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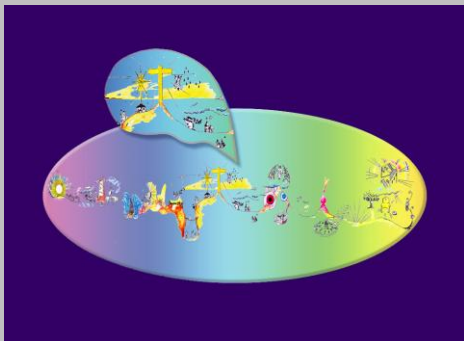
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We believe in one GOD, in three persons; FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT. We regard the Bible (both Hebrew Bible and New Testament) as the only infallible authoritative WORD OF GOD.

HULDAH MINISTRY aims to return to the Word Of God, founded on Hebrew background and to interpret it from Hebraic perspective, acknowledging that Jesus is a Jew and the Jewish-ness of His teaching as a continuation from the Hebrew Bible. The Ministry also aims to put His teaching into practice, to have a closer relationship with the Lord, Jesus Christ, and to regularly have a Christian fellowship so that this-worldly kingdom of God will materialise in the midst of the followers of Jesus here and now, as well as earnestly seeking Christ's Return to establish the otherworldly Kingdom of God on earth.

All activities are free of charge and no obligation whatever. Just enjoy our fellowship!

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HULDAH MINISTRY

LETTER TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST

【ETERNAL RULER FROM BETHLEHEM】

Marshal your troops, O city of troops, for a siege is laid against us. They will strike Israel's ruler on the cheeks with a rod.

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she is in labour gives birth and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites. He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. And he will be their peace.

When the Assyrian invades our land and marches through our fortresses, we will raise against him seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men. They will rule the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod with drawn sword. He will deliver us from the Assyrian when he invades our land and marches into our borders. The remnant of Jacob will be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, which do not wait for man or linger for mankind. The remnant of Jacob will be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep, which mauls and mangles as it goes, and no-one can rescue. Your hand will be lifted up in triumph over your enemies, and all your foes will be destroyed.

"In that day," declares the LORD, "I will destroy your horses from among you and demolish your chariots. I will destroy the cities of your land and tear down all your strongholds. I will destroy your witchcraft and you will no longer cast spells. I will destroy your carved images and your sacred stones from among you; you

will no longer bow down to the work of your hands. I will uproot from among you your Asherah poles and demolish your cities. I will take vengeance in anger and wrath upon the nations that have not obeyed me.” MICAH 5.

Similar familiar verses to the above are often quoted around the Christmas season. Micah 5 is one of them and uniquely tells of the birthplace of the ***‘one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times’***, i.e., of Messiah. Among the other Bethlehems in Canaan, Micah is clear to specify it as ***‘Bethlehem Ephrathah’***, i.e., the geographical place south-west of Jerusalem. It is the birthplace of David and means “House of Bread”. Bethlehem was so small and insignificant among thousands of places in Judah that it is not even mentioned in the list of the cities of Judah recorded in the books of Joshua and of Nehemiah.

The beginning of Micah 5 refers to the shameful fate of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. It prophesied that when Jerusalem is besieged he would also be seized and taken to Babylon. Actually when he was brought to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon at Riblah, Zedekiah’s eyes were gauged out and taken to Babylon and he died there. It was exactly as prophesied by the following two prophets, in the words of Jeremiah: ***‘Zedekiah...will certainly be handed over to the king of Babylon, and will speak with him face to face and see him with his own eyes’*** (Je.32:4), and Ezekiel also prophesied: ***‘I will spread my net for him, and he will be caught in my snare; I will bring him to Babylonia, the land of the Chaldeans, but he will not see it, and there he will die’*** (Ez.12:13).

However, the first verse of Micah 5 also refers to the coming Messiah as ***‘ruler over Israel’***, and the humiliation he would face. Actually, the Messiah, Jesus Christ was smitten in the face and stripped off of His beard as Isaiah prophesied: ***‘I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting’*** (Is.50:6). Having prophesied the degradation of the ***‘ruler over Israel’***, Micah moves on to predict the emergence of a future ruler of Israel, sharply contrasted with the shameful one in the previous passage. He will rule for God, and His existence preceded His birth, Micah says. In other words, He is the Preexistent One, who came forth from the Father as Isaiah predicted: ***‘For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace’*** (Is.9:6).

