints in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:24)! And may the Lord our God bless you as you bless them (Gen. 12:3; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Pet. 1:11).

¹Ultra-Orthodox Jewish neighborhood in Jerusalem. The term “Ultra-Orthodox” is not intended to be pejorative but to distinguish between the more fundamentalist of the Orthodox sects in modern Judaism.

²You may also ask the home office how you can help (1-877-242-7435).



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The Law of Messiah is intrinsically different from the Law of Moses. The latter has become obsolete through the death and resurrection of Yeshua the Messiah.

By John B. Metzger

The Law of Messiah



The rule of life for believers today is the Law of Messiah, which is comprised of many imperative commands given in the Gospels and the epistles. The Law of Messiah is unique as it allows people to live in Messiah and have victory over the habitual sin in their lives on a daily basis because of the indwelling Holy Spirit of God. In this new series, John Metzger will expound on the Law of Messiah, starting in this edition of Ariel's Magazine by shedding light on the participants in this law and what the law is.¹



The Participants

The foundation of the Law of Messiah is the New Covenant. This is an unconditional covenant with two participants. The primary participant, revealed in Jeremiah 31:31, is the LORD, who makes this unconditional covenant with the second participant,

Israel, also clearly identified in Jeremiah. You see the same two participants in Ezekiel 36, where more of the nature and purpose of the New Covenant is revealed. In the New Testament, the spiritual benefits of this covenant are extended to the Gentiles, who are the third participant—unseen and unidentified in the Hebrew Scriptures. Paul defines this as the mystery revealed in Ephesians (3:4-9) and Colossians (1:26). Back in Jeremiah, this unconditional covenant is clearly made between God and the *house of Judah* and the *house of Israel*, making the covenant exclusively Jewish, to the nation of Israel only.

A quick and simple Greek language lesson will be helpful here. In the Greek used in the New Testament, there are several tenses that give the reader information about the action taking place. There is a **present active indicative** tense, meaning the subject is acting. There is also a **present passive indicative**, which means that the subject is being acted upon² (for instance, the subject, God, is doing the action to/upon man). There is an **imperative** tense which indicates the giving of a command. For example, the imperative appears in cohortative or positive commands and in prohibitive or negative commands.³

Put into the context of this study, the New Covenant was God acting upon man (indicative) in giving us salvation (regeneration, justification, sanctification, reconciliation, imputation, redemption, and so on), as well as giving us the indwelling presence of

the Holy Spirit who regenerated us and removed our sin. God acted, not man. Man had no part in the salvation given except to believe by faith in the finished work of Messiah on the cross of Calvary. There are 33 positional truth⁴ statements of the **action of God** in our salvation, which are borne out in Scripture in all that He did in saving us from our sins and placing us into His own family. These statements are then followed by His commands, the imperatives, on how we are to walk this *new life in Messiah*. This is the Law of Messiah, with well over 600 commands given to us by Yeshua and His apostles (indicative) that we, as the subject, are now to obey (imperatives) and live by daily. Yeshua saved us (indicative) and then laid out commands (imperatives) on how we are to live and walk in Him.



What Is the Law of Messiah?

The foundation of the Law of Messiah is love. Yeshua gave us an explicit command to love one another even as He and the Father loved us. However, love is not the entirety of the Law of Messiah nor is the Sermon on the Mount or other teachings of Yeshua. His teaching on love forms the foundation of His law, but Yeshua, through the writings and teaching of the apostles, has given us hundreds of new laws that are different in nature and character from the old Mosaic Law.

¹ This series is based on John Metzger's excellent and important book *The Law, Then and Now: What About Grace* (Larkspur, CO: Grace Acres Press, 2019), available through Ariel Ministries at www.ariel.org. The text is published here with minor edits to better fit the format of this magazine.

² Ray Summers, *Essential of New Testament Greek* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1950), 12, 35.

³ Ibid., 113.

⁴ See Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Thirty-Three Things: A Study of Positional Truth*, Manuscript #110 (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, n.d.).

Believers have been empowered to live out these new laws through the power of the Holy Spirit, who resides in them because of the inauguration of the New Covenant by the blood of the covenant through the Lamb of God, Yeshua.

