

Bible Basics II

containing:

Spiritual Hatred
Fear Not
America Bless God
All In the Family

by
Dean & Susan Wheelock

All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God,
And *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,
For instruction in righteousness:
That the man of God may be perfect,
Thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
II Timothy 3:16-17

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~ Introduction ~

And He opened their understanding,
That they might comprehend the Scriptures.
Luke 24:45



Modern Christianity is divided into a myriad of denominations and sects, each believing they have a corner on truth which others do not possess. It is no different in the Messianic Community. Some look to the Rabbis for correct interpretation, others to charismatic teachers, or movements within the Messianic world -- while others seem to listen only to themselves.

In actuality, there is only one place to go for truth -- the Holy Scriptures. But even there one finds what sometimes seems to be disagreement, because of problems in translation and interpretation. As a result, some have cast out certain books found in the New Testament, saying they do not belong in the canon of Scripture, while others have added other books into their Bibles because they claim they belong there.

At *Hebrew Roots*®, we accept the entirety of Scripture canon (both Old and New Testaments) as the word of God. We accept other writings as just that -- other writings -- which may or may not have beneficial historical (or even spiritual) information which can be an aid to further one's faith. The bottom line is:

"All Scripture [Old Testament] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
(II Tim. 3:16-17)

Therefore, when it comes to trying to understand the mind of the Creator God of the Universe, it behooves us to be like the *Bereans* who checked everything the disciples taught them against what Scripture says. Do not accept as fact everything a

teacher teaches (including us). Do your own study, pray to the Father that He will reveal the truth to you -- and once you find it:

"... hold fast what is good,"

(I Thess. 5:21)

This booklet (*Bible Basics II*) contains four chapters which were originally published as separate articles in past issues of *Hebrew Roots*®. They are intended to teach some basic understandings about Scripture that we believe are essential to know when studying the Bible. It is the second booklet in this series.

The first chapter is entitled *Spiritual Hatred*. It was first published in *Hebrew Roots*® issue 01-3 shortly after the tragic events of 9-11-2001. It addresses the spiritual roots of the hatred that is so prevalent in today's modern world.

The second chapter, *Fear Not* is from issue 08-2. It deals with the profound fear that many Believers have of coming events prophesied in the Bible.

America Bless God was also written shortly after 9-11-2001 (issue 01-3) when many people were proclaiming "God Bless America." Little did they realize that what the Scriptures teach is that we, as Believers, should bless God and not demand that He bless us.

Finally, *All In the Family* (03-3) shows how God has called the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to be the vanguard people through whom came the Messiah *Y'shua* and who form the core of the people whom God is calling today to be a part of the Millennial Kingdom of God under the Kingship of *Y'shua*.

We hope you will find this booklet a blessing in your spiritual walk.

Shalom!

Dean & Susan Wheelock

Beit Shalom,
December, 2013

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~ Spiritual Hatred ~

Joseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a well;
His branches run over the wall.
The archers have bitterly grieved him,
Shot at him and hated him.
Genesis 49:22-23

Some years ago, on the television program *60 Minutes*, a high level Muslim Arab journalist told the interviewer that the United States of America was the most hated nation in the world, even above Israel. In other words, even if Israel were eliminated, radical Islam would still wage their terrorist war against the United States.

~ The Hatred of Nations ~

There are many reasons for this type of hatred. Yet, when one totals up all the acts and actions of the United States and weighs them against the many good things that the free world, led by America, has brought to the world at large, it seems unconvincing that such intense hatred should be based solely upon America's actions. After all, many other nations have also interfered in the affairs of other nations without engendering such virulent hatred.

Another country which seems to share in a great deal of the world's hatred is Britain. The reason most commonly given for hatred against Britain is their previous role as the world's greatest colonial power. Yet, a dispassionate view of history reveals that when Britain ruled a country, that country was usually blessed in many ways. In many cases, when Britain gave up rule, the country suffered. Some notable exceptions to this general observation are Canada, Australia, and New Zealand; who continue to have stable governments, prosperous people, and freedom. Besides, it has been a long time since Britain wielded colonial rule. To think that it might still be a source of hatred among people who never even knew colonialism firsthand is highly questionable.

Anger and frustration with the policies of America are understandable. Many Americans, including ourselves, are also frustrated from time to time with the actions and policies of our government, and we deplore the sex and violence which emanates from the television and film industry. But that does not answer the fundamental question: From whence comes this unrestrained hatred against America? We believe the answer lies partially in an understanding of the ethnic origins of many of our people.

~ The Melting Pot ~

America is usually characterized as a melting pot of many different peoples, all of whom have come to the 'New World' in search of a better life. A simple look at the ethnic makeup of our society confirms this view. Ethnically and culturally America is probably the most diverse nation in the world;

although much of Western Europe seems to be quickly catching up in this respect. For over two centuries people have flowed into America from many different countries. They came seeking freedom and prosperity. Even today, many people are risking their lives to become Americans. Why then the intense hatred? When viewed in this manner it would seem that America should be the most loved nation rather than the most hated.

We believe the answer has a spiritual basis, for it cannot be reasoned out solely on a physical or worldly level. We believe there are events occurring on earth which are strongly opposed by certain dark spiritual forces and that those forces wish to conceal their actions from the general public. As long as people look for an answer in the physical, those spiritual forces can continue to accomplish their objectives undetected. However, once they become exposed, those dark spiritual forces lose their power.

~ Early Immigration ~

The European immigration, to the North American continent, originally came from England, France, and Spain. The English settled primarily in what is now the continental United States and parts of Canada, the French in what is now the Canadian province of Quebec and portions of the northern United States (also in Louisiana), and the Spanish in Mexico, Central America, and the southwestern United States.

However, it was not long before other European nations also contributed to the influx of immigrants. Many came from Germany, others from Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. Southern Europe also contributed its share. Many Africans came to North America as slaves, giving the continent its first real taste of racial diversity. Later on there were migrations from China and Japan. Still later came people from other Asiatic countries such as India. More recently, there have been immigrants from Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. South and Central America have also contributed many people to the American citizenry.

Despite all of these influxes of various races and ethnic groups, the United States has always been controlled by descendants from the European nations, primarily those of British origin. This, along with a common language, has contributed to the close tie which Americans have always felt with Great Britain and our northern neighbor, Canada.

~ Another Hatred ~

As previously stated, the other nation that is on the most hated list (along with the United States) is Israel. The hatred there is more personal and involves hatred, not just for a nation, but for the Jewish people in general. This hatred is equally intense, and possibly even more difficult to understand, since Israel is far from being a super power that wields great influence throughout the world. The hatred against the Jewish people reached its twentieth century zenith in Nazi Germany, when millions of Jews were exterminated for the simple reason they were Jews.

From a strictly physical point of view, it is easier to understand the hatred against America than that against the Jews and Israel. At least there is the excuse that the United

States is a rich nation with great power and influence, which is sometimes misused to the detriment of smaller and weaker nations. However, the Jews constitute a very, very small group of people (about eighteen million in a world of seven billion). In addition, Israel is just a tiny nation (about the size of the state of New Jersey) surrounded by millions of mostly hostile Arabs.

Both hatreds (against America and Israel) are unreasonable, and, we believe, a part of the answer as to why this is so, can be found by understanding who we are.

~ Who Are We? ~

The answer to the question, Who are we? can be found in the Scriptures and in history by going back to the time of *Avraham* אַבְרָהָם (Ahv'-rah-hahm - Abraham) and continuing down through the centuries. What we are experiencing today is a hatred that began nearly four thousand years ago in the Middle East.

Avram אַבְרָם (Ahv'-ram' = Abram, as he was originally named), who became known as the father of the faithful, and his wife *Sarai* שָׂרַי (Sah-rye') were both getting old and they had no children. When *Avram* was seventy-five years old (and *Sarai* was sixty-five), God promised that he would yet have innumerable physical descendants:

"Now the LORD [YHVH] had said to Abram: ... 'I will make you a great nation; ...'" (Gen. 12:1-2)

Avram waited but nothing happened, no son was born of his seed. So he questioned God about the promise:

"After these things the word of the LORD [YHVH] came to Abram in a vision, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.'

"But Abram said, 'Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?'"

"Then Abram said, 'Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!'"

"And behold, the word of the LORD [YHVH] came to him, saying, 'This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.'

"Then He brought him outside and said, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.'"

"And he believed in the LORD [YHVH], and He accounted it to him for righteousness." (Gen. 15:1-6)

Ten years passed and still no child was born to *Avram* and *Sarai*. So *Sarai* decided to take matters into her own hands rather than to wait on God. *Sarai* gave *Avram* her handmaid *Hagar* הָגָר (Hah-gahr') as a concubine (a wife of a lesser status) and *Avram* sired a son by her:

"Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived."

(Gen. 16:3-4a)

This was the beginning of the hatred which we see evident in the world today:

"And when she [*Hagar*] saw that she had conceived, her mistress [*Sarai*] became despised in her eyes."

(Gen. 16:4b)

As a result, *Sarai* treated Hagar harshly and Hagar ran away, but God sent her back and told her to submit to the harsh treatment of *Sarai*, which she apparently did. And so, the seed of hatred was planted and it began to sprout and take root. Several months later *Hagar* bore a son and named him *Ishmael* יִשְׁמָעֵאל (Eesh'-mah-ehl). He is the progenitor of many of the modern day Arabs:

"And the Angel of the LORD [YHVH] said to her:

'Behold, you are with child,

And you shall bear a son.

You shall call his name Ishmael,

Because the LORD [YHVH] has heard your affliction.

He shall be a wild man;

His hand shall be against every man,

And every man's hand against him.

And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

(Gen. 16:11-12)

And so, today, the descendants of *Ishmael* dwell in the Middle East, all around the nation of Israel, while some of them dwell within the very borders of Israel. The literal translation of verse twelve is that *Ishmael* would be "*a wild ass*" פָּרָא (peh-reh', Strong's #6501). This statement alone helps to partially describe today's situation.

Some fourteen years later God came through with His promise to *Avram* and *Sarai* (now *Avraham* and *Sarah*) when a son *Yitzchak* יִצְחָק (Yeet'-sock = Isaac) was born to them. *Ishmael* hated *Yitzchak* because he knew that the birthright promise was to be given to *Yitzchak* instead of to him:

"So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. Therefore she said to Abraham, 'Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac.'" (Gen. 21:8-10)

Ishmael and *Hagar* were cast out from the presence of *Avraham* and the hatred within the heart of *Ishmael* continued to grow.

~ Increased Hatred ~

The hatred intensified even more in the next generation when *Yitzchak's* wife *Rivkah* רִבְקָה (Reev'-kah = Rebecca) gave birth to twin sons, *Esav* עֵשָׂו (Eh-sahv' = Esau) and *Ya'acov* יַעֲקֹב (Yah-ah-cove' = Jacob). *Esav* was the firstborn of the twin boys and he had the right to both the birthright and the chief family blessing. However, *Esav* despised his birthright and sold it to *Ya'acov* for a bowl of lentil stew:

"Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. And Esau said to Jacob, 'Please

feed me with that same red *stew*, for I am weary.' Therefore his name was called Edom.

"But Jacob said, 'Sell me your birthright as of this day.'

"And Esau said, 'Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?'