The Scriptures prophesying the coming of the Messiah on the surface seem to contradict each other, for example; “called out of Egypt” according to Hosea, to be called “a Nazarene” by Isaiah, and to be “born in Bethlehem” by Micah here. However, all these prophecies have correctly been fulfilled first because Mary had to travel to Bethlehem out of her native Nazareth with her husband to be, Joseph, when Caesar Augustus signed a tax bill and issued a decree of the first census. Secondly, when Herod died, Joseph and Mary went back to their original home town, Nazareth out of Egypt with the infant Jesus.

Until the Messiah is born and begins His rule over the earth, Israel will be abandoned into worldwide dispersion, i.e., so-called “Diaspora”, Micah says. Before the remnant of Israel and peace return to Jerusalem Israel will have to go through the Great Tribulation, i.e., ***‘a time of trouble for Jacob’*** (Je.30:7). For the present, neither the fulfillment of God’s promise to King David: ***‘Your house and your kingdom shall endure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever’*** (2Sam.7:16), nor the fulfillment of His worldwide rule from Zion has yet been accomplished although the Messiah was born after 700 years of eighth century BC prophets’ predictions. Despite the promise throughout the Hebrew Bible and also the confirmation of the promise to Mary by angel Gabriel at her pregnancy: ***‘He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end’*** (Luke 1:32-33), because of Israel’s rejection of her Messiah in Jesus’ First Coming, an interval was created between His two comings. First he came as a suffering servant and he was rejected, but he is to return as the king to rule over the world on earth in His second coming.

Micah illustrates the Messiah as the great shepherd who feeds His flock in the strength and majesty of God the Father, and Jesus Himself declared His role as a shepherd: ***‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep...I know my sheep and my sheep know me – just as the Father – knows me and I know the Father’ (John 10:11-14)***. In His Second Coming, Christ will ultimately constitute the peace and welfare of His people on earth but until that time there will be incessant attacks by the foes of Israel, who are represented by ***‘the Assyrian’***. This term was very appropriate in Micah’s time and also, some claim that it was an Assyrian Pharaoh and not an Egyptian Pharaoh that oppressed Israel during their sojourn in Egypt, because of his insecurity with the fast growing population of the non-Egyptian race, but here it includes all the future enemies of Israel: the Seleucid Syrians, the Romans, the Inquisition, and so on. The Assyrian king Sennacherib in Micah’s time could be a type or a title of the more specific one, the antichrist, and as many other prophets such as Isaiah, Joel and Zechariah predicted, the final climax would be a confederated global movement of the nations in order to blot out God’s chosen people Israel on the ‘day of the Lord’: ***‘On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves,’*** and ***‘A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you. I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city’ (Ze.12 & 14)***.

When Micah says: ***‘When the Assyrian invades our land and marches through our fortresses, we will raise against him seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men.’***, it can be understood that the number ‘seven’ represents the full and perfect work of God and that is quite sufficient though, if one more is added to it, making ‘eight’, leadership will be furnished enough against all assailants. While ***‘seven...eight’*** is such a Hebraic rhetorical figurative way of saying “many”, as used in Ecc.11:2: ***‘Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land’***, there may be another way of interpreting this passage. Some regard ‘the peace’ brought by that man as a false peace and they hint at the possibility of it being a reference to a clone or a Nephilim as in the riddle-like passage in Revelation 17:9-11: ***‘This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while. The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction’***. Here the apostle John is referring to ‘the antichrist’, who shows up in the last days and who plays the role of a king along with the preceding seven kings but in reality, he is an incarnated Satan. The “Seven kings on earth” are regarded to be (1) “Egypt”, the first foe of Israel, (2) “Assyria” in Micah’s time, (3) “Babylon” in Daniel’s time, (4) “Persia” in Nehemiah’s time, (5) “Greece” in fourth century BCE, (6) “Rome” in the first century up to the fifteenth century, and after a long interval of the current church age, (7) revived “Rome”. Finally, the last human kingdom will be followed by (8) the coming world leader, i.e., the antichrist, the incarnated Satan.

