

אריאל

Summer 2017 / Volume 1 / Number 23



ARIEL
MINISTRIES

**Before sundown
Friday**

Removal from
cross and burial

Sundown, Thursday

Passover Seder

3 p.m.

Yeshua gives up
His spirit

12 p.m.

Darkness covers
the whole land

9 a.m.

Crucifixion 5th - 8th
mockery:
by passersby,
Jewish leaders,
Roman soldiers and
two criminals

Early morning hours

1st stage of civil trial before Pilate
2nd stage of civil trial before Herod Antipas
3rd stage of civil trial before Pilate
Pilate again tries to set Yeshua free after flogging Him
3rd mockery: by soldiers
3rd declaration of innocence
Pilate finally sentences Yeshua to death.
4th mockery: by soldiers
5th mistreatment: crown of thorns, spitting, striking with reed

Dawn

3rd stage of rel. trial:
Yeshua condemned to
death for blasphemy by rel.
leaders; sending Him off to
be tried before a civil court
Judas commits suicide

After dinner

Yeshua's prayer in
Gethsemane

Before midnight

Yeshua's arrest

Midnight

Peter's 1st denial

Before 3 a.m.

2nd and 3rd mistreat-
ments: punching, slapping,
spitting, beating
1st mockery: by rel. leaders

2 a.m.

Peter's 2nd denial

3 a.m. (second cock crow)
Peter's 3rd denial; 2nd
stage of rel. trial ends

Plus:

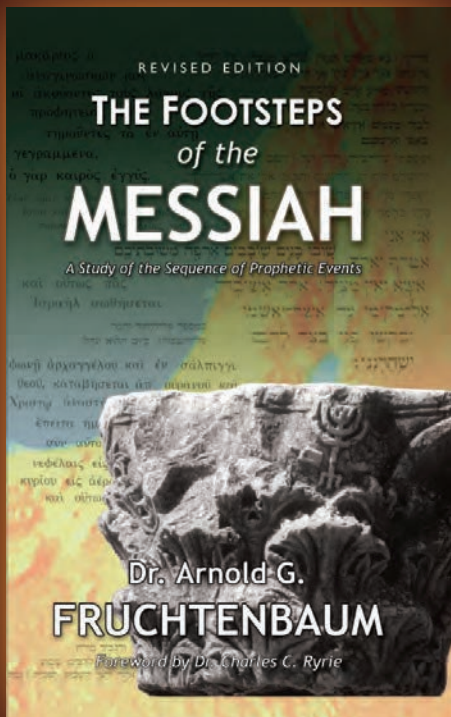
Israel's
political
system in a
nutshell

The facts behind the
Torah Scroll

How to
become a
radioactive believer

**The Most
Redeeming 24
Hours in Human
History**

Follow the Footsteps, Now also in Spanish.

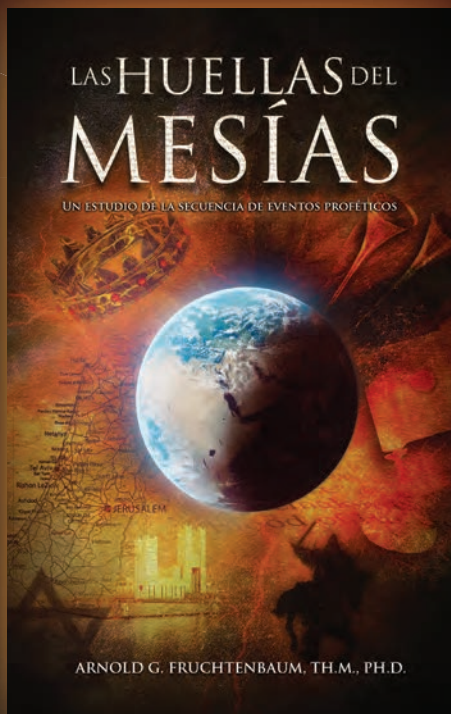


The Footsteps of the Messiah: A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events
by Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum

Using the Book of Revelation as an end time road map, Dr. Fruchtenbaum weaves the prophetic writings of the Hebrew Scriptures and Messiah's teachings to reveal God's plan for the future of Israel and the world. Dr. Fruchtenbaum gathers the many pieces of the prophetic puzzle and places them in sequential order with the result summed up by Dr. Charles Ryrie in his foreword: "Those who read this book cannot help but be instructed and stimulated by his work."

Footsteps is detailed, thorough and scholarly, yet written in a style that the average reader can easily understand. With a wealth of wisdom drawn from his Jewish background and extensive research, the author even tackles the "problem passages" to provide a comprehensive overview of the entire range of prophetic truth. "In a thoroughly biblical, balanced, and clear presentation, Arnold Fruchtenbaum plainly lays out God's plan for the future while avoiding the sensational errors of other prophetic writers. I have relied on this book as a resource for years." — Michael Rydelnik, Professor of Jewish Studies Program, Moody Bible Institute

Price: \$39.00



Las Huellas del Mesías: Un Estudio de la Secuencia de Eventos Proféticos
(The Footsteps of the Messiah)
by Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum

Sin duda alguna, la mayoría de los creyentes en todo el mundo testificarían que vivimos en los tiempos del fin. Con ansias ellos esperan que su Salvador les lleve al cielo mientras se alientan los unos a los otros con las palabras del apóstol Pablo en I Tesalonicenses 4:13-17. La esperanza de los creyentes crece con cada libro y cada película que trata sobre las promesas de la Biblia. Probablemente la serie más popular jamás publicada sobre los tiempos del fin fue escrita por el Dr. Tim LaHaye y Jerry B. Jenkins, titulada Dejados Atrás. Ha vendido millones de ejemplares y ha sido adaptada en cuatro películas hasta ahora. La serie está basada en uno de los estudios sobre los tiempos del fin titulado Las Huellas del Mesías. Cuando se le preguntó por qué él escogió esta obra como base para su exitosa serie, el Dr. LaHaye respondió, "Porque es el libro más sistemático y lógico sobre el tópico de los tiempos del fin".

Order your copy at ariel.org

Price: \$29.00





Cover Story:

The most redeeming 24 hours in human history transpired in A.D. 30. They began on Thursday, the 14th of Nisan, at sundown, and ended at sundown the next day. Dr. Fruchtenbaum summarizes what happened in those 24 hours by placing the events in chronological order. The basis of this order are the Gospel accounts and what is known about first-century Jewish culture through historical and rabbinic records.

Feature:

[Eye on Israel](#)

In this op-ed, Joel Rosenberg's wife Lynn elaborates on Israel's political system.

Feature:

[The Torah Scroll](#)

Mottel Baleston takes a look at the Torah Scroll and explains its historical and cultural significance.

Feature:

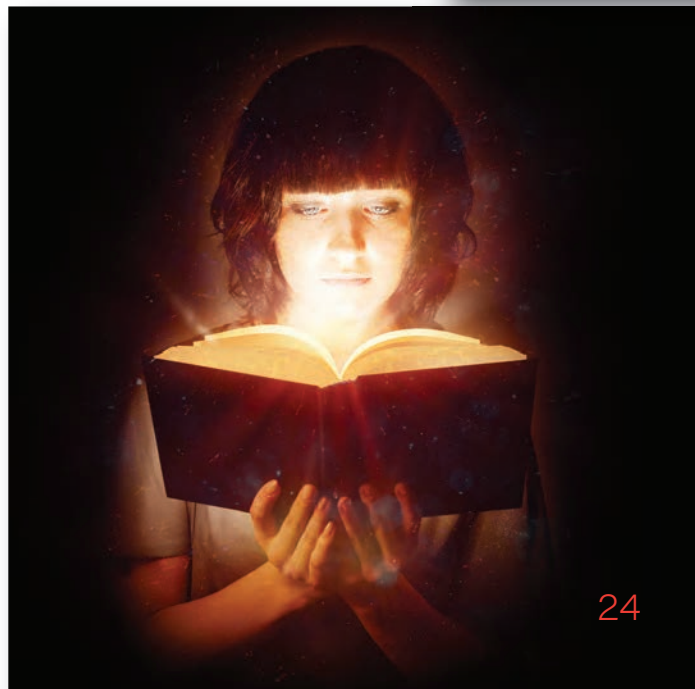
[What Does Yeshua's Identity as "Israel" Mean for the Nation Israel?](#)

Dr. Michael J. Vlach discusses the concept of Yeshua being the ideal Israel from a dispensational perspective.

Feature:

[We Should Be Radioactive](#)

In this practical Bible study of Exodus 34, Robert Morris encourages the believers to become radiant witnesses of God's love.





Purpose Statement

Ariel Ministries exists in order to evangelize Jewish people and to disciple Jewish and Gentile believers through intensive Bible teaching from a Jewish perspective.

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Shalom, Shalom,

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Messiah!

When we say these beautiful words, we wish you peace. But which peace are we talking about? Political peace? Personal peace? What constitutes biblical peace?

Without even trying to properly define the term “shalom,” many believers in Messiah conclude that peace is something they can achieve by living up to the standard of a man-made law. Others theorize that biblical peace may be found in a certain political system or party. Still others hold on to the thought that if only they bless Israel enough, the Lord will bestow immediate and bountiful blessings upon them. They take Genesis 12:3 literally—as they should. However, they add the somewhat superstitious thought to the verse that blessing Israel means to never criticize a Jewish person or the Jewish state. In extreme cases, the Jewish people are considered holier than other people, and the idea creeps in that Jews do not need salvation. After all, they are God’s chosen people, the apple of His eye!

Those who believe this often claim that the Law of Moses is sufficient to bring a Jewish person to saving faith. Having studied at Camp Shoshanah or having listened to Dr. Fruchtenbaum’s lectures, you surely recognize the absurdity of this theory. How do those who believe such things expect Israel to keep the Law of Moses now that there is no temple, no priesthood, and no sacrificial system?

It should be clear to all of us that each and every Jew who has not embraced his sinfulness and accepted Yeshua’s free gift of salvation on his behalf will end up in Gehenna, the place of the lost. Hence, we need to make an effort to reach these people with the gospel message. In this magazine, you will find an article about the most important 24 hours in human history. Dr. Fruchtenbaum systematically analyzes every minute, hour, and time frame mentioned in the Scriptures, starting at the last Passover Seder and ending with the burial of the Messiah. We encourage you to take this article and present it to your Jewish friends! Let them see the Jewishness of Yeshua and let them understand that He fulfilled God’s promises to Israel! Then—and only then—will they have a chance to come to saving faith and get to know true shalom, the peace that surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:7) and carries us through the storms of life.

In this spirit, I pray that the Sar Shalom, Yeshua, the Prince of Peace, may be with you when you tell the world about His coming!

In Yeshua’s service,

Christiane Jurik

Christiane Jurik
Editor-in-Chief

P.S.: Please feel free to send me your questions at christiane@ariel.org!





Ariel Mission Branches & Representatives



ARIEL BRANCHES



Ariel Australia Chris & Lisa Savage

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



Ariel Canada Jacques and Sharon Gabizon

Website: www.arielcanada.com

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Jacques and Sharon Gabizon represent Ariel Ministries in Canada. Their projects include door-to-door evangelism of Jewish homes in Montreal and translating Ariel's manuscripts into French. Ariel Canada established a messianic congregation in Montreal called Beth Ariel.



Ariel India Bakul N. Christian

Email: bakulchristian@yahoo.co.in

Bakul Christian represents Ariel Ministries in India and resides with his wife and daughter in Ahmedabad. After a chance meeting with a former New Zealand representative, Bakul became interested in the Jewish perspective of God's Word. Today, Bakul daily seeks the Lord's direction concerning his outreach ministry in India.



Ariel Israel Sasha G. & Lilian Granovsky

Email: sashag@ariel.org

Sasha and Lilian Granovsky represent Ariel Ministries in Israel. The husband and wife team have been representing Ariel Ministries in Israel since October 2009. They are responsible for coordinating the translation of our manuscripts and books into Hebrew and Russian.



Ariel China

For safety issues, we must protect the identity of this branch. Please keep them in your prayers.



Ariel Germany

Website: www.cmv-duesseldorf.de

Email: germany@ariel.org

Thanks to Manfred Künstler and his wife, Hanna, Ariel Ministries has had a presence in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland since 1985. In 2002, the work was passed on to Georg Hagedorn who, eight years later, turned it into a full branch. Today, this branch is led by a team of brothers and sisters.



Ariel Hungary Ivan & Rita Nagy

Email: hungary@ariel.org

Ivan and Rita Nagy represent Ariel Ministries in Hungary. The husband and wife team have developed a Come & See website in Hungarian. They also host several home Bible study groups, teaching from Ariel's materials. Their goal is to make teachings available to Jewish and Gentile believers and unbelievers in Hungary.



