

WHY WE SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR CHRIST'S RETURN:

4 I WANT JUSTICE FOR THE JEW

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INTRODUCTION:- HAMAS BRUTALLY ATTACKS ISRAEL

Due to illness I was not able to preach this fourth message in the series on the Second Coming of Christ at the **Mardon Road (Life Only in Christ) Church of Christ** in Hamilton, New Zealand. Much of what follows is what I had prepared.

However, in light of the violent and indiscriminate Hamas massacre upon Israeli civilians on **Saturday 7th October 2023**, I will post here my fourth reason why we should be looking for the Second Coming of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ:- **I want justice for the Jew.**

Tomorrow, the **13th of October** (not even one week after the horrific attack last Saturday) has been called by Islamist terrorists to be a worldwide **Jihad Day** in retaliation for Israel's "**indiscriminate bombing of Gaza**".

So it goes without saying that these events are currently escalating to epic proportions worldwide and, to make this message more applicable, relevant and powerful than when I planned on first delivering it, I am adding some new material. And right up front I will advise the reader that there will be some graphic material, so reader discretion is advised!

JEWISH DISAPPOINTMENT WITH JESUS' FIRST APPEARANCE

As Bible-believing Christians you will have thought nothing about what I have so far said in this series — that there are two comings of our Lord Jesus is an established doctrine amongst us, and is well-attested to in the New Testament.

However, the idea that there are two comings, two stages to the Messiah's work of redemption, represented a huge paradigm shift for First Century Christians. Most Jews had no idea that before he was to come in the power of the God of Israel, riding on the clouds of glory, that the Messiah was first to come in humility and suffering and indeed, must die in shame on a cursed tree.

This is why most of the Jewish nation failed to recognize the crucified Jesus as their Messiah:- Wasn't he supposed to bring the judgement of God on behalf of Israel upon the pagan nations? Wasn't he supposed to bring the universal glory of the LORD *their* God to the entire globe? Wasn't he supposed to exalt Israel above their oppressors and bring in everlasting righteousness? Oh, the Jewish disappointment of a crucified Messiah! What a scandal. What a disgrace! ^(¹)

¹ cf. **1 Cor. 1:23 ... to the Jew a stumbling block**, i.e. an offence; a scandal.

THE DISAPPOINTMENT AND DEPRESSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Wasn't that **John the Baptist's** problem? The greatest of all the prophets ever born, according to no one less than Jesus himself, had roused Israel's expectations that the Kingdom of God was imminent. John had thundered, "**He who is coming after me is mightier than I ... and he himself will baptise you with the holy Spirit and fire. And his winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean his threshing floor; and he will gather his wheat into the barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire**" (Matt. 3: 11-12). The glory of the reign of God's Messiah was about to burst upon the world's stage!

No wonder, when a few years later in jail, and the glorious Messianic Kingdom had not arrived, **John** was depressed and disillusioned. Jesus was a huge disappointment. So **John** sent a delegation to Jesus with the forlorn question, "**Are you the Messiah, or should we look for someone else?**" (Lk 7: 19). That question from the Baptist is a representative question from a nation disappointed with the perceived weakness and failure of Jesus. He was not the glorious, all-victorious Messiah they longed for.

This is still one of the major reasons today why Jews do not believe Jesus of Nazareth is their Messiah — his Kingdom has not yet visibly come. I was discussing this with a citizen of Israel and he said that if it should be that Jesus turns out to really be their Messiah, and if he should turn up as the New Testament says a second time, then he and his Jewish brothers would need to take Jesus aside for a "second chat!"

I marvel at this because the Jew who has suffered the most of any other faithful Jew, the Jew who suffered as the Righteous one, the Jew who suffered the worst rejection and most violent death above any other Jew, was Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, anointed by the God of Israel above all others. Surely, one would think, Jewish folk would flock to this most worthy of all Jews to be their Messiah?

Have you ever *really tried* to put yourself in the shoes of a Jew? Have you ever *really tried* to imagine what it must really be like to have Jewish blood in your veins, to love the Torah, to recite daily the *Sh'ma Yisrael*, to confess that the Almighty God is the only true God of the nations and all the religions, and to be treated as if you are an oxygen thief, the scum of the earth?

Who can begin to comprehend what it must be like to have the nations of the world plot and conspire to utterly wipe you and your children, your people from the face of the earth?

