

26 Nisan, 5772 (6/4/13) *Remembering the Shoah Once Again* J. M. Terrett

Shmini**Eighth****Torah:**

Lev. 9:1-11:47 (strange fire, priestly duties and Kosher)

(1) 9:24. The fire fell and the people rejoiced that He no longer dwelt on the mountain, but in their midst

(2) 10:2. Beware of strange fire – you receive it from the L-rd, you do not bring it to the L-rd.

(3) 10:10, 11. Levitical teaching mandate is still valid for Messianic Jewish believers today.

(4) 11:2. Kosher is about meat that is safe to eat, so we can be healthy, nothing more, nothing less.

Haftarah: 2 Sam. 6:1-7:17 (the return of the ark to Jerusalem by David)

(5) 6:3. The ark was to be carried, not carted. We are to walk with Him, not treat Him like merchandise.

(6) 7:18. G-d's Messianic reign is permanent; everything else is just stages along the way.

Brit Chadashah: Heb. 7:1-19 (Messiah's fulfilment of sacrificial ceremonies by His everlasting priesthood)

(7) 7:19. We are servants of the final reality, not just the symbolic anticipation, but actual fulfilment

Psalm 128 (Bernie)**Jewish Hero: Raoul Wallenberg (he saved over 70,000)**

Monday is Holocaust Memorial Day – Yon HaShoah and around the world, Jewish communities and many governments will be commemorating the most heinous slaughter of innocent fellow citizens in history as those who were killed officially are remembered. Today I want to remember two more groups – those who were killed recreationally and spontaneously and those who perished in the numerous pogroms throughout Europe and the Middle East from the second century till the modern day.

Now one of my biggest challenges is the amount of information I have to share, since the personal study of this horror began for me during my high school years. The other big challenge is always for me to come to grips with both why the L-rd let this happen and why ordinarily reasonable people become monsters of hate when they buy into the lies of anti-Semitism which I firmly believe are of satanic origin – or at least of satanic inspiration.

Let me take you to two passages of Scripture.

Matthew 24:9: ***“Then they will hand you over to be tortured, and will put you to death and you will be hated by all nations because of my name”***

This passage is taking to Messianic Jews, disciples of our L-rd and refers to the generational allergic reaction the world will continue to have when confronted with the Gospel and with those who share it – and this allergic reaction will always break out into a rash of violence, murder and hatred against both the disciples of the King of Israel and against those of the nation from which it arose.

I cannot think of a better, more succinct description of the treatment of the Jewish people, from the time it was written until the modern era where anti-Semitism and its political version Anti-Zionism are still rampant. Jewish people are hated of all nations and have been hated of all nations for centuries, except by those who love the L-rd, who is Jewish. Christian anti-Semites do not realize how deceived and spiritually compromised they are. The perpetrators of the Holocaust used propaganda which official Christian sources had sanctioned for centuries and which too many still unfortunately continue to sanction even today. Hatred of anyone is wrong. Hatred of G-d's chosen people is satanic and completely wrong and can never be justified.

Rev. 12:17: ***“Then the dragon was angry with the woman and went to make war on the rest of her children, those who keep the commandments of G-d and hold the testimony of Yeshua.”***

The Revelation is an amazing portrayal of the clockworks of G-d through the ages and has been misunderstood and misappropriated since it was first written. Chapter twelve is pivotal in understanding the message of the Book – the enemy shall try and destroy those who walk with G-d and this war shall last until Satan is finally destroyed and thrown into the lake of Fire.

Here we see his anger over the advent of the Messiah, whom he tried to kill when he was born. He is enraged by the generational spread of the Gospel and hates all of those who are responsible for this move of G-d's redemption. The woman is Israel and her children are those who generationally keep G-d's commandments and who hold the testimony of Yeshua. Now these are either two characteristics of the same group or two groups of people. It is probably referring to one group of people and should be a reminder to us as believers that if we hold the testimony of Yeshua, we should also keep the commandments of G-d.

This verse indicates the double pronged focus of satanic hatred – first against the woman (Jews) and then against believers who have the double pronged imperative of the Gospel (the testimony and the obedience). It is probably one of the most successful and subtle attacks of the enemy that he has succeeded in sowing hatred of the Jews among believers who were allowed to become citizens with us in the one new man of G-d.

Jewish people are the great nation charged with being a light to the nations and throughout our history, both before the Messiah and in the centuries since His advent, Judaism has always been a positive, civilizing force among the nations, even amidst the horrendous and unjust pogroms which continue to be launched against us. You have never seen, nor will you ever see holocaust terrorists – acts of violence against perpetrators by either the victims of the Holocaust or their decedents.

Let me move on to deal with the victims of the holocaust whose names were not meticulously recorded by their murderers. From 1933 onwards, first in Germany and then in every country the Nazis occupied, violence against Jews and their property was not only carried out by the Nazi government, but was also sanctioned, so that ordinary citizens could kill, maim and destroy without worrying about the police, who often joined in with the hooligans and the murderers.

Once the Germans entered Poland, they began rounding up Jews and transporting them to death camps. During the process, many who resisted were killed, as were many who were too old and too frail to make the journey – as well as countless infants whose murders still break my heart and enrage me. After the attack on Russia, countless Jewish villages were burned to the ground and their inhabitants were slaughtered. Slaughters also occurred in every major urban center the Nazis took possession of, from the Baltic to the Aegean Seas and from the boundaries of Spain to the frontiers of Turkey.

