

Israel's Tom Messenger

Fall 2015

Publishing Salvation to Zion - Isaiah 52:7
A ministry of Jewish Awareness Ministries

An artistic illustration of three patriarchs. Abraham is in the background with a long white beard and a grey robe. Isaac is on the right, also with a long white beard, wearing a grey robe. Jacob is in the foreground, with a dark beard and a green robe. The background is a soft, hazy landscape.

Abraham
אברהם

Isaac
יצחק

Jacob
יעקב



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SPEAKERS:

Rev. Mark Robinson:

Rev. Robinson took on the responsibilities as Executive Director of *Jewish Awareness Ministries* in October, 2006. He is the editor of and writes for the mission magazine *Israel's Messenger*. He has written numerous articles for different Christian publications and booklets over the years. He has traveled to Israel 19 times and has spoken in conferences throughout the U.S. on Israel, Bible prophecy, and Jewish Culture and the N.T. He has served in Jewish ministry for about 40 years. He is a student of the Middle East, especially as it relates to Israel.

Dr. Doug Bookman:

Dr. Bookman has served as a pastor, as well as on the faculty of Pillsbury Baptist Bible College, Central Seminary, Master's College, and presently at Shepherd's Theological Seminary through the years. During these years Dr. Bookman began to see the need for a renewed emphasis on the life of Christ and the nation of Israel. Much of his ministry in the last decade has focused on both Israel and the life of Messiah, leading study trips to Israel, and speaking at Bible Conferences across the United States and abroad. He has been to Israel approximately 45 times and is recognized as an expert on Israel and the life of Messiah.

Dr. Hanna Shahin:

Dr. Shahin was born and raised in the old city of Jerusalem and received Messiah as his personal Savior in his late teens. He attended the American College in Jerusalem, before following God's calling on his life which led him to the Baptist Seminary in Beirut, Lebanon. Hanna began his full-time Christian ministry in July of 1971, and has since served in almost every country of the Middle East and North Africa. In January of 2005 he and his wife Evelyn founded Endure International, a church planting ministry in which he serves as President. Hanna is the author of two books, *My Enemy...My Brother* and *The Master Disciple-Maker*. Hanna is also adjunct Professor at Lebanon Baptist Seminary, the Middle East regional home of Luther Rice Seminary. He is very knowledgeable on Islam and the Muslim world and will bring a unique perspective to the conference.

MISSION STATEMENT

Israel's Messenger is a quarterly publication of Jewish Awareness Ministries, a Christian ministry proclaiming the Messiah to Jew and Gentile, preaching the Word of God, and praying for Israel.

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Contents

ARTICLES THIS ISSUE

Abraham

Dan Bergman..... page 5

Isaac

Keith Megilligan..... page 8

Jacob

Mark Robinson page 10



REGULAR FEATURES

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Mark Robinson page 4

SOWING THE SEED... REAPING THE HARVEST

Mark Robinson page 13

ERETZ ISRAEL

Keith Megilligan..... page 14

SHADOWS OF THE TRIBULATION

Mark Robinsonpage 15



The cover of this issue of *Israel's Messenger* was done by Dan Bergman. Obviously, we don't know what the patriarchs looked like, but Dan has used his artistic talents to produce a portrait of these three men of God. This issue looks at the lives of these chosen vessels of the God of Israel.



From the Director's Desk

FALL 2015



This issue of *Israel's Messenger* looks at the patriarchs of Israel – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These three men were used by God to bring the Jewish people into existence, and through them, the Savior of the world.

I would guess thousands of articles and books have been written on the life of Abraham, and rightly so, as he is one of the stellar men of the Word of God. Dan Bergman does a commendable job in looking at the life of this man of God.

Isaac, in many ways, is the forgotten patriarch. Little has been written about Isaac in books and articles. Yet, he is an important link in the Messianic line. The promise of Messiah comes through Isaac, not Ishmael, and his son, Jacob, is the progenitor of the Jewish people. Keith Megilligan looks at this promised son of Abraham.

Jacob is unquestionably the most maligned of the three patriarchs. Conniving, deceitful, manipulative, liar are some of the ways Jacob has been described from pulpits and pens. It is my belief that Jacob has been maligned by men, where God nowhere in Scripture maligns him. Perhaps the teachings of men about Jacob have filtered down to these pulpits and pens who denigrate him. Dr. Henry Morris in his *Genesis Record* commentary astutely comments, "There is never a single instance in the Bible of criticism of Jacob (except on the lips of Esau and Laban, both of whom are unworthy

witnesses). Every time God spoke to Jacob, it was in a message of blessing and promise, never one of rebuke or chastisement. If we would be faithful Bible expositors, therefore, we must be guided by what God has actually said, not what we think He should have said... We suggest, therefore, that such an attitude as commonly expressed by Bible expositors relative to Jacob is entirely out of line... God's judgment concerning Jacob is given in Genesis 32:28: 'As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.'" Please read my article about Jacob and give this man of God another hearing.

We also have our regular columns. In *Sowing the seed... Reaping the harvest*, I have written about an encounter with an orthodox Israeli woman in the Galilee area of Israel. Keith Megilligan's *Eretz Israel* column looks at the region of Samaria. You will find his article very helpful in understanding biblical geography. The *Shadows of the Tribulation* article is written by me and analyzes the recent U.S. led nuclear agreement with Iran and how it may influence prophecy. We are certainly living in amazing times!

March 17 – 19, 2016 we will be hosting our first Bible Prophecy Conference at our headquarters. We will begin on Thursday night, have messages all day Friday, and end at noon on Saturday. Our *Knesset Room* (meeting room) has limited seating. Because of the limited seating we are taking reservations for this conference. Priority will be given to those coming from out of the area. There is no charge for the conference but love offerings will be taken to help cover

costs. There are some excellent speakers lined up as we address many of the issues of the day in light of Bible prophecy. Special music will be part of the conference. There are motels in the area 5 minutes from our headquarters. Details on these will be provided by contacting *Jewish Awareness Ministries* office. Please see the ad on the inside cover for details. CALL US to reserve your space for this conference.

On the back of the magazine is a 16 month calendar (starting in September, 2015 and running through December, 2016) advertisement. This calendar is produced in Israel and is more than a calendar – each page is artwork that is designed to be framed. The theme of this calendar is the twelve tribes of Israel. It is a gorgeous calendar and has a lot of helpful information. Order one for yourself and a friend. We have limited quantity so order soon.

Pastor, I am available to speak in your church. I can speak on Israel and prophecy, Christ in the Passover, or a myriad of other subjects that I can suggest. Call the office to talk with me about coming to your church.