Ariel New Zealand Johan Jansen van Vuuren

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This branch is led by Johan van Vuuren, Jason Santiago, and John Cavanagh and headquartered in Auckland, New Zealand.

ARIEL REPRESENTATIVES



Michael & Hannah Gabizon – Students (Hamilton)

Email: michaelgabizon@gmail.com

Michael and Hannah Gabizon are missionaries representing Ariel Ministries in Canada. The young couple has actively been involved in teaching and discipling people through God's Word. Their goal is to identify other young people within their sphere of influence who may be interested in becoming involved with Ariel.



John Metzger – Field Representative (Pennsylvania)

Website: www.promisestoisrael.org

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John Metzger is a missionary who represents Ariel Ministries in Pennsylvania. He is a teacher and speaker who actively travels throughout the central and eastern part of the U.S., speaking at various churches and conferences. John is also the author of *Discovering the Mystery of the Unity of God* published by Ariel Ministries.



Gary & Missy Demers – Camp Representatives (New York)

CampShoshanah@ariel.org

Gary and his wife Missy are the managers and camp facilitators of the Shoshanah campus in Upstate New York. Every summer they help host Ariel's Program of Messianic Jewish Studies. For more information about this program, please visit www.ariel.org.



Roberto Anchondo – Field Representative (El Paso, Texas, New Mexico, and Mexico)

Roberto Anchondo represents Ariel Ministries in parts of the Southwest regions of the U.S. and some cities in Mexico. Upon studying Dr. Fruchtenbaum's work, he recognized the missing link and became interested in teaching the Jewish interpretation of God's Word. He is currently discipling groups of men in the Jewish perspective. He also works with numerous churches in Mexico, teaching the importance of standing by Israel.



Germany

God has blessed Ariel Germany with wonderful responsibilities and more opportunities to share the good news of the Jewish Messiah. We receive frequent phone calls and many emails with specific questions which must be answered, and the team is busy running book tables; leading Bible studies; recording Arnold's teachings; translating his lectures, the magazine, and the books; and so on.

As we did last year, we are currently focusing a lot of our attention on publication



projects. The German version of Arnold's map book became available in the fall of 2016 and is wildly successful. We praise the Lord for this awesome material! We just published a new translation of *Ha-Mashiach: The Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures*, which now includes all parts of Arnold's book. We have decided to support the Ariel work in bordering Netherlands and publish and distribute the Dutch version of *Footsteps*. We are also working on two books dealing with the spiritual life and the feasts of Israel, which—Lord



willing—will both be published this year. The translation of *Yeshua: The Life of Messiah from a Messianic Jewish Perspective* is also making good progress, as is the translation of *Israelology*.

In addition, Ariel Germany helped prepare and orchestrate Arnold's teaching tours in the spring and in September of



this year. We are grateful for all the Lord has allowed us to do so far this year and await great things for the second half of 2017. Please keep the team in your prayers!



Australia

We are back into the full swing of things down here in Australia. Our discipleship classes resumed in February, and this year, I have reduced the number of teaching sessions back to three from four per week. The classes are held in the Ariel head office, in Geelong. I am hoping to start two additional weekly classes about the life of Messiah in Melbourne.

For the past two years, my focus has mainly been on the teaching aspect of the ministry; but this year, I will be dividing my time between teaching and being more intentional about sharing the good news

of Messiah Yeshua. For this purpose, I have trained a small group of believers who are very keen on sharing Yeshua. I have also found that as the Scriptures have been opened to the regular class



members, they are getting more confident and bolder in their witness.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of preaching in a Baptist church, and I spoke about the Jewish concept of being born again to the congregation. The feedback was as it often is, "We have never heard this before, but it now makes sense to us!" The church at large has missed out on so much by neglecting the Jewish roots of the faith. I have several speaking engagements coming up, some interstate and others in Victoria. At the time of writing this, I also have two Passover Seders to lead, which is another great opportunity to share the gospel.

The local synagogue in Geelong ceased meeting in 1984. At its height in the early 1900s, there were four hundred families involved. I was thankful to be invited to share in Kabbalat Shabbat and the re-consecration of this synagogue with a part of the local Jewish community who are trying to reestablish it. As a guest, I shared with them that I was part of Ariel Ministries and that our purpose is to teach the Scriptures from a Jewish perspective. My host later told me that there were many who came asking how I could be teaching their Scriptures? Pray that their curiosity does not wane and that I will be able to share with them why I do teach the Jewish Scriptures.



Hungary

The work of the “tentmaker” goes on. Ivan has been teaching music to six hundred children at a high school, and not all he experiences is as we know it from the movie “High School Musical.” But we are thankful that God provides an opportunity for work. Our continued prayer for the future is more free time for the ministry. Our small Messianic fellowship continues its biweekly meetings. Recently, three Jewish believers joined the group. One of them has a daughter who is also a believer—and the wife of a rabbi in Shanghai! We enjoy the freedom this Bible study gives us to emphasize things we consider

of interesting questions about the material, and as we recently noted, we are very international. We even receive questions from Norway!

The place where we gather is in the Jewish quarter of Budapest. The flat is owned by our friend with whom we have been reading the Bible for three years. We do not have to pay rent, so it is a real blessing from this Jewish man. During the Bible reading sessions, we have a lot of opportunity to talk to him about salvation. Still, he refuses to separate the real message of the New Testament from the history of the church and therefore has not come to faith yet.

Mariann, a lady who has been attending our Bible study on a regular basis but still has doubts about her faith in the Messiah, is a Holocaust survivor. She invited Rita and another believer to accompany her to a Catholic sisterhood called “Good Shepherd.” This sisterhood saved her and many other Jewish girls during the Holocaust. Rita listened to the story of the sisters who by saving these Jewish girls put their own lives at risk. They never asked for recognition for any of it. Mariann wanted to get to know her rescuers and give them honor for their brave achievement. However, the sisters had already passed away.

We received the great news that Dr. Fruchtenbaum will be coming to Budapest in September. Please pray for us as we organize our fourth Messianic conference.



important, such as to teach the Bible from a Jewish perspective. We started recording the teachings and are now sharing them on our homepage. Ivan's blog on Facebook is going on as well.

Ivan is continuing to teach the book of Revelation based on Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum's *Footsteps of the Messiah*. There are about 25 people in attendance, and many more get the recordings. We receive a lot



New Zealand

This has been an exciting quarter for Ariel New Zealand. After a great response to our Camp Shoshanah scholarship program, two successful candidates have been awarded scholarships and will be

attending Camp this year from New Zealand.

What difference can I make? In New Zealand, as is the case wherever there are believers, there are many opportunities to live according to Romans 1:16: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* We would like to share with you an article written by Scott Brown, Executive Director of Celebrate Messiah New Zealand, that speaks to this wonderful opportunity “down under” (see below). We ask that you keep Celebrate Messiah in your prayers as you pray for us, so that they may continue to be effective in bringing the gospel to Israelis through their Jewish evangelism.

The Israel / New Zealand Connection:

Jewish Evangelism
at the Ends of the Earth
By Scott Brown

Life in Israel is fraught with intense and unusual pressures. Terrorism, bombings, and the constant threat of attacks from neighboring countries are making an



enormous impact on young Israelis who are desperately seeking relief from the madness all around them. Their

search for answers is taking them to the farthest reaches, where they are very open to spiritual conversation. As one missionary in Israel put it, “Israelis go to New Zealand to find God.”

Obviously, this provides a remarkable opportunity to proclaim the good news of



Israel's Messiah, and we at Celebrate Messiah NZ are taking full advantage of those opportunities through direct, heart-to-heart interaction with thousands of Israeli travelers. Each year, we are privileged to deliver Hebrew Bibles, testimonials, and Messiah-centered resources directly into the hands of our Israeli friends.

But there's another side to this "Israeli backpacker phenomenon" that is clearly heaven-sent: Welcoming the thousands of Israeli visitors to NZ are hundreds of Christian households whose hearts and homes are lovingly receiving them. These extraordinary Kiwis are offering free accommodation as a way of "giving back" to the very people through whom God gave the Scriptures, the Savior, and even salvation, as Yeshua Himself said, "Salvation is of the Jews" (Jn. 4:22).

By training these wonderful hosts in Jewish evangelism and equipping them with Hebrew Bibles and Gospel literature, we employ Paul's very own strategy in Romans chapter II. By divine revelation, Paul understood God's plan to use the faith of Gentile believers to provoke and inspire his Jewish brothers to trust in Yeshua. For this reason, he "magnified"

his ministry among the Gentiles hoping to provoke to emulation those who were his flesh and save some of them (Rom. 11:13-14).

By now, you have probably figured out that our primary objective at Celebrate Messiah is to be engaged in classic missionary activity, building redemptive relationships among a particular group of people with a view toward fulfilling our Lord's Great Commission. In our context, this means finding creative ways to reach into New Zealand's transient but enormous backpacker community, with a special emphasis on God's chosen people. Our most successful strategy to date is to provide free accommodation for Israeli travelers through our three facilities: the Zula Lodge (Wanaka), the Yellow House (Waiholā), and the Holiday Park (Dansey's Pass, near Oamaru). Resident at each of these facilities are born-again Jewish believers who minister daily to the many hundreds of young Israelis who flock there. The Zula has become so popular that it is typically booked five weeks in advance by Israelis clamoring for a chance to experience it.

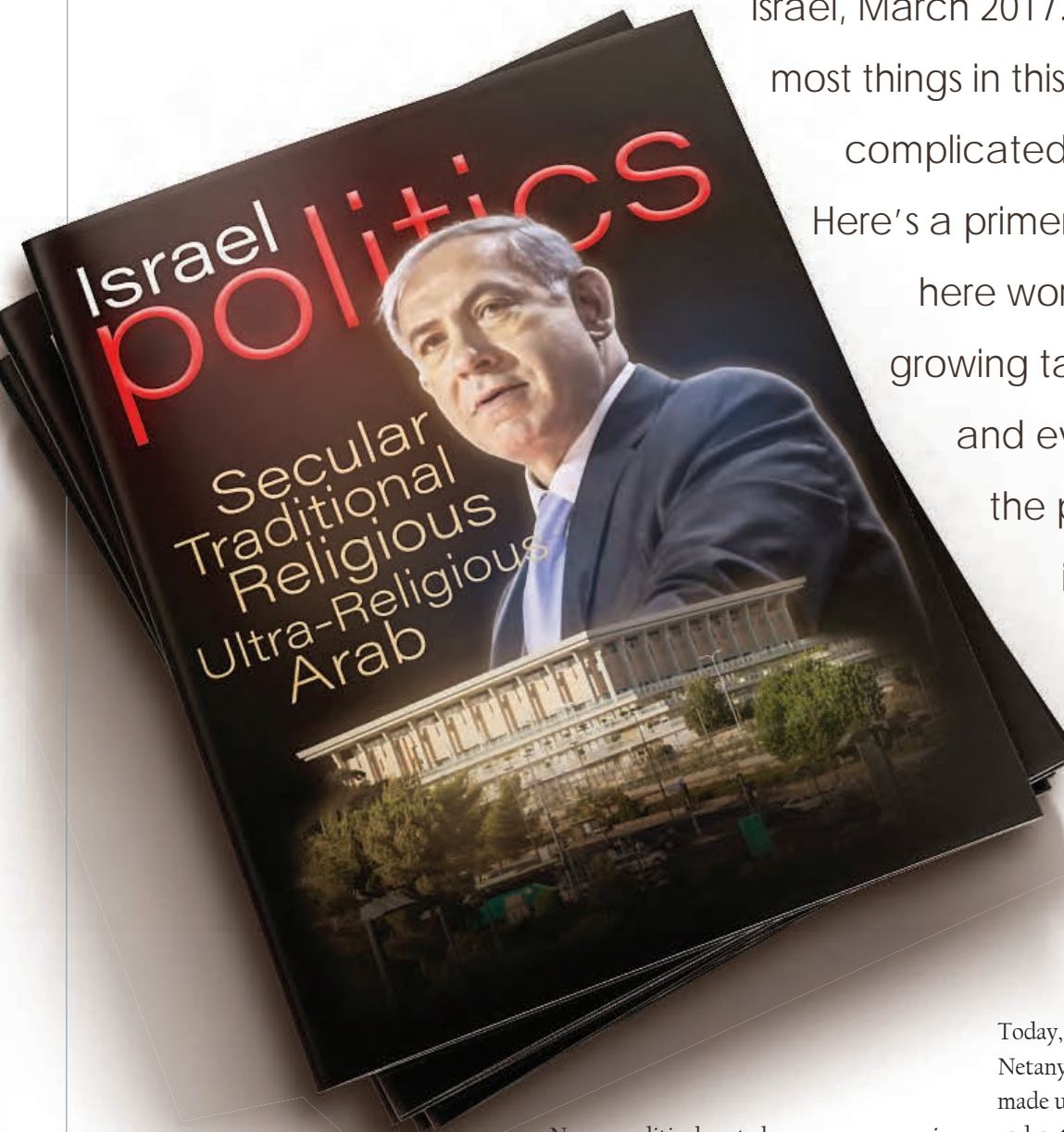
Best of all, our dedicated staff are consistently reporting God's grace poured out

on their many evangelistic encounters. For example, on multiple occasions this summer, older religious Israelis were shown the revelation of Isaiah 53. Rather than argue or walk away, they read our book *Isaiah 53: This Chapter Will Change Your Life* and were deeply challenged. Scores of secular and "new age" Israelis lunged forward in their spiritual progress toward faith in Yeshua. In fact, on two separate occasions at the camping ground, Israeli guests told me, "I only wish I could stay here longer to learn more of what the Bible says. I know I need this."

