

# LION HANDS

by Avram Yehoshua

## THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

Once upon a time there was a very handsome young prince. His father, the king, ruled his kingdom with love, mercy and righteousness, but there were many people in the realm who did not accept his rule and rebelled against him. The king was hard pressed as to what to do. Any other monarch would have squashed the rebellion by killing all the rebels, but the king deeply loved his people and did not want to destroy them.

The prince loved his father dearly and he also loved the people. The prince devised a plan and spoke of it to his father for approval. Upon hearing it the father gasped in shock and sadness. The son spoke of an idea that would appeal to the *hearts* of the rebels. The son reasoned that only something that could *pierce* their hearts would ever have a possibility of turning the rebels back to the king. The prince would take upon himself the punishment of death for all their rebellious actions, thus revealing both his tender love for them and freeing them from the punishment they deserved. This way they could return to the king in humility. The prince said that they would understand that the king had given up his most precious possession so they could be forgiven of their rebellion, and they would see the great love the king and the prince had for them. And so the two of them set out to do just that.

Fairy tale? Hardly! Just the opposite. A divine tale of love that will take eternity to comprehend and experience. You can read about it in the Book. It's all there—God's love for us; our perverse, stubborn and rebellious hearts, and the sacrifice of His Son that He paid to win back our hearts, that we might return to Him and receive His gracious forgiveness and eternal life-giving love.<sup>1</sup> Sadly, though, there have been rebels who have smeared and rejected what God did for them. They have even twisted and distorted His Word, causing many to pass over aspects of The Story and think nothing of it. One major place is the Jewish translation for Psalm 22:17:<sup>2</sup>

‘For dogs have compassed me; A company of evil doers have inclosed (sic) me; *Like a lion*, they are at my hands and my feet.’<sup>3</sup>

The Rabbis try and make sense of this phrase (‘like a lion, they are at my hands and my feet’) and say:

“My hands and feet are as if mangled by a lion’s jaw (Rashi). My hands are paralyzed so that I cannot defend myself, and my feet so that I cannot escape (Ibn Ezra; Rabbi Hirsch).”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Does our God have a Son? According to the Tanach He does. See Psalm 2:6-7; Proverbs 30:4 and also [Messiah's Deity and Micah 5:2](#), [The Virgin Conception of Messiah and Isaiah 7:14](#) and [Yeshua—God the Son](#).

<sup>2</sup> Hebrew Bibles list it as v. 17; Christian Bibles have it as v. 16. The reason for the difference is because the Hebrew Bibles count the heading, ‘For the leader...’ or ‘For the director of music,’ etc., in the Psalms as verse one. The Christian rendering for verse one begins with, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ Because of this it's common for the numbering of the verses ‘to be off’ by one verse in the Psalms.

<sup>3</sup> וכתובים (Torah, Nivi'im and Kituvim: The Law, Prophets and Writings): *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, thirteenth printing, 1982), p. 1572. Note well: there is no alternate reading given in the margin, yet there is an alternate rendering. The Masoretic texts were written about 600-900 AD, but the deception goes back to about 190 AD.

<sup>4</sup> Rabbi Menachem Davis, Editor, ספר תהלים The Book of Psalms (Brooklyn, NY: Artscroll Mesorah Publications, 2018), p. 53.

On the surface it may pass for an explanation, but in trying to make sense of the the explanation Franz Delitzsch writes that it does not make sense:

“In v. 17c the meaning of כָּאֲרִי (kah’ru like a lion)...is either that, selecting a point of attack, they” (the wicked, v. 16 Hebrew) “make the rounds of his hands and feet, just as a lion does its prey...or that, standing round about him like lions they make all defence impossible to his hands and all escape impossible to his feet. But whether we take this יָדָיו וְרַגְלָיו (hands and feet) as accusative of the members beside the accusative of the person (v. 17:11), or as the object of the הִקִּיפוּ (to encircle) to be supplied from v. 17b, it still remains harsh and drawling so far as the language is concerned.”<sup>5</sup>

Psalm 22 is about a righteous man being brutally murdered (Heb. vv. 10-11, 15-16, 20, 23) at the hands of rebels and wicked men (Heb. vv. 13-14, 17-18), and who was seemingly forsaken by God (vv. 2-3, 7-9). Yet, the man’s trust in God is so strong (Heb. vv. 10-11, 20-22) that he believes that God will raise him back to life so that he may declare God’s love and righteousness to Israel and the nations (Heb. vv. 23-32).

