



Oasis

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Baruch HaBa The Messiah Approaches!

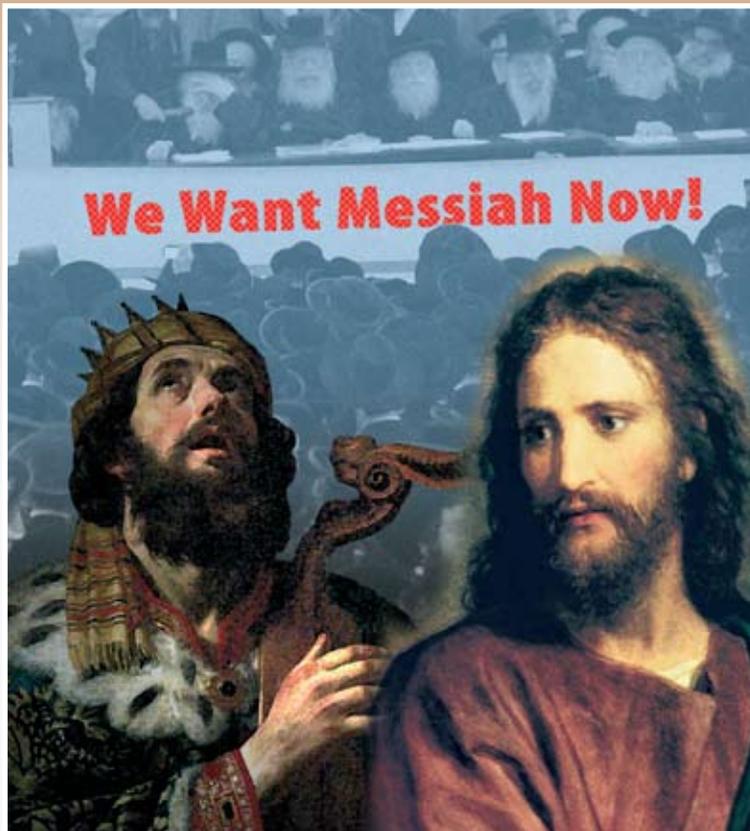
By Eitan Shishkoff

Messianic expectation has been with the Jewish people nearly as long as we have existed. Throughout Israel there are still posters and banners with a photo of Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, proclaiming him as the Messiah. The caption boldly declares, "Baruch HaBa Melech HaMashiach" (Blessed is He Who Comes, King Messiah). The Brooklyn rabbi, whose aim indeed was world redemption, died in 1994 and has not surfaced since.

Maimonides, the brilliant 12th century physician, author and rabbi, penned his famous thirteen principles of faith to encourage every Jew to remain faithful to messianic expectation. Principle twelve states:

"I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah. And even though he may tarry, I will await His coming every day. And he who doubts or diminishes the greatness of the Messiah is a denier in all the Torah for it testifies to the Messiah... And part of this principle is that there is no king of Israel except from the house of David and from the seed of Solomon alone."

These words are strikingly reminiscent of 2 Peter 3:3,4,8-9 in which the apostle exhorts us not to give up on the promise of



the Lord's return. Rather, he indicates that through our expectant faith, we are "looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God" (2 Peter 3:11,12).

Yeshua's words in Matthew 23:27,38 stir in us a well-founded expectation of His coming. "You will not see me again until you say 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.'" The original context from which Yeshua is quoting is found in Psalm 118:19-26. This Messianic prophecy includes the remarkable lines, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." Here we are introduced to the intriguing feature of a rejected Redeemer who becomes the foundation for the entire nation.