In my 30 years of missionary service to my Jewish people, I have never experienced such a rich and rewarding mission field. Indeed, the fields are white for harvest, and the Lord has gathered many talented and dedicated workers in New Zealand to tend His Jewish "crop."

May I add my sincere appreciation and gratitude for Ariel NZ, who were instrumental in helping Celebrate Messiah NZ gain its footing back in 2008. *How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity* (Ps. 133:1), especially in the rewarding work of laboring for Israel's salvation here at the ends of the earth!





Israel, March 2017. Politics in Israel, like most things in this part of the world, is complicated and multi-faceted. Here's a primer on how the system here works, and why there is growing talk of early elections and even the possibility of the prime minister being indicted on criminal charges.

Let's start with the system. Unlike America, Israel has a parliamentary system of government. Currently, there are 15 political parties that have won seats in Israel's one-chamber parliament, called the *Knesset* (which means "the gathering" or "the assembly" in Hebrew). Each party creates a list (or "slate") of potential office-holders ranked in their order of preference. The more votes a party receives, the more members of their slate become members of the Knesset (MKs), starting with the first name on the slate and working downward.

No one political party has ever won a majority, so Israel is ruled by a coalition government. Typically, whichever party receives the most votes in an election is given the first opportunity to build a majority coalition to lead the country.

Political parties reflect the highly diverse population in Israel, including secular, "traditional," religious, ultra-religious, and Arab citizens. Currently, the parties can be divided loosely into three "blocs": right wing/religious, centrist, left wing/Arab. Within each bloc, there are wide-ranging opinions on key topics.

Today, Prime Minister Benjamin ("Bibi") Netanyahu has built a majority coalition made up of the right wing/religious bloc. In order to keep his majority (which is, at times, an extremely narrow majority), Netanyahu's substantial Likud party has to make political promises to the smaller parties in his coalition. Because of this, Ultra-Orthodox party leaders are given powerful positions in the cabinet or their "pet projects" and laws are given positive attention.

Netanyahu was first elected prime minister in 1996 and served for three years. Netanyahu became prime minister again in March 2009 and has served continuously to this present day. Altogether, he has served as



Israel's premier for a total of nearly eleven years.

Netanyahu, who is fluent in English and has decades of experience on the world stage, is an amazing spokesman for Israel to the world. His laser focus on national security and foreign policy issues (especially countering the Iran nuclear threat) does tap into the number one concern of the citizens of Israel. However, Israelis also have many pressing domestic and economic concerns, from very high housing costs to the lack of enough manufacturing and blue collar jobs (all the emphasis seems to be on high tech jobs). These seem to have fallen to the bottom of Bibi's to-do list. Many secular Israelis also resent the power Netanyahu has given to what they see as narrow-minded or backward-thinking Ultra-Orthodox religious leaders.

Netanyahu is currently under two separate police investigations. It's difficult to determine whether these are politically-motivated prosecutions or if there is solid evidence of actual wrongdoing. But the Israeli press is abuzz with the possibility that Netanyahu could be indicted and might have to step down from office. Meanwhile, the police are currently recommending an indictment of the premier's former chief of staff, Ari Harrow, on bribery and corruption charges. Another senior Netanyahu aide, Perach Lerner, recently pled guilty to fraud and breach of trust charges. Both developments have added to the sense that criminal charges against Bibi may, in fact, be coming.

At the same time, a growing number of Israelis seem to be suffering from what one might call "Bibi Fatigue." In recent years, several Knesset members close to Netanyahu have become frustrated with his approach to leadership. Some have resigned from the Knesset. Others have formed their own political parties to run against Bibi. While the next elections aren't scheduled

until 2019, there is a growing sense that new elections may be held well before that.

A Pew Research Center poll taken in 2016 finds that eight percent of Israelis are "Haredi" or Ultra-Orthodox. Ten percent are "Dati" or Orthodox. Some 23 percent are "Masorti" or "traditionalists," while 40 percent are "Hiloni" or non-religious/secular.

After years of right wing/religious governments in power, Centrist parties are gaining more and more political support among Israelis these days. A poll taken by Channel 2 News in March of this year found that MK Yair Lapid's centrist party, "Yesh Atid" ("There is a Future"), would win the most seats (26) in the Knesset, overtaking Netanyahu's Likud party (with 22 seats), if the election were held today. Lapid has said publicly that if elected he would like to move to create a "unity government," where the government would share power among the major parties (rather than create a coalition of one large and many smaller parties).

Politics in Israel is a brutal field, with political enemies playing hardball and often criminalizing their opponents. Many citizens have the feeling that their politicians are untrustworthy and that corruption is a given. Only a few years ago, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was convicted on corruption charges and sent to prison. Not long before that, an Israeli president, Moshe Katsav, was sent to prison after being convicted on rape and sexual harassment charges.

This situation makes it hard to get involved with any particular party and hard even to choose whom to vote for. Where do Messi-

anic believers fit into this equation? Whom should they support to advance their values? They do not form a single unified group. The right wing/Ultra-Orthodox bloc of political parties are appealing to some because they are strong on national security issues, but they can also make life difficult for believers, because they are quite opposed to Jewish people becoming followers of Yeshua. Social issues that concern American Christians (such as abortion and homosexual marriage) are battles which are effectively "lost and over" in Israel and do not influence most believers' votes. Only the Ultra-Orthodox parties would have a similar view on life and marriage, for instance, as a typical American evangelical. Thus, while centrist parties appeal to some Messianics, such parties refuse to defend the sanctity of unborn children and strongly support gay marriage.

Israelis followed the 2016 U.S. presidential elections with great interest. Although the majority of Israelis polled before the election felt Hillary Clinton would be better for Israel than Donald Trump, today Israelis are cautiously optimistic that President Trump will be pro-Israel. The relationship between Netanyahu and Trump is warm and promising. Trump's stated desire to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem would right a longstanding injustice to the State of Israel. However, it is not something on the top of the average Israeli citizen's agenda. It could also stir up more Palestinian protests and possibly even spark more violence against the Jewish state.

Like most people in the world, Israelis earnestly desire to raise their families in peace. Since political peace is elusive, at best, we must continue to pray for God's protection and for true spiritual peace through Yeshua for both the Jewish and Arab people and all inhabitants of Israel.

Can a Jewish person believe in

YESHUA?

אריאל
ישראל



ARIEL
MINISTRIES

The hearts of Israelis and Russian speakers throughout the East are in great need of the gospel of Yeshua the Messiah. Living in the land of Israel, we see the need and desire to know God growing within the Jewish and Russian-speaking populations. Something so special is happening in the hearts of these individuals who were once victims of religious suppression in the countries controlled by the USSR.

How did this come to happen? As the Iron Curtain fell in Europe, Russian-speaking Jews were then free to migrate to other countries in search of hope and religious freedoms. Accompanying their years of suffering, this group of freedom-seekers discovered a great hunger for joy, abundant life, and real truth.

For more than 15 years, we at Ariel Ministries Israel have been using Arnold Fruchtenbaum's lessons for new believers, which are now

available in Hebrew and Russian. Our vision for 2017 is to reach more people in this digital age through an active, engaging and instructing online presence. The technical issues of our current website hinder us from reaching more people. Therefore, we are trying to build a new, bilingual website. Also, we have prepared the way with a small marketing team to help us reach Russian speakers in the land of Israel and throughout the world.

We are asking God for brothers and sisters who are willing to share biblical teaching with the people of Israel. While filled with joy in serving here in the land of Israel, we feel such a passionate desire to reach those Hebrew and Russian speaking populations around the world with the quality teaching of Ariel Ministries.

Would you consider standing with us?

Please pray for God to bring people who would be willing to be part of the expansion of His Word by financially supporting the creation of:

- ✧ Daily devotionals
- ✧ Teachings in both Hebrew and Russian
- ✧ New team members to reach out to Israelis through media
- ✧ Designing and launching of a new Ariel Ministries Israel website
- ✧ Media outreach to bring God's Word to new believers

How can you make a difference today?

Join our vision and contribute to the work being done here in the land of Israel and around the world by praying for us. We will make use of today's most effective social media and online outreach networks to spread the Word of God, as well as Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum's teachings. We are seeking support to fund a year of great expansion to reach the unreached and strengthen the body of believers. To accomplish this, we are in need of \$15,000. Would you kindly pray for God to bring in these funds?

Thank you!



The most redeeming 24 hours in human history transpired in the year A.D. 30. They began on Thursday, the 14th of Nisan, at sundown, and ended at sundown the next day. This article summarizes what happened in those 24 hours and attempts to place the events in chronological order. The basis of this order are the Gospel accounts and what is known about first-century Jewish culture through historical and rabbinic records.

For a full analysis and all the references, please see the author's book series, *Yeshua: The Life of Messiah from a Messianic Jewish Perspective*.

A. At Sundown



When the sun set on April 7th, A.D. 30, it was the beginning of the Jewish Passover. The main part of the feast is the *Seder*, a meal whose Hebrew name means "order."

Yeshua and His disciples celebrated the *Seder* in the upper room of a house somewhere in Jerusalem. During the *Seder*, several important things happened. The Gospels tell us that the group of men partook of the first of four cups of wine, called "the cup of blessing." Following this part of the Passover observance is the washing of hands, called *Ur'chatz*. Laying aside His garments, Yeshua took a towel and girded Himself, but instead of washing His disciples' hands, He *began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded* (Jn. 13:5).

The ceremony that follows the washing of hands is called *karpas*. Each participant dips a piece of green vegetable (usually parsley or celery) into salt water and then eats it. During this ceremony, Yeshua predicted that one of the 12 men present would betray Him, namely, *he that dipped his hand with Him in the dish* (Mt. 26:23). The context shows that the disciples missed the clue. However, Judas knew, because he had already made the bargain with the chief priests, and so, when he asked, *Is it I, Rabbi?* Yeshua answered, *You have said* (Mt. 26:25), meaning "Yes, indeed."

The next step in the Passover *Seder* is the *afikomen* ceremony, or the breaking of the middle *matzah*. Yeshua identified His body specifically with this unleavened, striped, and pierced bread: *And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you* (Lk. 22:19); *Take, eat; this is my body* (Mt. 26:26). The *matzah* was then hidden somewhere in the room.



One of the ceremonial items prepared for the Passover is called *charoset*, a mixture of apples, nuts, honey, cinnamon, lemon juice, and wine. The officiator of the Seder dips a piece of unleavened bread first into the charoset and then into bitter herbs, such as horseradish. He then passes the sop on to one of the guests and repeats this procedure until he and all the participants received their portion. Yeshua, during this ceremony, predicted again that He would be betrayed by one of the men at the table. When asked who this person was, He said that it was the first person to receive the sop, and so it went. Yeshua dipped the unleavened bread into the charoset and the bitter herbs and gave it to Judas. The disciples did not understand Yeshua's clue; yet, *after the sop, then entered Satan into Judas* (Jn. 13:27a), who consequently left the feast.

Before the dipping of the sop, the second cup, called the "cup of plagues" or "cup of deliverance" is drunk. Although not mentioned in the Gospels, it symbolizes the ten plagues that fell upon Egypt. Before anyone can drink the second cup, they must first spill out ten drops of wine. As the ten drops fall, the guests call out the names of the ten plagues. Drinking wine symbolizes joy, but Jewish law forbids rejoicing over the misfortunes of others, even if they happened to be one's worst enemies. Therefore, the ten drops are spilled as a sign of mourning.

Following the dipping of the sop, the Seder guests enjoy the main course, which consists of roasted lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs. Then the second part of the afikomen ceremony occurs, with the unwrapping, breaking, and distribution of the hidden matzah, followed by the third of the four cups of wine, called "the cup of the redemption." In Judaism, this cup symbolizes the blood of the lamb that saved the Jewish firstborns from the last plague in Egypt. Yeshua identified His blood with this cup. The third cup now becomes the symbol

of the blood of the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.