I’ve italicized ‘*Like a lion*’ above because it’s actually just one word in Hebrew and on this word hinges the correct meaning of the verse that intentionally has been hidden from us by our Rabbis. As it traditionally stands we might think that the ‘company of evil doers’ were ‘like a lion’ or had the power and fury of a lion at the man’s hands and feet, but what does that mean? Were they slapping his hands and his feet? Were they biting his hands and his feet? Were they growling at his hands and his feet? It’s a very awkward sentence in Hebrew because there is no verb, which is highly unusual, and so it becomes a strange translation in English (as well as how it reads in Hebrew). The words, ‘*they are at*’ have been added, meaning they are not in the Hebrew text (‘Like a lion, *they are at* my hands and my feet’). Literally, it reads, ‘*Like a lion my hands and my feet.*’ Is one to think that the man, who is surrounded by those evil men, has the strength of a lion in his hands and his feet? Lion hands? That’s how it should be translated, but this can hardly be what King David meant for one who was obviously dying a torturous death. Reading the two previous verses brings out that the man has absolutely no strength left, let alone the strength of a lion:

“I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax. It is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd<sup>6</sup> and my tongue cleaves to my jaws. And You lay me in the dust of death.”<sup>7</sup> (Hebrew, Psalm 22:15-16)

There is, however, a viable alternate reading found in the Septuagint, which is the Hebrew Bible translated into Greek about 280-250 BC. This was made for Jews living outside the Land of Israel whose Hebrew was poor or non-existent, like it is for most Jews living in the USA today. Because of Alexander the Great (330 BC), Greek was the *lingua franca* of the day. The Jewish sages who wrote the Septuagint translated the Hebrew word they found in Psalm 22:17 (that traditionally stands as ‘like a lion’) with a Greek word that means, ‘*they pierced.*’<sup>8</sup> The Greek word those ancient Jewish sages used was ωρουσαν<sup>9</sup> (*oh’rooks’sahn*). It

<sup>5</sup> C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 5, *Psalms* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001), p. 200.

<sup>6</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 25th printing, 1976), p. 877. A potsherd is ‘a fragment of an earthen vessel.’ It’s figuratively used of ‘that which is very dry.’ This parallels the man’s tongue cleaving to his jaws, as one would expect when extremely thirsty or dehydrated.

<sup>7</sup> These two verses, along with v. 17, offer a powerful description of what one would experience if they were being crucified. The whole Psalm is about the pierced Prince. Vv. 7-9, 13-14 and 17-18 are almost a word for word account of what will happen to the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6) in Mt. 27:35, 39-43 and Mark 15:24, 29-32, etc.

<sup>8</sup> Sir Lancelot C. L. Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* (USA: Hendrickson Publishers, sixth printing, February, 1997), p. 710.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

comes from the verb ορυσσω (*oh'roos'so*), which means to 'dig, or excavate;'<sup>10</sup> pierce.

Those Jewish sages knew the *Hebrew* text as, '**They pierced my hands and my feet**,'<sup>11</sup> and that's why they chose that Greek word. They didn't translate it as 'like a lion' because they saw a *vav* ם as the last Hebrew letter of the word; not a *yod* ך. This clashes with the traditional Hebrew and English text of today, but '*They pierced my hands and my feet*' is how our ancient Jewish people understood Ps. 22:17 *more than 250 years before the Prince had His hands and feet pierced to a tree in Jerusalem*—for you and me.

