

What Saith the Scripture?

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Salvation is of the Jews Or, Pray for the Conversion of Israel

"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for Salvation is of the Jews"
(John 4:22).

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Preface

We, the Church, are bondservants of the LORD Jesus Christ, "Who gave Himself a ransom for **all**" (1Timothy 2:6), and we owe the Gospel to all men-- "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). But, especially do we owe the Gospel to Israel, for they transmitted to us Jehovah's "Covenants of Promise" (Ephesians 2:12)-- "unto them were committed the Oracles of God [the Scriptures]" (Romans 3:2)-- that pointed us to Jesus Christ. Israel will soon be converted to Jesus the Messiah, Who is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6). Pray that the LORD will fulfill His Word that Israel will again **know** Him, i.e., "thou shalt know that I am the LORD" (Isaiah 49:23). "22 Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up Mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up My standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. 23 And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the Earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for **they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me**" (Isaiah 49:22-23).

The Woman at the Well

The LORD Jesus journeyed from Judea to Galilee by way of Samaria. "6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour [noon]. 7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink" (John 4:6-7). When the LORD Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman, He desired more than to demonstrate the intellectual superiority of the Jewish position over the Samaritan, but to give the Samaritan woman New Life, i.e., "11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us Eternal Life, and this Life is in His Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not Life" (1John 5:11-12). "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the Gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee Living Water" (4:10).

After hearing the woman question that He had nothing with which to draw the water nor did He seem to possess the greatness of spiritual character of Father Jacob to give that Living Water, the LORD Jesus began watering the woman with His Word, i.e., "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring" (Isaiah 44:3). "13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall

thirst again: 14 But whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the Water that I shall give him shall be in him a Well Of Water springing up into Everlasting Life" (John 4:13-14).

Intrigued with Jesus' response, the "woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw" (John 4:15). At a previous time, Jesus explained to another seeker of the Truth (Nicodemus), "Except a man be born of water [the first birth-- the physical] and of the Spirit [the Second Birth-- the spiritual], he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (3:5). Since Jesus understood that the Samaritan woman could not receive the Living Water without admitting and turning away from her sins, He brought up the subject of the woman's adulterous lifestyle, i.e., "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). "16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. 17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: 18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly" (John 4:16-18).

Turning the conversation away from her sin, the Samaritan woman complimented Jesus, i.e., "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet" (John 4:19), and attempted to embroil Him in the Jewish-Samaritan debate, i.e., "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (4:20). Jesus ended the attempted debate by assuring her that the location of worship was unimportant. "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father" (4:21). But, He then added, "Ye [Samaritans] worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for Salvation is of the Jews" (4:22). "Salvation is of the Jews" is a fact that Jesus declared and did not debate. "And the servant of the LORD must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (2Timothy 2:24).

True worship was and is required by the Father. "23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the True Worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth" (John 4:23-24). Jesus declared the simplicity of a Spirit led seeking of the Father, and the Apostle John repeated the same concept in his first epistle. "20 But ye have an Unction [the Holy Spirit] from the Holy One, and ye know all things... 27 But the Anointing [the Holy Spirit] which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is Truth, and is no lie, and even as It hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1John 2:20,27).

Jesus declared to us His unique nature, i.e., "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). The Samaritan woman said, "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things" (4:25), showing us that even the Samaritans were looking for the Messiah. To this, the LORD Jesus plainly answered, "I that speak unto thee am He" (4:26). More than once did the LORD Jesus confess to man His Messianic identity. "61 But He held His peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven" (Mark 14:61-62). The question is not whether Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, but "What will you do with Jesus? Believe Him or reject Him?" "What think ye of Christ? whose son is He?" (Matthew 22:42).

For the record, the woman at the well turned in faith to Jesus as the Messiah. "28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, 29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 4:28-29). She openly confessed Jesus as the Messiah. "9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).

A Great Wonder in Heaven

The story of Israel's birthing of the Messiah at His First Advent is set forth in the Apocalypse. "1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2 And she being with Child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. 3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. 4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of Heaven, and did cast them to the Earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her Child as soon as It was born. 5 And she brought forth a Man Child, Who was to rule all nations with a Rod of Iron: and her Child was caught up unto God, and to His Throne" (Revelation 12:1-5).

A "woman clothed with the sun" (12:1) refers to Israel. "For thy Maker is thine Husband; the LORD of Hosts is His name" (Isaiah 54:5). And, the "moon under her feet" (Revelation 12:1) brings to mind the dream of Joseph, where the "sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance" (Genesis 37:9) to him, which pictured Joseph's father and mother-- Jacob and Rachel-- and eleven brothers bowing down to him. "Upon her head a crown of twelve stars" (Revelation 12:1) speaks of the Twelve Tribes of Israel in allusion to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, i.e., "And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward Heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be" (Genesis 15:5).

Israel was God's planned vehicle to give the Messiah to both Israel and the world, i.e., "she being with Child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered" (Revelation 12:2). "Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" (John 7:42). A "great red dragon" (Revelation 12:3) points to the "dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan" (Revelation 20:2). The "seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads" (12:3) are, briefly, the succession of earthly kingdoms ruled by the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), the "god of this world" (2Corinthians 4:4), who conspires to manipulate mankind through earthly rulers. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12).

Satan's rebellion in Heaven was described as the mutiny of 1/3 of the heavenly host, i.e., "angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation" (Jude 6). "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of Heaven, and did cast them to the Earth" (Revelation 12:4). The destruction of the Messiah-- "to devour her Child as soon as It was born" (Revelation 12:4)-- would forfeit the

Almighty's dominion over Heaven as well as rob man of any hope of Salvation, i.e., "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the Wise Men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the Wise Men" (Matthew 2:16).