To bring the Passover observance to a close, the Seder guests sing Psalms 113-118, especially focusing on Psalms 117 and 118. While singing, they drink the fourth cup, called *hallel*, or "the cup of praise." The Gospels do not specifically mention the fourth cup, but they hint at it: *And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives* (Mt. 26:30). In Greek, the word *hymn* is a verb: They "hymned" the psalms in connection with cup of praise, with Psalm 118 holding great messianic significance.



B. The Arrest

Connected with this Passover Seder is Yeshua's farewell discourse to His disciples, which traditionally is called "the Upper Room Discourse." He spoke the first part while in the upper room during the Passover observance and the second part on the way to Gethsemane. After finishing the discourse, Yeshua prayed a prayer known today as His "high priestly prayer." He prayed as He was walking, shortly before entering the garden of Gethsemane. In the garden, He then entered one of His greatest spiritual battles, known as His agony, as Satan made one more attempt to keep Him from the cross.

While Yeshua was still in the garden of Gethsemane, Judas set out to follow through with his betrayal. He came with a Roman cohort, the servant of the high priest, the Jewish temple police, and some chief priests and elders. To clearly identify Yeshua, Judas kissed Him many times.

Trying to defend Yeshua, Peter pulled out a sword, *struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear* (Jn. 18:10a). Yeshua quickly stepped in and healed the servant's severed

ear. By so doing, He no doubt saved Peter's life. When the disciples realized that Yeshua would do nothing more to defend Himself, they *left him, and fled* (Mt. 26:56).

After His arrest, Yeshua underwent two distinct trials: a religious, Jewish trial and a civil, Gentile trial led by the Romans. Both trials had three distinct stages.

C. Before Midnight: The Religious Trial



1. The First Stage: The Trial before Annas

The purpose of the first stage of the religious trial was to establish a religious charge. If everything had gone the way the religious leaders had intended, they would have had false witnesses lined up, ready to testify. However, they were not organized and were still looking for specific charges to bring against Yeshua. The arresting forces led Yeshua to Annas first: *So the band [the Roman cohort] and the chief captain [the leader of the cohort], and the officers of the Jews [the temple police], seized Yeshua and bound him, and led him to Annas first* (Jn. 18:12-13). Annas served as high priest during the years A.D. 6 or 7 to A.D. 14, then was deposed by Valerius Gratus, the Roman governor at that time. However, Annas retained control of the priesthood, because he was succeeded by four or five of his sons; his son-in-law; and, at the end of his life, his grandson. He was the head of what the Pharisees called "the Bazaar of the Sons of Annas," a private money-changing and sacrifice-selling business. Yeshua overthrew his tables twice, at the first and last Passovers of His public ministry. Therefore, Annas held a personal grudge against Yeshua.



Annas questioned Yeshua about two key issues: *of his disciples*, to incriminate them, *and of his teaching*, to incriminate Him (Jn. 18:19). However, Yeshua insisted on His rights under Jewish civil law: *I have spoken openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and in secret spoke I nothing* (Jn. 18:20). He was not respon-

mistreatments Yeshua suffered that night, to which He responded: *If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why do you smite me?* (Jn. 18:23). They were conducting an illegal proceeding.

This first stage of the religious trial concluded without the authorities establishing a



2. The Second Stage: The Trial Before Caiaphas

Caiaphas was Annas' son-in-law, and he served as high priest during the years A.D. 18-36/37. He had led the religious leaders in rejecting the first sign of Jonah, the resurrection of Lazarus.

In order to try Yeshua, the Sanhedrin gathered *into the high priest's house* (Lk. 22:54). The Sanhedrin was comprised of 71 members. For capital cases, not all members had to participate in the trial, but a minimum of 23 had to be present. If only the minimum attended, and 11 members voted for innocence, the accused was acquitted, since conviction required 13 votes. A vote of 11 for innocent and 12 for guilty could not convict the accused; conviction must be by a majority of two. The number of the Sanhedrin members present is unknown, but at least two members were missing: Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

The second stage of the religious trial began with the religious leaders seeking *false witness against Yeshua* (Mt. 26:59). They presented one false witness after another, trying to find two in agreement; but one by one, their testimonies were disqualified. This demonstrates the disorganization of the whole process. After several attempts, the prosecutors found two men who seemingly said the same thing and formally presented them to the court. However, when each testified individually, they ended up disagreeing: *And not even so did their witness agree together* (Mk. 14:59). By Jewish law, Yeshua should have been released at this point.

The specific charge the religious leaders desired—disrespect of the Temple—did not materialize. Only this offense would have had merit under Roman law. Generally during that time, the Sanhedrin lacked authority to put anyone to death under Roman law, except for this one charge: If



sible to answer their questions, but they must produce two or three witnesses to conduct this trial. Everything He taught was in public, and so if He had truly said anything amiss, they should have no trouble finding these witnesses: *Why do you ask me? Ask them that have heard me; what I spoke unto them: behold, these know the things which I said* (Jn. 18:21). For this response, which was His right to make, He was smitten. This was the first of several

specific charge. The lack of organization, the element of anarchy, and the confusion which characterized the first stage were also evident at the beginning of the second stage. The religious leaders were ill-prepared to conduct the trial because none of this was supposed to occur on the night of the Passover observance. However, Yeshua had forced their hand by identifying the traitor, and so they were confused and disorganized.



they proved that the person had shown disrespect toward the Temple, the ruling authorities allowed them to execute the perpetrator. However, they could not find two witnesses to establish the charge against Yeshua.

This all frustrated Caiaphas and the others who were present, and several things then happened in quick succession. First, *the high priest rent his garments* (Mt. 26:65a). Second, Caiaphas, the chief judge, originated the charge of blasphemy: *He has spoken blasphemy* (Mt. 26:65b). Third, he stated, *what further need have we of witnesses?* (Mt. 26:65c). This was a magnanimous statement given that Caiaphas' witnesses had all been disqualified, including the two whose testimonies had originally seemed to agree. Nevertheless, the religious leaders said, *He is worthy of death* (Mt. 26:66), and pronounced Him guilty while it was still nighttime. This broke a specific rabbinic law: A verdict could not be announced at night, only in the daytime. Blasphemy was a capital offense; therefore, announcing the guilty verdict on the same day as the trial broke another law: In the case of capital punishment, the trial and guilty verdict could not occur at the same time, but had to be separated by at least twenty-four hours. Furthermore, the religious leaders quickly condemned Yeshua without properly voting: *they all condemned him to be worthy of death* (Mk. 14:64). The word *all* indicates a unanimous decision. By Jewish law, Yeshua should have been released, and failure to do so broke another law: A unanimous decision for guilt showed innocence, since it is impossible for 23 to 71 men to agree without plotting. Furthermore, in announcing the death sentence on the same day as the guilty verdict, they broke yet another law: The sentence could only be pronounced three days after the guilty verdict.

Next, Yeshua suffered the second mistreatment this night, as some men hit Him with their fists, some slapped Him with the palm

of their hands, and some spit into His face. These are some of the highest indignities under Jewish law, and all were punishable by fines. Yet, no one was fined on this occasion.



3. The Denial by Peter

a. Midnight

Peter's three denials all took place during the second stage of Yeshua's religious trial. Three times Peter was accused of being a disciple of Yeshua. Three times he denied it, with each denial becoming more intense. The first accusation came from a maid who said: *You also were with Yeshua the Galilean* (Mt. 26:69b). Peter denied the accusation. The first cock crow came, indicating it was midnight.

b. Two A.M.

A little while later, another maid saw him and also accused him of being with Yeshua. Peter again denied it, this time *with an oath* (Mt. 26:72).

c. Three A.M.

More time passed, and *after the space of about one hour* (Lk. 22:59), someone mentioned that Peter was a disciple of Yeshua. Peter denied Yeshua for the third time. This time, he even swore against and cursed Yeshua. Then came the second cock crow, at three o'clock in the morning.

The second stage of the religious trial apparently ended at the same time, and the door either opened or was already open: *And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter* (Lk. 22:61). Their eyes met at the moment following the second cock crow. Instantly, Peter remembered Yeshua's prophecy at the Last Passover: *before the cock crow twice*, Peter would deny Yeshua thrice (Mk. 14:30). Peter left the scene weeping with repentance.



4. The Mockery and Beating

Yeshua then suffered the third mistreatment of the night. In addition to the physical abuse, He also suffered mockery: *And the men that held <Yeshua> mocked him, and beat him* (Lk. 22:63). This was the first of eight mockeries He would experience over the next several hours.



5. Dawn: The Condemnation by the Sanhedrin

The only purpose of the third stage of the religious trial was to give it a semblance of legality. Apparently, some came to their senses, realizing that the entire proceedings so far were entirely illegal. So, they waited for a measure of daylight. All three accounts make that point: *Now when morning was come* (Mt. 27:1); *And straightway in the morning* (Mk. 15:1a); *And as soon as it was day* (Lk. 22:66). The religious leaders deliberately waited until daylight to give the trial a measure of legality; then they quickly reconvened, and asked Yeshua two questions. First, *If you are the Messiah, tell us* (Lk. 22:67). Yeshua answered that it was useless to tell them because they had already chosen not to believe. But someday they will know His claims are true, when they see Him seated at the right hand of God the Father. Second, *And they all said, Are you then the Son of God?* (Lk. 22:70). Yeshua answered: *Ye say that I am*. In Greek, this is an emphatic way of saying, "Yes, indeed, I am the Son of God."

The religious trial ended with Yeshua being condemned to death for blasphemy, a verdict unsupported by the actual evidence. The rabbinic definition of blasphemy was to expressly pronounce the four-letter name of God, and Yeshua had not done so. If the Sanhedrin had carried out the death sentence on these charges, Yeshua would



have been stoned and then hanged. This would have been contrary to the prophecies concerning how the Messiah would die. Messiah was to be crucified. The plan of God could not be diverted or subverted.



D. The Death of Judas

Despite their best efforts, the religious leaders were unable to prove their accusation that Yeshua had tried to destroy the Temple, so they lacked the authority to order His execution. While the Sanhedrin found Him guilty of blasphemy and sentenced Him to death, they could not execute the death sentence, as the Roman senate had revoked the Sanhedrin's right of capital punishment. Therefore, if Yeshua was going to be executed, He had to be found guilty of committing a capital offense under Roman law. Blasphemy was punishable by death under Jewish law only. Therefore, the religious leaders needed to trump up a different charge. While Judas was not needed for the religious trial, he was needed for the civil trial. However, between the two trials, Judas committed suicide. Once he was dead, the religious leaders lost their one witness for the prosecution. For that reason, just as disorganization and confusion dominated the initial stages of the religious trial, the same was true in the civil trial.



E. The Civil Trial

Like the religious trial, the civil trial also proceeded through three specific stages. While the issue of blasphemy in the religious trial was not punishable by death under Roman law, the issue of sedition or treason against Rome in the civil trial was punishable by death. A Roman trial was to begin with the accuser(s)

presenting formal charges for a crime that had to be punishable under Roman law, and for this the religious leaders would have needed Judas, as he was their sole witness.



1. The First Stage: The First Trial Before Pilate

Pilate, born in Spain, was a Roman citizen and served as procurator during A.D. 26-36. Although it was the early morning hours, he was up and dressed. He expected the trial, since earlier he had released the Roman cohort to Judas. In keeping with Roman law, he asked: *What accusation bring ye against this man?* (Jn. 18:29). At this point, Judas should have stepped forward, but Judas was dead. Instead, the religious leaders responded: *If this man were not an evildoer, we should not have delivered him up unto you* (Jn. 18:30). Their sole accuser was conspicuously absent, so they pressured Pilate to pass the sentence without any accusation or trial. Pilate, following Roman law, refused: *Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law* (Jn. 18:31a). With no accusation, there would be no trial; no trial, no condemnation; no condemnation, no sentence.

When the religious leaders realized that Pilate required a proper accusation to proceed, they claimed Yeshua was guilty of sedition on three counts. First, *We found this man perverting our nation* (Lk. 23:2a). They accused Yeshua of perverting the nation by mixing truth with heresy and therefore fomenting a rebellion. Second, they accused Him of *forbidding to give tribute to Caesar* (Lk. 23:2b), a treasonous act. They obviously lied, because Yeshua had said, *render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's* (Mt. 22:21; Mk. 12:17; Lk. 20:25). Third, they reminded Pilate that Yeshua claimed to be Messiah, a king, and therefore a competitor to Caesar.

