

Chapter 13

Furthermore, not only do we foolish, craven Christians and accursed Goyim regard our Messiah as so indispensable for delivering us from death through himself and without our holiness, but we wretched people are also afflicted with such great and terrible blindness as to believe that he needs no sword or worldly power to accomplish this. For we cannot comprehend how God's wrath, sin, death, and hell can be banished with the sword, since we observe that from the beginning of the world to the present day death has not cared a fig for the sword; it has overcome all emperors, kings, and whoever wields a sword as easily as it over comes the weakest infant in the cradle.

In this respect, the great seducers Isaiah, Jeremiah, and an the other prophets do us great harm. They beguile us mad Goyim with their false doctrine, saying that the kingdom of the Messiah will not bear the sword. Oh, that the holy rabbis and the chivalrous, bold heroes of the Jews would come to our rescue here and extricate us from these abominable errors! For when Isaiah 2:2 prophesies concerning the Messiah that the Gentiles shall come to the house and mountain of the Lord and let themselves be taught (for undoubtedly they do not expect to be murdered with the sword; in this case they would surely not approach but would stay away), he says: "He (the Messiah) shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Similar sorcery is also practiced upon us poor Goyim in Isaiah 11:9: "They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord. We poor blind Goyim cannot conceive of this "knowledge of the Lord" as a sword, but as the instruction by which one learns to know God; our understanding agrees with Isaiah 2, cited above, which also speaks of the knowledge which the Gentiles shall pursue. For knowledge does not come by the sword, but by teaching and hearing, as we stupid Goyim assume.

Likewise Isaiah 53:11: "By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous"; that

is, by teaching them and by their hearing him and believing in him. What else might "his knowledge" mean? In brief, the knowledge of the Messiah must come by preaching.

The proof of this is before your eyes, namely, that the apostles used no spear or sword but solely their tongues. And their example has been followed in all the world now for fifteen hundred years by all the bishops, pastors, and preachers, and is still being followed. Just see whether the pastor wields sword or spear when he enters the church, preaches, baptizes, administers the sacrament, when he retains and remits sin, restrains evildoers, comforts the godly, and teaches, helps, and nurtures everyone's soul. Does he not do all of this exclusively with the tongue or with words? And the congregation, likewise, brings no sword or spear to such a ministry, but only its ears.

And consider the miracles. The Roman Empire and the whole world abounded with idols to which the Gentiles adhered; the devil was mighty and defended himself vigorously. All swords were against it, and yet the tongue alone purged the entire world of all these idols without a sword. It also exorcised innumerable devils, raised the dead, healed all types of diseases, and snowed and rained down sheer miracles.

Thereafter it swept away all heresy and error, as it still does daily before our eyes. And further this is the greatest miracle it forgives and blots out all sin, creates happy, peaceful, patient hearts, devours death, locks the doors of hell and opens the gate of heaven, and gives eternal life. Who can enumerate all the blessings effected by God's word? In brief, it makes all who hear and believe it children of God and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Do you not call this a kingdom, power, might, dominion, glory? Yes, most certainly, this is a comforting kingdom and the true *chemdath* of all Gentiles. And should I, in company with the Jews, desire or accept bloodthirsty Kokhba in place of such a kingdom? As I said, in such circumstances I would rather be a sow than a man.

All the writings of the prophets agree fully with this interpretation, that the nations, both Jews and Gentiles, flocked to Shiloh after the scepter had been wrested from Judah (as Jacob says in Genesis 49); likewise, that the seventy weeks of Daniel are fulfilled; that the temple of Haggai is destroyed, but the house and throne of David have remained until the present time and will endure forever. On

the other hand, according to the mischievous denial, lying, and cursing of the Jews, whom God has rejected, this is not the meaning [of these passages], much less has it been fulfilled.

To speak first of the saying of Jacob in Genesis 49, we heard before what idle and senseless foolishness the Jews have invented regarding it, yet without hitting upon any definite meaning. But if we confess our Lord Jesus and let him be the "Shiloh" or Messiah, all agrees, coincides, rhymes, and harmonizes beautifully and delightfully. For he appeared promptly on the scene at the time of Herod, after the scepter had departed from Judah. He initiated his rule of peace without a sword, as Isaiah and Zechariah had prophesied, and an the nations gathered about him both Jews and Gentiles so that on one day in Jerusalem three thousand souls became believers, and many members of the priesthood and of the princes of the people also flocked to him, as Luke records in Acts 3 and 4.