## *The Pierced Prince*

With the 'clipping short' of one Hebrew letter, 'They pierced' was changed to 'Like a lion.' We see this concept in English with letters that, with the 'clipping off' of *part* of the letter becomes another letter. The capital English letter G clipped becomes a C; the E an F; and the R turns into a P; etc. In terms of how this effects a word, some permutations are; Gap to Cap; Rat to Pat; and Eat to Fat. The Hebrew letters in question are the *vav* (ם) a straight up and down line, and the *yod* (ך) a straight up and down line about half the length of a *vav*.<sup>12</sup> There's no difference between the two of them except for their length. The *vav* looks like a 'longer' *yod*. With no vowels in the ancient Hebrew text<sup>13</sup> the two words look and sound like this: with the long *vav* כָּאָרָו<sup>14</sup> *kah'ru* (they pierced, as the *vav* here takes on the ou sound, a very common occurrence in Hebrew for a *vav* at the end of a word), and with the shorter *yod* כָּאָרָי *kah'ah'ree* (like a lion). Also, in the Hebrew word *kah'ru*, the *vav* changes from its consonantal 'v' sound to its vowel sound of 'ou' (written as 'u'). The 'ou' is the personal pronoun (*they*), attached to the verb, a regular occurrence in Hebrew.

The two words are identical except for their *last* letter, the *vav* or the *yod*.<sup>15</sup> The ancient Jewish sages who translated the Hebrew Bible into the Septuagint must have seen a *vav* as the last letter in the Hebrew word. The *vav* makes the word *kah'ru* ('they pierced'). This solves the grammar problem of there not being a verb in the phrase, *like a lion my hands and my feet*, and the translation problem. We now have a verb ('pierced') and a pronoun ('they'). '**They pierced my hands and my feet**' is the way the Hebrew sentence was originally written by King David and the way it should appear today in Jewish-English Bibles. God wanted us to know through David that evil men would pierce the hands and feet of the Prince. Yes, as fan-

<sup>10</sup> Wesley J. Perschbacher, Editor, *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publications, 1990), p. 297. 'To dig, excavate,' see also p. 445.

<sup>11</sup> Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha*, p. 710.

<sup>12</sup> The *vav* and the *yod* pictured have a flange at their top, but this is because they are part of my Hebrew letters. The ancient *vav* and *yod* didn't have those flanges at the top—they were just sticks.

<sup>13</sup> Hebrew vowels, just dots and dashes, are generally placed under the Hebrew letters, alongside them, or over them. Originally they weren't in the Scriptures. They were created by the Masoretes to help with pronunciation, but the vowels weren't 'God-given.' King David wrote this Psalm about 3,000 years ago (c. 1000 BC). The Masoretes knew of Messiah Yeshua being crucified and either they, or those before them, intentionally altered the text. 'The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran, dating from c. 150 BC–75 AD, reveals that in this period there was not always the scrupulous uniformity of text that was so stressed in later centuries. The scrolls show numerous small variations in orthography, both as against the later Masoretic text, and between each other. It is also evident from the notings of corrections and of variant alternatives that scribes felt free to choose according to their personal taste and discretion between different readings.' Menachem Cohen, *The Idea of the Sanctity of the Biblical Text and the Science of Textual Criticism in HaMikrah V'anachnu*, ed. Uriel Simon, *HaMachon L'Yahadut U'Machshava Bat-Z'manenu and Dvir*, Tel-Aviv, 1979.

<sup>14</sup> Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Professor Wilhelm Gesenius; Edward Robinson, translator and E. Rodiger, editor, *The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Lafayette, IN: Associated Publishers and Authors, 1978), p. 468. The verb is translated as 'to bore or dig or hew.' Brown translates v. 17 as, 'they have bored (dugged, hewn) my hands and my feet.'

