“When once the existence of God guaranteed the existence of Israel, today the continued existence of the people Israel guarantees the existence of God.”
Emil Fackenheim

IN THIS ISSUE:

”BY MY SPIRIT”,
SAYS THE LORD

SIGNS OF THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH
part VIII
"Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan."

(Lev. 25:9-10)

In Hebrew the fiftieth year is called Yovel, a celebration year, jubilee. It is the year of the blowing of the ram’s horn. Thus Yovel got its name from the shofar announcing the beginning of the year.

The sound of the Yovel declares the beginning of a new era, the era of God’s favour towards Israel. In Hebrew the word yovel can be read in two ways. Either “yovel”, which means a ram or a ram’s horn like a shofar, or in passive voice “yuval”, is led or was led, like in Isaiah 53: “he was led like a lamb to the slaughter... for the transgression of my people he was punished.”

Like a lamb which has a desire to follow its shepherd humbly, to be led, “yuval”.

The three names of the shofar are like a road signs on our salvation path: Keren, which is the name including the personal calling, rose up in smoke with the sacrificed ram instead of Isaac (Gen. 22:13). On Mount Sinai the Israelites heard the sound of that horn, Shofar, for the first time when it called the people to make the change, a turn a round, teshuva.

The nation learned the sound of the shofar when The Lord himself blew the horn (Ex. 19:16).

From that point on the Israelites were commanded to blow themselves on the shofar (Lev. 25:9), until The Sovereign Lord himself blows it, this time the shofar called Yovel (Zech. 9:14).

Then He will announce freedom, liberation, a jubilee to all nations, to all of those who will hear His voice.

Yeshua the Messiah, Jesus Christ, started his ministry in the synagogue declaring with the words of Isaiah 61:1-2 proclaiming good news to the poor, freedom for the captives, release from darkness for the prisoners and proclaiming the year of the Lord’s favor. Proclaiming the jubilee, which is The Messiah himself.

In Him is the heritage restored, the one we lost in the garden of Eden. In Him is the essence of Yovel.

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Markus Nurmesniemi

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The noise of the Helsinki airport drills into ears. Thoughts flies in different directions. What will be this time? From the distance I hear somebody calling me. A friend recognizes me and invites me over. Our group begins to gather in, and we begin our journey. We begin this journey in so many ways. Many comes tired and broken. Many comes with mind full of questions. Many does journey towards a lap. The Father’s lap, from where one can find rest and security. It is the lap of the Father of Israel. We live in the times of thirst. We live in the times of the desert. We travel from oasis to oasis. And that is what these journeys offer, those moments at the oasis. They offer the hills of joy. As the deers long for the waterfalls, so do we as we travel towards the Living God with wounded souls. Under the guidance of our Lord Yeshua.

We get to enter into hospitality. We get to enter into the atmosphere of the prayer and friendship. We get to encounter surprising meetings and new friends. We become Echad, one. We are Echad, one. A heart sees a heart, the spirit recognizes the spirit. Souls begins its motion. It wants to grow, it stretches out its shaking hands, and it asks the Father to pour balsam into its aching wounds. Into innermost. Where it hurts the most. But the love of God comes. Our Father shows what it is really like when having a loving Father. The Father lets His love come pouring in and flooding. The wall crumbles down. I dare. I truly dare. We get to have shattering word of knowledge from a new friend coming from a land far away from ours. This friend has been carrying the message with loyalty for 18 months. In her heart. Without any knowledge of to whom the message to give. How? Where? When? When it’s God’s time. And the time was ripe when our group came along. Two different groups from different sides of Europe met in Israel, and the hearts became one. So someone else’s work on a different continent gets encouraged by a way, that leaves no one cold. God doesn’t leave one cold.

We get to have teaching, which penetrates the soul, the joints and the core. We get to have nourishment from the fountain of the word. Which nourishes strait from the Zion. We get to live so close, we are so up close and that the mind has difficulties to keep up with. The understanding comes afterwards. What blessing it is to be in the promised land of God. What a blessing it is to get to walk where our Messiah once walked. What a blessing it is to come close and just to be in awe. Just to wonder like a little child. What a blessing it is to be emptied. What a blessing it is to be filled and renewed in the apple of God’s eye. And finally. The praise which rises up itself. The praise which rises up from many mouths which are one.

The heart is full of joy. It brings forth the fruit, which breaks the vessel which wants to be broken, so that the Lord may come and mold it into new. This all is Israel. This all is our God Almighty. And there is so little what we can do by ourselves. How little we can see and understand when trying to understand God. And yet, we get to see and experience so much as the children of God. We get to dwell in His lap as His little children. The wound may be sore, but it will get better. Soon, just a scar as a reminder. The Lord looks you into your eyes and smiles. He gives you a glimpse of the heaven, peace and security. He shows His power from a safe distance. Be still and know, that I am the Lord.

This is the Kingdom of God. This is the reality, the real life. The life in the Lord. That is not the life which the surrounding world offers us. We get to look into the eternity. We bring a peace of the Kingdom into this reality. Helsinki airport is silent. Thoughts flies in different directions. From the distance I hear somebody calling me. A friend recognizes me and invites me over. That is our Lord. The Messiah. My Savior and Redeemer. Our group begins to dissolve, and we begin our journey.

Israel is on its way to a new era. It seems that the Bride is doing so as well. The year 2020 can be a stepping board into new visions and circumstances, and not all of them may necessarily be so pleasant. Nevertheless, many has experienced that the Lord will provide huge blessings through those who remain faithfull in prayer and righteousness. The year 2020 – the year of the perfect vision. At least according to the term which the opticians use when measuring the perfect eye sight, twenty-twenty vision.

The Yovel Magazine also enters into new era alongside 2020. This February’s issue is at least for now the last issue which comes out with the three-month period of release. The next issue comes out, God willing, next June, and with that issue the magazine will be released two times in a year, in June and in December.

This is because of us doing the magazine Pro Bono, and the work load of the daily job is getting more hectic as we speak. But we hope that the slow release will bring more quality into our magazine. I do wish you a good reading time with this issue. Let us continue with prayers and standing in the gap for Israel, for our families, our home towns and for nations as well.

With many blessings,
Markus Nurmesniemi, editor
Genocidal Mania
The Birth of Antisemitism
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Written by: Dr John D. Garr, Ph.D.

When the satraps and administrators in Babylon said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God,” they actually began to establish a foundation for what would become an insidious and enduring phenomenon wherein the Chosen People would be targeted individually and collectively for persecution, mayhem, violence, and death simply because of their faith.

This was the root cause of Antisemitism: making charges against the Jewish people because of “something to do with God’s law.” Antisemitism, then, has always been based in hatred of Israel’s God which has been directed against the Jewish people because represent God in the earth.

It was not long after Daniel’s experience that this idea was taken to extreme in another part of the Medo-Persian Empire that had been established by Cyrus the Great.

In the fortress city of Shushan (Susa), the very capital city of this realm, Xerxes I ruled over the vast domain that stretched from India to Ethiopia.

In the midst of the intrigue that unfolded in the royal court of this, the most powerful nation in the world, a plot was developed that, if it had been successful, would have resulted in the complete genocide of the Chosen People and the termination of the Abrahamic Covenant. At the same time, however, God was at work, orchestrating events so that the plot for evil would be exposed and obviated.

Xerxes was in a celebratory mood. So, he organized an ostentatious party to showcase his power and might and the beauty of his capital city in front of all his nobles and bureaucrats. “For a full 180 days he displayed the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of his majesty.”