Once Pilate had a specific charge, he proceeded. In a Roman trial, after the indictment was

officially presented, the accused was questioned. Pilate asked Yeshua: *Are you the King of the Jews?* (Jn. 18:33). The question from his perspective as an official of the Roman government was, "Are you really a competitor to Caesar?"

After a few clarifying statements, Yeshua gave the two reasons why He was not a competitor to Caesar. First, *My kingdom is not of this world* (Jn. 18:36). Second, *but now is my kingdom not from hence*, meaning "not from now." Because of the rejection of His Messiahship, Yeshua's kingdom would not yet be established. For these two reasons, He was not a competitor to Caesar.

To verify that he understood Yeshua correctly, Pilate asked a follow-up question: *Are you a king then?* (Jn. 18:37a), meaning, "Are you a king in any sense of the term?" Yeshua answered, "Yes, in one sense, I am a king even now; I am a king of the truth," and *Every one that is of the truth hears my voice* (Jn. 18:37b).

This ended the interrogation, and Pilate answered with a sarcastic question, *What is truth?* (Jn. 18:38). Sadly, for Pilate, at that very moment, he was looking at the Truth and did not recognize Him.

The procurator then issued the first of several declarations of innocence (Lk. 23:4). As far as he was concerned, Yeshua was not a threat to Rome. The first declaration of innocence was rebuffed and countered with many other accusations: *And the chief priests accused him of many things* (Mk. 15:3). Yeshua responded with silence. As the accusations were blurted out, someone mentioned that Yeshua was from Galilee: *But they were the more urgent, saying, He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Yehudah, and beginning from Galil even unto this place* (Lk. 23:5). The mention of Yeshua's Galilean origin gave Pilate an escape from the situation. While both Samaria and Judea were under his jurisdiction, Galilee was under the jurisdiction of

Herod Antipas, who also came to Jerusalem during the festivals to help maintain order. So, Pilate sent Yeshua to him.



2. The Second Stage: The Trial before Herod Antipas

Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great. About a year earlier, he had beheaded John the Baptizer. Only then did he hear about Yeshua's miracles, and for a while thought that Yeshua was John raised from the dead. He had wanted to meet Him in person *of a long time* (Lk. 23:8). Pilate now sent Yeshua, a Galilean, to Herod Antipas because He was under Antipas' jurisdiction (Lk. 23:7). So, Antipas finally got his wish: Yeshua stood before him, and he wanted to see miracles and be entertained. The same desire had cost the Baptizer his life. However, Yeshua refused to perform for Antipas. Disappointed, Antipas mocked Yeshua by *arraying him in gorgeous apparel* (Lk. 23:11), the second mockery the Messiah suffered that night. Then, Herod Antipas acknowledged that Yeshua posed no threat to Rome, regardless of the accusations brought against Him by the chief priests and scribes, so this trial concluded with a second declaration of innocence.



3. The Third Stage: The Second Trial before Pilate

After Herod Antipas failed to find a charge against Yeshua, Pilate made several specific efforts to release Yeshua, in the process again declaring His innocence. He gathered the religious leaders and said, *Ye brought unto me this man, as one that perverts the people: and behold, I having examined him before you, found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him* (Lk. 23:14). Herod could find no fault in Yeshua and determined that *nothing worthy of death has been done by him* (Lk. 23:15b). However, the crowd rejected this third proclamation of Yeshua's innocence.

In his second attempt to free Yeshua, Pilate offered the people a choice. A custom had developed that during the Passover the Roman authorities would release one Jewish prisoner as a goodwill gesture. Besides Yeshua, another man, named Barabbas, was imprisoned, who is referred to as a *robber* (Jn. 18:40). A better translation might be "malefactor" or "rebel," since robbery was not punishable by death. This man *had made insurrection, and in the insurrection had committed murder* (Mk. 15:7). Barabbas was guilty of the crime of which Yeshua was accused.

The two men were brought forward. Pilate tried so hard to release Yeshua because *he perceived that for envy the chief priests had delivered him up* (Mk. 15:10). The actual reasons for the trial were personal, but the charge was political. Pilate assumed that the people would ask for Yeshua's, not Barabbas' release.

The procedure was temporarily interrupted when Pilate received a message from his wife warning him not to get involved with the situation because of a dream she had just had. The interruption was long enough so that *the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas, and destroy Yeshua* (Mt. 27:20), and that is what they did: *But they cried out all together, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas* (Lk. 23:18), and thus, Pilate's second attempt to free Yeshua also failed.

Pilate made a third attempt to free Yeshua by satisfying the bloodlust of the crowd in a different way: *Then Pilate therefore took Yeshua, and scourged him* (Jn. 19:1). To be scourged was to be beaten or flogged with a whip with multiple lashes. The Jewish scourge handle was made either of leather or wood with short leather lashes. The only part of the body beaten was the victim's back. The whipping was excruciating, but never deadly. However, Yeshua was flogged by Romans, not Jews, with a vastly different

procedure. The number of times a person could be struck with the scourge was limitless. The Roman whip handle had long leather lashes, which could wrap around the whole body. At the end of each lash was a piece of metal, nail, glass, or sharp lamb bone. Sometimes even small jagged iron balls were used. After only a few applications of the scourge, the skin of the victim was torn away and the muscle exposed. The entire body was affected. The face was lacerated and became like pulp. Paintings of the crucifixion often reveal a faulty interpretation of this scene, portraying Yeshua's face intact except for a line of blood on the brow from the crown of thorns. In reality, His face would have been a pulpy mass.

This was the fourth mistreatment Yeshua endured on that night, and He also suffered the third mockery (Jn. 19:2-3). The accusation was that He claimed to be a king, so the soldiers *platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and arrayed him in a purple garment* (a sign of royalty), thus mocking Yeshua. The thorns of some plants in Israel come to almost razor sharp points, so that even lightly brushing against one can cause bleeding. Merely placing it on Yeshua's head after His scourging would cause pain, but they kept striking Him. If they struck Him on the head where the crown rested, the thorns would cut deeper and more painfully.

Pilate, believing that this severe corporal punishment without a guilty verdict would satisfy the Jewish leadership, issued a fourth declaration of innocence. However, although the crowd saw that Yeshua was beaten to a bloody mess, they still cried out for His crucifixion.

Pilate made a fourth attempt to free Yeshua by again declaring Him innocent of any crime. Without a sentence by Rome, He could not be executed. The Jewish leaders dropped the charge of sedition and returned to the real issue troubling them all along,



Yeshua's claim to be the Messiah: *We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God* (Jn. 19:7). Since Pilate had a new charge, he had to conduct a new interrogation (Jn. 19:8-11). This time, Yeshua did not answer any of his questions, probably because Pilate had previously received sufficient light to respond correctly, but instead asked sarcastically, *What is truth?* (Jn. 18:38). Therefore, Yeshua gave him no further truth.

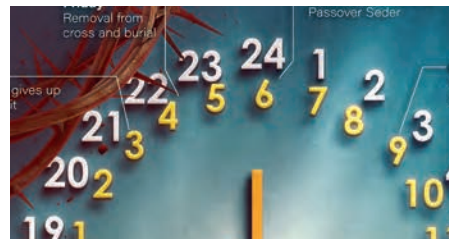
Pilate made a fifth attempt to have Yeshua released. However, his effort was spoiled when the people started crying out, *If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend: everyone that makes himself a king speaks against Caesar* (Jn. 19:12). While sounding like an empty threat, it still intimidated Pilate: *When Pilate therefore [for the specific reason] heard these words [referring to the words, If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend] he brought Yeshua out, and sat down on the judgment seat* (Jn. 19:13). Pilate immediately closed the proceedings and took his place on the judgment seat, an elevated stand probably erected outside the Praetorium. He made his sixth and final attempt to release Yeshua, presenting Him to the people and saying: *Behold, your King!* (Jn. 19:14). The masses, however, countered by demanding His crucifixion. When he asked them, *Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar* (Jn. 19:15).

After this, Pilate made no further attempts to free Yeshua. Instead, taking a pitcher of water, he washed his hands before the multitude (Mt. 27:24), assuming that this gesture would absolve him of guilt, but it did not. From a human perspective, the final decision as to whether Yeshua lived or died was not with the Jewish leaders, but with this one man, Pontius Pilate. He clearly knew what the right decision should be, but allowed himself to be intimidated into making the wrong one.

He then issued his fifth declaration of innocence, calling Yeshua *this righteous man*

(Mt. 27:24). This was the most significant of the five attestations, because it was made from the judgment seat. Still, *all the people answered and said, His blood \langle be \rangle on us, and on our children* (Mt. 27:25).

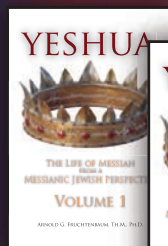
Finally, Pilate issued the death sentence, while releasing Barabbas. There was a symbolic substitution in that the innocent one went to His death in place of the guilty one, who was set free: *Then therefore he [Pilate] delivered him [Yeshua] unto them to be crucified* (Jn. 19:16).



4. The Mockery

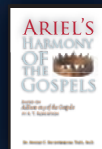
Having been turned over to Roman soldiers, *the soldiers of the governor took Yeshua into the Praetorium, and gathered unto him the whole band* (Mt. 27:27). In Greek, the word *band* means "cohort." A cohort had arrested Yeshua earlier, and now it reconvened for the crucifixion. After stripping Him of His clothes, they *put on him a scarlet robe* (Mt. 27:28), thus mocking His royalty. Instead of a crown of gold, they placed a crown of thorns on His head and a reed in his right hand (Mt. 27:29) to mimic a royal scepter. After spitting on Him (Mt. 27:30), they took the reed out of His hand and used it to strike Him on the head (Mk. 15:19). These were the fourth mockery and the fifth mistreatment He suffered on that night.

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F. The Death of the King

In harmonizing the four Gospel accounts, the best way to chronologically trace the exact sequence of events surrounding Yeshua's crucifixion is to enumerate them

stage by stage. The hours leading up to Yeshua's death, from the time He began His procession to Calvary until His burial, are recounted in 30 distinct stages.

30 Distinct Stages

With the burial of Yeshua, which took place before the sun set on the 15th of Nisan, the most important 24 hours in human history came to an end.

Major Event	Stage #	Description of Stage
Procession to Calvary	1	The Messiah Bears the Cross
	2	Simon of Cyrene Forced to Help
	3	The Lament over Jerusalem
	4	The Arrival at Golgotha
	5	Wine Mingled with Gall and Myrrh
The Wrath of Men	6	The Crucifixion (9 a.m.)
	7	The First Statement from the Cross
	8	The Parting of Yeshua's Garments
	9	The Superscription
	10	The Crucifixion of the Other Two
	11	The 5 th Mockery
	12	The 6 th Mockery
	13	The 7 th Mockery
	14	The 8 th Mockery
	15	The Conversion of One of the Malefactors
	16	The 2 nd Statement from the Cross
	17	The 3 rd Statement from the Cross
The Wrath of God	18	The Darkness over the Whole Land (12 p.m.)
	19	The 4 th Statement from the Cross
	20	The Reaction of the Bystanders
	21	The 5 th Statement from the Cross
	22	The Drinking of the Vinegar
	23	The 6 th Statement from the Cross
	24	The 7 th Statement from the Cross
	25	The Death of Yeshua (3 p.m.)
The Accompanying Signs	26	Earthquake; Resurrection of the Dead; Tearing of the Veil
The Burial	27	The Breaking of the Bones of the Other Two and the Piercing of Yeshua
	28	The Request for the Body
	29	The Removal of the Body from the Cross
	30	The Burial of Yeshua



If you are at all like me, you might admit that some of your strongest childhood memories are tied to special foods during celebrations. Across the street from the large apartment building of my childhood in Brooklyn, New York, was a very large Jewish synagogue and community center. Once a year, in October, a special ceremony was held that marked the end of the biblical Jewish holiday of Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles. The final ceremony is known as Simchat Torah, the Rejoicing over the Law, when the yearly cycle of Scripture readings from the five books of Moses are completed with the reading of the last chapters of Deuteronomy, and immediately the large Torah scroll is rolled back to the beginning and the first few verses of Genesis are chanted aloud in Hebrew.