Psalm 83 is a typical cry to God to vindicate Israel for her enemies confederate themselves to exterminate the Jew from the Land of Israel. **Ps. 83** is considered by many Bible students of prophecy to predict a final Ten-nation confederation of Arab states scheming to wipe Israel off the face of the map. **Ps. 83** reads,

O God, do not remain quiet; Do not be silent, and O God, do not be still. For behold, Your enemies make an uproar; and those who hate You have raised their heads. They lay crafty plans against your people; they consult together against those You protect.

They say, 'Come, let us wipe them out as a nation; let the name of Israel be remembered no more.' They conspire with one accord; against You they make a covenant --- the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites, Gebal and Ammon and Amalek, Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assyria also has joined them; they are the strong arm of the children of Lot.

Then the psalmist goes on to plead with God to preserve His people and their land. He implores the LORD God to turn the tables and to destroy those who would blot out the Name of Israel and her God. He finishes with,

Let them be put shame and dismayed forever; let them perish in disgrace. Let them know that You alone, whose Name is the LORD [YHVH --- Yod Hey Vav Hey --- Yehovah] are the Most High over all the earth.

Given what they have suffered for millennia, I can understand this cry from the heart of a godly Jew for redress. Century after century, indeed for millennia, they have cried to the God of Jacob, "How long O LORD?"

Israel is a tiny liberal democratic land of around 9 million people that would fit three-and-a-half times into the island of Tasmania --- barely 120 miles long and at its widest 40 miles. Israel --- divided by walls and barbed wire. Israel with a population hardly 10 millions is surrounded by a restless sea of 120 million Arabs and Muslims whose motto is, "First the Saturday people, then the Sunday people"!

"FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA, PALESTINE WILL BE FREE!" ... After the events of the barbaric incursion into Israel last Saturday (which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called *Israel's 911*), you would have seen the celebrations — yes, they were not protests but *celebrations*. Flares and rockets were let off in the suburb of Lakemba, Sydney .

There were celebrations of Hamas supporters on the steps of Sydney's Opera House chanting, "Gas the Jews. Gas the Jews. F*** the Jews. F*** the Jews!" And then you heard them chanting, "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free!" which means, wipe out, eliminate, destroy the nation of Israel from the Jordan to the Mediterranean. The nation of Israel is to be obliterated. It's a Satanic call for mass extermination, the holocaust finalised at last!

All through history the Jew has known the constant abhorrence of the nations of the world. They have heard the beating hooves of marauding horses, watched the fires burning their synagogues and their Torah scrolls, felt the flames of the stake, smelled the stench of the gas chambers of the Holocaust, run from the rockets shot over from Gaza for decades (ceded to them by and from Israel in 2005 — even removing their own Jewish citizens from Gaza so the Palestinians could captain their own destiny!).

Nor should I fail to mention how Jews have listened to the vile rantings of the mullahs and ayatollahs and even the accusations of the “orthodox” Catholic Church calling them “the Christ killers”.

RAV AMNON (²)

Rav Amnon of Mainz, Germany lived more than 800 years ago. He was a great man in his generation, wealthy, well connected, handsome and a close friend of the king. The nobles and officials of the city repeatedly attempted to convert him to Christianity, but he refused to listen to them. They pestered him constantly in their attempts to prevail upon him. Even the Archbishop of Mainz pressured him greatly.

Exasperated by their constant hounding, and in an attempt to escape their repeated requests, he told them, ***“I would like to deliberate upon the question for three days,”*** even though he had no intention of doing so and had said this only to put them off.

When he left the palace, Rav Amnon realised that his statement might be misconstrued as implying that he might consider the possibility of converting (to Catholicism) — as if he might deny the only true living God! He returned to his home distraught and refused to eat or drink. Those close to him tried to pacify him but he refused to be consoled, saying he would go to his grave mourning.

On the third day, his heart heavy and anxious, the Archbishop summoned him. He refused to go, whereupon the Archbishop sent a more prestigious delegation to have the venerable sage brought to his palace. When he refused even to accompany them, the Archbishop ordered that Rav Amnon be brought before him forcibly. The Archbishop turned to him and asked: ***“Why did you fail to come at the time when you promised, after you had finished deliberating?”***

Rav Amnon replied: ***“I shall pass my own judgement! Let the tongue that misspoke and lied be cut out.”*** for he sought to sanctify God’s Name for having spoken inappropriately.

