

PART 8 Typical Jewish Objections to the Gospel

If Jesus is the Messiah, where's the Peace?

In previous months we have gone through some of the typical objections that Jewish people have for rejecting the possibility that Yeshua is their promised Messiah. In this issue we want to deal with the following objection:

Jesus did not fulfill those prophecies which said the Messiah would bring peace; we still have war. Why the contradiction?

Before I begin giving a suggested answer, let me share with you that if you have a Jewish friend who you think is near to the King and Kingdom and you believe that a testimony from a Jewish believer might be helpful in his or her coming to faith, please don't hesitate to contact me. I would be open to meeting with you both, and perhaps God would use us together to lead that Jewish person to faith.

The Old Testament teaches that the Messiah must come twice. The first time He came, as the prophets foretold, He would die for the sins of Israel and the nations. In Isaiah 52: 13-15 the prophet described God's special servant who will prosper and will be lifted up above all others. That servant is the Messiah. The Gentiles (lit. nations) will be sprinkled by Him and, in Isaiah 53, Israel will find forgiveness through Him. (Is. 53:5-6, 11)

Sprinkling is an allusion to what the priests would do in the days of the temple. Sprinkling water was the way they were instructed to cleanse people from their sins. (Numbers 8:7, Ezekiel 36:25)

The second time the Servant of the Lord would come would be to rule over Israel and the nations. This rule would be brought about after a great battle centered in Israel. All the nations of the earth are described by the prophet Zechariah as gathering together against Israel. (Zechariah 12) The scenario, if it were played out today, would be a military force led by the United Nations. In Zechariah 12, we read that the Lord fights against the nations. Just before they totally eliminate an overwhelmed Israeli army, the Messiah comes and leads the armies of the Lord against those nations. Zechariah describes Israel and the Jewish people as recognizing the Lord Messiah as the "one that they have pierced," and mourning over him. (Zechariah 12:10)

In Zechariah 14: 16-18 the surviving nations will go up yearly to worship the Lord in Jerusalem and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. The Messiah and Lord will be ruling in Jerusalem and at that time peace will come to the world just as Isaiah described. (Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-10)

The rabbis discuss these two different comings and their solution to the problem of a suffering servant and a reigning king in the Talmud. Their solution to what appeared to them as a contradiction was to suggest that there will be two Messiahs. Rachmiel Frydland, a Talmudic scholar who studied under the leading rabbis in Poland prior to World War II, makes reference to this in his book, *What the Rabbis Know About Messiah*.

Messiah Ben Joseph will be pierced through by Armilus after which there will be much tribulation. Then, the Messiah, called Menahem Ben Ami-El, appears to the remnant of Israel. He, together with Elijah, brings to life Messiah Ben Joseph, and then the rest of the dead.

However, the biblical solution to the rabbinical problem of the two descriptions is one Messiah who would perform a two-fold work. His first coming would be as a sacrificial Lamb as described in Isaiah 53, and his second coming would be as a Lion from the tribe of Judah. (Genesis 49:10) The purpose of the Messiah's first coming was not to bring peace, but to suffer and die. Peace to the world would come through the second coming of the Messiah, the son of David, according to the classical rabbinical teaching. Of course, the New Testament teaches that peace comes to the person who will receive Yeshua as Messiah and Lord and allow His rule in their hearts. (John 14:27) So, while it is true that Jesus did not bring world-wide peace, that was not the purpose of the Messiah's first coming. But Jesus will yet come again, and when He returns following the great battle of Armageddon, He will bring world-wide peace.

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