

Seeking Witnesses

An Unanswered Call...

Very few people have come to know God. The first did so in the Garden, and gradually one person became two with the addition of Chawah. One thousand years later there were eight exceptional souls aboard the Ark.

The greatest number at any one time was during the liberation from Egypt, when hundreds of thousands enjoyed God's presence as He celebrated the first four Miqra'ey with the Children of Yisra'el – leading them and then leaving them with His Towrah. There have been long periods of time, the most recent lasting over a millennium, when no one on earth knew Yah.

For reasons that have nothing to do with Him and everything to do with us, God remains exceedingly unpopular. With no one to talk to or work with, Yahowah has withdrawn, offering His Word as His only witness. And even then, apart from the few who have been sufficiently open-minded and willing to go where His directions lead, the number of people who know Yah is only thousands among millions.

And today there is no excuse. We were fortuitously born at a time when there has been unfettered access to His testimony in the original language. We are able to obtain ancient manuscripts, interlinears, and lexicons to ascertain what God has to say. All we need now is the

motivation. To find the truth, one must be willing to invest countless of hours in the pursuit of understanding.

It would not matter that Yahowah has always been approachable and pleasing to be around, or that He is actually God, Creator of the universe, and Author of life. It would not seem to matter that He had a lot to say that was particularly interesting. It would not matter that He answered mankind's most important questions, proving His existence through prophecy. It would not matter that His testimony demonstrated that every religion was invalid, or that they all lead away from Him.

It would not matter that He was willing to get down on His knees to lift us up, or that He required so little of us and was willing and able to give us more than we could ever imagine. Humankind would prefer the words of men over the Word of God, squandering their souls and forfeiting everything Yahowah was offering in the process.

On this day, however, as we approach the 8th chapter of Yasha'yah, there were still a handful of Yahuwdym willing to listen, one among them, Yasha'yah, was also willing to write down what he would hear. Yahowah asked him to grasp hold of a very large scroll and, using a pen, write down the following in ordinary human form: *Mahar Shalal Chuwsh Baz*. Yasha'yah listened and engaged as would be the case with *Howsha'* / Hosea, the prophet who would bear a son by way of a religious whore whose name would be unforgettable.

“Then (wa) Yahowah (Yahowah – an accurate transliteration of the name YaHoWaH, our ‘elowah – God as guided by His towrah – instructions regarding His hayah – existence and our shalom – reconciliation) said (‘amar – actually conveyed, literally expressing, and declaring with unfolding implications (qal imperfect)) to me (‘el ‘any – as God unto me), ‘On your own initiative,

obtain (*laqah la 'atah* – choose on your behalf to accept, receive, and grasp hold of (qal imperative active) **an extremely large** (*gadowl* – great because it will be important) **vellum scroll** (*gilayown* – animal skins purposely prepared to convey a message in writing using a pen and ink; from *galah* – to uncover and reveal, to discover and make known, to disclose and show oneself) **and (wa) choose to write on it** (*kathab 'al huw'* – of your own freewill, elect to inscribe a message on it using the alphabet (qal imperative active)) **with a pen** (*ba cheret* – using an implement designed to apply ink; from an unused root meaning to engrave) **in ordinary human form** (*'enowsh* – in the common characters associated with mortal man), **“Concerning** (*la* – on behalf of) ***Mahar Shalal Chuwsh Baz* / rapid and thoughtless plunder by those enjoying their disturbing behavior while quickly capturing a spoil as militants and armed robbers** (*Mahar* – impetuously and anxiously, rashly and rapidly, headlong without thinking and without hesitation, *Shalal* – plunder the prey, taking a spoil, *Chuwsh* – acting quickly, showing haste, rushing while dismayed, actually enjoying being greatly disturbed, *Baz* – while capturing the plunder from a militant assault and an armed robbery).””” (*Yasha'yah* / Salvation is from Yahowah / Isaiah 8:1)

There is a lot being conveyed here, much of it extraordinarily profound, so let's take our time and consider the opening act of the 8th chapter one thought at a time. To begin, Yahowah's relationship with Yasha'yah seems surprising considering their relative positions. Yahowah could have bypassed this man and spoken directly to whomever He pleased. Or, He could have ordered Yasha'yah, or any other man, to do His bidding.

It is almost incomprehensible that the Creator of the universe would leave the transmission of His message up to the inclination of a being He had created. But that is

what's happening here. God wanted us to know that it was Yasha'yah's choice as to whether or not he would engage and write this down for our benefit. This means that Yahowah respects those who listen to Him. He trusts their judgment. And He'd prefer to work with a flawed and willing individual than work alone.

I laughed when I heard Yah tell His prophet that the scroll needed to be "*gadowl* – especially large and indeed great" because the largest and only complete scroll in the entire Qumran collection is called "The Great Isaiah Scroll." You know You are good when Your adjectives are prophetic. Moreover, Yah has to have an enduring sense of humor, especially realizing that His punch line wouldn't get a chuckle for another 2700 years.

In the entire history of human cultures and of the gods men have created, there isn't a single example of what we are witnessing here. The men, who conceived their religions and then spoke on behalf of the gods they had imagined, never memorialized their "conversations" in writing. For example, Muhammad was illiterate. It would be generations before his oral recitals would be committed to paper. In fact, there was no Arabic alphabet at the time. Never once is he afforded a choice. Never once is his response conveyed.

Paul's letters convey his thoughts. His favorite line is "but I, Paul, say." The few times he quotes God, it's an inaccurate rendition of something that was previously committed to writing by an actual prophet six to fourteen centuries prior to his abridged and erroneous citation.

Further, in the long history of religion, the stories attributed to pagan deities were just that, stories that evolved and changed over time. Nowhere in these myths, nor in the Talmud, in Paul's Epistles, or in Muhammad's Qur'an do we find their god asking anyone to write their

message down. The last thing these liars on behalf of false deities wanted was accountability.

The reasons for this disparity between the real God and man's imposters are as profound as they are obvious. Conversations with the gods of man's making never actually occurred because their gods were not only fake, they all modeled their gods after themselves. Allah is Muhammad. The Lord in Paul's epistles is his alter ego.