"Then Jacob said, 'Swear to me as of this day.' So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright." (Gen. 25:29-34)

Later on, *Ya'acov*, under the tutelage of his mother *Rivkah*, tricked his then blind father *Yitzhak* into giving him the blessing of the firstborn, which also should have gone to *Esav*. God allowed this to happen because *Esav*, "...despised his birthright." So another hatred was born, this time between the descendants of *Esav* and the descendants of *Ya'acov*:

"So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, 'The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.'" (Gen. 27:41)

Of course, *Esav* never carried out his plan for murder. However, the hatred continued on through his descendants when the Amalekites (named after *Amalek* עֲמֶלֶק (Ah'-mah-lehk) the grandson of *Esav*) became the very worst of the enemies of the children of Israel as they were coming out of Egyptian slavery:

"These were the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn son of Esau, were Chief Teman, Chief Omar, Chief Zepho, Chief Kenaz, Chief Korah, Chief Gatam, and Chief Amalek." (Gen. 36:15-16a)

The Amalekites were the people who attacked the children of Israel in the wilderness:

"Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim." (Gen. 17:8)

This was an unprovoked attack on the children of Israel and God promised that He would never forget what they had done to His people:

"So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. Then the LORD [YHVH] said to Moses, 'Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.'

"And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD-Is-My-Banner; for he said, 'Because the LORD [YHVH] has sworn: the LORD [YHVH] will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.'" (Gen. 17:13-16)

In Jewish tradition it is said that every generation of Jews will have to fight the Amalekites under God's banner. Today is no exception.

~ Other Family Problems ~

Two other nations were created through the daughters of *Lot* לוֹט (Loht), the nephew of *Avraham*. After the destruction of *Sodom* סֹדֹם (Soh-dohm') and *Gomarrh* עִמֹרָה (Ah-moh-rah'), *Lot* and his daughters fled to a cave. The daughters then tricked *Lot* into fathering their sons:

"Now the firstborn said to the younger, 'Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father.'" (Gen. 19:31-32)

A son was born to each of the daughters, both of whom became progenitors of Middle Eastern nations:

"The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the people of Ammon to this day." (Gen. 19:37-38)

It was *Balak* בָּלָק (Bah-lahkh'), the king of *Moav* מוֹאָב (Moh-ahv' = Moab) who hired *Balaam* בִּלְעָם (Beel-ahm') to curse Israel:

"... And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.

"Then he sent messengers to Balaam ... saying: 'Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me! Therefore please come at once, curse this people for me, for they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed.'" (Num. 22:4-6)

The people of *Moav* were steeped in pagan worship and they became instrumental in drawing the children of Israel into false worship:

"Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD [YHVH] was aroused against Israel." (Num. 25:1-3)

During the time of the Judges, God used both the people of *Moav* and *Ammon* עַמּוֹן (Ahm-mohn') to punish the children of Israel for disobedience:

"And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD [YHVH]. So the LORD [YHVH] strengthened Eglon king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD [YHVH]. Then he gathered to himself the people of Ammon and Amalek, went and defeated Israel, and took possession of the City of Palms. So the children of Israel served Eglon king of Moab eighteen years." (Judges 3:12-14)

Today the capitol of the nation of Jordan is called *Ammon*. It is believed that many of the Jordanians are descended from *Ammon* and possibly also from *Moav*.

~ Hatred From Outside ~

It was not just hatred from within the family of *Avraham* that plagued the children of Israel, there was also hatred from without. These outsiders became enemies primarily because of fear, for the people who lived in the land of *Canaan* כְּנַעַן (Keh-nah-ahn') knew they were marked by God to be driven out of the land in which they were dwelling. The *Canaanite* people descended from several different tribes. However, they were primarily descendants of *Ham* חָם (Hahm); one of the sons of *Noach* נֹחַ (Noh-ach' = Noah):

"Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and Heth; the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed.

"And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha." (Gen. 10:15-19)

The fear which overtook the Canaanites also came upon the descendants of *Edom* עֲדָם (Eeh-dohm' equals *Esav*) and *Moav*:

"The people [inhabitants of Canaan] will hear and be afraid; Sorrow will take hold of the inhabitants of Philistia. Then the chiefs of Edom will be dismayed; The mighty men of Moab, Trembling will take hold of them; All the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away. Fear and dread will fall on them; By the greatness of Your arm They will be as still as a stone, Till Your people pass over, O LORD [YHVH], Till the people pass over Whom You have purchased. You will bring them in and plant them In the mountain of Your inheritance, In the place, O LORD [YHVH], which You have made For Your own dwelling, The sanctuary, O LORD [YHVH], which Your hands have established." (Ex. 15:14-17)

Another chief enemy of the children of Israel were the *Pelishtim* פְּלִשְׁתִּים (Peh-leesh-teem' = Philistines). The origin of the *Pelishtim* is unknown to historians, but they are believed to have come from the island of Crete, the Aegean Islands, or the Greek mainland. The prophet Amos connected the *Pelishtim* with *Caphtor* כַּפְתֹּר (Kahf-tohr):

"Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, The Philistines from Caphtor, And the Syrians from Kir?" (Amos 9:7b)

The table of nations, found in Genesis 10, lists the *Caphtorim* (Kahf-toh-reem') as being descended from *Mitzraim* מִצְרַיִם (Meetz-rah-eem' = Egyptians), who is one of the sons of *Ham*:

"Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, and Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim)." (Gen. 10:13-14)

The modern word 'Palestine' is the Latin form of *Pelishtim*. A few of today's Palestinians are probably descendant from the ancient *Pelishtim*, but most of them have come into the land God gave to Israel within the last fifty to seventy-five years in order to find work as the Jewish economy developed.

~ Internal Problems ~

Like many families, the children of Israel also had internal problems which have plagued them down through the centuries. These family problems grew when *Yoseif* יוֹסֵף (Yoh-safe' = Joseph) brought back a bad report about his half-brothers, *Dan*, *Naphtali*, *Gad*, and *Asher*, to his father *Ya'acov*:

"This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father." (Gen. 37:2)

Not only did *Yoseif* bring back a bad report about his brothers, he was also the most loved son of their father; a situation which created much jealousy:

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him." (Gen. 37:2-4)

The problems were compounded when *Yoseif* related to his brothers his dreams of tribal domination:

"Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more." (Gen. 37:5)

The hatred was so intense *Yoseif's* brothers actually wanted to kill him:

"Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him. Then they said to one another, 'Look, this dreamer is coming! Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, "Some wild beast has devoured him." We shall see what will become of his dreams!'"

(Gen. 37:18-20)

One brother, *Reuvain* רְאוּבֵן (Rh-oo'-vayn = Reuben), tried to save *Yoseif*, but the other brothers, under the leadership of *Yehudah* יְהוּדָה (Yeh-hoo'-dah = Judah), had already sold him into slavery:

"Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him

to the Ishmaelites for twenty *shekels* of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt." (Gen. 37:28)

Many years later, *Yehudah* and *Yoseif* were reconciled in Egypt when *Yoseif* revealed himself to his brothers, who had come seeking food. This occurred when *Yehudah* offered himself as a slave in place of *Yoseif's* full brother *Binyamin* בִּנְיָמִן (Been-yah-meen' = Benjamin):

"Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?" (Gen. 44:33-34)

While the brothers, *Yoseif* and *Yehudah*, did reconcile in Egypt, their descendants have remained somewhat at loggerheads even to this day. Anciently, this animosity boiled forth when the northern ten tribes of Israel (known as the House of Israel), led by the tribe of *Ephraim* אֶפְרַיִם (Ehf-rah-eem', the descendants of *Yoseif*), rebelled against the southern tribes, (the House of Judah) led by the tribe of *Yehudah*. It is interesting to note that the first time the word *Yehudim* יְהוּדִים (Yeh-hoo-deem' (translated as Jews)) is used in Scripture, they are at war with Israel:

"Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and drave the Jews [Yehudim] from Elath: ..." (II Kings 16:5-6 KJV)

This animosity is not going to last forever, for it is prophesied that one day *Yehudah* and *Ephraim* will be united in brotherhood. This will occur when King Messiah (*Y'shua HaMashiach* = Jesus the Messiah) comes back to bring peace to the earth:

"There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.
The Spirit of the LORD [YHVH] shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of
the LORD [YHVH].

...
Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins,
And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

...
'And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a banner to the people;
For the Gentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be glorious.'
He will set up a banner for the nations,
And will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
And gather together the dispersed of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.
Also the envy of Ephraim shall depart,
And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off;
Ephraim shall not envy Judah,
And Judah shall not harass Ephraim."

(Isa. 11:1-2, 5, 10-13)

~ Avraham's Seed ~

If this prophecy, given by Isaiah (which is to occur when Messiah returns), is to come to pass, then *Ephraim* must still exist somewhere on this earth separate from *Yehudah* (Judah = the Jews). Currently, there are no nations who officially claim to be one of the lost tribes of the House of Israel.

Most mainstream Jews claim that the twelve tribes were all reunited when the house of Judah returned from Babylonian captivity. They say the descendants of the House of Israel are to be found only within modern day Judaism. However, many of the Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox Jews teach just the opposite. They believe that the House of Israel is scattered throughout the nations of the earth and have yet to return to the Promised Land. This Orthodox view has Biblical support when one understands more fully the meaning of the following passage:

"Now the LORD [YHVH] had said to Abram:

'Get out of your country,

From your family

And from your father's house,

To a land that I will show you.

I will make you a great nation;

I will bless you

And make your name great;

And you shall be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you,

And I will curse him who curses you;

And in you all the families of the earth shall

be blessed."

(Gen. 12:1-3)

A key word to understanding the dispersion of the House of Israel may be found in the words 'be blessed' which occur at the end of verse three. According to author Eddie Chumney, on pages 438-39 of his book *Restoring the Two Houses of Israel*, the Hebrew should be rendered somewhat differently:

"However, in Hebrew, this verse is more profound in understanding *how* ALL FAMILIES of the earth would be 'blessed' through the seed of Abraham (*Avraham*). In Hebrew, the phrase in Genesis (*Bereishit*) 12:3 that reads in English as '*And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed*' is written:

"*Ve nivrecu bekah kol mishpachot ha-adamah.*"

"The Hebrew word '*nivrecu*' is translated in most English texts as '*be blessed*.' However, the usual Hebrew word for '*be blessed*' is not *nivrecu*. It is *yivrecu*. The word '*nivrecu*' is the 'niph'al' conjugation of the Hebrew word, *barak*. The Hebrew word *barak* has a deeper meaning than just 'blessed.' ...

"In five places in the Talmud and other Rabbinic literature, *nivrecu* is translated as '**grafted** or intermingled.' In the Orthodox Jewish *ArtScroll Tenakh Series*, Volume 1, page 432, it is written:

"There is ... an opinion ... that the verb (*ve nivrecu*) in Genesis 12:3 is related to the root *barak* as in the Mishnaic term *mavreek* meaning to "intermingle or graft." ... As Heidenheim explains it, this

interpretation is inspired by the fact that nowhere else besides here do we find *barak* in the sense of blessing in the niphal conjugation, while in the sense of "grafting" it is common in that form.'

Perhaps a better translation of this verse would read:

"And in you all families of the earth shall be intermingled [or grafted]." (Gen. 12:3c)

This information has led us to understand that the physical seed of *Avraham* (through his descendants, *Yitzchak*, and *Ya'acov*, which includes the Ten Lost Tribes of the House of Israel) has been scattered throughout all the nations of the earth; no matter what their race or ethnicity. We believe that many of the people who call themselves Christians may be descended from these intermingled people.

While this premise can certainly be argued, nevertheless the *Brit Chadasha* (Breet Hah-dah-shah' = the ReNewed Covenant) also explains that if one accepts *Y'shua* (Jesus) as their Savior and the promised *Mashiach* (Messiah), they automatically become 'grafted' into the Commonwealth of Israel whether they are of the physical 'seed' of *Avraham* or not:

"Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh -- who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands -- that at that time you were without Christ [Messiah], being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus [Messiah Y'shua] you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ [Messiah]." (Eph. 2:11-13)

It is by God's grace that, through faith in *Y'shua HaMashiach*, all people are given the privilege of becoming part of the nation or Commonwealth of Israel. When this occurs, the Gentile Believer (no matter what his ethnic origin might be) becomes a full fledged Israelite without having to undergo Jewish proselytisation or physical circumcision:

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus [Messiah Y'shua]. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ [Messiah] have put on Christ [Messiah]. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus [Messiah Y'shua]. And if you are Christ's [Messiah's], then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:26-29)

It is interesting to note what *Shaul* שָׁאוּל (Shah-ool' = Saul aka Paul) wrote concerning those 'Gentiles' who were grafted into the Olive Tree of Israel:

"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles [nations] has come in. And so all Israel will be saved [including the grafted in Gentiles], as it is written:

**'The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob [Israel];
For this is My covenant with them [Israel],**

When I take away their [Israel's] sins."