<sup>15</sup> Hebrew is read from right to left, just the opposite of English.

tastic as this sounds, that the Messiah of Israel would die, this is how God used their evil for His good, loving and redemptive purpose. The crucified Messiah graphically displays His love for us. Today you probably won't get a rabbi to tell you that among the ancient Sages they had acknowledged a Messiah who would die. They named him Messiah—the Son of Joseph because like Joseph, He would be betrayed, but also like Joseph, He would provide redemption. Isaiah 52:13—53:12 is the biblical foundation for this Messiah who would die for our reconciliation with God. He was also known as the Suffering Messiah.<sup>16</sup>

The traditional Hebrew text of Psalm 22:17 (16 in English) that we have today was a deliberate attempt on the part of our Scribes, around 180 AD, to destroy the obvious Messianic meaning with its full implication of a *Pierced Prince*. In copying text it is common, over many scribal copies, for the shorter *yod* to be lengthened to become the longer *vav*, as one scribe would make the *yod* slightly longer and the next scribe might think it was the longer *vav*,<sup>17</sup> but it's improbable that the longer *vav* would be thought to be the shorter *yod*. Such a reversal, in this specific case, for the *vav* to be 'mistaken' for the shorter *yod*, could only be intentional on the part of the Scribes because there were ample ancient texts to properly determine the Hebrew word. As we'll see, the current Jewish text with *like a lion*, didn't come upon the scene *until a century and a half after the Prince was pierced in 30 AD*.

The Hebrew word with the *vav*, *kah'ru* ('they pierced') appears in Hebrew manuscripts, as well as the Syriac Bible for Psalm 22:17.<sup>18</sup> By no means does the traditional Jewish translation of the text go unchallenged by ancient sources. Therefore, it's not just 'the Septuagint versus the Masoretic' version of the text, which would have been a strong point *against* the Masoretic version we have today.<sup>19</sup>

With a number of texts available to modern Jewish translators there is no justifiable reason to print, 'Like a

<sup>16</sup> See [A Three Day Old Bagel](#), [Fresh Bagels Anyone?](#), [Disfigured Beyond Man](#), [What Would Tevyeh Think?](#), [The Day After](#), [Who Would Believe?](#) The Targum, in translating Is. 52:13 speaks of the Servant as the Messiah. In *Sanhedrin* 98a, the ancient Sages called the Servant, the Suffering or Leprous Messiah. In *Sanhedrin* 98b the Messianic appellation 'Leprous' (*Sanhedrin* 98b) is expressly based upon Isaiah 53. נָגַח (nah'gu'ah) derives from the verb נָגַח (nah'gah), which means 'to touch with force and violence, to strike, to smote,' as when God smote with disease. The word used in Leviticus 13-14 for leprosy is *neh'gah* (from *nah'gah*) and means, 'strike, blow, infliction of evil...a plague, especially as divine judgment...spot, mark, as of leprosy.' The fact that Isaiah says Messiah would carry our diseases and our sins (Is. 53:5), and we would think that He was struck by God (v. 4), and that the word 'to strike' is associated with leprosy, is why the Rabbis named our Messiah, the Leprous Messiah. (See Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), pp. 533-534.) *Midrash Rabbah* on Ruth 5:6 says that Messiah 'was wounded for our afflictions.' In *Pesikta Rabbati*, *Piska* 36:142 we find, 'the Messiah, as one who, **before the creation**, consented to suffer for the sins of the souls of men in order to redeem them.' Here we see not only the suffering the Messiah would take upon Himself for Israel, but also his preexistence or deity as no created being was alive 'before the creation.' Rabbi David Kimchi (1160 to 1235), also known as Radak, of whom it was said, 'without him we will not find the correct way to interpret the Scriptures,' thought that the Second Temple, which was so much less magnificent, in the physical than the First Temple of King Solomon (Haggai 2:1-9), would be greater *because Messiah would walk in it*. Kimchi correctly understood that, as well as that both the Lord and the Messenger of the Covenant that Malachi the prophet spoke of was King Messiah (Malachi 3:1).

<sup>17</sup> A number of errors in the Hebrew Bible relate to this phenomenon.

