

# Selah



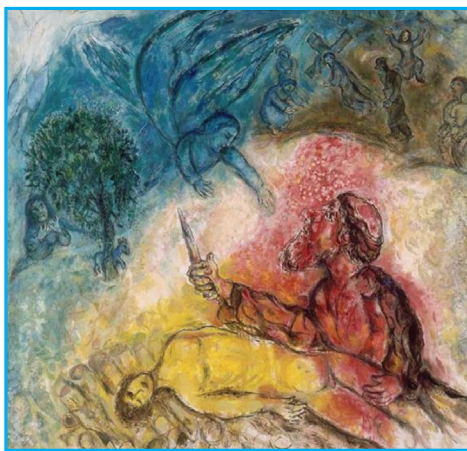
## Passover and ...the Akedah???!\*

Every year, round about this time, early signs of Spring bring thoughts of Passover to mind; the preparations, the story and the very rich spiritual significances that are summed up in that one-word name: Pesach; Passover. Recently, I was meditating on the fact that God foretold the events of the Exodus to Abram, when He entered into covenant relationship with him (Gen 15: 13-17), generations before the first Passover took place.

Much later, God reiterated His covenant promise to Moses (Ex. 6:6-8). At that point, God was very specific about the actual date that the first Passover lamb was to be killed: the 14th of Nisan (Ex 12:5,6).

Because the Lord was so specific about the actual date that the Lamb was to be sequestered for examination (10th of Nisan) and then killed, I began to wonder if those dates might be, in themselves, anniversaries of some past events; perhaps anniversaries of the Lord's earlier dealings with Abram/Abraham, for example? It's only a theory, to be sure, but because of the many parallels and cycles (Midrashim) in the Bible, along with significant events that DID happen later, on those dates, I felt I had a basis to at least pose the question.

As we know, Jesus (Yeshua) died at Passover. His last meal, before he died, was a Passover Seder. In Scripture, He is referred to as 'Messiah, our Passover, sacrificed for us' (1 Cor 5:7). There are many other parallels to be found in these two landmark events; some, well-known and some not so well-known, but too many to list here!



Le Sacrifice D'Isaac'

But I soon found that my thoughts had turned to another major event in the history and formation of the nation of Israel; the Akedah – the 'Binding of Isaac'. This is found in Genesis 22 and is the story of how God told Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah. It is one of the most-read passages of Scripture in Jewish liturgy, being found in the Morning Service and also at Rosh Hashanah.

In the Akedah, we also find MANY amazing parallels with the death of Yeshua:

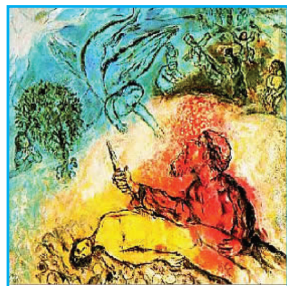
Abraham was called upon by God to offer his only, beloved son, Isaac, on Mount Moriah. In this story, we clearly see that Abraham believed in God's resurrection power. God sent His own Beloved Son to be a sacrifice for the sin of the world, raising Jesus from the dead three days later. Both sacrifices took place in the same geographical location: Moriah/Jerusalem. Abraham willingly obeyed God. Isaac willingly

*continued from page 1*

carried the wood for the sacrifice and allowed himself to be bound on the altar. Jesus also went to His death willingly, carrying His cross for some of the journey and allowing Himself to be nailed to it. Abraham, in faith, told Isaac that 'God will provide, for Himself, the lamb for the offering.' Upon seeing Jesus, on two occasions, John declared, 'Behold, the Lamb of God!' (John 1:29, 36)

While we can't be sure that the Binding of Isaac took place on the date that was later to become designated for the Passover, it is interesting to note the very strong parallels, reaching from the early chapters of Genesis right through to the time of Yeshua and beyond.

I decided to do some searching to see if anyone else – whether in Jewish or Messianic circles – might have had the same thoughts... and in my research, I came across the painting of Marc Chagall, called 'Le Sacrifice D'Isaac', done in 1966.



In this amazing work of art, Chagall clearly draws a connection between the Akedah and the crucifixion of Jesus at Passover. Seeing it so vividly portrayed, the central meaning that can be derived is that God DID provide for Himself the Lamb.

Chagall was not only an amazing artist, but he was a polyglot, speaking French, Polish, Russian and Yiddish. He also learned the Hebrew Bible through a method which involved oral recitation, aural reception and memory. I believe that Chagall will have connected the aspect of the 'ram caught in the thicket' with Jesus' crown of thorns (the Hebrew word translated 'thicket', in Gen 22:13, is 'SBCH', which literally means 'interwoven thorns')! While Chagall himself said that his use of the crucifixion motif did not make it a Christian painting, his juxtaposition of it on the Binding of Isaac was a deliberate invitation to reflect on the meaning of the cross!

I'd like to mention one more wonderful aspect of this painting: that which, I can only conclude, is the flow of blood, coming from the crucifixion down to Abraham and Isaac; Suggesting – even highlighting – that the fulfilment of God's

provision lies in His Son, Jesus (Yeshua).

