

September 16, 2023
Rosh HaShanah 5784
Supernatural beginning, but beginning of Naqba

What do you get
when you cross
a fish with an elephant?
Swimming trunks
[from Matt Hershey]

The newest innovation
in Rosh HaShanah
apples and honey.
[from JB Bernstein]



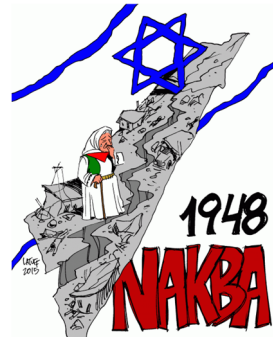
**Rosh Hashanah:
Supernatural Beginning,
but Beginning of Naqba**
Rabbi Shmuel Wolkenfeld

September 16, 2023 | 1st of Tishrei, 5783
א' בתשרי תשפ"ד

OR HAOLAM
MESSIANIC SYNAGOGUE

What is Naqba?? How does it fit in the theme of Rosh HaShanah?

Nakba Day (يوم النكبة yawm in-nakbah), "day of the catastrophe," an annual day of commemoration for the Palestinian Arab people of the anniversary of the creation of Israel, every May 15, the day after Israelis celebrate their Independence Day.



"Nakba" means "catastrophe" in Arabic



[\[https://i.ytimg.com/vi/sBCBqWlbMxE/maxresdefault.jpg\]](https://i.ytimg.com/vi/sBCBqWlbMxE/maxresdefault.jpg) Home: Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Determined opposition to the existence of the State of Israel
https://www.israelhayom.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/AFP_1GH0JO.jpg

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Outline

1. Miraculous start of the Jewish nation
2. Bitter catastrophe in the history
3. Messiah's Ruakh redemption

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Why is this passage read on Rosh HaShanah?

Quoting Rabbi Nosson Scherman Stone Edition Chumash commentary: "According to tradition, **Sarah conceived on Rosh HaShanah**. Therefore, this narrative is the reading of that day."
[R. Scherman doesn't give a source of this tradition. Is there a lesson for us?]

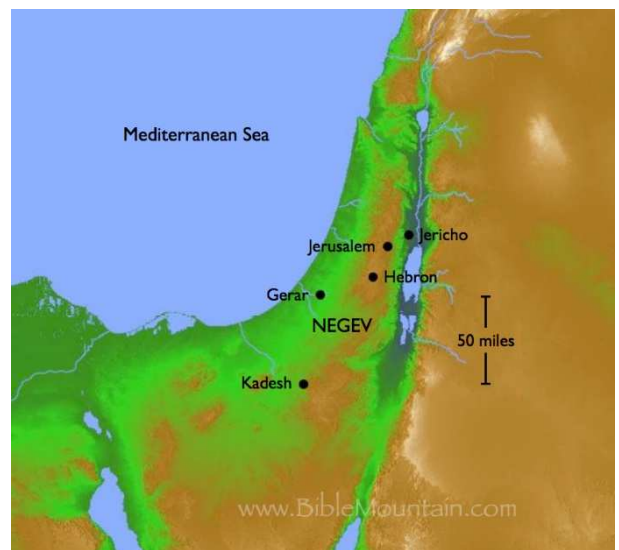
<https://i0.wp.com/www.biblemountain.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Gen020001020007.001.jpg?ssl=1>

So, what is the application to us, today?

Backstory to the reading:

Ber/Gen 20.1-2 Avraham traveled from there [near Hevron] toward the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. While living as an outsider in G'rar, Avraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister"; so Avimelekh king of G'rar sent and took Sarah.

Ber/Gen 20.3 But God came to Avimelech in a dream at night and said to him, "Behold, you are as good as dead, because of the woman whom you have taken—since she is a married woman." Now Avimelech had not come near her. So he said, "My Lord, will You slay a nation, even though innocent?"



[So, King Avimelech confronted Avraham. Avraham: She is my half-sister.]

Ber/Gen 20.17-18 Then Avraham prayed to God and God healed Avimelech, his wife and his female slaves so that they could bear children. For Adoni had completely locked up every womb in Avimelech's household because of Sarah, Avraham's wife.

[Amazing to me that Avraham lied, caused infertility in Avimelech's family, then Avraham was the pray-er.]

