

Prayer Update From Israel (December 10, 2012)



A HANUKKAH STORY FROM MARTIN & NORMA

This story takes place some years ago not long after we had moved up from Haifa to assist in setting up *Succat Hallel*, a house of worship and intercession in Jerusalem. The mostly-Jewish neighborhood of *Givat Hananiya* caps a hill just south of the Old City, with the large Arab community of *Abu Tor* spreading out on the slopes beneath. A few months before we had moved into a tiny ground-floor apartment there, nestled back from the road through a gated stone wall, with a small private garden and several trees. In those early days the “worship watches” of the house of prayer were actually taking place several times a week in different homes; we hosted one in our living room on Friday mornings.

That year Hanukkah and the Muslim month of Ramadan happened to coincide. The Hanukkah lights are normally lit only in the evenings, yet on that particular morning we felt impressed to re-light the *hanukkiah* (the eight-branched menorah) during our morning watch. Instead of the candles often used, this year we had little vials of oil on the branches with wicks floating in them. As we worshipped and prayed, we were led to begin interceding for our Jewish neighbors—that as they lit their lamps each evening, illumination would come to them regarding the *Shamash*—the “Servant” lamp, through which all the other lamps received their light...revelation of “*the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world*” (John 1:9). We prayed that an anointing from the inexhaustible source—the oil of the Holy Spirit would be released “*on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplication*” (Zechariah 12:10).

As I (Martin) was leading the worship in Hebrew and English from the keyboard, I suddenly felt something within me say, “Sing an Arabic song.” I didn’t speak any Arabic—but I happened to have brought with me from Haifa a few song-sheets in Arabic, with the pronunciations transliterated into English. I pulled out one of these sheets and its overhead transparency and began to sing:

*Anta malikuna (You are our King)/Sod aleina alan waltamla il macan bisakiben
ajib min ruhika l'hhanan alan (Reign on us now and fill this place with a
mighty outpouring with your tender spirit now)/Bikuwati ruhika elmis
kulubana wahhtiyajatina eidan tarnimana alan (With the power of your Spirit
touch our hearts, our needs and our worship now!)*

As we sang, something began to happen—an awakening, aching burden of intercession on behalf of our Muslim Arab neighbors just a few blocks away. Soon we weren't singing anymore, but a kind of travail had descended upon us—crying out for mercy—that light would shine into their darkness—that *the oil of His anointing would extend beyond the borders of our Jewish community and flow down into the teeming streets beneath*. As we were earnestly praying and beseeching the Lord—there was a knock at the door. Norma pulled away and went to answer. A moment later she came back to me at the keyboard. There was a middle-aged Arab woman standing out front from the community below. She had been walking by and noticed over the fence our old olive tree, laden with large black olives. If we weren't going to use them, would we mind allowing her to harvest them so as to get the oil to sell to help her in supporting her old and infirm husband who was not able to work? —And we had just been praying for oil to go forth into that community! I got up from the piano and as the others continued to pray went outside, got the lady a ladder, told her in Hebrew she was welcome to all the olives she could get, offered her some water (she declined, it still being Ramadan), shared with her briefly our faith in the love of “Yasua” and went back inside.

Some weeks later we were again worshipping in our Friday morning watch, and again there was a knock on the door. The same little lady, with a smile, and a plastic Coke-bottle filled with oil, a token of gratitude for having let her use our tree—then she was gone; we would never see her again. We took the bottle in, deeply moved. The 2nd *Intifada* had recently broken out—there was increasing violence, we knew there might soon be opportunities for anger and bitterness and hatred. We felt the Lord leading us to take the woman's oil and anoint each other's foreheads—praying that our minds and emotions would be guarded by the power of the Holy Spirit, that in dark and violent days we would remember the love and mercy burning in the Father's heart which had shone forth so warmly towards all the people in His land on that Hanukkah morning during Ramadan.

“And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”
(John 1:5 ESV)

“‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of Hosts”
(Zechariah 4:6; From this week's *Haftarah*)

THIS WEEK'S TORAH PORTION:

From ancient times there has been a weekly portion (Parasha) from the first five books of Moses (The Torah) and an ending (Haftarah) from the Prophets read on the

Sabbath in synagogues around the world. This portion is given a Hebrew name drawn from the opening words of the Torah passage. An illustration of this practice appears to have been recorded in Luke 4:16 where Yeshua (Jesus) arrived in the synagogue in Nazareth and was asked to read the portion (Isaiah 61) from the Prophets. We have found that in perusing these weekly readings, not only are we provided opportunity to identify in the context of God's Word with millions of Jewish people around the world, but very often the Holy Spirit will illumine specific passages pertinent that week in our intercession for the Land and people of Israel. All texts are those of English translations of the Scriptures.

