

DESTRUCTION AND REBIRTH, THE BIRTH PANGS OF THE COMING MESSIAH

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I will take you from [among] the nations and gather you from all the lands, and I will bring you to your own soil. Then I will sprinkle pure water upon you, that you may become cleansed; I will cleanse you from all your contamination and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit within you . . . Ezekiel 36:24-27.

Along the mysteries of Divine Providence, the Jewish world has experienced three overwhelming disasters, or *churban*.¹ *Churban*, a Yiddish word, means a catastrophe which makes an end to an old era and creates a new era that implies progress achieved through sacrifice (a day of awe beyond human understanding).²

Churban pertains to the loss of the Divine Presence, a loss of the Name, in the world and signifies an assault on God through an assault on His Chosen.³ For each *churban* entailed the extinction of the flow of God's light into the world.⁴ A *churban* is a decisive alteration of the course of history.⁵ There is a creative element in this destructiveness, which marks the end of one era and the beginning of a new and different era, both for the Jews and the world.⁶ Unfortunately, the new age can only come into being with the destruction of the old.⁷

The destruction of Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple in 586 BC by Nebuchadnezzar that initiated the Diaspora of the Jews was the first *churban* with the Jews bringing knowledge of the true God and Divine Law to the pagan nations beyond Israel's borders.⁸ Without the Diaspora, knowledge of God's Word might have remained confined to one small tribal community. For the first time, the world had a nationhood of people without a land and without a state and yet pursuing a holy mission in history.⁹

During the Babylonian exile, the Jewish people developed distinct patterns of faith that reinforced their separateness.¹⁰ Babylon became an important center of Jewish learning with the creation of the *Babylonian Talmud*.¹¹ During the exile, Ezra had renewed the oral tradition of reading and interpreting the *Torah*, enabling Judaism to survive in the absence of the Temple and a home country.¹²

The second creative destruction was the Roman devastation of Judea and Jerusalem and Herod's Temple in 70 AD, following the defeat of the Jewish rebellion from 66 to 70 AD.¹³ After the Bar Kochba rebellion of 132 to 135 AD to rebuild the Temple and to overthrow Roman rule, Emperor Hadrian barred the Jews from the renamed city of *Aelia Capitolina*, which was built on the ruins of Jerusalem, and outlawed Judaism because of the heavy Roman casualties.¹⁴

After the destruction, the synagogue became the predominant Jewish religious institution with its worship based upon the study of the Word of God and prayer instead

of the Temple with its worship based upon animal sacrifice.¹⁵ The synagogue, the place of assembly for worship, study and fellowship, became Judaism's most important institution.¹⁶ Since the destruction of the Temple, prayer not only takes the place and purpose of sacrifice, but is more important than sacrifice.¹⁷ The purpose of the sacrificial service was to bring about a person's closeness and dedication to Godliness.¹⁸ Prayer is the elevation of the soul unto God.¹⁹

The Jews by losing their political independence were fulfilling their mission of spreading the knowledge of God throughout the Roman Empire. During the Diaspora period, the Jewish people entered a period of remarkable growth, of which the writings of the *Mishnah* and then the *Talmud of Babylon* and the *Talmud of Jerusalem* were the consequences in trying to understand God's Word.²⁰

Scattered through all the major centers of the Roman Empire, rabbinic Judaism emerged and developed a form of Jewish life for Israel's covenant with God, which kept the Jewish people alive through hardships and persecutions at the hands of Christian Europe and the Muslim world.²¹ Rabbinic Judaism stressed the *Torah* and its interpretation through the oral tradition and *Talmudic* writings, which developed in the Diaspora.²²

Under rabbinic Judaism, if Jews are faithful to God's grace and in fulfilling His commandments, God would send the Messiah to bring about their final redemption and their steadfastness and suffering will be vindicated.²³ All of humanity will come to recognize the one God and to realize that Israel had borne tribulations on their behalf.²⁴ Regrettably, the hatred of Jews is interpreted as an integral part of Jewish existence.²⁵

Rabbinic Judaism was the dominant form of Judaism for almost two thousand years until Reform and Conservative Judaism emerged from the post-Enlightenment Jewish thought.²⁶ Rabbinic Judaism became known as "orthodox" Judaism, which emphasizes Jews as the "suffering servant" (*Isaiah 53*) who one day would be redeemed by the Messiah and the Kingdom of God instituted, the people "*who dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations*" (*Numbers 23:9*) and whose vision will ultimately be vindicated when the world recognizes the one true God.²⁷

