



August 2000

Dear Mishpochah,

## Why We Believe

The Holy Scriptures tell us to: "... *be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason for the **hope** that is in you, with meekness and fear.*" (1 Peter 3:15)

The **hope** that is in us is Yeshua, the living Torah, the promise of life in the world to come, and the source of living water in the present. If someone asks you: "Why do you believe that Yeshua is the Messiah?," what is your answer? This month we feel led to give you our answer, in abbreviated form, hoping that it will help you to better articulate the reason for **your hope**.

## Prophecy Fulfilled

One of the main reasons we believe that Yeshua is the Messiah is fulfilled Bible prophecy. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob spoke through the Jewish prophets of old, telling His people that He would one day send a Messiah to redeem them. Moses said: "*The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst...*" (Deut. 18:15), and Zechariah told us: "*Rejoice Greatly o daughter of Zion... Behold, your King is coming to you. He is just and having salvation.. riding on a donkey...*" (Zech. 9:9) The Prophets of old looked forward to the time when the "*desire of all nations*" (the Messiah) would come. (Haggai 2:7)

When Yeshua ministered in the Land of Israel He declared that He was the One spoken of by the prophets: "*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.*" (John 5:39) (REMEMBER the only Scriptures at that time were what we now call the Old Testament.)

Over a 1,000 year period of time the prophets of Israel painted a picture of Messiah, a picture that Yeshua matches in every single detail. Canon Hague, Bible scholar, expresses the amazing fact of fulfilled prophecy as follows: "Christ (Messiah) is the only person ever born into this world whose ancestry, birth time, forerunner, birthplace, birth manner, infancy, manhood, teaching, character, career, preaching, reception, rejection, death, burial, resurrection and ascension were all pre-written in the most marvelous manner centuries before He was born." Could this possibly be coincidence? No! It is God-incidence. God giving His people a way to recognize the true Messiah \_ the One that He was sending to them. Yeshua of Nazareth fulfilled the Old Covenant predictions of the coming Messiah perfectly.

Studying the probability of fulfilled prophecy, Dr. Olinthus Gregory made the following observation: "Suppose that there were only 50 prophecies in the Old Testament... giving details of the coming Messiah and all meet in the person of Jesus...the probability of chance fulfillment as calculated by mathematicians according to the theory of probabilities is less than 1 in 1,125,000,000,000,000."

Following are a few of the 333 prophecies fulfilled exactly by Yeshua. These prophecies deal with His sufferings and death at Jerusalem.

## **Prophecies from Psalm 22 Fulfillment in Yeshua**

"My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" vs. 1 "And at the ninth hour Yeshua cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Mark 15:34

"They pierced my hands and my feet." vs. 16 "Then they crucified Him, and divided His "They divide my garments among them, vs. 18 garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled and for My clothing they cast lots." which was spoken by the prophet: 'They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.' " Matthew 27:35

"...He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him; vs. 8 "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" Matthew 27:43

## **Prophecies from Isaiah 53 Fulfillment in Yeshua**

"He is despised and rejected by men, a Man vs. 3 "He came to His own, and His own did not of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we receive Him." John 1:11

hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him."

"And they made His grave with the wicked \_ vs. 9 "Now when evening had come, there came a but with the rich at His death..." rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who

himself had also become a disciple of Yeshua. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Yeshua. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb..." Matthew 27:57-60

"Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the vs. 12 "With Him they also crucified two robbers, one great, and He shall divide the spoil with the on His right and the other on His left. So the strong, because He poured out His soul unto scripture was fulfilled which says, "and He was death, and He was numbered with the numbered with the transgressors.!" transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, Mark 15:27-28 and made intercession for the transgressors."

Would a man in the terrible agony of death by crucifixion intentionally do things to fulfill prophecy, i.e. quote directly from Psalm 22? Not a chance. Could a writer accidentally paint a picture of Yeshua's death 700 years before He was born? The Talmud (Sanhedrin 98) teaches that Isaiah Chapter 53 refers to Messiah. Yeshua can be seen in almost every verse! Read Isaiah 53 for yourself and decide.

There is also a very interesting prophecy about the **time of Messiah's death** that is hard to refute. We read the following in Daniel 9:26: "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary..." Jerusalem and the Temple in Jerusalem were destroyed in 70 A.D. That means that, according to Bible prophecy, Messiah had to come and be cut off before the destruction of the Temple. Yeshua was!

## **The Person of Yeshua**

We believe that Yeshua is the Jewish Messiah because of who He was as a person. He was wiser than King

Solomon (Matt. 12:42), consumed with zeal for the God of Israel (John 2:13-17), God's faithful servant who loves Gentiles as well as Jews (Matthew 12:18-21), a master teacher in Israel (Matthew 7:28-29), a loyal friend (John 11:5), a compassionate healer (Acts 10:38), no respecter of persons (Matthew 15:21-28), a thoroughly righteous man (Luke 19:45-48), strong in the face of temptation (Matthew 4:1-11), without sin (2Corinthians 5:21), passionate about Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37), a loyal Jew (Luke 4:16), non-violent (Luke 6:28-29), understanding human frailty (Matthew 9:12-13), non-condemning (John 8:10-11), forgiving (Mark 16:7), total love (John 15:12-13).

