

It's time to go up to Zion again—

Fall 2004 Mercy Mission!

"Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion;
for the time to favor her, yes,
the set time has come." (Psalm 102:13)

Blessings in the Lamb!

From Purim to Passover

Purim is a Jewish holiday based on the Book of Esther. This year it will be celebrated on March 7. The Hebrew word *purim* means "lots" (Esther 9:24, 26) and refers to the lots that Haman, the enemy of the Jews, cast to determine on which day the Jews were to be annihilated as a people. The decree to kill all the Jews, young and old, was published by the scribes of the Persian king Ahaseuerus on the "*thirteenth day of the first month.*" On the Jewish calendar, the 13th of Nisan, the first month of the biblical year, is the night of the "leaven purge" in Jewish homes. All leaven (a type of sin) is removed from the home in preparation for the Passover (see Ex. 12:14-15; I Cor. 5:7). Was Haman intentionally equating the Jewish people with leaven which he intended to purge from his home?? This was not the first time that God's Chosen People were targeted for extermination. Before Haman, there was Pharaoh. He commanded that all male Hebrew babies be cast into the river. The same Hebrew word for "cast," *tashlich* is found in Micah 7:19 — "*...thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*" Is another gruesome parallel being made here between removing sin by casting it into the sea and permanently removing Jews by casting all male infants into the water?

Such irrational, supernatural hatred of Jewish people is called anti-Semitism. The enemy (ha satan) convinces morally weak leaders of nations that the Jews are an evil to be eradicated. These men act upon his whisperings and the result is mass murders, drownings, tortures, burning of synagogues, pogroms, forced baptisms, confiscation of property and more.

Many people mistakenly think that anti-Semitism ended with Hitler. This is far from the truth. The present situation in the Middle East should be ample evidence to the fallacy of that belief. Palestinian leaders call daily for the extermination of the Israeli people. (The PLO Charter still calls for the total destruction of Israel!)

The following are a few of the items reported in the January 2004 issue of Dateline World Jewry, published by the World Jewish Congress:

- 1) A top French cardinal, Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, has said that anti-Semitism is on the rise in Europe, and urged constant vigilance to avoid setting out on the "path to Auschwitz."
- 2) Belgian's official anti-racism center is taking measures to stop imports of an Italian wine with labels bearing pictures of Adolf Hitler, other leading Nazis, and Nazi slogans.
- 3) In France, Orthodox Jewish men have been warned to wear a hat over their Kippah in public. While in Belguim and Sweden, the Jewish people have been warned not to wear Judaic jewelry

where it can be seen by the public.

4) Cardinal Josef Gleny has refused to order removal of anti-Semitic literature from the bookstore of All Saints Catholic Church, which is located across the street from Warsaw's only synagogue.

Also in January, The Toronto Globe and mail reports that a Jewish professor of sociology found swastikas painted on her door. At the same university, bathroom graffiti stated: "Jews are a disease."

Believers Against Anti-Semitism

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob wants believers in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua (Jesus) to take a stand against this insidious, demon-inspired spirit. The Holy Scriptures exhort the children of God to bless the Jewish people (Genesis 12:3), pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6), comfort Zion (Isaiah 40:1,2) and arise and have mercy upon her (Psalm 102:13).

Lest you think that the same spirit that motivated Pharoah, Haman and Hitler is not in our country today, allow us to reprint a note given to us by Paulette, the wife of Gary who received his Messiah shortly before going to be with the Lord (see November newsletter). "We had work done by a plumber. When he finished, he saw my Jewish star and made a comment, 'Oh you're the ones that killed my lord.' My answer to him was, 'We do not kill our own.' I then asked him to leave."

Jewish people today are still being subjected to the age-old accusation. "You Jews killed Christ." Those of us who know the Lord, and the Bible know that **we** killed the Messiah. Our sins nailed Him to the tree. We are all responsible for his death: Jews, non-Jews, males, females, young, old: fallen humanity. To single out the Jewish people is a gross, and dangerous mistake.

Is the Passion of Jesus Anti-Semitic?

This is the title of a little 18 page booklet written by Larry W. Poland, Ph. D., Chairman and CEO of Mastermedia International, an organization that ministers to media leaders in Hollywood and other global media centers. Dr. Poland has done an excellent job of addressing the issue of anti-Semitism as it relates to the recently released Mel Gibson film, **The Passion of the Christ**. We strongly suggest that you order one or more copies of this booklet to use in sharing with multitudes of non-believers who will see this film and have questions.

Dr. Poland explains why Jewish people are concerned that "**The Passion**" might stir up anti-Jewish sentiment: "In Europe, the best-known theatrical presentation of the passion of Jesus is the one performed at Oberammergau, Germany (begun in 1634). When Adolf Hitler came to power and sought to fuel the fires of hatred for Jewish people, he used this Oberammergau "passion play" drama to stir non-Jews with the message, 'See, it was the Jews who killed your saviour!' "

Who, in fact, did kill Jesus? Dr. Poland summarizes the blame for Yeshua's death in the following way: "So, the passion of Christ can be laid at the feet of a betraying friend, a cadre of self-protective Jewish leaders, a weak or conflicted Roman official, and a violence-prone Roman military. One salient point remains to be made on this issue. In a very real, sense, neither the Jews, Romans, nor others can bear the full responsibility for Jesus' death. In his own testimony, Jesus declared that he came to earth to die and was giving his life into the hands of others to carry out God's plan. '*No one takes my life from me,*' Jesus declared, '*I lay it down myself.*' "

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain

The last book of the Bible makes it abundantly clear that Yeshua, the Messiah, was appointed to die from the beginning of time. Revelation 13:8 calls Yeshua *"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."* His death was preordained by God before there were any Jewish people. Yeshua, embracing the will of His Father, condescended to come to this earth in the likeness of man, *"and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross"* (Philippians 2:8).

