

B'nai Chayim Children of Life: First Winter Series: Who is This Guy Anyway?

A Messianic Jewish Understanding of the Messiah, the King of Israel

29 Cheshvan, 5768 (Oct. 10, 2007) *Messiah is the Word of G-d Deut. 18:18* J. M. Terrett

Toldot	Generations
Torah:	Gen. 25:9-28:9
Haftarah:	Mal. 1:1-2:7
Brit Chadashah:	Rom. 9:1-13

We have been talking about the Messiah as the **central component** of G-d's redemptive purposes from all eternity and not just as something that was tacked on when His "Plan A" did not work out. After our first ancestors had a disastrous encounter with the enemy of our souls, G-d promised our first mother that one day her seed would crush the serpent. But before this could happen, G-d had to intervene twice to prevent the premature, total annihilation of the human race.

When the line of Seth began to succumb to the corruption of the line of Cain, G-d selected one family and placed them in the ark while He cleansed the earth our evil ancestors had so badly polluted. Once the descendents of Noah refused to spread out over the earth, and began to practice criminal idolatry, G-d separated the human race into **rac**es, **nations**, **languages** and **families** and our cousins drifted to the far corners of the planet until G-d was ready to weave them back together into a single community.

Once the **generational survival** of the race was secure, G-d began the weaving process by selecting one family, from among all the families of the earth. He promised that this small family would become a **great nation** and that Abraham's seed would be a **blessing to all nations**. In its third generation, the family of Abraham went into the womb of Egypt, so that it could become a great nation and G-d selected one of the tribes of Israel to be one whose descendents would bear the seed of the coming Messiah.

In Judah, we are told that the **serpent crusher**, who would bless all nations, is going to accomplish this crushing blessing by becoming both a **lawgiver** and as a **king** over all nations. Some four hundred years later, Israel had grown in size to become a great nation and it was time to take these people back to the homeland G-d had promised to Abraham as a **perpetual possession** until Shiloh, the **royal lawgiver**, would come.

After an intense period of miraculous intervention, the **motley crew** settled at the feet of Mount Sinai and were given their **generational spiritual mandate**. G-d himself spoke the **ten words** from the top of the mountain and all that He would subsequently command would always be based on these **foundational spiritual principles**. He spoke in two categories when He showed the House of Israel how to put the ten principles of His Law into practice. First of all He gave a whole series of national, **community applications** of the ten in what we would call **legal jurisprudence** today.

In order for this jurisprudence to be properly applied, Moses also set up a core of teachers and judges so that every aspect of the personal and community life of Israel would come under the careful scrutiny of the Ten Words of the Law of G-d. And just so the Children of Israel would know that there was more to come, He also set up an intricate series of **symbolic and ritual observances** with its triple purpose. First of all the observance of the rituals allowed the **presence of G-d** to dwell in the midst of a people who were shown how to maintain a high degree of **spiritual hygiene**.

Next, the people were shown how to build a **generational spiritual momentum** which would be a witness to all the nations and show all mankind the impact which a relationship with the only true G-d could have on people, both as individuals and as a community. Lastly, the people were shown that **there was more to come** and they knew that it had something to do with regathering all the nations of the earth under the coming seed, who would rule as both the King of Israel and as the King of all nations.

They did not yet understand how these purposes would be fulfilled and they understood that **there was more that G-d had to say to them which He was not yet prepared to share with them** – or to put it another way, **which they were not yet prepared to hear**. This brings us to our passage today and to the next stage in the fulfillment of the **redemptive purposes** of G-d through the Messiah. Let's read Deut. 18:18:

“I will raise up for them, from the midst of their brethren a prophet like you and I will put my words in His mouth and he shall say to them all that I command him to say.”

So far, we have been studying the **genetic, generational weaving of Messiah** and we know that there are more stipulations or clarifications to come. He is to be (1) the seed of woman, (2) the seed of Abraham, and (3) the seed of Judah. It would take another four hundred years before the **genetic ancestry** of Messiah would be complete. In David we are told which family He would come from as (4) the seed of David. In our passage today, through Moses we are told more about **the nature of His ministry**.

He is to be a prophet like Moses, which can only mean He was to have the same level of **authority** and the same **miraculous ability** and **leadership role** as Moses did. Instead of speaking to Him, the L-rd will speak through Him, because He will have G-d's word put in His mouth. The prophet Isaiah knew he had unclean lips and that he was not worthy to hear and to proclaim the truths of G-d, without some painful cleansing.

John, the author of the Revelation, wept when he understood that no-one was found worthy to take of the Book and to open its seals and thus fulfill the redemptive purposes of G-d. He rejoiced when the slain, resurrected Lamb, who was also the lion of Judah and the root of David, came forward to **complete the redemptive purposes of G-d**.

So when Moses reported that the L-rd was going to place His Word into the mouth of the future prophet, we understand that He was going to be **different** than all those who preceded Him, even **different** than Moses. **G-d never put His Word into Moses' mouth and there were commandments which were never given to Moses.** So not only is this prophet to come superior to Moses, and in fact superior to all men, but He is also the vehicle whereby **all the remaining redemptive purposes of G-d** would be **communicated** and **accomplished**.