Finally, on the seventh day, Xerxes commanded that the queen be brought before him so that everyone could see her beauty. When the orders were delivered to Vashti, however, she refused to appear. The king was furious and after consulting with his advisors determined that in order to limit confusion throughout the realm, Vashti should be removed and replaced by another queen.

A New Queen

After a long process, a new queen was indeed chosen. She was Hadassah (“Esther” in Persian), a young Jewish girl who was extraordinarily beautiful. As it turned out, Hadassah was also amazingly
resourceful, socially adroit, and powerfully resolute. On the advice of Mordecai, her cousin and mentor, she kept her true identity as a Jewish maiden totally secret.

Her emergence as queen of the Persian realm was the result of circumstances and events that were divinely orchestrated in preparation for what would be needed to ensure the survival of the Chosen People.

At this time, Persia dominated the entire Middle East; therefore, every Jew in the entire world lived in the Persian Empire.

This created a unique situation in which every living Jew was vulnerable to the court intrigue that often produced decisions in Shushan that were enforced by the strong and merciless Persian military. The strategic placement of Esther as the queen of the realm and a favorite of Xerxes the king could not have been more important in this circumstance. Then, Esther’s position was strengthened even more when Mordecai discovered an assassination plot against Xerxes and encouraged Esther expose it.

Afterwards, both Esther and Mordecai were honored by the king for their loyalty.

A powerful and insidious evil, however, was lurking in the highest halls of the Persian government, for the realm’s newly appointed prime minister was a man who suffered from severe egomania.

He loved the perquisites and the pomposity of power. He relished seeing the people bowing themselves to the ground before him. Because the Jewish people were under strict orders to bow to no one except God, Mordecai refused to bow before Haman when he passed by in all of his pomp and glory.

This, in turn, infuriated the prime minister, prompting him to search for a way in which he could avenge himself against Mordecai and assuage the pain that this impudent Jew had inflicted on his ego. He could not be satisfied, however, with simply killing Mordecai.

So, he “looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai’s people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.”

A Damnable Conspiracy

Instead of dealing directly with Mordecai, Haman approached the king with these scurrilous words of slander: “There is a certain people dispersed among the peoples in the provinces of your kingdom who keep themselves separate. Their customs are different from those of other people, and they do not obey the king’s laws; it is not in the king’s best interest to tolerate them.”

Then, he petitioned for the enactment of this vicious edict and pledged to remunerate the king for loss of revenue from the Jews: “If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and I will give ten thousand talents of silver to the king’s administrators for the royal treasury.”

To Haman, the lives of “all the Jews” in the world would be worth over $200 million in today’s money.

The declaration, “It is not in the king’s best interest to tolerate [this] certain people,” was the first and perhaps most succinct description of overt Antisemitism ever set forth.

Throughout their history, the Jewish people were to be judged because “their customs [were] different from those of other people,” because they had followed God’s instructions to separate themselves and not participate in the idolatry of the other nations. More often than not, the Je-
wish people found themselves unable to “keep the king’s laws.” While they did their best to be loyal subjects of the realms in which they lived, still they were bound by the Torah and by their consciences to keep God’s commandments, even if it meant suffering persecution and martyrdom. Their time in Persia was no different.

Haman’s appeal was so effective that Xerxes gave him his own signet ring, told him to keep his money, and ordered him to “do with the people as you please.”

Immediately, the royal secretaries wrote the decree in Xerxes’ name in the languages of every province and sealed them with the king’s signet ring. Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the provinces of the Persian Empire with this order: “Kill and annihilate all the Jews—young and old, women and children—on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month... and plunder their goods.” Haman’s evil plot had the force of law that was irrevocable. The prospect was simple: all the Jews in Persia—and, therefore, all the Jews in the world—were going to be killed, and the genocide of the Jewish people would be complete.

When Mordecai learned of the edict, he, like Jews throughout the realm, tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went about “wailing loudly and bitterly.”

In short order, he conveyed the information of Haman’s plot on to Esther. The queen thought her hands were tied because unless she were summoned to appear before Xerxes, she could not do so without risking her own life in the process. Mordecai made this response to her excuse: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish.” Then he addressed his cousin with these immortal words: “Who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”

Esther immediately demonstrated her profound faith, asking Mordecai to request that all the Jews in Shushan fast and pray for her for three days and nights.

Then she said, “I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.” As she had promised, on the third day, Esther put on her royal robes and, fearing the worst, reluctantly entered the royal court. When Xerxes saw her, however, he was pleased, so he held out the golden scepter, sparing her life. “What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half of the kingdom, it will be given you,” he said.

The ever-resourceful Esther had already devised a plan as to how she would approach the king in the context of the court intrigue wherein Haman appeared to have the upper hand. “If it pleases the king,” she replied, “let the king, together with Haman, come today to a banquet I have prepared for him.” In due course, the king, with Haman in tow, dutifully arrived at Esther’s banquet, asking, “Now what is your petition?”

The coy Esther said, “Let the king and Haman come tomorrow” to another banquet, and “then I will answer the king’s question.”

The biblical text records that Haman went out that day happy and in high spirits. “I’m the only person Queen Esther invited to accompany the king to the banquet she gave,” he boasted. “All this gives me no satisfaction,” he said, “as long as I see that Jew Mordecai sitting at the king’s gate.”

Haman’s wife had a solution: “Have a pole set up, reaching to a height of seventy-five feet, and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai impaled on it.” This suggestion delighted Haman, so he had the pole erected on which just knew he would see Mordecai die the next day.

During the ensuing night, Xerxes could not sleep, so he ordered has servants to read to him from the book of the chronicles of his reign. These just happened to open to the records that detailed how Mordecai had exposed the assassination plot against the king. “What honor and recognition has Mordecai received for this?” the king inquired. “Nothing,” they replied. At that moment, Haman just happened to enter the royal chambers, so the king ordered him to appear before him.

“What should be done for the man the king delights to honor?” he asked. The prime minister, thinking that the king was speaking of him, said, “Have them bring a royal robe while she is with me in the chambers, so the king ordered has servants to read to him from the book of the chronicles of his reign. The king could not sleep, so he ordered his servants to read to him from the book of the chronicles of his reign. The king asked Esther, “Who is... the man who has dared to do such a thing?” Unhesitatingly, Esther pointed out the enemy: “This vile Haman!”

Upon hearing this shocking news, the king was furious and went out into the palace garden to collect his thoughts. Realizing that the king would certainly be deciding his fate in minutes, Haman stayed behind to beg the queen for his life. When Xerxes returned, he found Haman falling on the couch where Esther was reclining and exclaimed, “Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?” The king’s judgment was immediate and final: “Impale Haman on the pole by his house,” and the sentence was then carried out forthwith.

That left one important bit of unfinished business. What could be done about the inalterable imperial decree that specified a date for the annihilation of all the Jews in the Persian Empire?

As a counter-measure, Xerxes issued another decree giving the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves against all who would attack them. When this decree was published, there
was great joy in Persia, especially among the Jews, and Mordecai was highly honored.

Then, the text of Scripture makes this startling declaration: “Many people of other nationalities became Jews because fear of the Jews had seized them.” The text does not explain how this was accomplished, but it does note the turn of events. Then, on the day appointed, when “the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, now the tables were turned and the Jews got the upper hand over those who hated them.”

The victory of the Jews was complete. Genocide was obviated.

**Am Yisrael chai!**

Among the Jews, the next day was a time of such great rejoicing that a new festival celebrating that day was added to the calendar of Torah festivals outlined in Leviticus 23. This festival, called Purim, thereafter became a prominent fixture in the lives of the Jews.

