

# Messianic Rabbi: 4+1+1 = The Good News

The Bible is filled with stories about people, and each one of those people is an intricate part of the greater narrative that tells the story of G-D's love for all mankind. Some of those people have names, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or David, Solomon, or Herod.

Some, like Moses and Ruth, are the main characters of their stories, and others, like Miriam and Aaron, seem to be more supporting roles. But we should never allow ourselves to consider their seemingly supportive roles to mean they are less important to the greater narrative. Every person mentioned in the Bible was a significant and crucial part of the story, and without them the story would not only be incomplete; it would not provide the fullness of the good news that G-D established from before the foundation of the world.

However, the importance of the characters of the Bible isn't limited to those for whom we are provided names. As a matter of fact, some of the most important lessons we can learn from within the Holy Scriptures are gleaned from the stories of those whose names are not provided. For instance, in Genesis 24 we are not told the name of Abraham's servant who travels to Abraham's homeland to find a bride for Isaac. Yet from this unnamed servant we learn lessons about faithfulness, prayer, servanthood and so much more.

There are thousands of unnamed people in the Bible, and not one of them is irrelevant to the story they are found within, and not one of them is unnecessary to the greater narrative of the good news. It is this greater interconnective narrative that I want to share with the hope that it will not only provide some insight into the wonder that is the Bible, but also in hope that it will bring encouragement to you.

Every event that we read about in the Bible is divinely connected to every other event, even if we cannot see how they are connected. To demonstrate how two events in the Bible can be connected even though they involve different people in different books that lived during different times, I want to look at two separate but connected stories.

One story is found in the Book of 2 Kings 7 and is about four unnamed lepers. The second story is found in the Book of John chapter 4. These stories may seem completely unrelated, but if we look into the details of these stories, we find many similarities and ultimately a message of the good news for you and me.

Let's review some of the similarities. In both stories, we find the unnamed people outside of their cities. In both stories, there is a need for food: in Kings because of a famine, and in John they ran out of food so the disciples went to buy some.

In both stories, there is a king: in Kings, it was the king who ruled the city; in John, it was the King of all kings. In both stories, the unnamed people were all undesirables. In Kings, they were lepers. In John, it was a Samaritan woman who'd had five husbands and was living with a man to whom she was not married. These are not the only similarities between the two stories, but they should be enough for us to see that while the stories took place in different places and times, and although one is in the Tanakh (Old Testament) and the other is in the New Testament, there are enough similarities between the two for us to see that we should look at similar stories to find a similar lesson for us.

In the case of these two stories, I love that the characters are unnamed. I think one of the reasons that they are left unnamed is so that you and I reading these stories could, in a symbolic and spiritual way, insert our names into the story. Each of us, like the lepers and the Samaritan woman, either

are or were separated because of our sin.

However, their being a leper or a sinner isn't the end of the story. In both cases, these people who were seemingly undesirable to everyone else were desired by G-D, and in both cases, they were chosen to bring the good news of salvation to the people – the lepers were in the physical sense as they announced that their enemy had been vanquished by G-D, and the Samaritan woman was in the spiritual sense when she announced basically the same message to her city: the Messiah has come (the One who would vanquish our enemy)!

So, while these stories are hundreds of pages apart in your Bibles and took place in different books and time periods, the connective message of both is the same. That message is the good news: no matter what we have done in our past that causes us to feel undesirable or outcast, G-D loves us; if we turn to Him in faith, He not only can but *will* use us to share the good news if we let Him, and the result will be the salvation of many. So, when we add the story of the four lepers, plus the story of the Samaritan woman, plus your story, the answer is good news. {eoa}

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