Classic Reform Judaism considered the Jews as a strictly religious group and not a people or a nation. Reform Judaism introduced the idea of a messianic age, rather than a messianic figure and emphasized ethical over ritual commandments, and they should become more like than unlike the society around them and become a moral "*light unto the nations*" (*Isaiah 42:6*).²⁸ In the early Reform Judaism movement, David Einhorn (1809-79) in Germany and then in the United States advocated the "replac[ement of] the doctrine of resurrection with 'the idea of a purely spiritual immortality.'"²⁹ Subsequently in the Reform prayer book, *The Union Prayerbook* (1895) and later in the *Gates of Prayer* (1975), resurrection was redefined as power over one's own life.³⁰ The ancient acclamation of divine power in the face of human defeat was transformed into a modern prayer for enhanced personal autonomy.³¹

Conservative Judaism in the *Sabbath and Festival Prayer Book (1946)* and later in the *Siddur Sim Shalom* provides a doctrine of resurrection.³² Conservative Judaism embraces the *Torah* as the gift from God to the Jewish people and recognizes God's ongoing presence in Jewish life. Conservative Judaism believes that Jewish law is a path toward greater intimacy with God and holiness in personal life and by embracing a life of being involved in the welfare of society; we become a light to the world.

However, all Jews are commanded to remember their experiences with God as He acted on their behalf in history and the manner of remembrance is through ritual and recitation.³³ The commandment to remember has kept Judaism alive in global dispersion for almost two thousand years.³⁴ Wiesel has commented that the Jewish people have survived the centuries of persecution, because they have kept the memory of the Exodus, of Jewish moral values and of the moral mission given by God at Mount Sinai.³⁵

Professor George Steiner wrote that:

It is not the God-killer whom Christianity has hounded to the rim of extinction in Europe since the Middle Ages, it is the 'God-maker' or mouthpiece who has reminded mankind of what it could be, of what it must become if man is indeed to be man, if a being of Jesus of Nazareth's ethical radiance can legitimately be called a Son of man.

. . . there has been in every pogrom and in the Shoah a central strain of Christian self-mutilation, a desperate endeavor by Christianity and by its pagan-parodistic offshoots such as Nazism to silence once and for all the curse of the ideal inherent in the Mosaic covenant with God, in the more-than-human humaneness of Isaiah, in the teachings of Jesus the Jew. Eradicate the Jew and you will have eradicated from within the Christian West an unendurable remembrance of moral and social failure. There is, in consequence, an awful symmetry in the fact that by instituting and allowing the world of the death camps, European gentile civilization has striven to make it unbearable for Jews to remember. For it is in Judaism that there has been the obsessive, maddening remembrance that Christianity worked furiously to stifle inside itself.³⁶

The third *churban* was the Holocaust, which Irving Greenberg has described as a revelational event for both Judaism and Christianity.³⁷ This third *churban* was the extermination of East European Jewry and Sephardic Jewry from 1933 to 1945 with the Middle Ages (the medieval pattern of life) having come to the end.³⁸ Medieval society and the Jewish Middle Ages survived in Eastern Europe until Hitler, Lenin and Stalin³⁹ and in North Africa and the Middle East until the rise of pan-Arab revolts and radical Islam. The majority of the Jewish people now live under the influence of Western civilization.⁴⁰

Although the Jewish people and Judaism survived the Third Reich, the Nazis succeeded in forever destroying the life and culture of East European Jewry.⁴¹ This destruction brought an end to a thousand-year-old culture of Ashkenazi Jewry whose language was Yiddish that had originated in the Rhine Basin during the end of the Roman Empire and by 1939 was concentrated in Eastern Europe.⁴² Remarkably, this

religious culture of Eastern Europe Jewry and its great leading centers of rabbinical teaching have been reemerging in Israel since 1948.