(Rom. 11:25-27)

We believe that it is quite probable that many of the so-called 'Gentiles' who are grafted into the Commonwealth of Israel through *Y'shua*, are also physical descendants of *Avraham*, *Yitzchak*, and *Ya'acov* and are part of the 'lost' ten tribes of Israel which were divorced by God:

"Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also." (Jer. 3:8)

~ Where is the House of Israel? ~

If this interpretation of Scripture is correct, then that part of the literal physical seed of *Avraham* which makes up the lost House of Israel, is spread throughout the world. It is to be found in all races, nations, and ethnic groups. Because of intermarriage, they look just like the people with whom they currently dwell. They can be any skin color (white, black, brown, yellow, or red).

History also indicates there were descendants of the House of Israel who stayed together and formed the core people of some of our modern nations. Today, there is a growing number of Bible teachers and historians who are coming to believe that the Lost Tribes of the House of Israel can be identified nationally, in addition to their widespread dispersion throughout all the nations of the earth. The general consensus is that great numbers of them (but certainly not all), especially the descendants of *Yoseif* (through his two sons *Ephraim* and *Manashe* מְנַשֶּׁה (Mah-nah-shay' = Manasseh)), can be found within the peoples of Britain, Western Europe, and the United States.

~ Spiritual Hatred ~

We believe that a great many of the American people are descended from the House of Israel (or grafted into it), and that the blind hatred displayed by the modern descendants of *Ishmael*, *Esau*, *Moav*, *Ammon*, and others, is an unappeasable hatred that knows no reason; born from a dark spiritual source that had its beginning in ancient times. We see this hatred encompassing the modern nation of Israel (*Yehudah*) and those nations of Western Europe (especially Britain) and America (Canada, Australia, and New Zealand included), who have, dwelling in their midst, great numbers of Israelites. We are not talking about the Jewish populations found in those countries, rather those citizens who are descended from the House of Israel as opposed to the House of Judah. (Remember that all Jews are Israelites, but not all Israelites are Jews.) From this perspective, the terrorist attacks upon the World Trade Center and the Pentagon become more understandable, though even less reasonable.

The Arab descendants of *Avraham's* collateral lines are largely poor and living lives with little hope, while the 'lost' tribes of Israel, especially the descendants of *Yoseif*, are rich and increased with material goods, blessed by God beyond all

other people. This too, was prophesied to occur in the 'last days:'

"And Jacob called his sons and said, 'Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days:

**'Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob,
And listen to Israel your father.**

...

**'Joseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a well;
His branches run over the wall.
The archers have bitterly grieved him,
Shot at him and hated him.
But his bow remained in strength,
And the arms of his hands were made strong
By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob
(From there *is* the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),
By the God of your father who will help you,
And by the Almighty who will bless you
With blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that lies beneath,
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.
The blessings of your father
Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors,
Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.
They shall be on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of him who was separate
from his brothers.'" (Gen. 49:1-2, 22-26)**

YHVH (our God) has truly blessed America and Britain; the sons of *Yoseif*, not because we deserve it, but because of the faithfulness of our ancestors *Avraham*, *Yitzchak*, *Ya'acov*, and *Yoseif*. Remember, that of all the sons of *Ya'acov* (aka Israel), *Yoseif* is the one who overcame temptation (with Potifar's wife) and was made second in command over the most powerful nation on earth. The life of *Yoseif* is a picture of Messiah.

No wonder the other descendants of *Avraham* and *Yitzchak* (*Ishmael* and *Esav*) continue their hatred until this day. They seem to have a spiritual knowledge deep down within their being that the blessings of *YHVH* are not for them but for the descendants of *Jacob*. What most of them do not realize is that they too could share in these blessings (especially for the future) by accepting *Y'shua* as their personal Savior and promised Messiah, and thereby being grafted into the Commonwealth of Israel.

~ Israel's Calling ~

It cannot be denied that the people of North America and Western Europe have been abundantly blessed in material things. As already mentioned, we believe this is because their citizenry contains so many members of the lost House of Israel. Their blessing comes from God because of His promise to the Patriarchs, as can be seen by the blessing *Yitzchak* (Isaac) bestowed upon *Ya'acov* (Jacob):

**""Therefore may God give you
Of the dew of heaven,
Of the fatness of the earth,
And plenty of grain and wine.
Let peoples serve you,**

**And nations bow down to you.
Be master over your brethren,
And let your mother's sons bow down to you.
Cursed *be* everyone who curses you,
And blessed *be* those who bless you!""**

(Gen. 27:28-29)

If it is true that the blessings of Britain and America have come to us as a result of our righteous ancestors, then why would God now allow the descendants of *Ishmael* and *Esav* to begin bringing destruction upon Israel? The answer lies in understanding that God's chosen people, Israel, are supposed to behave differently from the people of the other nations, for with blessings come behavioral responsibility. If those responsibilities are not met, the result is unimaginable curses.

~ A Set Apart Nation ~

When God called the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, He told them they were to be a special, set-apart nation. They were not to conduct their affairs (neither internal nor external) like the other nations of the world. He promised that if they would keep covenant with Him and follow all of His instructions, they would be a special treasure to Him and He would make them a nation of priests:

""Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."" (Ex. 19:6)

In addition, Israel was to be a nation that was above all other nations in all facets of life; physical, moral, and spiritual:

""Also today the LORD [*YHVH*] has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that *you* should keep all His commandments, and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be a holy people to the LORD [*YHVH*] your God, just as He has spoken." (Deut. 26:18-19)

Because of God's covenant with Israel, and their obedience to Him, all the other nations would stand in fear and awe of Israel:

""The LORD [*YHVH*] will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD [*YHVH*] your God and walk in His ways. Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD [*YHVH*], and they shall be afraid of you." (Deut. 28:9-10)

In other words, it is Israel's responsibility to obey God. The initial blessings came as a result of the righteousness of the Patriarchs and God's promises to them. However, those blessings are conditional, and the condition for retaining them is obedience to God's *Torah* (law). If Israel would but hold to the *Torah*, then they would have nothing to fear from any of

their enemies, for God would be on their side. Then Israel's enemies would submit to them:

"Happy are you, O Israel!

Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD [YHVH],

The shield of your help

And the sword of your majesty!

Your enemies shall submit to you,

And you shall tread down their high places."

(Deut. 33:29)

Not only would the other nations have respect and awe for Israel (if Israel kept the commandments of God) they would also want to come and worship the God of all creation who had blessed His people so abundantly:

"Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name's sake (for they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this temple, hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name."

(I Kings 8:41-43)

~ Blessings and Curses ~

If a father does not love his child he may not discipline him in the manner needed, but will let him do whatever he pleases. The same is true with God. One of the clear signs that God loves the lost tribes of Israel is that He brings punishment upon them when they disobey Him:

"Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD [YHVH] your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD [YHVH] your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known."

(Deut. 11:26-28)

One of the primary causes for punishment is the breaking of the first two commandments:

"I am the LORD [YHVH] your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or 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; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them."

(Ex. 20:2-4)

Today the Western world (Europe, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc.) vacillates between two Gods, YHVH and Mammon (the pursuit of material wealth). However, it is written:

"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

(Luke 16:13)

Is it any wonder that the first target of the September 11th terrorists was the World Trade Center, the self proclaimed center for wealth in the world? And the second target was the Pentagon, the center for all of America's meddling in the affairs of other nations? Perhaps, God is sending us a message.

Chapter 28 of Deuteronomy lists all of the blessings that will be Israel's when they obey and all the curses that will be theirs if they disobey. The final curse to be given, when all of the others have failed to bring about *teshuvah* (teh-shoe'-vah = repentance and return to God), is captivity and dispersion among the nations:

"And it shall be, that just as the LORD [YHVH] rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD [YHVH] will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. Then the LORD [YHVH] will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known -- wood and stone."

(Deut. 28:63-64)

This punishment was already meted out to the House of Israel when they were taken captive and removed from the Promised Land in 722 BCE and dispersed throughout the world.

It is interesting to note that *Yehudah* (the House of Judah) has already undergone two different dispersions; the first in 586 BCE when the Babylonian Empire destroyed the First Temple and took the leadership of the country captive, and again in the period from 70 to 135 CE when the Second Temple was destroyed and the Jews were expelled from the Holy Land for nearly 1900 years. Is it possible that the House of Israel (Europe and America), who has been reaping the benefits of many years of blessings, will once again have to go into captivity as a result of her sins? Or will the House of Israel do *teshuvah* and return to the precepts of God as found in the *Torah*?

Only time will tell, but we expect it will be the former.

~ The Tents of Israel's Enemies ~

The Psalms are generally thought of as a source of spiritual inspiration, and so they are. However, many of them, such as Psalm 83, also have prophetic implications. This Psalm names ten nations that are prophesied to come against the nation of Israel. It is interesting that all of them were originally found in the Middle East, although their exact location today is debatable. These nations are not only portrayed as the enemies of Israel, they are also pictured as the very enemies of God, and He is the One that will be called upon to defeat them when the time for that comes:

"A Song.

A Psalm of Asaph.

Do not keep silent, O God!

Do not hold Your peace,

And do not be still, O God!

For behold, Your enemies make a tumult;

And those who hate You have lifted up their head.

They have taken crafty counsel against Your people,

**And consulted together against Your sheltered ones.
They have said, 'Come, and let us cut them off from
being a nation,**

That the name of Israel may be remembered no more.'

For they have consulted together with one consent;

They form a confederacy against You:

The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites;

Moab and the Hagrites;

Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek;

Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;

Assyria also has joined with them;

They have helped the children of Lot.

Selah

Deal with them as *with* Midian,

As *with* Sisera,

As *with* Jabin at the Brook Kishon,

Who perished at En Dor,

***Who became as* refuse on the earth.**

Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeeb,

Yes, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,

Who said, 'Let us take for ourselves

The pastures of God for a possession.'

O my God, make them like the whirling dust,

Like the chaff before the wind!

As the fire burns the woods,

And as the flame sets the mountains on fire,

So pursue them with Your tempest,

And frighten them with Your storm.

Fill their faces with shame,

That they may seek Your name, O LORD [YHVH].

Let them be confounded and dismayed forever;

Yes, let them be put to shame and perish,

**That they may know that You, whose name alone is
the LORD [YHVH],**

Are the Most High over all the earth."

(Psalm 83:1-18)

While *Asaph* requests that God destroy the nations which are named, he also prays that the individuals of those nations be brought to the knowledge of the one true God of all the earth and to learn the name of *YHVH*. Today those enemies do not know the name *YHVH*, instead many of them worship a god they call *Allah*.

~ Amalek United ~

What makes the descendants of the natural enemies of Israel even more dangerous today is the fact that they are now united under the banner of a single religion, *Islam*.

Some radical sects of *Islam* (the *Muslim* religion) teach that martyrdom is rewarded in the next life with instant entrance into Paradise and being presented with seventy (some say seventy-two) virgins. This is a powerful incentive to poor, hormone raging young men without much hope for a decent life in this world. (Why should someone who believes such a tale wait for a natural death when they could just strap on a bomb and enjoy those virgins right away?) This is radical!