The readings for this week 9-15 December are called *MiKetz*—"At the End [of two full years]."

TORAH: Genesis 41:1—44:17

HAFTARAT HANUKKAH: Zechariah 2:10—4:7

***Genesis 41:1; 15-16.** *"Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream...And Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it.' So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, 'It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of shalom.'"*

PLEASE PRAY: *That the LORD release dreams into our secular leaders—which can only be interpreted by those whom He has prepared. Pray that the Lord raise up young men and women who will be filled with His Spirit, and who will be able supernaturally (in this rationalistic age) to give our Prime Minister and other leaders "an answer of Shalom."*

***Genesis 44:5, 15:** *"Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing.'" "Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?"*

Joseph never actually says he "practices divination"—rather, *"Is this not the one...with which he indeed practices divination?"* and *"Such a man as I can certainly practice divination"*. He is still allowing his brothers to think he is an Egyptian ruler, who normally would be expected to do such things. Numbers 23:23 uses the same Hebrew word is asserting that *"there is no sorcery in Jacob"*. As we have seen (Genesis 40:8; 41:16) Joseph was always open in attributing his powers not to himself or his expertise, but to God.

***Zechariah 2:10-11.** *"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the LORD. "Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you."*

There is nothing in the Hebrew of this passage to suggest that the One (i.e. the LORD) who says He is “coming to dwell in Zion’s midst” in vs. 10 (and again in vs. 11) is not the same “One” who continues “*Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.*” We see this as the same “recognition” as that in Zechariah 12:10, when “*they will look on Me whom they pierced.*” **PLEASE PRAY: For revelation in Israel to understand and believe that The LORD of Hosts who promised to “dwell in her midst” and the One sent to her “whom she pierced” are ONE (John 10:30).**

***Zechariah 2:12-13.** “*And the LORD (Yehovah) will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. Hush! all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!*”

With the passage of the Nov. 9th UN vote on Palestinian statehood, which would attempt to place all of the area mentioned in this verse—this *adamat-hakodesh* (literally “holy earth”) which the LORD (*Yehovah*) has said *He* will “take possession of” as *His* “inheritance”—under the sovereignty of a different deity, things are coming into position for a clash of unprecedented proportions. To survive and see our way—to see *His* way—in the coming storm, it will be of paramount importance that we “*walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit,*” that we “*set our minds on the things of the Spirit*” and “*by the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body, that we may live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God*” (Romans 1:4,5,13-14). **PLEASE PRAY: that the Body of Messiah in Israel move into a deep understanding and practice of what it means to “keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25 NIV), to say “Hush!” to our flesh before our LORD, as He is aroused from His holy habitation!**

***Zechariah 3:2.** “*And the LORD said to Satan, ‘The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?’*”

Revelation 12:11 points to a time when the Accuser will be overcome “*by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.*” We infer from this Zechariah passage that part of that “word of testimony” may include a linking of the name of the LORD/YHVH with *his choosing of Jerusalem*. This will be the place of His throne! (Psalm 2) ***An acknowledgment and confession of the LORD’s covenant link with Jerusalem will release a power to silence the Accuser in the last days!***

***Zechariah 3:8.** “*Behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.*”

As mentioned last week, part of the Hanukkah celebration includes use of a special eight-branched menorah (*hanukkiah*) upon which a new oil lamp or candle is lit each evening. Each light is ignited from the flame of a separate “branch” called *shamash*—“servant”. Remarkably, the *Haftarah* reading for this Saturday within Hanukkah, besides containing, as might be expected, a menorah (Zechariah 4:2-3), also includes these words, “***Behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.***” Although a different Hebrew word for “servant” is used here, there is no doubt that it refers to the

Servant-Messiah, sent by the Father—the *Light Inextinguishable*, who illumines all coming into the world (John 1:9)!

Zechariah 4:6. “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the LORD of hosts.*”

These words are blazoned across the bottom of the outer branches of the menorah which stands before the Knesset in Jerusalem (below). ***PLEASE PRAY: that the Holy Spirit of God invade the halls of government in Israel. That Spirit-filled believers rise into the higher echelons of government, displacing the powers of darkness there and influencing the leadership for righteousness!***



***Martin & Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem***

[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week (16-22 December: *Vayiggash*—“and [Judah] approached”) will be: TORAH: Genesis 44:18—47:27; HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 37:15-28]

You may give to our work in Israel by donating online (click [HERE](#) and add Sarvis Support in the comment line) or by calling **1-888-965-1099** or **1-940-382-7231**.