In 1 John 2:6, a standard is set that applies to every true believer in Messiah: We are under a moral and legal obligation to be walking like Yeshua. John states: *He who is constantly saying that he as a habit of life is living in close fellowship with and dependence upon Him is morally obligated just as that One [Yeshua] conducted Himself, also himself in the manner spoken of to be conducting himself* (1 Jn. 2:6).⁵ Wuest focuses on the Greek tenses of these words to point out that we as believers are morally obligated to walk in this present life even as Yeshua Himself walked. That is not possible for humans except by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, who can empower us to live it and to walk it, not in our power but in His power. Notice how high John sets the bar. Such conduct can only be obtained or accomplished by the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers because of the New Covenant for those who surrender to the Holy Spirit. We are under a legal obligation to Yeshua the Messiah, not to Moses; that obligation is not expressed by the externalities of the Mosaic Law, but in the inward heart of every believer, which is again evidence of the outworking of the New Covenant in the hearts and lives of Jewish and Gentile believers in Messiah Yeshua. As Verlyn Verbrugge put it in the *Expositor's Bible Com-*

mentary on Romans and Galatians:

What is this "law of Christ"? Since *nomos* (law) has a wide variety of meanings and Paul is known to play with the meaning of this word, presumably he is referring to the life principle that manifested itself in Christ's own life and that shaped Paul's life, namely, the principle of self-sacrifice and of love as the summary of the law.⁶

Verbrugge is correct: *Nomos* refers to and is connected to the life principle seen in Messiah's life, which was the same principle that shaped Paul's life, namely, self-sacrifice and love (to summarize the Law of Messiah). But his comments reveal an incomplete understanding of the Law of Messiah, and he does not tell us what that law is. His statement concerning the foundation of the Law of Messiah is valid, but it does not explain what was built upon the foundation by the apostles of Messiah.

Love is the fulfilling of the Law of Messiah. This love is speaking of human relationships, but there is more to the Law of Messiah than love. What is lacking is the meat on the bones. The Law of Messiah includes our actions and our behavior, which come from our hearts that have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit through the New Covenant. In addition, this Law of Messiah includes instruction, correction, and warnings. The Law of Messiah has been divinely revealed by Messiah Himself through the teachings of His apostles. Certainly, the Law of Messiah encompasses love, but it consists of more than love: It includes the teachings that the apostles gave to

individuals and to the churches. In the epistles of Paul, James, Peter, John, and the writer of Hebrews, there are well over 600 imperative commands given by Yeshua who Himself is the Word of God (Jn. 1:1-14; Rev. 19:13) through His apostles. These commands are just as authoritative as the laws given by God through Moses in the Old Testament. But Yeshua fulfilled the Mosaic Law and rendered it inoperative by His death, burial, and resurrection, and initiated the Law of Messiah instead.

The Law of Messiah is also a system of law given by Yeshua to His apostles as the standard that we as believers are to walk in. It governs our relationship to God and to humankind in general, as well as our relationship with our brothers and sisters in Messiah Yeshua. His new law comes in the form of imperative commands to teach, instruct, guide, correct, encourage, strengthen, and warn us about sin and false teachers. It also includes the ministry of the Holy Spirit that is to guide us into all truth. As we yield to Him and surrender to Him, He will give us the power to walk the believer's life in the Spirit, walking in the light and not in the flesh, carnality, or darkness.

In the next part of this series, we will examine the purpose of the Law of Messiah and some of its statutes.



John Metzger's excellent and important book *The Law, Then and Now: What About Grace* is available through Ariel Ministries at www.ariel.org.

⁵ Kenneth S. Wuest, *The New Testament: An Expanded Translation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1961), 566.

⁶ Tremper Longman III & David E. Garland, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 11:339.

Israel Tour 2020



Sharon and
J. Isaac Gabizon

A Messianic Perspective

Shalom! We are blessed and excited for this upcoming trip to Israel. This will be a 16-day tour, leaving May 3rd to May 18th, 2020.