Ber/Gen 21.1 Adoni remembered Sarah as he had said, and Adoni did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah conceived and bore Avraham a son in his old age, at the very time God had said to him.
Halleluyah moment!!

1. Avraham just prayed this for Avimelech, and there is a Talmudic concept (Bava Kama 92a) that if you pray for someone else, something that you need, the answer will surely come.
2. Says "Sarah ... bore Avraham a son." Since she had been in Avimelech's harem, though allegedly untouched, the paternity could have been questioned.
3. Yitskhak / Isaac born in old age? Could have been in prime childbearing years? Demonstrates divine intervention. History Jews divine intervention. History Or HaOlam divine working!
4. "Sarah conceived" on Rosh HaShanah, according to tradition. High note in the story!

Ber/Gen 21.2-8 Avraham circumcised his son Yitz'chak when he was eight days old, as God had ordered him to do ... Sarah said, "God has given me good reason to laugh now ... I have borne him a son in his old age!"

Circumcision = Brit Milah, is a GREAT great party time still. Photographer, food.

[I know a Messianic rabbi who was a professional photographer, who recorded these.

Who are you going to show the recordings to?

We've done many Brit Milah here.]

Ber/Gen 21.2-8 The child grew and was weaned, and Avraham gave a great banquet on the day that Yitz'chak was weaned.

[Weaning then and there was a great celebration. I've never heard of, or been invited to a weaning party.]

Then it went from celebration to historic catastrophe!

[Catastrophe for all history established.]

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B'resheet (Genesis) 21:9-13

But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom Hagar had borne to Avraham, making fun of Yitz'chak; so Sarah said to Avraham, "Throw this slave-girl out! And her son! I will not have this slave-girl's son as your heir along with my son Yitz'chak!" Avraham became very distressed over this matter of his son. But God said to Avraham, "Don't be distressed because of the boy and your slave-girl. Listen to everything Sarah says to you, because it is your descendants through Yitz'chak who will be counted. "But I will also make a nation from the son of the slave-girl, since he is descended from you." Avraham got up early in the morning, took **bread and a skin of water** and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child; then he sent her away.

- No camel, no servant, no tent, no land grant for this single mom!

Compare, later after Sarah's death:

Ber/Gen 25.5-10 "Avraham gave everything he owned to Yitz'chak ... But to the sons of the concubines he **made grants** while he was still living and sent them off to the east."

[Land grant? Some significant wealth. Gifts. מתנות]

This was the essence of rejection. Ishmael has lived in rejection by the people of Isaac/Yitzkhak ever since.

- Rejection: You may live or die, it's of no consequence. You're dishonorable.
- Kicked out of the house, 4000 years trying to get back in.
- A culture and spirit of fatherlessness

[No servant, no camel, no gift, no tent.]

The Qur'an teaches that god to them is not a father to anyone. According to both the Qur'an and Hadith, there are 99 names of god and not one of them reference him as a father. Allah is just another one of those names.

[<https://www.catalyticministries.com/blog/2019/5/21/spiritual-fatherlessness>]

Real Naqba, real wound, and hope: beginning of the issue

Beresheet/Genesis 16.1-2 Now Sarai Avram's wife had not borne him a child. But she had an Egyptian slave-girl named Hagar; so Sarai said to Avram, "Here now, ADONI has kept me from having children; so go in and sleep with my slave-girl. Maybe I'll be able to have children through her." Avram listened to what Sarai said.

[Avram with great wisdom and holiness, Hagar ~16 maybe in love some appropriate young man, Snatched by complaining matriarch]

First trouble

Beresheet/Genesis 16.4 Avram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she conceived. But when she became aware that she was pregnant, she looked on her mistress with **contempt**.

[Tone: Baby grew up w contempt in family, Hagar probably festering anger since forced Hormones → fetus]

First Reaction

Beresheet/Genesis 16.5-6 Sarai said to Avram, "This **outrage** being done to me is your fault! True, I gave my slave-girl to you to sleep with; but when she saw that she was pregnant, she began holding me in **contempt**. May ADONI decide who is right - I or you!"

[Sarah's response: Contempt and harshness: babies hear emotional messages]

First Reaction

Beresheet/Genesis 16.5-6

However, Avram answered Sarai, "Look, she's your slave-girl. Deal with her as you think fit." Then Sarai treated her so harshly that she ran away from her.