The ultimate source of their hatred is not just from within the people themselves, its root is in the spiritual world. This is not merely the hatred born of the ancient brothers and cousins,

rather it originates with an even more ancient hatred of the Adversary (*HaSatan*) for God Himself. It is this foundational hatred, in the spiritual world, which manifests itself today in the hatred of the people of these ten nations (Psalm 83) for the children of Israel; God's chosen people.

If Believing Americans and Europeans (as well as Believers in other nations of the world) are descended from the House of Israel (or grafted into the Commonwealth as full citizens), then we too have become a part of the "Chosen People;" the seed of *Avraham*. For this reason, *HaSatan* would like to see all of us eliminated from the scene so that (in his mind) he could take over complete control of the world through those who are not part of God's family.

~ Innocents Abroad ~

It must be remembered that the vast majority of the one billion people who subscribe to the religion of *Islam* are not part of the radical element. Most Muslim's are like most Christians, they have grown up in a religion of which they know little about other than the five daily prayers which they are commanded to perform. Most Muslim's know little or nothing about the *Koran* (the Islamic holy book), just as most Christians know little or nothing about the Bible. By and large, these nominal Muslims abhor the violence that has been perpetrated in the name of their god, *Allah*; especially those who live in peace and prosperity in America or Europe. This is not the case, of course, in Israel (and several Muslim ruled countries) where there was dancing in the streets over the destruction of the Twin Towers.

There is a saying in the Muslim world: "First Saturday, then Sunday." What this means is that first they will eliminate the people who worship on Saturday (the Jews) and then they will destroy the people who worship on Sunday (the Christians).

Do not be deceived, the ultimate goal of radical Islam is world domination. The difference between Believers and Muslims is that Believers (for the most part) are willing to wait for Messiah to come and bring world domination through the Kingdom of God, while Muslims believe it is they who must go to war for *Allah* in order to bring about world domination under him.

~ The Real Enemy ~

Shaul addressed the fact that our real enemy is not each other but the dark spiritual forces which go unseen:

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Eph. 6:10-12)

While Believers may heed the warning of this passage, the average American, who knows little or nothing about the Bible, does not have a clue as to what he is up against. Instead, the average person seeks a worldly, physical solution to the problem of terrorism. At this point in time it looks, to most

people, as though a broad coalition of the nations of the world (especially if it includes many Islamic nations) is the best answer to eliminating the terrorist threat. However, we believe that by bringing the Islamic nations into such a coalition (to the exclusion of Israel), the United States is making a pact with the Adversary (*HaSatan*). This is the same mistake which the House of Israel made when they signed a peace treaty with their enemy, Assyria, in the eighth century BCE:

**"And the pride of Israel testifies to his face,
But they do not return to the LORD [YHVH] their God,
Nor seek Him for all this.
Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without sense --
They call to Egypt,
They go to Assyria.
Wherever they go, I will spread My net on them;
I will bring them down like birds of the air;
I will chastise them
According to what their congregation has heard.
Woe to them, for they have fled from Me!
Destruction to them,
Because they have transgressed against Me!
Though I redeemed them,
Yet they have spoken lies against Me." (Hosea 7:10-13)**

God will punish His people Israel because they are in need of it, because they have rejected Him by casting Him out of all public places and worship Mammon instead. The god of this world is not YHVH; the Creator God of the universe. Rather it is the one who has perpetrated this terrorism in the first place:

"But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ [Messiah], who is the image of God, should shine on them." (II Cor. 4:3-4)

The god of this age has some degree of control over the entire world, including most of the physical descendants of the House of Israel and the House of Judah. Believers too can be swayed by the influence of this world's god unless they continually resist his advances, for:

"...the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one." (I John 5:19)

Since the 'god of this age' tried to entice *Y'shua* into disqualifying Himself during His temptation in the wilderness, is it not possible that he will also try and tempt us to disqualify ourselves from entering into the Kingdom?

"Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.'" (Matt. 4:8-9)

The kingdoms of the world were *HaSatan's* to give, because he is the god of this world (age). They are still his to give, but only until *Y'shua* comes to take possession of all the nations on earth, as it is written:

"Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world

have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ [Messiah], and He shall reign forever and ever!"

(Rev. 11:15)

Y'shua Himself called *HaSatan* the ruler of this world:

"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me."

(John 14:30)

Despite the fact that *HaSatan* is the god of this evil age, YHVH will take control when the time is ripe.

~ God's Punishment ~

The Scriptures teach that whenever the children of Israel became wicked YHVH would use Gentile nations to punish them. He used the Assyrians to take the House of Israel captive in 722 BCE, and He used the Babylonians to do the same to the House of Judah in 586 BCE. In 70 CE it was the Romans. It should come as no surprise if He were to do something similar today.

When the House of Israel was taken captive it was the result of over two hundred years of rule by kings which "did evil in the sight of the LORD." It is common knowledge that the people of a nation tend to emulate their leaders, so if a leader is evil many of the people will also practice evil. In like manner, if a leader is good, many people under him will want to follow after righteousness.

The trouble in the House of Israel started with King Jeroboam and ended with King Hoshea (the first king and the last king). According to Henry H. Halley, in his *Bible Handbook*, fifteen of the nineteen kings of the House of Israel were rated as 'bad.' King Omri was 'Extra Bad' and King Ahab was 'The Worst.' The only two kings who received a little better rating were Joram and Jehu; they were rated as 'Bad Mostly.' (Not a very good track record for the original set of rulers over the House of Israel.)

The question we need to ask ourselves is this: How about the Presidents of the United States? How would God look upon them? Would they all be considered to have done 'evil' in His sight, or were some of them 'good'? Remember that the criteria for rating a king 'good' was whether or not he turned himself and the people back to the true service and worship of God.

~ Assyria Punished Judah ~

The Assyrians were also used to punish the House of Judah, however they were not allowed to take the city of Jerusalem. That task was left to the Babylonians. However, the danger for any country who is used as the instrument of God's anger to punish his people Israel, is that if they go beyond what God requires they will end up being destroyed. This is what happened to Assyria when they overstepped their bounds in punishing Judah and then claimed it was all accomplished because of their own strength and that God had nothing to do with it:

**"Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger
And the staff in whose hand is My indignation.**

...

"Therefore it shall come to pass, when the LORD [YHVH] has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, *that He will say*, 'I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks.'

"For he says:

'By the strength of my hand I have done it,
And by my wisdom, for I am prudent;
Also I have removed the boundaries of the people,
And have robbed their treasuries;
So I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant *man*.

...

"'Shall the ax boast itself against him who chops
with it?
Or shall the saw exalt itself against him who saws
with it?
As if a rod could wield *itself* against those who lift it up,
Or as if a staff could lift up, *as if it were* not wood!
Therefore the Lord, the Lord of hosts,
Will send leanness among his fat ones;
And under his glory He will kindle a burning
Like the burning of a fire.
So the Light of Israel will be for a fire,
And his Holy One for a flame;
It will burn and devour His thorns and his briars in
one day.
And it will consume the glory of his forest and of
his fruitful field,
Both soul and body;
And they will be as when a sick man wastes away.
Then the rest of the trees of his forest
Will be so few in number
That a child may write them.'" (Isa. 10:5, 12-19)

This is not a very pretty sight for those who wish to be used by God to punish Israel, especially if their goal is total destruction, for YHVH will not allow His people to be destroyed. Rather, the purpose of God's punishment is to chasten the people of Israel so they will return to Him; to once again follow His instruction book (the *Torah*) and keep covenant with Him. Eventually this will happen, and when it does, YHVH will richly bless Israel in a measure far beyond the punishment received:

"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD of hosts: 'O My people, who dwell in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrian. He shall strike you with a rod and lift up his staff against you, in the manner of Egypt. For yet a very little while and the indignation will cease, as will My anger in their destruction.'

"And the LORD [YHVH] of hosts will stir up a scourge for him like the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb; *as* His rod was on the sea, so will He lift it up in the manner of Egypt.

"It shall come to pass in that day
That his burden will be taken away from your shoulder,
And his yoke from your neck,
And the yoke will be destroyed because of
the anointing oil.

...

"Behold, the Lord,
The LORD [YHVH] of hosts,
Will lop off the bough with terror;
Those of high stature *will be* hewn down,
And the haughty will be humbled." (Isa. 10:24-27, 33)

God rescued Jerusalem and the House of Judah in the sixth century BCE, He did it again in the 20th century for the House of Judah. We believe He will do it also for the House of Israel (Ephraim, His 'firstborn') in the twenty-first century CE.

~ The Cause of Captivity ~

The reason God originally took the House of Israel out of the Promised Land and scattered them among the nations is because of their many sins, which are enumerated in II Kings 17:

"For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD [YHVH] their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods, and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD [YHVH] had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

"Also the children of Israel secretly did against the LORD [YHVH] their God things that *were* not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower to fortified city. ...

"And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who *were* all around them, concerning whom the LORD [YHVH] had charged them that they should not do like them.

"So they left all the commandments of the LORD [YHVH] their God, ... practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD [YHVH], to provoke Him to anger."

(II Kings 17:7-9, 15-19)

Has America (and Europe) done any of these same things today? Without a doubt they have. We believe this is the reason that God allowed the Muslim terrorists to come against our nation on 9-11. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A WAKE UP CALL!!! So let us all wake up and do what we can to turn the morals of our country around into following the precepts set forth in the *Torah* thereby worshipping the God of the Universe. If we would only do this, our nation would be blessed beyond belief:

"O Israel, return to the LORD [YHVH] your God,
For you have stumbled because of your iniquity;
Take words with you,
And return to the LORD [YHVH].
Say to Him,
'Take away all iniquity;
Receive *us* graciously,
For we will offer the sacrifices of our lips.'"

(Hosea 14:1-2)

~ The Love of God ~

While it may seem right to feel hatred for the Islamic fundamentalists who perpetrate the attacks, we must remember that the people who oppose the House of Israel and the House of Judah walk in a spirit of disobedience; a place where all Believers once walked:

"And you *He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*"
(Eph. 2:1-3)

Like the Psalmist *Asaph* (in Psalm 83), we need to be able to pray that our sworn enemies will one day see the Light of the world and come to repentance for the terrible sins they have committed:

"For this *is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*"
(I Tim. 2:3-4)

The Adversary, *HaSatan*, has indeed blinded the eyes of the people of the world. Unfortunately, he has also blinded the eyes of the people of both houses of Israel as well, for the vast majority of our people do not know who they are and why all of this hatred is being directed toward them. They too need to come to repentance for their sins (worship of Mammon and other idols) and turn to God; even as do the terrorists:

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even the tax collectors do so?"

"Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."
(Matt. 5:43-48)

This may seem like a tall order, to be able to pray for those who want to see us destroyed. The temptation is great to hate in return, however, remember this:

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*"
(I Cor. 10:13)

We need to learn how to pray for our enemies, especially those who are most hateful towards us. Perhaps some of them might receive salvation and become a part of our family; part of the nation of Israel.

~ Summary ~

The hatred of the radical fundamentalist Moslems is not a rational hatred based upon real facts. Rather, it is a spiritual hatred that stems from very ancient animosities, guided and directed by *HaSatan* (the god of this present evil age). This hatred will continue unabated until one of two things happens: the modern day children of Israel repent and return to their God and receive the spiritual blessings which He has promised them, or until Messiah comes. In the meantime, we must be vigilant concerning the terrorist attacks that may yet come against us, all the while praying that our enemies will have their hatred turned to love.