Yeshua is the "*pearl of great price*." When He came upon fishermen mending their nets and said, "*Follow Me*," many left everything they had to follow Yeshua. Magnetic? Awe-inspiring? Dynamic? Irresistible? Yes \_ Ben Elohim, the Son of God. When we personally caught a glimpse of who He was in 1973, we also left all to follow Him. It was, without a doubt, the wisest decision of our lives. We say of Yeshua what some of His contemporaries said of Him:

*"I find no fault in this man."* (Luke 23:4)

*"No man ever spoke like this man."* (John 7:46)

*"He has done all things well."* (Mark 7:37)

*"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*(Matthew16:16)

### **Personal Transformations of His Talmidim**

We believe in Yeshua because when He comes into a person's life, they are supernaturally transformed. Peter, a Galilean fisherman, became the articulate leader of Messianic Jews in the Land of Israel and beyond. He gave a message on Shavuot in Jerusalem that resulted in 3,000 souls receiving Yeshua as Messiah. Sha'ul (Paul) of Tarsus, a Pharisee of Pharisees, persecuted the early believers in Yeshua, was present at the stoning of Stephen, and after encountering Yeshua on the road to Damascus, brought the message of the Jewish Messiah to the Gentile world, Sha'ul suffered greatly for the cause of Messiah and counted it all joy because He had met the risen Messiah and had been forever changed!

Demon possessed men and women were transformed into lovers of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob once Yeshua touched their lives. A despised tax collector, Matthew, went from cheating and stealing to giving, loving and healing. Neil and Jamie Lash were changed from self-absorbed, worldly sinners to born-again lovers of God. Jamie's dad, Gus, was transformed in one day from an abusive alcoholic, enslaved by the enemy, to a loving, giving father. Total transformation in direct response to total surrender to Yeshua Ha Mashiach. The Holy Scriptures express this transformation as follows: "*If any man be in Messiah, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new.*" (2Corinthians5:17)

### **Peace with God**

We believe that Yeshua is the Sar Shalom, the Prince of Peace, spoken of by Isaiah: "*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor (Pele-Yo'etz) The Mighty God (El Gibbor), The Everlasting Father (Avi-Ad), The Prince of Peace (Sar-Shalom).*" (Isaiah 9:6)

When Yeshua comes into a life, He brings shalom-shalom (perfect peace) to the heart. Peace with God. The peace of sins forgiven. Rest for the soul. Who but God alone can give this priceless gift to the spirit of man? As the Scripture says: He is our peace. (Ephesians 2:14) Yeshua promised His followers peace before He left this world, and He kept His word: "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart*

*be troubled neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27)*

Yeshua gives: "... *peace that passes all understanding.*" (Phil. 4:7) It is a peace that is deep within His Talmidim, yet not necessarily on the outside. Believers have struggles and problems like everyone else, but there is a great difference. The One who has overcome the world lives inside the believer through the presence of the Ruach HaKodesh, bringing peace in the midst of life's storms.

Some ask: "If Yeshua is the Messiah, why didn't He bring peace to the world?" He did bring peace to those who received Him, but not the external "*peace on earth*" including the overthrow of Roman rule that the 1st century Jews were hoping for. The "*peace on earth*" that Yeshua brought was the overthrow of self rule and the initiation of the government of God in the hearts of men.

Before there can be peace in the world, man must have peace with God and peace within himself. If more people would surrender to the Sar Shalom, there would be more peace in the world! When Yeshua returns to rule and reign in the coming Messianic Kingdom, peace will be everyone's portion as the wolf lies down with the lamb. (Isaiah 65:25)

### **Proof of the Resurrection**

We believe that Yeshua is the Messiah of Israel because he rose from the dead, as prophesied by Isaiah (53:10) and King David (Psalm 16:10). Yeshua of Nazareth is the only person in all of history whose resurrection from the dead can be substantiated. Yeshua Himself told His disciples that He would be raised from the dead, so that when God did indeed bring Him back from the dead they would know for sure that He was the Messiah of Israel. One time He told His talmidim: "*The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.*" (Matthew 17:33-34) Another time He said: "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*" (John 2:19)

Yeshua was crucified at Passover. Three days later, God raised Him from the dead. The New Covenant Scriptures provide the primary historical source for information on the resurrection. Archaeological discoveries have confirmed the accuracy of the New Covenant. There were witnesses who saw the empty tomb, the grave clothes and the risen Messiah! The followers of Yeshua saw Him during a period of 40 days after His resurrection. Rabbi Sha'ul wrote: "...*he (Yeshua) was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve: After that, he was seen by about five hundred brethren at once...*" (1Corinthians 15:5-6)

More than anything else, **something** happened that changed a fearful band of disciples who ran away and hid on the night of Yeshua's arrest, into a group of men that were willing to (and did) die for what they believed. They had seen the risen Messiah. Yeshua had conquered death. He was who He had said He was.. *the resurrection and the life.* (John 11:25).

### **Neil's Favorite Proof of the Resurrection**

"I have been to Israel many times and have seen the 'empty tomb' with the sign saying: '*He is risen.*' It's impressive. But more impressive still is the empty tomb that was my heart for 36 years. **It isn't empty anymore.** Since September 2, 1973 it has been filled with the presence of the *Ruach HaKodesh*, God's Holy Spirit, the sign freely given to all who believe in Yeshua. I have experienced the fullness of what Yeshua was talking about when He said: '*Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*' (Matthew 11:28)"

May you experience the "*peace that passes all understanding*" through Yeshua, the *Sar Shalom*, the Prince of Peace. (Philippians 4:7)