He came as a lamb, not as a lion, to fulfill the ancient Jewish sacrificial law (Leviticus 17:11). He came to be the final sacrifice for sin. He fulfilled the Passover. The Passover lambs, as God instructed Moses, had to be perfect and unblemished. Yeshua was. That is why the Apostle Kefa (Peter) told the believers of his day, *"For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."*

The passover lambs had to be held for four days (from the 10th to the 14th of Nisan) for inspection, to make sure there were no defects (Exodus 12:3,6). Yeshua entered Jerusalem on the 10th day of Nisan and was crucified 4 days later. When Pilate, after examining Yeshua said to the chief priests and to the people, *"I find no fault in this man,"* he was in effect saying, *"This lamb has no blemish. He is perfect."*

Yeshua, identified by Yochanan (John) in John 1:29 as *"the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,"* will be worshipped throughout eternity by thousands of thousands from every tribe and tongue and people and nation saying: *"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing"* (Revelation 5:12)!

Some Prophecies fulfilled in the Last week of the Lamb

Passover begins on the eve of April 5 this year. This special Feast of the Lord is a glorious type of our deliverance from the bondage of sin. Yeshua, *"The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."* (John 1:29), fulfilled many prophecies given years before His birth. This confirms that The Lamb's death was part of God's DIVINE PLAN from the very beginning.

Prophesied in the Tenach (Fulfilled in the Brit HaDasha)

Yeshua entered Jerusalem on a donkey Zechariah 9:9 (Matthew 21:1-2)

The people sang Hoshanna to Him. Psalm 118:25-26 (Matthew 21:9)

The little ones adored Him. Psalm 8:2 (Matthew 21:15,16)

Yeshua was betrayed by a close friend. Psalm 41:9 (Luke 22:47, 48)

Betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. Zechariah 11:12 (Matthew 26:14, 15)

He was accused by false witnesses. Psalm 35:11 (Mark 14:57,58)

The Lamb was silent to accusations. Isaiah 53:7 (Mark 15:4,5)

He was hated without a cause. Psalm 35:19 (John 15:24,25)

Messiah's death would be a vicarious sacrifice. Isaiah 53:5 (Romans 5:6, 8)

He would be crucified with criminals. Isaiah 53:12 (Mark 15: 27, 28)

He would be scorned and mocked. Psalm 22:7, 8 (Luke 23:35)

His hands and feet would be pierced. Zechariah 12:10 (John 20:27)

He would pray for His enemies. Psalm 109:4 (Luke 23:34)

Soldiers would gamble for the Messiah's clothing. Psalm 22:17, 18 (Matthew 27:35, 36)

No bones would be broken. Psalm 34:20 (John 19:32, 33, 36)

He would be forsaken by God. Psalm 22:1 (Matthew 27:46)

His side would be pierced. Zechariah 12:10 (John 19:34)

He would be buried with the rich. Isaiah 53:9 (Matthew 27:57-60)

Messiah would be resurrected from the dead. Psalm 16:10; 49:15 (Mark 16:6, 7)

If you want to study more about the prophecies fulfilled in the life of Yeshua, we highly recommend the book **The Prophets Still Speak: Messiah in Both Testaments** by Fred John Meldau for further study.

This Year in Jerusalem!

The Passover Seder ends with the words, "Next Year in Jerusalem." It is an expression of Jewish hope throughout the ages for a return to Jerusalem, the site of the Holy Temple where for 1500 years "*a lamb for a household*" (Exodus 12:3) was slain to remember God's deliverance of His people.

Jerusalem is still precious to God and central to His purposes. It is time to go there again and share the Lamb with His own people. Please indicate on the mailback card if you are interested in joining us this fall on our next Mercy Mission to Israel.

In Yeshua's love,

Neil and Jamie

I Have a Friend Who's Jewish—Do You? by Don Goldstein

We highly recommend this book to give to anyone who is Jewish. This helpful tool addresses many of the issues and questions the Jewish people have asked for years: "Why don't the rabbis believe Yeshua is the Messiah?" "If the Lord is one, then what's this business of God having a Son, and the Holy Spirit?" "What about the six million Jews?" Read it for yourself— then pass it on to the one for whom you've been praying!

PASSOVER - 2004

Neil and Jamie will be hosting a Passover Seder at Christian Retreat in Bradenton, Florida on Tuesday, April 6. For more information, please call 1-800-2YESHUA.

We will also be giving a Passover presentation at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Satellite Beach, Florida on April 8. Please call (321)777-2047 for more information.