



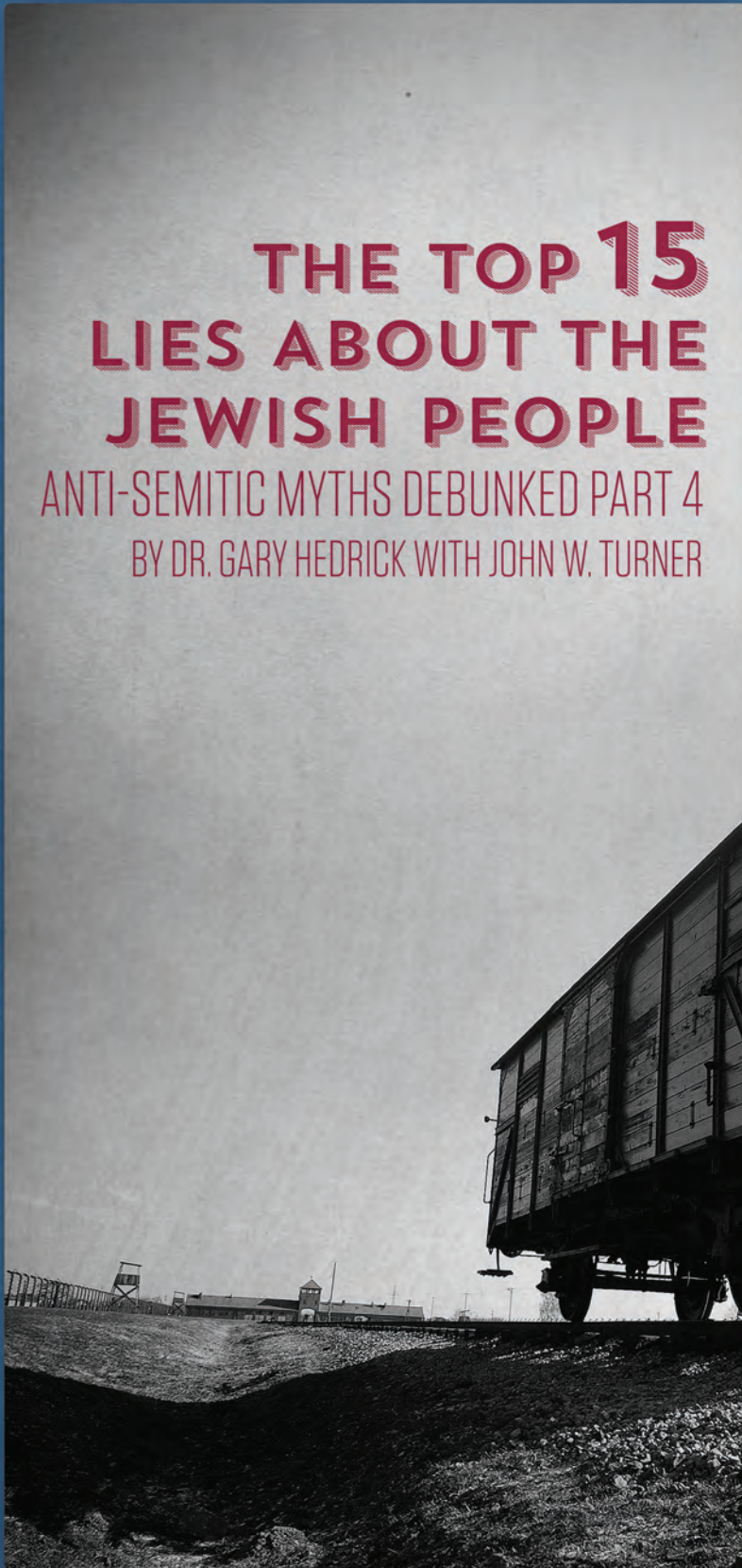
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Messianic Perspectives®

God has not forgotten the Jewish people, and neither have we.

THE TOP 15 LIES ABOUT THE JEWISH PEOPLE

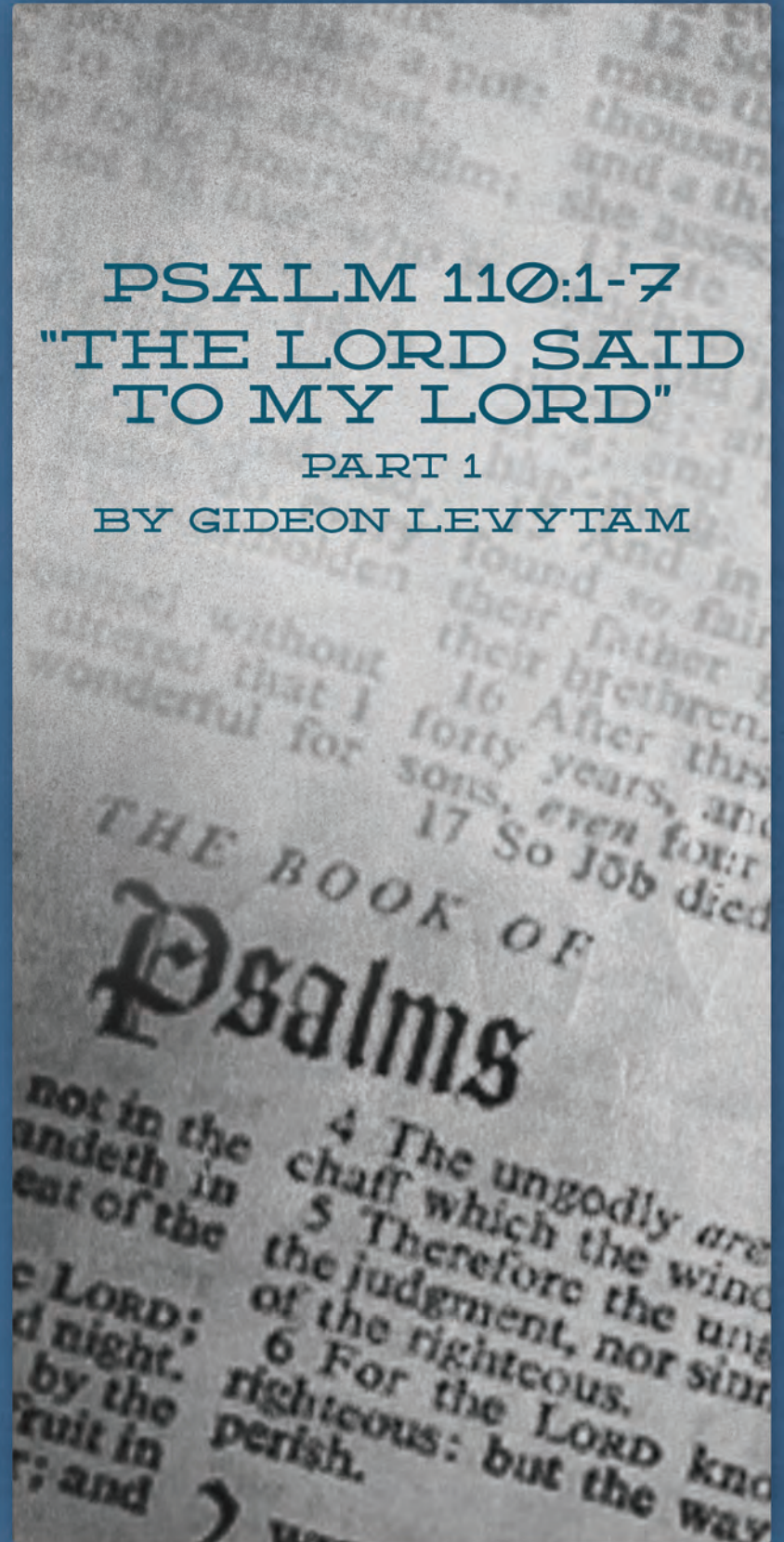
ANTI-SEMITIC MYTHS DEBUNKED PART 4
BY DR. GARY HEDRICK WITH JOHN W. TURNER

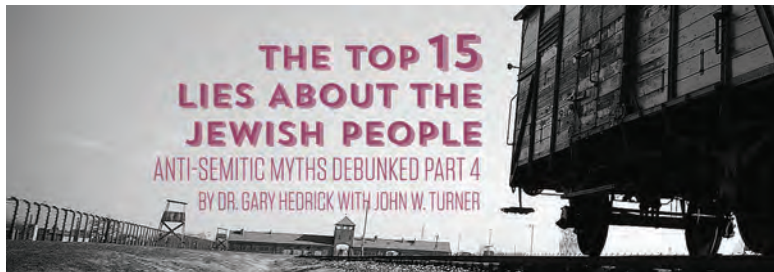


PSALM 110:1-7 "THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD"

PART 1

BY GIDEON LEVYTAM





In this series of studies, we've discussed a global propaganda campaign carried out by God's enemies against Israel and the Jewish people. The previous three installments have covered anti-Semitic claims regarding:

1. The Talmud and its teachings;
2. The role of the ancient Khazars in Jewish history;
3. A forged document known as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*;
4. The Jewish influence on societies where they reside;
5. The view that Israel has been replaced by the Church in God's plan;
6. The notion that all of Israel's promises were fulfilled in the past—and therefore none are left for the future;
7. The theory that the Abrahamic promises have been transferred to the Church; and,
8. The Zionist movement allegedly being part of some larger, sinister plot.