Because the House of Israel does not know who they are, there is still a degree of animosity between Judah and Israel. This can be seen by the anti-Semitic feelings which some of the descendants of the House of Israel still harbor, and the suspicion which Judah (the modern day nation of Israel) holds concerning the ulterior motives of the United States and Britain. This will not be the case forever, for it is written:

"Behold, *the days are coming,*' says the LORD [YHVH],

**'That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness;
A King shall reign and prosper,
And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.
In His days Judah will be saved,
And Israel will dwell safely;
Now this *is His name by which He will be called:*
THE LORD [YHVH] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'"**

(Jer. 23:5-6)

The terminology here is quite instructive: "Judah will be saved." and "Israel will dwell safely." This is exactly what both of our nations need at this particular time in history. Ultimately, the victory will belong to the combined Houses of Israel and Judah, when God brings the counsel of the nations to naught:

**"The LORD [YHVH] brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.
The counsel of the LORD [YHVH] stands forever,
The plans of His heart to all generations.
Blessed *is the nation whose God is the LORD [YHVH],*
The people He has chosen as His own inheritance."**

(Psalm 33:10-12)

This will all come together when He brings about the reunion of the House of Israel and the House of Judah:

"Again the word of the LORD [YHVH] came to me, saying,

"As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.' Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand."

"And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, "Will you not show us what you *mean* by these?"-- say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.'"

"And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.

"Then say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. David My servant *shall be king over them*, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them.

""Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David *shall be* their prince forever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, the LORD [YHVH], sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore."" (Ezek. 37:15-28)

~ Personal Examination ~

Now is the time for each one of us to examine ourselves to see if there is any spot or wrinkle that needs to be removed from our wedding garment of righteousness. The following Psalm expresses this desire in words of great eloquence:

**"Blessed are those who keep justice,
And he who does righteousness at all times!
Remember me, O LORD [YHVH], with the favor
You have toward Your people;**

Oh, visit me with Your salvation,
That I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones,
That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation,
That I may glory with Your inheritance.
We have sinned with our fathers,
We have committed iniquity,
We have done wickedly.

...
"Save us, O LORD [YHVH] our God,
And gather us from among the Gentiles,
To give thanks to Your holy name,
And to triumph in Your praise.

Blessed *be* the LORD [YHVH] God of Israel
From everlasting to everlasting!
And let all the people say, 'Amen'

Praise the LORD [YHVH]!" (Psalm 106:3-6, 47-48)

Redemption will come only to those who are part of the Commonwealth of Israel. All of us (whether of the natural, physical seed of *Avraham*, *Yitzhak*, and *Ya'acov* or of purebred Gentile stock) must be grafted into the Olive Tree of Israel (see Rom. 11) if we want to be partakers of the Tree of Life; for it is the people of Israel who are truly God's very own people:

""Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For *there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You*, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And who *is* like Your people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name -- and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land -- before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, LORD [YHVH], have become their God." (II Sam. 7:22-24)

Pray for the reunion of Israel and Judah, and for the repentance and subsequent peace for all Israel.

Shalom.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

~ Fear Not ~

Be strong and of good courage,
Do not fear nor be afraid of them;
For the LORD your God,
He is the One who goes with you.
He will not leave you nor forsake you.
Deuteronomy 31:6



No single emotion can debilitate a person quite as profoundly as fear. When a person becomes afraid, due to some unexpected and/or dangerous situation, almost all other functions of the mind seem to cease, until the initial intense fear response can be sufficiently overcome so that a plan can be developed and action taken to alleviate the fear source.

~ Acute Fear Response ~

Some time back, an acquaintance told us about a fearful event he experienced a number of years ago, when someone came into a Messianic Synagogue in Texas and began randomly shooting a rifle above the heads of the people assembled there. He immediately dropped to the floor in total fear. This reaction was normal, and one which God has programmed into human beings so they are able to react quickly when required to protect themselves in a dangerous situation.

He went on to say, however, that very shortly a calmness came over him and he began to look for ways in which he could further protect not only himself, but those around him. He credited that reaction to the *Ruach HaKodesh* רוח הקדש (Rue-akh' Ha Koh-dehsh' = the Holy Spirit) giving him the ability to think more clearly about the situation. He said that others in the room told him later they had responded in much the same manner, including having a calmness come over them so they could think more clearly and attempt to devise a plan of action to protect others and stop the gunman. (The good news of this story is that no one was shot or injured in any way and the gunman was captured.)

As can be seen from this example, there are times when an Acute Fear Response is truly healthy and life saving. Our Father in heaven designed us to respond in fear when something or somebody threatens us in an extreme manner. Depending on the type and severity of the threat, the natural human reaction is either to fight or take flight.

This "fight or flight" response works well in certain circumstances, where one's immediate physical survival from an enemy is of the highest priority. Today, however, most of us in the Western world live in a state of relative safety. Today, in the Western world, most people do not live in fear of someone coming into their home and killing them.

~ Fear of Prophecy ~

Some people seem deathly afraid of what Bible prophecy shows will happen at the end of this age -- just prior to the

return of *Y'shua* to take control of this world's governments. A similar situation existed in the seventh century BCE, when the prophet Jeremiah foresaw the unfolding of the Babylonian siege against Jerusalem during the reign of king Zedekiah. He was given a number of prophecies concerning this matter, which were recorded by his scribe Baruch. For example:

**"We have heard the report of it;
Our hands grow feeble.
Anguish has taken hold of us,
Pain as of a woman in labor.
²⁵ Do not go out into the field,
Nor walk by the way.
Because of the sword of the enemy,
Fear is on every side."**

(Jer. 6:24-25)

Those caught within the walls of Jerusalem during the Babylonian siege were not able to escape, so flight was not possible. All they could do was stand and fight, or surrender. Their fear was legitimate.

Later, Jeremiah gave the following prophecy to king Zedekiah, telling him that God had ordained that the House of Judah be captured, one way or another, and that the better part of wisdom was to surrender:

"Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, 'Thus says the LORD [YHVH], the God of hosts, the God of Israel: 'If you surely surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then your soul shall live; this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live. ¹⁸ But if you do not surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans; they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not escape from their hand.'"

(Jer. 38:17-18)

Jeremiah's words were true, for the Babylonians did overthrow Jerusalem and destroy the temple which had been built by king Solomon. However, during the time these prophecies were given, Jeremiah was considered to be a traitor, because he was foretelling that the Judeans could not withstand the Babylonian enemy and that many would die if they resisted.

~ Debilitating Fear Response ~

In some extreme cases, a person's fear of what might happen can be so great that they lose their ability to either fight or flee. Instead, they become "frozen with fear." In extreme cases, people can even die of heart failure because of the Acute Fear they experience. *Y'shua* said this would be the case at the end of the age, when people -- who do not understand or believe what the Scriptures teach -- begin to see God's wrath being poured out on those ungodly men who have persecuted the Saints and challenged His authority:

"For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ²³ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. ²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ²⁵ And there will be signs in the

sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶ men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken." (Luke 21:22-26)

As Messianic Believers, we do not need to react to the events of the world with fear, for *Y'shua* went on to say:

"Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." (Luke 21:27-28)

Today, in contrast to those who do not believe in Bible prophecy, some Believers live in a constant state of fearfulness because they do understand what is prophesied to come to pass in the future and feel they do not have the strength to face it. This can become Chronic Prophecy Fear, and it is much different from an Acute Fear Response to an immediate threat.

Many believe these future prophetic events are imminent and feel helpless in the face of them. Their Chronic Fear is not usually as intense as Acute Fear, nevertheless, it is a very real fear that can nearly paralyze a person if harbored over a long period of time. Such Chronic Fear can manifest itself in many forms, all the way from mild anxiety to total hopelessness and near helplessness.

~ Modern Fear ~

Today, fears often stem from more subtle and complex factors than looking out the window and seeing the Babylonians surrounding one's tract home in the suburbs. These fears may also manifest themselves as Chronic Fear rather than Acute Fear. The list of things which can cause Chronic Fear in the hearts of people are many and varied, and may include things such as fear of a life threatening disease (cancer or heart disease), fear of losing one's mate, fear of losing a job, fear of another person committing physical violence against them, and a long list that can go on and on (including, of course, end time Bible prophecies). In our modern society, where the vast majority of people depend upon the grocery store for food instead of growing their own, the fear of not being able to buy food, because of the expectation of an impending economic collapse, can be extremely frightening.

While many of these fears may be based upon real events, at other times fear may be the result of one's overactive imagination building up possible scenarios which a person may think could come to pass but which, in all probability, will not. Many times, family members will make light of these types of fears which they hear expressed by those close to them. However, it must be remembered that even if a fear is totally ungrounded in fact, it is still a very real fear to the person experiencing it and, therefore, can be just as debilitating as one based upon solid fact. In fact, Chronic Fantasy Fears are sometimes more debilitating than chronic real ones, because often there seems to be nothing a person can do to overcome an unsubstantiated fear which will just not go away.

Often, the fear of something happening is worse than its actual occurrence. Thus, the fear of losing one's job might be

so severe that it could actually affect a person's work performance and thereby contribute to job loss (a type of self fulfilling prophecy). Yet, once a job is lost, many people find that the reality of being out of work for a time is not nearly as awful as they expected, and they go out and seek another job with real fervor. Sometimes it can even be a door to a better opportunity, more pay, increased happiness on the job, or a job closer to home.

~ Scriptural Examples ~

Scripture abounds with examples of people who found themselves in a situation which made them profoundly afraid. The biblical record shows that even the Patriarchs had moments of fear, even though they knew the promises of God:

"Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. ¹² For You said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'" (Gen. 32:11-12)

In this instance, *Ya'acov* remembered that God had promised to treat him well. Yet he was still afraid of what his brother Esau might do to him and his family. Instead of succumbing to his fear and staying on the other side of the *Yabok* יַבֹּק' (Yah-bohk' = Jabbok) river, where they were relatively safe, *Ya'acov* faced his fear and developed a plan of action which he hoped would appease his brother:

"So he lodged there that same night, and took what came to his hand as a present for Esau his brother: ¹⁴ two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, ¹⁵ thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals. ¹⁶ Then he delivered them to the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, 'Pass over before me, and put some distance between successive droves.'

"¹⁷ And he commanded the first one, saying, 'When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose are these in front of you?' ¹⁸ then you shall say, 'They are your servant Jacob's. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also is behind us.'"

"¹⁹ So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed the droves, saying, 'In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; ²⁰ and also say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob is behind us.'" For he said, 'I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me.'"

(Gen. 32:13-20)

Citing another example, the children of Israel were very afraid when they realized that Pharaoh and his army had pursued them and they were caught between his army and the Red Sea. The situation looked completely hopeless to the fearful hearts of many:

"And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after

them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD [YHVH]. ¹¹ Then they said to Moses, 'Because *there were no graves in Egypt*, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt?' ¹² *Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, "Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians?" For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness.'*" (Ex. 14:10-12)

The children of Israel succumbed to the natural human Acute Fear Response inherent in that situation. But *Moshe* did not show fear to the people, encouraging them instead:

"And Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD [YHVH], which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. ¹⁴The LORD [YHVH] will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.'" (Ex. 14:13-14)

However, it seems, from God's response to *Moshe*, that he too must have harbored some degree of fear in his heart:

"And the LORD [YHVH] said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.'" (Ex. 14:15)

In this passage are found two primary keys which can be used when confronted with Acute Fear. First of all, be aware that the LORD (YHVH) perfectly handles events, and second, continue to move forward because everything is in His plan. Above all, we must not allow ourselves to be paralyzed by fear, for then appropriate action becomes nearly impossible to achieve.

~ Practice Trust ~

It is easy for a person to say they will no longer live their life in a fearful state and quite another to put that desire into actual practice. We believe the first and foremost key to overcoming fear is to replace one's fear response with trust and confidence (faith) in God, at the seed level, so that He can eliminate the source of a person's fear:

"The LORD [YHVH] is my light and my salvation;

Whom shall I fear?

The LORD [YHVH] is the strength of my life;

Of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1)

Again, easy words to read or say, but sometimes very difficult to internalize. However, as the saying goes, practice does make perfect, and people need to step out in faith, trusting God to take care of them.