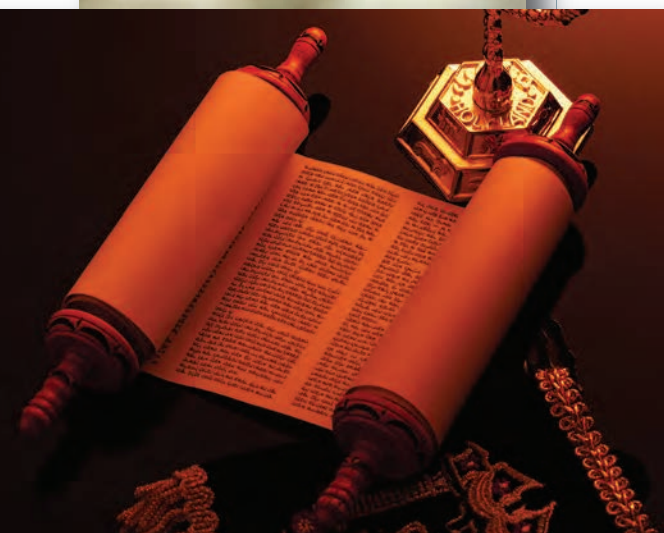
That “Rejoicing over the Law” is celebrated by a literal parade of worshipers who dance around the synagogue, with the rabbi leading in front holding the heavy Torah scroll containing the five books of Moses, and singing Hebrew praises. In order to encourage us children to participate, we were given small paper flags to wave and were told that once the parade made two circles around the synagogue sanctuary, we could go to the back and receive a very large, red jellied candy apple on a stick. Yes, it was a little like bribery!

Well, word got out in our neighborhood that the synagogue would again give out “jelly apples” for kids who participated in the Simchat Torah parade, and soon Jewish kids from blocks around, even those from other synagogues, made sure they were in place for the start of the parade. My eight-year-old self started to worry that there would not be enough “jelly apples” to go around! Of course, the point of the parade was the genuine joy of lifting aloft the Torah scroll and thanking God for His written word. Early on, I learned to have a deep respect for the Torah, as it contained the very words of God!

Many Gentile believers are starting to become aware of the significance of the Torah scroll. After all, the Bible from which Yeshua and the apostles read was written on a Torah scroll, and so this is important to all believers in Messiah Yeshua.

For over 3,000 years, the traditional Jewish community has made ceremonial working copies of the five books of Moses—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—comprising the Torah. The scribes wrote down the words by hand on long scrolls of parchment or vellum, fine-grained animal skins that were sewn together. They are still doing so in our modern day. The other portion of the Hebrew Scripture that is also handwritten on a parchment scroll for ceremonial use in our day is the book of Esther, called Megillah in Hebrew.

Originally, all the books of the Hebrew Scriptures were written on parchment scrolls. Individual books were usually written on individual parchments, and examples of such scrolls are found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. A further example is this New Testament episode involving Yeshua: *And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the scroll and found the place where it was written (Lk. 4:17).* Today, the traditional Jewish world regards the 39



books that form the Old Testament as the Word of God. That Bible is usually in hardcover form and found in synagogues and homes, whether in the original Hebrew or in translation to any modern language.

The parchment for a Torah scroll must come from a Kosher animal, either calf, goat, cattle, or deer. The skin is stretched on a frame, cleaned and smoothed and then cut into a rectangle. Each piece is approximately 18 to 20 inches high by 28 to 30 inches wide, and it takes about 70 to 80 skins to make up the full Torah scroll. The leaves are sewn together, and depending upon the writing style of the scribe, the completed scroll may be as long as 180 feet. Depending upon the thickness of the parchment, it can weigh over 40 pounds.

The Jewish man who is a skilled calligrapher and who hand writes the Hebrew letters of the Torah scroll is called a sopher, which means "scribe." He writes with a goose quill, which he dips in thick ink made from an old formula of oak nut resin, acacia tree sap, oils, and charcoal soot. Each parchment leaf has three to four columns of writing, with each column having 42 lines vertically. There are exactly 304,805 Hebrew letters in a Torah scroll. A skilled scribe usually takes nine months to complete the scroll. Along with the raw materials, it explains why new Torah scrolls from Israeli scribes are currently sold for about \$40,000. Once the Torah scroll is complete, it is called a Sefer Torah, a written Torah.

There are two types of cases for a Sefer Torah. Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews from the Mediterranean and Middle East areas respectively put their scrolls on two small wooden rollers, which are held in an ornate case, either made of silver-ornamented metal or decorated, polished wood. Ashkenazic Jews are from Europe, and their Torah scrolls are on two large wooden rollers, about 30 inches high. The rollers are covered

with a lavishly decorated cloth frame. Most synagogues in the Western world own several Torah scrolls, usually in the Ashkenazic style. The scrolls are kept in an ornate wooden display cabinet, an "ark," at the front of the synagogue sanctuary.

In most synagogues, the Torah scroll is taken out of the ark during the Shabbat service on Saturday mornings. When the doors of the Torah ark are opened, the congregation stands in respect. The rabbi carries the Sefer Torah in a dignified procession around the sanctuary. Worshipers often show their respect and understanding that the Torah contains the Word of God by reaching out to touch it with a prayer shawl or prayer book, and then bring that item to their lips.

If that last description seems a bit strange to readers without a Jewish background, it might be helpful to remember that during the public ministry of Yeshua and His apostles, they often voluntarily participated in the activities of the larger Jewish community. The Apostle Paul was given many opportunities to share the good news of the arrival of Messiah within the midst of the Jewish community, something documented in the book of Acts. By doing so, he demonstrated his familiarity and comfort with the Jewish traditions of the day.

In my over 30 years of leading Messianic Jewish congregations and fellowships, I have officiated at almost two dozen Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies with a full Torah scroll service and Hebrew Scripture reading, as well as many other services where we read from the Torah scroll. All of Romans 14 reminds us that we have freedom in these areas of Jewish practice and cultural traditions. First Corinthians 9:20-21 further states:

To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the [Mosaic] law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the

law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Messiah's law), so as to win those not having the law.

At many of those Messianic services, we had Jewish friends and relatives in attendance who were not yet believers in Messiah Yeshua. They often arrived with the idea that Jewish believers in Yeshua were fully ignorant of Jewish culture and learning, and that was the only reason for our belief. That prejudice was blown away when they saw these ceremonies and heard the joyful singing of Hebrew psalms. At the same time, we were very clear about the fact that Yeshua is the one and only Messiah and His atonement the only way into the kingdom of God.

One can fully embrace the Scriptural truth that we are no longer under Mosaic Law, but rather are under grace, as I clearly do, while still being enriched by an understanding and practice of the Jewish roots of our faith. I have no desire to go back under law, and in fact never have, but I am practicing the very advice that the Apostle Paul gave above in I Corinthians 9:20-21.

May God find us alert to learn more about the roots of our faith and eager to tell all who need to hear that the Living Torah, the very Word of God, is Messiah Jesus.





Introduction

Dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists disagree sharply on the issue of national Israel. Dispensationalists maintain that national Israel will be saved and restored to a place of service to the nations under the Messiah in His earthly kingdom. Non-dispensationalists, on the other hand, argue that the nation will never again have a role in the plan of God. This view is consistent with replacement theology and the view that the church has replaced or superseded Israel in God's plans.

Important to this non-dispensational understanding of Israel is Yeshua's role as "true Israel." In sum, the non-dispensational argument goes something like this: Messiah Yeshua is the complete fulfillment of Israel and, thus, is the "true Israel." As a result, all those who are "in Messiah," whether Jew or Gentile, are now part of Israel. Thus, there is no future significance for the nation Israel.

In this article, I argue that this non-dispensational understanding of Messiah Yeshua as "true Israel" is not supported by Scripture. *I assert that Yeshua's identity as the ultimate and true Israelite is the basis and reason for national Israel's restoration.* So instead of Yeshua terminating national Israel's significance in the plan of God, His identity as the true Israelite guarantees the nation's significance.

The Non-Dispensational View of Messiah as "True Israel"

To demonstrate the non-dispensational perspective I am arguing against, I reference the writing of four non-dispensational scholars: Robert B. Strimple, Kim Riddlebarger, Russell D. Moore, and Vern Poythress. Strimple, an amillennialist, states, "The true Israel is Christ. He is the suffering Servant of the Lord."² He then says, "Since Christ is the true Israel, the true seed of Abraham, we who are *in Christ* by faith and the working of his Spirit are the true Israel,

the Israel of faith, not of mere descent."³ For him, this means that there is no future significance for the nation Israel. Strimple argues that Matthew 2:15's use of Hosea 11:1, in which Messiah's departure from Egypt is declared a fulfillment of Israel's exodus from Egypt centuries earlier, is support for this view. So Strimple uses Matthew 2:15 to declare: "Christ is the true Israel of God, the one in whom Israel's history is recapitulated and God's purposes for Israel come to fulfillment."⁴

Riddlebarger also argues against a literal fulfillment of Old Testament physical promises to the nation Israel based on his understanding of Messiah as the "true Israel":

The New Testament writers claimed that Jesus was the true Israel of God and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. So what remains of the dispensationalists' case that these prophecies will yet be fulfilled in a future millennium? They vanish in Jesus Christ, who has fulfilled them.⁵

Thus, for Riddlebarger the coming of Yeshua as "the true Israel of God" means prophecies related to a future millennium "vanish."

Moore, too, argues that dispensationalists are mistaken when they speak of "millennial Israel as having a 'mediatorial' role in dispensing the blessings of God to the nations."⁶ Allegedly, dispensationalists do not understand that Yeshua is now the true Israel and that He now possesses the mediatorial role (see 1 Tim. 2:5). For Moore, the nation Israel no longer is a mediator of God's blessings. He says, "Thus, when dispensationalists speak of the 'future' of Israel, they should speak of it in terms of the



'future' of Jesus—a future He promises to share with His 'friends.'⁸

Vern S. Poythress, too, links his understanding of Yeshua as true Israel with the new covenant:

Because Christ is an Israelite and Christians are in union with Christ, Christians partake of the benefits promised to Israel and Judah in Jeremiah. With whom is the new covenant made? It is made with Israel and Judah. Hence it is made with Christians by virtue of Christ the Israelite. Thus one might say that Israel and Judah themselves undergo a transformation at the first coming of Christ, because Christ is the final, supremely faithful Israelite. Around him all true Israel gathers.⁹

For Poythress the concept of Israel undergoes "transformation" because of Messiah, who is the "supremely faithful Israelite."

In sum, the non-dispensationalist argument asserts that since Messiah is the true Israel, all who are in Messiah are Israel; thus, there is no need for a future restoration of the nation Israel with any type of mediatorial role. The essentials of this argument can be put in the following form:

Premise 1: Israel was a nation in the Old Testament.

Premise 2: Yeshua is now the true Israel.

Premise 3: As the true Israel, Yeshua assumes and fulfills the nation Israel's mediatorial role.

Premise 4: All who are in the true Israel—Messiah Yeshua—are also Israel.

Conclusion: Therefore, there is no future special identity or mediatorial role for the nation Israel in the plan of God.

A Critique of the Non-dispensational View

There are serious problems with the non-dispensational argument. Before looking at these problems, though, note that many dispensationalists actually agree with Premises 1 and 2. Dispensationalists affirm that Israel was a nation in the Old Testament and Yeshua is the true Israelite who represents all that Israel was to supposed to be. However, Premises 3 and 4 have problems.

Concerning Premise 3—"As true Israel, Yeshua assumes and fulfills the nation Israel's mediatorial role"—this position, as understood by nondispensationalists, is not supported by Scripture. No verse indicates that Yeshua's identity as "true Israel" means the end of national Israel's significance in the plan of God. Matthew 2:15 is often put forth as support, but this verse does not support the non-dispensational understanding. Matthew 2:15 shows Yeshua's identification with Israel, but as will be shown, Yeshua's identification with Israel is the reason national Israel can be saved and restored.

Moore mentions 1 Timothy 2:5 to support his understanding; "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Messiah Yeshua." This supposedly is evidence that since Messiah is the mediator, there is no role for the nation Israel as a mediator.¹⁰ But does this verse rule out a mediatorial function for Israel or anyone other than Messiah in the kingdom of God? It does not. The context of 1 Timothy 2:1-6 is salvation. This passage mentions "God our Savior who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (3-4). Certainly, when it comes to salvation Yeshua is the only mediator. But this does not rule out others being mediators in God's plans in other ways. Yeshua promised the church that

those who overcome will have "authority over the nations" (Rev 2:26). Thus, believers will have mediatorial roles in the future kingdom of Messiah. Revelation 5:10 promises that the saints will "reign upon the earth." Again, Yeshua appears to share His reign with others who are mediators. Also, Yeshua promised the apostles functional positions of authority over the tribes of Israel in Matthew 19:28 when He said they would be on thrones "judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Thus, Messiah's role as mediator in salvation does not rule out a functional mediatorial rule for others, including the nation Israel, in His kingdom (see Isa. 2:2-4).