We now complete the series with the final seven most common lies about the Jewish people.

Lie #9: Israel is the oppressor in the Middle East.

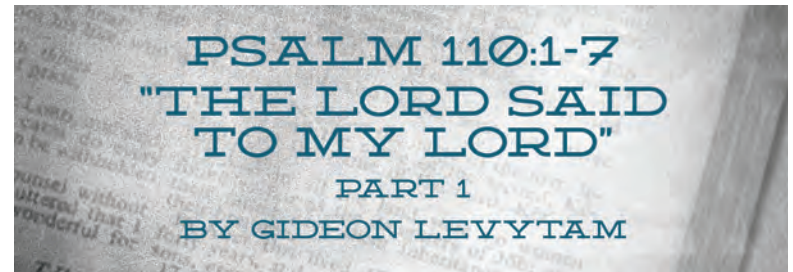
The “David and Goliath” caricature that’s often invoked in discussions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be misleading. The young, upstart “David” isn’t the Palestinians and the bully “Goliath” isn’t the Jewish state, as some people think.

In fact, it’s just the opposite. The giant is the Arab world, and even the world in general, where anti-Semitism is deeply entrenched and many see the Jewish people (and hence the nation Israel) as a blight on the human race that should be eradicated.¹ And “David” is tiny Israel, surrounded by menacing enemies who are sworn to their destruction.

The reality is that all the Israelis are trying to do is survive—and to live their lives in peace. Their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents suffered through the Nazi Holocaust in the last century. Millions of them, in fact, tragically perished at the hands of Hitler and his henchmen.

The Israelis have no designs on any other part of the Middle East. They’re not interested in building an empire. They just want to be left alone.

continued on page 8



Introduction: The Man Who Wrote the Psalm

When we study Psalm *Mizmor* 110, we must be aware that the one who wrote this psalm is the sweet psalmist of Israel, “*Naim Zimrot* Israel,” whose name is David. About half of the 150 psalms bear his name. In Hebrew, the name *David* means “Beloved.” The same term “beloved” is found in the Song of Solomon 6:3a: *I am my beloved's, And my beloved is mine.* As emphasized earlier, “beloved” is the very name of David: “a beloved one.”

This amazing servant of God was a faithful, godly man. First, as a young boy, he submitted to his father Jesse in leading his father’s flock to be fed in the fields of Bethlehem; and second, when he became the king of Israel, he was faithful in leading *God’s* flock, our People. God’s Word calls David “a man after God’s own heart.” Samuel was asked by God to go to Bethlehem, to the family of Jesse, and there he was called to anoint David to become the king of Israel. But even before God sent Samuel to Bethlehem, Samuel said these words to Saul: “. . . *The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, . . .*” (1 Sam. 13:14). Israel’s first king, Saul, violated God’s word in rebelling against Him; therefore, the Lord sought for Himself a man after His very own heart. And God found that man; it was David, the obedient boy who was faithful at home feeding his father’s flock. God himself declared in Psalm 89:20: “*I have found My servant David; With My holy oil I have anointed him.*” God sought and found a man who was after His own heart. Paul made a reference to the man David when, as recorded in Acts 13:22, he spoke on Shabbath in the synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia. To repeat: This man of whom Paul spoke was none other than David himself, the one who was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write Psalm 110.

When Israel’s prophet Samuel came to Bethlehem, searching for the one whom he was to anoint as king, he came to the family of Jesse. We read in 1 Samuel 16 how Jesse presented his children before Samuel, one by one: Eliab, Abinadab, Shammah, and the other sons. Then we read Samuel’s words in Verse 11: *And Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all the young men here?” Then he said, “There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here.”* David was sent for and he came, and we read of how Samuel anointed David, in the midst of his brethren, to be God’s choice as Israel’s king. In Verses 12-13 we read: *So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes and good-looking. And the LORD said, “Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!” Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed*

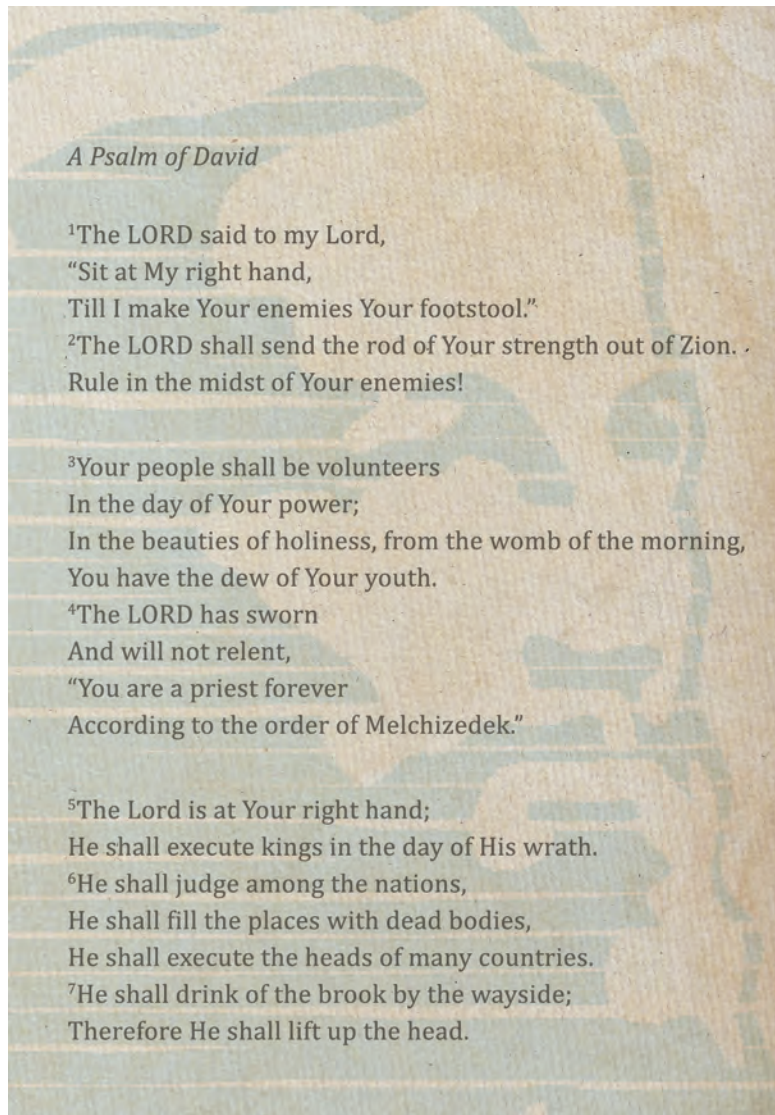
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him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. . . . We learn here how God desires for each of His own people to be a person—man or woman—who will seek to please Him and be “after His very own heart.” He was seeking one, and He found one: David, who, of course, becomes for us one of the most beautiful types and pictures of our blessed Lord Yeshua—Jesus, Israel’s Messiah.



God promised a Messiah to our forefathers long before David was even born—a Messiah who would truly be a man after God’s own heart, of whom David was the type, the picture. Indeed, David the king did lead our people Israel in a way that was pleasing to the LORD. But although he was a man after God’s own heart, David sinned and failed the LORD. Yet God, who knows all, knew David’s inner soul and knew that he sought to please Him. God declared in His Word, Psalm 14:2-3: *The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.* All, the best of men, the best of us, have come short of the glory of God. All fail in this world, just as David failed—and all of God’s own people who follow the Lord fail to some degree. But David, in his life experiences, becomes a type and picture of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, who came to suffer and die an atoning death for our nation Israel and for the nations of the world. David’s last words in his old age, by divine inspiration, were these: “David was the sweet psalmist of Israel.” Note what is written in 2 Samuel 23:1: *Now these are the last words of David. Thus*

says David the son of Jesse; Thus says the man raised up on high, The anointed of the God of Jacob, And the sweet psalmist of Israel. Of the many psalms that David wrote, Psalm 72 was his last one, which is alluded to by Samuel.

Thus, 2 Samuel reiterates the truth: How sweet indeed David was! Everyone who reads the Book of Psalms can see, feel, and identify with the experiences of David. It was through trials that David became a clear picture of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah. David is governed by the Holy Spirit to write things which relate to Israel’s promised Messiah. Psalm 110 is one of the most quoted psalms in the New Covenant. Yeshua the Messiah pointed to this psalm in his deliberation with Israel’s spiritual leaders, the Pharisees, found in Matthew 22:41-45. The Apostle Peter, when preaching, made reference to Psalm 110 in Acts 2:32-36. The writer of the Book of Hebrews pointed to this psalm in Hebrews 1:13. And also, the Apostle Paul made references to Psalm 110 in his epistles. David wrote the psalm some 3,000 years ago, knowing that God promised that out of his loins and seed would come one whom God would establish as Israel’s eternal King. God gave David the amazing, blessed, threefold promise of eternal house, eternal kingdom, and eternal throne in 2 Samuel 7:11-13, 16. Note again: Long before our Lord Jesus the Messiah entered into this world, David understood in some small measure that out of his seed the Redeemer who is the Messiah would come. Psalm 110 is a Messianic psalm, a *mizmor*, which presents before us the coming Messiah, not only in His divine nature, but also in His humanity as King and Priest.