~ Fear Not ~

Messianic Believers in *Y'shua HaMashiach* have not been called to be afraid of what man can do to them, or what bad things might happen in the future, but rather to be confidently trusting (i.e. have faith) that God is firmly and totally in control. God is the One who ultimately gives His people their

reward, no matter what happens in this life. So, listen to what He said to the church at Smyrna:

"Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some of you* into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death." (Rev. 2:10-11)

Remember that the first death is only temporary:

"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10:28)

All men must die the first death, but we who believe that *Y'shua* is our Savior and follow the *Written Torah*, will not have to die the second death:

"Then Jesus [*Y'shua*] said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.'" (John 6:53-56)

Do not forget what the Spirit said to the Church at Smyrna:

"... He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death." (Rev. 2:11)

The future of the Messianic Believer is both secure and beautiful to behold. It consists of eternal life in both the *Malchut Shamayim* מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם (Mahl-koot' Shah-mah'-eem = Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God) and the *Olam Haba* הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא (Oh-lahm' Hah-bah'), the world to come which follows the 1000 year Kingdom of God on earth (Revelation 21 and 22).

Not only will Messianic Believers obtain eternal life by being part of the first resurrection, we are also destined to be rulers in the Kingdom:

"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ [*Messiah*], and shall reign with Him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6)

~ Be Anxious for Nothing ~

Anxiety is a more mild form of fear. Chronic Anxiety is much more common than full blown Chronic Fear, however, it too can be debilitating. Many times a person cannot clearly identify the source of their anxiety. Here is what the *Encyclopedia Britannica* has to say about anxiety:

... a feeling of dread, fear, or apprehension, often with no clear justification. Anxiety is distinguished from true fear because the latter arises in response to a clear and actual danger, such as one affecting a person's physical safety. Anxiety, by contrast, arises in response to apparently innocuous situations or is the product of subjective,

internal emotional conflicts the causes of which may not be apparent to the person himself.

Y'shua addressed daily anxiety quite extensively:

"Then He said to His disciples, 'Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. ²³ Life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing. ²⁴ Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? ²⁵ And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁶ If you then are not able to do *the* least, why are you anxious for the rest?

²⁷ 'Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more *will He clothe* you, O you of little faith? ²⁹ And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. ³⁰ For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. ³¹ But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. ³² Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.'" (Luke 12:22-33)

Yes, there are Messianic Believers today who probably do not know from where their next meal will come. That condition may well affect many more of us as the end draws closer. Yet, *Y'shua* said we are not to be unduly concerned, to the point where we can no longer function normally, we need to keep moving forward even in the face of extreme adversity.

This does not mean that we should abandon our personal responsibility to supply food, clothing, and shelter for our families and ourselves. What it does mean is that we should continue to work because they depend on us. However, when our physical needs are met, we need to recognize the source of those provisions truly is our Father in heaven, and we are to give thanks to him:

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus [*Messiah Y'shua*]." (Phil. 4:6-7)

~ Proper Fear ~

There is a healthy fear which all men should have; the fear of God. Fear in this case does not mean the kind of fear which engenders "flight or fight" syndrome. When it comes to fearing God the key definition is "reverence or awe:"

**"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear [*yahre*] God and keep His commandments,
For this is man's all.**

¹⁴ For God will bring every work into judgment,

Including every secret thing, whether good or evil."

(Eccl. 12:13-14)

The primitive root word for "fear" in the Hebrew Scriptures is *yahre* (#3372). It carries a number of similar meanings:

3372 יָרֵא *yare'* {yaw-ray'}

Meaning: 1) to fear, revere, be afraid 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to fear, be afraid 1a2) to stand in awe of, be awed 1a3) to fear, reverence, honour, respect 1b) (Niphal) 1b1) to be fearful, be dreadful, be feared 1b2) to cause astonishment and awe, be held in awe 1b3) to inspire reverence or godly fear or awe

God is the creator of all things and we, as a part of His creation, need to have a proper perspective concerning our relationship with Him. While God is our loving Father, He is also the God of justice, as well as the God of mercy. Whether we gain eternal life or not is totally up to Him, it is His decision. Our part is to love and respect Him, obey His word, and believe that He was gracious enough to send His very own Son to pay the full price for the folly of our sins:

"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:9-10)

Knowing that the creator God of the Universe and the giver of all life has seen fit to be so concerned about us (those He made in His own likeness) should inspire everyone on earth to extreme forms of awe and reverence:

"Let all the earth fear the LORD [*YHVH*];

**Let all the inhabitants of the world stand
in awe of Him.**

⁹ For He spoke, and it was *done*;

He commanded, and it stood fast." (Psalm 33:8-9)

~ Love Vs Fear ~

Scripture teaches that the best way to rid one's self of fear is to replace it with love:

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." (1 John 4:18)

Some say that hate is the opposite of love -- but it seems that the real opposite of love may be fear, for hate is but another form of fear. The highest calling a Messianic Believer can achieve is to learn how to fully and completely love God and love one another:

"Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶ 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?'

³⁷ Jesus [*Y'shua*] said to him, "'You shall love the LORD [*YHVH*] your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." ³⁸ This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ And *the* second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ⁴⁰ On these two

commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

(Matt. 22:35-40)

The reason love casts out fear is because love comes from God, while unwarranted fear comes from the Adversary. By learning to express *agape* (Godly) love, we demonstrate that God is indwelling us and that the Adversary has no power over us when God chooses to rebuke him:

"And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him."

(I John 4:16)

It is God's love which gives the Messianic Believer boldness to proclaim His word, even in the face of adversity and persecution, giving us confidence on Judgment Day:

"Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world."

(I John 4:17)

Neither can we take credit for the love of God which indwells us, because that kind of love (*agape*) does not stem from within the human heart, but exists in us because God loved us even before we loved Him:

"We love Him because He first loved us."

(I John 4:19)

He loved us even when we were still sinners:

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ [Messiah] (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus [Messiah Y'shua], ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus [Messiah Y'shua]. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus [Messiah Y'shua] for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

(Eph. 2:4-10)

If you want to eliminate fear from your life, learn to love one another with the *agape* love of God:

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

(Rom. 12:21)

~ Positive Results ~

There are many blessings which accrue to the Messianic Believer who truly lives in the awesome fear of God. There are far too many to list in this brief chapter but here are a few:

"But the mercy of the LORD [YHVH] is from everlasting to everlasting

On those who fear Him,

And His righteousness to children's children,

¹⁸ To such as keep His covenant,

And to those who remember His commandments to do them."

(Psalm 103:17-18)

"The fear of the LORD [YHVH] is the beginning of wisdom,

And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

(Prov. 9:10)

"The fear of the LORD [YHVH] prolongs days, But the years of the wicked will be shortened."

(Prov. 10:27)

"Do not let your heart envy sinners

But *be zealous* for the fear of the LORD [YHVH] all the day;

¹⁸ For surely there is a hereafter,

And your hope will not be cut off."

(Prov. 23:17-18)

"Then a voice came from the throne, saying,

"Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" ⁶ And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!'"

(Rev. 19:5-6)

~ Summary ~

God has programmed into mankind a basic fear response which is activated whenever a person is confronted by a dangerous situation. This response is normal and healthy, for it can, in extreme circumstances, be instrumental in saving a person's life or the lives of others around them. Nevertheless, there is also another kind of fear which is not healthy and is often based upon faulty or incomplete information. This type of fear can be debilitating and -- in its extreme form -- seriously affect normal day to day functioning.

It is this second type of fear (sometimes called anxiety in its milder forms) for which the Scripture provides antidotes. The primary antidote being the replacement of anxious fear with the *agape* love of God.

Anxious fear should not be confused with the proper fear of God Himself -- an understanding of His awesome power and love. Proper fear of God is a healthy fear causing us to understand the true nature of our ultimate protector.

Therefore we choose to:

- ◆ Stand back and watch as God handles each situation perfectly.
- ◆ Continue to move forward in the face of adversity.
- ◆ Make our needs known to God through prayer and supplication.
- ◆ Trust God to remove the root cause of our fear.
- ◆ Replace human fear with God's *agape* love.

Perfect love casts out fear. Therefore the best way to alleviate fear is to replace fearful thoughts with those which are good and holy -- thoughts that are based upon God's promises and not on physical appearances. In his letter to the Phillipians, the Apostle Paul set forth the very traits upon which the mind of a Messianic Believer should be focused:

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy -- meditate on these things." (Phil. 4:8)

As an old song goes:

"You gotta accentuate the positive,
Eliminate the negative,
Latch on to the affirmative,
And don't mess with Mister Inbetween."

"The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you." (Phil. 4:9)

~ America Bless God ~

Then David said to all the assembly,
"Now bless the LORD your God."
So all the assembly blessed the LORD God of their fathers,
And bowed their heads and prostrated themselves
Before the LORD and the king.
1 Chronicles 29:20



It is quite obvious from the events which took place on 9-11-2001 (taking the lives of people from sixty-nine different countries) that God was not blessing America on that particular day. But, to some extent, God was watching over America, possibly sparing the capitol building and White House from destruction, for one of the hijacked planes crashed in an uninhabited area and late reports seem to indicate that at least two other flights were also targeted by the terrorists but did not take off because they were grounded for repairs.

These destructive events should have come as a wake up call for all Americans, that systemic problems exist within our society which need to be fixed.

~ Divine Favor ~

There is a universal desire by all people to have God bless their nation. Americans are no exception; especially in a time of national crisis such as was engendered by that experience. So, in response to the terrible terrorist attacks, numerous signs outside of business establishments carried the imploring phrase: "*God Bless America!*" These signs were posted to invite God's divine favor upon our nation.

Of course, we Americans want God to bless (show divine favor to) our nation in an hour of need. However, when we use the phrase, "*God Bless America*" (and the song by the same title), it may come across to others that we are telling God that we deserve to be blessed. It is our opinion that such an attitude represents a fundamental misconception about the primary meaning of the word 'bless' as it is defined in Hebrew and used in the Scriptures.

~ Bless Defined ~

The English word bless is translated from the Hebrew word *barach* בָּרַךְ (bah-rachk', Strong's #1288). In Hebrew it literally means: "*to kneel*" as in bowing down, a position or attitude of servitude. No doubt, it was the secondary meaning of the Hebrew word *barach* (bless), "*to invoke divine favor upon*," which was intended by the author of the song.

In Scripture, it is not the inherent right of a person to ask that a blessing (divine favor) be given to them personally (or to their nation), but the phrase, "*God Bless America*," in and of itself, implies that we are demanding that God kneel before our nation and impart divine favor to us whether we deserve it or not. In our opinion it would be better to phrase it: "Please God, we beseech You to bless our nation." But that phraseology is not poetic and would not make for a good song lyric.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Now, it is true that the word 'bless' is sometimes used in Scripture to describe divine favor. A prime example was when *Moshe* spoke to the children of Israel on the east side of the Jordan River, just before his death and their subsequent entry into the Promised Land:

"The LORD [YHVH] your God has multiplied you, and here you are today, as the stars of heaven in multitude. May the LORD [YHVH] God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you as He has promised you!" (Deut. 1:10-11)

However, when *Moshe* made the statement "*May the LORD God ... bless you...*" he was merely reiterating what God had already said He would do, "*...as He has promised you!*" In other words, the right to impart divine favor is solely at the discretion of God, it does not come because certain individuals desire, request, or demand it.

For example, *Avraham* did not ask for God's blessing, it was offered to him by God as part of his calling:

**"Now the LORD [YHVH] had said to Abram:
'Get out of your country,
From your family
And from your father's house,
To a land that I will show you.
I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in you all the families of the earth
shall be blessed.'"** (Gen. 12:1-3)

~ Begging for a Blessing ~

A prime example of one who begged for a blessing (the imparting of favor) was none other than Esau, the evil brother of *Ya'akov*:

"When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, 'Bless me -- me also, O my father!' ...

