



Birthpangs of Messiah

and the end of Olam HazeH...

What is the sign of your coming and the end of olam ha-zeh? (Matt. 24:3)

וְנִמָּח אֹת בּוֹאֵךְ וְאֹת קֵץ הָעוֹלָם



OUR WORLD APPEARS TO BE CAREENING toward a crash... Most of us are troubled, if not frightened. Corruption and decay are all around us and nothing makes much sense any longer.... We cannot trust our politicians. Bankers and big business are anathema. The world is now facing a global economic meltdown - but no one seems to be able to account for the “transfer” (i.e., theft) of literally trillions of dollars. We woke up one day to discover that we were dreaming all along: our “money,” based as it was on the absurd “fiat system,” suddenly was decreed to be “worth-less.” And the mainstream “news” offers up nothing but bland government-sponsored propaganda and ideology. There seem to be no genuine leaders whom we can trust; there is no way to obtain good information to make sound decisions; everyone seems out of control.

The “Church” has been asleep for years now, either colluding with the world or else self-destructing through postmodern despair. Thinking Christians find themselves alienated from other Christian communities.... The voice of the prophet has been squelched and ghettoized. Tragically, moral truth now comes from a few courageous souls in the alternative media who have chosen to resist the dialectical “force-feeding,” yet they are routinely disregarded by most people as agitators or “crackpots.” In short, it seems as if our entire culture and way of life is tottering and ready to collapse. We are confused, perplexed and feel threatened.



Yet this is exactly what the “world system” wants you to feel: “confused, perplexed, and threatened,” because by this means they can further their plans for social engineering and control without risk of serious dissent...



Of course “there is no fear in love” (אֵין פֶּחַד בְּאַהֲבָה), especially since we know that *ein od milvado* – there is no real power apart from HaShem (i.e., He is the only true Power in the universe, despite the menace and threats that mankind routinely practice upon one another).... The LORD God of Israel is in complete control of all things. Indeed, Yeshua is called *elyon le Malkhei-Aretz* (עֲלִיּוֹן לְמַלְכֵי-אֶרֶץ) - the “Ruler of the princes of the earth” (Rev. 1:5) - and that means they ultimately will answer to Him. Despite the pre-planned “deconstruction” of the United States and other world economies, we know that the LORD God Almighty reigns, and we need not be subject to the fear of man or his devices. Act counter culturally – call upon the Name of the LORD and walk in faith, chaverim!



The period of time immediately before the Messiah’s arrival is sometimes called *ikvot meshicha* (עֲקֵבוֹת מָשִׁיחַ), the time when the “footsteps of the Messiah” can be heard. This is the time appointed by God for the final Messianic redemption and the close of the present age (*olam ha-zeh*). For Christians, this refers to the time just before the Second Coming of Jesus to judge the nations and establish His kingdom in Jerusalem. Here is how the Mishnah describes it:

With the *footsteps of the Messiah* presumption shall increase and dearth reach its height... The wisdom of the Scribes shall become insipid and they that shun sin shall be deemed contemptible, and truth shall nowhere be found. Children shall shame the elders, and the elders shall rise up before the children, for “the son dishonors the father, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: a man’s enemies are the men of his own house.” The face of this generation is as the face of a dog (Sotah 9:15b).

According to traditional Jewish sources (Pesachim 54b; Midrash Tehilim 9:2), no one knows the time when the Messiah will appear – though there are some hints. God created the world in six days, each of which represents a thousand years. The seventh day is the start of the great Messianic Sabbath Rest, and therefore this age cannot last beyond 6,000 years. According to the traditional Jewish calendar, then, we are living near the end of the sixth millennium, the “Erev Shabbat” of the world.. We are drawing close, in other words, to the prophesied End of Days and the appearance of Yeshua our Messiah!



According to the sages, then, by the year 6,000 the Messiah has to arrive, though he could come earlier. This accords with the teachings of Jesus and His apostolic witnesses (Matt. 24:36-44; 1 Thess 5:1-3; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3). The condition of the world during *acharit hayamim* (the end of days) will be grossly evil (2 Pet. 3:3; 2 Thess. 2:3-4, 2 Tim. 3:1-5). The world will undergo various forms of tribulation, called *chevlei Mashiach* - the “birth pangs of the Messiah” (Sanhedrin 98a; Ketubot, Bereshit Rabbah 42:4, Matt. 24:8).



Sometimes the birth pangs are said to last for 70 years, with the last 7 years as the most intense period of tribulation – the “Time of Jacob’s Trouble” / *עַת־צָרָה הִיא לְיַעֲקֹב* (Jer. 30:7). The first wave of trouble came from Edom (i.e., “Rome/Europe”) in the form of the Holocaust; the second is coming from Ishamel (i.e., the Arab states) in the form of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This accords with the teachings of Jesus in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24-25).

Some of the “signs” of this period include the rise of various false prophets, numerous wars and “rumors of wars” (including the rise of Magog), famines, earthquakes, worldwide apostasy from the faith, persecution, and a globalized sort of godlessness that is revealed in unbridled selfishness, greed, *chutzpah* (audacity), shamelessness, and a general lack of *hakarat ha-tov* (gratitude). The greatest sign, however, will be that Israel will exist once again as a sovereign nation, despite the prophesied exile among the nations (Deut. 4:27-31; Jer. 30:1-3). According to some of the sages, the 9th century work *Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer* foretells that just before the coming of Messiah, “Ishmael” will rise in power to terrorize the world. According to *Yalkut Shimoni*, the king of Persia (Iran) is going to “have a weapon that is going to terrorize the world.” A coming “Messiah of evil” (code name *Armilus*) will soon appear on the world stage to offer a peace treaty for Israel and the Middle East, “but when they shall say, “peace and safety” (confirmed covenant) then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman (time of Jacob’s Trouble), and they will not escape (1 Thess. 5:3). This is the significance of the extraordinary cataclysmic world events which we are witnessing this very day....

Ultimately the Great Tribulation period is redemptive and healing (called *yissurei ahavah*, “the troubles of love”). The prophets wrote that Zion will go through labor and then give birth to children (Isa. 66:8). Thus the Vilna Gaon wrote that the *geulah* (national redemption) is something like rebirth of the nation of Israel. This accords with the prophetic fulfillment of Yom Kippur as the Day of Judgment and time of Israel’s national conversion. In the verse from prophet Jeremiah regarding the “Time of Jacob’s Trouble,” it’s vital to see the goal in mind - “yet out of it he is saved” (Jer. 30:7).



The sages note that childbirth is a time of radical transition and struggle for the baby – from the time of relatively peaceful existence within the womb into the harsh light of day – and therefore a similar transition between this world and the Messianic world to come is about to take place.

Surely we can look to HaShem, may His Name be blessed, to reveal the fulfillment of the redemption soon! *Maran ata Yeshua!*



כִּי עוֹד חֲזוֹן לְמוֹעֵד וַיִּפֹּחַ לֶקֶץ וְלֹא יִכָּזֵב
אִם-יִתְמַהֲמָה חֶכְהָלוֹ כִּי-בֹא יָבֹא לֹא יֵאָחֵר

“For while the vision awaits its appointed time,
it hastens to the end – it will not lie.

If it seems slow, wait for it;
it will surely come; it will not delay.”

(Habakkuk 2:3)