Each year thereafter, Purim became a time to celebrate God’s deliverance of the Jews from the certainty of death into abundant life—all because divine providence had positioned a young Jewish girl in the palace of the world’s most powerful king and had emboldened her with faith to intercede for the deliverance of her people.

Esther was, indeed, elevated by God’s hand into royalty “for such a time as this,” and she did not fail to accomplish her mission.

In this case, the genocide of the entire Jewish people was averted. But at the same time, God demonstrated his power over death and life in such a profound way that the Jewish people were exalted in honor and position, and many pagans were converted to the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Once again, in a dramatic and powerful way, God demonstrated his gevurot and his faithfulness to the entire Israelite nation by bringing forth life from the dead.

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"By My Spirit”,
says the Lord

A view to the Mediterranean Sea from mount Carmel. Photo: Markus Nurmesniemi

Written by:
Dr John D. Garr, Ph.D.

As the time that was numbered prophetically upon the Israelites for their exile from Jerusalem and Judah finally reached its fullness, the hand of God began to orchestrate circumstances in the world of global politics that would make it possible for the miracle of national resurrection to occur, just as the prophets had predicted.

Jeremiah’s seventy years were finally drawing to an end. It was time for the Chosen People to go home, ending the harsh judgment imposed upon their ancestors for their sins and idolatry. The trek from Babylon back to Judea was initiated by small numbers of brave souls whose hearts must have cried out with King David, “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy!”

The way was hard, but the memories of the old among them were dreams of Jerusalem’s former splendor, and the young envisioned the return to glory that they had prayed for and hoped would come.

Still, the outlook was bleak. Jerusalem had been utterly destroyed by the Babylonians, razed to the ground. The accretions of decades of abandonment covered the entire area with more signs of deterioration and neglect.

Yet, an indomitable spirit arose in the hearts of a remnant of Judah convincing them of their divine destiny to go up to the devastated land and take on the impossible.

What could even remotely effect the realization of their improbable dreams? The answer was established clearly in the prophetic word that was delivered to Zechariah: “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord.”

God had positioned Nehemiah in the Persian imperial court of Artaxerxes in the citadel of Sushan. When he enquired of his brother about the situation in Judah, Nehemiah was heartbroken by the report: “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.”

When Nehemiah heard this assessment, he sat down and wept, and he began to travail before God with fasting and prayer for the situation.
He repented on behalf of his people: “We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.”

Then he asked God to remember his word: “Even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my name.”

Finally he sought God’s favor, with much trepidation, he approached the king with the hope of sharing his burden.

When the king saw Nehemiah, he asked him, “Why does your face look so sad?” Immediately, fear seized upon him because he knew that it was not proper court etiquette for the king’s servants to display anything but happiness in his presence.

Nehemiah, however, took the risk and replied, “Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins?” Artaxerxes then asked, “What is it you want?”

Nehemiah began to detail the plan that he had already devised for the rebuilding of Jerusalem: 1) send him to the city, 2) provide letters of safe passage for him to the governors of the Trans-Euphrates, and 3) direct the administrators of the royal park to provide timbers and other materials for him to reconstruct the gates and walls of the city.

The king was impressed and granted Nehemiah’s requests and even sent army officers and calvary with him. Thus began a long and arduous struggle to restore Jerusalem wherein Nehemiah was joined by political leaders like Zerubbabel, sages like Ezra, and prophets like Haggai and Zechariah in a collaborative architectural, political, and spiritual exercise.

The resurrection of one person is a miracle: how much more the restoration of a nation—a land and a people. Could such a thing really happen?

Who in the world did these Jews think they were, and what on earth did they think they were doing? Their answer to these questions from detractors around them was stunning and clear: “We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, one that a great king of Israel built and finished.”

Then they appealed to the fact that when Cyrus conquered Babylon, he had made a decree that the temple in Jerusalem should be rebuilt, and they requested a search of the imperial records so that the original decree could be found and enforced.

In time, the Cyrus proclamation was found, and it did give a clear command: “Let the temple be rebuilt as a place to present sacrifices. . . . And let the cost be paid from the royal treasury. Also let the gold and silver utensils of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be returned and brought to their places in the temple in Jerusalem.”

As soon as this discovery was made, King Darius sent specific orders to fulfill Cyrus’ command for the rebuilding of the temple. He commanded those detractors in the area not to interfere with the work in any way, and he instructed his royal treasury to pay all of the expenses of the restoration project.

The work proceeded slowly tediously until finally it was finished. A band of 42,360 men worked long and hard.

What had taken Solomon only seven years to build required forty-nine years to rebuild. Whereas Solomon had had unlimited resources and the world’s finest craftsmen when he built the original temple, the returning Judeans struggled to find both material and manpower even though they worked under imperial decree and were funded to some degree by the Persian government.

The task was challenging even for the most visionary among them.

Finally, the miracle was complete. The city of Jerusalem had been restored, the temple had been rebuilt, and the service of God had been renewed.

For the men of Judah, this represented a corporate resurrection as it were. Whereas they had surveyed only destruction and death when they had first arrived at the holy site, now they were able to lift up their eyes and behold a reborn city, a restored temple, and a resuscitated people.

They knew in their hearts, however, that this action had not been accomplished by their own might or power. It was a work of the Spirit of the living God. Without a doubt, for these hard-working visionaries, this restoration was a miracle of life from the dead!

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www.hebraiccommunity.org
A search for the Jewish Roots of the Christian faith would properly identify who we are as believers called from the Gentile world to faith in the Jewish Messiah.

Yet, little under than thirty years on it has not been quite so simple as we hoped.

Others, on what seemed like a similar journey, arrived at different destinations. One of the chief problems has been a growing fascination for Judaism by some believers. This becomes a problem when a desire to be culturally Jewish replaces seeking after deeper fellowship with the God of Israel. Congregations are even emerging consisting entirely of believers from the Gentile world giving the outward show of being a Jewish synagogue, men dressed in traditional Jewish clothing performing ceremonies and rituals that are more traditional than biblical.

It is possible for fascination for Torah as a ritual to replace a walk with the Living God, where mishnaic ideas (oral traditions) are added to biblical interpretation. The most worrying aspect of this is the possibility of being diverted so that ones relationship with the God of Israel becomes more and more distant, the opposite of what is intended when Yeshua became our sacrifice on the Cross.

A clue to departure from a deep relationship with the God of Israel comes from the way we talk of Him and pray to Him.

There are many Names for the God of Israel. They come from the way He revealed His character to His people over the centuries.

The Name considered most sacred to Israelites has four Hebrew letters, Yud, Hay, Vav, Hay. Since the Hebrew text of the Bible was originally passed on in consonant form only it is possible that no-one now knows how to say this sacred Name.

The Scribes put the vowel pointing of Adonai (Lord) so that those reading the text would pause and say Adonai rather than attempt to utter the Sacred Name of God with imperfect human lips.

On account of this many Christians have thought that the Name of God is Jehovah, but that comes from attempting to read the four Hebrew consonants with the vowels of Adonai. Others say that His Name is Yahweh, but we cannot be sure of this pronunciation, since we are not sure of the vowels that go with the four consonants. Moses certainly knew the Name that the God of Israel gave Himself, but now we cannot be sure how to address Him, based on this Name.

Anyway, is that what He expects of His people now that He has revealed Himself to us more fully through His Son Yeshua HaMashiach?

