

# The Shepherd of Israel



THE SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL, P.O. BOX 1331, ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N.J. 07632

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## WHAT GOD HAS COMMUNICATED TO ME

In 1964 I had the extremely good fortune to meet the Man whose Name I had hardly known, a Person whom I thought could have absolutely no relevance to my life. Yet, having met Him my life has been so dramatically transformed that I am compelled to tell others.

*Stuart Sacks describes himself as a converted Jew. Is there such a thing or has Sacks simply converted?*

*Decide for yourself in Sacks' discussion of Old Testament Judaism.*

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STUART SACKS, TH.D.

## My Background

I have always believed in God. Sensing God's existence from my earliest years however, I was dubious that His existence enabled me to pray to Him or that He could be an active personal force in my life.

More inside—



# WHAT GOD HAS COMMUNICATED TO ME

By Stuart Sacks, Th.D.

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“Moses, recognizing his own inadequacy with respect to salvation, admonished the people to anticipate Messiah and give allegiance to Him (Deut. 18:15).”

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This rather vague belief was also that of my Jewish family. They, too, acknowledged God's existence but had no real sense of His dynamic immanency in everyday life. The Scriptures were thought of as inspirational prose and poetry. Hardly the God-breathed utterances Orthodox Jews confessed them to be.

Following graduation cum laude from Boston University I began my career in New York with C.B.S. Television. During my second year with them I was highly honored to have a network broadcast of my music by the C.B.S. Orchestra.

Yet, despite success and the excitement of life in New York, I found my life to be a hol-

low shell. I began to yearn and pray for spiritual understanding. My heart's cry was for contact with God. Could He be known?

The philosophers and existentialists offered opinions but few spoke with any certainty. The "eastern" religions were either obsessively introspective or blindly impersonal.

After a short while it became increasingly obvious that I would not be able to know God by my intellect.

Finally I was led to consider the book given me in shul (synagogue), one whose contents I had criticized but whose binding I had never cracked. I offer the following for those groping about for God.

### The Bible: Who wrote it?

As I read and prayed, God convicted me that the Scriptures were His inerrant revelation. A sure guide to lead men to Himself.

With respect to Divine Authorship, John Wesley said the Bible was written by evil men, demons, good men, or God Himself. Yet evil men or demons could not have written Scripture for they would never exhort men to obey God.

Neither could good men have been the authors for they wouldn't be good if, having attributed the words to God, they were actually the originators.

The Old Testament is largely prophetic. There are no less than 25 distinct prophecies pertaining to the Babylonian captivity, the dispersion of the Jews and the destiny of their land. Each has remarkably come to fruition.

us for our sin — eternal separation from Him — and restore us to a unique eternal relationship with Him.

Sin, epitomized in Adam, is any violation of God's law and perfect will. Who among us could say he has always lived in perfect subjection to God? We inveterately prefer our will to God's and so go our own way rather than His.

This waywardness is the essence of sin. The root of man's dilemma is not simply the sin he commits but rather the innate residual sinfulness which spawns such behavior (Jer. 17:9). Estrangement from God is the result.

Since the penalty for sin is death (Ezek. 18:4), the solution is not easy. Let us see how God undertook to solve this.

### God's Solution

Abraham's parents were not worshipping the true God. They served idols (Joshua 24:2). But the Lord revealed Him-

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**“As the Hebrew laid his knife to the throat of the innocent creature he realized God was telling him he deserved to die . . .”**

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But the most important prophecies in the *Tenach* are Messianic and anticipate the one who is called *Meshiach*, Messiah, or the Anointed One. The crucial question is when would the Anointed — by necessity supernatural (Mic. 5:2) — appear?

In the 6th century B.C., Daniel had a powerful vision from the Lord.

In the 9th Chapter of Daniel, the prophet was shown the Messiah would come while the Temple was standing, be rejected, suffer death on behalf of His people and that the Temple would be destroyed subsequent to His death.

Extraordinarily each of these unique contingencies was perfectly fulfilled in the life of Yeshua (or Joshua, Jesus in the Greek). In Hebrew, Yeshua literally means deliverer.

### The Definition of Sin

It might occur to the reader, “Why does mankind need a Deliverer? From what does God wish to deliver us?” Quite simply, He desires to deliver us from the penalty due

self to Abraham and caused him to leave his heathen tradition.

