

Yom Hasho'ah

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The mere mention of this word "Holocaust", stirs up an incredible whirlwind of emotions. This is particularly true of those of us who have lost family members in the gas chambers. But, in fact, the Holocaust has become synonymous with the worst sort of cruelty committed by man. How do we, in a Messianic Jewish congregation, integrate the Holocaust into our thinking and feeling?

A good place to begin is by understanding that the Holocaust is a lot more than man's inhumanity to man. It represents an outpouring of demonic fury against the Jewish people. In a sense, it was just another one in a long line of efforts by Satan and his forces to obliterate the Jewish people. Why would he mark Israel for special treatment? Since he is totally opposed to G-d's plans to redeem mankind, it is natural that Satan would target Israel. We need to remember that G-d's plan to redeem mankind involved Israel-the Scriptures and the Messiah came through Israel. What's more, G-d's plan to restore mankind will involve Israel. (Romans 11: 15; Isaiah 2:1-4)

Recently, a group of "scholars" has started to claim that the Holocaust never happened at all-that it was a massive hoax perpetrated by devious Jewish people in order to bilk gullible Germans of millions of marks in reparations. They charge that Jewish people have used the Holocaust as the means to gain sympathy. Dorothy Groteluschen, an Aurora school teacher coined the phrase "Holo-hoax" to describe her feelings on the matter. This is not surprising at all. If the Holocaust was inspired by Satan, this re-writing of history is a manifestation of Satan as the Father of Lies.

If at times Jewish people appear to be paranoid, seeing the possibility of a Holocaust under every bush, it should be understandable. After 2,000 years of persecution, it is not surprising that we are hypersensitive. Yet, for us, the story of the Holocaust does not end here. We celebrate the fact that our L-rd is indeed the Master of the Universe and that He has the amazing ability to bring life out of ashes. The State of Israel emerged out of the Holocaust. G-d allowed the Holocaust to happen, yet He will never permit anyone to annihilate the nation of Israel. His plans and purposes for Israel and for us will definitely stand.

These sobering figures give us an idea of just how many Jews were destroyed in the Shoah (Holocaust) in Europe. What the numbers don't tell us in who these people really are.

Germany 195,000	Austria 53,000
Czechoslovakia 255,000	Poland 3,271,000
Soviet Union 1,050,000	France 140,000

Belgium 57,000	Luxembourg 3,000
Norway 1,000	Holland 120,000
Italy 20,000	Yugoslavia 64,000
Bulgaria 5,000	Romania 530,000
Hungary 200,000	