Due reverence has been carried into the Christian Church whenever the Name Jehovah or Yahweh is said, which is an important point. Nevertheless, how does the God of Israel want to be addressed by His people – by His family? Those who align themselves with Judaism will discover that the God of Israel is talked about as HaShem (the Name).

This is an attempt to revere the God of Israel and not make the mistake of saying the wrong name. This is deeply rooted in the prayers and hymns of the Synagogue and brings beauty and reverence.

Because of this, there are some Christians who have set out to discover their “Jewish roots” whom you will find doing just this. They will talk of HaShem and pray to HaShem. This, though on the surface seeming good, may nevertheless be evidence of diversion from a seeking after deeper fellowship with God to a seeking after the practices of ritual Judaism. Though reverence is preserved relationship may be at risk.

How then should we address the God of Israel? What shall we call Him? Perhaps it depends on the circles we mix in, but if we are in the closest relationship with Him then it is not Jehovah, Yahweh or HaShem.

Even the title God does not come from the Hebrew language, nor the Arabic Allah, however much we wish to show fear and reverence for our Maker. How we address the God of Israel depends perhaps on how close He has allowed us to come to Him in His inner circle of fellowship – His family, bought by the sacrifice of His Son. The cost was high so that the privilege is great.

Nevertheless, our privilege as those born again by His Spirit is to know Him as Abba, Father, no less, and our freedom to know Him as such is evidence of the relationship we have. Those whose lives have not been transformed by His Holy Spirit will not know the experience of a Father/child relationship with God, so it is understandable that the Names they use to address the Creator of the universe will vary.

If He has identified us as His child He has singled us out as an individual, brought us into His family by the power of His Spirit, and begun a work of transformation in us to the likeness of Yeshua – and He desires our intimate response. Our relationship must be full of reverence, of course, but to draw back to even a respectful distance is a denial of what Yeshua has done for us:

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of Elohim. (Romans 8:15-16)
Written by:
Keijo Lindeman

Antisemitism, the Catholic Church, and the Crusades

For almost twenty centuries the Jews have been severely wronged in various parts of Europe, East and West alike. There were pogroms and deportations in many places, and millions of people, many of them Jews, were executed after having been declared heretics by the Catholic Church. It may be said that the biggest antisemitic institution in the course of history has been the Catholic Church, which has on its conscience probably the largest number of souls of Jewish martyrs. The crusades, then, are a chapter of their own.

The first crusade, initiated by Pope Urban II in 1095 in the Council of Clermont, was particularly and ruthlessly directed against innocent Jews in Europe, and Jewish blood was shed in horrible massacres. European crusaders wanted to avenge the death of Christ on His murderers before setting forth to take the Holy Land from infidel Muslims. Godfrey Bouillon, leader of the first crusade, swore: “Avenge the blood of Christ on Israel, eradicate all trace of Jewish race.” (Wright, 1994).

A couple of years ago the Catholic Church repented and asked for forgiveness for the injustice and atrocities inflicted upon the Jewish people, but according to Revelation 17, history may repeat itself in the End time. (Let us not forget that there have been priests, nuns and other members of the Catholic Church, who have protected Jews risking their own lives.) Many believe that the great harlot of Revelation 17 will yet rise, along with Rome, to reign over the world for a short time together with the antimessianic rule of the beast, and the blood of saints and Jews will again be shed.

Antisemitic attitude against Messianic Jews

During the history of Christianity Messianic Jews have not been spared of antisemitism. If in the early Christian centuries a Jew wanted to believe in Yeshua the Messiah, the Christian church forced them – against the teaching of the New Testament - to reject completely their Jewish roots. The Jews were forced to swear the following oath of resignation:

"I give up all traditions, rites, observances of the law, unleavened bread and Hebrew sacrifice of lambs, all other Hebrew feasts, sacrifices, prayers, aspirations, purifications, sanctifications, sacrifices of atonement, and fasting and New Moons and Shabbats, and superstitions, psalms and liturgies, observances and synagogues, Hebrew meals and drinks; in one word, I give up absolutely all Jewish law, rites, and customs, and first of all, I deny antichrist, whom all Jews expect to come in the form and figure of Christ...and if I later deny and return to the Jewish superstition, or if I am seen to share a meal with Jews or to fast with them, or if I secretly convert and condemn..."
Christian faith, and instead of openly condemning them and their vain faith, be it so that the trembling of Cain and the leprosy of Gehazi is passed on to me like a legal punishment for what I admit myself responsible for. And may it be that I will be banned in the world to come and may my soul be placed down with Satan and the demons” (Wright, 1994).

Thank God that in recent times many Christians have acquired the understanding, through right and truthful teaching of the Word, that according to the New Testament, e.g. 1. Cor. 7:18 and Acts 21:18-26, Jews do not have to give up their Jewish identity when they become believers in Yeshua.

All they need to do is to accept their own Messiah Yeshua as their Saviour. It is sad, though, that a part of Christendom is still under the influence of the ancient antisemitic ideas of the early centuries, which claimed that to be a good Christian Jews had to reject their Jewish roots and curse Judaism.

Luther and Antisemitism

Antisemitism has prevailed in the Christian Church to some degree also in the 20th century, and to our days. I shall not go into the atrocities of the Christian Nazi Germany where six million Jews were murdered, because it is a well-known fact which is luckily constantly referred to as to remind us of the absurdity and hatred of antisemitism.

(Less known are the persecutions organized by Stalin in the former Soviet Union, in which an estimated 20 to 30 million people, among them many Jews, were killed. As the Soviet Union was one of the winners in World War II, Stalin’s persecutions have drawn far less attention than the cruelties of Hitler’s Germany, the losing party. Unfortunately there is evidence now that especially younger people in Russia are beginning to admire Stalin.)

Not only in Russia but also in the Christian West the knowledge of the past and the Holocaust is shockingly superficial, and antisemitism is growing. There are those who diminish the happenings of Holocaust or, at the worst, deny it altogether.

It may come as a surprise to some Christians that it is Martin Luther’s old age hatred for the Jews that lies behind the antisemitism of the Christian Church.

Luther was a great Reformer who renewed Christian faith with his doctrine of justification by grace through faith without deeds of law or a person’s merits, and cleansed it from some Roman traditions, e.g. sale of indulgencies. Still, he was blind in his attitude towards the Jewish people.

In 1543 he wrote in Wittenberg a treatise called “On the Jews and their lies”. The following quotation is translated from the Finnish translation published in 1842.

“I want to give here my sincere advice. First, that their synagogues or schools be set on fire, and what will not burn, be covered with earth and buried completely so that no one would ever see a stone or dirt of it. This must be done in honour of our Lord and our Christendom so that God will see that we are Christians” (p. 169).

“Now whoever wants to take to his house those poisonous snakes and new demons, the most fervent enemies of Christ our Lord and of all of us, and love them blindly and respect them, and whoever wants to have himself fled, robbed, ransacked, humiliated, spat on, and cursed, and suffer all kind of evil from them, to his house these Jews may be welcome. And if that is not enough, let him have them relieve themselves in his mouth or let him crawl to their arse and adore the same sanctuary. Let him boast afterwards that he has been merciful, has strengthened the devil and his young demons in blaspheming our beloved Lord and the precious blood we have been redeemed with. Then he will be a perfect Christian, full of deeds of mercy, for which Christ will reward him on the day of judgement with the Jews in the eternal fire of hell” (pp. 182-183).

What Martin Luther wrote in
his book in 1543, Hitler implemented 400 years later. The majority of Christians do not share Luther’s hatred for the Jews, nevertheless, neither the Lutheran church nor protestant churches in general are today entirely free from Luther’s antisemitism.