Let's consider why the one and only actual God asked His prophet to memorialize what He had to say in writing during the revelation. I can think of five reasons – all of which are important.

First, information is retained more accurately in writing than when conveyed orally. To test this conclusion, gather ten people together and ask them to form a line. Initially, recite the opening paragraph of this chapter into the ear of the individual at one end of the line and then ask him or her to repeat it to the person standing next to them, one after the other until the tenth person tries to repeat what they have heard. Typically, the result is laughable.

Then, print out the first ten pages of this chapter, hand it to the first person in the line and have them recite it. Pass the text to the next person with the same instruction, and so on until the ninth person has handed the printed text to the tenth and they have read it aloud. Unless someone is illiterate or wholly unfocused, every rendition will be the same, and each will accurately reflect what was written.

In the oral test, even if it is limited to a single paragraph, even if it is concluded rapidly, 50% of the paragraph's words will either be forgotten or replaced. But by passing along the written presentation of the first ten pages of this chapter, the final recital, like the initial one, will correctly reflect the text.

The fact is, I wrote the opening paragraph, and read it through a second and third time after composing it, working to improve it, and yet if I were to close my eyes and try to recite it from memory, I'd get more of it wrong than right. The point is: if you want your message to be accurately transmitted, put it in writing.

The Dead Sea Scrolls serve as a perfect example. Scribed over two-thousand years ago from much older scrolls, they, with tremendous fidelity, transmit Yahowah's testimony through the millennia – a feat which would have been impossible with oral traditions.

Second, both individual comprehension and retention are measurably increased when we read and study a written presentation as opposed to simply hearing it. Unlike the spoken word whose reverberations dissipate shortly after they are formed, we have the opportunity to read a written presentation over and over again, as often and as long as we'd like.

The more we repeat the process, especially if we recite it aloud, especially if we think about the implications and seek to understand what we are reading, while jotting down our conclusions, the message will naturally be transferred from short term to long term memory, enabling us to recall the presentation whenever we need it. If you want your message remembered, put it in writing.

Additionally, the spoken word tends to elicit an emotional response, whereas the written word facilitates a more logical evaluation. People are moved by speeches and remain influenced by them long after most of the words are forgotten. A written message is food for the brain while the spoken word inspires the heart.

Third, written words are easier to validate, especially today with the advent of internet search engines. There is no mistaking the letters or the words they spell out. We

don't have to ask the speaker to pause while we look them up. We have all the time we need to seek definitions which are complete and correct as well as to fully explore their implications. We can even change our perspective, choosing to examine the details or broaden our view to ponder each word's contribution to the message as a whole. We even have the time to compare what we have just seen to something we have previously read. Furthermore, we have the opportunity to check to see if a statement is accurate scientifically or historically. And lastly, by comparing what we have just read to other statements the author has made on similar subjects, we can check for consistency, rejecting the message of those prone to contradictions. Therefore, if you want your message validated, put it in writing.

Fourth, prior to the advent of electronic communications, the maximum number of people who could actually hear an oral statement was a few thousand people, even under the most ideal circumstances. But once the message is written down, it can be read by and recited to a never-ending chain of people. For example, almost everyone in the world, nearly seven-billion people today, can read Yahowah's Towrah – or at the very least, have it read to them. The point being, if you want the largest number of people possible to know what you have to say, put it in writing.

If you have watched Monty Python's *Life of Brian*, you have seen this play out in a hilarious scene. Those listening to the Sermon on the Mount at the extremity of the crowd at the bottom of the hill, think Brian / Yahowsha' is blessing "the Greek" rather than "the meek."

Fifth, the spoken word is fleeting while the written word is enduring. The tenor of Yahowah's voice is unknown to us, but the words Yahowah asked Yasha'yah to scribe on the scroll are as vital and piercing as the day

his ink first stained the parchment. If you want your word to endure, put it in writing.

Yahowah didn't just ask Yasha'yah to write this down. He actually described the alphabet He wanted him to use. And come to find out, it's the same one we have been using from the beginning – the original pictorial characters.

There are twenty-two letters in the ancient paleo-Hebrew alphabet. Ten of these characters represent aspects of the human anatomy: a foot – c, standing upright – e, an outstretched arm and hand – i, the open palm of a hand – k, sperm – n, an eye – o, a mouth – p, resting – y, a profile head – r, and teeth – s.

One of these in particular is “*enowsh* – depicting mortal man.” It's the e – Hey, which is not only drawn in the form of a human being, it conveys Yahowah's desire for humankind. If you are a parent, you've experienced it, and if not, you've likely seen it. In a public place where a child's safety is a concern, parents typically walk with their children between them. As they reach down, a toddler naturally reaches up to grasp hold of mom's and dad's hands. In this position, the child appears to their parents the way God has designed us when we reach up and grasp hold of our Heavenly Father's and Spiritual Mother's outstretched hands.

Drawn to depict the ideal family experience, the Hebrew e – Hey conveys God's intent in “*enowsh* – common characters associated with mortal man presented in human form.” Even at its most basic level, Yahowah's communication with His creation is focused on us, not Him.

Further, many of the other twelve letters in God's alphabet address things of human interest. A ram's head – a depicts the communal, non-violent animal man is most likely to shepherd as a source of milk, wool, and

protein. The l represents the shepherd's staff, demonstrating caring leadership and protection. The *beyth* / family – b was drawn to portray the floorplan of a home where children are nurtured and grow. The d represents the doorway into that home and access to the family. The f is the tent peg used to enlarge and secure the homes of the day. The plow – z was used to remove the weeds and prepare the ground for farming. Fences h kept the family and their flock secure. The harvest was carried in a u – basket. As we know, water m is fundamental to life. Even the Taw – t represents a signature, revealing the name of the individual communicating with us.

This brings us to the essence of Yahowah's warning. The Northern Kingdom had become militant, political, and religious, and in so doing, had turned away from Yahowah and against Yahuwdah. No longer under God's protection, they would soon be ransacked by the Assyrians. The conquest would be "*mahar* – rapid, rash, and thoughtless." The wayward and misled nation would be "*shalal* – plundered" "*chuwsh* – without hesitation" by those who would actually "relish the role" of "*baz* – thieves engaged in armed robbery." As a descriptive phrase, it unambiguously conveys the impending fate of Yisra'el. And in contrast with His promise to protect Yahuwdah, there would be no reprieve for 'Ephraim.