When we study the psalms, we must bear in mind that when the Hebrew writers wrote them, they had in mind God’s dealings with his earthly people Israel. They had no knowledge of what is now known to us as the “Church Age,” of which we are a part. The Hebrew writers were concerned with that which relates to their people Israel as a nation, in relationship to the true and living God. It was the Apostle Paul who wrote to the Ephesians in Chapter 3 that the Church was hidden in God. He wrote in Verses 3 and 4: *how that by revelation He [the Lord Jesus] made known to me [Paul] the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ).* This is the mystery of the Messiah Yeshua now in relationship to the Church (Jews and Gentiles united together as believers in Messiah). He continues to say in Verse 5: *which in other ages [or other generations] was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets.* And in Verses 9-10, Paul continues: *and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in heavenly places.* Pay close attention to what Paul is saying in Ephesians 3:3-5 and 9-10. He points out that the Church, in Greek *ekklésia*, the “called-out ones,” is a composition of forgiven and redeemed people. Both Jewish and Gentile believers in Yeshua are now united together in Him, the risen Messiah. This Church Age was hidden in God during all the other ages, and was not revealed to men until now. It is only that God, through His glorified Son Yeshua, revealed this amazing mystery to Paul: the union of Messiah Yeshua to His body, the Church. Another thing we need to realize is that the theme of God’s Word, including the Book of Psalms, is the Person of Yeshua the Messiah. We will observe this as we look into Psalm 110. The central theme of God’s Word is the Person of the Lord, Israel’s Redeemer.

In Psalm 40:6-8, David speaks on behalf of the Messiah saying: *Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require. Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart."* "The volume [scroll] of the book" is God's Word: God's "book" is the Bible. *Be-Megilat Hasefer*, the theme of God's Word, is the Person and the work of Israel's Messiah. He said, "In the volume of the book it is written of me." This is important to bear in mind as we study Psalm 110. By divine inspiration, David shares with us in Psalm 110 a private conversation between Jehovah, his God, and his Lord, *Adon* (master). David's Lord is none else but God the Son, whom God the Father addresses. It is similar yet the reverse of what we read in the New Testament in John, Chapter 17:1-4: *Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do."* Here in John 17, we learn that the Son, our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, spoke to His Father just before His anticipated, atoning death, asking His Father to glorify Him with the same glory that He had before His incarnation. Jesus the Messiah allows the disciples and us who read God's Word the privilege of listening to this private conversation, which He shared with His own Father. In a very similar way, Psalm 110 reveals to us an amazing private conversation among the Persons of the Godhead, where God the Father speaks to God the Son as man who is David's Lord, David's Master, telling Him of what He intends to do. These thoughts are very precious to the heart.

The Psalm: A Psalm of David

The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. The LORD has sworn, And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. He shall drink of the brook by the way-side; Therefore He shall lift up the head.

This 110th Psalm contains seven verses, just as shown in the Hebrew Masoretic text. The heading, "A Psalm of David," can be viewed as part of the first verse. In Hebrew, it is *Mizmor Le-David*. In this psalm, David praises his God for His declaration to His Master.

Notice, beloved, that this Messianic psalm is divided into four sections:

- A. Verse 1, the divine nature of David's Lord.
- B. Verses 2-3, the kingly rule of David's Lord.
- C. Verse 4, the eternal priesthood of David's Lord.
- D. Verses 5-7, the judgment of nations by David's Lord.

Throughout Psalm 110, David looks ahead as through a tunnel, pointing to his Lord, his *Adon* the Messiah, and the events that will accrue in the future through Him. From David's time in history, about 1040 BC, those events will occur much later—they will take place in stages, not all at once. It is mind-boggling to learn how God, through His Holy Spirit, enables His servant to know things that will happen long after his departure from this world. As far as we, believers



David and Goliath by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio



King David by Giovanni Francesco Barbieri

of this Church Age, are concerned in the year 2014, only some of the things that David wrote in this psalm have happened; others will take place in the future.

Verse 1: *The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”* Notice what David is saying here: *The LORD said to my Lord.* The first word for *LORD* here in Verse 1 is the Hebrew word *Jehovah* or *YHWH*, יהוה, the sacred tetragrammaton. The English uses large and small capital letters: “LORD.” In our Hebrew language, there are no vowels in this word for God’s name: *YHWH*. It is simply the word *YHWH*. This is the name by which God revealed Himself to Moses and to our nation Israel. Our people, the Hebrews, were slaves in Egypt for over 400 years. They cried to their God for help and deliverance, and God responded by revealing Himself to Israel with this name: *YHWH*. We read in Exodus 3 how Moses went to Horeb where the LORD appeared unto him in the midst of the burning bush. In Verse 6, God said to Moses: “. . . *I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*” And *Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.*

In his conversation with Moses, God promised to deliver Israel out of the land of Egypt. Moses asked God a question in Verses 13-14 of Exodus 3: *Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?”* And God said to Moses, *“I AM WHO I AM.”* And He said, *“Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”* The words for *“I AM WHO I AM”* in Hebrew are *Eheyeh-Asher-Eheyeh*. Or more correctly, God said, “I will be that which I will be.” So, in actuality God said to Moses and Israel, “I promise you that I will be to you, Israel, all that you are in need of. I will meet all your needs.” Then, in connection with this promise, we read in Verse 15 this very important statement that God declared to Moses: His very own name of *YHWH*, the covenant-keeping God of Israel. Note: *Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The LORD [YHWH] God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name [Yehovah, YHWH, Jehovah] forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.’”* Here, Israel’s God has clearly declared to Moses that His name is *YHWH*, *Jehovah*. Here, we find the first time in Scripture that God himself audibly pointed out His very own name, *YHWH*, saying, “This is My name forever.” He is the covenant-keeping God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the living God of Israel.

We observe that it is this *YHWH*, *Jehovah*, who speaks unto David’s Lord, in the Hebrew *Adonee*. And we notice in this first part of Verse 1 that there are two different persons who are called “Lord” by David. But we must take note that he calls the first person “*Jehovah-YHWH*” and he calls the second person, “*Lord-Adonee*.” Here, we have two completely different Hebrew words: *YHWH* and *Adonee*. In Hebrew, the meaning is David’s *Adon*. David calls Him, My Lord, *Adonee*. To help English readers understand, the translators of our Hebrew Bible distinguished the two words for “Lord” in this way. For the Hebrew word *Jehovah*, *YHWH*, the translators express *LORD* in large and small capital letters; and for the Hebrew words *Adon*, *Adonee*, or *Adonai*, they present Lord with only the first letter capitalized. In our Hebrew language, both in the Tanakh (Old Testament) and in our daily conversation, the word *Adon* simply means “master” or “sir.” When that Master, that *Adon* is a master that belongs to me (my master), then we personalize the word *Adon* and we say *Adonee*, meaning my Lord, my Master. These words, *Lord Adon* and *my Lord Adonee*, may refer to both—to men and also to God. But the word *Adonai*, which is the plural of the word *Adon*, applies only to God and not to men.



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We can see the usage of the word *Adon* in some Bible passages. For example, in Exodus 34:23 we read: *“Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the LORD God [Ha-Adon YHWH] of Israel.”* In Deuteronomy 10:17a we read: *For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords [Adoney Ha-Adonim], . . .* In Joshua 3:11 we read: *“Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord [Adon] of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan.”* In those verses, the word *Adon* refers to God himself. In Genesis 18:12, Sarah used that word referring to her husband, Abraham: *Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, “After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord [Adonee] being old also?”* On the other hand, we can see how Abraham in Genesis 15:2a used the word *Adonai* in reference to God when he said, “. . . Lord GOD [Adonai YHWH], what will You give me, seeing I go childless, . . . ?”

So here again, in Psalm 110, we note that *YHWH* gave a declaration unto David’s *Adon*, saying unto him: “Sit at my right hand.” From this statement we learn much. We learn that David’s Lord, David’s *Adon*, was someone who was much more than just another man. He was the one whom David recognized as his Lord, his Master—the Messiah—who has a divine nature, and of Him he pointed out elsewhere, in Psalm 2:7, that *YHWH* called him, “My Son.” Note: *“I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, ‘You are My Son [Atah Bnee]. Today I have begotten You.’”* A question immediately arises in our minds: Who could sit at *YHWH*’s right hand? The answer is clear. No one could, unless that person was more than just another man. Only one who is equal to God can sit at His right hand and share His throne in Heaven. Only a divine person can have such a glorious position. This declaration of one divine person to another teaches us that a plurality exists in the Godhead. Already, the first verse in God’s Word teaches us that truth. *In the beginning God [Elohim] created the heavens and the earth* (Gen. 1:1). The Hebrew word *Elohim* is the plural form of the single word *EL* (God). Yes, there is only one God, *Elohim*, but this one God exists and subsists as a Trinity, in three persons. This truth of the Trinity in the Godhead is evident throughout God’s Word, in both the Old and New Covenants. We can find it, in fact, in Isaiah 48:16, 61:1; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; and in many other places in the Bible.