<sup>18</sup> John Kohlenberger III, Editor, *The NIV Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Corporation, 1979), p. 368. Note n states, 'Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint and Syriac' have *kah'ru* (they pierced), while 'most Hebrew manuscripts' have *kah'ah'ree* (like a lion). This means there are a number of reliable texts that translate the word as 'they pierced,' including Hebrew manuscripts, the Septuagint and the Syriac Peshitta, which is a direct translation from the ancient Hebrew Bible. Also, just because there are more Hebrew manuscripts with the reading, 'like the loin,' majority in this case doesn't mean it's correct. Copying an error hundreds of times doesn't make the text correct or authoritative. It just means there are many manuscripts with errors in them.

<sup>19</sup> This is because the Masoretic text offers an exceptionally poor grammatical structure and a completely unsatisfactory translation for Psalm 22:17.

lion,' *except to intentionally hide the Pierced Prince*. Against these other manuscripts the traditional Hebrew Bible of today finds itself alone in its perverse translation of 'Like a lion my hands and my feet.'

Noted scholar C. F. Keil explains that the proper reading is 'they pierced' and that Ps. 22:17 isn't the only Scripture where the Prince is prophesied of as being pierced:

"The fulfilment in the nailing of the hands and...of the feet of the Crucified One to the cross is clear. This is not the only passage in which it is predicated that the future Christ shall be murderously pierced, but it is the same in Isa. 53:5 where He is said to be *pierced* (מְחַלֵּל *m'holal*) on account of our sins, and in Zech. 12:10, where" it speaks of the Messiah being *pierced-through* (דָּקְרוּ *da'kah'ru*). "Therefore, the reading כָּאֲרוּ (*kah'ru*) might at least have an equal right to be recognized with the present *recepta*"<sup>20</sup> (what has been received; i.e. the Hebrew Masoretic text).

## The Dead Sea Scrolls to the Rescue

The reading of 'lion' instead of 'pierced' only first appears in Hebrew manuscripts of the late second century AD, or more than 150 years after the Prince was pierced to a tree. This confirms that it was intentionally altered because by then Jewish and Gentile Christians had been using Psalm 22:17 in their dialogues with Jewish people to convince them that the pierced Prince was Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) since 30 AD (cf. John 19:34, 37; Rev. 1:7). The scribes didn't like that and so the *vav* was shortened to a *yod* and the reading changed from 'they pierced' to 'like a lion.'

Author, professor and linguist Shon Hopkin states that the original Hebrew text of Psalm 22:17 had, 'they pierced my hands and my feet,' and not, 'like a lion, my hands and my feet.' He writes,

<sup>20</sup> C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 5, *Psalms*, p. 201. On pp. 200-201: "Even the Targum...bears witness to the ancient hesitancy between the substantival and verbal rendering of the כָּאֲרוּ. *The other ancient versions have, without any doubt, read כָּאֲרוּ*. Aquila in the 1st edition of his translation rendered it ἡσχυσαν (from the Aramaic and Talmudic כָּעַר = כָּאָר to soil, *part.* כָּאֲרוּ dirty, nasty), but this is not applicable to hands and feet, and therefore has nothing to stand upon. In the 2nd edition of his translation the same Aquila had instead of this, like Symmachus, "they have bound," after כָּר, Arab. *krr*, to twist, lace, but this rendering is improbable since the Hebrew has other words for "to bind"...nothing of any weight can be urged against the rendering of the LXX ὠστξαν (Peshito בִּזְעוּ, Vulg. *foderunt*); for even if we do not suppose any special verb כָּאָר, כָּאֲרוּ can be expanded from כָּרוּ (כָּרוּ) = כָּרוּ (כָּרָה) just in the same manner as רָאָמָה, Zech. 14:10 from רָמָה, cf. קָאָמָה Dan. 7:16. And that כָּרוּ and כָּרָה can signify not merely to dig out and dig into, engrave, but also to dig through, pierce."

Ibid., vol. 10, *The Minor Prophets*, pp. 609-610; the word דָּקְרוּ (*da'kah'ru*) "does not mean to ridicule, or scoff at, but only to pierce, thrust through, and to slay by any kind of death whatever (cf. Lam. 4:9)...the context shows...it signifies to put to death."