But more than this, the name *Mahar Shalal Chuwsh Baz* is forward-looking. It accurately depicts the long and relentless assault of Islamic jihadists upon Yisra'el – of unthinking and rash armed robbers relishing the role of plundering thieves. It is also descriptive of what Yisra'el ought to expect during the Magog War.

If intended as a name, the moniker would convey the consequence of the epithet given to Howsha's son, becoming "Not My Children." They had perverted and

annulled the intent of the Covenant and would, therefore, have to fend for themselves.

Turning back to the bigger issue and thinking it through, one might assume that there would be a host of ways God could communicate directly with His creation without imposing Himself on us and violating our freewill. But other than through a document such as the Towrah which we are free to accept or reject, I'm unaware of any. Existing in greater dimensions, He cannot enter our 3D realm on His own. He has to use implements, symbols, and diminished manifestations to convey His nature and purpose. God isn't so small that all of Him will fit within the body of a man. Sorry Christians. Therefore, He cannot simply walk up to us and introduce Himself.

But even when using implements, diminished manifestations, and words, He has to be cautious about how imposing these representations can be. Too bold, and once again He's back to the problem of becoming impossible to ignore and difficult to reject. In doing so, He'd make a mockery of choice.

Had God implanted His testimony inside of us, we would all know Him. Everyone would love Him, and there would be no way to corrupt His word or create alternative gods based upon our perversions. However, without a viable alternative, the choice would be between God and nothing. As an innately social being, no one would choose nothing. And so now you can appreciate why Yahowah gave Chawah to 'Adam in the Garden.

Ponder for a moment just how ineffective the fire on top of the mountain, the booming voice from above, and the miracles were during the Exodus. Even while they were occurring, even as the beneficiaries of these things, a considerable number of Yisra'elites preferred worshipping the gods of Egypt with whom they had

become familiar. And most failed to identify with Yahowah and come to trust and rely upon Him to the point that they could be led directly into the Promised Land.

These things may all have been showy, even difficult to ignore, but they were ineffective. The fact is, if a corporeal manifestation of Yahowah were to walk into the Vatican, He'd never get an audience with the Pope, nor would He endure such a thing.

By far, the most enduring and effective way to know Yahowah has been and remains to read the words His prophets scribed for our benefit or, at the very least, listen to those reciting them. It is the most enlightening, enriching, and empowering thing we can do.

There were forty prophets and God's conversation with mankind continued for four-thousand years. You might correctly conclude, therefore, that He has a penchant for communicating with us.

“And (wa) I'd like to call on witnesses to testify for Me (*'uwd la 'any* – let's help one another by repeatedly issuing a warning, admonishing others, providing a restoring witness to affirm future reoccurring events as a means to approach Me (hifil imperfect cohortative – the witness is engaged by God and becomes like Him with regard to the witness with ongoing implications and as an expression of the will of the speaker, God)), **eternal witnesses** (*'ed* – those who provide everlasting testimony, presenting the enduring evidence, regarding what happened in the ancient past and into the future, forever) **who are truthful and reliable** (*'aman* – who are trustworthy and verifiable, dependable and steadfast, who are unwavering and enduring, correct, credible, and confident, confirming and supportive, who are certain and nourishing, serving as workmen and artists, who are sure, right, and firm (nifal

participle passive – the subject, which are the witnesses, provide the testimony and are eternally influenced by it as a descriptive verb)), **such as** (*‘eth* – with both) **‘Uwryah** (*‘Uwryah* – Yah is Light; from *‘uwr* / *‘owr* – light and *Yahowah*), **the one who assists** (*ha kohen* – the priest who teaches and functions to explain the *Miqra’ey*, performing in an office established by God; from *kahan* – to serve by mediating), **and** (*wa ‘eth*) **Zakaryah** (*Zakaryah* – Remember Yah; from *zakar* – to recall and be mindful of, to mention and bring to mind, reminding others about and *Yahowah*), **the son of** (*ben*) **Yaberekyahuw** (*Yaberekyahuw* – Yah Blesses; from *Yahowah* and *barak* – to kneel down in love to lift up).” (*Yasha’yah* / Freedom is from *Yahowah* / Isaiah 8:2)

There can be no better job, no higher calling, no more enjoyable or productive way to invest our time than to testify on behalf of *Yahowah*. There is no mistaking the fact that this is obviously what God wants, after all, He just told us so. All we have to do is accept His invitation and then strive to meet His expectations.

If it were not for the fact that *‘aman* follows *‘uwd la ‘any* and *‘ed*, none of us would qualify. But when we recognize *Yahowah* is simply asking us to testify on His behalf, to share His eternal witness, so long as we read and recite what He has had inscribed in writing, everything we say will be *‘aman* because *Yahowah* is *‘aman*. All God is asking is for us to “*‘aman* – truthfully, reliably, correctly, credibly, and confidently” recite His testimony.

Based upon the full implications of *‘aman*, *Yahowah* wants us to convey His words in such a way that the reader can “*‘aman* – verify” them for themselves, “confirming their authenticity.” This has always been the reason we have included the Hebrew basis for each translation within the citation itself. It is why we have

striven to explain the thinking behind our choices when there are other options.

Also interesting, there is a “workmanlike and artistic” aspect of *‘aman* that I’ve sensed was true but never noticed it in the definitions. Translating Yahowah’s Word is “work.” Like all work, it takes time and training to be any good at it. But it is a skill anyone with the proper focus and dedication can learn. The more one does it, the better they will be at it. And as is the case with most jobs, there is a tremendous sense of satisfaction and accomplishment at the conclusion of a day’s labor.

An effective translation, however, isn’t always calculated. The Hebrew alphabet is graphic, and the language is highly symbolic, requiring an artist’s perspective. The challenge is always to look at the words and their shadings and weave them together such that the picture the Artist intended is properly presented.