During the 19th century, Leopold Zunz (1794-1886), a founder of *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, aspired to make Judaism more attractive for the assimilated German Jew by exchanging the wisdom of the Written and Oral *Torah* and Jewish traditions for the moral philosophy of German Idealism.⁴³ The moral philosophy of German Idealism was carried forward with Eduard Gans, Heinrich Heine, Nachman Krochmal, Moritz Lazarus, Hermann Cohen and other modern Jewish philosophers, who abandoned the *Torah* as the absolute Word of the living God.⁴⁴

In 1880, German historian Heinrich von Treitschke argued that Judaism was an “antiquated religion of an antiquated tribe that was alien to the German people,” while Hermann Cohen responded in *Ein Bekenntnis zur Judenfrage (A Reflection on the Jewish Question)* that Liberal Judaism was essentially the same as German Protestantism with both rooted in the basic principles of the Enlightenment.⁴⁵ Cohen’s “religion of reason” was not based upon the return of the Jewish people set apart from the world to a geographical area based upon a living God and the *Torah*, but based upon a messianic age of social justice and freedom that every person would enjoy equally and equating divine holiness with moral goodness.⁴⁶

The German Reform Synagogue emerged as a halfway house of conversion to Protestantism, which was common in Prussia since the early 19th century.⁴⁷ Although the Reform Synagogue was not the norm among the Jewish congregations, it was an attempt to merge with the dominant Christian culture.

The beginning of the 20th century was full of hope with the ideals of Enlightenment philosophy where civilization had progressed to a time of universal brotherhood, economic equality, comfort and peace.⁴⁸ Jews throughout Europe were exchanging their religious ideals for secular ones with eighty percent of Western European Jews assimilated or converted beginning in the 20th century.⁴⁹ In Eastern Europe and Russia, Jews left the *shtetls* to join anarchist, communist, socialist and bundist movements.⁵⁰

Jewish assimilation was violently halted in Germany and Western Europe by the Nazis. Rabbi Maybaum raised the question of whether God acted as a surgeon in world history to cut away from the Jewish people a secular history that connected German Jews with German history, East European Jews with Polish, Lithuanian and Russian history, and Sephardic Jews with Islamic history.⁵¹ Yaakov Astor has claimed that the Holocaust became the only connection many Jews had to Judaism and it became the anchor of Jewish identity in the decades after the Holocaust to this day.⁵² Is the modern Exodus to Israel leading to a new history, to a rebirth of life, in which the Jewish people will live again with God and to redemption?⁵³

Rabbi Maybaum in his book, *The Face of God After Auschwitz*, characterized the S.S. soldiers as the Dominicans of the technical age with the Führer symbolizing papal

infallibility.⁵⁴ He identified Auschwitz as the symbol of the place where the directors of the inquisition did their work in the midst of the 20th century.⁵⁵

The Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, Mosheh Avigdor Amiel (1882-1946), wrote in reaction to *Kristallnacht* in 1938 that the German hatred toward the Jews and its intent to destroy the Jews with the tacit approval or praise of other nations had no natural or human explanation.⁵⁶ As mirrored by other orthodox rabbis in Eastern Europe, the reason was to be found within Israel's covenantal relationship with God and the cause was assimilation and the decline of Judaism.⁵⁷

The guilt of the Roman Catholic Church was that it was a medieval church in the 20th century.⁵⁸ "Outside the Church there is no salvation" (*Extra Ecclesiam salus non est*) was the foundational dogma of the Christian Middle Ages.⁵⁹ From the 5th to the 15th centuries under this principle, Catholicism was the only true religion and the Church was the only way to salvation.⁶⁰

In the Christian Middle Ages, there was no place for the Jews, "who had killed Christ" and thus were destined to be persecuted.⁶¹ The Church's theology of Judaism continued as the sinful Jews, suffering because they rejected and crucified Christ.⁶² Hitler was a crusader under the Vatican view against Jewish-Bolshevism.⁶³

During the 1930's, Polish Catholic theologians defined the Church as the New Israel and as the legitimate heir to the Old Testament and the Mosaic religion and defined rabbinic Judaism, created by Jews after the destruction of the Temple and the dispersion, as a new religion based upon a hate-filled *Talmud*, which broke with the Mosaic religion and became a distorted religion and the antithesis of Christianity.⁶⁴ The Catholic Church's doctrine on the immaculate conception of the Blessed Mother, in which Mary was conceived without original sin, meant that Mary was born without the Jews' unpleasant qualities and thus Jesus himself did not have the negative traits possessed by Jews, according to the German Catholic Church writings in the 1930's.⁶⁵

During the 1920's and 30's, the German Catholic writings reinforced the responsibility for Jesus' crucifixion on the Jewish people and, as a result of the Jew's refusal to accept Jesus as the Messiah, the Church as the new chosen people, the new Israel, was established through the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus.⁶⁶ Essentially, the Church leaders alleged that God had abolished the covenants with the Jewish people in order to propagate the Church's anti-Judaism, but the Church ignored the very teachings of the Bible that acknowledge God's eternal covenant with the Jewish people and the sacred dignity of the Jewish people.⁶⁷