Neo-nazi movements in Europe and America have embraced antisemitism, striving to diminish and deny the killing of six million Jews and trying to work up hatred for the Jews.

**Eastern Christianity and Antisemitism**

Neither are the churches of the East and the world of Orthodox Christianity free from antisemitism, on the contrary. Let us take as an example the case of Mendel Beilis, occurred at Easter 1911 in Kiev. A young boy of 12 years was found dead, with his face mangled and body largely pricked. The Jewish populace was accused for the crime and the following announcement was given in order to incite hatred for the Jews.

“Orthodox Christians! The Yid-dish have tortured Andrusha Yushchinsky to death. Every year before Easter they torture to death tens of Chris-tian children in order to take their blood and mix it to Matza bread. They make this in remembrance of our Saviour whom they tortured to death on the cross. Authorized medical doctors made the observation that before torturing Yushchinsky the Jews stripped him naked, bound him up, and cut him in the main artery to have as much blood as possible. Russians! If you care for your children, beat the Yiddish, beat them until there is none left in Russia. Have mercy on your children! Avenge the poor martyr! It is time! It is time!” (Wright, 1994).

Similar antisemitism based on superstition has been quite common in the world. Jews have been accused for whatever cause; for pests, earthquakes, accidents, financial crises, rebellions - you name it - just to stir up antisemitism.

Not so long ago the Jews were accused for having brought AIDS in the world. Hatred for Jews is still very strong in the Orthodox world of Eastern Europe where many ultraorthodox neo-nazi movements operate fairly openly against the Jews stirring up antisemitism by their propaganda and activity.

It is sad that the authorities often turn the blind eye to the activities of these radical movements and allow the antisemtic propaganda and even persecutions to go on.

**The Protocols of the Elders of Zion and antisemitism**

The so called Protocols of the elders of Zion form a chapter of their own in the history of antisemitism. This work is a historical forgery that has been used and is still used in anti-Jewish propaganda around the world.

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion is based on the pamphlet against Napoleon III (Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu) written by Maurice Joly (1821-1887) and a novel called Biarritz (1864). The novel describes how Sanhedrin, the great Jewish council, meets during the night in a cemetery in Prague and in the presence of Satan makes a plan to submit the world under their power.

The first version of Protocols was probably written in the anti-Jewish France of 1890’s. In Finland it was first published in Swedish in 1919, and in Finnish a year later. The third Finnish edition was published in 1943. In its introduction all non-Jewish people were admonished to defend themselves against the attacks of global Jewry. To emphasize the urgency of this appeal the text refers to Luther’s anti-Jewish conviction.

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion describes how 300 Zionists would have made a secret plan to take over the financial, political, and spiritual power in the world.

The Protocols is said to be a report of the secret meeting of the first Zionist congress in Basel in 1905, led by Teodor Hertzl. The Protocols was published in Russia in 1905. Tsar Nicholas II, through the secret police, used it for his own purposes to turn the people’s discontent to hatred against the Jews.

Although these Protocols are known to be forgery, the book was still sold in recent years in Russia and other east-European countries. Hitler also used the Protocols of the Elders of Zion as a weapon in his war against the Jews. He wrote in his book “My Struggle” as follows:

“To which extent the very existence of this [Jewish] people is based on a ever continuing lie, is demonstrated in an unparalleled way by The Protocols of the Elders of Zion that the Jews hate so much…”

The Protocols is still used as a weapon of propaganda against the Jews in many Arab and Muslim countries despite of Auschwitz and dispite of the fact that it has been revealed as a forgery. The book continues on sale in many countries.

Antisemitism of Islam and Israel’s Tribulation in the End Time

“"In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will enter into judgement against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel, for they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land. They cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine that they might drink. Now what have you against me, O Tyre and Sidon and all you regions of Philis-tia? Are you repaying me for something I have done? If you are paying me back, I will swiftly and speedily return on your own heads what you have done...Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men draw near and attack...The Lord will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the sky will tremble. But the Lord will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel” (Joel 3:1-4, 9,16).

Islam started with Muham-mad in the beginning of 7th century AD. It has spread all over the world mostly by the power of the sword, and the number of its followers is now about 1,9 billion. Through centuries, there have always been Jews living in many Islamic countries.

At times they have had great freedom, even greater than in countries of antisemitic Chris-tianity, and at times they have been persecuted by the Muslims. Although the majority of Muslims want to live in peaceful coexistence, there are extremists who use Islam and the
Quran to fight against infidel Christians and Jews.

According to many militant Muslim groups peaceful coexistence is only temporary and there won’t be peace until the entire world is under Islam’s power.

This is shown clearly in their attitude towards Jews and the state of Israel. Assad of Syria once said: “Jews will be pushed into the sea and the blue Mediterranean Sea will turn red from blood” (Sartola, 2001, 2002).

Much time and effort has been given to establish peace in the Middle East. Americans in collaboration with other nations have drawn up a plan to establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel, on the West Bank of the river Jordan. It is possible to interpret the word of the Bible so that a false peace will reign just before the final storm and the Messiah’s coming.

See e.g. 1. Tessalonians 5:1-9, Jeremia 4:10-13; 8:15-16 and Ezekiel 38:8-13. Time will show if the interpretation is correct, and if there will be a false peace and if there’ll be a state of Palestine. The book of Joel tells us that if any one divides the land of Israel against God’s promises, he will be judged.

It is good to bear in mind, though, that if there is to be peace in the Middle East, it will be a temporary, false peace before the final tribulations and the coming of the Messiah. According to Islamic teaching peace with the infidel can be made only for 10 years at the most.

Another point to remember is the declaration PFLP made on radio in Lebanon on June 9th in 1989: “The establishment of the state of Palestine on the West Bank and Gaza strip will be the beginning of the fall of Zionist aspirations. We can trust that in defeating the enemy we will put up a perfect fight to achieve our final aim, which is total liberation of national Palestine.”

This will be the reality on a day to come. Joel 3 tells us how Gentiles will raise a holy war, Jihad in the Quran, against Israel, the areas of Philistines or Palestinians being one party in this war. (Philistine or Palestine is a mock name the Romans gave to the Jewish state in the days of Emperor Hadrian; Philistines were Israel’s old arch enemies.) It is the Lord Himself who brings the nations and particularly the nations of Islamic world to a holy war against Israel, to the Valley of Jehoshabat, to be judged by God.

Ezekiel, in chapters 38 and 39, speaks about the same event when he speaks about the war of Gog. Among the troops of Gog from the far north are e.g. Persia or today’s Iran which is constantly threatening to destroy Israel (Dan. 10:13-14, 20-21). (Afganistan and Pakistan were part of Persia in the old days.)

Other Gog’s allies will be Ethiopia (in the original language Cush can also mean the Islamic Sudan) and Put, i.e. Libya. And there is Beth Torgarmah, i.e. Turkey. Many scholars also locate Gomer within the modern Turkey. This is to say that Gog’s front will be comprised mostly of Islamic nations which will unexpectedly attack Israel which is living in peace, possibly lulled into false security by the false peace. However, the attacking troops will suffer a crushing defeat on Israeli mountains, in the region of Bashan, i.e. Golan.

Psalm 83 speaks about the nations surrounding Israel which will also attack Israel to eradicate Israel’s name from the map of the world and take over Jerusalem. The attackers will, however, be destroyed.