Messiah ben Joseph

This theme was taken up by generations of Jewish scholars who needed to resolve the dilemma of a Messiah who is described in the Hebrew Scriptures as both suffering and reigning. Their solution was two messiahs. One would come in the likeness of Joseph, the son of Jacob who suffered rejection at the hands of his brothers, hence the

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title Messiah ben Yosef. The second would arrive as a triumphant king, conquering all of God's foes, hence the title Messiah ben David. In his book, *Messiah Texts*, Dr. Raphael Patai, noted anthropologist and author of more than 25 books, explores the ancient myths located in numerous Jewish sources over many centuries. For those of us who see in Yeshua of Nazareth the fulfillment of both Messiah ben Yosef and ben David, his findings are astounding.¹ Chapter 17 is entitled "Messiah ben Joseph" and references Daniel 9, Psalm 2 and the Babylonian Talmud as evidence that the Messiah must suffer and die! Then, Messiah ben David "will come after him (in some legends will bring him back to life...) and will lead Israel to ultimate victory, the triumph and the Messianic era of bliss."²

The Joseph prophecy includes the essential role played by his Gentile sponsors. He was not just hidden from his brothers, but elevated to Ruler of Egypt, saving the world from famine.

Romans 11:11-15 matches this picture of a latter day Jewish embrace of Yeshua that follows an initial Gentile ingrafting. Paul even foresaw the temptation to which the Gentile church ultimately succumbed, that of thinking that God had rejected the Jews and shifted all their promises to the Church (See, Romans 11:18-24).

Messiah ben David

The biblical basis for the Messiah being David's greater son is rooted in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and 1 Chronicles 17:7-14. These passages contain God's promise to establish the throne of David's kingdom forever. More dramatically, God states that the son of David who will sit on the throne forever will be God's son. "I will be his Father and he shall be my son" (1 Chronicles 17:13).

This unequivocal promise brings amplification to the disciples' question, addressed to the resurrected Messiah in Acts 1:6: "Will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" Clearly they were expecting the risen King to take his place over all Israel right then and there. They understood that the Son of David had come to rule and reign over the earth from Jerusalem.

With the benefit of 2000 years hindsight, we know that Yeshua's response "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority" (Acts 1:7) anticipated a profound delay. Yet with that same benefit of elapsed time, we can also see that a key component of the kingdom being restored is NOW in place. That component is the restoration/resurrection of national Israel.

Israel's Return to the Land & David's Reign

Jeremiah clearly refers to the Davidic King/Messiah when he says "But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their King" (Jeremiah 30:9). The prophet speaks in the context of God's declaration that He "will bring back from captivity my people

Israel and Judah... and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers" (Jeremiah 30:3). Ezekiel confirms Jeremiah's words, "David my servant (who) shall be king over them" (Ezekiel 37:24,25). Ezekiel makes this startling promise immediately following his prophecy about Israel rising out of the grave - the dry bones coming to life and being placed in our own land.

And finally, the most succinct and perhaps literal of these prophecies which link the Messiah's return as the King of Israel to sit on David's throne is Hosea 3:4,5, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim (all the service and equipment of the temple). Afterward the children of Israel will return and seek the Lord and David their King. They shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." Incredible? It's right there in the text! Without a doubt, Messianic Jews living in the reborn nation of Israel, worshiping the God of Israel as Yeshua's disciples, signifies the coming of the King. Let's turn the Master's words in Matthew 23:39 into a positive statement: "You WILL see me again when you say *Baruch HaBa, ba Shem Adonai*."

Returning to Schneerson's followers - why do they put up signs saying "Melech HaMashiach"?

Because the Jewish expectation, based on these and many other passages, is that Messiah is King of Israel. As quoted in the Gospels, Zechariah 9:9,10 states "Behold your king is coming to you... lowly and riding on a donkey." In Isaiah 9:6,7 we read that the ultimate ruler will sit "Upon the throne of David and (rule) over his Kingdom!"

Covenant, Intercession and a Jewish Wedding

The significance is huge. If we are merely waiting for a world Savior, it is an event without a specific rooting in history, prophecy or geography. But if the return of the King is in fact, the fulfillment of the **ancient covenant** between God and His people Israel, it alters the situation dramatically. Then, the role of the Church becomes one of assisting Israel to embrace her King, and primarily of linking in **deep friendship** with the portion of Israel that already takes part in His Kingdom, the Messianic Jewish community.