Beloved, pray for the peace of Jerusalem, Psalm 122:6, and for the U.S. We are living in treacherous times. 🕊

In Messiah,
Mark Robinson

Abraham: The Father of Faith



By Rev. Dan Bergman



Travel back with me over four thousand years to the desert plains of a place called Ur (modern-day southern Iraq). It is in this ancient place that our story begins. It is a journey full of trials, promises, and blessings. It is a story that tells the origin of a nation who came from a barren womb - the people from whom the Messiah would come. It contains the deed of ownership to the most contested piece of real estate on the planet. It is the story of how God, through a single man, would bless the whole world. It is the story of Abraham.

THE CALL

After the death of Haran his brother, Abram married Sarai. His father took him, Sarai, and the son of his deceased brother from Ur on the long journey to Haran (modern day Turkey), where they settled for some time. It was while they were in Haran, that something amazing happened! The Creator spoke to him! But, our awe is short-circuited. Perhaps we know this story too well.

For a moment, try to put yourself in Abram's sandals. You are 75. You have a barren wife who seems beyond

all hope of ever having children. Your brother died, and your father is taking you on a pilgrimage far from your home. You finally arrive, and then - a voice! Imagine the fear, the awe, and the immensity of hearing the voice of the Creator of the universe! What is He going to tell you?!

לך-לך (Lech-l'cha) was the first words that Abram ever heard the Creator speak.

The phrase carries with it an intensity of purpose that could literally be translated as "Get up and go!" or "Arise, and get out of here!"

We must sense the enormity and difficulty of this command, and its ramifications.

THE PROMISE

Within the same sentence, the LORD proclaimed that He would give Abram a land, make of him a great nation, and bless the whole world through him.

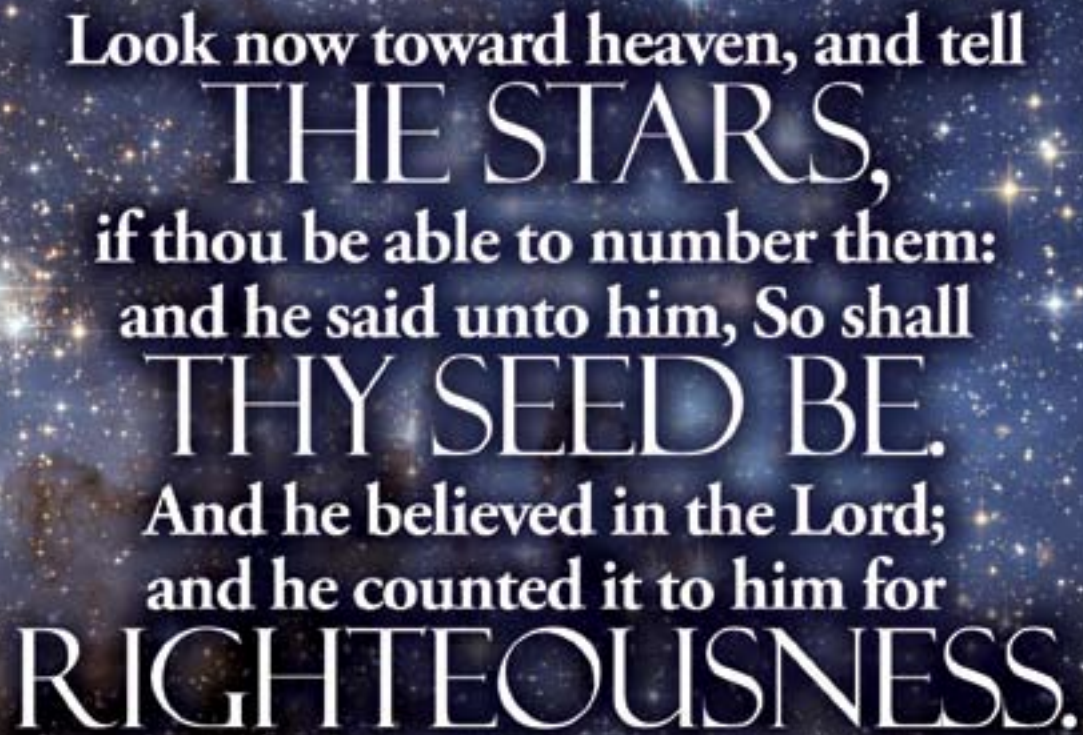
In the New Testament, Galatians 3:6-9 tells us that this world-wide blessing is the gospel! It was preached unto Abraham roughly 2,000 years before Jesus was born!

"I will make of thee a great nation..."¹ the booming indescribably majestic voice of the Creator proclaimed.

How ironic it must have seemed, that God would choose to make a nation from the loins of a man whose greatest trial thus far was the barrenness of his wife's womb! Imagine leaving your own family based on a promise that doesn't seem to make any logical sense. And yet he obeyed God, gathered his belongings, and departed.

Abraham's father would stay in Haran for 60 more years after Abraham

Continued on page 6



Look now toward heaven, and tell
THE STARS,
if thou be able to number them:
and he said unto him, So shall
THY SEED BE.
And he believed in the Lord;
and he counted it to him for
RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Continued from page 5

left, and he would die there.

How would *you* have responded – would *you* have left?

Abraham did.

How amazing it must have been for God to tell him that He would make him a blessing - to the whole earth! Imagine his astonishment at the Creator's promise to bless those that bless him and curse those that curse him!²

As Abram, Sarai, and Lot (their nephew) journeyed southward to Canaan, the LORD spoke to him again, but this time He actually appeared unto him! God tells him that He will give this land to Abraham's descendants! Abraham was so moved by the greatness of the Creator, that he built an altar right there – in the plain of Moreh.³ Moreh is in the modern-day West Bank, biblical Judea and Samaria. Try to wrap your mind around the reality of that Biblical truth! After continuing southward, he was once again stirred

by the wonder of the Lord. He built another altar in a place called Beth-el. It would be in this place that he would call upon the personal name of the Creator – יהוה (often transliterated as Yahweh or Jehovah).

In Beth-el there was not enough land to sustain all of the flocks. So Lot went to the plains of Jordan, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. Abram traveled toward Hebron. While there, the LORD spoke to him again, reaffirming His promise "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth."⁴

Abraham goes to Hebron, and there builds another altar. He is consumed with God's worthiness of worship.

After Abraham traverses a great portion of the Promised Land to rescue Lot from hostile armies, God speaks to Abram in a vision.

Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. ... he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. ... Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able

*to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*⁵

Once again, Galatians sheds light on the life of Abraham, and tells us that this proclamation shows us that the only way to be justified is by faith.⁶ Peter's statement in Acts chapter 3:25-26 provides insight. He speaks of Jesus as the Prophet that Moses spoke of, and then identifies how God's age-old promise to Abraham regarding his seed bringing blessing to the whole world, would be fulfilled. Forgiveness, redemption, and salvation through Jesus the Messiah is exactly how the entire world would be blessed through Abraham! Romans 4 also expounds upon these amazing truths. The One who would bear the iniquities of the children of Abraham would be born to a virgin some 2,000 years later, as the Seed of Abraham to bring blessing to the whole world!

Continued on page 7

THE STRUGGLE

At some point after God speaks this incredible prophecy to Abram, and the unconditional covenant is made, Sarai tells him to take her hand-maid, Hagar, as his wife, and that she may give Abram a child. Abram follows Sarai's advice, and Hagar becomes pregnant.

As a response to this, Hagar despises Sarai and Sarai treats Hagar harshly. Things are a mess. After fleeing, Hagar is encouraged and blessed by the angel of the LORD. She then returns to Sarai, placing herself under her hands. Her son, Ishmael, is born. Abram is 86. God would not speak to him again for 13 years.

Thirteen years pass and then the LORD appears unto Abram. He falls on his face. God reaffirms once again that He would make Abram a father of many nations. He changes his name from "High father" to "Father of a multitude." Abram is now Abraham. God reiterates His previous promises and explains the physical sign of the covenant – circumcision.

There are those today, as there were in the first century, who believe their outward conformity to a standard, or their biological heritage merit some sort of righteousness. They might find it interesting to know when Abraham received the sign of God's covenant (circumcision), it came after he was already pronounced "righteous" as a result of his faith. Romans 4:11 and 12 expound upon this.

God then tells Abraham something that he was apparently not expecting. Sarai (whose name will now be Sarah) would have a son, and that all of these promises within the covenant would be fulfilled through his lineage!

This was hard to swallow. Abraham was 99, and Sarah was 90! Abraham laughs in disbelief. He even begs God to recognize

Ishmael. Although He does bless Ishmael, God reassures him of Sarah's seed to be the child of the covenant, and proclaims the boy's name – taken from the Hebrew verb "to laugh", Isaac.

The LORD would appear once more to Abraham to reaffirm this promise. This time He is in a physical form, in the door of Abraham's tent in the heat of the day, Genesis 18. This is none other than a pre-incarnate appearance of the Messiah, Jesus. When He speaks of the promise again, Sarah laughs within herself, finding the thought of bearing a child at this age impossible.

THE TEST

Isaac is born (just as God had said)!! Years follow. What is possibly the most difficult test of faith Abraham would ever face, would come from the voice of God - the voice he had learned to trust.

He tells Abraham to take Isaac "and offer him... for a burnt offering."⁷ Let that sink in.

Abraham rose up, took Isaac, two of his servants, and some wood on the three day journey up to Mount Moriah.

He did not waver. We are in fact told in the book of Hebrews that Abraham believed so strongly in God's promise that he thought that if he actually went through with sacrificing Isaac, God would raise Isaac from the dead!⁸

Isaac innocently asks Abraham where the lamb was for the offering, and he responds by telling his son that "God will provide Himself a lamb."⁹ Isaac is willingly bound and placed on the altar with the wood. Just as Abraham's knife was at the ready to take his son's life, the angel of the LORD stops him! Abraham passed the test of fearing the Lord! A ram is then eyed by Abraham struggling in a thicket. It is offered in the stead of his son. He names the place יהוה יראה — Jehovah will provide. This is the same Hebrew word used by Abraham in verse 8 when Abraham says "God will provide."

This is looking toward the future. The ram was not the fulfillment. After the ram is sacrificed and Abraham names the mountain, we are told that even at the time of the writing of

Genesis, it was commonly said that in that very mountain it would yet be seen, or provided!

Some 2,000 years later, the perfect sinless Lamb of God, born of the seed of Abraham, God in human flesh, would hang on a tree on this same mountain. God truly provided *Himself* – the lamb.

The story of Abraham culminates in the coming of Messiah and blessing to the entire world, Genesis 12:3. You can be blessed, when, like Abraham, you believe God and accept His Son as your Redeemer. 🙏



End Notes

- 1 Genesis 12:2
- 2 Genesis 12:3
- 3 Genesis 12:6-7
- 4 Genesis 13:16
- 5 From Genesis 15:1-7
- 6 Galatians 3:6-9
- 7 Genesis 22:2
- 8 Hebrews 11:17-19
- 9 Genesis 22:8



Isaac: The Middle Patriarch

by Dr. Keith Megilligan

There is a certain chain-linked relationship which the early patriarchs inherited. The Old Testament reference to the three founders of Israel is almost formulaic. *“The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”* is the standard form of reference. This reference is spoken of with reverence and almost in prayer-like intonation. The foundation of the phrase has its roots in the blessing that Isaac places upon Jacob while invoking the God of Abraham (Genesis 28:1-5). But the pivotal passage would probably be Exodus 2:24 where God remembers the covenantal relationship that he had with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. However from this Scriptural point forward, Isaac would always be the “middle man!” But how does this look, this middle man position of Isaac’s?

Of all the biblical characters of the Old Testament of which books have been written, I doubt seriously that a book on the life of Isaac would even make the top ten. Of his father and his son (Abraham and Jacob), much has been written. The former is marked as a man of faith, the father of his nation, etc. The latter is often seen as the deceiving progenitor of the twelve tribes who would produce the foundation for the nation of Israel. So, where does that leave Isaac?

There is quiet news, good news and some surprising news when it comes to Isaac. Let’s start with the quiet news. I use the word quiet to describe Isaac because there is little recorded of his speaking in Genesis. His entrance, of course, is significant - almost miraculous. He is the child of promise. Though Abraham and Sarah had tried to force the issue of having children so they might see the blessings of the multitudes

God had promised, it ended in mitigated sorrow. God’s sovereignty was not to be outdone, however. When he came to announce the birth and arrival of the promised son, he caught Sarah in an embarrassing response. She laughed and God heard her. And then the embarrassment came. God asked her why she laughed; she denied it and He called her on it! The result was that God named the promised son for her and Abraham. He named the yet-to-be-born son, “Laughter (or, “he laughs),” for that is the Hebrew translation of Isaac (Genesis 18:9-15). From then on, whenever Sarah would call her son, there would be a not so subtle rebuke to her own soul as she spoke the name of Isaac: calling “Laughter.” From Isaac’s point of view, perhaps there was a bit of personal encouragement in having such a name - surely it would bring an occasional smile to himself and others. And in fairness, this was the desire of Sarah’s heart as well after Isaac was born (Genesis 21:6, 7).