He is to be the **Word incarnate** or the **Word in the flesh** and just as the tabernacle was a specially prepared vessel for the presence of G-d, so one day one of the descendants of the House of Judah would prepare **a human vessel for the Word of G-d**.

Now, as Messianic Jews and Gentiles we have already established that the Messiah would not erase, or undo any of the Ten Words of G-d's holy Law. He would come and fulfill all that the ritual, symbolic portions of the Law portrayed.

You see, Judaism has always been about the Kingdom of G-d which reunites the scattered nations and generations of mankind and places them once again under the **sovereignty of G-d**. However there are at least two further mysteries which must be explained before we can understand how this is to take place.

First of all, the voluntary, sinful defilement of mankind must be dealt with and not just symbolically contained as it was in the sacrificial system. A cosmic event was needed that would destroy the power of sin and crush the dark enemy who first introduced sin into the world.

However, once the cosmic event has occurred, ***how could its benefits be applied to all the nations of the earth, including the nation of Israel?*** Clearly the details of this mystery were not given through Moses and Moses freely admits that the story is not complete, but that there are more commandments, more details to come.

Now don't get me wrong, the **covenant observances** and the **ritual observances** which Moses set up are a complete set of guidelines for the personal and national spirituality of the House of Israel, but we must always draw a clear distinction between symbolic behaviour and the spiritual reality it describes.

The sacrificial system and even the festival cycle are the symbolic indicators of a greater future spiritual reality and are not that spiritual reality in and of themselves. Now before you say we should abandon these reminders and move on to the spirituality which they remind us of, let me make a couple of points and then I will close.

In order to have a well built home, you need both the **blue prints, good materials**, handled by **qualified labour**. Without the blue print, the house could not be built to specifications, but just because you have the blue prints, there is no guarantee that the house will be built. You need both a vision and the means to bring the project to its full completion.

Moses and the ritual, sacrificial system are the **symbolic blue prints** for Messiah's ministry. The Law, in the Ten Words are the **building blocks**, both for what Messiah was to accomplish for the salvation of the world and also for what He wants to accomplish in our lives, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. The intricate system of ritual observance which Moses established kept Israel focused both on daily obedience of the principles of G-d's Word and also on the future which was then still to come - when a new set of instructions would be given for the next stage in the redemptive purposes of G-d, when all nations would be brought under His **personal sovereignty**.

This new set of instructions would not undo or erase (replace) the initial blue prints. They would only take the redemptive purposes of G-d to the next level. It is to this next level of purposes which Moses is referring when He speaks of **future commands** which had not then been given. The Gospel teaches us that the **national spirituality** of Israel is not the same as the **international spirituality** of the nations, but you need both applications of G-d's redemptive purposes in order to fit all the pieces together. Next week, we will look at the next piece: Messiah as the seed of David.

Toldot Generations To Catch a Thief

Torah: Gen. 25:9-28:9

- (1) 25:23 - two nations, where the greater shall be subject to the lesser.
- (2) 25:33 – it was a legal transaction only to change the order of succession
- (3) 27:29 – Jacob is to be the covenant bearer, an ancestor of the Messiah to come.
- (4) 28:7 – Esau understood obedience too late. He should have confirmed the agreement he made with his brother and not try to steal it back by allowing his father to give him the blessing which belonged to Jacob. He was impetuous and tried to cover his tracks, rather than actually repent – he must have known that he should not have taken Canaanite wives. When Isaac blessed Jacob with Esau's birthright blessing, Rebecca was using a deception to prevent a theft, because the blessing belonged to Jacob.

Haftarah: Mal. 1:1-2:7

- (5) 1:11 – This blessing which Jacob received was going to bring the nations back to G-d and teach them, not the impetuous partial obedience of Esau, but the complete obedience of Jacob.
- (6) 2:3 – if we only fulfill the ritual, symbolic practices of His Law (put on a good appearance), our disobedience turns our faith into charade we put on, like Esau tried to put on, instead of a celebration of reality which is the calling of the House of Jacob.

Brit Chadashah: Rom. 9:1-13

- (7) 9:13 – The L-rd loved Jacob and He hated Esau. This is a difficult phrase to understand unless you take it connection with the deal the brothers made and in connection with the life style Esau chose. Esau made a solemn oath and broke it and he allied himself with Canaanite women against his parent's wishes, while Jacob obeyed his parents. Jacob was not perfect and Esau was not completely evil, but of the two, Esau was the thief, trying to get his own way while publicly pretending to follow the rules.

The basic difference between the two brothers and the message of today's Torah meditation has to do with the difference between appearance and reality. Jacob may have appeared to be the thief, when he disguised himself as his brother, but for intents and purposes concerning the blessing which Isaac was going to bestow on him, he was legally the Esau from whom he bought the birth right. It was Esau who tried to steal what was not his and yet to appear to be obedient – he hunted the meal his father wanted, instead of telling him the truth. Later he wants to kill his brother for taking what Jacob had every right to possess. When he married some Canaanite women, against his parent's wishes, he tries to cover his tracks by marrying into Ishmael's family, instead of going back to Padam-Aram to get a wife like Jacob did. May the L-rd deliver us from the dishonest spirituality of Esau which only tries to cover our tracks and teach us the true repentance of Jacob.