First Restoration

Beresheet/Genesis 16.7-9

The angel of ADONI found her by a spring in the desert, the spring on the road to Shur, and said, "Hagar! Sarai's slave-girl! Where have you come from, and where are you going?" She answered, "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai." The angel of ADONI said to her, "Go back to your mistress, and submit to her authority."

First Redemption

Beresheet/Genesis 16.10-12

The angel of ADONI said to her, "I will greatly increase your descendants; there will be so many that it will be impossible to count them." The angel of ADONI said to her, "Look, you are pregnant, and you will give birth to a son. You are to call him Yishma'el [God pays attention] because Adoni has paid attention to your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man ... "

[Three promises]

First Redemption

Beresheet/Genesis 16.13

So she named ADONI, who had spoken with her, El Ro'i [God of seeing], because she said, "Have I really seen the One who sees me [and stayed alive]?"

Firsts:

1. Multitude of offspring [almost first]
2. Gender prediction
3. Divine Naming Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
3.5 First angelic visit to a slave girl forced to an old man FREE
4. First Character prediction: Wild donkey:



The Asian wild ass, also called the onager. They are proud, nomadic unconquered, independent animals. They can run faster than any other horse or donkey, reaching and sustaining speeds of up to about forty-four miles (70 km) per hour. It sounds derogatory but it's not.

<http://animal.discovery.com/guides/mammals/habitat/aridland/asianass.html>

Other not so flattering names: Dan a serpent, Benj a ravenous wolf

~Am mustang

5. First revelation, seeing G-d 'El Ro'i [God of my seeing], because she said, "Have I really seen the One who sees me [and stayed alive]?"
6. First prediction of progeny: 12 17.20 to this day
[Saw יָשָׁא first
12 princes Abu Saada p 208]
7. First circumcised? Likely, age 13

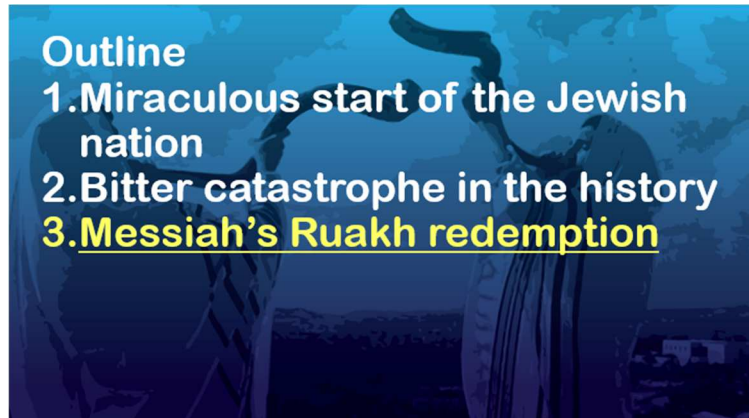
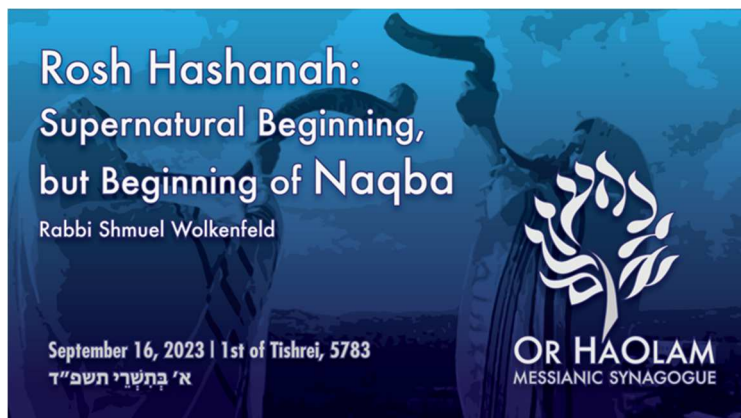
NOT a cursed son
NOT the covenantal son:
blessing, destiny, Land

This was the essence of rejection. Ishmael has lived in rejection by the people of Isaac/Yitzkhak ever since.

Enacted at a celebratory party over a miraculous birth! From blessing to catastrophe!

- Rejection: You may live or die, it's of no consequence. You're dishonorable.
- Kicked out of the house, 4000 years trying to get back in.