It is important for us to understand that David’s Lord, the Messiah, was called to this exalted high place at *YHWH*’s right hand, not only because He is God’s Son (that place of glory He always had, even from eternity), but also because He, God the Son, was willing to take on humanity with His own divine nature. He was willing to become a man for the purpose of becoming a sacrifice for the sins of Israel and for the sins of the whole world. He was willing to die as a just substitute for a sinful and unjust humanity. David wrote of the Messiah’s willingness in Psalm 40:6-8, saying: *Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require. Then I said, “Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.”* The Messiah, the Son, said to God, His Father: “I am willing to come to this world to do your will.” God’s will was to redeem a sinful world back to Himself. Why? Because every man who has been born into this world has inherited Adam’s sin nature and has failed God. David pointed out this fact in Psalm 14:2-3: *The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.*

The first man, Adam, sinned by violating God’s command (see Genesis 2:16-17). Through disobedience in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-21), Adam plunged the whole human race into sin. Because of Adam and his failure to obey, mankind fell into judgment—to death and separation from a holy God. And therefore, the only way this holy God could forgive man and restore a fallen, sinful humanity to Himself was, and is, through One who was sinless and willing to take God’s punishment and judgment for sin upon Himself as a substitute. This is why God the Son, who is David’s Lord, had to become a man. This is why we all need a Messiah, a redeemer. God’s Word teaches us that the Redeemer, the Messiah (Jesus), entered this world through a Jewish virgin from the house of Judah (Isa. 7:14) and that He, the Messiah, would be that Son whom God gave, called *El-Gibor*, a “Mighty God” (Isa. 9:6), that He would be born in the city of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), and that He would be the One who would take upon Himself the judgment for sin (Isa. 53:6).



God admonishing Adam and Eve by Domenico Zampieri

Indeed, this Messiah is none else but Yeshua, Jesus, the Son of God, the son of man, the son of David, whom the religious leaders of our nation Israel confronted daily. It was to them that Yeshua raised the most important question, a question to which every person will have to give an answer one day. It is found in Matthew 22:41-46: “. . . *What do you think about the Christ [Messiah]? Whose Son is He?*” (v. 42). They knew very well that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David, so they answered: *They said to Him, “The son of David [Ben David].”* Yeshua, in His response, quoted from Psalm 110: *He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: ‘The LORD said unto my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”?’ “If David then calls Him ‘Lord’ [Adonee], how is He his Son?” And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore* (vv. 43-46). Yeshua himself used Psalm 110, seeking to show to the leaders of Israel that He was the Messiah. How can He, at the same time, be David’s son and David’s *Adonai*, David’s Lord? Here, we learn about the divine nature of the Messiah as well as His humanity. He became David’s son when He entered into this world, but in His divine nature He also was David’s Lord. He is the One of whom we read in the New Covenant: *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high* (Heb. 1:1-3).


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By His entrance into the world, our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, fulfilled all that our Hebrew prophets of old have spoken. We read of His miraculous birth, His holy and righteous life, His substitutionary death, His justifying resurrection, and His glorious ascension in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. All these divinely inspired men presented our Lord Yeshua, the Messiah, in His perfection and His loving willingness to become God's Lamb. And indeed, He died as a substitute for mankind on a Roman cross, crying out to God: “. . . *It is finished!* . . .” (John 19:30). Notice what the writer of the Book of Hebrews is saying to his Hebrew brethren in 1:3: *by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*. Thus Yeshua, our Messiah, after He purged our sins through His atoning death on the Cross, was taken, as man, to be seated at *YHWH's* right hand, a place of honor and glory. We also read in Hebrews 1:13: *But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at my right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”?* To no one was this declaration ever given, except to David's Lord, the God-Man, Jesus the Messiah.

How long was he, David's *Adon*, to sit at *YHWH's* right hand? Observe again what we read in the remaining portion of Verse 1 of Psalm 110: He is to sit at God's right hand: “. . . *Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.*” *YHWH*, God the Father, is assuring His Son as man that in a coming day all His enemies, all those who opposed and rejected Him, will be defeated and be made His footstool. So it will be as in Joshua's day, when Joshua, Israel's captain, called his people to put their feet upon the necks of their defeated enemies: *“Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.” And they drew near and put their feet on their necks* (Josh. 10:24b). So it will be in a day to come that all of Yeshua's enemies will be defeated and become His footstool. This is the plan and purpose of *YHWH* for David's Lord, David's *Adon*. Note the emphasis and reiteration of 1 Corinthians 15:25: *For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.* 

To be continued



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continued from page 2

Everyone knows this is true. Even the anti-Semites themselves know it. No one seriously believes that the Israelis are a strategic threat to anyone in the Middle East. Egypt never gives a thought to an unprovoked Israeli invasion. Neither does Jordan or Saudi Arabia.²

Israel's military is a defensive force, not an offensive one. The only time the IDF (Israel Defense Force) ever acts is when the security of the Jewish State and its citizens is threatened.

Even Israel's incursions into the Palestinian territories, and the erection of the much-maligned security barrier (or wall), have been defensive actions in response to Palestinian aggression and terrorism. The claims of activists like Gary Burge and Stephen Sizer that Israel's security barrier is an offensive strategy designed to oppress the Palestinian people are pure fiction—and preposterous.³

are granted full civil rights under Israeli law, which forbids discrimination on the basis of race, creed, or sex. Arabs take part fully in Israeli society and government. Arab citizens of Israel vote in national elections, have elected representatives in the Israeli Knesset, and even hold seats in the Israeli court system (all the way up to the Supreme Court, by the way).⁵ Israel's Arab citizens (especially the women!) have more rights, and enjoy more freedom, education, and economic opportunity than the citizens of any Arab state.⁶

- b. ***Is it Israel's fault that there is no Palestinian state in the Middle East?*** No. The newly formed United Nations devised a partition plan in 1947-48 that would have provided side-by-side Jewish and Palestinian states (see map).⁷ The Arab nations rejected the UN's plan and decided instead to attack the fledgling Jewish state on May 14, 1948. Their plan, of course, was to wipe out the Jews, leaving the entire region for the Arab Palestinians rather than only part of it.



Photos like this one are often used as a propaganda tool to perpetuate the illusion that the Israelis are the “Goliath” and the Palestinians are the underdog “David.” What is truly sad here is how the little Palestinian boy is used as a prop.

Jewish commentator Dennis Prager is right on target when he says that “if the Palestinians and their Arab allies were to lay down their arms tomorrow, there would be peace in the Middle East by noon on the following Wednesday.” On the other hand, though, if Israel unilaterally took the initiative and razed the wall, removed the checkpoints, and dismantled its own military defenses, there would be a bloodbath.⁴

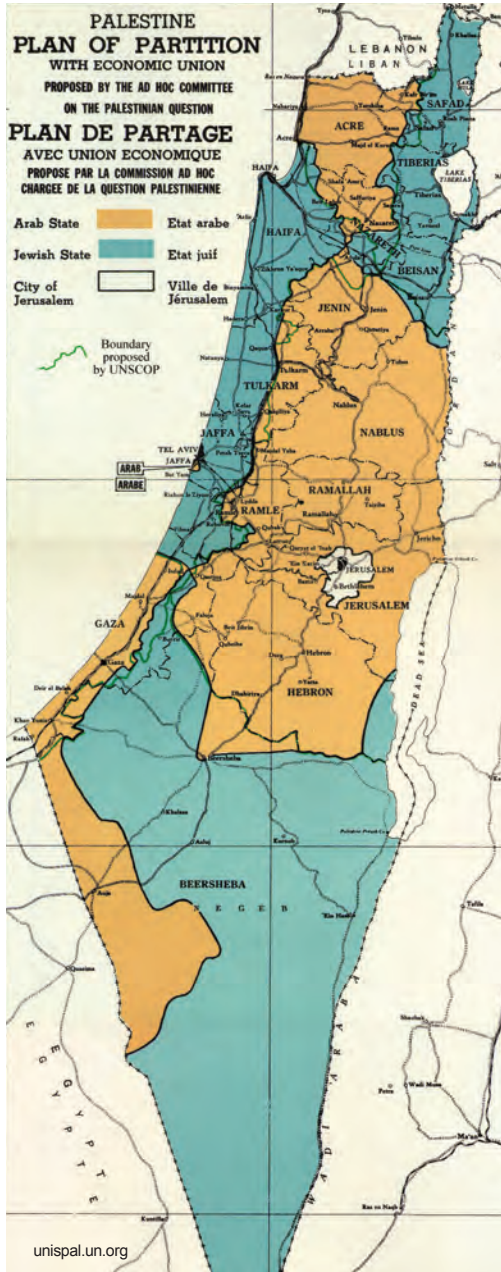
But listening to the diffuse anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist rhetoric that reverberates in so much of the media leaves one with the impression that the Israelis are the big, bad “Goliath” in the Middle East. But are these impressions grounded in reality? Consider a few interesting questions that the anti-Semites ignore:

- a. ***Is Israel an apartheid state where Arab Palestinians are oppressed as a minority?*** Hardly! Non-Jews

However, the outcome of the conflict wasn't what they had expected. Against all odds, the tiny, newly reborn Jewish state repelled the massive onslaught—and survived.⁸ During the war, Jordan seized the territory that had been set aside for a Palestinian state, including East Jerusalem and the Old City.