Also, Moore asserts that language applied to Israel in the Old Testament such as "firstborn" and "son of God" is now applied to the Messiah.¹¹ But how does the fact that Yeshua is identified with Israel by means of those terms show there is no future significance for the nation Israel in the plan of God? Why would it not be the case that titles such as "firstborn" and "son of God" can be fulfilled in Messiah, but also apply to others as well? We see this with other concepts. Messiah is the singular true seed of Abraham according to Galatians 3:16, but this does not rule out others being descendants of Abraham (see Gal 3:29). "Temple" terminology is used of the Messiah (John 2:21), the believer (1 Cor. 6:19), the church (Eph 2:21), and a last days temple in Jerusalem (2 Thess. 2:4), but no one sense of this term cancels out the others.

Strimple appeals to Galatians 3:7-9, 29 to show that since believing Gentiles are sons of Abraham, they must be part of Israel. But Paul does not identify believing Gentiles as part of Israel. He quotes Genesis 12:3 in Galatians 3:8-9 to show that Gentiles are related to that part of the Abrahamic Covenant that predicted blessings to the Gentiles in the first place. In Romans 4:11-12 Paul said that Abraham is the father



of both believing Gentiles and believing Jews, but he never says that being related to Abraham makes Gentiles part of Israel.

Not only is the non-dispensational understanding of Messiah as "true Israel" not supported by Scripture, it is actually contradicted by the Bible. Important here is Isaiah 49:3-6:

³He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel,
In Whom I will show My glory."

⁴But I said, "I have toiled in vain,
I have spent My strength for nothing
and vanity;

Yet surely the justice due to Me is with
the LORD,

And My reward with My God."

⁵And now says the LORD, who formed
Me from the womb to be His Servant,

To bring Jacob back to Him, so that
Israel might be gathered to Him
(For I am honored in the sight of the
LORD,

And My God is My strength),

⁶He says, "It is too small a thing that You
should be My Servant

To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to
restore the preserved ones of Israel;

I will also make You a light of the
nations

So that My salvation may reach to the
end of the earth." (NASB)

According to verse 3, The LORD speaks to "My Servant Israel." Strimple is right when he states that Messiah "is the suffering Servant of the Lord." Thus, one thing both dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists affirm is that the Servant is referring to Messiah Yeshua. But verse 5 then states one of the purposes of this Servant. The Servant's role is "to bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him." Verse 6 also states that the role of the Servant is "to raise up the tribes of Jacob

and to restore the preserved ones of Israel." God will also "make" the Servant be "a light to the nations" (v. 6). What is significant here is that the Servant is clearly linked with Israel (v.3), yet He is also distinct in some way, since He is the one who will "restore" Israel. The nation Israel cannot restore itself, for it is sinful. But the Servant — Messiah Yeshua, the true Israel — can restore the nation Israel and bring blessings for the nations. Thus, this passage teaches that Yeshua, the true Servant of Israel, will restore the nation Israel and bring light to the nations. He will also restore Israel to her land (Isa 49:8). The presence of the true Israelite, Yeshua, does not mean Israel loses its significance. On the contrary, Israel is restored because of Yeshua the Messiah.

Israel, who was given a mission to the nations, will be able to accomplish its mission because of the Servant—Messiah Yeshua. Thus, Isaiah 49:5-6 explicitly contradicts the argument of non-dispensationalists. Messiah as true Israel does not mean the end of the nation Israel in the plan of God; instead, the presence of the Messiah means the restoration of the nation Israel. As Robert Thomas explains, "Through the Servant's redemptive work on behalf of the nation (cf. Isa. 53:6), the nation will eventually be one with Him and thereby glorify the Lord."

The fourth premise of the non-dispensational view that "All who are in the true Israel—Messiah Yeshua, are also Israel," is also inaccurate. There are 73 references to Israel in the New Testament. Of these, seventy clearly refer to ethnic Jews. Three references—Romans 9:6; 11:25-26; and Galatians 6:16—have sometimes been understood by non-dispensationalists to broaden the concept of "Israel" to include believing Gentiles. But there are no strong reasons to depart from the regular ethnic understanding in those passages. In Romans 9:6 Paul states, "For not all who are

descended from Israel are Israel." Paul's point is that the true "Israel" is comprised of those who are Jews by lineage and believers in Messiah Yeshua. As John Murray has noted, Romans 9:6 is teaching that "there is an 'Israel' within ethnic Israel."¹⁴ Gentiles are not in view here.

With Romans 11:25b-26a, Paul declared, "a partial hardening has come to Israel until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved." Some see a reference to the church with Paul's reference to "Israel" here. But this is highly unlikely. The other ten references to "Israel" in Romans 9-11 clearly refer to ethnic Israel. It is thus difficult to view "Israel" in verse 26 as meaning anything other than ethnic Israel.

Some have interpreted Galatians 6:16 to mean that Paul broadened the concept of Israel to include believing Gentiles. This verse states, "May peace be on all those who follow this standard, and mercy also be on the Israel of God." But this, too, is a reference to ethnic Jews who believed in Messiah. After launching a blistering critique of the Judaizers who wanted to add circumcision and the Mosaic Law to the Gospel, Paul reached out to those ethnic Jews who had not fallen for the error of the Judaizers and recognized them as the true "Israel of God." Thus, Galatians 6:16 refers to believing Jews.

Finally, dispensationalists disagree with the conclusion of the non-dispensationalist that "There is no future identity or mediatorial role for the nation Israel in the plan of God." This claim is refuted by multiple passages in the New Testament that still affirm the importance of Israel in God's plan. Gabriel told Mary that her coming Son, Yeshua, would "reign over the house of



Jacob forever" (Lk. 1:33), which is a reference to Yeshua's future reign over Israel. Matthew 19:28 also states:

And Yeshua said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Here a prophecy of Yeshua indicates the presence and significance of the "twelve tribes of Israel." Yeshua, the Son of Man, will be sitting on "His glorious throne" while His disciples will be in positions of authority over Israel. Thus, in the *eschaton*,¹⁵ Yeshua, the true Israel, exists alongside "the twelve tribes of Israel" which refers to the nation Israel. Yeshua does not indicate that His identity as "true Israel" extinguishes national Israel's identity and significance.

After forty days of kingdom instruction from the risen Lord (Acts 1:3), the disciples asked Yeshua the question, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). The disciples did not believe that Yeshua's identity ruled out a restoration of the kingdom to Israel. With

Romans 9:4 Paul declared that the "Israelites" belong to "the covenants" and "the promises." Paul linked the salvation of "all Israel" with Old Testament promises in Romans 11:26-27. Paul also drew upon the Old Testament hope when he announced that "Messiah became a servant to the circumcision . . . and for the Gentiles" (Rom 15:8-9). With the book of Revelation, John the apostle pointed to future significance for the twelve tribes of Israel (7:4-8), who are distinguished from a "great multitude" from "every nation and all tribes" (7:9). Again, the ministry of Yeshua has significance for both the nation Israel and the Gentiles.

Conclusion

There simply is no scriptural evidence for the view that Messiah's identity as "Israel" means the non-significance of the nation Israel in the future. Scripture actually teaches the opposite: Messiah's role as true Israel means the restoration of the nation Israel. The belief that Messiah as "true Israel" means there is no longer any significance for Israel as a nation is refuted by the following reasons:

1. No Bible writer says Yeshua's identity as true Israel means the end of national Israel's significance.

2. Isaiah 49 predicts that the Servant and ultimate Israelite Messiah Yeshua would restore the nation Israel and bring light to the nations.

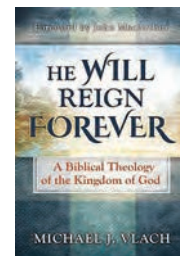
3. Yeshua did not view His identity and ministry as the end of national Israel's existence; instead, He affirmed national Israel's place in the *eschaton*.

4. Even after the church started, the apostles affirmed a future for the nation Israel.

As believers in Yeshua, we should acknowledge and celebrate Messiah's role as "true Israel," but we must also draw correct implications from this truth. Messiah, the true Israelite, will restore national Israel and bring light and blessings to the Gentiles. Thus, the non-dispensational view that the nation Israel no longer has a place in God's future plans because Messiah is "true Israel" should be rejected.



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Footnotes

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² Robert B. Strimple, "Amillennialism," in *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*, ed. Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 87.

³ Ibid., 88–89.

⁴ Ibid., 88.

⁵ Kim Riddlebarger, *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 70.

⁶ Russell D. Moore, *The Kingdom of Christ: The New Evangelical Perspective* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 118.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 119.

⁹ Vern S. Poythress, *Understanding Dispensationalists*, 2d. ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1994), 106.

¹⁰ Moore, 118.

¹¹ Moore, 118.

¹² Strimple, 87.

¹³ Robert L. Thomas, "The Mission of Israel and of the Messiah," in *Israel, the Land and the People: An Evangelical Affirmation of God's Promises*, ed. H. Wayne House (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998), 264.

¹⁴ John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959, Reprint 1997), 2:9.

¹⁵ The final event in the divine plan; the end of the world.



If we spend time in the presence of God and obey His commands, our faces will radiate the love of Yeshua.

1. Introduction

When we say the word “radiation,” what kind of picture comes into our minds? For many of us, thinking about the word results in anxiety. However, radiation is not in itself a bad word. The word simply refers to the process by which energy is released by atoms and molecules as they undergo internal change. We associate the term with danger because of the strong association it has today with radioactivity. However, radiation can be either harmful or beneficial, depending on what kind of radiation it is.

For example, we are happy to bask in the glow of a warm fire; that is good radiation. Conversely, we know that if radioactive food, water, or air causes us to “glow,” we may be harmed.

As there is radiation in the physical realm, there is radiation in the spiritual realm. As we come to Exodus 34, we are going to encounter a form of radiation that should glow from the being of every believer. We will learn that if we spend time in the presence of God and obey His commands, our faces will radiate the love of Yeshua.

At the beginning of chapter 34, Israel took the initiative and begged God to renew the covenant it had broken. God consented, and Moses, acting in his role of mediator, hewed out a new set of stone tablets and ascended Mount Sinai for a third time. At that time, God laid out the prelude to the covenant.

In verses 18-26, the covenant requirements are explained. We will not find a list of all 613 commands of the Mosaic Law in these verses, but a summary of the covenant itself. In fact, the verses are an outline that highlights one particular side of the Mosaic Covenant. As we study this side, we find it contains commands that govern Israel's vertical relationship with God as well as Israel's horizontal relationship with her fellow man.

2. The Requirements of the Covenant - Exodus 34:18-26

a. Rejoice—Exodus 34:18

Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in that month you came out of Egypt.

The first requirement of the covenant is the command to rejoice in the celebration of both the Feasts of Passover and of Unleavened Bread. These feasts are reminders that Israel owes her freedom and national

existence to the redemptive power of God. The observance of these interdependent feasts would prevent Israel from going astray after other gods.

b. Redeem—Exodus 34:19-20

The first offspring of every womb belongs to me, including all the firstborn males of your livestock, whether from herd or flock. Redeem the firstborn donkey with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, break its neck. Redeem all your firstborn sons. No one is to appear before me empty-handed.

The next summary statement is a reminder to obey the law of redemption. This law is mentioned here because it is connected with the Exodus from Egypt. During the events of the Exodus, God “passed over” the Jewish homes and struck the firstborn of every man and beast in Egypt. God spared the firstborn of Israel because each Jewish family obeyed Him and sacrificed a lamb in place of its firstborn son. The sparing of their firstborn sons was commemorated by the dedication of the firstborn humans and animals to God.

Additionally, none of the firstborn sons were to come to the pilgrim festivals without an offering. Again, this is a reminder that Israel owes its freedom and national existence to the redemptive power of God.

c. Rest—Exodus 34:21

Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest.

The next key reminder of Israel's covenant relationship with God is the observance of the Sabbath—a weekly reminder that God alone created the universe and delivered Israel from Egypt.

Setting aside one day each week also provided the nation with the rest that each person needed. The day of rest was to be observed even when it seemed impractical



or detrimental to the people of Israel. The Sabbath was to be observed even during periods of the year when there was urgent pressure to be in the field plowing and harvesting. When an Israelite felt that his livelihood demanded continuous work without a break, the Sabbath was still to be kept.

The issue here is a matter of trust and control. God is the One who is in control, and He is worthy of our trust. This trust extends to our occupations. God is the One who will ultimately cause prosperity to result from the pursuit of our jobs. Israel was to rest one day a week and trust God for the income from its work.

This is good advice to “workaholics” living in twenty-first century America. The world will not end, and our businesses will not go bankrupt, if we take one day off a week for rest.

Thus, Israel is to rejoice, redeem, and rest.

d. Regather—Exodus 34:22-23

Celebrate the Feast of Weeks with the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year. Three times a year all your men are to appear before the Sovereign LORD, the God of Israel.