"And Esau said to his father, 'Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me -- me also, O my father!' And Esau lifted up his voice and wept." (Gen. 27:34, 38)

Certainly, we can understand Esau's grief at losing both the birthright and his rightful blessing as the firstborn. However, the blessing imparted by *Yitzchak* upon *Ya'acov* was in full accordance with God's will, for God hated Esau because he despised his birthright by selling it.

It was God's personal decision to impart divine favor upon *Ya'acov* despite his human weaknesses:

"The burden of the word of the LORD [YHVH] to Israel by Malachi.

**'I have loved you,' says the LORD [YHVH].
Yet you say, "In what way have You loved us?"
Was not Esau Jacob's brother?"
Says the LORD [YHVH].
'Yet Jacob I have loved;**

**But Esau I have hated,
And laid waste his mountains and his heritage
For the jackals of the wilderness."** (Mal. 1:1-3)

Why did God hate Esau? Because he loved only himself. By selling his birthright, Esau showed that he did not even care about his own descendants, for they were the ones who would have directly benefited from the birthright.

~ Bend the Knee ~

The Scriptures are full of examples about how we should "bend the knee" to God. King David understood the concept:

**"I will extol You, my God, O King;
And I will bless [bend the knee to] Your name
forever and ever.
Every day I will bless [bend the knee to] You,
And I will praise Your name forever and ever."** (Psalm 145:1-2)

Psalm 134 employs both usage's of the word *barach*; to bend the knee to God, and God's imparting of divine favor:

**"A Song of Ascents.
Behold, bless [bend the knee to] the LORD [YHVH],
All you servants of the LORD [YHVH],
Who by night stand in the house of the LORD [YHVH]!
Lift up your hands in the sanctuary,
And bless [bend the knee to] the LORD [YHVH].
The LORD [YHVH] who made heaven and earth
Bless [impart divine favor to] you from Zion!"** (Psalm 134:1-3)

Instead of demanding that God bend His knee and give America divine favor, we (the people of America) should be honoring God by bending our knees to Him, asking forgiveness for our sins, both individual and national, and pledging that we will serve Him alone. Only then can we expect to receive the divine favor (blessing) that we so fervently desire.

The very act of bending the knee implies subservience. The slave kneels before his master, the subject before his king. Thus, the Believer kneels before God, the creator and ruler of all.

It is neither our right nor our privilege to require God to kneel before us. Yet, like a loving Father, that is exactly what He is willing to do for us if we will love Him and keep His commandments:

**"For You, O LORD [YHVH], will bless [impart divine favor to] the righteous;
With favor You will surround him as with a shield."** (Psalm 5:12)

Even as a loving father will kneel down and wipe the bloody nose of his beloved injured son, so God the Father will kneel down and come to the aid of his beloved repentant children when they are in need. America was founded upon

Biblical standards, but she has left that narrow path and is now receiving punishment for her sins.

Since America suffered such great loss on September 11, 2001, why should we now expect that God would suddenly turn around and bless America? Has America changed that much? Has true repentance taken place?

When *Jonah* carried God's message to *Nineveh* she repented and God spared her destruction, even so, we too could yet receive His favor:

"So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. ⁶ Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. ⁷ And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying,

"'Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. ⁸ But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. ⁹ Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?'"

"¹⁰ Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

May America repent and Bless God as did Nineveh!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

~ All In the Family ~

And I will establish My covenant
Between Me and you
And your descendants after you in their generations,
For an everlasting covenant,
To be God to you and your descendants after you.
Genesis 17:7



Families are very important to God. The Scriptures are full of stories about families and family relationships. The importance of the family unit is discernible from the very beginning of the creation story, when God created *Chava* חַוָּה (Hah-vah' = Eve) to be the wife of *Adam* אָדָם (Ah-dahm'):

"And the LORD [YHVH] God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.'" (Gen. 2:18)

After naming all the animals and observing that they were created as male and female pairs, *Adam* realized that he was alone and that none of the animals were suitable as a mate for him:

"So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him." (Gen. 2:20)

~ Creating Eve ~

The traditional story, which most of us have heard, is that *Chava* (Eve) was created from one of *Adam's* ribs. This is the way it is translated in most English Bibles:

"And the LORD [YHVH] God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs [tsela], and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD [YHVH] God had taken from man He made into a woman," (Gen. 2:21-22a)

There are at least two different Jewish traditions concerning how *Chava* was created. One ancient myth states that *Adam* was initially created complete, in the respect that he was created both male and female. In volume one of *The Midrash Says: Beraishis*, p. 33, it states:

"Even Adam's physical creation was twofold, male and female in one body. In front he was a man, but attached to him in back was a woman."

Thus, it is taught, that when God created *Chava* He removed her from the back of *Adam*. This interpretation is Scripturally possible because the Hebrew word *tsela* צֵלָע (tzay-lah'), which is translated 'rib,' is more commonly translated 'side' (Strong's #6763). In fact, out of forty-one usages, *tsela* is only translated as 'rib' two times and both of those occurrences are found in Genesis 2. In other words, in this tradition, *Chava* was taken out of the "back side" of *Adam*.

This extracted female part was then said to have been replaced with flesh.

However, another Jewish tradition teaches that *Chava* was indeed created from a rib, the thirteenth rib on *Adam's* right side, to be exact. It is also taught that God considered creating *Chava* from other parts of *Adam's* body but rejected them for various reasons:

"God chose not to create her from Adam's head, lest she be swellheaded; nor from his eye, lest she be a flirt; nor from his ear, lest she be an eavesdropper; nor from his mouth, lest she be a gossip; nor from his heart, lest she be prone to jealousy; nor from his hand, lest she be thievish; nor from his foot, lest she be a gadabout." (*Encyclopedia Judaica - CD Rom Version*)

~ One Flesh ~

Then God brought *Chava* and presented her to *Adam*:

"... and He brought her to the man. ²³ And Adam said:

**'This is now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man.'**

**"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother
and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one [*echad*]
flesh."** (Gen. 2:22b-23)

The first great principle of family relationships is contained in this verse. *Adam* and *Chava* are to become *echad* עֶחָד (eh-khad' = one) flesh. In other words, they are to be as 'one' person and neither one was to be shared with others. This fidelity to the marriage relationship was confirmed by *Y'shua*:

**"They said, 'Moses permitted a man to write a
certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her.' ⁵ And Jesus
[*Y'shua*] answered and said to them, 'Because of the
hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. ⁶ But
from the beginning of the creation, God "made them male
and female." ⁷ For this reason a man shall leave his father
and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸ and the two shall
become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one
flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let not
man separate.'"** (Mark 10:4-9)

It is apparent that God was vitally concerned about family relationships from the very beginning.

~ The Family Line ~

Scripture dispatches the next fifteen hundred years of human history very quickly. In only two chapters the book of Genesis moves from the creation story and the sin of *Adam* and *Chava* to the time of *Noach*, when sin and violence had overwhelmed the earth:

**"Then the LORD [*YHVH*] saw that the wickedness of
man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the
thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the
LORD [*YHVH*] was sorry that He had made man on the
earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ So the LORD
[*YHVH*] said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from**

**the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing
and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made
them.'"** (Gen. 6:5-7)

Noach, however, was a very special man in the family lineage of *Adam* and *Chava*, for the Scripture says that:

**"... Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD
[*YHVH*]."** (Gen. 6:8)

Not only did *Noach* find grace (favor or acceptance) with God, he was also the first man to be called a *tzadik* צַדִּיק (tzah-deek' = righteous man):

**"This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man
[*tzadik*], perfect [*tamim*] in his generations. Noah walked
[*halak*] with God."** (Gen. 6:9)

Not only was *Noach* a *tzadik* (righteous man) he was also *tamim* תָּמִים (tah-meem' = complete, whole, entire, sound). Because of his righteousness and completeness as a man he was allowed to *halak* הָלַךְ (hah-lakh' = walk) with God. *Halak* is the root word for *halakah* which is used of those who follow *Torah*. *Halakah* is said to be "the way one walks." In other words, it is the righteous walk of a *tzadik*.

The name *Noach* also has significance, for it means 'rest.' This is why his father *Lamech* לֶמֶךְ (Leh-mekh'):

**"... called his name Noah [*rest*], saying, 'This same
shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands,
because of the ground which the LORD [*YHVH*] hath
cursed.'"** (Gen. 5:29)

~ The Family Line ~

There were ten generations before the Flood that are listed in Scripture. The line begins with *Adam* and ends with *Noach*. The ten generations (with birth and death dates from creation *) are:

- *Adam* b. 0 - d. 930
- *Seth* b. 130 - d. 1042
- *Enosh* b. 235 - d. 1140
- *Kenan* b. 325 - d. 1235
- *Mahalalel* b. 395-d. 1290
- *Jared* b. 460 - d. 1422
- *Enoch* b. 622 - d. 987
- *Methuselah* b. 687 - d. 1656
- *Lemech* b. 874 - d. 1651
- *Noach* b. 1056 - d. 2006

What is not often understood is that because *Adam* lived 930 years, he therefore lived to see all of these men with the exception of *Noach*. *Adam* died in the year 930 from creation, and *Noach* was born in the year 1056, or 126 years after the death of *Adam*.

* The chronology used in this article is taken from *The Sequence of Events in the Old Testament*, by Eliezer Shulman, pub. by Ministry of Defense Publishing House, Israel, 1987.

Today, to say that a person was born 126 years after a certain ancestor had died would seem as though that person were very far removed from us. In fact, 126 years is so far removed from us, we would not know anyone who had lived during the lifetime of that ancestor. Yet in *Noach's* case, his own father, *Lamech*, overlapped *Adam's* life by 56 years. In other words, *Noach's* own father could have passed on to *Noach* his personal conversations with *Adam*. While there are eight generations between *Noach* and *Adam*, *Noach* is only one contact generation removed from *Adam* and the creation of the world.

~ Noach's Generations ~

Noach had three sons:

"And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth." (Gen. 5:32)

It would seem from this verse that *Noach's* three sons were triplets, all born the same year, exactly 100 years before the Flood, for *Noach* was 600 years old when the Flood began:

"Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth." (Gen. 7:6)

However, this was clearly not the case, for we know that *Shem* שֵׁם (*Shehm*) did not turn 100 years old until two years after the Flood when his son *Arpachshad* אֲרַפַּחְשָׁד (Ahr-pahk'-shad = *Arphaxad*) was born:

"This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood." (Gen. 11:10)

Also, we know that *Japheth* יָפֶֿתֿ (*Yeh-phet'*) was the oldest of the three sons:

"And children were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder." (Gen. 10:21)

So why, then, is *Shem* always listed first? Because Scripture always lists the wisest or most righteous son first.

We know that *Japheth* was the eldest and that *Shem* was the wisest. Where, then, does *Ham* חָם (*Hahm*) fit in the birth order? According to the Sages, *Ham* is the youngest but he is listed after *Shem* because there is no need to rearrange the birth order once the wisest son has been listed first. Therefore, according to the Sages, *Japheth* is the eldest, *Shem* is next, and *Ham* is the youngest.

This information gives us birth dates for the first two of *Noach's* sons (all dates are given from creation):

- *Japheth* b. 1556 - d. unknown. (*Japheth* was born 100 years before the Flood)
- *Shem* b. 1558 - 2158. (We know *Shem* was born 98 years before the Flood because he was 100 years old 2 years after the Flood.)
- *Ham* b. unknown - d. unknown.

Since *Japheth* and *Ham* are not a part of the family line with whom God is working, we are not told the dates they died, nor are we even told the year of *Ham's* birth.