Now while it is true that Abraham had also laughed when he first heard the news that he was to have a son (Genesis 17:17-19), Abraham’s circumstances were different. The first time God had made the promise of a son of Abraham’s old age, the Lord was not taken back by Abraham’s response (of laughter). Instead, He laid out the covenantal nature of his promised son. From the New Testament another interesting biblical anecdote is provided for us in the announcement of the birth of Jesus and Mary’s stunned reply (Luke 1:34-38). Put that response over against Zechariah’s reply to the announcement of John the Baptist’s birth (Luke 1:18-22).



His astonishment is viewed as a lack of faith resulting in his mute judgment. Zechariah surely had knowledge of Abraham and Sarah’s history with Isaac. Thus he should have responded with more expectation than doubt. But, Mary had no such precedence. Her response was “acceptable” to the angel and the Lord.

Isaac was circumcised on the eighth day following his birth. The next generation of the initial covenant to Abraham was marked by this act of obedience. (But see also the element of faith related to circumcision vs. uncircumcision in Romans 4:9-18.) The confluence of Isaac being a child of the old man, the fulfillment of promise of God regarding Abraham’s progeny, and the testing of Abraham’s faith regarding his son (Genesis 22), were all causes for strong emotional ties between this elder patriarch and his son. Some of the quiet news regarding Isaac takes place during

Continued on page 9

the Mt. Moriah incident. Abraham is quietly obedient and Isaac is quietly submissive. Not once do you get the idea that Isaac was protesting his personal offering as a sacrifice. The evidence of this bond, co-mingled with Isaac's quiet demeanor, comes to the forefront when Abraham gives his trusted servant instructions about obtaining a bride for his son. The action is at Abraham's initiation and direction. But the culmination shows the tender heart of Isaac as he is "comforted" over the death of his mother with the advent of a bride in his life (Genesis 24).

This "good news" for Isaac lays the foundation for good news for us as well. Genesis 21:12, Romans 9:7, and Hebrews 11:18 open our eyes a bit to this good news. The Genesis passage reads (in part) "...in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Romans 9:7, "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called." The Hebrews passage reads: "Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

The primary passage of record is Genesis 21:12. The other New Testament passages provide divine commentary and exegesis for us as to how the primary passage should be understood. Both Paul in Romans and the author of Hebrews put the calling of the descendants of Abraham/Isaac in the context of faith - each with slightly different detail.

The point to draw from the Genesis passage is the distinction that the Lord made to Abraham between his two sons. He was told not to worry about the son of Hagar; God would make a nation of him. Instead take special note of his son of promise, Isaac. From him will come Abraham's descendants (his seed; the Hebrew text in Genesis 21:12, 13 is zera=seed), and, more pointedly, the promised seed of Messiah. The personal pronoun is used to distinguish Isaac's descendants from that of his half-brother,

i.e. "your seed/descendants." Interestingly, in this whole narrative of Genesis 21 about the two sons of Abraham, only Isaac is referred to by name. Ishmael is simply referred to as "the lad, the boy," "son of Hagar" or "her son." The good news is that when God makes a promise, He keeps it! The son of promise, Isaac, becomes the "seed" through which the Messiah would come. The One in whom rests our salvation and eternal life.

In Romans 9:7, the Holy Spirit is directing Paul to emphasize that the children who come from Abraham/Isaac are the ones through whom his "seed be called." This is where the "surprise" comes. Paul makes a distinction here, not only between the two sons, but also between Abraham and Isaac.

There is a distinction made about who should be considered Israel. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children..." (Romans 9:6b-7a).

Both the Hebrew text (of Genesis 21:12) and the LXX (Septuagint-Greek translation of OT Hebrew text) use their respective words for "seed." Likewise, Paul uses the New Testament Greek word for seed. The linguistic emphasis is a bit stronger than using the word "descendant" or the like. It appears to emphasize a certain "direct" connection between the generations. Further, Paul plays off the use of *sperma* against *tekna* (Greek translated "children") in Romans 9:7 and following.

Paul (and the author of Hebrews, each following the writing of Moses in Genesis 21:12) states the reason Isaac is important is, 1) he is the son of promise, 2) as the son of promise his genealogical line is the line that is blessed by covenant, 3) his seed will be the one from which the nations of the world will be blessed (Genesis 15, 17, 21:12, 22:16-18).

As the son of promise/covenant, he was the first male offspring to be circumcised after God entered into the covenant with Abraham. The synthesis is stated in Romans 9:8, "... That is,

They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Isaac became the first child of the children of promise that would come from Abraham.

Abraham is given another distinction in this matter of genealogy. In Romans 4:17, Paul quotes Moses in Genesis 17:5: "...a father of many nations have I made thee." God grants the patriarch a promotion: Abram becomes Abraham. The reason being, the Lord will make of him a "father of many nations." And, the reality is just that. Abraham and Hagar have Ishmael through whom comes twelve tribes and a great nation of people (Genesis 17:20). Following that comes the son of promise, Isaac, then Jacob, the "son of promise" instead of Esau, Genesis 28:13-14, and finally the twelve tribes who make up the nation of Israel. However, it is with Isaac, not Ishmael, that God establishes his covenant (17:21). Abraham becomes the "father" of many nations. Indeed today, Christians, Jews and Muslims each look to Abraham as their progenitor, "Father." However the son of promise, Isaac, becomes the "father" of all Jewish people who embrace the promise (of Messiah), the true Israel, Jews who believe in Jesus, as opposed to those who are not true Israel, Jews who don't believe in Jesus as Messiah. As Paul says in Romans 9:8, "That is, *They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.*"

Physical heritage is not important. What is important? A person's spiritual relationship! This is the distinction being made in Romans 9:6-8! Being born Jewish does not please God. Following in the path of Isaac is what is needed. "Concerning the flesh Messiah came..." (Romans 9:5) speaks of the Jewish lineage of Jesus. But, the lesson of Isaac, is that he is the progenitor of Messiah and those who recognize and follow Messiah "are counted for the seed," "the children of God." 📖



Jacob: Scoundrel or Saint?

by Rev. Mark Robinson

In a marriage arranged from “on high”, Isaac, at the age of forty, would marry Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel, Abraham’s brother’s son. They had a great desire to have children, but for twenty years Rebekah had been barren. They sought the LORD that her inability to conceive would be removed. God granted their petition, and twin boys named Jacob and Esau were born to Isaac and Rebekah.