"[Karl Fredreich Keil](#) (1807-1888) was a German Protestant exegetist...In 1887 he moved to Rodlitz, continuing his literary activity there until his death. He belonged to the strictly orthodox and conservative school of Hengstenberg. Ignoring modern criticism almost entirely, all his writings represent the view that the books of the Old and New Testaments are to be retained as the revealed word of God...His chief work is the commentary on the Old Testament (1866), which he undertook with Franz Delitzsch. To this work he contributed commentaries on all the books from Genesis through Esther, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and *The Minor Prophets*." Delitzsch wrote commentary on the Psalms.

The [Bible Hub](#) has, "they pierced, the textual reading is kaari, 'as a lion my hands and feet;' but several MSS read *karoo* (*kah'ru*), and others *karoo* (*kah'ru*) in the margin, which affords the reading adopted by our translators. *So the LXX (Septuagint), so also the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic; and as all the Evangelists so quote the passage, and apply it to the crucifixion of Christ, there seems little doubt that this is the genuine reading; especially when it is considered that the other contains no sense at all. The whole difference lies between wav (vav) and yod, which might be easily taken for one another.*

“Sometime around the end of the second century AD, the word כָּאֲרִי (‘like a lion’) as opposed to the third-person plural verb כָּאָרוּ (‘pierced/dug’) appears in Hebrew manuscripts. Eventually כָּאֲרִי (like a lion) came to be the majority Masoretic reading, and accordingly ...כָּאָרוּ (they pierced) appears as a variant reading in the Masoretic notes.”<sup>21</sup>

In support of his position that ‘like a lion’ had not appeared in any Hebrew text before the end of the second century AD, Hopkin lists Hebrew manuscripts, which had the change, dating back to only the end of the second century and not before. Then he presents the Dead Sea Scrolls parchment for Psalm 22:17, which also confirms that the original text had *they pierced* my hands and my feet:

“One of the Dead Sea Scrolls fragments contains Psalm 22:16 (Heb. v. 17). This fragment, published in 1997, was discovered in a cache of Scrolls at Nahal Hever in Israel during the early 1950s. Significantly, the 5/6 Hev–Sev4Ps Fragment 11 of Psalm 22 contains the crucial word in the form of a third-person plural verb, written כָּאָרוּ (‘pierced/dug’).<sup>22</sup> While it can often be difficult to distinguish between a *waw* (vav)<sup>23</sup> and *yod* (y) in the Dead Sea texts, the editors of the most authoritative edition of the scrolls, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, confirm this reading in its transliteration and in two notes. It states:”

“Although the photograph...is very faded, most of the letters are clearly identifiable under magnification,’ and regarding כָּאָרוּ (they pierced) the editors conclude that ‘the *waw* (vav) is clearly distinguishable and the variant (כָּאָרוּ they pierced) reading *is assured*.”<sup>24</sup>

Hopkin provides a photograph of the Hebrew text and a magnification of the word itself from the Dead Sea Scrolls that clearly presents the Hebrew word having the *vav* (*kah’ru*; they pierced), and not the *yod* (*kah’ah’ree*; like the lion).<sup>25</sup> The Septuagint, the Peshitta and the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal that the shortening of the *vav* into a *yod* was not an accident, but intentionally done more than 150 years *after* the Prince was pierced, to pervert the Word of God so it wouldn’t proclaim the Pierced Prince—the Messiah of Israel, as Yeshua of Nazareth—the Crucified One.

## Conclusion

The only ‘lion hands’ that we find in the text are those *lyin’ hands* that corrupted it! There have always been rebels who have hated the King and His Way of doing things. In their pride and ignorance they despise what the King has done for them. Those rebels have done their utmost to keep you from knowing the truth about your God and your Prince, who gave His life for you so that you could have life—real life from Above today and forever.

Two thousand years ago God sent His Son to be pierced to a tree. It was Their plan. I know that there have been many vicious anti-Semite Christians who have accused us Jews of being ‘Christ killers,’ and millions

<sup>21</sup> [Shon Hopkin](#), *The Psalm 22:16 Controversy: New Evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Elliger and Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, p.1104.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, p. 88.