- A culture and spirit of fatherlessness



Ariel and Vered Blumenthal, May 2016:

As so often happens in this Gathering movement, the Holy Spirit moved powerfully on the group through prophetic, "*identificational*" acts of reconciliation, intercession and unity – this time bringing healing to the Abrahamic family by us repenting (especially Vered "standing in" as Sarah) and welcoming Hagar and Ishmael (the Egyptians) back into the family.

"On the third day of our meeting we had a clear sense that God had brought us together "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). As it was with Esther, this time we were led by the women in our midst.

"Egyptian women willingly identified with Hagar and confessed the rejection, envy and resentment she felt when Abraham cast her out of the family as Sarah demanded. (This spirit of rejection has dogged the Arab peoples every generation since.

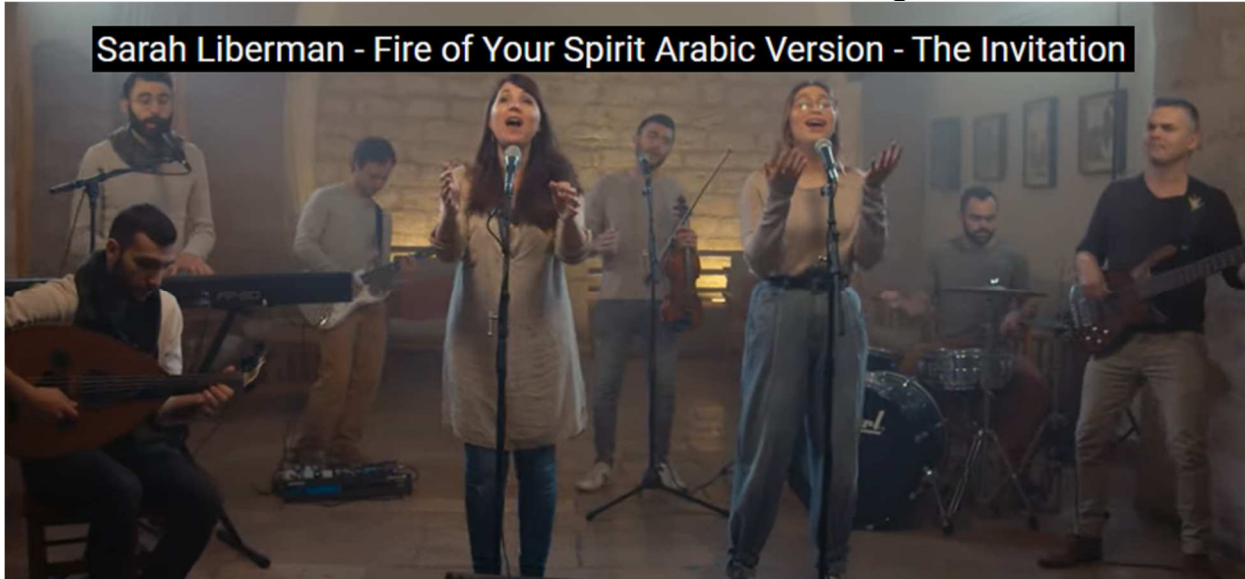
"Those who have been set free from it are often magnificent people, but the ethnic type prevails.) Agonized tears were wept by the Egyptians and everyone else as we experienced a measure of those emotions.

"They confessed that they had hated and mocked "Isaac" and his offspring. Then an Israeli mother [Vered] stepped forward to plead, "There are two empty places at our family table. Won't you come home? Our family is not complete.

"Isaac needs his older brother, who was blessed by God first." These words don't begin to express the depth of significance and emotion of the moment. I hope you can imagine a bit of the atmosphere. There was much weeping and rejoicing following this time of sharing. And then, the Egyptians began to sing over us, while our 8-month-old boy, Lavi, sat on my shoulders giggling and smiling (as he almost always does). It was as if Hagar and Ishmael were singing, rejoicing over Isaac! (Perhaps that's what we should have named our laughing boy.)

"Possibly for the first time in history, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob came together with the family of Hagar and Ishmael, all of us secure in our eternal inheritance because of our faith in our great, older brother, Abraham's greatest Son, Yeshua (Romans 8:29-30)."

Other ministries of such reunification of the sons and daughters of Isaac and Yishmael:



Her husband, Evan Liberman, told me last Tuesday this is now one of Sarah's main focus. Welcoming Ishmael back to the table.

Sarah's music: Gadol Adoni Great is the Lord.