These two sons had conflict with each other even in the womb of their mother. The Scripture tells us that “... *the children struggled together within her.*”¹ When she inquired of the LORD as to the reason for this struggle, He responded: “... *Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*”²

The two nations were represented by Esau (so named because of the redness covering his body), and Jacob (which literally means “heel.”)³ Jacob’s name was given him because of the order of his birth; he emerged second, grabbing hold of Esau’s heel.

The Scripture presents an interesting contrast of these two individuals. Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, loved by his father Isaac, and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents, and loved by Rebekah. They came from the same womb but lived as if they were from two different worlds.

As the firstborn, Esau had the promise of the birthright. Esau, though, was a profane man. Coming in from the field famished, Esau saw the meal that Jacob was cooking. He asked Jacob to give him the meal he had prepared. Jacob offered to sell



the meal to Esau for his birthright. With undeniable overstatement, Esau responded, “... *Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?*”⁴ Jacob consummated the agreement by having Esau swear to it, and the birthright was sold for a meal of pottage.

The above incident has resulted in Jacob being described as a cunning, conniving, manipulative individual. He is oftentimes erroneously referred to as a *supplanter* because of what took place in this activity. Unfortunately, this unscriptural portrait of Jacob is frequently applied to Jewish people as a whole. Just as Jacob’s character has been maliciously maligned, so too Jewish people have suffered under the same type of character assassinations. How much has this portrait of Jacob contributed to anti-Semitic treatment of Jewish people?

The unfolding of subsequent events in this story is oftentimes seen through this distorted initial supposition about Jacob.

Isaac was old and nearing the time of his death; his eyesight was failing. He called Esau to him and told him to go kill a deer and provide some venison for him which was his favorite meal. After having partaken of this meal, Isaac would then bless him. Rebekah overheard this conversation and concocted a plan.

She called Jacob and told him to follow her instructions. He was to go get some kids of the goats and she would make a delicious meal for Isaac. Rebekah gave Jacob some of Esau’s clothing to wear, and out of the skins of the goats she produced a hairy-like covering for Jacob’s hands and neck. This being done, Jacob went in to Isaac and after serving the meal to him he was blessed by his father.

Upon returning from the field and learning that Jacob had received the blessing, Esau was bitter and angry. In anger he proclaimed to Isaac, “... *Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times; he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?*”⁵

It seems many people give more weight to this statement about Jacob than all the rest of the biblical record of these two men and the events of their lives. The angry, vain, and profane immediate response of Esau to the seeming injustice in his life certainly should merit less emphasis than the entire context of the happenings in the lives of Jacob and Esau.

Rebekah was told by God of the future of her twins while they were in the womb. “*And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated*

Continued on page 11

from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger,” Genesis 25:23. Dr. Henry Morris in his *Genesis Record* commentary, commenting on Rebekah being told by God of the reason for the struggles in her womb, aptly suggests, “No doubt, Rebekah told all this to her husband Isaac; and later, when the time was appropriate, she told it to Jacob and perhaps even to Esau. As time went on, however, Isaac and Esau began to reject and to forget this decision of the Lord, even trying to thwart it. Strange it is, and a sad commentary on the spiritual discernment of most believers even today, that they tend to favor Esau rather than Jacob, just as Isaac did.”⁶

Strange indeed, that many preachers and writers give more credence to Esau than to Jacob. It is my opinion that Jacob has been one of the most unjustly maligned individuals in the Word of God. Following are some thoughts for your consideration.⁷

- 1) Not one verse in the entire Word of God condemns Jacob. In fact, God says “*Jacob have I loved...*” This silence from Scripture about any negative actions or attitudes by Jacob is totally different from the usual portrayal of Jacob from too many pulpits and pens.
- 2) In Genesis 25:27 Jacob is referred to as a “plain man.” Aaron Pick’s *Dictionary of Old Testament Words for English Readers* translates this word as “perfect.” The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament likewise translates this as “perfect,” and adds that it also means “undefiled, upright.” It seems God’s understanding of Jacob’s character is quite different from many others.
- 3) Esau was a profane man. We are warned “*lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.*”⁸ Profane speaks of someone not interested in religious things.

- 4) Jacob entered into a legal transaction when he bought the birthright. *It was Esau* who despised the birthright and the promises of God, not Jacob. An effective argument has been made that Jacob (and certainly, Rebekah) was seeking the spiritual blessings of God and the Messianic succession of the birthright so the promise would not stay with an ungodly, selfish individual.⁹ Based on this transaction; the birthright now legally belonged to Jacob.
- 5) It was Rebekah who told Jacob to do the things he did. It seems that Jacob did not believe he was doing something wrong since the birthright now belonged to him. Hear his response to his mother’s request to obey her. “*My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.*”¹⁰ Jacob says “*I will seem to him to be a deceiver.*” Since Isaac knew nothing about what had transpired between Jacob and Esau he could possibly think of Jacob as a deceiver. But from Jacob’s statement it seems that he did not look on his actions as deceptive, but rather the receiving of what was now rightfully his.
- 6) It would seem that Esau was the deceiver in this case. Despising the birthright, he sold it to his brother and then tried to get it back by misleading his father.
- 7) When Isaac asked Jacob to identify himself, his response has seemed to many to be an outright lie. *The Artscroll Tenach* commentary suggests an interesting understanding of the Hebrew בכרך עשו אונכי, “I am Esau your firstborn.” The comment is made that, “the commentators agree that technically Jacob did not lie. He chose his words deliberately, the intent of his response being as *Rashi* explains: אונכי, It is I who bring this to you; עשו בכרך, Esau, (however) is your first born. Thus, by adding בכרך, your first born, Jacob was presenting

an ambiguity and intimating what was, in fact the truth;”¹¹

- 8) The blessing given to Jacob by Isaac was never rescinded. One would think if Isaac thought he had been duped, he would have removed the blessing. But he didn’t. He actually confirmed it. The Scripture records that “*... Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.*”¹² Isaac somehow knew (possibly by the Holy Spirit’s leading), that the blessing should reside with Jacob, not Esau, and perhaps he trembled realizing how close he came to giving the blessing to the “wrong” son. The inspired writer to the Hebrews confirms this understanding, “*By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*”¹³ How can we miss the understanding of Hebrews 11:20, that Isaac blessed Jacob through his faith in the God of his father. He was doing exactly what God wanted and, again, there is no hint of condemnation of wrong actions on the part of Jacob recorded in the entire Word of God. No wonder Isaac would say “*and he shall be blessed.*”
- 9) The unfortunate label of “supplanter” on Jacob has largely come about because of a statement by Esau. This ungodly, bitter individual’s testimony has become the standard character description of Jacob. How tragic, especially since this verse as translated does not express the meaning of the verse. Let me quote Dr. Joseph Cohn.