In April 1943, the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising helped shape Israel's national self-understanding and is considered as the first Jewish rebellion since the Bar Kochba revolt in 135 AD.⁶⁸ In the diary on April 20th of Ludwig Landau, he wrote of the uprising as "The War of the Jews' from which there are episodes which would merit the pen of a Josephus Flavius . . . a Jew bearing an automatic rifle is wounded and in the next moment, the woman at his side takes over his weapon, and aims a round of bullets at

the Germans.”⁶⁹ The fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto found themselves abandoned by the Allies; all the clandestine networks in occupied Europe received arms and money from London, Washington, even Moscow, all except the Jewish resistance fighters of the ghettos.⁷⁰

The trigger of the Ghetto revolt was Himmler’s order of February 16, 1943 to liquidate the remainder of the Jewish Quarter on April 19th as a birthday present to Hitler and the first day of Passover.⁷¹ The operation was concluded on May 16th with the dynamiting of the famous Warsaw Synagogue.⁷²

The letters and testaments of the Jewish fighters who took up arms against an impossible situation revealed that they wanted to show the world that Jews were capable of taking up arms “to defend and save Jewish honor.”⁷³ All were filled with *abavat Israel*, the love for their people.⁷⁴ That is why in the ghettos and the death camps there were Jews who took it upon themselves to write diaries and journals, so that future generations would remember and know.⁷⁵

Emmanuel Ringelblum had a committee of one hundred chroniclers inside the Warsaw Ghetto that became the memory of the Jewish community.⁷⁶ In the ghetto, they knew and described the degradation of hunger, the cold, the exhaustion of the elderly, the ravages of disease, the cowardice of the informers, and the profiteers.⁷⁷ Chaim Kaplan began in his Warsaw diary that I will write a “scroll of agony” in order to remember the past in the future.⁷⁸ However, his last words were a cry of despair of “If my life ends – what will become of my diary?”⁷⁹ Kaplan’s concern for his diary was a concern about the fate of the truth, which is linked to the fate of humanity either embracing God’s Truth or the lies of idolatry.⁸⁰ In July 26, 1942, Chaim Kaplan wrote in his diary:

*Some of my friends and acquaintances who know the secret of my diary urge me, in their despair, to stop writing. “Why? For what purpose? Will you live to see it published? Will these words of yours reach the ears of future generations? How? . . .” And yet in spite of it all I refuse to listen to them. I feel that continuing this diary to the very end of my physical and spiritual strength is a historical mission which must not be abandoned. My mind is still clear, my need to record unstilled, though it is now five days since any real food has passed my lips. Therefore I will not silence my diary!*⁸¹

As Alexander Donat wrote there was “no precedent for the eventual uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto because it was undertaken solely for death with dignity, and without the slightest hope of victory in life.”⁸² During the 25th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Yitzhak Zuckerman (“Antek”), one of the leaders of the Jewish Fighting Organization, was asked by the Israeli press what were the military and strategic lessons to be learned from the Uprising.⁸³ The Warsaw ghetto uprising held off the Nazis longer than the great French army. His reply was:

I don’t think there’s any need to analyze the Uprising in military terms. This was a war of less than a thousand people against a mighty army, and no one doubted how it was likely to turn out. This isn’t a subject for study in a military school. Not the weapons, not

*the operations, not the tactics. If there's a school to study the human spirit, there it should be a major subject. The really important things were inherent in the force shown by Jewish youths, after years of degradation, to rise up against their destroyers and determine what death they would choose: Treblinka or Uprising. I don't know if there's a standard to measure that.*⁸⁴

Holocaust survivor, Gerda Weissmann Klein, found her answer to the pain and loss of her childhood home in Poland and her family in her religion and in the land of her ancient ancestors. She believes that "Israel, by extending the *Law of Return* to all Jews, has become the metaphorical sepulcher of my parents as well as my spiritual childhood home."⁸⁵

Contained in the Israeli Declaration of Independence is the principle of unlimited admission of Jews to Israel, which was enacted into the *Law of Return* in July 1950 and provides every Jew the right to immigrate and to immediate citizenship.⁸⁶ The *Law of Return* is a symbolic statement that Jews will never again as during the 1930s find themselves without a place to go.⁸⁷ The *Law of Return* requires only one Jewish grandparent (based upon the Nazi laws defining a Jew for extermination) to be considered Jewish, even though under Jewish law one has to be born of a Jewish mother, or convert to Judaism, to be considered a Jew.

