

MARTYRDOM OF MATTITHYAHU

Edited by Noel Joshua Hadley

¹ The holy Mattithyahu remained alone on the Mount praying, in the apostolic robe, barefoot, and Yahusha appeared to him in the form of one of the children that were singing in Paradise.

² Mattithyahu said: That I saw thee in paradise singing with the other children that were slain at Bethlehem I know; but how have you come hither so quickly, I marvel. But tell me, where is that righteous Herod?

³ He dwelleth in She'ol, and there is prepared for him fire unquenchable, unending Gehenna, boiling mire, the worm that sleeps not, because he killed 3,000 children. ⁴ Now take my Staff and go to Myrna the city of the man-eaters, and plant it at the gate of the church which you and Andrei founded. It will become a tree, and a spring will rise at its foot, and the man-eaters will eat of the tree and wash in the spring and their bodies will be changed and they will be ashamed of their nakedness, and use fire to cook their food, and learn to know me.

⁵ At the city gate he was met by Phulbana the king's wife, Phulbanos his son and Erba his wife, all possessed by devils, and the devils cried out and threatened Mattithyahu that they would rouse the king against him. He cast them out.

⁶ The bishop Plato heard and came out to meet him with the clergy. And Mattithyahu preached to the people, ⁷ and planted the staff. And the people became humanized. ⁸ He baptized the queen and the rest. ⁹ At dawn the staff had become a tree. ¹⁰ Phulbanus the king was pleased with all this at first, but when they refused to quit Mattithyahu he resolved to burn him.

¹¹ Mattithyahu had a consoling vision and warned the people of his death.

¹² The devil whom he had cast out disguised himself as a soldier and went to the king and advised him to seize Mattithyahu. ¹³ He sent four soldiers, who could only hear two men talking (Mattithyahu and Plato), and then ten who were routed by seeing a child with a torch. ¹⁴ The devil described to the king the difficulty of seizing Mattithyahu and all that he could do.

The king said: Take him yourself.

I cannot, for he has destroyed all our race.

¹⁵ Who, then, are you? said the king.

I am the demon Asmodaeus who was in your wife.

The king adjured him to depart without harming anyone, and he vanished as smoke. ¹⁶ That day the king remained quiet, but the next day took two soldiers and went to the church and sent for Mattithyahu.

¹⁷ He came out with Plato, but the king could not see him. Mattithyahu opened his eyes. ¹⁸ The king treacherously led him to the palace. They pinned him hand and foot to the earth and covered him with papyrus soaked in dolphin oil, and poured brimstone, asphalt, and pitch on him, and heaped up tow and wood. ¹⁹ And the fire turned to [a wet] dew and all the people praised Elohiym. ²⁰ Much charcoal from the royal baths was brought, and the twelve elohiym of gold and silver were set round the fire.

²¹ Mattithyahu looking up to heaven, cried: *Adonai Eloi Sabaoth marmari marmountb.*

The fire blazed up, and the king said: Where is your magic now?

But all the fire blew out about the idols and melted them, whose weight was 1,000 talents of gold. And the king lamented that elohiym of stone and clay were superior. ²² The fire burnt up many soldiers, and then took the form of a dragon and chased the king to the palace, and curled round so that he could not go in and made him come back to Mattithyahu, crying for help.

Mattithyahu rebuked the fire and prayed and gave up the ruach.

²³ The king had him borne in state to the palace. The body and robes were intact, and sometimes he was seen on the bier, sometimes following, or preceding it, and laying his hand on Plato's head. And many of the sick were healed.

²⁴ When they reached the palace Mattithyahu was seen to rise from the bier and ascend to heaven, led by a beautiful child, and twelve men in crowns, and we saw the child crown him. The king had a coffin made of iron and sealed it with lead, and privately put it on a ship at midnight and sank it in the sea.

²⁵ All night the brethren watched at the palace gate, and at dawn a voice came: Plato, take the Besorah and the psalter and go to the east of the palace and sing Alleluia, and read the Besorah, and offer of the bread and the vine, pressing three clusters into the cup, and communicate with me, as Adonai Yahusha showed us the offering that is above, on the third day after he rose. So, it was done, and the chanter went up on a great stone and sang: Precious in the sight of Adonai. I slept and rose up again. And they answered: Shall not the sleeper wake up? Now will I arise, saith Adonai. Alleluia. They read the Besorah and made the offering.

²⁶ It was about the sixth hour, and Plato looked out to sea seven stadia away, and lo, Mattithyahu standing on the sea between two men in bright apparel, and the beautiful child before them. And they said Amen, Alleluia. And the sea was to look upon like a crystal stone, and before the Child a cross came up out of the deep, and at the lower end of it the coffin of Mattithyahu: and in a moment it was set on the land where they were.

²⁷ The king beheld all from a window and came down and fell at their feet and confessed his sin and his belief. He would give them the palace for a sanctuary, and the coffin should be laid on his golden couch in the great hall. Plato baptized and communicated him. ²⁸ The apostle appeared and said: Your name shall no more be Bulphamnus but Mattithyahu; your son not Bulphandrus but also Mattithyahu; your wife Ziphagia, Sophia; and his wife Orba, Synesis. He ordained the king a priest, being thirty-seven, his son a deacon, being seventeen: his wife a priestess (presbytis) and his son's wife a deaconess, being seventeen. The king destroyed his idols and issued a decree establishing the new faith. ³⁰ Mattithyahu bade them offer the offering daily for forty-nine days and repeat it yearly and told Plato he should join him in three years, and be succeeded by the king, and he by his son. Then with two angels he departed to heaven. ³¹ And a voice came, promising peace and safety to the city.