“We have mentioned before in this volume the fact that nowhere can it be shown that the word Jacob in the Bible means “supplanter.” This is purely an imagination of certain Bible translators or interpreters; whether such imagination was

deliberate or accidental we cannot of course assert. But the word Jacob means only ‘heel,’ and nothing else. And so the original Hebrew passage of Genesis 27:36 has been grossly misinterpreted and mistranslated in the English. The English rendering in the St. James version reads: ‘Is not he rightly named Jacob? For he hath *supplanted* me these two times.’ But if we take the Hebrew just as it is written, the passage will read as follows: ‘Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he hath *Jacobed* (heeled) me these two times.’ In other words Esau simply made a play on the word Jacob, which means heel, and not supplanter.”¹⁴

Even if one were to accept *supplanter* as the meaning of Jacob, the word *supplant(er)* basically means to supersede or replace another. Although Webster’s Dictionary does say it is especially done by force or treachery, it does not need to have that inference. I would suggest that the negative connotation of the phrase *supplanter* has been read into Jacob’s actions, and is not based on a consideration of the entire context.

- 10) Jacob would go to Padan-aram to get a wife as he was told to do by his mother and father. Before leaving, Isaac again gave him his unqualified blessing. Would this have been done to an unrepentant fraud and deceiver? I think not.

Rabbi Riskin, a regular contributor to the *Jerusalem Post*, comments on the possible motives of Rebecca and the deception of Esau in this episode which are helpful.

“...Rebecca sees the world - and Esau - with different eyes. First of all, God Himself (as it were) had told her that two nations were in her womb, and that the elder would serve the younger. And even more to the point,

she grew up with Laban, the Aramean — a word linguistically connected with *rama’i*, deceiver, and its repetition three times in our portion suggests that Rebecca knew only too well the sounds of a person speaking with forked tongue.

“Perhaps Rebecca sees such a machination as an opportunity to demonstrate Esau’s true character. Rebecca cannot criticize Esau outright, the apple of his father’s eye. The Matriarch must demonstrate to her naive husband that he is capable of being deceived, he would also understand that the same deception had been practiced by Esau all these years.

“And this is precisely what happens. Esau’s arrival with the venison produces a great trembling in Isaac, possibly evoking the trembling he felt on the altar. He realizes that just as his father once nearly sacrificed him, he has unconsciously been sacrificing Jacob, overlooking the son given over to study and morality in favor of the son who craves animal blood.

“Rebecca, sister of Laban the Aramean deceiver, saw it all along. Isaac realizes at last that he is capable of being fooled. Hence, anger directed at Jacob is not appropriate. On the contrary, Jacob is the true heir to the blessing, which is why the key phrase is, ‘Moreover, and he shall be blessed.’

“Jacob is not the deceiver. Esau is, and has been all along.”¹⁵

Upon leaving Beersheba and heading for Haran, Jacob bedded down for the night in a place he would eventually call Bethel. In the midst of his sleep, through a dream, God reestablished the blessing to him: “... *I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the*

families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.”¹⁶

Jacob, according to Scripture, was an “upright, undefiled, perfect” man. God’s promises to Abraham, through Isaac, would continue through Jacob. Jacob would be the direct progenitor of the twelve tribes, the nation of Israel. Jacob being listed among the men and women of faith of Hebrews 11, suggests God’s understanding of him and his character is different from most preachers and writers. 🕯

End Notes

1. Genesis 25:22a
2. Genesis 25:23
3. The common teaching that Jacob means supplanter is erroneous. The Artscroll Tenach Series, Genesis Vol. III, p. 1061, says, “His father [sc. Isaac] named him Jacob [Yaakov, a play on the word ekev, heel] because he grasped Esau’s heel.”
4. Genesis 25:32
5. Genesis 27:36
6. Dr. Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*, page 181, Baker Book House, 1976
7. I am indebted to the book *I Have Loved Jacob*, (ABMJ, now Chosen People Ministries, 1948) by Dr. Joseph Hoffman Cohn for much of the following insights.
8. Hebrews 12:16
9. See pages 31 - 37 of *I Have Loved Jacob*.
10. Genesis 27:12
11. The Artscroll Tenach Series, Genesis Vol. III, p. 1130. The commentary adds “The commentators take pains to show that Jacob remained as close as possible to the truth during the course of his conversation with Isaac. Some of the interpretations seem very strained in the light of the translation. It should be borne in mind, however, that the construction of the Hebrew allows for such interpretation even where the English does not.” It then footnotes this comment with “However, it must be understood that only the Divinely ordained nature of the mission justified Jacob’s clever choice of words to avoid an outright lie. He did mislead his father, and in everyday affairs such behavior would be halachically (religious law) forbidden as deceptive...”
12. Genesis 27:33
13. Hebrews 11:20
14. Dr. Joseph Cohn, *I Have Loved Jacob*, (ABMJ, 1948) p. 45-46
15. Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, *A Lesson in Deceit*, Shabat Shalom Column, *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, week ending November 16, 1996, page 31
16. Genesis 28:13-15



Sowing the Seed... *Reaping the Harvest*

OLIVE OIL FACTORY

By Rev. Mark Robinson

Cheryl and I recently spent a week in Israel. As we traveled throughout the Galilee and eventually Jerusalem we saw new places we have never been to, and talked with a number of people. One of the places recommended to us was an olive oil factory in the Golan. We set up a time to visit this factory on our second day in Israel, so I could consider if this would be a worthwhile addition to our tours to Israel. Upon entering the facility I met Ruth, the manager of the olive oil factory. She suggested Cheryl and I join a group that was just about to start their tour and that we could talk afterward. The hour tour went quickly. The initial introduction by our hostess was informative and lively. Following this we watched a brief movie on the importance of olives and the production of olive oil in Israel. From the movie, we had the opportunity to taste different varieties of olive oil with bread. It was certainly very tasty, and a great advertising vehicle for provoking us to want to purchase some of the different olive oil products.

At the end of our tour we sat down with Ruth to discuss the details about bringing our October tour to the facility. It wasn't long into the conversation when Ruth asked, "May I ask you a private (i.e. personal) question?" "Certainly," I responded.

"You are Jewish?" "Yes," I answered. "And you bring Christian groups to Israel?" Again I responded in the affirmative. "So, you are Christian?" "Yes," I said. Ruth then asked, "Please explain how this is?" This question led to about a 45 minute conversation. Through the years I have found that many Israeli Jews are much more open than the average American Jew to discuss if Jesus is the Messiah. Perhaps a reason for this is they live in a Jewish state and are much more secure in their identity. Whatever the reason, my experience is that they are often not threatened by discussing Jesus as Messiah. And in Ruth's case, she was a religious Jewess, not secular.