The Holocaust and the rebirth of the State of Israel have initiated the third great era, *churban*, in Jewish history. Israel's faith in the God of history demands that the destruction from the Holocaust be matched by an unprecedented act of redemption of biblical statute, a new Exodus, as expressed by the words of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik:

*In the heart of a night of terror, full of the horrors of Maidanek, Treblinka, and Buchenwald, in the night of gas chambers and crematoria, a night of Absolute Hiddenness [of God], in the night of the reign of the Satan of Doubts and Apostasy . . . a night of ceaseless search . . . when the people of Israel lay inundated with sorrow, and faint, tossing and turning in its bed amidst death agonies and the torments of hell, [came a knock on the door of Jewish history].*⁸⁸

Yaacov Herzog explained that this third great era has brought a spiritual revival because of the rebirth of Israel during a 1958 speech in Chicago in which he said:

*The ash-heaps of Europe have been a prelude not only to Jewish renaissance in the Land of Israel but also to a phenomenal upsurge of Jewish faith and consciousness throughout the Diaspora and, in particular, in the United States.*⁸⁹

What are the implications of the Holocaust for the Christian vision of God, humanity and redemption? Many people may have thought that the experience of Auschwitz symbolized that the Jews were cut off from God and hope and that the covenant was destroyed; however, the return of the Jews to Jerusalem symbolizes that God's promises are eternal and His people are eternal and represents His act of redemption.⁹⁰ Emil Fackenheim contended that the State of Israel is an aspect of a mending of the rupture in Jewish-Christian relations signified by the Holocaust.⁹¹

Christian support of Israel is a beginning step to mending the rupture in Jewish-Christian relations.

The rebirth of the State of Israel represents a repudiation of what the Christian Church has taught regarding the Jews from the second century until 1948 as being punished by God for crucifying and rejecting Jesus.⁹² In 1967, the mainline Christian churches could not accept the Jews return to Jerusalem, as it mocked their supercession doctrine and made their own religious dogma questionable.

The traditional Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox conviction that God forbids the return of the Jews to Jerusalem until the Messianic End Time was expressed by the Jesuit publication *Civiltà Cattolica* in response to Herzl's World Zionist Congress in 1897:

One thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven years have passed since the prediction of Jesus of Nazareth was fulfilled, namely that Jerusalem would be destroyed . . . that the Jews would be led away to be slaves among all the nations, and that they would remain in the dispersion until the end of the world . . . According to the Sacred Scriptures, the Jewish people must always live dispersed and vagabond (vagrant) among the other nations so that they may render witness to Christ not only by the Scriptures . . . but by their very existence.

*As for a rebuilt Jerusalem which might become the center of a reconstructed State of Israel, we must add that this is contrary to the prediction of Christ himself who foretold that "Jerusalem would be downtrodden by the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled" (Luke 21:24), that is . . . until the end of the world.*⁹³

The mainline Protestant churches see Jews returning only at the time of the End Time judgment against those who oppose Jesus and for the purpose of one last chance to convert to Christianity before the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem and the establishment of the heavenly Jerusalem.⁹⁴

Also, the Muslims could not and will not accept Israel and Jewish control of Jerusalem, for it disrupted their conquest for a dominate Muslim Middle East, committed to the Sword and Crescent. On August 7, 2003, the "Bali bomber" Amrozi bin Nurhasin shouted in the Indonesian court room during his sentencing for the deaths of more than 200 people: "Jews remember Khaibar – The army of Mohammed is coming back to defeat you."⁹⁵ In the year 628 AD, the Prophet Mohammed murdered 6 to 9 hundred Jews living in the oasis at Khaibar.⁹⁶ Muslims have continued this hatred with the Battle of Khaibar still as a rallying cry against the State of Israel.⁹⁷ The Battle of Khaibar symbolized the defeat of the Jewish infidels and the beginning of the subjugation and humiliation of Jews under the *dhimma* practice under Sharia Law, which included the *jizya* poll tax to be paid personally to emphasize Jewish degradation.⁹⁸

And God said to her: "Two nations are in your womb; two regimes from your insides shall be separated; the might shall pass from one regime to the other, and the elder shall serve the younger" . . . The first one emerged red, entirely like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. After that his brother emerged with his hand grasping on to the heel

of Esau; so he called his name Jacob . . . Genesis 25:23-26. [Since Jacob was conceived in the womb first although not born first, he was the spiritual firstborn and the legitimate first born from the seed of the Patriarch].