The last chapters of Zechariah’s book also speak about surrounding Gentiles attacking Israel. Jerusalem is the real subject of controversy in these times as the world wants to make it the capital of the State of Palestine. In the midst of this tribulation the Israeli remnant will be saved and the antisemitic Islam and other enemies of Israel will be judged (Zech. 12:1-13; Rom. 11:25-27).

**Antisemitism in the End Time and the Great Exodus**

“However, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when men will no longer say, ‘As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the Israeli-
tes up out of Egypt,’ but they will say, ‘As surely as the Lord lives who brought the Israelites up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.’

For I will restore them to the land I gave to their forefathers. But now I will send for many fishermen;’ declares the Lord, ‘and they will catch them. After that I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them down on every mountain and hill and from the crevices of the rocks’ (Jer. 16:14-16).

“Come! Come! Flee from the land of the north,’ declares the Lord, ‘for I have scattered you to the four winds of heaven,’ declares the Lord. ‘Come, O Zion! Escape, you who live in the Daughter of Babylon! For this is what the Lord Almighty says, ‘After he has honoured me and has sent me against the nations, I will gather them all to their own land, not leaving any behind. I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Sovereign Lord” (Eze. 39:28,29).

According to Jeremiah’s prophecy, the Lord will send “fishermen” to invite the Israelites to return to their own land, Israel, which God has promised to their fathers. We have witnessed this prophecy being fulfilled in front of our eyes. In the late 19th century Teodor Herzl founded the Zionist movement and the idea of a Jewish state was born.

These fishermen of the Zionist movement and also many Christians have exhorted Jews to return to their own land from among the nations. Since those times there have been waves of immigration. These waves of exodus, or Aliya, brought thousands of Jews to Palestine of that time. When the state of Israel was born on May 14th in 1948 after a two thousand year long diaspora, with the UN working as “a midwife”, exodus really got going and today over six million Jews live in the land of Israel.

However, some ten million Jews are still living among the nations, but the Lord will gather them all to their own land (Jer. 3:14; Eze. 20:32-38). This means a great End Time Exodus of at least ten million Jews from among the nations. Fishermen with their tender exhortations will not convince them all to make Aliya, for many live in great comfort and have close ties to the countries they live in.

It is not easy to break away and leave behind everything one has learned to call home for many generations. Then there are the Anussim-Jews or Marranos, who the Catholic Church forced to convert to Catholicism, and who have millions of descendants living e.g. in Spain, Portugal, and South America. Obadja’s prophecy tells us that they will come and live in the Negev (Ob. 12-21).

God will fulfill His word down to the last detail; He calls “hunters”, e.g. global anti-Semitism and hatred for Israel, to drive the Israel from among the nations to their own land. Something is going to happen that will flare up the world’s smouldering anti-Semitism.

Jews living in the regions of Judeah, i.e. the West Bank, will have to flee the invading troops. Jews living among the nations are similarly forced to flee persecution from all nations. Especially the areas north of Israel, Russia and the countries of former Soviet Union, come up in many biblical prophecies. This exodus from the north has already touched Finland; thousands of Jews from Russia and the Baltic countries have moved to Israel through Finland.

Believers in Finland do well in preparing for greater waves of exodus in the future, when Jews are fleeing persecution and global anti-Semitism of the great tribulation.

Believers’ Mission in Days of End Time Anti-Semitism

“Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the sabbath” (Matt. 24:20).

“For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God... Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no-one will fall by following their example of disobedience” (Heb. 4:8,9,11).

“God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marvelled at among
all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you” (2. Thes. 1:6-10).

“The Lord will have compassion on Jacob; once again he will choose Israel and will settle them in their own land. Aliens will join them and unite with the house of Jacob. Nations will take them and bring them to their own place…” (Isa. 14:1,2a).

“This is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘See, I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders’ (Isa. 49:22).

When Yeshua spoke about fleeing during the great tribulation – concerning the Israeli Aliya from among the nations – He told His disciples to pray that it would not happen in winter or on a Shabbat. Why winter and Shabbat? Let us study the issue of winter first.

Despite of latent antisemitism we have had a reasonably peaceful “fishermen’s” time. Jews have been exhorted to return to their own land while the general circumstances have been mostly good and tranquil. Although there have been difficulties and challenges, the Jews who have decided to return to Israel have been able to make the journey rather safely by car, by bus, by plane, by ship, etc. (Isa. 60:8,9). When the “hunters” emerge in the days of the great tribulation, the latent antisemitism and hatred for Israel will break out and there will be few places of refuge for the Jews.

Those exodus-Jews who then flee from among the nations, flee trembling and scared, with persecutors on their heels, underground, through forests and backwoods. There are old people, children, sick people, handicapped people, and expecting mothers among them, as Jeremia prophesies.

If this happens in winter, many of them might not survive the hardships of the journey. That is why we need to pray that it would happen in summer, when the conditions are better, and in His mercy the Lord will see to it because of the prayers of believers.

Why, then, do we need to pray that it would not happen on a Shabbat? One explanation is that the holiness of Shabbat must not be violated. This, however, seems a rather limited view in this connection.

Firstly, we have to remember that Shabbat has many meanings in the Bible and there are various kinds of Shabbats.

* Weekly Shabbat, the 7th day, from Friday evening to Saturday evening. This is the normal Shabbat, and the only one many people know (Gen. 2:1-3).

* Feast Shabbats. There are 7 feast Shabbats in connection with the 7 High Holidays described in Leviticus 23. No regular work is allowed on a feast Shabbat.

* Shabbat year every 7th year. The land is given rest, no sowing, no reaping (
* Shabbat, the 7th day is also a picture of the Thousand year Kingdom of Peace of the Messiah (Ps. 90:4; 2. Peter 3:8), when the resurrected saints reign with their Messiah for a thousand years (Rev. 20).

The creation will also be redeemed from slavery to the glorious freedom of God’s children (Rom. 8:18-23).

The writer of Hebrews speaks about the Shabbat-rest of God’s people.

He refers to the journey in the desert the Israelites made under Moses leadership, when many of them died in the desert because of sin and disobedience, without ever entering the rest in the Promised Land of Israel, although the gospel was preached to them in the days of Moses (Heb. 3:7-4:7).

The writer then continues and says that even those who entered the Land with Joshua did not enter God’s final rest. But there will be God’s Shabbat-rest to God’s people, and to enter that rest we have to make every effort and guard us from following the example of disobedience of those who died in the desert.

When will God’s people enter this final rest? Apostle Paul speaks about it in his letter to the Thessalonians. It will be on the day when the Lord Yeshua comes with his holy angels to revenge their wickedness on those who have rejected God and resisted His gospel.

Believers in Yeshua will be glorified, that is, they get a glorified resurrection body, similar to Joshua’s after He was resurrected, and then they enter the rest, the heavenly state of resurrection, liberated from the world of distress (Phil. 3:20,21).

When the Messiah comes to fetch His own, the Shabbat-rest begins for God’s people.

When Yeshua told his disciples to pray that the Israelis wouldn’t have to flee from the nations on a Shabbat, He meant this final Shabbat-rest. It God’s people had already entered the heavenly Shabbat-rest, who would be here on earth to help the fleeing Exodus-Jews during the days of the Great Tribulation and End Time antisemitism?

We have to pray that God’s church, believers who love Israel and the Jews, will still be on the earth to help the Exodus-Jews on their way to Israel in the days of the Great Tribulation and antisemitism.

