

A MESSIANIC JEWISH QUARTERLY WINTER/1977 VOL. 62 NO. 2

The Shepherd of Israel



The survival of the Jewish people is the greatest miracle of history. It was predicted by the prophets of Israel. All the facts of Jewish survival were delineated in the Tenach.

God began by making specific UNCONDITIONAL promises to our father Abraham. In Genesis 12:2, He declared that He would make Abraham's descendants a great nation. God promised that this nation would be blessed in a special way, and would in turn, be a blessing to all the peoples of the world (Gen. 12:3).

This agreement or covenant God established with Abraham (Gen. 17:7). It was confirmed with his son Isaac (Gen. 17:19, 27), and also with Isaac's son Jacob (Gen. 25:23; 35:9-15). This covenant, which granted a specific area of land to Abraham's descendants through Isaac and Jacob, was guaranteed by God to be ETERNAL.

Abraham's grandson Jacob and his sons immigrated to Egypt during a great famine. They left their homeland a small tribe but returned to it a great nation. The Jewish people retained their distinctiveness even in

Egypt first because of separation and later because of servitude. They did not assimilate (Gen. 46).

God promised to be with His people even in Egypt. He also promised to lead them out of Egypt and back to their own land (Gen. 46:3-4).

Moishe Rabbenu (Moses our Teacher) was used by God to lead our people, now a nation of several million, from Egypt (Ex. 12:37). Through him God established a CONDITIONAL covenant (the Mosaic Covenant) with the nation of Israel (Ex. 19).

According to this covenant God would bless Israel as a nation when Israel was obedient with God's holy law. Israel was to commit herself to God, as a nation, sanctified and set apart from all other peoples. God also kept His promise to Abraham: the land which He had promised was given to Abraham's descendants (Josh. 1-24).

God warned Israel of the consequences of disobedience. These prophetic warnings echo through the Tenach. Disobedience could not go unpunished (Lev. 26:14-39; Deut. 28:15-68). The prophets of Israel preached holiness and repentance

**God's Plan for
Jewish Survival**

"I would believe in Jesus if all the people who profess to believe in Him did what He taught!"

This not unusual statement may be the most common excuse for rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. The conclusion is not supported by theology but by skepticism. Why accept Jesus when those who call themselves by His name act so deplorably.

Weren't the medieval Crusaders who massacred Jews and Arabs alike supposed to be followers of Jesus? Wasn't the Inquisition in Spain, Portugal and South America which took the lives of many Jews and forced others to emigrate sponsored by the largest organized body of His followers? Didn't the Holocaust in which six million Jews died take place in a country where almost everyone believed in Him?

Interestingly enough, none of this has any real bearing on the question at hand.

Not all Democrats voted for Carter. Not all Republicans avidly supported Ford. And not everyone who calls himself a follower of Jesus is one!

Jesus commanded his followers to righteous actions. "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you . . ." (Matt. 5:43-44)

He reproved those who would call themselves His followers but did not, in fact, belong to Him. "Not everyone

DILEMMA IN FAITH

who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name . . . and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evil doers.'" (Matt. 7:21-23)

But another person's behavior does not excuse or in any way justify our attitudes and beliefs.

A famous Jewish columnist recently reported the plight of a woman whose faith had faltered because of the poor example of a co-religionist, thought to be a model of godliness. This woman was prepared to reject all that she had professed to believe because of another's actions. She was cautioned by the columnist that it was not God who should be condemned because people

have ignored or perverted His testimony to mankind. The columnist concluded that by rejecting God, we harm only ourselves: God does not need us, but we certainly need Him!

Ultimately, each person is responsible to God for his own life. The excuses he used to justify wrong doings will not be accepted by the Holy Judge. God will also repudiate all rationalizations for rejecting Jesus as the Messiah.

Mankind has been clearly forewarned by the Jewish prophets that He would come to die as an atonement for sins: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6) God's promise and His warning are clear: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in . . . God's one and only Son." (John 3:16-18) A dilemma in faith can not be resolved by foolish rationalizations based on other people's actions. Each of us must decide for himself to believe God and accept His gift of atonement, salvation, reconciliation, and eternal life.



GOD'S PLAN FOR JEWISH SURVIVAL

when Israel as a nation worshipped gods of wood and stone, delivering their children as sacrifices to pagan deities. The people were warned of the disaster and judgment they would surely bring upon their nation (Amos

2:4). These holy men described the coming judgment of unrighteousness:

- continuous sorrow and distress (Lev. 26:16)
- drought, famine, and desolation (Lev. 26:20, 27-31)
- Israel's dispersion throughout the world (Deut. 28:64)
- persecution and death (Lev. 26:38; Deut. 28:65-67).

All of these things have happened! But miraculously, the Jewish people have been preserved DESPITE all these occurrences.

God's promise to Abraham also included a warning to the enemies of His people, ". . . I will curse him that curseth thee . . ." (Gen. 12:3). Ultimately, those peoples who have done

The Faith of Abraham ... and Sarah

by DR. SARAH GOLDBERG

I was raised in a traditional Conservative Jewish home. We attended synagogue on all holidays and at least twice a month on Shabbat (the Sabbath). My family and I related to God, as most Jews do, as a far-off Spirit to be placated not a Divine Person to be loved.