For more than one hundred years after Jesus' resurrection, that is, from the eighteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius until the eighteenth year of the reign of Emperor Hadrian, who inflicted the second and last bloodbath of the Jews, who defeated Kokhba and drove the Jews utterly and completely from their country, there were always bishops in Jerusalem from the tribe of the children of Israel, an of whom our Eusebius mentions by name (*Eccl. Hist.*, Bk. 4, ch. 5). He begins with St. James the apostle and enumerates about fifteen of them, an of whom preached the gospel with great diligence, performed miracles and lived a holy life, converting many thousands of Jews and children of Israel to their promised Messiah who had now appeared, Jesus of Nazareth; apart from these there were the Jews living in the Diaspora who were converted together with the Gentiles by St. Paul, other apostles, and their disciples. This was accomplished despite the fact that the other faction, the blind, impenitent Jews the fathers of the present-day Jews raved, raged, and ranted against it without letup and without ceasing, and shed much blood of members of their own race both within their own country and abroad among the Gentiles, as was related earlier also of Kokhba.

After Hadrian had expelled the Jews from their country, however, it was necessary to choose the bishops in Jerusalem

from the Gentiles who had become Christians, for the Jews were no longer found or tolerated in the country because of Kokhba and his rebellious followers, who gave the Romans no rest. Yet the other, pious, converted Jews who lived dispersed among the Gentiles converted many of the children of Israel, as we gather from the Epistles of St. Paul and from the histories. But these always and everywhere suffered persecution at the hands of the Kokhbaites, so that the pious children of Israel had no worse enemies than their own people. This is true today in the instance of converted Jews.

The Gentiles all over the world now also gathered about these pious, converted children of Israel. This they did in great numbers and with such zeal that they gave up not only their idols and their own wisdom but also forsook wife and child, friends, goods and honor, life and limb for the sake of it. They suffered everything that the devil and all the other Gentiles, as well as the mad Jews, could contrive. For all of that, they did not seek a Kokhba, nor the Gentiles' gold, silver, possessions, dominion, land, or people; they sought eternal life, a life other than this temporal one. They were poor and wretched voluntarily, and yet were happy and content. They were not embittered or vindictive, but kind and merciful. They prayed for their enemies, and, in addition, performed many and great miracles. That has lasted uninterruptedly from that time on down to the present day, and it will endure to the end of the world.

It is a great, extraordinary, and wonderful thing that the Gentiles in all the world accepted, without sword or coercion, with no temporal benefits accruing to them, gladly and freely, a poor Man of the Jews as the true Messiah, one whom his own people had crucified, condemned, cursed, and persecuted without end. They did and suffered so much for his sake, and forsook all idolatry, just so that they might live with him eternally. This has been going on now for fifteen hundred years. No worship of a false god ever endured so long, nor did all the world suffer so much because of it or cling so firmly to it. And I suppose one of the strongest proofs is found in the fact that no other god ever withstood such hard opposition as the Messiah, against whom alone all other gods and peoples have raged and against whom they all acted in concert, no matter how varied they were or how they otherwise disagreed.

Whoever is not moved by this miraculous spectacle quite deserves to remain blind or to become an accursed Jew. We Christians perceive that these events are in agreement with the statement of Jacob found in Genesis 49: "To the Shiloh or Messiah (after the scepter has dropped from the hands of Judah) shall be the obedience of the peoples." We have the fulfillment of this before our eyes: The peoples, that is, not only the Jews but also the Gentiles, are in perfect accord in their obedience to this Shiloh; they have become one people, that is, Christians. One cannot mention or think of anyone to whom this verse of Jacob applies and refers so fittingly as to our dear Lord Jesus. It would have had to be someone who appeared just after the loss of the scepter, or else the Holy Spirit lied through the mouth of the holy patriarch Jacob, and God forgot his promise. May the devil say that, or anyone who wishes to be an accursed Jew!

Likewise the verse regarding the everlasting house and throne of David fits no other than this our Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth [II Sam. 23:5]. For subsequent to the rule of the kings from the tribe of Judah and since the days of Herod, we cannot think of any son of David who might have sat on his throne or still occupies it today "to preserve his throne eternally." Yet that is what had to take place and still must take place, since God promised it with an oath. But when this Son of David arose from the dead, many, many thousands of children of Israel rallied about him, both in Jerusalem and throughout the world, accepting him as their King and Messiah, as the true Seed of Abraham and of their lineage. These were and still are the house, the kingdom, the throne of David. For they are the descendants of the children of Israel and the seed of Abraham, over whom David was king.