According to the *Torah* commentaries, the unborn infants struggle in the womb symbolized the future conflict between Israel and Edom, which will end with the younger prevailing over the older. By holding on to Esau's heel, Jacob is the eternal thorn in the side of Esau and the denier of his beliefs and the excesses of Esau's behavior and violence. Islam is angry of Jacob's hold on its heel represented by the existence of a Jewish state and the continued existence of the Jews means that Jacob is still engaged in holding Esau's heel.

The fact that Jews have survived against impossible odds of more than 2,000 years of persecution and the Holocaust serves to demonstrate God's power.⁹⁹ Infertility was common among the Patriarchs and Matriarchs of Israel, but prayer and Divine intervention resulted in the emergence of the nation.¹⁰⁰ God was proving that the Jewish people are not a natural phenomenon, for without miracles the Jewish people could not have existed nor could the Jewish people continue to exist.¹⁰¹

*Not through army and not through strength, but through My spirit, said the Lord.
Zechariah 4:6.*

However, it is not the individual Jew that God promised to keep alive, but the Nationhood of the Jewish people.¹⁰² God ensures the ultimate survival of the Jewish people, because the Jews were chosen to live by God's commandments, to remember His great acts and to tell the story faithfully.¹⁰³

Fear not, My servant Jacob and Jeshurun [Israel] , whom I have chosen . . . so shall I pour out My spirit upon your offspring and My blessing upon your progeny, and they will flourish among the grass like willows by streams of water. Isaiah 44:2-4.

Wiesel has commented that Israel was not an answer to the Holocaust for "these are two distinct events, both inexplicable, unexplained, mysterious, both staggering to the mind and a challenge to the imagination."¹⁰⁴ Wiesel further said that "we shall never understand how Auschwitz was possible . . . nor how Israel, scarcely a few years later, was able to draw from itself the strength and vision to rebuild its home in a world adrift and in ruins."¹⁰⁵

Why do nations gather, and regimes talk in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the princes conspire secretly, against God and against His anointed [the Messiah]: "Let us cut their cords and let us cast off their ropes from ourselves." He Who sits in heaven will laugh, the Lord will mock them. Then He will speak to them in His anger, and in His wrath He will terrify them:"I Myself have anointed My king, over Zion, My holy mountain!" Psalms 2:1-6.

In *The Holocaust Kingdom*, Lena Donat, when witnessing the women in Auschwitz going to their deaths singing the *Hatikvah*, the song of undying hope, the song of an ancient people always carrying the vision of Zion in its heart, realized that "...

I know that through mankind flows a stream of eternity greater and more powerful than individual deaths.”¹⁰⁶ The Jew of the Holocaust is not only the bearer of a message, but the message itself to both Jews and Christians. Is it a message of redemption from God? Wiesel has written about the responsibility to the dead to deliver their messages to the living.¹⁰⁷

Jews historically stand for justice, mercy and truth, which made every word of Hitler a lie¹⁰⁸ and every word of the Islamic Jihadists an abomination against God, *Deuteronomy 18:12*. The Jew is in his historic existence a witness who with the highest authority possible to man, says to mankind: “Behold, your God! *Hinneh eloheichem* Your God, He is here.”¹⁰⁹

Abraham Heschel has written about the need for self-examination to scrutinize the authenticity of one’s religious existence for both Jews and Christians. He has presented these questions of self-examination:

*Is our religious attitude one of conviction or a mere assertion? Is the existence of God a probability to us or a certainty? Is God a mere word to us, a name, a possibility, a hypothesis, or is He a living presence? Is the claim of the prophets a figure of speech to us or a compelling belief?*¹¹⁰

Heschel has stated that self-understanding is important for “[w]e often assume it is God we believe in, but in reality it may be a symbol of personal interests that we dwell upon:”

*We may assume that we feel drawn to God, but in reality it may be a power within the world that is the object of our adoration. We may assume it is God we care for, but it may be our own ego we are concerned with.*¹¹¹

