

Prayer Update From Israel (April 11, 2016)



“...before the coming of the Great and Dreadful DAY OF THE LORD.”
(Malachi 4:5, See Haftarah below)

As mentioned last week, this week Handel’s *Messiah* for chorus, soloists and orchestra will be performed in the Hebrew language in three cities in Israel (Or Akiva, Monday night; Beer Sheva, Wednesday night, Jerusalem, Friday afternoon). Please pray protection over these performances—over the voices of the soloists, over the choir and orchestra and our director David Loden—over passage to and from each venue. Pray that the Spirit of God assist us in releasing His Word of Life!

This is a unique opportunity for Israelis to hear the message of their Messiah in their own (the original Biblical) language. Most are totally unaware of these Scriptures. And of course, it will provide a wonderful inspiration for those attending who have already discovered and received the gift of life in their Messiah. We know of no other work of art which so succinctly synthesizes this message, weaving it together from both Testaments—and releasing it on the wings of some of the most glorious music ever written.

Both as a quickening to intercession on behalf of those who will be attending the concerts and also as a refreshing of our own spirits in preparation for the message of Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread which begin next week, we can think of no better means than the prayerful reading through from beginning to end of the texts of the Oratorio. The following is drawn from the English text which will be alongside the Hebrew in the hands of all attending the performances. **We have just learned that there is a strong possibility that several hundred Holocaust survivors will be in attendance at one of the concerts.** May the Spirit breathe over the Word—and shine into the darkness, bringing Life and Hope to His children!

I

Comfort my people, saith your God. Speak comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned. A voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Isaiah 40:1-3)

Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill made low. The crooked straight, and the rough places plain. (Isaiah 40:4)

And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Isaiah 40:5)

Thus saith the LORD of Hosts, "Yet once, a little while and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. The LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. Behold, He shall come, saith the LORD of Hosts." (Haggai 2:6-7; Malachi 3:1)

But who may abide the day of His coming and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire, and who shall stand the day of His coming? (Malachi 3:2)

And He shall purify the sons of Levi that they may offer unto the LORD an offering of righteousness. (Malachi 3:3)

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name *Immanu'El*; God with us. (Isaiah 7:14)

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. Lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, and be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, "Behold your God! Arise, shine; for thy light is come, Arise...and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee." (Isaiah 40:9; 60:1)

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, say unto the cities of Judah, "Behold your God! The glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. Behold!"

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people. The LORD shall arise upon thee and His glory shall be seen upon thee. Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. (Isaiah 60:2-3)

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. (Isaiah 9:2)

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called, **WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE.**

(Isaiah 9:6)

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo! The angel of the LORD came upon them, and the glory of the LORD shone round about them and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Messiah the LORD." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying...

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH, PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN! (Luke 2:8-11, 13-14)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is the righteous Savior and he shall speak peace unto the heathen. Rejoice... (Zechariah 9:9-10)

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. (Isaiah 35:5-6)

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Come unto Him, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and He shall give you rest. Take his yoke upon you, and learn of Him; for He is meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (Isaiah 40:11; Matthew 11:28-29)

His yoke is easy and His burden is light. (Matthew 11:30)

II

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. (John 1:29)

He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. He hid not His face from shame and spitting. (Isaiah 53:3; 50:6)

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. (Isaiah 53:4-5)

And with His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. And the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

All they that see laugh him to scorn. They shoot out their lips, they shake their heads. (Psalm 22:7)

“He trusted in God that He would deliver him: let Him deliver him, if He delight in him. (Psalm 22:8; Matthew 27:43)

Thy rebuke hath broken his heart. He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was none; neither found He any to comfort Him. (Psalm 26:20)

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like his sorrow. (Lamentations 1:12)

He was cut off out of the land of the living. For the transgression of Thy people was He stricken. (Isaiah 53:8)

But thou didst not leave his soul in Sheol; neither didst thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. (Psalm 16:10)

Lift up your heads, O ye gates and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is the King of Glory? YHVH strong and mighty, YHVH mighty in battle. He is the King of Glory. YHVH of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. (Psalm 24:7-10)

Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even for Thine enemies, that the LORD God might dwell among them. (Psalm 68:18)

How beautiful are the feet of them who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation and proclaim peace. (Isaiah 52:7)

Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing! The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD, and against His anointed. (Psalm 2:1-2)

Let us break their bands, and cast away their cords from us! (Psalm 2:3)

He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: The LORD shall have them in derision. (Psalm 2:4)

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron. Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (Psalm 2:9)

HALLELU-YAH! For the Lord GOD omnipotent reigneth. The kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdom of our LORD, and of His Christ. And He shall reign for ever and ever. King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. HALLELU-YAH! (Revelation 19:6; 11:15; 19:16)

I know that my redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. After my skin has been destroyed, in my flesh shall I see God. But now is Messiah risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept. (Job 19:25-26; I Corinthians 15:20)

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Messiah shall all be made alive. (I Corinthians 15:21-22)

Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last shofar. (I Corinthians 15:51-52)

For the shofar shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (I Corinthians 15:52)

Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in Victory!” (I Corinthians 15:54)

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. (I Corinthians 15:55-56)

But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah! (I Corinthians 15:57)

WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN AND HAS REDEEMED US TO GOD BY HIS BLOOD; TO RECEIVE POWER, AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING. BLESSING, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND POWER BE UNTO HIM THAT SITTETH UPON THE THRONE AND UNTO THE LAMB FOR EVER AND EVER! (Revelation 5:9, 12-13)

AMEN

THIS WEEK’S TORAH PORTION:

From ancient times there has been a weekly portion (Parashah) 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. The Haftarah, unless otherwise noted, will be that read in Ashkenazy synagogues around the world. The references for all texts are those found in English translations of the Scriptures.

The readings for this week 10-16 April 2016 are called *Metsora*—“Skin disease/Leprosy”. NOTE: Because this is the Sabbath preceding Passover, the usual Haftarah (II Kings 7:3-20) is replaced by Malachi 3:4—4:6 (See *Shabbat haGadol* below).

TORAH: Leviticus 14:1—15:33

HAFTARAH (*Shabbat haGadol*): Malachi 3:4—4:6.

As we wrote last week, after focusing on the importance of Israel’s being ‘set apart’ to God in a special way, of her distinguishing between the holy and unholy, the unclean and clean (Lev. 10:10)—both last week’s and this week’s portions continue in instruction of how this was to be worked out in everyday life. There needed to be purification and atonement made for a mother when bringing forth children; there must be measures of isolation and testing taken for outbreaks of surface diseases or blights (both on physical bodies and on dwellings), and for contaminating discharges from the body. And there was a way prescribed for restoration once healing had occurred.

When Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus) came to be born in a stable, his mother Miriam (Mary) submitted to these same instructions for purification (Luke 2:22), and when it was time for the sacrifice, she and Joseph could only afford the humble offering mentioned here (Lev 12:8; Luke 2:24). Yeshua’s coming was to “undo the works of the devil” manifest in all of these diseases, to bring atonement, redemption healing and cleansing. It is very significant that among his healing miracles, special mention is made of those involving lepers and a woman with an ‘issue of blood’. PLEASE PRAY: as those in synagogues this coming weekend hear these words which so graphically picture the presence and result of sin in our midst and man’s need for healing and being pronounced clean, that the Holy Spirit will convict of sin and righteousness and judgment, and draw Jews to seek cleansing through the One who washes white as snow!

HAFTARAH

SHABBAT HAGADOL

Malachi 3:4—4:6

The Sabbath preceding Passover is called *Shabbat HaGadol*—the “Great Sabbath”. It takes its name from *Yom Yehovah haGadol v’haNorah*—“**The Great and dreadful day of the LORD**” found in Malachi 4:5 of the special *Haftarah* which is read on this occasion. It is an important time for soberly “taking account” of the Day which is coming “burning like an oven”...but also for taking heart from God’s promise that “to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings!”

***Malachi 3:16-18.** “Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. ‘They shall be Mine,’ says the LORD of Armies, ‘On

the day that I make them my jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.’ Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.” This passage shows that believers who spend time with other believers in conversation characterized by the Fear of the Lord, and who also spend time meditating on the attributes signified by His name—these will be ones who are granted discernment so as to be spared the deception which will prevail more and more until the Lord’s return (Matt. 24:4, 11, 24; Daniel 8:25).

***Malachi 4:1.** *“For behold, the Day is coming, burning like an oven...”*

As darkness gathers (John 9:4; Daniel 12:1-3) we must as believers hold to each other, listening, *“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...as we see the Day approaching* (Hebrews 10:24-25). As the world refuses to wait on God’s command, drawing instead the fire of His wrath, another voice will be calling—*“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the congregations . . .”* (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 13:9).

Next week at *seders* around the world, Jews will put a glass of wine out on the porch “for Elijah”. At the end of the *seder* someone (often a child) will be sent out to see if he “came”. It is a charming tradition—but one related to a very serious Word from God, who has promised that He will *“send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the LORD”* (Malachi 4:5). Yeshua (Jesus) affirmed that *“To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things.”*, even though he had already “come” in the form of John the Baptizer, yet gone unrecognized. However may be the ultimate form of his next coming, the awakened body of Messiah in the land of Israel is in great need of the discernment and power of the gifts and office of prophet which he represented. **PLEASE PRAY:** For the desire for and discernment of these gifts in Israel—and that this time their manifestation not be unrecognized!

“Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy...For the testimony of Yeshua (Jesus) is the spirit of prophecy” (I Cor. 14:1; Rev. 19:10).



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[Passover and the Week of the Festival of Unleavened Bread begin Friday evening April 22nd. There will be special readings on Passover day, 23 April. The next in the regular cycle of Torah readings (*Acharei Mot*—“After the Death”) will continue on 11 April in Israel, and on 7 May in other nations.]

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