But the Archbishop answered: ***“No! I shall not cut out your tongue, for it spoke well. Rather, the feet that did not bring you to me on time, shall be amputated and your other limbs shall be punished as well!”***

The tyrant then ordered that each of Rav Amnon’s fingers and toes be amputated separately. Each time one was severed, he was asked: ***“Amnon! Are you willing to convert and accept our god?”***

And each time, Amnon refused. When they finished their torture, the Archbishop had Rav Amnon sent hom with his severed limbs by his side. Truly there was reason why he

² I take this story from *IF? The End of a Messianic Lie* as retold by Uriel ben-Mordechai (p 80-81, 2011). I have slightly edited the story hopefully to make a few things clearer which the reader who has not read the book may benefit from.

had been named Amnon [from the Hebrew root meaning faithfulness], for he had great faith in God and suffered the most severe of tortures because of that faith.

Shortly afterwards, when Rosh Ha'Shanah [Jewish New Year] came, Rav Amnon asked that he be brought to the synagogue and placed near the cantor. When the cantor reached the section of Kedushah of Musaf, Rav Amnon said: ***“Wait a moment, and I will sanctify His great Name.”*** After reciting the stanza, ***“And behold may sanctity ascend to You”*** Rav Amnon began to recite his original composition of *“U’Netanneh Tokef”* — a prayer that speaks of God’s judgement of man’s deeds and man’s acceptance of divine justice.

At the hymn’s conclusion, Rav Amnon expired and departed from this world, taken by God. And of him it is said in the Psalms: ***“How great is the good that You have stored up for those who fear You.”*** (Ps. 31: 19).

Why this almost universal hatred of the Jew? Surely the reason is because Satan hates the Jewish people with a passion because from them have come the holy Scriptures of God’s prophets foretelling his defeat? From them has come the Messiah our beloved Lord Jesus, from them has been announced God’s mighty plan of rescuing this world, from them has been prophesied the certain defeat of all evil in this world.. It’s all come to us through the faithful and believing Jew.

How much we owe to the faithful of God’s chosen people! And with such persecution even from so-called Christians who think they do God an honour by such vile deeds, no wonder to this point the vast majority of Jewish folk see no beauty in our Lord Jesus who himself is outraged by those who claim to represent him.

THE DRAGON

This is graphically though metaphorically portrayed in **Revelation 12**. There we read about **a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labour and in pain to give birth.**

And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished ... and there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war ... and the great dragon was thrown down ... (vs. 1-9).

Satan hates the Jew! And the reason of course, is that God's plan to save mankind is wrapped up in the Jewish Messiah. Did not Jesus say, "Salvation is of the Jews"? How close Satan has come in the past to exterminating God's promises through them!

As horrific as Hitler's holocaust was, I can tell you on the authority and the accuracy of Biblical prophecy, another holocaust is coming for Israel. The prophets called it "Jacob's Trouble". Jesus called it "The Great Tribulation".

I don't have time to go into it now, but the Bible says before Jacob's Great Trouble Israel is going to make a treaty of peace with a double-crossing fiend who is energised by the spirit of Satan. All the world is going to hail this Antichrist man who initially brings peace to Israel and the world. Perhaps he will seem to solve the "Two State" conundrum? "Peace! Safety!" [they will rejoice] then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape (I Thess. 5: 3).

After he breaks his covenant with Israel, for three-and-a-half years there will be a relentless persecution of the Jews (as if history isn't filled up with enough Jewish blood already!). This is not called Jacob's Trouble for no good reason and it marks the climax, the end of this evil Age — an end so horrific it will look like not a single one will be left. But the God of Israel has promised there will be a faithful remnant prepared to greet and joyfully welcome their returning and victorious Lord Messiah.

When Jesus returns there will be tears of great joy just like when Joseph's brothers recognized their brother was the Second in Charge of Egypt's Empire. And they will cry out, "Baruch haba b'Shem Adonai", "Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the LORD."

At last, the converted remnant of Abraham's physical descendants, the faithful Jews, will acknowledge Jesus as the son of David, the Son of God Most High, their Lord Messiah. And so will come to pass the prophecy that "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 9-11). ⁽³⁾ This is how Zechariah 12 puts it,

And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a spirit of grace and favour; so that they will look on him whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born. In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem ...

What a day that will be! What a welcome they will give their Messiah! Instead of Jews being scorned and persecuted, instead of Jews being harassed and murdered and hunted down, the Bible predicts the whole world will respect the now converted, now repentant, now tearful and believing Israel.

³ The phrase "And so all Israel will be saved" does not mean every single Jew who has ever lived or who is still alive at the end time is going to be saved. In the OT "all Israel" often means a representative remnant who are gathered from all the tribes (e.g. I Chron. 11:1; Deut. 1:1)

We get a picture of this in the story of Joseph and his tearful brothers ...

Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he shouted, "Have everyone go out from me." So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it ... then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me." And he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here ; for God sent me before you to preserve life..."

I believe that Joseph, betrayed by his brothers, now reconciled to them with loud wailings and cryings, is a type, a portrayal of the great Day when Jesus will be so overcome with emotions that we will see his tears, we will hear his loud wailings of joy when the family of God is at last in his kingly presence.

The apostle Paul's own remarkable conversion when he was struck down from his high and mighty horse by a vision of the risen Lord Jesus Christ is, I believe, a prophetic forecast of the day when Jesus comes back and when **all Israel** will be saved. The apostle Paul's individual conversion points to a miracle on a massive scale that awaits the Jew when Jesus returns. For the Jews are going to see the wounds their Messiah ---

The LORD of Hosts says, "In those days ten men from the nations of every language will grasp the garment of a Jew saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you" (Zechariah 8:23).

Make no mistake about this:- Despite all attempts to eliminate the Jew and his promised land, the Bible assures us that at the very end of this present evil Age there will be a remnant of Israel left to testify to the world how great God's faithfulness has been. They will be regrafted into the natural olive tree! These converted Christians (if I may put it this way for they indeed will be lovers and followers of Jesus, or as they will call him Yeshua) will be back where they belong — true descendants of the faith of Abraham, true sons and daughters of the only true God of Israel!

"UNTIL"

When he looked into the future Jesus saw first the immediate rejection by his fellow countrymen but then he also predicted their ultimate restoration. Remember when he was weeping over their rejection of him and their refusal to accept his protection, how he prophesied, **You will not see me again until you say, "Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the LORD (Matt. 23:39)? That's a prophecy that the Jew will be preserved until the end of the age!**

Jesus predicted Jerusalem would be **trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (Lk. 21:24). That's a prophecy that the Jew will be in Jerusalem at the Second Coming!** And the apostle Paul later predicted that Israel's hardening

against Christ and his Gospel would be partial and temporary **until the full number of the Gentiles has come in (Rom. 11:25)**.

And the fact that today God --- as He promised --- is gathering the Jews back into their Promised Homeland with all of the complexities and challenges it has brought, is an indication the stage is being set for the return of Messiah. As predicted, in spite of determined international opposition the Jews are coming back to the land God gave them. All other dastardly efforts to the contrary, the nation of Israel will endure. If not, then the God of the Bible is a liar and will no longer be on His throne! God forbid!

OBJECTION! REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

Now I am perfectly well aware that In spite of the fact that Jesus was a Jew, that he lived and died as “the King of the Jews”, that his theology was thoroughly Jewish, and that **salvation is from the Jews (Jn 4: 22)**, the Church has been quick to pull up its Jewish roots. This is classically seen in what is called “Replacement Theology” or “Ultra Dispensationalism”.

Now they are big words. But the basic idea is that God has transferred His covenant promises and purposes from Israel over to the Church. Replacement Theology says that God has one earthly destiny for the Jew and another heavenly destiny for the Christian Church.

Now, I have no intention of getting into that big subject, except to say this: The NT says the blood Jesus shed on the cross has broken down the middle barrier between Jew & Gentile and that all who believe in Messiah Jesus have been reconciled into **one body**. Indeed, in Christ, God has created **one new man, one new humanity** --- that now Jew & Gentile share **one hope of our calling**, in our **one Lord** who himself said, **“There will be one flock, and one shepherd” (Gal. 6:16; Eph. 2: 15-16; 4: 4; John 10: 16)**.

The NT teaches the Gentiles through faith in Israel’s Messiah now belong to the **commonwealth of Israel**. The promises God made to Abraham now belong to all in Messiah Jesus. This is NT covenant theology 101!

Friends, there is no such thing as an earthly destiny for the converted Jew and a heavenly destiny for the believing Gentile! Jesus is not a polygamist! There is one body, his bride, the Church of God. Our common destiny is wrapped up in the promises God has made to Abraham and his true descendants, believing Jews and believing Gentiles.

God has never revoked the covenant he made with Abraham who is the father of all the faithful. Yes, I am looking for the Second Coming of Jesus to give justice to the faithful Jew. Oh, can’t you hear that **loud voice of a great multitude in heaven saying, Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; because His judgements are true and righteous ... for He has avenged the blood of His servants ... (Rev. 19:1f)**? I can!