The commentary, then, should be somewhat artistic as well. Its purpose is to encourage the reader to view the portrait Yahowah has painted from the most enlightening vantage point. And keep in mind, every letter of Yahowah’s preferred alphabet is an artistic representation of an important idea. Further, since we lack the capacity to visualize the implications of being elevated to the seventh dimension, the best Yahowah can do is draw pictures for us and then encourage us to extrapolate from them.

There was an aspect of *‘uwd* which may be surprising to some, so even though it was highlighted within the parenthetical, it is worth repeating. About half of what Yahowah communicates falls under the purview of “a warning or admonition.” And so if we are going to speak accurately on His behalf, we must be prepared and willing to warn people about the counterproductive and unGodly nature of religion and politics, of patriotism and

militarism. Exposing and condemning the things man is predisposed to respect will make us as unpopular among our peers as were Yahowah's prophets, but it must be done for us to be *'aman*.

Let's consider the two witnesses for a moment. These were hardly perfect people. *Uwryah* / Urijah, the priest, was embroiled in the story of 'Achaz. He humored the moronic king with an idolatrous altar in 2 Kings 16:10-11.

"Now King 'Achaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria.

And he saw the altar which was at Damascus. So King 'Achaz sent to Uwryah, the priest, the pattern of the altar and a model of it, in accordance with its workmanship. (16:10)

Then Uwryah, the priest, built an altar in accordance with everything King 'Achaz had sent to him from Damascus.

Therefore, Uwryah, the priest, made it before King 'Achaz returned from Damascus." (*Melekym* / Rulers / 2 Kings 16:10-11)

Since there are few things he could have done worse than building a pagan altar, placing it in Yahowah's Home, and then conducting sacrifices upon it in harmony with the king's wishes, this priest embodied the reason Yisra'el would soon be *Mahar Shalal Chuwsh Baz*. One can only assume in this case that Uwryah came to regret his decision and that as a result, he more clearly than someone who had not been exposed to religious error, understood why God asked us to disassociate from such things. Similarly, perhaps, Moseh had been part of the Egyptian royal household he helped bring down.

As for "*Zakaryah*, the son of *Yaberekyahuw*," that's a mystery. According to Ezra 5:1 and 6:14, which was

scribed in Aramaic, '*Idowa*' / Iddo was the prophet's father. But in the opening line of *Zakaryah* / Zechariah 1:1, *Zakaryah*, himself, wrote that he was the son of *Berekyah* and the grandson of '*Idowa*'.

There are those who consider *Berekyah* to be a corruption of *Yaberekyahuw*, but that's a bit odd considering that this was written by *Zakaryah*, himself. However, this *Zakaryah* wasn't a contemporary of Yasha'yah, and in fact wasn't called as a prophet until two-hundred years after Yasha'yah 8 was written.

While there were a number of men named *Zakaryah*, the closest match to *Zakaryah* to *Yaberekyahuw* is the *Zakaryah* who was the son of the High Priest *Yahowyada*' / Jehoiada. If it weren't for the fact that the fathers' names differ and that this *Zakaryah* died decades earlier, he would be an ideal candidate.

After telling the people that Yahowah had abandoned them during the reign of King Yow'ash, he was stoned in the Temple Court. But as previously stated, this *Zakaryah* is problematic because Yow'ash was king of Yahuwdah between 835 and 796 BCE, so this man died sixty years before Yahowah called *Zakaryah ben Yaberekyahuw* as a witness.

Unfortunately, this isn't accurate. It was the much earlier *Zakaryah ben Yahowyada*' who was stoned in this fashion for having told the truth about the people having forsaken Yahowah. *Zakaryah ben Berekyah* was born three-hundred years after this occurred.

If, however, the reference were directed to the spirit of *Zakaryah ben Yahowyada*', we clearly see '*aman*'.

"Then the Spirit of God adorned Zakaryah ben Yahowyada', the priest, and he stood firm before the approaching people and said to them, 'This is what the Almighty says, "Why do you pass over the terms and

conditions of Yahowah's contract so that you cannot succeed, prosper, or thrive?

Indeed, you have rejected and abandoned Yahowah, disassociating from Him, and therefore, He has rejected and abandoned you.” (24:20)

But they conspired together against him and they hurled stones at him to execute him at the instruction of the king in the outer courtyard of the House of Yahowah.” (2 Chronicles 24:20-21)

Based upon this accounting of this man's witness, and the fact that he was adorned by the Spirit, I strongly suspect that he serves as a shining example of what Yahowah is requesting. God found this man, and now, so have we.

As we continue to ponder this remarkable statement, there is one last thought I'd like to convey. If an audience is intelligent, if they are capable of processing information logically, and if they are neither distracted nor indoctrinated, the most effective way to present one's case is to bolster evidence with reason. God has made His case in favor of the Covenant and in opposition to the religious and political alternatives in this manner.

Unfortunately, however, He could count those who had been willing to listen on one hand. Therefore, He needed a more shocking and memorable way to communicate to the masses, and that would necessitate being graphic – to convey the message in a way most will grasp and few will forget. That is what was happening here.

While Yahowah views religion as prostitution, we do not know if the “prophetess” in this next statement is Yasha'yah's wife or a spokesperson for a religious cult. Adding further intrigue, *naby'* was scribed in the masculine rather than the feminine in 1QIsa. That

notwithstanding, based upon all of the grievances Yahowah has brought to bear against those claiming to be prophets thus far in Yasha'yah, there is every reason to suspect that the mother of the wayward child was a religious whore. And if we were to turn to the example of Yasha'yah's contemporary, Howsha', and his Divinely arranged marriage to Gomer, the religious prostitute, for guidance, then God is reinforcing the idea that, by choosing religion over the Covenant relationship, Yisra'el was committing adultery.

Furthermore, it's hard to justify the notion that this woman was a prophet who spoke for Yahowah because there are no citations from her. Making matters worse, she has been identified, not as his "wife," but instead using either the masculine or feminine of *naby'*, the very people Yahowah has been criticizing for having led His people astray. And that brings us to the name ascribed to the boy. It is indicative of the consequence of having engaged in an illicit religious relationship.

“And so (wa) I approached (*qarab* – I came near and presented myself before) the prophetess (*ha naby'ah* – the woman who claims to speak for God and predicts the future [*naby'* is masculine in 1QIsa]) and she conceived (*wa harah* – she became pregnant) and gave birth to a son (*wa yalad ben* – she delivered a baby boy).