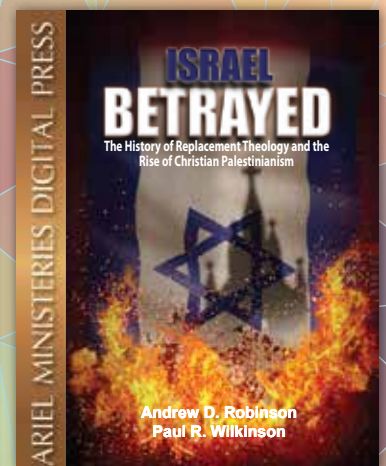
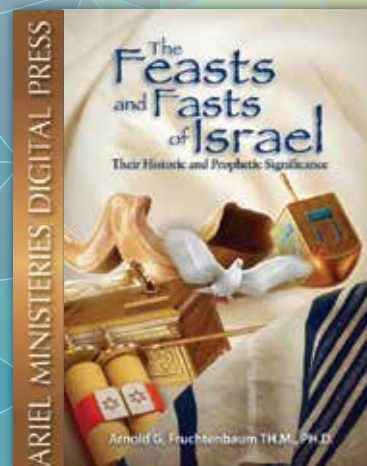
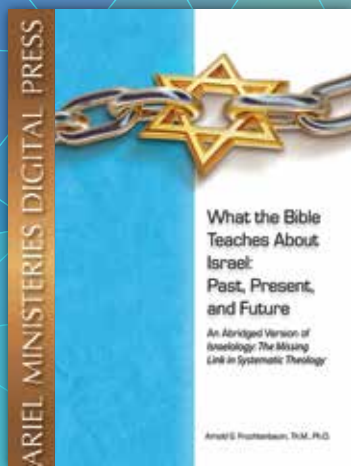
We will have a professional tour guide as well as insightful Bible teaching and gleanings from the Scriptures with J. Isaac Gabizon, director of Ariel Ministries Canada and congregational leader of Beth Ariel Congregation in Montreal, Canada.

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Every year, people from around the world gather together at Camp Shoshanah, Ariel Ministries' conference center in upstate New York. They come to learn from Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum and other wonderful Bible teachers. The classes start with praise music taken from Scripture. Just as

the lessons are taught from a Messianic Jewish perspective, so the music, too, is mostly Messianic. This year, Mottell Baleston, long-time friend of the ministry and teacher at Camp Shoshanah, oversaw the music program. In order to help those who led the worship prepare for

their "gigs," he wrote them a letter which we are publishing here as it showcases the focus of this unique kind of music. The letter is paired with a testimony by one of the brothers who led the worship during one of the eight weeks of Camp this summer.



FROM THE DESK OF MOTTEL BALESTON

June 2019

Dear Camp Shoshanah Music Ministry Members,

Thank you for your willingness to serve in ministry on the 2019 Ariel Ministries' Camp Shoshanah music team. This document will serve as a basic guideline for conducting the music ministry of Camp. I also want to invite the input of all who minister in music so that we can include that into a future revision of these guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING CAMP SHOSHANAH WORSHIP MUSIC: Overall, I am very pleased with the way the Lord has used the Camp music team to encourage worship over the past years. It has been a great blessing to lift up songs of praise that are mostly linked to Scripture. Singing God's Word back to Him embeds it in our hearts and minds. We are not there to sing about ourselves or our personal feelings at the moment, as is becoming more common in some contemporary worship services. We are there to praise our great God and Savior.

As all of you understand, we value the Jewish roots of our faith and most of our camp worship songs reflect a Messianic Jewish style. For many newcomers to Camp who are not Jewish, this is a highlight of their time, singing in Hebrew and learning this music. Additionally, singing Messianic style music reinforces the truth that one can embrace both faith in Messiah as well as Jewish ethnic culture. There does not need to be a conflict between the two. A passage in God's Word that highlights this is found in 1 Corinthians 9:20-22:

To the Jews I became as a Jew that I might win the Jews . . . , To those under law I became as under the law that I might win those who are under the law. . . . , I have become all things to all men so that I might save some.

While we want to emphasize Messianic Jewish style music, we are also free to carefully use Christian praise music that is Scripture-linked. There are many examples of this that lift our hearts to God. One of the things we avoid are songs that express adoration for the culture of institutional Christendom. As many of you know, our Jewish people have experienced much violent persecution over the centuries from those who adored Christendom but somehow managed to hate Jews and ignore the clear teaching of the New Testament.