That is why there is no Palestinian state today. The Arabs themselves rejected the plan in 1948 and chose instead to attack Israel.

For the next nearly 20 years, Jordan controlled the territory that had been assigned to the Palestinians—and no one called for that land to be turned over for the formation of an independent, autonomous “Palestine.” It wasn't until after Israel won the West Bank and East Jerusalem in the Six-Day War of 1967 that the Arabs began calling for a Palestinian state.



THE ARAB WORLD VS. ISRAEL (2013)							
Rank	Country (or dependent territory)	July 1, 2013 projection	% of pop.	Average relative annual growth (%)	Average absolute annual growth	Estimated doubling time (Years)	Date
1	Egypt	84,605,000	22.81	2.29	1,893,000	31	Jan 1, 2013
2	Algeria	38,295,000	10.32	2.11	792,000	33	Jan 1, 2013
3	Iraq	35,404,000	9.54	3.06	1,051,000	23	2011
4	Sudan	35,150,000	9.47	2.52	863,000	28	Apr 22, 2008
5	Morocco	32,950,000	8.88	1.08	353,000	64	Apr 28, 2014
6	Saudi Arabia	30,193,000	8.14	3.41	997,000	21	2012
7	Yemen	25,252,000	6.81	2.96	725,000	24	2012
8	Syria	22,169,000	5.98	2.45	531,000	29	Dec 31, 2011
9	Tunisia	10,889,000	2.94	1.03	111,000	68	Jul 1, 2012
10	Somalia	9,662,000	2.60	1.17	112,000	59	Jul 1, 2010
11	United Arab Emirates	8,659,000	2.33	1.56	133,000	45	2010
12	Jordan	6,517,000	1.76	2.84	180,000	25	Mar 28, 2014
13	Libya	6,323,000	1.70	1.56	97,000	45	2013
14	"Palestine" (West Bank, Gaza)	4,421,000	1.19	2.91	125,000	24	2013
15	Lebanon	4,127,000	1.11	1.58	64,000	44	2007
16	Oman	3,942,000	1.06	8.80	319,000	8	Feb 28, 2013
17	Kuwait	3,852,000	1.04	2.94	110,000	24	Dec 31, 2010
18	Mauritania	3,461,000	0.93	2.58	87,000	27	2013
19	Qatar	1,917,000	0.52	3.85	71,000	18	Jun 30, 2013
20	Bahrain	1,546,000	0.42	7.36	106,000	10	Apr 27, 2010
21	Djibouti	912,000	0.25	2.70	24,000	26	Jul 1, 2011
22	Comoros	743,000	0.20	2.62	19,000	27	Jul 1, 2012
	Total	370,989,000	100.00	2.42	8,763,000	29	
	Israel	8,132,000	100.00	1.8	147,000	47	2012

It's a simple and undeniable fact of history. If the Arabs and Palestinians had accepted the UN partition plan in 1947-48, a Palestinian state would have been established in the Middle East more than 65 years ago.

- c. **Should we blame Israel for the fact that the Middle East peace process has been largely fruitless up to this point?** No. The blame should be laid squarely at the feet of the international community, particularly those members of the United Nations who have offered the Palestinians statehood without their having to negotiate with the Israelis. When the UN General Assembly voted in 2012 to recognize a sovereign Palestinian state, it sent a message to the Palestinians that they could unilaterally establish a state without coming to an agreement with Israel—or without even so much as recognizing Israel's right to exist.⁹
- d. **Why should the Palestinians recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish homeland?** A better question is "Why not?" There are 21 Arab-Muslim nations in the world.¹⁰ So why shouldn't the Jewish people have at least one nation as a homeland and refuge from persecution?

Lie #10: The Holocaust never happened.

It's embarrassing, in a way, for us to dignify such a ridiculous claim with a serious response. Few historical events have been more meticulously documented or more extensively chronicled than *HaShoah*.¹¹ Many Holocaust survivors are still living and continue to tell their stories. Museums and memorials all over North America and Europe, as well as in other parts of the world, are filled with artifacts and records from the Nazis' crazed, genocidal campaign against the Jewish people.

Shortly after the war, the German government itself acknowledged the horrendous nature of the Holocaust and since that time has paid billions of euros in damages to victims and their descendants.¹²

For what possible reason would an entire nation assume responsibility for an atrocity that never happened? The very suggestion defies any possible measure of common sense or rationality.

In 2010, *Time* magazine called the Holocaust "the worst crime in human history."¹³

Because of the overwhelming nature of the data, including tens of thousands of eyewitness accounts, Holocaust denial represents a break from reality that approaches the level of psychosis.¹⁴

TIME Top 10 National Apologies

THE HOLOCAUST

by Dan Fastenberg

How do you apologize for the worst crime in human history? The question has befuddled generations of post-war Germans, but there was perhaps no politician with a cleaner wartime record to make a public mea culpa than Willy Brandt. As a politically active teenager with the Social Democrats, Brandt fled Germany for Norway in the Third Reich's earliest days in 1933. He returned to Germany after fighting for the Resistance during the war and became chancellor of West Germany in 1969. When a state visit to Poland in December 1970 coincided with a commemoration to the Jewish victims of the Warsaw Ghetto, Brandt joined in and spontaneously dropped to his knees. Brandt didn't utter a word during his *kniefall*, and later said in his autobiography, that upon "carrying the burden of the millions who were murdered, I did what people do when words fail them." Germany has since paid out billions to Israel and to Jewish survivors.



AFP/Getty Images

It's ironic, because Holocaust deniers have called the notion of a Holocaust a "psychotic delusion."¹⁵ So everyone agrees that one side or the other is delusional!

Even before Hitler penned his hate-riddled tome *Mein Kampf*, in which he detailed his plan for Jewish genocide, he wrote in a letter dated September 16, 1919, that he would wipe out the Jews "root and branch."¹⁶ In his famous Reichstag speech of January 30, 1939, Hitler boasted of "... the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe."¹⁷ On October 4, 1943, Heinrich Himmler, commandant of the concentration and extermination camps, confided in SS generals at Posen, Poland, that "the Jewish people are being liquidated." He continued, "Most of you will know what it means to see 100 corpses piled up, or 500 or 1,000. . . . This is an unwritten, never-to-be-written, glorious page of our history."¹⁸

Tragically, Himmler's prophecy came to pass. The historical evidence is undeniable.

Lie #11: There is no religious freedom in Israel.

On the contrary, Israel is the only country in the Middle East that guarantees religious freedom for all its citizens. This applies not only to its Jewish majority, but also to its Christian, Druze, and Muslim minorities.

Freedom of religion in the Palestinian territories, however, is quite another matter. Although Yasser Arafat signed a religious freedom law in 2002, it has done little to alleviate the suffering and persecution of Palestinian Christians, who have been fleeing the territories in droves.¹⁹

It's true that the Messianic community in Israel has come under persecution in Israel at various times, and we would agree that this is a religious liberty issue. However, those episodes have typically been at the hands of a small minority of religious zealots with a disproportionate amount of influence in Israel's Ministry of the Interior.²⁰

A vibrant and robust Messianic (Jewish-Christian) movement has nevertheless flourished in Israel since 1948. Today, there are at least 174 Messianic organizations and congregations in the Land.²¹ A State Department report in 2011 estimated that there are 20,000 Messianic Israeli Jews "who believe Jesus is the Messiah and consider themselves to be Jews."²²

Messianic believers have in recent years become more adept at defending their religious rights in the legal system (and more willing to do so when necessary), and the results, over all, have been encouraging. There have also been signs that the *Meshechim* (Jewish believers in Yeshua) are enjoying more acceptance in Israeli society, yet another positive development.²³

Lie #12: Jewish people control the United States and the world.

Earlier in this study, we talked about a malicious forgery known as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. It purports to be a record of a secret meeting of Jewish leaders who were devising a plan in the 1800s to rule the world.

But *Protocols* is only one of many such propaganda pieces claiming that such a conspiracy exists. Some well-known anti-Semites (like the famous automobile manufacturer Henry Ford, for instance) have promoted and defended various Jewish conspiracy theories.

Some Jewish figures have risen to positions of influence in government and business—like Henry Kissinger in the 1970s' Nixon Administration, for instance, or Ben Bernanke, who was, until February of this year, chairperson of the Federal Reserve.

If the Jewish people are as ubiquitous and influential as the anti-Semites claim, however, one cannot help wondering why they don't do a better job of promoting their own interests. As we've already seen, the United Nations almost never votes in favor of Israel. And perhaps the most compelling question of all is this: If the alleged conspiracy is so powerful, why couldn't it stop the greatest Jewish threat of modern times—the Holocaust?

Lie #13: Jewish stereotyping.

Jewish people are often portrayed as high achievers. Wherever they live, they tend to rise to the top in business, medicine, education, the arts, and other pursuits. Here in the United States, for example, Jewish people represent only two percent of the population, yet 25 percent of the wealthiest Americans are Jewish.