God promised Abraham that through his seed (Messiah), the whole world would be blessed. Ultimately, Messiah would come forth and the blessing extended to Israel would be the plan of salvation for mankind (Isa. 49:6).

Remarkably, each book of the Bible reinforces this plan of salvation.

God, jealous of His people's affections, required them to love Him with all their heart. He gave them laws which were to uniquely distinguish them from all other nations.

But the Mosaic law was never designed to bring men into salvation. Moses, recognizing his inadequacy with respect to salvation, admonished the people to anticipate the Messiah and give allegiance to Him (Deut. 18:15).

Even prayer coupled with repentance and dedicated attempts at self-transformation were inadequate to bring anyone into right standing with God. The key has always been, and shall forever be,

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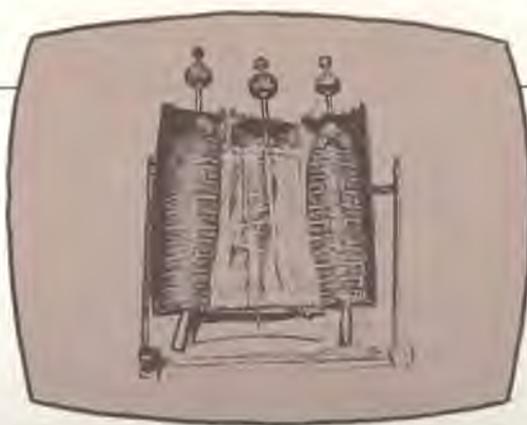


### The Blood Covenant—Access to God

The redemption of the Hebrew people was bound up with the blood sacrifice of animals. The Passover and Day of Atonement bore witness to one central truth in Leviticus 17.

Without the shedding of blood there is no atonement possible.

As the Hebrew laid his knife to the throat of the innocent creature he realized that God was telling him he deserved to die for his sin. But a guiltless victim's death was, at least temporarily, being accepted.



“... many express their opinion that the soul returns to God like a drop of water is absorbed by an ocean. The Scriptures are in sharp contradistinction to such nonsense . . .”

The one sacrificing the beast leaned on it to express the idea of the conference of the penitent's sin. In a sense the animal's "guiltlessness" was mysteriously imputed to the sacrificing Israelite because the animal was a symbol of the Messiah, or Anointed One.

Appropriately, the prophet Isaiah identified Him as a lamb whose substitutionary death would fully atone for the sins of all those who put their trust in Him.

It is fundamental to realize that God cannot simply forgive sin or overlook it. He is avowed to judge and penalize sin (Job 10:14). Since death is the penalty for sin, the Substitute for sinners must pay that price.

The Messiah's voluntary death bridged the chasm between sinful man and the Holy God. My sin was judged on Him and God's righteousness satisfied.

We stand condemned apart from the mediatorial services of Messiah. He loved us to the extent that He shed His blood for our forgiveness, being raised from the dead to conquer death for all who trust Him.

### The Resurrection . . . Impossible?

Why should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead? God is not limited by our shallow intellectual assessment of His power.

I've heard many express their opinion that the soul simply returns to God like a drop of water is absorbed by an ocean. The Scriptures are in sharp contradistinction to such nonsense.

Six hundred years B.C. Daniel wrote, "... those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 9).

The Spirit of the living Messiah has come to dwell in me and I am confident that, although this mortal body returns to dust, God will someday quicken it and make it gloriously incorruptible, according to His promise.

If you will simply come to Messiah confessing your need of Him He will bless your life. "He who comes unto me," said Jesus, "I will in no wise cast out."

If you wish to enter into this relationship with the Lord, the following prayer will assist you in coming to Him as His Word says you must.

*Dear God, I confess with sorrow before You that I am sinful: I have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Yet I believe, as the Bible says, that Jesus the Messiah took my sins upon Himself when He died.*

*I pray that the risen Messiah will come into my life, pardon my sin and make me over again into a new person. I willingly forsake the old way in which I led my life; take over my life and lead me into Your perfect will.*

*Messiah be a continual reality in my life and help me follow You faithfully.*

*Amen.*

If you have prayed the above from your heart, you can be sure of your eternal destiny.

If you would like your own personal copy of Stuart Sacks' pocket-sized booklet *His Truth Shall Be My Shield and Buckler* just fill out and mail this postage-paid card. No stamp is necessary.

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