Shem's life overlapped two of the men whose lives overlapped *Adam*. *Shem* overlapped the life of *Lamech* some 93 years and that of *Methuselah* מֶתוּשֶׁלַח (*Meth-oo'-seh-lah*) a total of 98 years. So, once again we see that *Shem* no doubt knew men who personally knew *Adam*. Since both *Noach* and *Shem* lived many years after the Flood, they could have passed their second hand knowledge about *Adam* on to many of those who were born after the Flood.

~ The Family Continues ~

The book of Genesis then turns its attention to one particular individual, who was chosen by God to be the Patriarch of His people. That man was, of course, *Avraham*. However, there are several more generations that must occur before the birth of *Avraham*. Since *Japheth* and *Ham* are not central to this family, we will pick up the genealogy with the descendants of *Shem*:

"The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram." (Gen. 10:22)

We have already seen that *Arphaxad*, was born two years after the Flood when *Shem* was 100 years old. This would have put the birth year of *Arphaxad* at 1658 from creation.

It is interesting to note that there were a total of ten generations from *Adam* to *Noach* and there are also ten generations from *Shem* to *Avraham*. The list of *Avraham's* ancestors back to *Noach* follows:

- *Noach* b. 1056 - d. 2006 (*Noach* lived 950 years and died 350 years after the Flood).
- *Shem* b. 1558 - d. 2158 (*Shem* lived 600 years and died 502 years after the Flood).
- *Arpachshad* b. 1658 - d. 2096 (*Arpachshad* lived 438 years and died 440 years after the Flood)
- *Shelah* b. 1693 - d. 2126 (*Shelah* lived 433 years and died 470 years after the Flood).
- *Eber* b. 1723 - d. 2187 (*Eber* lived 464 years and died 531 years after the Flood).
- *Peleg* b. 1757 - d. 1996 (*Peleg* lived 239 years and died 340 years after the Flood).
- *Reu* b. 1787 - d. 2026 (*Reu* lived 239 years and died 370 years after the Flood).
- *Serug* b. 1819 - d. 2049 (*Serug* lived 230 years and died 393 years after the Flood).
- *Nahor* b. 1849 - d. 1997 (*Nahor* lived 148 years and died 341 years after the Flood).
- *Terah* b. 1878 - d. 2083 (*Terah* lived 205 years and died 427 years after the Flood).

These dates (with the exception of *Noach*) are derived from Genesis 11.

~ Dating Avraham ~

This brings us up to the birth of *Avraham*, however at this point there is a problem. The Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) seem to indicate that *Avraham* was born when *Terah* was 70 years old:

"And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran."
(Gen. 11:26)

However, as we have already seen with *Shem*, just because a person is listed first, it does not necessarily mean that that he was born first, for it is said that the wisest or most righteous son is always listed first. Therefore, *Avraham* may have been born later.

If we accept *Avraham's* birth year as being when *Terah* was 70 years old, then *Avraham* would have been born in the year 1948 from creation. Thus, *Avraham's* birth and death years would look like this:

- *Avraham* b. 1948 - d. 2123 (*Avraham* lived 175 years and died 467 years after the Flood).

But there is another problem. This would mean that *Terah* would have been only 145 years old when *Avraham* moved to Canaan:

"Now the LORD [YHVH] had said to Abram:

**'Get out of your country,
From your family
And from your father's house,
To a land that I will show you.' ...**

"⁴ So Abram departed as the LORD [YHVH] had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran."

(Gen. 12:1, 4)

However, Stephen, in the seventh chapter of Acts, gives a different chronology:

"And he said, 'Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,³ and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.' ⁴Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell.'" (Acts 7:2-4)

If *Avraham* was 75 years old when he moved to Canaan, and his father was already dead, then *Terah* would have had to have been at least 130 years old when *Avraham* was born. This would make the dating for *Avraham* look like this:

- *Avraham* b. 2008 - d. 2183 (*Avraham* lived 175 years and died 527 years after the Flood).

This discrepancy has been argued by the scholars for centuries without a satisfactory resolution. It is our opinion that we should accept Stephen's account and place *Avraham's* birth at the later date, although that opinion could change if more definitive information becomes available.

~ More Overlap ~

Now we are able to date the rest of the Patriarchs of Israel:

- *Avraham* (Abraham) b. 2008 - d. 2183 (Lived 175 years: Gen. 25:7-9)
- *Yitzchak* (Isaac) b. 2108 - d. 2288 (Lived 180 years: Gen. 35:28-29)
- *Ya'acov* (Jacob) b. 2168 - d. 2315 (Lived 147 years: Gen. 47:9)
- *Yoseif* (Joseph) b. 2259 - d. 2369 (Lived 110 years: Gen. 50:26)

If this dating is correct then we can draw some parallels between the Patriarchs of Israel and *Noach* and *Shem* who both lived before the Flood.

- *Avraham* was born 2 years after *Noach* died.
- *Avraham* was 150 years old when *Shem* died.
- *Yitzchak* was 50 years old when *Shem* died.

Thus, both *Avraham* and *Yitzchak* could have received, first hand, stories of what life was like before the Flood.

Since we have already determined that *Shem's* life overlapped two men (*Lamech* and *Methuselah*) whose lives, in turn, overlapped *Adam*, we can now determine that there are only two contact generations between *Avraham* and *Adam*.

- *Adam* b. 0 - d. 930
- *Lamech* b. 874 - d. 1651 (Overlap of 56 years with *Adam*)
- *Shem* b. 1558 - d. 2158 (Overlap of 93 years with *Lamech*)
- *Avraham* b. 2008 - d. 2183 (Overlap of 150 years with *Shem*)

Lamech was 56 years old when *Adam* died, *Shem* was 93 years old when *Lamech* died, and *Avraham* was 150 years old when *Shem* died. *Yitzchak* too had many years of overlap with *Shem*, for he was 50 years old when *Shem* died. In fact, Jewish tradition teaches that after the *Akeidah* (Ah-kay'-day, Gen. 22), when *Yitzchak* was offered on the altar by his father *Avraham*, *Yitzchak* went to study with *Shem* at what is now Jerusalem.

By understanding these charts, it is easy to see how the correct story of creation, as well as life before, during, and after the Flood, could have been transmitted all the way from *Adam* and *Noach* down to both *Avraham* and *Yitzchak*.

~ Moses Wrote It Down ~

The story does not end with *Yitzchak*, for it was *Moshe* who was given the task of recording the history of the earth on down through the descendants of *Avraham*.

So, how far removed was *Moshe* from *Adam*?

It is not possible to prove conclusively from Scripture exactly when *Moshe* and some of his ancestors were born, so we will have to rely partially on tradition in setting the following dates. We will begin this portion of the family line with *Yitzchak*, who was born when *Avraham* was 100 years old:

"Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him."
(Gen. 21:5)

Yitzchak (Isaac) was 40 years old when he married *Rivkah* (Reev'-kah = Rebecca):

"Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, ..."
(Gen. 25:20)

According to tradition, *Rivkah* (Rebecca) was barren for twenty years before she gave birth to Esau and *Ya'acov* (Jacob). This would have made *Yitzchak* 60 years old when *Esau* and *Ya'acov* were born.

Ya'cov's age when he sired *Yoseif* (Yoh-safe' = Joseph) can be calculated from the time he arrived in Egypt:

"Pharaoh said to Jacob, 'How old are you?' ' And Jacob said to Pharaoh, 'The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; ...'"
(Gen. 47:8-9)

At this time, *Yoseif* was approximately 39 years old for he was 30 years old when he entered Pharaoh's service:

"Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt."
(Gen. 41:46)

After *Yoseif* entered the service of the Pharaoh, there were seven years of plenty before the famine struck. It is assumed that at least two years of famine had passed before *Ya'acov* and his other sons joined *Yoseif* in Egypt. Thus, *Ya'acov* would have been about 91 or less when *Yoseif* was born. If *Yoseif* was born near the end of *Ya'acov's* fourteen years of service for the two daughters of *Laban* (*Leah* and *Rachel*), then *Ya'acov* would have been 84 when he married the two sisters (he served seven years prior to the marriage).

The generations from *Avraham* to *Moshe* look something like this:

- *Avraham* b. 2008 - d. 2183
- *Yitzchak* b. 2108 - d. 2288

- *Ya'acov* b. 2168 - d. 2315
- *Levi* b. 2255 - d. 2392 (Lived 137 years: Ex. 6:16)
- *Kohath* b. 2295 - d. 2428 (Traditional birth year, lived 133 years: Ex. 6:18)
- *Amram* b. 2315 - d. 2452 (Traditional birth year, lived 137 years: Ex. 6:20)
- *Moshe* b. 2428 - d. 2548 (Traditional birth year, lived 120 years: Deut. 34:7)

Once again, we have added 60 years to the traditional Jewish dates for these men because of Stephen's testimony that *Avraham* left *Haran* for Canaan after his father *Terah* had died.

~ Adam to Moshe ~

Using these dates we can now see how many contact generations there are between *Adam* and *Moshe*:

- *Adam* b. 0 - d. 930
- *Lemech* b. 874 - d. 1651 (Overlap of 56 years with *Adam*)
- *Shem* b. 1558 - 2158 (Overlap of 93 years with *Lemech*)
- *Avraham* b. 2008 - d. 2183 (Overlap of 150 years with *Shem*)
- *Ya'acov* b. 2168 - d. 2315 (Overlap of 15 years with *Avraham*)
- *Levi* b. 2255 - d. 2392 (Overlap of 60 years with *Ya'acov*)
- *Amram* b. 2315 - d. 2452 (Overlap of 77 years with *Levi*)
- *Moshe* b. 2428 - d. 2548 (Overlap of 24 years with *Amram*)

Thus we see that, potentially, only six contact generations stand between *Adam* and *Moshe*, even though it was a span of 1498 years. This means that *Moshe* could easily have received all of the oral traditions since creation, with very little being changed or lost.

Some believe that not only did *Moshe* receive the history found in Genesis orally, but that he even had written documents dating all the way back to *Adam*. Of course, there is no way of proving this one way or another. However, even if he only had the oral traditions, and they were somewhat corrupted, those traditions could have been corrected by God Himself, since *Moshe* spoke to Him face to face:

**"Then He said, 'Hear now My words:
If there is a prophet among you,
I, the LORD [YHVH], make Myself known to him
in a vision;
I speak to him in a dream.
⁷ Not so with My servant Moses;
He is faithful in all My house.
⁸ I speak with him face to face,
Even plainly, and not in dark sayings;
And he sees the form of the LORD [YHVH]."**

(Num. 12:6-8)

~ Summary ~

The Biblical story is a family story that leads up to the Chosen People; the children of Israel. That family began with *Adam* and *Chava* and extends down through *Noach* and on to the three Patriarchs, *Avraham*, *Yitzhak* and *Ya'acov*. From there it moves through the twelve sons of *Ya'acov* and includes all of the children of Israel. However, one of the key figures is, of course, *Moshe*; the one whom God chose to lead the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt and up to the Promised Land.

If our calculations are correct (and they may not be exact) it was 1498 years from the death of *Adam* to the birth of *Moshe*. Yet, there are only six people who stand between *Moshe* and *Adam*. This means that much valuable information could very well have been passed down from the time of creation to *Moshe*, who is credited with recording it all in the book of Genesis.

What this means to us in the 21st century is that we have an account of the creation which is factual and accurate. The Bible is a book that can be trusted above all others. It was written under the inspiration of God and:

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

(II Tim. 3:16-17)

Since the genealogy goes on from *Ya'acov* and *Yehudah* (Yeh-who'-dah = Judah) to *Y'shua*, one could say that the Bible is a book about a very special family; the family of God:

"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,¹⁷ and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ [Messiah], if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

(Rom. 8:16-17)

It truly is All In The Family!

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