After the church has thus served Exodus-Jews, it is free to enter the heavenly Shabbat-rest in their resurrection bodies. Believers should not pray that the church be taken up before the days of the Great Tribulation but on the contrary that the church would still be here on earth to help the fleeing Jews during the days of End Time tribulations and antisemitism (Matt. 24:20-22, 29-31).

Though the times that lie ahead of us are exciting and hard, they are also interesting times because we will see prophecies fulfilled.

They are times of preparation for the Messiah’s coming and the taking-up of the church to the heavenly Shabbat-rest.

It is a great comfort to know that God will take care of His own even in difficult times, and that He is our refuge as well in good as in bad days.


Prophetical Perspectives
Signs of the Coming of the Messiah
part VIII

Written by:
Keijo Lindeman

MESSIANIC KINGDOM OF PEACE, part I

"For we know in part and we prophesy in part" (1. Cor. 13:9).

For it is just like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted them with his possessions. 15To one he gave five talents, to another two talents, and to another one talent—each according to his own ability. And he promptly went on his journey. The servant who had received the five talents went and put them to work and gained five more. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’

His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master!’

The servant who had received the two talents also came and said, ‘Master, you entrusted me with two talents. See, I have gained two more.’

His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master!’

Finally, the servant who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Master, I knew that you are a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So in my fear, I went and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what belongs to you.’

‘You wicked, lazy servant!’ replied his master. ‘You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed. Then you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received it back with interest. Therefore take the talent from him and give it to the one who has ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. But the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. And throw that worthless servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25:14-30).

In this parable-like story Yeshua the Messiah describes His ascension to heaven to His Father after His sacrifice on the cross, and then His return to the earth to reign as King in His Kingdom of Peace. While He is in His Father’s House preparing a place for His own. His servants work with their talents for His Kingdom here on earth (John 14:1-6). When the Lord returns, He calls His servants to account for their dealings, and everyone is rewarded according to what they deserve.

They will rule with the Messiah in His Kingdom according to their faithfulness. We will now study the coming Messianic Kingdom of Peace more
in detail, its main features and the role of believers as Messiah’s assistant rulers. We will also look into some main interpretations and concepts about the Millennial Kingdom of Peace.

Interpretations of the Messianic Kingdom of Peace

Then a shoot will spring up from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit.

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him— the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD. And He will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what His eyes see, and He will not decide by what His ears hear, but with righteousness He will judge the poor, and with equity He will decide for the lowly of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth and slay the wicked with the breath of His lips. Righteousness will be the belt around His hips, and faithfulness the sash around His waist.

The wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat; the calf and young lion and fatling will be together, a and a little child will lead them.

The cow will graze with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

The infant will play by the cobra’s den, and the toddler will reach into the viper’s nest. 9They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the sea is full of water. On that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples. The nations will seek Him, and His place of rest will be glorious (Isaiah 11:1-10).

There are three main interpretations of the Millennial Messianic Kingdom of Peace within the body of Christ.

Amillennial interpretation goes back to Church Father Augustine. According to this interpretation there is no literal Millennial Kingdom; the term must be understood spiritually, and meaning the church of Christ. This is the prevailing concept in the Catholic Church, and the one the reformers Luther and Calvin embraced. They believe that the Kingdom of God began at the first coming of Christ and that the saints now rule the church. Revelation 20 and other related places are considered symbolical.

According to the Postmillennial interpretation Christ will not come until after the thousand year period in connection with the Last Judgment and the end of the world. Triumphant spreading of the gospel brings God’s Kingdom on earth. For them the Kingdom means first of all spiritual and social influence that changes the circumstances. Premillennial interpretation is dominant in so called fundamentalistic circles, and they take the prophecies concerning the Millennial Messianic Kingdom literally; this kingdom is truly God’s Kingdom on earth, ruled by the Messiah and his saints, before the ultimate time of new heavens and new earth. It will not come about through progressive influence but through divine intervention when the Messiah comes to rule on the earth.

The writer’s view corresponds to this interpretation which seems to be the most biblical. It will be a time of bliss, says Isaiah, when the Messiah and His saints rule and sweet peace and harmony reign on earth. We will take a look at how this kingdom is established and what it is like.

Founding of the Millennial Kingdom of Peace

“Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out in a loud voice to all the birds flying overhead, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God, 18so that you may eat the flesh of kings and commanders and mighty men, of horses and riders, of all men slave and free, small and great.”

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies assembled to wage war against the One seated on the horse, and against His army. But the beast was captured along with the false prophet, who on its behalf had performed signs deceiving those who had the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. Both the beast and the false prophet were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. 21And the rest were killed with the sword that proceeded from the mouth of the One seated on the horse. And all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key to the Abyss, holding in his hand a great chain. 2He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. 3And he threw him into the Abyss, shut it, and sealed it over him, so that he could not deceive the nations until the thousand years were complete. After that, he must be released for a brief period of time (Revelation 20:1-3).

In that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven above and the kings of the earth below. They will be gathered together like prisoners in a pit. They will be confined to a dungeon and punished after many days.
The moon will be confounded and the sun will be ashamed; for the LORD of Hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His elders with great glory (Isaiah 24:21-23).

Isaiah prophesies that when the Messiah sits on His judgment seat to judge the nations, He will punish all godless kings of the earth and their armies, and they will be condemned and destroyed in front of Israel’s Messiah (Rev. 19:11-21).

Besides these kings and armies of the earth, also hosts of heaven above will take part in this final battle of the End Time. These are the fallen angels and spiritual forces of Satan who fight against the Archangel Michael and his hosts (Eph. 2:1-3,6:10-13; Rev. 12:7-12; Dan. 10:13,14,20, 12:1).

The armies of the evil “trinity”: the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, who attack Israel and the God of Israel, are overcome by the Messiah and His hosts. The resurrected saints have their place in the Messiah’s army and they fight along with the angels, led by the archangel Michael, in this battle which leads to the founding of the Kingdom of Peace.

The remnant of Israel, who have received Yeshua as their Messiah, also fight in His army and in His power, and destroy their enemy (Zech. 10;12;14:1-5, 12-15; Jude 14-15).

The beast and the false prophet will be captured and thrown to the fiery lake of burning sulphur. All the spiritual forces of evil will be defeated at the coming of the Messiah, and they will be gathered with their rebel general Satan and thrown for a thousand years into the Abyss (Hebr. Tehom), so that they cannot deceive people nor incite them to sin, rebel, or fight during the Millennial Messianic Kingdom of Peace. Also the lawless one of Rome, who has been deceiving the world with his false doctrines, is destroyed at the coming of the Messiah. The Millennial Kingdom is a kingdom of peace; the Lord does in no way allow the Satan and his forces disturb the peace and harmony of that kingdom, where the Messiah reigns with His holy ones in their resurrection bodies.

The Hebrew Bible gives two places that are reserved to godless people on the other side of death.
1. Sheol, or Hades where the souls of the godless are waiting for the resurrection of condemnation and the Last Judgment (2. Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). Sanat and his troops are thrown into the Abyss for a thousand years to wait for the Last Judgment when they will be thrown into hell, Gehinnom, after the last rebellion (Matt. 25:41).

2. Gehinnom, or the lake of fire of hell, the second death which is the final place for the ungodly after the judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

The glory of Messiah will fill this temple where the presence of the Lord lives in the midst of Israelis like in ancient times in Salomo’s temple (2. Chron. 5:11-14; Eze. 43:1-7).