Sadly, as I searched for this painting on the internet, I found that many, if not most, of the versions that were posted were cropped in such a way as to remove the crucifixion scene at the top, as in this one:



While I have no factual information, I nonetheless wonder at the possible motives involved in abridging such a wonderful and important work of art. I've never found artwork by other famous artists cropped or edited in this way... Is the suggestion of a direct connection between the Akedah and the crucifixion too controversial? Too radical? Too uncomfortable?

As we approach this Passover season once again, with all of its practical preparations, it is always good to be reminded of their spiritual applications (cleaning out leaven represents getting rid of sin, etc.). Also, that the various elements in the story and in the Seder celebration are foreshadows of what Jesus (Yeshua) has done, when He fulfilled the Law on the 14th of Nisan.

In closing, there is no way that I can prove my original question about whether any earlier Biblical events happened on the exact same date as the 14th of Nisan of Exodus. It is pure conjecture! However, there are definite types, foreshadows and fulfilments in the things I have discussed here. One thing I'd like the reader to ponder is that all of the individuals I have mentioned in this article – Abraham, Isaac, Jesus and Marc Chagall - have one thing in common: they have all acted willingly. I think that willingness is often accompanied by courage, which again, they all demonstrated. May we also be willing to consider these profound patterns and connections and, like Abraham, lift up our eyes with faith to behold the eternal plan and purpose of God to send His only begotten Son, as a Lamb, to take away sin and its consequences, to believe in the Resurrection and to put our trust in Messiah Yeshua, our Pesach (Passover), sacrificed for us! Chag Pesach Sameach! (a Happy Passover)

Chrissy Rodgers

*\*Akedah is the Hebrew word for 'binding', as found in Gen. 22:9, when Abraham bound Isaac. It is the name by which Jewish people refer to this story.*

**UK Office**  
PO Box 1168  
Harrow HA1 9ND  
T: 07547 212299  
E: debbie.mtoffice@gmail.com

**Ireland Office**  
T: 028 9502 2895  
E: ireland@messianictestimony.com

**Trustees** Colin Leyson, Brian Chapman,  
Tim Gamston, June Marshall, Mike  
Roberts

**Editors of Selah**  
Chrissy Rodgers and Debbie Rodgers

**Emeritus Director** Tom Mayr-Lori

**Messianic Testimony is a Company Limited by Guarantee in  
England and Wales No. 8147968 and a Registered Charity No. 1148986  
All contents © 2016 Messianic Testimony**

## In Memory Of



**Albert John Turner** (89) was called home on 3rd January 2017. Albert was born 24 May 1928, the eldest of three children. As a child, he attended the local Methodist Church Sunday school and it was through this contact that he was taken to hear Billy Graham preach in 1946. As a result, at the age of 18, Albert, committed his life to the Lord. After National Service, he eventually became the Registrar of the local college, a job he held until he took early retirement. Throughout these years he was a local preacher. He went to Israel for the first time in 1965, driving by car across Europe. This was followed by almost 60 visits over the next 40 years. As a result the Israeli Ambassador presented him with an award for his dedicated service to Tourism in Israel. Many reading this will remember the house parties/conferences that Albert organised in North Wales and Scotland. He served on the Council of Messianic Testimony for many years, retiring at the end of 2005. He was the pastor of Bethany Baptist Church Pwllgwaun, Pontypridd from 1982 to 1991. During this time, he also faithfully represented MT in Wales and is remembered for his dedication to the Gospel, his hospitality, his visiting skills, his preaching and his love of Israel. But more importantly his love for Israel's God whom he faithfully served for over 60 years.

Esme Lori

### *'Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful servants'. Psalm 116:15.*



These were the words that Rev Jonathan Stephen used in his message at the memorial service for **Alison Ruth Bendor-Samuel** (95) who was called home on 5th January 2017. Alison was a 'faithful servant' for over 80 years and her life was not always easy. Born Alison Ruth Rodgers, in Herefordshire, on 18 June 1921 she was the youngest of four children. Alison committed her life to the Lord and was baptised in 1935 whilst still at school. In 1948 she married Theodore Bendor-Samuel [MMJ/MT director 1955-1998]. At that time, Theodore was a widower with three teenage children to whom Alison became a friend [Auntie Ali, as she was known to them and to many other people over the years]. In 1952 their son, Martin, was born. Martin was confined to a wheelchair throughout his life and needed constant attention. Alison, gave him devoted, unstinted, and loving 24-hour care until his death in October 1979. In his teenage years, this involved driving him to and from school each day and finally daily to Reading University. In all of this Alison never grumbled. At the same time, she supported Theodore (as a Pastor, Director, & finally in 'retirement'); cared for the home; entertained the family and the numerous visitors who crossed their threshold. Alison was a gracious lady with a wonderful sense of humour, who put the Lord first in her

life and was always ready to share her faith. Theodore died in 1998, not long after their Golden wedding. After this Alison lived alone, firstly in the family home in Shinfield, moving to sheltered accommodation in Milward Court and around a year ago, to Abbeyfields. Although frail, she managed (with help) to care for herself until shortly before her death. Following her burial in Shinfield, a memorial service was held at Carey Baptist Church Reading on 16th January 2017.

Esme Lori