

בשורה *Besorah!*

Who Hath Believed Our Report?

As Passover approaches, we ponder afresh what is implicit- historically and prophetically - in this Feast of the Lord - as the Feasts are prophetic even when they memorialise the past. Passover, as we know, commemorates the historic event of the exodus of Israel out of Egypt. We also know that Jesus died at Passover, so these two earth-shaking events are directly connected. I believe that the most comprehensive and detailed prophecy relating to Jesus' death – and, therefore, Passover - is Isaiah 53. But I also believe that Isaiah 53 is still a prophetic 'lamp unto our feet' (Ps 119:105) for the future.

Isaiah 53 has been rightly called the 'Gospel in the Old Testament'. In fact, it is one of the passages most referred to in the New Testament.

The very first promise of redemption, in Gen 3:15, contains the Gospel in germ. Indeed, a 'Seed' is mentioned. Scripture is organic in its growth – not, as it were, an aggregate of teaching added to teaching. Rather, it is a development of living seed. A seed contains DNA and goes through many stages of development (some not bearing any resemblance to the seed itself), eventually producing the fruit of its design – and more seed. In this way, we can understand the

growth and development of the Law and the Prophets, as we read through the scriptures. Details are added with the progression of time. So this first promise, while it contained comfort to its first recipients, echoes through the ages with increasing fullness and detail – until the end of the age, when the Millennium discloses Genesis.

We know that God made a covenant with Abraham and his seed (Gen 12:7), which included the Land of Israel, and that Messiah was to be of the seed of David (Rom 1:3). We also know that, 'The law was added because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made' (Gal 3:16, 19). That promised seed is Yeshua

However, Deut 27:26 reads, 'Cursed be he that confirmeth not *all* the words of this law to do them'. It would seem, in the AV, that the word 'all' is not present in the text (indicated by italics). However, Paul quotes this verse from the Septuagint (Gal 3:10) and we see that the word 'all' is clearly meant to be present. The law was comprehensive and detailed in its demands and in its penalties for falling short.

In Isaiah 53, we find every one of God's judicial requirements for propitiation listed and satisfied in the death of the unique



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Person described. Reading through the chapter, we see references to sin, transgression, iniquity, guilt and peace – all of which require offerings. In previous issues of the Besorah, we have discussed the peace offering in detail. To reiterate, the peace offering could not be brought until every other outstanding offering for sin, etc., had been made. This is what is meant by the phrase, ‘the chastisement for our peace was upon Him’ (v. 5). The peace offering is also the only offering that was eaten by the forgiven sinner and shared with his family and community.

The focus of Passover is on the lamb; the lamb whose blood was daubed on the entrances of the tents of families and whose flesh was eaten (hence the *symbolic* language of John 6:54, in reference to ‘eating’ His flesh and ‘drinking’ His blood). Jesus died at Passover and even though the Biblical instructions regarding the original, historical event don’t mention any offerings for atonement, they are implied – contained in the germ, if you will – in the eating of the lamb.

We have also explained that in Hebrew, the names for various sacrifices do not contain the word ‘offering’. So in Hebrew, a ‘sin offering’ is simply named ‘sin’. Therefore, when the scripture says, ‘for He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him’ (2 Cor 5:21), we understand that Jesus became a *sin offering*, not sin!!

Let us remember that Passover was a NATIONAL deliverance. Prophetically, therefore, it points toward Israel’s *future* national salvation, when ‘they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn’ (Zech 12:10), ‘and so all Israel shall be saved’ (Rom 11:26). Surely the mourning and bitterness for the firstborn harks back to what happened in Egypt, in the plague of the firstborn.