That they have now died and lie buried does not matter; they are nonetheless his kingdom and his people before him. They are dead to us and to the world, but to him they are alive and not dead. It is natural that the blind Jews are unaware of this; for he who is blind sees nothing at all. We Christians, however, know that he says in John 8:56 and in Matthew 22:32: "Abraham lives. Also in John 11:25: "He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live." Thus David's house and throne are firmly established. There is a Son occupying it eternally, who never dies, nor does he ever let die those who are of his kingdom or who accept him in true faith as King.

That marks the true fulfillment of this verse which declares that David's throne shall be eternal. Now let all the devils and Jews, Turks and whoever wants to concern himself with it also name one or more sons of David to whom this verse regarding the house of David applies so precisely and beautifully, since the time of Herod, and we shall be ready to praise them.

To such kingdom and throne of David we Gentiles belong, along with all who have accepted this Messiah and Son of David as King with the same faith, and who continue to accept him to the end of the world and in eternity. Jacob's saying in Genesis 49:10 states: "To him shall be the obedience of the peoples." This means not only one nation, such as the children of Israel, but also whatever others are called nations. And later we read in Genesis 22:18: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves." In this verse we find the term "Goyim," which in the Bible commonly means the Gentiles, except where the prophets also call the Jews this in a strong tone of contempt. To summarize, the blessing of God through the seed of Abraham shall not be confined to his physical descendants, but shall be disseminated among all the Gentiles. That is why God himself calls Abraham "father of a multitude of nations" [Gen. 17:5]. There are many more such sayings in Scripture.

The reason that Scripture calls this kingdom "David's throne" and that it calls the King Messiah "David's Seed" is found in the fact that this kingdom of David and the King Messiah did not come from us Gentiles to the children of Abraham and Israel, but came from the children of Abraham and Israel, as the Lord himself says in John 4:22: "Salvation is from the Jews." Even if we are all descended from Adam and partake of the same birth and blood, nevertheless all other nations were shunted aside and solely Abraham's seed was selected as the nation from which the Messiah would come. After Abraham only Isaac, after Isaac only Jacob, after Jacob only Judah, after Judah only David were chosen, and the other brothers, each in his turn, were pushed aside and not chosen as the lineage from which the Messiah was to come. But everything, all things, happened for the sake of the Messiah. Therefore the whole seed of Abraham, especially those who believed in this Messiah, were highly honored by God, as St. Paul says in Acts 13:17: "God made the people great." For it

surely is a great honor and distinction to be able to boast of being the Messiah's relative and kin. The closer the relationship, the greater the honor.

However, this boasting must not stem from the idea that Abraham's and his descendants' lineage is worthy of such honor; for that would nullify everything. It must be based rather on the fact that God chose Abraham's flesh and blood for this purpose out of sheer grace and mercy, although it surely deserved a far different lot. We Gentiles, too, have been honored very highly by being made partakers of the Messiah and the kingdom and by enjoying the blessing promised to Abraham's seed. But if we should boast as though we were deserving of this, and not acknowledge that we owe it to sheer, pure mercy, giving God alone the glory, all would also be spoiled and lost. It is as said in I Corinthians 4:7: "What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?"

Thus the dear Son of David, Jesus Christ, is also our King and Messiah, and we glory in being his kingdom and people, just as much as David himself and all children of Israel and Abraham. For we know that he has been instated as Lord, King, and Judge over the living and the dead. "If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord"; that is, we will also live after death, as we just heard, and as St. Paul preaches in Romans 14:8. We look for no bloodthirsty Kokhba in him, but the true Messiah who can give life and salvation. That is what is meant by a son of David sitting on his throne eternally. The blind Jews and Turks know nothing at all of this. May God have mercy on them as he has had and will have on us. Amen.

Neither can one produce a Messiah to whom the statement in Daniel 9 applies other than this Jesus of Nazareth, even if this drives the devil with all his angels and Jews to madness. For we heard before how lame the lies of the Jews regarding King Cyrus and King Agrippa are. However, things did come to pass in accord with the words of the angel Gabriel, and we see the fulfillment before our eyes. "Seventy weeks of years," he says, "are decreed concerning your people and your holy city." He does not mention the city by name, Jerusalem, but he simply says "your holy city"; nor does he say, "God's people," but simply "your people." For this people's and this city's holiness are to terminate after the expiration of the seventy weeks. In

its place a new people, a new Jerusalem, and a different holiness would arise in which one would no longer have to propitiate sin annually by sacrifice, worship, and holiness in the temple and yet never become righteous and perfectly holy, because the atonement had to be repeated and sought anew by sacrifice every year.