In response to her inquiry I responded, as I usually do, by briefly sharing my testimony. When I do I ultimately emphasize Micah 5:2, "*But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting,*" because Jewish people need to understand that my belief in Jesus as Messiah is based on the Jewish Bible.

Ruth responded to my testimony by saying, "If Jesus is the Messiah, shouldn't his name be in the Tenach?" "It is. Let me show you something in Isaiah."

The only Bible available was the one on Cheryl's cell phone so I opened that and brought up Isaiah 62:11, "*Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.*" I told her, "Notice, '*thy salvation comes,*' Salvation here is a person, '*his reward is with him, and his work*

before him.' Jesus' name in Hebrew is Yeshua. Salvation here is Yesha, a form of Yeshua. You could translate this verse, 'Yeshua (Jesus/salvation) is coming; behold, his reward (Jesus') is with him, and his (Jesus') work before him.'

"That's not in my Bible," Ruth responded. "It certainly is. Let me show you another passage closely related to this passage – Isaiah 40:10, '*Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.*'"

I asked Ruth, "Who is coming according to this verse?" She correctly responded, "God is coming." "Notice," I said, "that 'his reward is with him, and his work before him.' This is the exact same language used in Isaiah 62:11. But, in Isaiah 62:11, it is *salvation* coming. You remember your math" I asked? If A = B and B = C, then A = C. If God is coming and His reward and work are before Him and salvation is coming and His reward and work are before Him, this means that God and salvation (Yeshua) must be the same!"

"This is not in my Bible," once again Ruth stated. I assured her it is.

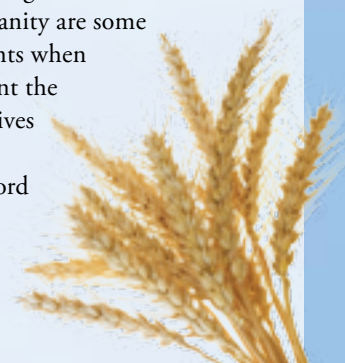
"So, you believe that God and Jesus are the same?" "According to the Jewish scriptures Yeshua is God," I answered. "I can't believe that," Ruth replied. "You can, if you accept the teaching of the Tenach," was my response.

From here we briefly considered the difficult subject of the Tri-unity of God looking at Genesis 1:1 and the triune universe of time (beginning), space (heavens), and matter (earth) as an illustration. We finished by examining the triune God in Isaiah 48:12-17. Ruth's response, once more, was "this is not in my Bible."

I assured her it was and encouraged her to read these passages from her Bible. We wrote the references we covered down for her and also added Isaiah 53. She said she would read them if I would listen to a YouTube video of a particular rabbi who "refutes" belief in Jesus as Messiah. I said I would and she said she would read the verses. "Please, let the verses speak to you. Not me, or any rabbi. Open your heart and mind to what God says," was my concluding challenge.

Jewish evangelism is a slow process. Ignorance, misunderstanding, and cultural Christianity are some of the obstacles a Jewish person confronts when considering Jesus as Messiah. Some plant the word, some water the word, but God gives the increase (see 1 Corinthians 3:6-7).

May we all be faithful in sharing the word of God with Jew and Gentile and may God give the increase in many lives, including Ruth's. 🌾



ERETZ ISRAEL

ארץ ישראל

God's Testing Ground of Faith

SAMARIA: THE NORTHERN PART OF THE CENTRAL HILL COUNTRY

by Dr. Keith Megilligan

There is an Old Testament Samaria, there is a New Testament Samaria, and there is pre-Samaria! In each case the region and geography stays essentially the same. What changes, as you might expect, are the people and their history.

Geographically, Samaria is one of the prettiest sections of Eretz Israel. Its pristine mountains and deep valleys give the region a varied beauty because of its topography. Samaria is so inviting, that Joshua made it clear that when he died, he wanted to be buried there (though at the time it was still known by its tribal name: Ephraim (Joshua 24: 29,30)). Its northern most perimeter is the Jezreel Valley. It has the Coastal Plain to the west, the Jordan/Rift Valley to the east and Judea to the south. Based on this brief description you can readily sense that the region is "closed." That is, there is no easy access into or out of Samaria. Its beauty is also its constriction.

However, the constriction of various mountains and deep valleys provide two inviting characteristics for the inhabitants. Because ease of access is restricted the local residents are not usually bothered by invading foreign forces. Further, the topography and geology provide some of the most fertile soil for growing grape vines, olive trees and even wheat in the broader valleys.

Pre-Samaria is the territory first known to the patriarchs. They probably entered the land of Israel, after fording the Jordan River, and headed west up Wadi Far'ia. This valley provides the widest access from the east into the northern hill country. Once they ascended from the Jordan Valley, they would take a slight jog to the south and east entering the region of Shechem - both the valley and city. In turn, there is a much narrower valley that heads west from Shechem into the Coastal Plain known as Nahal Shechem. The patriarchs discovered that it was not always easy to live with the local residents - the Canaanites. Abraham first encountered the Canaanites in the region of Shechem, but he also received his first promise of inheritance of the Land there as well (Genesis 12). In this same biblical context the "way of the patriarchs" is outlined for us - Shechem to Bethel to the Negev (via Hebron). After the period of the patriarchs and the beginning of the settlement of the Promised Land under Joshua, this broader territory was named after the two sons of Joseph - Ephraim and Manasseh.

Old Testament Samaria is highlighted by two major factors.



First, it is a region of three capitals - Shechem, Tirzah, and Samaria. After the two kingdoms of Israel split (Judah in the south and Israel in the north), Jeroboam decided to make Shechem the capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kings 12:25). Later, when Zimri became king, he reigned from Tirzah (1 Kings 16:15). Finally, when Omri took the throne, he reigned initially from Tirzah and then moved the capital to Samaria. Samaria was actually a hill purchased by Omri from Shemer, after whom the town was named (1 Kings 16: 23, 24). Of the three, Tirzah is the prettiest. Shechem is the most vulnerable. And Samaria is the most prominent and fortified. Even today, the remnants of Roman columns greet the visitors as they approach the ancient city and ruins of Samaria. Omri knew what he was doing when he chose

Shemer to be the capital of the northern kingdom. The sad thing today for the modern visitors to Israel is that because of political tensions, none of these sites is visited very much.