<sup>23</sup> There are many English teachers who wrongly think that the *vav* should be a *waw* or *w* sound, but this has only come upon the scene in the last 40 years or so, and is not able to withstand scrutiny.

<sup>24</sup> Hopkin, *The Psalm 22:16 Controversy*. James Charlesworth and others, eds., *Miscellaneous Texts from the Judaean Desert, in Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, 38 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), vol. 38: pp. 160-161.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

of us have been murdered, tortured and persecuted because of them and that satanic lie. The divine truth is that the Prince loves His Jewish people and He gave His life for us. He *willingly* laid down His life (John 10:18) so that we stubborn rebels, every Jew, and even the Gentiles, could be forgiven of our sins and great rebellion against the King. (Do you think we aren't rebellious? Look at our Fathers in the Wilderness, wandering for 40 years because they wouldn't believe that the same God who brought Pharaoh to his knees and parted the Red Sea for them, would be able to give us the Land of Canaan because the giants were there. Are we any different than our Fathers?)

The human side of this divine truth is that *both* Jew and Gentile pierced and murdered the Prince. Our highest authority, the Sanhedrin and the High Priest of Israel declared that the Prince was a blasphemer 'worthy of death! (Matthew 26:65) Our High Priest placed the Prince under oath and demanded to know if He was the Prince, the Son of the Living God! Yeshua said that He was and the High Priest accused the Prince of blasphemy! Our Sanhedrin condemned Him to death, but we Jews didn't have the authority to kill anyone at that time. That right had been taken out of our hands by the Roman Empire.

Pontius Pilate, representing Rome, and symbolically the whole Gentile world, ordered the death of the Prince, *thus implicating every Jew and Gentile in the most sinister murder that the Heavens have ever witnessed*, but it was God's Plan of Redemption for His people Israel and any Gentile who would truly believe in the Messiah of Israel. The Prince was pure, holy and sinless, yet He took our just punishment upon Himself because of His love for you and me.

Psalm 22, written 800 years before the Romans made crucifixion a means of death, is a perfect picture of a man being pierced-through or crucified. King David, who wrote the psalm, was prophesying. He described what his Son,<sup>26</sup> the Messiah, *the Pierced Prince*,<sup>27</sup> would go through for us as He cried, 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?' (Heb. Psalm 22:2; Matthew 27:46)

Have you ever felt that God has abandoned you? Our Prince felt that too, so that you would know that He is has gone through everything you could ever go through and be able to comfort you in all your pain and confusion. He's also able to heal and to save you.<sup>28</sup> His Father, the King, has also given to Him all authority on Judgment Day and eternal life.<sup>29</sup>

Fairy tale or divine drama? Once upon a time there was this handsome Prince who was *pierced* to a tree so that your heart might be pierced with His love for you. After all, how many people would do that for you? Your mother? Your father? Your brother, sister or a friend? And is so, how much does that tell you of their love for you?

If you ask Yeshua to reveal Himself to you, He will. He will also forgive your sins and come into your heart if you ask Him. Then you'll *know* why He's called the Prince of Peace because you'll be filled with shalom (heavenly peace), and you'll *know* that He's not a fairy tale. Yeshua made a way for you to enter into God's eternal Kingdom—today.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Messiah is also known as the Son of David because of what God says to David in 2nd Samuel 7:1-16f. esp. vv. 13, 16.

<sup>27</sup> Isaiah 53:6 speaks of the Servant of Yahveh (Is. 52:13), the Prince of Peace, being pierced through, but the English text of the Jewish Bible fails to bring this out, substituting the word 'wounded' instead. Zechariah 12:10 also writes of this Prince being pierced ('thrust through'), but the Jewish translation and subsequent note (a), obliterate the true meaning the divine text seeks to convey.

<sup>28</sup> Isaiah 35:1-10; 53:1-12; 61:1, Acts 3:15; 5:31.

<sup>29</sup> Matthew 28:18; John 5:19-30; 17:2-3.

<sup>30</sup> Revised on Wednesday, April 22, 2020.