Then (wa) Yahowah (*Yahowah* – the proper pronunciation of the name of YaHoWaH, our 'elowah – God as directed in His *towrah* – teaching regarding His *hayah* existence and our *shalowm* – restoration) said (*'amar* – conveyed and expressed, and declaring with unfolding implications (qal imperfect)) to me ('el 'any – as God unto me), ‘Call his name (*qara' shem huw'* – issue a summons by proclaiming his name), “Mahar Shalal Chuwsh Baz** (*Mahar Shalal Chuwsh Baz* – rapid and thoughtless plunder by those enjoying their disturbing behavior while quickly capturing a spoil as**

militants and armed robbers; *Mahar* – impetuously and anxiously, rashly and rapidly, headlong without thinking and without hesitation, *Shalal* – plunder the prey, taking a spoil, *Chuwsh* – acting quickly, showing haste, rushing while dismayed, actually enjoying being greatly disturbed, *Baz* – while capturing the plunder from a militant assault and an armed robbery),” (8:3) **because before** (*ky ba terem* – in that prior to) **the boy** (*ha na’ar* – the lad, the scattered sheep who are in danger) **calls out** (*qara’* – summons, greets, or proclaims), **‘My father** (*‘ab ‘any*) **or** (*wa*) **‘My mother** (*‘em ‘any* [while 1QIsa reads ‘his father and his mother’ the MT appears more appropriate]), **the political prowess, military strength, and economic wealth** (*‘eth chayl* – the troops and capacity to function) **of Dameseq | Damascus** (*Dameseq* – weeping wounds, mourning and sorrow, basal responses and physical pain) **along with** (*wa*) **the plunder and spoils** (*shalal* – the war booty, property and prey) **of Shimrown | Samaria** (*Shimrown* – the observant) **will be carried away** (*nasa’* – will be removed) **before the presence** (*la paneh*) **of the king** (*melek* – dictator and sovereign ruler) **of ‘Ashuwr | Assyria** (*‘Ashuwr* – to fight and conquer; named after the god ‘Ashur, a warrior and conqueror symbolized as an archer with a winged disk).” (*Yasha’yah* / Deliverance is from Yahowah / Isaiah 8:4)

Qara’, meaning “to call out, to invite or summon, to read and recite, to meet, greet, and welcome,” is among the Towrah’s most revealing and important verbs. It serves as the root of *Miqra’*, the name Yahowah chose to distinguish His seven annual “Invitations to Be Called Out and Meet” while “reading and reciting” His Word so that we might enjoy “being welcomed by Him.”

Qara’ was used not once but twice in this pronouncement, one which has Yisra’el, represented by the boy, failing to acknowledge his Mother and Father. It

is the very reason the people are in this predicament. Rather than walking between his parents, rather than reaching up and grasping hold of his Mother's and Father's hands, this boy went off on his own and has run into trouble – into the vicious hands of evil men.

While Yahowah is predicting that the Assyrians will plunder Damascus in route to sacking Samaria, “hastening to quickly seize the booty,” a slightly different fate awaits one versus the other. Both would be plundered, but Damascus would remain inhabitable, albeit denuded of her “*chayl* – political prowess, military strength, and economic wealth.” The city would lose “the capacity to function” as she had previously, along with losing her “troops.” By contrast, Samaria would be treated as “*shalal* – prey to spoil, as a possession, and as war booty.” Her people would be “taken away as property.”

All of this would occur before the aptly-named and wayward child would be willing to so much as acknowledge his Spiritual Mother or Heavenly Father. Bad things happen when we engage with the wrong people or believe that we can survive on our own.

Let's recap where we have been so that we have our footing before we move on. Our Creator just said...

“Then Yahowah expressed with unfolding implications to me, ‘On your own initiative, obtain an extremely large vellum scroll designed to reveal and make known, to disclose and show oneself, and choose to write on it with a pen in ordinary human form, using the common characters associated with mortal man, “Concerning: *Mahar Shalal Chuwsh Baz* | the rapid and thoughtless plunder by those enjoying their disturbing behavior while quickly capturing a spoil as militants and armed robbers.”’ (*Yasha 'yah* / Isaiah 8:1)

Then I'd like to call on witnesses to testify for Me because we can help one another by repeatedly issuing a warning, admonishing others, while providing a restoring witness to affirm future reoccurring events as a means to approach Me, eternal witnesses who provide everlasting testimony, presenting the enduring evidence regarding what happened in the ancient past and into the future, who are truthful and reliable, trustworthy and verifiable, dependable and steadfast, who are unwavering and enduring, correct, credible, and confident, confirming and supportive, who are certain and nourishing, serving as workmen and artists, who are sure, right, and firm, such as 'Uwryah (Yah is Light), the one who assists by teaching, and Zakaryah (Remember Yah), the son of Yaberekyahuw (Yah Blesses).' (*Yasha 'yah* / Isaiah 8:2)

And so I approached and presented myself before the prophetess and she conceived and gave birth to a son. Then Yahowah said to me, 'Call his name "*Mahar Shalal Chuwsh Baz* (rapid and thoughtless plunder by those enjoying their disturbing behavior while quickly capturing a spoil as militants and armed robbers, impetuously and anxiously, rashly and rapidly, headlong without thinking and without hesitation, plundering their prey, taking a spoil, acting quickly, showing haste, rushing while dismayed, actually enjoying being greatly disturbed while capturing the plunder from a militant assault and an armed robbery)," (8:3) because before the boy (representing the scattered sheep who are in danger) calls out, "My father" or "My mother," the political prowess, military strength, and economic wealth of *Dameseq* / Damascus along with the plunder and spoils of *Shimrown* / Samaria will be carried away before the presence of the king of 'Ashuwr / Assyria.'" (*Yasha 'yah* / Isaiah 8:4)

Having had the opportunity to read through this once again, I'm convinced that we have correctly identified the two witnesses. The first, Uwryah, demonstrates the corrective power of the Towrah. At the direction of his king, he had violated in the most horrible way the Second Statement Yahowah etched in stone. But since the altar he copied is never mentioned again, there is every reason to believe that Uwryah learned from his mistake and now understood why Yahowah did not want us to be religious. So long as he stuck to Yahowah's script, his testimony would not only be valid, his tone would clearly show that he knew what he was talking about because he had been in the same predicament he found his audience.