Did the Holocaust represent the footsteps of the Messiah¹¹² and the birth pangs of the coming of the Messiah?¹¹³ Did the Holocaust represent the agony and suffering preceding the coming Messianic period?¹¹⁴ Are these the birth pangs that will reveal the Kingdom of God?¹¹⁵ Martin Buber, one of the leading spiritual thinkers of the 20th century, wrote in 1923 Germany that “evil is essential to the coming of the kingdom [of God].”¹¹⁶ Buber was alluding to the story of Rabbi Yaakov Yitzhak of Lublin who sought to hasten the Messiah by kabbalistic prayers to influence God to employ Napoleon, who was invading Poland, as His messianic agent.¹¹⁷

*I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah; and though he tarry, none the less do I believe. – Song of the ghetto martyrs.[Principles of Faith outlined by Maimonides in the 12th century]*¹¹⁸

Was this suffering meant to cleanse a person from all the foreign attributes that oppose the Messianic period, to cause the sons of Israel to rise to a higher level of prayer and to recognize their total dependence on God?¹¹⁹

See – I have placed before you today the life and the good, and the death and the evil, that which I command you today, to love God, your God, to walk in His ways, to observe

His commandments, His decrees, and His ordinances; then you will live and you will multiply, and God, your God, will bless you in the Land to which you come, to possess it.

. . .

I call heaven and earth today to bear witness against you; I have placed life and death before you, blessing and curse; and you shall choose life, so that you will live, you and your offspring – to love God, your God, to listen to His voice and to cleave to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days, to dwell upon the Land that God swore to your forefathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. Deuteronomy 30:15-16, 19-20.

Professor Patterson wrote that the Islamic Jihadist evil exceeds the Nazi evil for they have combined murder and suicide into a single act of “martyrdom,” which represents two forms of rebellion against God of murder and suicide.¹²⁰ The Nazi assault on God took the form of mass murder against the Jews and the destroying of the soul of Israel.¹²¹ The Jihadist takes the Nazi evil and reduces all men to surplus people and expects all men to be engaged in making all men equally superfluous by choosing death over life.¹²²

To the Western world, martyrdom is viewed as dying with a refusal to commit murder and in order to sanctify life.¹²³ The Islamic Jihadist has perverted martyrdom into dying precisely to commit mass murder for the glorification of Allah.¹²⁴ The Jihadists not only chose death but worship it in a demonstration of idolatry with an appetite for human sacrifice that is unquenchable.¹²⁵ Israel represents to humanity the “ancient testimony to the holiness of every human life,” which denies the salvation “truth” of Nazism and Islamic Jihadism.¹²⁶

Islamic Jihadists seek the souls of the children with the education of their youth, beginning in kindergarten by preaching virulent hatred toward Jews and Israel and the righteousness of killing Jews by their martyrdom.¹²⁷ In *Deuteronomy 18:10*, God warned the Israelites against the idolaters in the Land (Molech worship) *who causes his son or daughter to pass through the fire*, using their children as sacrificial offerings to die a death and combining this suicide with the mass murder of innocent Jews.¹²⁸

For anyone who does these is an abomination of God, and because of these abominations the Lord, your God, banishes [the nations] from before you. You shall be wholehearted with the Lord, your God. For these nations that you are possessing – they hearken to astrologers and diviners; but as for you – not so has the Lord, your God, given for you. Deuteronomy 18:12-14.

The objective of the Jihadists is just not to morally delegitimize Israel as a Jewish state, but to dehumanize Judaism and the Jewish people. As the Jewish race is dehumanized, their murder becomes a religious obligation. Since the Jihadist bible is the Quran, the Jihadist evil transcends the Nazi evil because the Quran is “scripture,” a revelation from Allah, while the Nazi evil was based only upon *Mein Kampf* with pronouncements from the *Führer*.¹²⁹ With a scriptural foundation for their actions, the Jihadists justify any evil as the absolute will of Allah without refutation.¹³⁰ The Jihadists’ fundamental principle in which murder equals righteousness as expressed by Haj Amin

al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem who collaborated with Hitler and the Nazis in the “Final Solution,” was

*Slaughter Jews wherever you find them! Their spilled blood pleases Allah!*¹³¹

As the Muslim community expanded into Europe, the Muslim Brotherhood drafted on December 1, 1982 a document referred to as “The Project,” setting out the vision of a European Islamic State and “to adopt the Palestinian cause as part of a worldwide Islamic plan with the policy and by means of jihad, since it acts as the keystone of the renaissance of the Arab world today.”¹³² On May 22, 1991, the Brotherhood published a similar document for the grand Jihad for North America by establishing Islamic centers throughout “sabotaging” Western civilization and spreading “true” Islam.¹³³