BIBLICAL BASIS FOR THE USE OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP: We need to recognize that what we do in leading worship is what God has asked us to do. The following verses illustrate this:

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (Eph. 5:19-21)

Let the word of Messiah dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (Col. 3:16)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN MUSIC MINISTRY: Music is ministry! Everyone on the music team is "leading in worship," not just the person who is the perceived leader. This is a profound joy and also a profound privilege. Scripture holds out standards in our lives for those who would stand before the people of God and lead in worship. While none of us are "always" in the place that God wants us to be at all times, the believer who is growing in their relationship with the Lord will increasingly demonstrate the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR THOSE ON THE MUSIC TEAM: In order to accomplish our goals in leading in worship, here are some measures we should follow:

1. Each week's leader will decide on a rehearsal schedule and make that known to those serving that week.
2. The rehearsal time should be thought of as a time dedicated to the Lord. In practical terms, you might want to imagine that there is no one else in the room other than the members of the music team. Frequent interruptions of the rehearsal cause much lost time, as well as frustrate some members of the team. Another distraction is needless talking among the team members during rehearsal about matters that are not related to "ironing out" the music. Normally, all members of the team should be focused on the music leader during rehearsal.
3. The way we present ourselves while leading worship is important. We often focus on "getting the sound right" to make sure that the songs can be sung well since we don't want poor musical performance to distract from the worship. In a similar way, even our appearance can be a distraction from worship. While we want people to focus on the Lord, nevertheless, we are in front of addition to looking at the words on the screen, the students are also looking at us for "cues" regarding word phrasing, etc. If we are wearing something loud or unusual, that will be a distraction. We have no intention to develop a legalistic dress code but rather to have each one give some attention to this thought. Thankfully, this has never been a big concern here.
4. When a song is introduced, team members should be slightly turned toward the person introducing the song.

Please let me know if there are any more items you can think of. May God be pleased to use our efforts to encourage people in worship.

Your brother and fellow music servant,

Mottel Baleston
Isa. 62:1



Making a Joyful Noise

By Mark Melville

This spring, when I received Mottel's email asking for help with worship music for Camp, I was filled with mixed emotions. Having been involved in church/worship music off and on for many years, I knew the rewards and the challenges involved, the myriad of details to consider. Who would run the sound? Who would the other musicians and singers be? Do I want other musicians and singers? Does it matter what I want? How many Messianic songs does this Gentile man know?

There are differences in Messianic worship music. In the same way that Messianic teaching draws from the deep well of Jewish history and culture, Messianic music does as well. Much of the material for these songs is taken directly from the First Testament Scriptures, and the focus is a bit different than standard Christian worship music. Many of the Messianic songs are written in minor keys, which gives them a different feel musically. The instrumentation tends to favor violin and different kinds of percussion, and the shofar is also a common element. Some songs call for praying for the peace of Jerusalem. Some call on *Jehovah Jirah*, our provider. Some speak to the issue of Jew and Gentile being one in Messiah. Many of the songs reflect the core aspects of Messianic theology while praising and glorifying our Maker. They are sung in a mix of both Hebrew and English. Learning the Hebrew parts would be the most challenging task for me.

There were two months to prepare musically and spiritually. My motto would be "freight train." Picture the old west locomotives outfitted with cowcatchers on the front. These were not there for decoration. Most everything in their path would be pushed to the side, and the trains would keep on chugging. Nothing short of a catastrophic event could stop them. With this in mind, I assembled a collection of about sixty songs from which to draw. Many hours were spent in practice, but still I was a bit apprehensive. Then I had a stroke of genius. Maybe my daughter Mia would sing with me! As soon as we began to practice together, I had a peace. The train was now complete with a little caboose. Practice filled our home with praise, and I realized that the blessing was as much for our family as it was for the campers we would lead in singing praises to the Lord.

At the appointed time, we arrived at Camp Shoshanah quite prepared. An Israeli violinist was added to form a trio. There were more responsibilities than in past summers, but they were met with more rewards as well. The other campers were very encouraging and complimentary. The highlight for me was the honor of leading the music for the Shabbat service on Friday night. Being a part of the Messianic community was never on my radar as a young believer, but over the years since becoming involved, my life has been richly blessed.

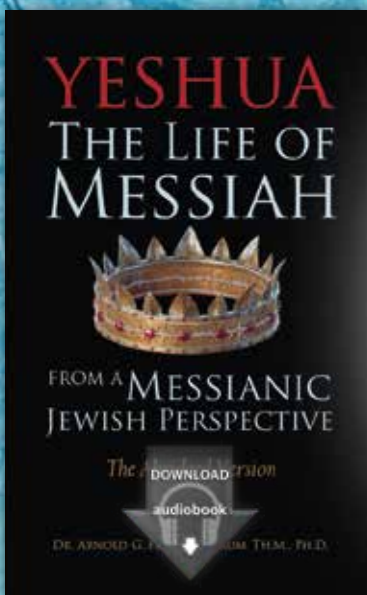
Shalom!