Gentile nations will come to Jerusalem and learn from the Israeli people of priests about the ways of the Lord. And the Israelis go from Jerusalem into the nations to teach the Torah of God’s Torah and the ordinances and keep and observe His commandments righteously, and the commandments of God’s Torah and the decrees of God’s Word are taught to all nations of the world, and so righteousness will reign on earth (Isa. 11:9; Hab.2:14). The Messiah will be King over the whole earth (Zech. 14:9; Ps. 2:7-9, 22:28-29, 72:8-11). Israel will take its place as the head among the nations, the place the Lord had intended for her in the beginning, and the nations will be blessed through Israel (Deut. 28:13; Isa. 60).

Messiah’s Kingdom is a true kingdom of peace. When Yeshua the Prince of Peace reigns, all the world’s weapons are destroyed or made into tools of peace (Mic. 4:1-4; Isa.9:4-6). There will be no more armies, and the nations will no longer learn to fight. All kind of evil and violence is chained on earth in this Kingdom of Peace, where peace is the governor and righteousness the ruler (Isa. 60:17). It will be a time of real peace between Israel and Arab nations; Israel, Egypt, and Assyria will live in perfect harmony as a blessing on the earth (Isa. 19:21-25).

All Arabs who have acknowledged The Messiah of Israel and want to follow the way of Israel’s God will have a blessed future in Messiah’s Kingdom among the Israelis and as Israel’s neighbours (Jer 12:14-17). Only Yeshua, the Prince of Peace, can bring on earth such a peace.

Heavenly Jerusalem – Administrative Center of the Saints

24My servant David will be king over them, and there will be one shepherd for all of them. They will follow My ordinances and keep and observe My statutes. 25They
will live in the land that I gave to My servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They will live there forever with their children and grandchildren, and My servant David will be their prince forever. And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be My people. Then the nations will know that I the LORD sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is among them forever” (Ezekiel 37:24-28).

Then I saw the thrones, and those seated on them had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image, and had not received its mark on their foreheads or hands. And they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the thousand years were complete. This is the first resurrection! The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him for a thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6).

While the people were listening to this, Jesus proceeded to tell them a parable, because He was near Jerusalem and they thought the kingdom of God would appear imminent.

So He said, “A man of noble birth went to a distant country to lay claim to his kingship and then return. Beforehand, he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Conduct business with this until I return,’ he said. But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We do not want this man to rule over us.’”

When he returned from procuring his kingship, he summoned the servants to whom he had given the money, to find out what each one had earned. The first servant came forward and said, ‘Master, your mina has produced ten more minas.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very small matter, you shall have authority over ten cities.’

And to this one he said, ‘You shall have authority over five cities’ (Luke 19:11-19).

The second administrative level is the heavenly new Jerusalem, the dwelling place of God and the camp of the saints, which will descend from heaven and stay in space over Jerusalem for the Millennial Kingdom. It is the administrative center of the Messiah and resurrected saints (Rev. 20:9).

Ezekiel’s prophecy speaks about David who will rule the house of Israel. This is either Yeshua the Messiah, son of David, or the resurrected king David as His regent in Israel. (The Messiah will be the Ruler of the whole world.)

The Messiah’s twelve apostles, in their glorious state, will rule the twelve tribes of Israel (Mat. 19:27-30; Luke 22:29,30). All believers, God’s saints, who have served the Lord faithfully and obeyed God’s Word and the commandments of the Torah, will also have responsible positions in the administration of the Millennial Kingdom of Peace.

We need to understand the biblical truth that every human being is saved only by God’s grace through faith, without deeds of law or one’s own merits, but the reward is given for service which we
have done while in our earthly bodies (Rom. 3:19-24, 4:4; 2 Cor. 5:1-10).

It is God’s will that we would not only save our souls but that we would be fully rewarded (2. John 8). People who have served their whole life the enemy of our souls and the world and do not acknowledge Yeshua as their Lord and Saviour until their last moment will be saved by grace and enter the kingdom of heaven, but they will naturally be left without any reward.

The holy ones of God, who have lived according to God’s Word and the commandments of the Torah and served the Lord faithfully, will rule ten cities, or five cities.

But there are some people whose life’s work comes to nothing, because they have not lived and worked the way God’s Word and the Lord’s commandments require.

Their souls will be saved as if through fire, but their reward is burnt up (1. Cor. 3:10-17; Ps. 19:8-12; Mat. 5:17-19). There are believers who hide in the ground the talents the Lord has given them instead of using them to advance the Kingdom of God in any way.

They, too, are left without reward, and they even endanger the salvation of their souls, because faith without deeds is dead (Jam. 2:14-26; Luke 19:20-28; Mat. 25:24-30).

God’s will is, then, that we in faith receive Yeshua as our Saviour and serve Him faithfully in the duties we have been given in the body of Messiah, according to God’s Word and the commandments of the Torah.

That is how we will save our souls and receive a full reward in the Messiah’s Kingdom (1. Cor. 12:12-27).

There are some other facts besides doing God’s will and obeying the commandments that affect our reward. Firstly, that we serve faithfully, for this is what is expected of us (1 Kings 4:1-2; Rev. 17:14; Mat.22:14). Then there are the motives of our heart; do we serve with the intention of gaining benefit or honour to ourselves, or is love to the Lord our motive (Heb. 4:11-13; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; Phil. 2:3).

Thirdly, the amount of reward is in proportion to the talents we have received and how we have dealt with them (Mat. 25:14-30). From the one who has received much, much more will be asked (Luke 12:47,48).

The time we have served the Lord does not necessarily affect the amount of reward. God may allow some of His servants only a short time to minister, and we will be fully rewarded, if we faithfully accomplish the work within the time God in His grace has given us (Mat. 20:1-16).

Scholars estimate that the ministry of John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the Lord, only lasted about six months, after which he suffered a martyr’s death, but Yeshua called him the greatest among those born of women, because he ministered faithfully until death within the time God had given him (Luke 1:13-17; Mat. 11:7-11; Mark 6:17-29).

In what way does the Lord repay His resurrected saints?

Every believer is going to have a resurrection body, the splendour of which varies like the splendour of the stars (Luke 14:12-14; 1 Cor. 15:35-41).

The resurrection body of the wise, who have faithfully served the Lord and won souls, will shine brighter than that of others (Dan. 12:2-3), and some will outshine the sun and the moon (Mat. 13:43; 1 Cor. 15:41,42).

The amount of splendour of our resurrection body is determined by our ministry and faithfulness on earth, and once we with unveiled faces see the Lord’s glory we are transformed into the Lord’s image with ever-increasing glory (2. Cor. 3:17,18).

Secondly, the reward means a position of authority in the Kingdom of Peace. Faithful servants rule ten cities, or five cities. Some get a smaller reward, some are left without reward for one reason or other, only the soul is saved through faith, as if through flames (1. Cor. 3:10-17).

In their heavenly bodies every one rejoices and no one is jealous, although the Lord has justly rewarded every one according to their ministry and faithfulness.

The heavenly new Jerusalem will be the administrative center of the resurrected saints in the Kingdom of Peace. In their resurrection bodies the saints are like Yeshua, and if the Lord tells them, they can appear to people still living on the earth and, after having accomplished their assignment, disappear in a split second to the heavens (Phil.3:20,21; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-20).

The resurrection body is like a bridge through which the resurrected saints can translate between the heavenly state of resurrection and the earthly state of flesh whenever the Lord sends them to do an errand and minister on earth. After a completed mission they return to their heavenly headquarters in Jerusalem. It will be an incomprehensibly perfect state of bliss.

To be continued.

Bible quotations from The Hebrew Bible, if not otherwise indicated.
"...that all of them may be one (echad)..." Joh. 17:21

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