God’s chosen people Israel will ultimately triumph over their assailants like a powerful lion and become a source of refreshing and blessing in the hands of God by finally trusting in Him. In the final battle of the last days, at Armageddon, the world powers against God and His people will be overthrown completely. The area formerly held by the hostile world power was symbolically called ***‘the land of Nimrod’***, because Nimrod was the original founder of historic Assyria, Babel, i.e., Babylon. When Christ appears in His Second Coming, He shall bring true peace on the land in a threefold sense; of defending Israel against her enemies, of empowering Israel against her enemies and of demolishing all weapons and idolatry. This victory will not be accomplished through any human strength or military resources. All the latter-day military equivalents of horses and chariots and strongholds will be destroyed and all idolatry and heresy will be purged out of the land. ***‘Carved images and (your) sacred stones’*** were

representation of the male god in the pagan ‘high places’, and they symbolized every type and form of idols in eighth-century BCE terms. Also, the ‘*Asherah poles*’ were cultic wooden pillars and representation of a goddess. “Astrology and spiritism” represented by the terms, ‘*witchcraft...cast spells*’ will be wiped out of the messiah’s kingdom. The wrath of God will consume the whole rebellious world and judgment will be inevitable. Unless foreign alliances, occult practices and false gods are completely wiped out and so, the land is purified, the Messiah’s kingdom cannot commence.

When we look around the present society it is not so hard to recognize rampant pagan influence even in Christendom, which might be one of the significant signs of the end times. For example, the prophet Jeremiah warned against the adoption of pagan practice within the community of Israel: ‘*Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them. For the customs of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel. They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so that it will not totter. Like a scarecrow in a melon patch, their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good.*’ (Je.10:2-5). This passage refers to the danger of following idolatrous ‘ways’ of the pagan nations instead of ‘the only way’ of eternal life presented by God, and also the utter impotence of idols despite their adornment with precious metals. However, the passage might be taken specifically as a reference to the globally familiar Christmas trees. It is understood that Christmas trees and also the artistry of tree trimming have their roots in Babylon. Behind all idols are Satan and demons, and so, even as Eve was attracted to ‘*the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*’ in Eden and fell into Satan’s trap, there would be a potential danger of falling into idolatry to admire God through beautifully decorated trees with silver and gold. As to the background of trimmed trees some claim an interesting comment on the phrases ‘*Like a scarecrow in a melon patch*’ or ‘pillars in groves’ in Je.10:5. Most scholars see in these phrases a phallic symbol, trimmed and designed to be a fertility symbol. It was typically situated on top of a hill, where there were trees, and people trimmed the trees to make the place a pagan fertility offering place. In other words, it became a place of sex orgies, where fertility of the crops was connected to the Canaanite sex worship. This is the reason why the Lord warned Israel never to build her altars to worship Him on the hilltop by trees or groves throughout the Hebrew Bible. Adopting their ways of idol worship would defile the way of worshipping the true God, Yahweh.

In the account of the birth of Christ, Matthew mentioned that during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and inquired about the one who was born king of the Jews and also they referred to the star which they saw in the east. Traditionally there are many interpretations about who the Magi were. The Magi were said to be established as the state religion of Persia by Darius the Great, and became the supreme priestly caste of the empire. Since the days of Daniel, both Persia and the Jewish nation closely intertwined and both regained their independence after King of Greece, Alexander’s conquest. It was at this time that the Magi composed the upper house of the council of the “magistrates”. They were understood not to be originally followers of Zoroaster but “oneiromancy”. When they, led by the “star of Bethlehem”, visited Jerusalem, Christ was not in a stable but had already moved to Bethlehem and they presented the infant Jesus three special gifts; gold as symbol of His deity, frankincense as symbol of His priesthood, and myrrh as symbol of His redemptive death on the cross. Significantly, the first two gifts will be re-presented to the Lord in the glorious Zion but myrrh is no longer needed in the Messiah’s kingdom. Time to reflect on God’s precious gift has come around.

**We hope all the blessings and peace of this special Season
Will light up your life with Faith, Hope and Love.
Wherever and Whoever we are,
JESUS CHRIST is God’s Gift for us!**