New Testament Samaria is a tale of warped Old Testament history. By the time of Jesus' visitation upon the earth, Samaria and the Samaritans had become infamous among the Jews. The origin of this infamy took place when the northern kingdom of Israel was defeated by the king of Assyria (2 Kings 17:6). The Assyrian king deported most of the inhabitants to Assyria and brought in "foreigners" to occupy Israel (2 Kings 17:24). The ultimate result was not only a mixture of people, customs, and religion, but a spiritual contamination resulted that led the occupants of the territory of Samaria to turn their backs totally on the Lord (2 Kings 17:29-41). A "cult" of the Samaritans came into existence which lasted till at least the time of Jesus (John 4). Jesus exposed their pseudo-religion, history, and worship as he dealt with the woman at the well. The upside of His visit is that the Lord provided her and the entire village of Samaria with His pre-Pentecost good news to replace their old news. Further, this foundation of spiritual revival (brought by Jesus) bore fantastic fruit by the time that Philip came announcing his post-Pentecost good news!

What was once warped became whole! What was once spiritual contamination was given the opportunity for new life! It might even be said that there was a fourth Samaria: a post-evangelical Samaria! 🙏

Shadows of the Tribulation

by Rev. Mark Robinson

On July 14th, the U.S. led negotiating team entered into an agreement with Iran concerning their development of nuclear weapons. Despite the claim of the narcissists who orchestrated this deal, it has been condemned in no uncertain terms by pundits and politicians alike. The Barack Obama “legacy” desire, and the John Kerry capitulation in every point, has produced a deal where Iran got everything they wanted and the U.S. got none of their initial designs. That the deal was forged in a crucible of lies and distortions from Obama and his administration is obvious to all but the lemmings aligning with them.

“The agreement between world powers and Iran over the latter’s nuclear program is built on ‘lies and deceit.’”

—Moshe Ya’alon, *Israel’s Defense Minister, July 16, 2015*

“When you write a column, as did I two weeks ago, headlined ‘The worst agreement in U.S. diplomatic history,’ you don’t expect to revisit the issue. We had hit bottom. Or so I thought. Then on Tuesday the final terms of the Iranian nuclear deal were published. I was wrong. Who would have imagined we would be giving up the conventional arms and ballistic missile embargoes on Iran? In nuclear negotiations?”

—Charles Krauthammer, *July 17, 2015*

“A question has hung in the air since Barack Obama first moved into 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue and began his ‘fundamental transformation’ of this country: Did he intend harm, or was he merely so blinded by ideology that he could not see the damage his policies were creating? The Iran deal provides an answer... Obama both secretly and openly wooed the Iranian regime. In the process, he repeatedly lied to Congress, our allies and the American people, settling, to my satisfaction at least, that he is inflicting this potential catastrophe wittingly.”

—Mona Charen, *July 17, 2015*

“When we examine this agreement — which is bad in every aspect — when we read this agreement, the picture becomes more bleak and we discover it’s filled with absurdities.”

—Benjamin Netanyahu, *Prime Minister of Israel, July 16, 2015*

“The real traitor was always in the White House. And it’s time we called his foreign policy what it is. Treason.”

—Daniel Greenfield, *July 16, 2015*

There are many citizens of the U.S. who believe Obama is a traitor. At the very least, these would argue, he should be impeached. Perhaps, if he is a traitor, he should be tried for treason.

In the political climate of the U.S. today neither impeachment nor charges of treason will ever see the light of day.

So what are we to make of this deal and what is developing? How can we understand this deal in light of the fact, as I believe, that we are living in the “Shadows of the Tribulation?”

1. Although there are voices in Israel arguing for a military strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities there are other voices saying that Israel needs to accept the inevitable and start preparing stronger diplomatic initiatives to deal with Iran. The thinking with the second group is that the wrath of Obama, the U.N. and Europe would come down on Israel if they would indeed unilaterally attempt to destroy Iran’s nuclear facilities. And there is the concern that Israel alone doesn’t have the military capability, short of using a nuclear bomb, to destroy Iran’s nuclear fortifications.

What we know from the prophetic texts is that Iran (Persia) will be part of the Gog and Magog alliance (Ezekiel 38-39) that attacks Israel. I believe all scriptural evidence points to this attack taking place just prior to the middle of the Tribulation period. If this is correct, perhaps the proponents arguing for diplomacy on the part of Israel to resolve this will take place. And, the 7 year Tribulation period starts when the anti-Christ initiates a 7 year peace agreement between Israel and her enemies, Daniel 9:27. This is diplomacy.

If those arguing for Israel to attempt to militarily take out Iran’s nuclear facilities win the day, one of the results would be the ire of Obama, the U.N., and Europe. We know there will be increased anti-Semitism in the end times and especially in the Tribulation period, Revelation 12, and this action by Israel would certainly bring the hatred of these entities in greater intensity on Israel. Perhaps enough to force Israel to sign a peace treaty? For 7 years?

2. On Monday, July 20, the U.N. Security Council unanimously approved the deal. This action preceded the U.S. Congress’ vote on this agreement anticipated sometime in September. The Security Council vote was done despite a number of U.S. politicians asking President Obama to delay the U.N. vote until after Congress votes.

In effect, any power this country has over international agreements involving the U.S., with this vote setting a precedent, is subservient to the vote of the world. The scriptures teach there will be a one world government in the Tribulation period controlled by the anti-Christ, Revelation 13:7. Could this Iranian agreement orchestrated by the U.S. along with England, France, Germany, Russia and China, and approved by the world body of nations at the U.N. accelerate the move toward the prophesied one-world government? Not only might it do this, but it will do it!

The Iranian deal is a disaster! But, as Bible believing Christians we need to focus on the bigger picture. God and His plan for the world! We are hurtling at break neck speed toward the Tribulation period. Fasten your seat belt! Not to go into that turbulent time of God’s wrath, but for God’s rapture of His precious bride, believing Jew and Gentile, before this 7 year period begins. ☞

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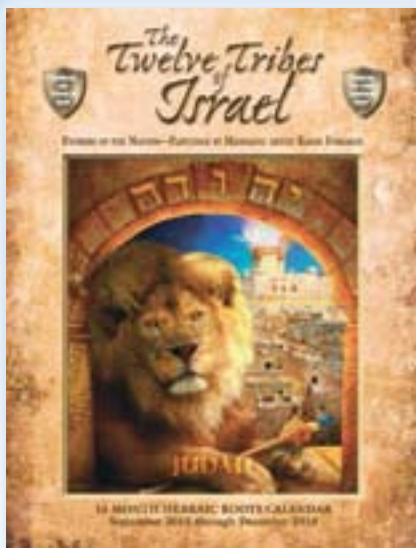
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