That first Passover symbolized freedom from enslavement to sin. However, consider that Isaiah 53 is written in the context of a prophecy that seems to indicate a return from Babylon (Isaiah 52:11 and Rev 18:4). This would point us *beyond* the original deliverance from Egypt (slavery in a

single foreign country) to a future deliverance from a global dispersion and world system of idolatry. Israel’s historical return from the Babylonian captivity was only partial, physically and spiritually. Israel’s future re-gathering from all the nations will be complete, physically and spiritually:

‘In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land. (Notice: ‘seed’. Jer 23:6 -8 KJV)

With Isaiah 53 as a lens, we view all the aspects of the seed, including the Land which God promised to Abraham. The passage even begins with the language of flora: ‘For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground’, (Isa 53:2) and follows later with, ‘he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days’ (v. 10).

Meditating on verse 4, ‘Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted’, I have been considering what *national* griefs and sorrows might be implied.

When becoming Bar Mitzvah at the age of 13, in 1868, David Baron (one of the founders of Messianic Testimony) delivered a discourse entitled, ‘Putting Away Leaven’. It was declared to be a masterpiece of reasoning, fit for an aged Rabbi! However, David knew that in his own heart lurked every kind of darkness and sin. He also realised that such sin caused his nation to be driven from their Land and the Temple to be destroyed. He continued for some years, without peace or comfort, mourning the dispersion of the Jewish people and wishing for a Temple and a sacrifice, in order to get right with God. It wasn’t until years later, after arriving in England, that he met John Wilkinson (another of our founders) who read and ministered Isaiah 53 to him. When he

then came to faith, all his 'sorrows and griefs' were borne by Yeshua - the personal *and* national ones.

While David Baron, in the 19th century, had mourned the national calamity of the destruction of the Temple and the expulsion of the Jewish people, the 20th century witnessed another catastrophe in Jewish experience in the events of WWII. In 1991, George Steiner (notable Jewish philosopher who wrote extensively on the impact of the Holocaust), delivered a lecture at the Raul Hilberg (preeminent Holocaust scholar) Symposium on the Holocaust and said the following:

'Almost wholly unexplored, in some Freudian sense perhaps suppressed, is the historical moment which has determined the tragic destiny of the Jew over these past two thousand years. It is the moment in which the core of Judaism rejects the messianic claims and promises put forward by Jesus of Nazareth and his immediate adherents... The key motion of spirit, that whereby Jews refused the 'good news' (*sic*) brought by Jesus, affirmed by his 'resurrection' (*sic*), the crucial repudiation by Jews, at one of the most sombre hours in their history – that of the murderous suppression of national insurgence and the consequent destruction of the Temple – to acknowledge, to accept the concordat of human rebirth and divine pardon offered by the Galilean god-man (*sic*) and his apostles, eludes us... Why did the Jews or, more exactly, why did Judaism so far as it can be defined in relation to Torah and Talmud, to nationhood and to exile, say 'No' to the kerygmatic revelation, when compelling elements

from within Torah and prophecy had prepared that very revelation?' WOW! Read that again!!

While many have, and may, come to a personal knowledge of Yeshua's atonement for sin by considering Isaiah 53, the promises are also collective – national - as seen in the pronouns 'we, us, our'. In fact, reaching beyond the future salvation of Israel, some expert Biblical Hebraists strongly see this chapter as what will form a *national testimony*, due to the peculiar grammatical tense! In other words, after all Israel is saved, this chapter will be their proclamation! This is truly wonderful to think about.

Isaiah 53 is comprehensive in its revelation of Jesus and His fulfilment of all sacrifices and prophecies relating to the future salvation of Israel and their restoration to the Land: 'he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand' (Is 53:10). Every Passover celebration ends in the shout, 'Next year, in Jerusalem!'

A day is coming when all Israel will be gathered back into their promised land. Messiah, Yeshua, will reveal Himself to them as a nation and, as a nation, they shall look upon Him, Whom they have pierced. Their centuries of grief and sorrow will culminate in their mourning for Him, as for an only Son, but their sorrow will be turned into joy. Wow... who would believe it! Until that time, we continue to pray, work and cry: Hosanna in the highest! (Hebrew: Hosheanna, Elyon! Save, oh Most High!)
Chrissy Rodgers