This is the meaning of the phrase "*Baruch HaBa*". It also happens to be the opening blessing of the Jewish wedding ceremony. As the bridegroom approaches the wedding canopy (chupah) the presiding Rabbi proclaims the words, "*Baruch HaBa ba Shem Adonai*". Indeed, as we declare these words, our Bridegroom Yeshua is already approaching the chupah. We are so close to the wedding supper of the Lamb. Yes Lord, Come! ✨

¹ Patai, Raphael, *Messiah Texts*, Avon Books, New York, 1979

² *Ibid*, p.166

Editor: Martin Shoub
 Graphic Design: David Coddington
 P.O.Box 1018 Kiryat Yam 29109, Israel
 Tel: +972 (4) 877-7921, Fax: +972 (4) 875-7792
 E-mail: ohalei@netvision.net.il
 Stateside: c/o Tikkun Ministries
 P.O. Box 2997 Gaithersburg, MD 20886-2997
 www.tents-of-mercy.org



Our Vision:

Tents of Mercy - to participate in today's historic exodus by assisting Israel's returning exiles.

No spectators in the Kingdom - to be a worshiping, sharing community based in homes, equipping each one for service.

Come back Yeshua - to welcome Yeshua home to Israel, by restoring the Jewish roots of New Covenant faith.



One New Man Taking Shape

By Marty Shoub

Well over a year ago I received an email from a Pastor serving in Washington State. Here is an excerpt from his note: “As we were praying through the Asher Intrater word concerning Matthew 23:39 and the key of Israel’s Cry, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord’ for the second coming of Yeshua, it came to me that perhaps this might be a vision for the next Intercessory Prayer Conference. I am very sorry to presume to even suggest this, but I think it might be of the Lord...certainly ignore it as the Lord leads!”

This pastor is a dear brother whom we deeply respect, so we would never ignore his suggestion but we were still not quite ready to make a decision about the next conference. I thanked him and said we would consider this word at our next planning meeting. Two months went by and there I was with Leora and Eitan, seated in Eitan’s office. My laptop was open to this brother’s email - ready to put his suggestion forward. As is his custom, Eitan paused to pray and ask God for wisdom. He continued to pray prophetically and declared it was time for Jews and Gentiles to cry out, “Baruch Haba” in preparation for Yeshua’s return. It was as if Eitan was reading the email open on my computer. After he finished, beaming with excitement, I read the email out loud. Together, Eitan, Leora and I experienced that uncanny wonder of seeing the Lord’s unexpected, unforeseeable confirmation. The theme of our next conference became the easiest of decisions.

Heaven’s guidance ensures a good start but it is the combination of God’s continued grace and guidance, matched by the spiritual sensitivity of the participants that determines a successful conference. Throughout the nine days of our conference I could see how the hand of the Lord brought us together. This was our fifth conference. Every one has been special, but there was an added element to Baruch Haba. Sometimes, Messianic Jews have experienced the frustration of being misunderstood. Well meaning brothers and sisters have on occasion viewed us with suspicion and have doubted our call to pursue our discipleship as Jews within the larger Jewish community. For them, Jewish distinctiveness smacks suspiciously of separation and division. Our hearts have been saddened because people, who we love for who they are in their own unique and distinctive way, have not reciprocated in kind. On the other extreme, some have denied their own unique identity, as if Jewish identity was somehow intrinsically superior.

Baruch HaBa was a coming together of Jewish and Gentile believers from fifteen countries and every continent. There was no jealousy, there was no suspicion, there was no insecurity. Instead,



Guy and Tali Cohen share a laugh with Andrey and Tina



Yuval, Ariel and Asher speaking at Yad HaShmona

there was love, kindness and mutual appreciation. This truly was One New Man collectively celebrating our unity and our multi-ethnic diversity in Yeshua. Together, we joined in common purpose to declare, “Baruch haba b’shem Adonai.” Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Surely, our unity together as One New Man hastens His return - it is Yeshua’s great request of His Father that we may be one, even as He and His Father are one. Unity in the Body of Messiah has been rife with division, in no small part to the failure of the Body to recognize the first breach in our unity, the unity of Jew and Gentile in Messiah. Baruch HaBa has been a sign to us that the breach is finally being repaired. ✨



Eitan, Connie and some Korean friends



Worshipping at Gethsemane



Hiking down the Mount of Beatitudes



Leon and Ephraim help Pastor Angela from Taiwan



Moshe and Eitan