Does this mean Jewish people are superior to non-Jews? Not quite in the way you might think. On the contrary, the data indicates that most Jewish people are quite ordinary. Yes, they tend to have a higher literacy rate than the general population, and their IQs test out a bit higher;²⁴ nonetheless, in Israel, students “failed *on average* to outperform Americans in international tests of eighth-grade math and science skills. In math, Israelis ranked just behind Thailand and Moldova and one place ahead of Tunisia. Israel lagged nine places behind the United States, whose performance is usually deemed miserably far behind the leading Asian and European performers. In science, the numbers were similar.”²⁵

What are we to conclude from all of this? Very simply, Jewish Israelis on average are . . . well, quite average. They may even lag slightly behind the rest of us in some categories.

But if that's true, how do we explain the disproportionately high rate of Jewish achievement in society? Why, for example, are there so many Jewish Nobel laureates?²⁶ Why are so many of our favorite musicians (like Bob Dylan, Barbra Streisand, Josh Grobin, Idina Menzel, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Felix Mendelssohn, and so many others) Jewish? Why are there so many Jewish billionaires, actors, comedians, authors, or pioneers in medicine?

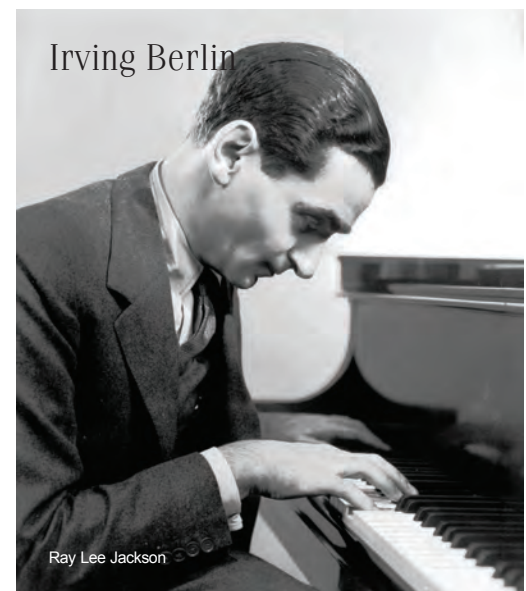
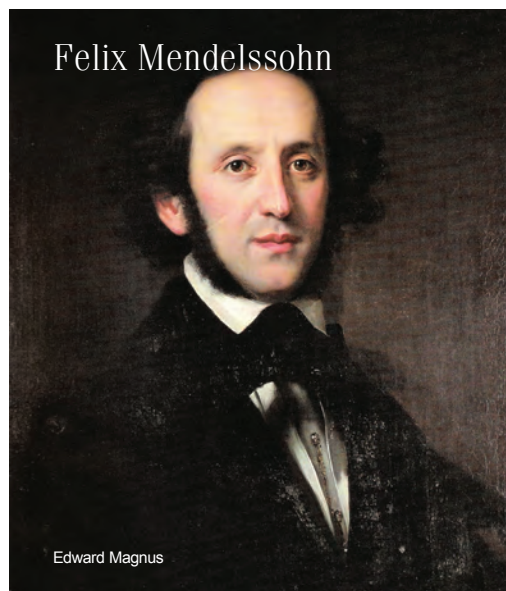
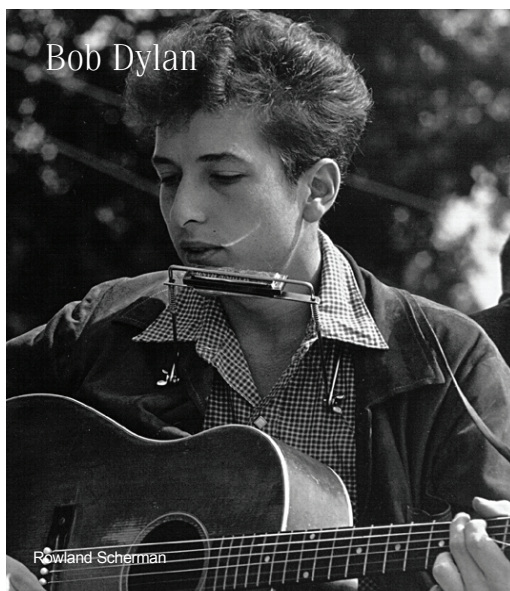
The answer is that the general Jewish population, as average as it is, is laced with a small ribbon of exceptional individuals. And this is where the numbers shoot off the charts: “The proportion of Jews with IQs of 140 or higher is somewhere around six times the proportion of everyone else. . . . This proportion rises at still higher IQs. Murray and Herrnstein report a study . . . that showed Jews with some 85% of the IQs over 170 (24 out of 28).”²⁷

How incredible! God took a very ordinary group of people (the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and imbued them—through a small subset of extraordinary individuals—with the capacity to be a blessing to the rest of the world. He not only commanded Abraham to bless the world through his progeny (Gen. 12:3), but He also provided the giftedness to make it possible!

That's why we should avoid stereotypes that say all Jewish people are rich, smart, greedy, or whatever it may be. The fact is, most Jewish people are just like the rest of us. Our friend Roy Schwarcz often says, tongue in cheek, “Jewish people are just like everyone else, only more so.”

And then there are those stereotypes that are just downright offensive: like, all Jews have big noses, or they're penny-pinchers (hence, the description of a financial negotiation as trying to “Jew” the seller down), or they're schemers and cheaters, not to be trusted.

Such stereotypes are based on all sorts of exaggerations, assumptions, and contradictions. For instance, the one that says Jewish people are greedy and more adept at accumulating material wealth for themselves stands in direct contradiction to the teaching of *The Protocols* that the so-called “Elders of Zion” are communists.²⁸ How can a communist, who by definition believes in communal ownership and the redistribution of wealth, practice capitalism?



This is not surprising, however. Anti-Semites have never been known for their dogged logic, keen insight, or sound judgment.

Lie #14: Jewish scapegoating.

Scapegoating is one of the oldest forms of anti-Semitism. For millennia, Jewish people have been blamed for the ills of societies where they have lived.

In the days of Queen Esther, for instance, Haman accused the Jewish community in Persia of being lawless insurrectionists who were disloyal to the king (Esther 3:8). Convinced that they were a threat to the empire, the king gave Haman permission to destroy them (v. 9). He might have succeeded if Esther had not bravely and selflessly intervened.

In the 14th century, the Jews of Europe were blamed for the Black Plague. Because they followed Jewish purity and cleansing laws, they seldom came into contact with the bacterium that killed millions of non-Jews. However, the non-Jewish populace became convinced that because Jews were largely unaffected, they must have been behind the horrific plague. Entire Jewish communities were attacked and slaughtered in Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. In 1349, for example, 600 Jewish people were burned at the stake in Basel (based on false confessions in court), 140 Jewish children were forcibly baptized, and the local synagogue was converted into a church.²⁹

In the mid-20th century, the Nazis blamed “the Jews” for the economic ills of Germany in the aftermath of the First World War. Hitler used *The Protocols* to whip the German people into an anti-Semitic frenzy and lay the groundwork for his tragic “Final Solution”—the attempted annihilation of the Jewish people.

And so it continues into the 21st century. Whenever something bad happens anywhere in the world, crazed anti-Semites blame it on the Jews. Even the 9/11 World Trade Center tragedy was said by some fringe groups to have been a Jewish conspiracy.³⁰

Lie #15: The Jewish people are responsible for the death of the Messiah.

In his autobiography, Charles Halff (the founder of our ministry) recalls being called a “Christ killer” by a cruel and cantankerous schoolmate on his elementary school playground in the 1940s. Young Charles was perplexed because he had no idea who this “Christ” was—or why he was being accused of having killed Him!

Charles ran home from school that day and asked his mother who Christ was. She told him that Christianity is a Gentile religion.

“They worship a different God than we do,” she explained. “They call him Jesus Christ.”

That was the first time our founder had heard the name of Jesus. It set in motion a remarkable series of divinely guided events that led to his coming to faith in Yeshua of Nazareth—and, eventually, to the founding of this ministry.

Charles, however, wasn’t the first Jewish person to have his ears ring with that epithet “Christ killer.” The charge of deicide (lit., “God killing”), or the collective guilt of the Jewish people for the crucifixion of the Messiah, can be traced back to the church fathers and other ancient “Christian” leaders. As early as the second century (AD 167), Melito, bishop of Sardis, said the Jewish people

were guilty of killing God (referring to the divine nature of the Messiah).³¹ Later, Origin wrote, “The blood of Jesus [falls] not only upon those who lived then, but also upon all generations of the Jewish people following afterwards until the end of the world.”³²

Their proof texts are passages like Matthew 27:25 and Acts 2:22-23, where the Jewish role in the Lord’s death is mentioned; however, they conveniently overlook the testimony of the Son of God himself, who said, as He was dying on Calvary, “. . . *Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do . . .*” (Luke 23:34).

**IS IT CONCEIVABLE THAT
YESHUA COULD UTTER A PRAYER
THAT GOD WOULD NOT ANSWER?
WE DON'T THINK SO.**

The NT makes it clear that the *Jewish* leadership in Jerusalem hatched a political plot against Yeshua to have Him condemned to death as an insurrectionist. But it also implicates the *Roman* authorities because Pilate turned Him over to the Sanhedrin and, later, his soldiers carried out the cruel execution.