"And she brought forth a man child" (Revelation 12:5) was Israel bringing forth the LORD Jesus Christ through the Virgin Mary. "7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten thee. 8 Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for Thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel... 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (Psalm 2:7-9,12). "And her child was caught up unto God, and to His Throne" (Revelation 12:5) refers to the ascension of the LORD Jesus back into Heaven after His death, burial, and resurrection. "But we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9).

And So All Israel Shall Be Saved

The Messiah was prophesied to be born of a virgin. "Therefore the LORD Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin [Hebrew, *almah*-- used to describe Rebekah before she married Isaac (Genesis 24:43)] shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel [literally, God With Us]" (Isaiah 7:14). Jesus "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Philippians 2:6), claimed no less than equality with the Father. "Say ye of Him, Whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (John 10:36). When Jesus of Nazareth said, "I and My Father are One" (10:30), the Jews that heard Him understood that He claimed an equality and unity with the God of Israel that would make Himself out to be **the** God of Israel. "And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1Timothy 3:16). He preserved both the Mystery and Unity of the Godhead. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

"Then the LORD [Jesus, the Son of God] rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD [the Father] out of heaven" (Genesis 19:24). "An Exposition of the Old and New Testament" by John Gill, comments on Genesis 19:24: "This destruction was brought upon them by Jehovah the Son of God, who had appeared to Abraham in an human form, and gave him notice of it, and heard all he had to plead for those cities, and then departed from him to Sodom, and was the author of this sad catastrophe; this amazing shower of fire and brimstone was rained by him from Jehovah his Father, out of heaven; so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem both call him, the Word of the Lord."

Modern Israel understands the claim that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah

5:2). Yet, understanding this precious fact of the nativity of the Messiah did not deter Herod the Great from the slaughter of the innocents. "Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not [Matthew 2:18]" (Jeremiah 31:15). The obstinacy of Judaism to confess the Truth of this and other promises concerning the Messiah, caused them-- along with **all** sinful men-- to have the LORD Jesus Christ crucified and to fiercely oppose any attempt to further declare this Truth. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Romans 11:25).

Needless to say, unconverted Israel must look with great disdain at any so-called Second Coming of Jesus Christ, if He has previously so miserably disappointed their expectation of a conquering Messiah, who should have given them their greatly anticipated peace, i.e., "And He [the Messiah] shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4). But, Ancient Israel-- like the Modern Professed Christian Church-- forgot that peace belongs only to those who practice righteousness. "This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 54:17). Peace has alluded Israel at the Messiah's First Advent, and continues to evade them to the present. "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked" (Isaiah 48:22). And, that righteousness only comes by an active trust in the Living God. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith [Habakkuk 2:4]" (Romans 1:17).

Even today, the Almighty has a Remnant of Jews who have placed their faith in the LORD Jesus Christ. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5). By no means should we cease to attempt to reach the unconverted Jew, but the certain Promise is that unconverted Israel will ultimately be converted at the Second Coming of the Messiah. "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the Earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (Isaiah 66:8).

What more could be said to plead for Israel to believe that Jesus of Nazareth is not simply the Deliverer of the Gentiles, but Israel's True Messiah? "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, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). "14 And He [the LORD of Hosts] shall be for a Sanctuary; but for a Stone Of Stumbling and for a Rock Of Offence to both the houses of Israel, for a Gin and for a Snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken" (8:14-15). Truly, Jesus Christ must clearly have understood the mountainous difficulty of His fellow Jews to receive Him as their Messiah. "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me" (Matthew 11:6).

"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Romans 11:26). This would be the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. "Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified" (Isaiah 60:21). As Israel has frustrated the grace of God in extreme, just so she shall be "clothed with Salvation" (2Chronicles 6:41) in one

miraculous day. "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?" (Isaiah 66:8).

Only the Spirit of God can persuade anyone to believe. "Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles" (Isaiah 42:1). No less than the prophet Ezekiel recorded the necessity of God's Spirit to transform Unbelieving Israel into a finally cleansed, justified, and obedient condition. "25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a New Spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My Statutes, and ye shall keep My Judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:25-27). But, is this not just what Jesus told the Pharisee, Nicodemus? "7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:7-8).

Conclusion

Standing before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor that could release Jesus from death, Pilate asked, "Art Thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest [or, It is as you say]" (Matthew 27:11). The evidence is great as to what Jesus claimed for Himself. It is only left to us to answer Pilate's question for ourselves, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" (27:22). May the LORD preserve us from answering as did the chief priests, the elders, and the multitude, "Let Him be crucified" (27:22).

The Old Testament emphasized the necessity of blood in cleansing from sin. "And almost all things are by the Law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). In the New Testament, the blood of Christ is necessary to cleanse us from our sins. "But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1John 1:7). Pontius Pilate sensed his own blood-guiltiness in condemning Jesus to death. "23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath He done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let Him be crucified. 24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this Just Person: see ye to it" (Matthew 27:23-24). But, the Jews who shouted for the crucifixion of the LORD Jesus, exclaimed, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (27:25). The sad history of Israel until recent times has been testimony that Israel has traditionally accepted responsibility-- without repentance-- for the death of Jesus, who claimed to be Israel's Messiah. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I Am" (John 8:58).

How do we, the Church, repay our debt to Israel? "14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also. 16 For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:14-16). Pray for Israel's Salvation. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee" (Psalm 122:6).