Two additional festivals of the Mosaic Law are now mentioned: *Shavuot*, or “Weeks,” also known as “Pentecost”; and *Succoth*, or “the festival of ingathering.” These feasts are mentioned with Passover (*Pesach*) and its accompanying “Feast of Unleavened Bread” (*Hag Mazot*), because *Pesach*/Unleavened Bread, *Shavuot*, and *Succoth* are the three pilgrim festivals of the law. Each year, during these three feasts, all the men in Israel were to appear before God at the place He had chosen: Jerusalem.

Weekly rest was prescribed by the law, but our custom of weekly worship was not. Under the Mosaic Law, worship of the Lord

occurred only at the Temple in Jerusalem and nowhere else. While you could go to Jerusalem at any time of the year and offer a sacrifice, you were only obligated to go three times a year.

Weekly worship was impossible in ancient Israel because travel was slow. For example, it was a three days’ journey on foot from Galilee to Jerusalem. If you lived in Galilee, you would spend three days traveling to Jerusalem, one day would be dedicated to worship, and then three days would be spent traveling back to Galilee, for a total of seven days. A traveler would no sooner arrive home than he would have to turn around and begin the three-day journey back to Jerusalem. Because weekly worship in the Temple was not possible, the law required just the three pilgrim festivals.

All the men in Israel were to journey to Jerusalem from Galilee, from east of the Jordan, and from the south in the Negev. They were to leave their homes, farms, animals, and other possessions behind, in the hands of God.

Knowing that the Jewish people left their villages three times a year would certainly tempt Israel’s enemies to plunder them. However, God anticipated this and made a provision for Israel’s protection.

e. God’s Protection—Exodus 34:24

I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your territory, and no one will covet your land when you go up three times each year to appear before the LORD your God.”



The Jewish people did not need to worry about their property when they gathered before the Lord at Jerusalem. While they were away from their villages and their houses were empty, God would protect their goods and nothing would be stolen in the house or in the field.

An important word of caution is in order at this point. This is not a promise for us today, but for Israel, living in the land, in obedience to the Mosaic Law. Nothing like this is promised in the New Testament. We should not take God’s provision for Israel out of context, believing that He has promised to protect our property whenever we go to church. We should be prudent, lock our homes when we go to worship, and lock our cars in the parking lot of the church.

Here is a basic summary of what Israel was to do in her relationship with God: Rejoice, redeem, rest, and regather in Jerusalem for worship three times a year.

f. Additional Restrictions - Exodus 34:25-26

Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to me along with anything containing yeast, and do not let any of the sacrifice from the Passover Feast remain until morning. Bring the best firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God. Do not cook a young goat in its mother’s milk.

Four specific restrictions are mentioned in this passage. First, God tells Israel not to sacrifice anything to Him that contains yeast. Yeast (leaven) in the Scriptures is a symbol of sin. Sin, in its insidious, invisible way, can permeate all our words, thoughts, and deeds. God tells Israel not to worship Him by mingling redemptive blood with unclean yeast. He tells them not to relate to Him with sin in their lives. God wants to be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

The second restriction pertains to the Passover lamb, which was a holy lamb, a



lamb set aside for a specific use and for one specific meal, the Passover meal only. It was not to be used in a common or profane manner. Whatever was not used for the designated purpose had to be destroyed. This restriction deals with the attitude the Jewish people were to take toward the covenant. They were to relate to God with an attitude of obedience and respect. The Passover sacrifice is but one example.

The third restriction is, "Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the Lord your God." Israel was not to bring just anything they chose to God, regardless of its value; they were to bring the best that they had. The issue here is respect. If you respect someone, you do not give that person useless items. You give them the best you have. Your best may not be as new or as expensive as someone else's, but it is your best. Your gift should be an expression of your respect and love for God. This is what God desires.

The last restriction is, "Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk." This practice is a reference to heathen occult religious practices. The Canaanites thought this custom would promote fertility. The principle behind this restriction is that Israel must not get involved in false religions, the occult, or superstition.

Now the summary of the covenant is complete: Israel, rejoice in your redemption from Egypt, redeem your firstborn, rest weekly on the Sabbath, regather in Jerusalem for worship three times a year, and remember the restrictions or boundaries. These points summarize Israel's relationship to God. She is to cling to God as her Redeemer, Sustainer, and Creator.

3. The Record of the Covenant - Exodus 34:27-28

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." Moses



was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments."

Verse 28 tells us that Moses stayed with the Lord for the same amount of time he spent during his earlier sojourn on the mountain. There are two points to note. First, the fact that Moses could go for this length of time without food or water was a miracle requiring the Lord's supernatural care.

Second, Israel passed the test this time. Instead of impatiently running off after golden calves, Israel submissively waited the entire time for Moses' return.

4. The Radiance of the Covenant - Exodus 34:29-35

a. The Return of Moses—Exodus 34:29

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD.

After forty days, when Moses came down from the mountain with the two tablets of stone, his face shone. It did not shine the first time he came down with the two tablets, but this time it did. The reason is that this time Moses had a unique experience with the *Shechinah*. He was touched by the afterglow of the fullness of God's glory.

The result of this was that Moses' face began to reflect the glory he saw on the mountain. The *Shechinah* was not in the face of Moses, but just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, the face of Moses reflected the glory of God.

At first, Moses was unaware that this was happening. Israel, however, was very much aware of it and started to be afraid.

b. Fear—Exodus 34:30-32

When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him. But, Moses called to them; so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and he spoke to them. Afterward all the Israelites came near him, and he gave them all the commands the LORD had given him on Mount Sinai.

Israel responded with fear and retreated in terror. They were afraid to approach Moses until he called them. He then communicated to Israel all that God had spoken to him while he was up on the mount for this second forty-day session.

c. The Removal of the Veil - Exodus 34:33-35

When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. However, whenever he entered the LORD's presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And, when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the LORD.

When Moses finished speaking with the people, he veiled his face. Whenever he would go in to talk with God, he would remove the veil and talk with Him face to face. When he came down to the people, he would teach them God's Word with his face unveiled. The nation would see the radiance of God's glory on his face. When he was finished teaching, he would veil himself again. The radiance was only visible

when Moses was acting as the oracle of God. The reason Moses put the veil on is not explained in Exodus. However, it is explained in the New Testament. Rabbi Shaul refers to this incident in 2 Corinthians 3:6-17:

He has made us competent as ministers of the new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Rabbi Shaul begins his explanation by comparing two covenants, the first being the Mosaic Covenant, which Shaul refers to as “the covenant of the letter” (the Law). The second covenant is the New Covenant, which Shaul refers to as “the covenant of the Spirit.”

Moses mediated the covenant of the letter. Yeshua mediated the covenant of the Spirit. The covenant of the letter was instituted by Moses on Mt. Sinai. The covenant of the Spirit was instituted by Yeshua fifteen hundred years after the covenant of the letter was instituted. The former covenant is what we live under today—the New Covenant.

The contrast in verse 6 focuses on the power of the two covenants. The covenant of the letter has no power to save mankind. It reveals God’s standards of righteousness, but it does not give men the ability to live up to those standards. Therefore, it brings death. In contrast, the New Covenant imparts life.

Shaul then contrasts the glory of the two covenants in 2 Corinthians 3:7-11:

Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. And if

what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

Rabbi Shaul makes two points here: The Mosaic Covenant was holy, righteous, and good. Even though it was limited and was fading away, even though it condemned man, it came from God and was a glorious revelation. We would do well to plumb its depths for principles that apply to our lives today (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

The Mosaic Covenant is a glorious covenant. However, it is not operating as the rule of life for believers today. We live under the New Covenant; yet, the Mosaic Covenant is still a magnificent covenant.

Here in 2 Corinthians 3:7, we get an insight into the reason Aaron and the people were afraid of Moses: The glory radiating from his face was so bright they could hardly look at it. He did not glow in the dark; rather, Moses shone with light. This would scare most of us.

Thus, the Rabbi Shaul’s first point is that the Mosaic Covenant is a glorious, albeit limited, covenant. The next point he makes is that the New Covenant possesses even greater glory. The Mosaic Covenant pales when set alongside the New Covenant, because the latter possesses the power to make men righteous and because it is an

everlasting, eternal covenant. It will not fade away.

After comparing the power and glory of the two covenants, Shaul now compares the people of the two covenants in 2 Corinthians 3:12-13:

Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away.

The first person to appear before God was Moses. Shaul reveals the reason Moses veiled his face: He knew that the radiance was temporary. Ultimately, it would fade away. Moses did not want the people to see this happen, as shown in 2 Corinthians 3:14-16:

But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Messiah is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the LORD, the veil is taken away.

The veil becomes a symbol explaining Israel’s unbelief in Yeshua. The Israel of old, contrasted with the Israel of Shaul’s day, and even compared to the Israel of today, does not see the full depth of God’s glory contained in the Mosaic Covenant. It is veiled, or hidden from them, because their hearts are dull and unresponsive to the revelation contained in it. Shaul’s point is that Yeshua is proclaimed and revealed in the Torah. He is the Passover Lamb—the substitutionary sacrifice that causes God’s wrath to pass over us. Yeshua is portrayed in the Tabernacle. He is seen in the ark of the covenant, the lampstand, the altar of incense, the table of showbread, the bronze basin, and the altar of sacrifice. He is also our Great High Priest. He is seen very clearly by us because the Torah is unveiled to our spiritual sight. However, He is not seen by Israel today when the Torah is read in the synagogue. His glory is





veiled or obscured just as the radiance on Moses' face was hidden by the veil. However, whenever anyone — Jew or Gentile — turns to Yeshua in faith, that veil is removed, and the pure, unadulterated glory of the Lord radiates forth to them.

Second Corinthians 3:17-18 says:

Now the LORD is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the LORD's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the LORD, who is the Spirit.

We, the believers, have been freed from the obscuring veil by the Spirit of God. We bask in the glory radiating from the Torah. Because of this, we reflect the Lord's glory in a manner similar to the way Moses did. God's blinding blaze of spiritual light bounces off our faces into the dark world around us.

Additionally, we are being transformed into God's likeness. We are being molded and shaped so that we can radiate more and more of the Lord's glory. Unlike the glory that Moses experienced, which was temporary and fading away, we experience a glory that is eternal and will not fade. In fact, our glory is doing just the opposite of what Moses' glory was doing. We experience an ever-increasing glory from the Lord, a glory that is transforming us into the type of people God wants us to be.

5. Application

Do we want to be the kind of believer described above? Do we want to radiate God's glory to those around us? This is what Yeshua wants for us. He wants us to be like Moses in this respect. Remember what Yeshua said in Matthew 5:14-16:

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it

gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Yeshua wants us to radiate the blinding blaze of His love to everyone around us. He wants us to be radioactive—to glow with His love in the darkness of this present world.

Does Scripture give us any guidelines on how to become a radiant, radioactive believer, glowing in this world? The answer is "Yes!" For example, in 2 Corinthians 6:14, Shaul writes:

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

The context of this verse involves false teachers. Shaul warns us to stay away from false teachers so that our light will shine. In Ephesians 5:8b, he says:

Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the LORD. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

Thus, we will radiate Messiah's light if we live good, moral, truthful lives and expose immorality.

In Philippians 2:14, an extremely difficult assignment is given to us. If we want to radiate Yeshua's glory, if we want to be radioactive believers, we must "do everything without complaining or arguing." This is difficult; in fact, almost impossible. But if we, by the power of God's grace within us, do this, if we stop complaining and stop arguing, God says that we will

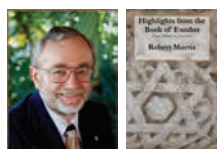
shine like the stars in the universe. We will be able to radiate God's love in this dark world.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:4, we are told that we will radiate the light of the Messiah if we live our lives in an alert, self-controlled manner. Finally, in 1 John 5:7, we are told that if we walk in the light and have fellowship with other believers, we will be radiant believers.

Now, there only remains one more thing to do if we want to become radioactive believers. That one thing is to do what Moses did. We must spend time alone with God. Remember the definition of the word "radiation." The word "radiation" means the process by which energy is sent out from atoms and molecules as they undergo internal change. This is what has to happen in our lives. We have to be changed internally, and when that happens, spiritual energy will be radiating out from our lives as well.

Internal change takes place when we spend time alone with God. We must read His Word and get to know Him personally. Then we need to begin doing the things mentioned in His Word: renounce any false teachings that have come into our lives; live a moral, truthful, self-controlled life; expose immorality; stop complaining; stop arguing; walk in the light; and have fellowship with other believers.

If we do these things, we will be different from those around us. We will radiate the love of Yeshua. This radiating glory will repel some and scare them just as it scared Israel because it is too bright to look at. At the same time, this radiating glory will comfort others and draw them gently into a personal relationship with the Messiah.



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