None of those who did not survive to be rounded up were counted by the Nazi officials and there is no definite way to know exactly how many perished, but we have to understand that only those whose names were recorded in the annals of the death camps figure among the six million we will be commemorating on Monday. The actual figure is much higher and may be twice as high, given the prewar Jewish population of Eastern Europe.

Why do I mention these people? I do not want to swell the numbers of those we remember, I just do not want to erase the memory of those whose deaths were not officially recorded, but who died nonetheless.

Horror stories of entire communities being beaten to death, shot and buried in mass graves, stagger the imagination and their death cut the worldwide Jewish population by more than half and it would take many generations for the Jewish populations of Europe to recover its numbers in every occupied country where our people once dwelt.

There is another sizeable group which often gets ignored while we remember those whose deaths were official – Christians with a Jewish heritage. When Napoleon opened the ghettos and allowed our people to become citizens of the countries they lived in and to integrate into the societies of Western Europe, he required that they acquire last names – something our people never bothered with until this time.

These names were written down in local registries and the Nazis studied these to find those Jews who had become Christians and lived assimilated lives under the supposed protection of their new faith. Many of them had no knowledge of their Jewish roots and were even pastors, priests and nuns. If anyone had two Jewish grandparents, they were rounded up along with the unassimilated members of the Jewish community and they perished alongside them – sort of makes you think of the passage in Revelation where the devil was killing Jews and Christian Jews.

Students of European history are not always open to share about the frequency of pogroms from the times of the Romans till the present day. A pogrom refers to an attack on any Jewish community or population by the Gentile population among whom they live – either as neighbours or while they were locked up and trapped in the ghettos.

In every generation since the Roman world collapsed, there have been major attacks on various Jewish communities in various places in Europe and the death toll was always high. The worst period of time was during the Crusades when soldiers practised killing any Jews in their path on the way to the Holy Land – and once they were there, they slaughtered the entire Jewish population of Jerusalem.

Jews tried to seek the protection of various government and church authorities, but this protection was never reliable and the murder of Jews and the seizure of their property and their belongings was either approved or not prevented and continued right up until history's biggest pogrom – the holocaust. Before I move on to deal with why G-d allowed this horror, let me just teach you about the origin of the word: Holocaust.

It refers to the burnt offerings in the tabernacle and later in the temple and was selected by the worldwide Jewish community as an appropriate term to describe the sacrifice of innocent victims who had committed no crimes and whom no one was willing to rescue.

Let me move towards my conclusion with a question – why did G-d allow this to happen? This is not an easy answer for anyone who looks objectively at all the horror and the tragic loss of human life in what claimed to be Christian Europe. Four things and I will close. First of all, we are all born with free will and dignity – in other words we choose and have to suffer the consequences of our choices. On the Day of Judgment, all perpetrators and deniers will stand before the resurrected Jewish Messiah and be judged for their heinous crimes – no one gets away with anything forever.

Secondly, the spiritual combat for the souls of man has been raging for centuries and if G-d intervened to save His people, He would have had to end human history before His redemptive purposes were fulfilled for all the nations and generations of mankind. The enemy may have been trying to break G-d's heart, but I feel he was just taking out his rage against Israel because we gave the Saviour to the world and he hates us fully and completely. We are not the victims in this spiritual battle, we are battle casualties whose names will never be forgotten by the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – long after the enemy's has been forgotten.

Thirdly, there were many cases of bravery among the Gentiles who hid and who sheltered Jews in their time of distress – and Poland has more Holocaust heroes than all the rest of the occupied European countries combined – followed by the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. The greatest gentile hero, was today's Jewish hero – Raoul Wallenberg, but we must remember he had lots of help and it was a mighty, glorious team effort. However there were also Jewish heroes who died fighting during the dozens of camp rebellions and the countless groups of Jewish partisans whose bravery and whose sabotage meant that we did not all go quietly.

Lastly, I am greatly saddened by the fact that the countries of the world who were aware of Hitler's plans and who were aware of his operations, did not do more to save the victims who were being gassed, both Jewish and non Jewish, despite the pleas from the Jewish authorities in Palestine to drop Jewish commandoes behind German lines and fight to free the camps. Whenever people stop speaking out against injustice and whenever people succumb to hatred and to hateful propaganda they are playing into the hands of the enemy who wants the slaughter of innocents to continue, first among the Jews of Israel and also among the nations of the world where helpless minorities continue to be slaughtered – and where the silence of the world is stunning and sickening.

We are to speak up for the widow and the orphan and we are to take up the cause of the oppressed and this is one of the cornerstones of Jewish social action and of Israeli foreign policy and one of the reasons I am deeply offended and angered by anti-Semites who label Israel an apartheid state when all of her citizens have equal rights and where guest workers are well treated, while those in neighbouring Islamic countries are robbed, raped and murdered without any substantial world protest.

As we remember the six million and the untold numbers of unofficial victims, may we understand the spiritual nature of the conflict and take a stand against racism and the violation of everyone and anyone's human rights, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. Am Israel Chai (the people of Israel live). Zachor (remember). Never Again. See you on the grounds of the leg on Monday at 11:30 am.

Shalom.

Let's pray.