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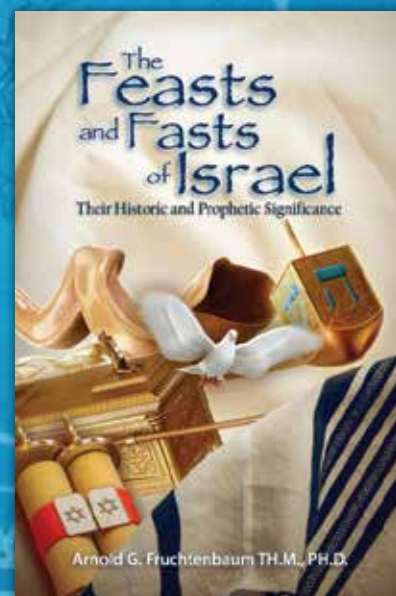
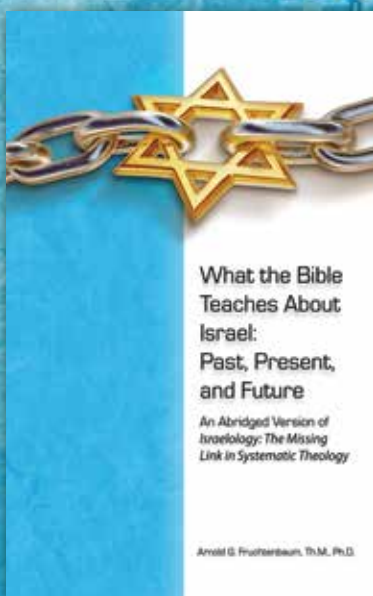
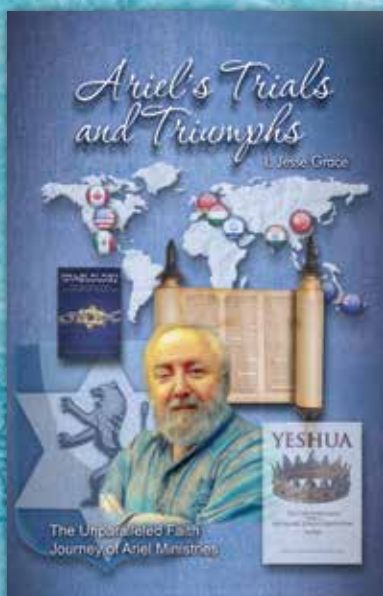
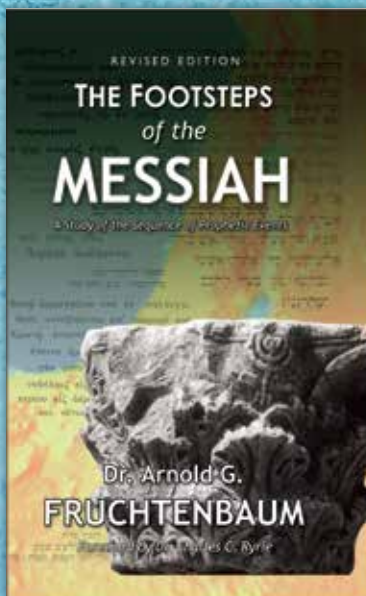
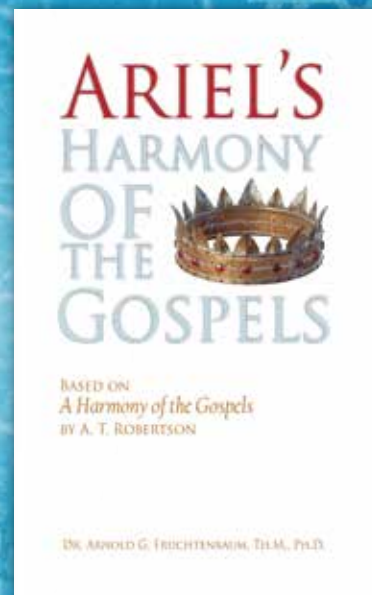


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