But Yeshua pointed out that neither group was ultimately responsible for His death. He said, “*No one takes [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father*” (John 10:18).

He was, after all, God in human form. While He was being betrayed, condemned, and beaten, and later as He was hanging there on Calvary between two thieves, legions of angels were standing by, ready to intervene at His slightest whisper (Matt. 26:53). But that command never came. He knew He had come into this world to die.

In reality, then, we are all guilty of crucifying Him. No one group is more culpable than another. Whether we are Jewish or Gentile, our sins made His death necessary: *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Rom. 3:23).

The most famous Messianic prophecy in the Bible tells us that God himself struck down His Son at Calvary: *Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, **Smitten by God**, and afflicted* (Isa. 53:4).

Why was the God of the universe willing to sacrifice His own Son, Yeshua of Nazareth? The answer is found in John 3:16: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Conclusion

We’ve dealt here with only a few of the many lies that are commonly spread about the Jewish people.


But we’re keenly aware that we could argue endlessly without ever really striking at the root of the problem. Why is there so much venom and vitriol against the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? And why does it persist? Why is it intensifying in the 21st century, when humankind should be more sophisticated and knowledgeable than ever before?

Those are the real questions. We believe the answer is that anti-Semitism isn’t an intellectual problem that can be solved merely by correcting flawed data. Instead, it’s a spiritual problem. The devil despises the Jewish

people because they represent God's power to keep all the promises He made in the Bible to both Jews and Gentiles—including the one in Genesis 3:15 about his (Satan's) own, ultimate demise. This is the animus that keeps anti-Semitism alive from generation to generation. Unseen forces work surreptitiously behind the scenes to stoke its sinister fires.

As we approach the end of this age, the battle between the forces of good and evil will intensify. There will be new lies, more slander, and an accelerated expansion of the devil's propaganda campaign against the nation Israel and the earthly seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

And in a stroke of pure genius, the Evil One employs religious figures (even some who claim to be Christians) to proclaim his lies and slander. He knows that some gullible people will assume that if a preacher says it, it must be true. But that's an erroneous assumption—one the Lord himself warned us about, as cited in Matthew 7:21-23.

May God in Heaven give us the strength and courage to stand for His truth in these dangerous times! 



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care minister.*

ENDNOTES

¹For a sampling of world opinion vis-à-vis Israel, consider the United Nations (the largest and most universally recognized world body) and its dealings with the Jewish State. In almost every situation since 1948 when the UN (or its Security Council) has voted on issues relating to the Middle East, it has sided with Israel's enemies. Regarding radical Islam's mandated eradication of the Jewish people, see Article 7 of the Hamas Charter: "Hamas has been looking forward to implementing Allah's promise, whatever time it might take. The prophet [Muhammad] said: 'The time (of Resurrection) will not come until Muslims will fight the Jews; until the Jews hide behind rocks and trees, which will cry: O Muslim! there is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him!'" (*Sahih Muslim*, Book 41, Number 6985).

²Interestingly, both Jordan and Egypt maintain security barriers on their borders with Gaza and the West Bank to prevent Palestinians from entering their countries without passing through a checkpoint. Would the critics say that the Jordanians and Egyptians, too, are guilty of apartheid against the Palestinians?

³The statistics are undeniable. Terrorist attacks in Israel have declined by at least 95% since the security barrier went up. Everyone knows the wall leaks like a sieve (there are places where Palestinian children famously climb over it to visit friends and relatives on the other side while the IDF looks the other way); but even if the deterrent effect is largely symbolic, it has been an unqualified success in reducing the number of terrorist attacks on Israeli citizens.

⁴See "Prager on the Problem of Israel" on YouTube (www.youtube.com). It's well worth the six minutes or less that it takes to watch. Netanyahu has made similar statements.

⁵Salim Jubran, a respected Arab Israeli jurist, has served on the Supreme Court of the State of Israel since 2003. And he's not the first. Abdel Rahman Zuabi, another Arab Israeli, received a temporary appointment to the high court from March to December of 1999.

⁶As Prime Minister "Bibi" Netanyahu has correctly observed, "Of the 300 million Arabs in the Middle East and North Africa, only Israel's Arab citizens enjoy real democratic rights. . . . Of those 300 million Arabs, less than one-half of one percent are truly free, and they are all citizens of Israel!" (www.forward.com/articles/138568/#ixzz1c0lFujia).

⁷See United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 (II) on the "Future Government of Palestine" (A/RES/181 II, 29 November 1947) at domino.un.org.

⁸In Israel's 1948 War of Independence, her new (and largely untested) army successfully repelled attackers from Egypt, Jordan (previously known as the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan), Iraq, and Syria.

⁹The Quartet (the US, the EU, Russia, and the UN) has insisted that one prerequisite of any Mideast peace agreement must be the Palestinians' unqualified recognition of Israel's right to exist. After all, there are 21 Arab states—so there's nothing unreasonable about the Jewish people wanting one state as a Jewish homeland.

¹⁰There are 22 Arab states if we include the West Bank and Gaza as a proposed Palestinian state ("Palestine").

¹¹*HaShoah* is Hebrew for "the Catastrophe," referring to the Holocaust when nearly six million European Jews were systematically murdered by the Nazis and their cronies during the Second World War.

¹²The original compensation treaty was enacted in 1952 and has been expanded several times during the ensuing years. The most recent revision was in November of 2012. See "Germany Expands Pension Scheme for Victims of the Holocaust" (*London Daily Mail*, online edition for November 15, 2012, at dailymail.co.uk).

¹³"The Holocaust" in *The Top Ten National Apologies* by Dan Fastenberg (Thursday, June 17, 2010) at *Time* Online (content.time.com).

¹⁴There are many shades and versions of Holocaust denial. Some people admit that the Holocaust happened, but they cite fabricated or skewed statistics to scale it down and make it look like only thousands (rather than multiplied millions) of Jews perished. Others deny that the Holocaust happened at all. Some conspiracy theorists claim that many of the Nazi ovens and gas chambers were set up (or modified) after the war for propaganda purposes (see "The Gas Chambers: Truth or Lie?" by French anti-Semite and Holocaust denier Robert Faurisson on *The Institute for Historical Review* website at ihr.org).

¹⁵"Denying the Holocaust" by Deborah Lipstadt (from the 2-17-2011 online edition of *BBC History* at www.bbc.co.uk).

¹⁶*Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* by Daniel J. Goldhagen (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 425.

¹⁷*The Holocaust and Genocides in Europe* by Benjamin Lieberman (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 116.

¹⁸*Hitler, Germans, and the Jewish Question* by Sarah Ann Gordon (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 196. Note that Himmler's speech hinted at a strategy that avoided committing gruesome details about "the Final Solution" to writing. As far as the Nazi hierarchy was concerned, the less of a paper trail they left behind, the better.

¹⁹Fifty years ago, Palestinian Christians made up 70 percent of Bethlehem's population. Today, under Fatah governance since 2006, the number has shrunk to under 15 percent.

²⁰Anti-missionary (or counter-missionary) organizations like *Yad Lachim* (Heb., "hand for brothers") actively oppose Christian/Messianic evangelistic efforts in Israel, even though the only form of outreach that's illegal is evangelizing minors without parental consent.

²¹These statistics are from Kehila.com.

²²From the U.S. Department of State's *2010 Human Rights Report: Israel and the Occupied Territories* (www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/nea/154463.htm). The figures cited appear to reflect only Israelis who openly identify as *Meshichim*. The actual total of Jesus-believers is almost certainly significantly higher.

²³Israel's national news media has covered the controversy between Israeli Messianic believers and the militant, anti-missionary group *Yad Lachim* (see endnote 19 above)—and in its reporting has been increasingly sympathetic to the plight of the Jewish believers in Jesus (e.g., search YouTube for "Second Look" aired on Israel's Channel One News for March 31, 2011).

²⁴Claims about higher average Jewish IQs (like the ones made by Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein in *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*) are controversial; the data seems nonetheless compelling to us, even if it's not politically correct.

²⁵*The Israel Test* by George Gilder (New York: Encounter Books, 2012), 38.

²⁶See, for example, our discussion of the disproportionately high number of Jewish Nobel laureates in Part Two of this series of articles (*Messianic Perspectives*, Nov.-Dec. 2013 issue).

²⁷Gilder, *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁸Protocol No. 3, Article 7, declares: "We appear on the scene as alleged saviors of the worker from this oppression when we propose to him to enter the ranks of our fighting forces—Socialists, Anarchists, Communists—to whom we always give support in accordance with an alleged brotherly rule (of the solidarity of all humanity) of our social masonry" (*The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* translated by Victor Marsden [Minneapolis: Filiquarian Publishing, 2006], 33). Remember that the writer is pretending to represent a clandestine Jewish cabal.

²⁹*The Jewish Timeline Encyclopedia* by Mattis Kantor (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1993), 168.

³⁰See *The Judgment Against Imperialism, Fascism, and Racism Against Caliphate and Islam* by Khondakar Golam Mowla (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008), 659, which implicates the Israelis and "Zionists" in an alleged World Trade Center conspiracy. He also advocates the reestablishing of the 1,300 year-old Caliphate (i.e., an Islamic kingdom ruled by a caliph).