And the story of Zakaryah ben Yahowyada' provides a vivid illustration of the Set-Apart Spirit's willingness to adorn us in a Garment of Light, while conveying the empowering and enlightening result of having done so. The son of Knowing Yahowah not only recognized that the people had passed over, failing to see or consider, the terms and conditions associated with the Covenant and, therefore, could not hope to succeed, they had completely disassociated themselves from Yahowah. And having rejected Him, He in turn had rejected them.

His story also bears repeating...

“Then the Spirit of God adorned Zakaryah ben Yahowyada', the priest, and he stood firm before the approaching people and said to them, ‘This is what the Almighty says, “Why do you pass over the terms and conditions of Yahowah’s contract so that you cannot succeed, prosper, or thrive? Indeed, you have rejected and abandoned Yahowah, disassociating from Him, and therefore, He has rejected and abandoned you.”’
(2 Chronicles 24:20)

The human capacity to remain focused and process a long stream of information has deteriorated over time. I came to this conclusion reading scholarly tomes published during the 18th and 19th centuries and comparing their presentation to similar books written within the past fifty years. Back then, a sentence was often ten lines long, five times longer than today's average. A paragraph was a page or more, five times longer than what is typically encountered in modern texts. Not only were chapters considerably more extensive, it was common for books to exceed a thousand pages, five times longer than what is normally published today.

Exemplifying this, the most popular genre of books today are fantasy novels such as *Harry Potter* and the *Hunger Games*. There is no substance to them. At least with *Game of Thrones*, it was written as a social commentary on religion and politics, but with this undercurrent, the dark novels weren't nearly as popular as the HBO show has become.

Failing to adapt to our time, I initially wrote in a similar style, only to find that readers were having trouble following a train of thought from beginning to end of a sentence. They would lose focus in the midst of a paragraph. So while I will occasionally include a long, run-on sentence, it is always buttressed by much shorter ones. And I typically start a new paragraph after three or four sentences. It is also the reason behind the bold text in my translations, and for placing the Hebrew words and further amplifications within parenthesis and in standard typeface. It is the reason I declutter these translations and present them a second time.

This problem is getting worse. We have begun a transition from soundbites to texting, from actual printed material to social media. The writing quality has

plummeted, as has the vocabulary and reasoning of both writer and reader. Most people have lost the capacity to focus on anything important long enough to transfer the information from short-term to long-term memory. Exacerbated by an aversion to reason, and exercising good judgment, the preponderance of people have no hope of understanding.

Yahowah was correct when He said that they would look and yet not understand. This problem has become so ubiquitous, so obvious, it is demonstrated every day in the media and by those who are political and religious. As a whole, mankind is neither observant nor rational.

I share this with you at this time because Yahowah's next statement is long, with a singular sentence presented over three verses. A great deal will be conveyed before we have the opportunity to dissect it in our search for understanding.

“Yet again (*wa yacaph* – joining these things together, adding more information, once again (hifil imperfect)) **Yahowah** (*Yahowah* – an accurate transliteration of the name YaHoWaH, our *‘elowah* – God as guided by His *towrah* – instructions regarding His *hayah* – existence and our *shalowm* – reconciliation) **spoke** (*dabar* – communicated using words, conveying these statements and message (piel infinitive – intensifying the action and making it more descriptive and vivid, the prophet was influenced and put into action by the words God spoke)) **to me** (*‘el ‘any* – as God unto me), **continuing to testify** (*‘uwd* – providing an eternal witness which restores and sustains some while admonishing and warning others regarding unfavorable and dangerous future events), (8:5) **to say** (*la ‘amar* – to declare), **‘Indeed** (*ky* – surely and truthfully as a consequence) **because** (*ya’an* – for the express reason) **these people** (*ha ‘am ha zeh* – the family of related individuals) **have rejected and come to despise and**

spurn (*ma'ac* – have avoided, refusing an association with and come to disdain and scorn, loathing in their aversion to (qal perfect)) **the waters** (*'eth maym* – that which is essential to all life and that which serves as the universal solvent, and thus cleansing properties of the waters) **of the One Who Is Sent, *ha Shiloach*** (*ha Shiloach* – of the One Who is Sent; from *shalach* – to stretch out and send, to extend oneself and to go forth), **who walks** (*ha halak* – who goes, journeying and taking a path through life, conducting His life) **by approaching mercifully** (*la 'at* – by acting kindly to those facing a potentially violent situation, moving gently and softly, approaching slowly in a comforting manner, showing some humility and patience) **while also** (*wa* – in addition) **delighting in** (*masows 'eth* – gayly celebrating and rejoicing in) **Retsyn** (*Retsyn* – the Self-Willed and Pleasure-Seeking) **and** (*wa*) **ben Ramalyahuw** (*ben Ramalyahuw* – the son Exalted Above Yahowah), (8:6) **therefore** (*wa la ken* – assuredly and accordingly, it is right that), **behold** (*hineh* – pay attention, look up, listen attentively), **Yahowah** (*Yahowah* – the proper pronunciation of the name of YaHoWaH, our *'elowah* – God as directed in His *towrah* – teaching regarding His *hayah* existence and our *shalowm* – restoration [from 1QIsa vs. *'adony* in the MT]), **Almighty God** (*'elohym* – the Mighty One [from 1QIsa]), **is withdrawing, and He is lifting up** (*'alah* – is moving away and ascending, offering up) **against them** (*'al hem* – before them and upon them), **accordingly** (*'eth*), **the waters** (*maym* – a sea, a flood, or tears; plural of *my* – who, whose, whom, or whosoever) **of a powerful torrent** (*ha nahar ha 'atsuwmm* – of the potent and purposeful flow of a forceful multitude, a countless throng of severe individuals intent on accomplishing their purpose, flowing together like a mighty river; from *'atsam* – to be vast, numerous, and mighty, albeit unobservant) **in addition to** (*wa*) **the numerous soldiers** (*rab* – the extensive military and

commanders, the abundant archers) **of the king** (*'eth melek* – of the political leader and dictator) **of 'Ashuwr | Assyria** (*'Ashuwr* – to fight and conquer; named after the god 'Ashur, a warrior and conqueror symbolized as an archer with a winged disk), **along with (wa) the entire** (*'eth kol*) **manifestation of its power** (*kabowd huw'* – glorification of its wealth and status and attribution of divine status).