Hezbollah has its roots in Khomeini’s Jihadist movement in Iran and al-Qaeda was an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood.¹³⁴ One of the most evil inheritors from Haj Amin al-Husseini is the PLO and its military wing Fatah whose sole purpose is the destruction of the Jewish state under Article 15 of the PLO Charter.¹³⁵ Article 22 of the Charter states that Israel is a constant threat to peace in the Middle East, the whole world and to all humanity.¹³⁶

Arafat described the Oslo Accords as a step in the “phased strategy” for the destruction of the Jewish state with the Israelis allowing “a Trojan Horse into their midst” and by emulating Hitler’s signing of the Munich agreement that led to the destruction of Czechoslovakia.¹³⁷ Arafat compared this strategy to the Prophet Muhammad, signing the Treaty of Hudaibiya with the people of Mecca in 628 until he was strong enough to defeat them, which is the continuation of the principle of *taqiya* in lying to the non-believer for the sake of advancing Islam.¹³⁸ The power struggle between Hamas and Fatah concerns who will control the process of exterminating the Jews.¹³⁹

The Islamic Jihadists are driven to usurp the Holy One, exterminate His people, dominate the Land and destroy the Word of God.¹⁴⁰ Judaism insists on an ethical accountability and the Jewish people are witnesses to the nations, witnesses to an absolute, revealed truth that implicates every human in relationship with all of humans in *Leviticus 19:18 of you shall love your fellow as yourself*, which represents the soul and substance of who you are.¹⁴¹ As expressed by Patterson, to love another is to affirm the covenantal relation to the One who commands us to love; whereas, to murder another is an assault on God and the Jewish people through whom He transmits the commandment to the world.¹⁴²

For one who finds me finds life and elicits favor from God. But one who sins against me despoils his soul; all who hate me love death. Proverbs 8:35-36.

The Jewish presence in the Land has metaphysical significance, demonstrating the holiness of life and the truth of the Word of God, and Jewish presence in Jerusalem asserts Divine authority and the Divine commandment to affirm the holiness of humanity.¹⁴³ Professor Patterson wrote that “Jerusalem is the lens through which God

looks upon the world and puts to every human being the question He put to the first human being [Adam] in *Genesis 3: Where are you?*¹⁴⁴ Do you know where you are and your soul?

You will arise and show Zion mercy, for [there will come] the time to favor her, for the appointed time will have come. For Your servants have cherished her stones, and favored her dust. Then the nations will fear the Name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth Your glory. For the Lord will have built Zion, He will have appeared in His glory. He will have turned to the prayer of each devastated one and not have despised their prayer. Psalms 102:14-18.

¹ Ignaz Maybaum, *The Face of God After Auschwitz*, (1st ed. 1965), p. 32.

² *Ibid.*

³ David Patterson, *Wrestling With the Angel: Toward a Jewish Understanding of the Nazi Assault on the Name*, (1st ed. 2006), p. xx.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁵ Maybaum, p. 32.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Jocelyn Hellig, *The Holocaust and Antisemitism, A Short History*, (1st ed. 2003), p. 112.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Maybaum, p. 61.

¹⁴ Hellig, pp. 124-125.

¹⁵ Maybaum, pp. 62, 198.

¹⁶ Hellig, pp. 112-113.

¹⁷ Patterson, *Wrestling With the Angel*, p. 68.

¹⁸ *Genesis 8:20 (The Chumash, commentary)*.

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²² Hellig, p. 100.

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²⁶ Hellig, pp. 116-117.

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- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34, 62-63.
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- ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. xxxviii.
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- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 63-67.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.
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- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
- ⁵¹ Maybaum, p. 52.
- ⁵² Astor, pp. 53-54.
- ⁵³ Maybaum, p. 52.
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- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.
- ⁵⁶ Maria Mazzenga, *American Religious Responses to Kristallnacht*, (1st ed. 2009), p. 151.
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- ⁵⁸ Maybaum, p. 34.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.
- ⁶⁰ Kevin P. Spicer, *Antisemitism, Christian Ambivalence, and the Holocaust*, (1st ed. 2007), p. 27, Note 2.
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- ⁶² Spicer, p. 29.
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- ⁶⁴ Spicer, pp. 31-36.
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