Rather the Messiah would bring eternal righteousness, make misdeeds of no effect, check transgressions, atone for sin, fulfill prophecies and visions, etc. Where sin has been forever removed and eternal righteousness is found, there sacrifice for sin or for righteousness is no longer required. Why should one sacrifice for sin if it no longer exists? Why should one seek righteousness by service to God if this righteousness is already at hand? But if sacrifice and worship are no longer necessary, of what use are priests and temple? If priests and temple are no longer necessary, why a people and a city who are served by them? It must develop into a new people and city which no longer needs such priests, temple, sacrifice, and worship, or it must be laid low and destroyed together with the useless temple and worship, priests and sacrifice. For the seventy weeks pronounce the final judgment and put an end to them together with city and temple, priests, sacrifice, and worship.

The Christian church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, is such a new people and a new Jerusalem. This people knows that sin has been removed entirely by Jesus Christ, that all prophecy has been fulfilled, and eternal righteousness established. For he who believes in him is eternally righteous, and all his sins are forever made of no effect, they are atoned for and forgiven, as the New Testament, especially St. Peter and St. Paul, strongly emphasizes. We no longer hear it said: Whoever offers guilt-offerings or sin-offerings or other offerings in Jerusalem becomes righteous or has atoned for his sin; but now we hear: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" [Mark 16:16], no matter where in the wide world he may be. He need not travel to Jerusalem; no, Jerusalem has to come to him.

David, too, proclaimed this in Psalm 40:6: "Sacrifice and offering thou dost not desire; but thou hast given me an open ear" (that is, the ears of the world, that they might hear and believe and thus be saved without sacrifice, temple, and

priests). "Burnt offering and sin offering thou hast not required. Then I said, 'Lo, I come; in the roll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do they will, O God.'" Indeed, this is the Messiah who brought righteousness through his will and obedience. This is the message of the books of Moses and of all the prophets. Thus also Gabriel says that the sacrifice will not be adequate; he declares that the Messiah "shall be cut off and have nothing" [Dan. 9:26]. Of what will he have nothing? Find out about what he is talking. He is speaking to Daniel about his people and his holy city. He will have none of these, so that their holiness will no longer be with him and in him. Thus Psalm 16:4 says: "I do not want their libations of blood, nor will I take their names upon my lips."

So also we read in Isaiah 33: "The people who will dwell in the new Jerusalem will be called *Nesu awon, levatus peccato*: a people forgiven of an sin." And Jeremiah 32 also promises another, a new, covenant in which not Moses with his covenant shall reign, but rather, as he says: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" [Jer. 31:34]. This is, indeed, a covenant of grace, of forgiveness, of remission of all sins eternally. That cannot, of course, be effected by the sword, as the blood thirsty Kokhbaites aspire to do. No, this was brought into the unworthy world by pure grace through the crucified Messiah, for eternal righteousness and salvation, as Gabriel here declares.

As was said before, this saying is too rich; the whole New Testament is summed up in it. Consequently, more time and space would be needed to expound it fully. At present it will suffice if we are convinced that it is impossible to understand this statement as referring to any other Messiah or King than our Lord Jesus of Nazareth. This is true also for the reason that at that time, in the last week; no other Messiah than this was killed; for as Daniel's words clearly indicate, there must be a Messiah who was killed at that time.

And, finally, also Haggai's saying fits no one else. For from Haggai's time on there was no one who might with the slightest plausibility be called "the *chemdath* of an the Gentiles," their delight and consolation, except this Jesus Christ alone. For fifteen hundred years the Gentiles have found their comfort, joy, and delight in him, as we perceive clearly and as the Jews themselves confirm with their cursing to the present day. For why do they curse us? Solely because

we confess, praise, and laud this Jesus, the true Messiah, as our consolation, joy, and delight, from whom we win not he parted or separated by weal or woe, in whom and for whom we will confidently and willingly live and die. And the more the Jews, Turks, and all other foes revile and defame him, the more firmly will we cling to him and the dearer we will be to him, as he says [Matt 5:11 f.]: "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven." All praise and thanks, glory and honor be to him, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the one true and veritable God. Amen.

So long an essay, dear sir and good friend, you have elicited from me with your booklet in which a Jew demonstrates his skill in a debate with an absent Christian. He would not, thank God, do this in my presence! My essay, I hope, will furnish a Christian (who in any case has no desire to become a Jew) with enough material not only to defend himself against the blind, venomous Jews, but also to become the foe of the Jews' malice, lying, and cursing, and to understand not only that their belief is false but that they are surely possessed by all devils. May Christ, our dear Lord, convert them mercifully and preserve us steadfastly and immovably in the knowledge of him, which is eternal life. Amen.