And it will rise (*'alah* – it will ascend, increasing) **over all of its channels** (*'al kol 'aphyq huw'* – over all of its valleys and ravines, deep places in the sea and offshoots; from *'acaph* – where those who gather together are removed and taken away, ultimately perishing) **and (wa) travel** (*halak* – journey by walking) **over all** (*'al kol*) **its banks** (*gadah huw'* – its embankments; from an unused root meaning to cut off).” (*Yasha 'yah* / Salvation is from Yahowah / Isaiah 8:7)

To begin, *Yasha 'yah*, unlike *Sha 'uwl* / Paul, and indeed unlike anything in the Christian New Testament, listened to what Yahowah said and then shared His words, writing them down for us to read. This is, therefore, the Word of God.

The purpose of this testimony was conveyed in “*uwd* – to provide an eternal witness designed to restore and sustain some while admonishing and warning others regarding unfavorable and dangerous future events.” Prophecy isn’t designed to satiate the curiosity of believers, but instead to prove that Yahowah’s words endure forever and that He is the source of our restoration. Further, God wants us to be forewarned, so that everyone is without excuse. There is a consequence of choosing to trust and rely on man rather than God. This, too, undermines the veracity of a New Testament, especially for those who are observant, rational, and open-minded.

These people had “*ma’ac* – rejected and come to despise” the waters of “Shiloach – the One Who is Sent.” And indeed, whether one identifies Shiloach with Yahowah, Himself, His liberator, Moseh, His shepherd, Dowd, His prophet, Yasha’yah, or His Most Set Apart, Yahowsha’, all were dispatched with the living and cleansing waters of Yah, a God who walks “*la’at* – gently and approaches mercifully.”

Those who have taken the time to know Him, recognize that Yahowah is “*‘at* – kind, gentle, patient,” and surprisingly, “humble.” This perspective is important because by contrast man is just the opposite, especially militant, religious, and political men. The destructive flood of militants who would devastate the Northern Kingdom would be mean, ruthless, rash, and arrogant.

When the option is to either accept the living waters the One God has mercifully sent or endure the mean-spirited wrath of self-aggrandizing men, why is it that almost everyone “*ma’ac* – refuses an association with” Yahowah, and openly demonstrates their aversion to” Him?

And yet the Northern Kingdom cast their lot in with Retsyn, the Self-Willed and Pleasure-Seeking, and *ben* Ramalyahuw, the son Exalted Above Yahowah. And nothing has changed. Men are still choosing the likes of President Trump and Pope Francis over God.

As a result, Yah not only announced that He was withdrawing, in that no one was interested in engaging in a relationship with Him, He would see to it that the human alternative would make an enduring impression. Gentle waters of a spring bring and sustain life, but a powerful torrent destroys everything in its way. And in this case, the flood would be comprised of the Assyrian military. They would leave the land between the two rivers to accomplish their purpose. ‘Ashuwr would arrive

displaying the full manifestation of its power. Their arrogant king would not only claim to be the son of god, he would display all of the trappings of temporal wealth.

Assyria took its name from the city of Assur on the west bank of the Tigris River in modern Iraq. The town, itself, was named in honor of the sun-god, Ashur, a warrior deity who was alleged to facilitate the conquests of those who served him. Ashur was worshiped in the form of an archer with wings spread out from a circular disk – symbolic of the sun. This symbol bears a striking resemblance to those used by Imperial Rome, Nazi Germany, and the United States.

Assur was the capital of the Old Assyrian kingdom. The cult of Assur elevated the god's status to the equivalent of Enlil, the chief Sumerian god at the time, at least until Hammurabi reestablished the empire upon the myths of Marduk and based it in Babylon circa 1850 BCE. To salvage their cult, clerics had Assur absorb the characteristics of Enlil's wife, Mullissu, and his son, Ninurta, creating a trinity.

Then beginning around 900 BCE and continuing through 600 BCE, Assyrian imperial propaganda proclaimed the unrivaled supremacy of Ashur, declaring that the conquered peoples had been abandoned by their now obsolete gods. He would be worshiped as God Almighty, the Creator, and Lord of the Worlds. This god in the image of a man ultimately had every divine attribute transferred to him, and thereby provided the mythology which underpins Christianity.

As an interesting aside, beginning in the 7th century BCE and again after Assyria conquered Babylon, Assyrian scribes wrote the name of Ashur on cuneiform signs as: “*● AN.ŠAR – the Stars and Sun (the entire heavens) belong to Ashur.” This is intriguing because “Ansar” was the name later afforded the pagan militants

who became jihadists and fought alongside Muhammad in Yathrib. In keeping with Islamic tradition, many Islamic terrorist groups incorporate Ansar into their names today. And it's these same jihadists who will fulfill the horrid predictions made about them in connection to the Magog War. In this way the prophecy serves two eras, 722 BCE and 2027 CE.

The Assyrian king, Shalmaneser III (circa 859 to 825 BCE), was the harbinger of Assyrian ills toward Yisra'el. He fought and defeated a Syrian - Israeli alliance (under 'Ahab) during the battle of Qarqar on the Orontes River northeast of Yisra'el in 853 BCE. A century later, Tiglath-Pileser III (745 to 727 BCE) began incorporating conquered territory into the Assyrian Empire as provinces, while at the same time weakening their capacity to resist by transplanting conquered populations away from their homeland. It was then under Shalmaneser V that a weakened Yisra'el fell in 722 BCE.

Before we leave this passage, there are a couple of options relative to the metaphor of rising water overflowing beyond its banks. The first is obvious because the city which gave birth to the warrior god, Assur, was on the banks of the Tigris River, and the country of Assyria was situated between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

Both rivers begin their long march to the sea north of Yisra'el, suggesting that the Assyrian army would flow out of its borders and invade the Northern Kingdom by marching along the banks of these rivers. Further, the notion of militants flooding into Yisra'el is common to the prophetic statements recorded in Yasha'yah 17, and indicates that these militants will so outnumber the remaining population that they will be unstoppable.