This groundbreaking project includes worship songs from Israel translated and sung in Arabic. The heart behind this project is to call the prodigals of the Middle East back to their Father's tent.

<https://news.kehila.org/video-fire-of-your-spirit-arabic-version-the-invitation/>

An Arab ministry with this same passion of restoration:

Rania Sayegh, director of a house of prayer in Nazareth, Israel, offers an Arab perspective on Christian reconciliation. I met Rania at an IHOPKC prayer meeting. When she understood that I was a Messianic Jewish rabbi, she got on her knees there, publicly to ask forgiveness! Rosemarie Schindler was with her.

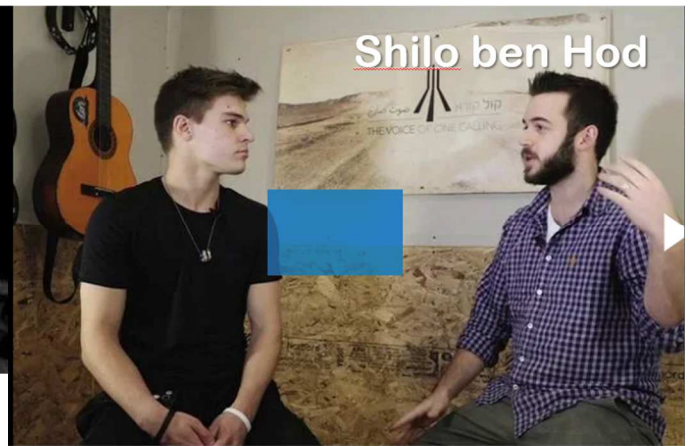


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klUnDeZ6vv4>

“Yeshua is the Prince of Peace, and the only answer between both Jewish and Arab people in the land. We find that praying and worshiping together is one way of making peace. Through our House of Prayer also, and events and gatherings, we have Messianic Jewish young people also coming to pray and fellowship with our Arab young people.

“Also, through ELAV [youth] conferences, that were done by dear friends of ours, Rick and Patty Ridings from Jerusalem – Succat Hallel [house of prayer]. During these conferences, we used to bring Arab young people to be part of this three or four days of worshiping praying, and coming together where our hearts are softened towards each other.”

Another such Jewish Arab worship ministry:



“Every summer we organise a Worship and Prayer training camp in Israel for Jewish and Arab youth called the Dor Haba Camp. We also produce worship music in Hebrew and Arabic, specifically songs written by the younger generation in Israel, in collaboration with songwriters and worship leaders from surrounding Middle Eastern countries.”
[\[https://dorhaba.com/en/about-2/\]](https://dorhaba.com/en/about-2/)

Conclusion for us: generations, centuries, millennia of contempt, bitterness, hostility can be melted by the Presence of the Ruakh, together.

The teruah [shofar/shout] is the sound of worship and breakthrough praise
[Is that all? The only Rosh HaShanah lesson for us from this story?]

Leviticus 25:9	jubilee LIBERTY
Hosea 5:8	war, invaders
Psalms 81:3-4	joyful celebration
2 Shmuel 6:15	victory celebration
Ezra 3:11	joyful celebration
Job 8:21	spiritual joy
Psalms 27:6	victory over foes

In her blog called The Palliative Provocateur, Rebecca Gagne-Henderson, Ph.D., APRN, ACHPN, a palliative care specialist who has worked with dying patients for 27 years, tells a convincing story about this human hunger.

“Jackie,’ a local gang member, learned she was dying at age 22. Initially bitter and hostile, she slowly softened under the care of her kind hospice nurse, Pat. In a vulnerable moment, Jackie told Pat the one thing she wanted before dying was for her mom and dad to care for her together. Jackie's embittered parents had divorced 17 years earlier, leaving her and her siblings in the care of revolving family members.

“Through the perseverance of the hospice chaplain, Jackie’s parents miraculously agreed to stay with her for three days, bathing, changing, and feeding her, caring for her in a way Jackie likely dreamed of since she was 5.

“By the third day, the hate and anger between Jackie’s parents melted, and the three wept together as they forgave each other.

“The next day, Jackie, once rife with bitterness over dying, told Pat, ‘Now I can die, and it is OK. I did what I was supposed to do.’”