When I married, Judaism became the least important thing in my life. My husband, a university professor, is Jewish but from a Reform, non-religious family. We were involved in our careers and in our life together. Neither of us felt that God (if He really existed) cared very much what we did as long as we were relatively moral, led "good" lives, and didn't cause harm to others.

My son's birth made a difference. Someone else's life and future were at stake, not just mine and my husband's. I became concerned at the lack of Jewishness in my home and the absence of any religious ties or practices.

At this significant time in my life I met Ruthie Fleischer through a mutual friend. She had a deep commitment to her Jewish heritage. But this commitment was tied to a personal relationship to the God of Israel.

I began, with my husband and an-

other Jewish friend, to study the Tenach (Old Testament). Ruthie presented its truths in such a definite way that it was clear she really believed it was God's Word (she could defend it intellectually, too). Faith in the entire Bible, in Messianic prophecy and its fulfillment in Yeshua (Jesus) was presented as a truly Jewish faith!

Through studying the Bible, I came to grips with myself as a Jew. Ruthie was patient with me, answering questions, suggesting books I could read (loaning me some of hers), studying and searching with me for the answers I sought.

Finally, as she suggested, I asked God to reveal Himself to me. I wasn't struck by lightning and I didn't hear a voice like thunder. But deep within me I knew, not only intellectually but spiritually, that the Bible is true, and that Yeshua is the promised Messiah.

When we met again, Ruthie and I prayed together and I asked Yeshua to be my personal Atonement and Savior, to become the Lord of my life. He has done that, and I thank and praise Him daily that I can call myself a Messianic Jew, a twice-born Jew according to the faith of Abraham!



ch evil deeds to the Jewish people have not prospered.

Despite all that has happened, God's unconditional covenant with Abraham remains in effect. God's love and mercy towards Israel is manifested in His promise to regather the Jewish people and return them to their own land (Isa. 11:11-12). God has kept that promise! He also promised them that they would again possess the land of their inheritance (Ezek. 36:21) and that the cities would once again prosper and flourish (Amos 9:14).

The Jewish people will continue to survive because God has declared that they will! But the future is even more bleak than the past. According to the Holy Scriptures, there will be a time

called "The Great Tribulation" or "The Time of Jacob's Trouble."

In those days the Jewish people will again call upon God as a nation and He will hear them (Zech. 13:8-9). When all the nations of the earth seek to destroy Israel, God will be their Savior (Zech. 12:7-9; 14:12). In that day, the people of Israel will recognize the One Who fought for them, the Anointed One (Messiah), Yeshua (Jesus):

"... they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son. . . ." (Zech. 12:10)

But the story of Jewish survival does have a happy ending. With recognition will come repentance,

and with repentance, reconciliation. Israel will be cleansed from all past sin by the Messiah's atonement and will be reconciled as a nation to the God of their fathers (Zech. 13:1).

YOU don't have to wait for that national day of repentance and reconciliation. Today is the day of salvation. You can assure your eternal survival NOW by accepting the gracious gift of atonement through Jesus the Messiah and find eternal reconciliation and peace with God.

For further information write:
Editor, Shepherd of Israel
P. O. Box 1331
Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 07632

What Would Your Rabbi Say?



According to the Messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53, the Messiah was to come to die as an atonement — once for all time — for the sins of mankind. This is symbolized in the offering of the Pesach lamb whose blood applied to the doorposts saved the lives of Israelite sons (*Exodus 12*). It is also typified in the Yom Kippur of Leviticus 16, when the High Priest offered animal sacrifices for the sins of the Jewish nation.

Your rabbi will tell you that Isaiah 53 refers to the Jewish people (not the Messiah) who bear the iniquities of mankind and suffer for the sins of the world.

But THIS is what your rabbi will not tell you:

1. "every one shall die for his own iniquity" (*Jer. 31:30*).

2. "in Thy sight [that is, in God's sight] shall no man . . . be justified" (*Ps. 143:2*).

3. "None . . . can by any means redeem his brother [or any man]" (*Ps. 49:7*).

4. "it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (*Lev. 17:11*).

5. "the Messiah would make an end of sins and provide reconciliation with God (read *Dan. 9:24-27* in your Bible).

Do you really think YOU are good enough in God's eyes to bear someone else's sins—or, do you need the Messiah's atonement applied to your life?

How Would You Know the Messiah?

God gave the Jewish people many signs which pointed the way to Messiah, His coming, His life on earth, and His death are foretold by the prophets of Israel. Hundreds of prophecies had to be fulfilled by the One Who was to come.

Do you know how the Messiah was to be identified? If not, fill out the coupon below and you will receive free of charge the booklet, "How Would You Know the Messiah?"

Please send me a copy of "How Would You Know the Messiah?"

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Mail to: SAR SHALOM PUBLICATIONS
P.O. Box 1331
Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

The Shepherd of Israel

RUTH FLEISCHER SNOW, EDITOR

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY SAR SHALOM PUBLICATIONS
P.O. BOX 1331, ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N.J. 07632

IN THIS ISSUE

God's Plan for Jewish Survival

Dilemma in Faith

The Faith of Abraham . . . and Sarah

What Would Your Rabbi Say?