Secondarily, the root of *'aphyq*, translated "tributaries," speaks of the enemies of Yisra'el who

“gather together, are removed, and perish, estranged from” God. They “rise up from the deepest places in the sea” a metaphor for the worst of the Gentiles. We are even told that these nefarious individuals “*halak* – walk” into Yisra’el.

This is exactly as it occurred...

“And (wa) it will go by (*chalaph ba* – it will go past, sweeping by in such a way as to alter (qal perfect)) Yahuwdah (*Yahuwdah* – Those who are Related to Yah), exerting the considerable force of a flood (*shataph* – engulfing and overflowing) while (wa) extending up to (*‘abar ‘ad* – and pass over until reaching) the neck (*tsuw’ar* – the throat; from *tsuwr* – the hostile confines in adversarial fashion seeking to besiege), making contact with and violently striking (*naga’* – touching and plaguing) while (wa) coming to (*hayah* – existing to) stretch out (*mutah* – spread out) its wings (*kanaph huw’* – its ability to fly), filling (*malo’* – a multitude crowding into) the breadth (*rochab* – the width or thickness) of your land (*‘erets ‘atah* – your region or country), ‘Imanuw’el (*‘Imanuw’el* – God is with Us [one word in 1QIsa and all other Qumran Scrolls but two in the MT]).” (*Yasha ‘yah* / Freedom is from Yahowah / Isaiah 8:8)

The Assyrians did indeed flood into Yahuwdah with hostile intent, besieging the Southern Kingdom at its throat, Yaruwshalaim. But they failed and ultimately withdrew.

As for the reference to stretching out their wings, the Assyrians attacked bearing the images of their god. ‘Ashur, as we now know, was depicted with eagle wings extending to the left and right of a solar disk. His logo should be familiar to us because as we have discussed, it served as the basis for those used in Imperial Rome, by the Nazis, and also in America.

Some time had transpired since Yahowah began speaking with Yasha'yah in 745 BCE. As such, the Assyrian invasion was just around the corner. Starting in 740 BCE and continuing through 722 BCE, Shalmaneser V capitalized upon what Tiglath-Pileser III had begun, with Sargon II completing the twenty-year relocation project, forcibly removing the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom and resettling them throughout the Assyrian Empire. Although they did not overtake Yahuwdah, Yaruwshalaim was besieged, just as the prophecy indicated.

Cuneiform writings on the walls of the royal palace at Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad) state: "In my first year of reign *** the people of Samaria *** to the number of 27,290 I carried away. Fifty chariots for my royal equipment I selected. The city I rebuilt. I made it greater than it was before. People of the lands I had conquered I settled therein. My official, Tartan, I placed over them as governor."

The relatively low number of captives who were deported and the fact that Sargon II acknowledges having placed a governor over those he had conquered and settled therein, affirms something we have come to know: the ten tribes were not lost. Many fled to Yahuwdah and settled there. Many more stayed in the defeated nation as Assyrian subjects. A tiny fraction were escorted northeast to Gozam and Ninevah. This is important because Yahowah has promised to reconcile His relationship with a reunited Yisra'el and Yahuwdah. They have to exist for that to occur.

'Erets Yisra'el is being equated to *'Imanuwl'el*. It is the Land Yahowah gave to 'Abraham after leading him into it during his journey out of Babel. It is part of the Covenant's inheritance. It is the Land Yahowah led His liberated people back into following their four-hundred-

year captivity in Mitsraym – the realm of human oppression.

It was the home He shared with His beloved son, Dowd. It is the Land in which He fulfilled the first four *Miqra'ey* in Year 4000 Yah as Yahowsha'. It is the Land to which He will return in Year 6000 Yah, fulfilling the final two *Miqra'ey*. So while He was withdrawing, He would return. Yisra'el is the Land where man comes to know and walk with God.

As is our custom, let's review the most recent pronouncement. It begins by reminding us that these are Yahowah's words communicated through Yasha'yah. And they are designed to do far more than convey a warning regarding future events; they provide an eternally sustaining and restoring witness.

“Yet again, joining these things together, adding more information, Yahowah spoke to me, continuing to testify, providing an eternal witness which restores and sustains some while admonishing and warning others regarding unfavorable and dangerous future events, (8:5) to say,

‘Indeed because these people have rejected and come to despise and spurn, avoiding an association with and demonstrating their aversion to the waters, that which is essential to all life and that which serves as the universal solvent, and thus cleansing properties of the waters, of the One Who Is Sent, *ha Shiloach*, who walks by approaching mercifully, by acting kindly to those facing a potentially violent situation, moving gently and approaching in a comforting manner, showing humility and patience, while also delighting in and gayly celebrating *Retsyn* | the Self-Willed, and *ben Ramalyahuw* | the son Exalted Above Yahowah, (*Yasha'yah* / Isaiah 8:6),

behold, pay attention, look up, listen attentively, Yahowah, Almighty God, is withdrawing, and He is lifting up against them, accordingly, the waters of the sea as a flood of tears as a powerful torrent, the potent and purposeful flow of a forceful multitude of severe individuals intent on accomplishing their purpose, flowing together like a mighty river, in addition to the numerous soldiers, abundant archers, and extensive military of the king, political leader, and dictator of ‘Ashuwr | Assyria, those who fight and conquer in the name of their sun god, along with the entire manifestation of its power, the glorification of its wealth and status and attribution of divine status to Ashur and its king.

And it will rise over all of its channels, from the deepest places in the sea along with its offshoots, all gathering together to die while walking over all its banks. (*Yasha’yah* / Isaiah 8:7)

And it will go past, sweeping by in such a way as to alter, Yahuwdah, exerting the considerable force of a flood while extending up to and reaching its neck in adversarial fashion seeking to besiege, while making contact with and violently striking, coming to stretch out its wings, filling the breadth of your land, ‘*Imanuw’el* / God with Us.’” (*Yasha’yah* / Isaiah 8:8)