[\[https://palliativeprovocateur.com/2022/04/13/a-story-of-grace-redemption-and-remoralization/\]](https://palliativeprovocateur.com/2022/04/13/a-story-of-grace-redemption-and-remoralization/)

Another story of redemption, from George Whitten:

Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Messiah, and to die is gain. From George Whitten

“I happened (on rare occasion) the other day to see a CNN headline, ‘Health Officials Brace for Three Major Viruses this Fall;’ Immediately, I thought, ‘Not again!’ Yet, scouring the headlines, it now appears that several colleges are instituting mask mandates even though there isn’t a case of illness yet.

“While the world is being prepared for an ‘outbreak’ of disease, I’m hoping we may learn a lesson from history so that, perhaps, we’ll see an ‘outbreak’ of revival!

“Church history reveals that God used pandemics to test the saints, demonstrate their faith, courage, and love, and dramatically advance the gospel.

“The Antonine Plague in the 2nd century lasted over 10 years, resulting in at least 5 million deaths. The Plague of Cyprian in the 3rd century devastated the population of Alexandria, dropping it from 500,000 to 190,000.

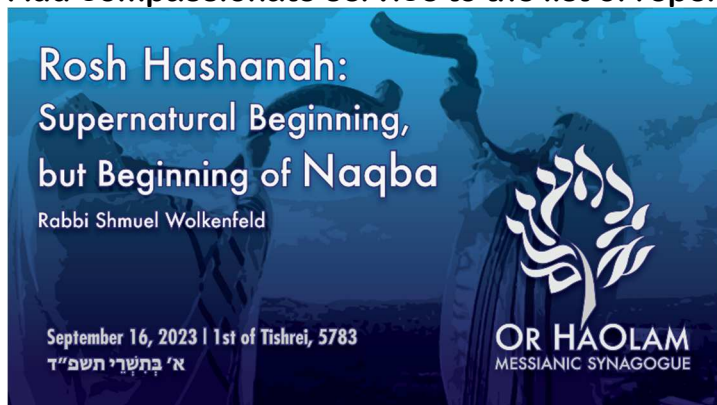
“While pagan priests were fleeing the plague and leaving the sick to die, it was the steadfast faith of the saints that cared for the sick in the face of death. This rarely acknowledged Christian heroism radically transformed the Roman Empire, leading to the eradication of the pagan gods and eventually to a massive social transformation.

“Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, witnessed and described the atmosphere of the time: ‘There is nothing remarkable in cherishing merely our own people with the due attentions of love, but that one might become perfect, he who should do something more than heathen men or publicans; overcoming evil with good, and practicing a merciful kindness like that of God, he should love his enemies as well ... Thus the good was done to all men, not merely to the household of faith. By the terrors of mortality and of the times, lukewarm men are heartened, the listless nerved, the sluggish awakened; deserters are compelled to return heathens brought to believe; the congregation of established believers is called to rest; fresh and numerous champions are banded in heartier strength for the conflict, and having come into warfare in the season of death, will fight without fear of death, when the battle comes.’

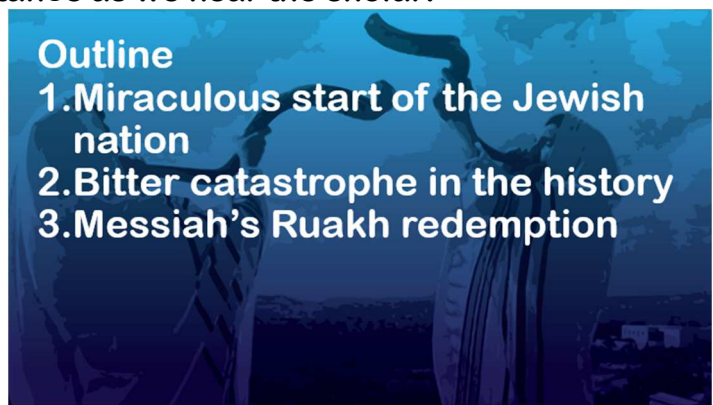
“Historians noted that the Christians’ compassion and devotion to tending the sick during the pandemics caused the pagan world to collapse and saw an explosive growth of Christianity with many coming to faith.”

Let’s apply that to our worst enemies and distresses.

Add compassionate service to the list of repentance as we hear the shofar.



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1. Do you KNOW Yeshua and ready for the teruah of His return?
2. Are you hearing daily from His Word?
3. How are you applying what you heard?
4. Are you offering that life to anyone?