³¹*Melito, Peri Pascha 1 and 2: Text and Interpretation* by S.G. Hall (*Kyriakon: Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, Granfield and Jungmann, editors [Munster: Aschendorff, 1970]), 236-48.

³²*Western Civilization: A Brief History, Complete, Volume 2* by Marvin Perry (Boston: Wadsworth, 2013), 117.

Fruit from the Harvest

by Violette Berger



God's Family

Recently, after visiting his sister-in-law at a rehab facility, **Michael Campo, CJFM area director (Chicago)**, took a stroll around the facility before leaving. He noticed a sad-looking gentleman alone in his room. Mike entered the room and started a conversation with "Sam," who was extremely ill and was at risk of having his leg amputated, in addition to other serious medical concerns. Sam had no family to support him, so Mike returned to visit him. The Lord provided an opportunity for him to share the Good News, as Mike explained to Sam that "he must not die in his present spiritual condition." Although he had difficulty speaking, Sam agreed to pray the prayer of salvation with Mike. Afterwards, Sam nodded, indicating that he knew exactly what he had done and what it meant. Although Sam may have no *earthly* family, God has now blessed him with *His* family.

Yet He sets the poor on high, far from affliction, And makes their families like a flock (Psalm 107:41).

Word of Mouth

Peter Parkas, CJFM Northeast representative (New Jersey), has been discipling Alex, a new believer whom he had the privilege of leading to the Lord. At their last scheduled meeting together, Alex brought his teenaged cousin, Evan, with him because "Evan had never heard about being 'born again' or that he could have forgiveness of sins and eternal life through Yeshua, the Jewish Messiah." Peter read Isaiah 53 to Evan and asked him, "Whom do you think Isaiah is talking about?" Evan replied, "Jesus!" Peter went on to explain the Gospel message to Evan and answered his questions from the Word of God. Satisfied, Evan prayed with Peter to receive Yeshua as his Messiah and Savior. Peter is blessed now to hold an ongoing discipleship class for *two*, a direct result of word of mouth to the Word of God.

The Right Line

Recently, while waiting in line at a hospital to file a claim, Peter met Clyde. They had time to talk, but not enough time to finish their friendly conversation, which touched on spiritual matters. Clyde offered to give Peter his phone

number. During their follow-up telephone conversation, Peter was able to explain the Gospel message in more detail, focusing on Clyde's lack of assurance that he would go to Heaven when he died. The Holy Spirit moved in Clyde's heart, and he prayed for his salvation over the phone with Peter. Clyde then expressed his concern for his wife, who is Jewish and unsaved, and asked Peter to share the Good News with her as well.

The Right Claim

But God was not finished, as we backtrack to Peter's turn with the claim-processing agent, José, who was also pleasant and had time to talk with Peter. To determine José's spiritual beliefs, Peter asked him a diagnostic question: "If you were to die right now, why should God let you into Heaven?" José replied, "Because I help people." When Peter shared Isaiah 64:6 and Romans 3:23 with him, José had difficulty accepting the "bad news"—that man is a sinner who can't save himself. Peter explained the Gospel and added that "without the bad news, however, the 'Good News' isn't good news." As they continued to converse, José told Peter that his wife was very sick and agreed when Peter asked if he could pray for her. As Peter prayed, he continued with a clear Gospel message and followed with the sinner's prayer since José was repeating everything with such genuine sincerity. Peter trusts that "the Lord will honor José's prayer and fill him with the Holy Spirit, which he asked God to do."

"For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13).

Praises from Israel

CJFM Pastor Yossi, from the Messianic Congregation, Kehilat HaDerech (The Way Congregation), in Karmiel, writes: "We had a special youth meeting during which 10 of the youths prayed to accept Yeshua (Jesus) into their lives. What a joy and blessing! Please keep them in your prayers—may the good seed grow and not be snatched away by the enemy."

continued on page 16

Bible Questions AND Answers

by DR. GARY HEDRICK

Have a Bible question?

Submit it to Dr. Hedrick at garyh@cjfm.org, or mail it to 611 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas 78215.

You may see your question addressed in a future issue of *Messianic Perspectives*.

QUESTION: *A large crucifix is prominently displayed at the front of our church. I'm not sure why, but after all these years, it's really starting to bug me. I googled it and found where John Calvin considered the crucifix and even the cross itself idolatrous. But Martin Luther evidently thought crosses were fine. So I don't know what to think.*

ANSWER: Many Messianic believers consider the crucifix an idol because (1) it purports to be a representation of Deity (i.e., Jesus hanging on the Cross) and (2) it is the focus of worship, devotion, or veneration in certain religious traditions.

In the Torah, God told His people, “*You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth*” (Ex. 20:4). This prohibition, of course, wasn't meant to apply to routine works of art, but rather to the creation of any image or likeness that might attract worship (cp. v. 5).¹

Defenders of crucifixes (and other religious objects that some people use as aids to worship) point out that people don't really worship the objects or images themselves. They say they only worship what the object or image represents. However, the Torah makes no such distinction. It doesn't say that images are okay as long as they only represent God. When the Lord (through Moses) uses terms like “bow down” and “serve,” He's clearly referring to acts or services of worship, veneration, or adulation. And He says worship should not involve any manmade representation of God. In fact, we shouldn't even *make* such a likeness in the first place. So it's not just the worship of an image that's wrong. Even creating such an image is wrong.

Why is it wrong? Because we worship only the Reality itself—the LORD God of Heaven and earth—and nothing less. Even if the image represents a reality, the use of the image is wrong. This is what the Bible says.

One Catholic encyclopedia admits that “the portrayal of Christ on the Cross was absent in the first centuries of Christian art. During the time of Constantine (early fourth century), the Cross was presented as a sign of Christ's triumph over death at Easter.”² This same source adds that crucifixes (that is, an image of a cross with the Son of God hanging on it) didn't become common until Medieval times.³

The crucifix, then, didn't exist during Apostolic times. The early, first-century church was distinctively Jewish—and those Messianic believers knew what the second commandment said. They would not use images in worship. Later, however, as non-Jewish influences crept into the institutional church, images were incorporated into worship anyway.

This non-Jewish (and sometimes anti-Jewish) approach was evidenced in a number of important ways. For instance, while the Early Church had always celebrated the Resurrection of Messiah during Passover,⁴ the Council of Nicea (convened by Constantine) later declared: “If any bishop, presbyter, or deacon shall celebrate the holy day of Easter before the vernal equinox with the Jews, let him be deposed.”⁵ This dangerous shift away from our Jewish roots in the third and fourth centuries spilled over into other areas, as well—including the use of icons and images in worship.

That's why, in our teaching here at CJF Ministries, we look at the Bible through a first-century, Messianic (Jewish-Christian) lens. We call it our “Messianic perspective.” It helps us achieve and maintain clarity on important issues like this one.

ENDNOTES

¹Also, see Leviticus 26:1 and Deuteronomy 5:8-9.

²*The Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995), 383.

³*Ibid.*

⁴Church historians refer to this early Messianic practice of celebrating the Resurrection during the Jewish Passover as *Quartodecimenism*.

⁵“Apostolic Canon 7” in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series, Volume 14: The Seven Ecumenical Councils* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 594.

IN THIS ISSUE

The Top 15 Lies About The Jewish People, Part 4
by Dr. Gary Hedrick
with John W. Turner
Page 2

**Psalm 110:1-7
"The Lord Said to My Lord"
Part 1**
by Gideon Levytam
Page 2

Fruit from the Harvest
by Violette Berger
Page 14

Bible Q&A
by Dr. Gary Hedrick
Page 15

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continued from page 14

God's Miracles

Richard Hill, CJFM representative (Las Vegas) and pastor of Beth Yeshua Messianic Congregation, relates an account of God's wonderful grace bestowed on the lives of good friends, Bob and Gracie. Bob was diagnosed with late-stage lung cancer and admitted into ICU in a coma after suffering many infections and blood clots throughout his body. His doctors said that he would never improve and pressured his wife, Gracie, to remove Bob's respirator every time she visited. Gracie refused to do so. One day, Oanh, Richard's wife, drove Gracie to the hospital to visit Bob, which Gracie said would most likely be the last time. During this visit, Bob opened his eyes and even kicked his feet a few times, and his vital signs returned to almost normal. Oanh took this opportunity to share the Gospel with their unsaved friend and prayed the sinner's prayer. Since Bob could not speak, Oanh then asked him if he had prayed silently with her to receive Jesus into his life, knowing that he was a sinner in need of salvation. If so, Oanh asked him to kick his feet—which he did!

Oanh had invited Gracie to their home for dinner that night, and when she drove Gracie home, she shared the Gospel message with her, too. Gracie also received Jesus that night. "She told Oanh that she experienced a great weight being lifted off her shoulders." And Rich adds, "Three days later, Bob passed away, but we believe he received the Lord's wonderful miracle of grace and mercy despite the attempts to end his life too early." Presiding over Bob's memorial service, Rich had the opportunity to share God's miracles in Bob and Gracie's lives with their family and friends.

And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them (Psalm 139:16b, c). 🌿

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