

Prayer Update From Israel (April 4, 2016)



Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!

1. NINE YEARS: HANDEL’S MESSIAH IN ISRAEL—IN HEBREW!

Exactly nine years ago today in our Update for 11 April 2007 we released the following special report:

“KI-YELED YULAD-LANU . . .”

“FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN . . .”

**FOR THE FIRST TIME, HANDEL’S ‘MESSIAH’ IS PERFORMED IN JERUSALEM—
*IN HEBREW!***

On the fourth of April, the second day of the Passover “Feast of Unleavened Bread” there occurred a “Miracle Night” in Jerusalem. For the first time since it was written in 1741 the mighty oratorio “Messiah” by George Fredrich Handel was performed in Jerusalem in the language in which most of its texts were originally written—Hebrew! For two evenings a choir made up of Messianic Jewish and Christian believers and a chamber orchestra of professional musicians released those ancient texts of Salvation set to glorious music into the heavenlies over Jerusalem. The two performances took place in the “Pavilion”—a wonderful auditorium built and used by Believers in the center of the city.

It was a strange and wonderful experience, for those of us who are familiar with the oratorio in English and who have become familiar with the same texts in our Hebrew

Bibles, to hear the beloved music, to hear the ancient texts, and to see in “super-titles” the actual Hebrew words being projected with their references on a screen above the stage— Here, in Jerusalem where most of the events took place—Here, the day after Passover *when* it took place—in the idiom through which it was prophesied to take place. This had been the dream of a lady named Irene Levy—a faithful believer in her 90’s, long in the land, who has for years assisted believers who are new in the land to learn Biblical Hebrew. Irene saw her dream realized—and actually took part in the choir! The texts of the Old Testament were adapted to the music by among others Arie Bar David, who also conducted (Another brother in the Land adapted Hebrew translations of the New Testament portions to the music). Arie has long been respected in the Messianic community as a gifted musician with a heart to see music released in integrity and beauty to the Glory of God in Israel. Some years ago this heroic man spoke during one of our youth retreats to Israeli young people, all of whom face military service at an early age (Arie distinguished himself in his own unit the Golan Heights during the Yom Kippur War).

Visiting non-believing Israelis were stunned by the power of the Biblical texts and the music—and the “Spirit” which they felt in the air. Many had never realized how married the prophetic texts were to those of the New Covenant. Also...many portions of Isaiah 53 are in the Oratorio. Tellingly, this incredible prophecy of the suffering and ultimate victory of Messiah is unknown to most Jews—the portions taken from the Prophets read in Synagogues around the world each weekend, hit Isaiah 52, and 54—but leave out all of Isaiah 53.

Hopefully, these two performances were only the beginning of a new annual presentation of this wonderful vehicle of the Good News, not only in Jerusalem but throughout Israel!

WELL—in God’s mercies, such has proven the case! 2016 is the ninth year that this translation of the oratorio has been presented in Israel, the eighth under the baton of David Loden. David, a professional musician, singer, conductor, is a pioneer in the realm of Messianic worship and praise music in Israel; indeed he is treasured as a father-figure in that regard. Under his direction, *Messiah* will be presented next week in Or Akiva on Monday night, Beer Sheva on Wednesday, and in Jerusalem on Friday afternoon the 15th. God continues to bless these annual productions. They cost an enormous amount of money to put on—which is generously donated, mostly from believers abroad. Last year, a large group of Holocaust Survivors attended one of the performances—with the Texts in Hebrew and English in their hands.

PLEASE PRAY:

***Praise and Thanksgiving that the Spirit Who breathed all of these wonderful words of Scripture – and Who inspired one of His servants to use His gift in setting them to music – has chosen to release it in this way to His ancient people in the Land of Israel during these days—and in the language in which much of it was originally written to them.**

*** Protection over the choir—protection in travel to and from the dress-rehearsal this Thursday afternoon, and the three performances next week. These are four locations far**

apart in Israel; it is many miles from many locations for so many people to be coming together.

*** Grace in health and spirit—that the choir will be filled with the joy of the Lord—and that the performances would be done with excellence and earnestness.**

***That the Holy Spirit will brood over those Israelis who attend the performances, not knowing their Messiah—that they would respond to the revelation released over the holy Word—drawing them with Everlasting Love. That during this week before Passover begins, their *Mashiach* would be revealed to them as the Passover Lamb of God, whose blood is their salvation, who bears away the sin of the world and brings us clean before our Father in Heaven.**

*** THAT LIGHT WILL SHINE IN DARKNESS AND THE DARKNESS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO EXTINGUISH IT!**

2. SOUTH AFRICA & ISRAEL—DRAWING GOD’S LINES TAUT.

On the 10th of last month the Director General of Israel’s Foreign Ministry Dr. Dore Gold arrived in South Africa for an official visit, designed to improve relations between the two countries. It was the first visit of a Foreign Ministry director to that nation in a decade. Strong tensions have been in place between the two countries for many years.

Although at its birth in 1948 South Africa was one of the first nations to recognize Israel as a Jewish State, the S.A. government at that time was an apartheid regime. Post-apartheid governments have remained committed to ties with Israel—but a global rhetoric equating the Israeli-Palestinian situation with apartheid (which is unequivocally false) have tended to stoke a strong anti-Israeli sentiment in the minds of the populace and some of the leaders. This came to a head with Israel’s raid on a Gaza-bound flotilla in 2010, when S.A. recalled its ambassador to Israel in protest. The ambassador was returned a few weeks later, but in 2013 a minister of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) announced that in a show of solidarity with the Palestinian cause, S.A. ministers would no more visit Israel. In response, Israel’s then foreign minister Lieberman accused South Africa of hypocrisy and classic anti-Semitism, speculating that “a pogrom against the Jews of South Africa is only a matter of time.” A year ago, a S.A. Minister of Education and Training was not allowed an entry permit to Israel, because he was travelling only to Ramallah in the West Bank. The minister responded with a call for an academic boycott of Israel and a demand that the Israeli ambassador be expelled from Pretoria. Finally, last October South Africa hosted Hamas political chief, Khaled Mashal, a move which infuriated Israel, who saw it as a support of terrorism by embracing the head of an organization whose charter demands Israel’s annihilation. Meanwhile, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS) in South Africa is considered one of the most militant in the world.

But recently the government has begun showing signs of softening its stance—particularly as regards trade with Israel, and there is a desire to improve cooperation in the areas of agriculture and water. This year the S.A. embassy is foregoing an annual Independence Day celebration in

order to fund bringing representatives from Israel's successful water management companies to South Africa to meet with private and public sector decision makers regarding ways to combat the current drought there.

As we see movement beginning in the governments to mend ties between the two countries, we are also aware of a more over-arching work which our gracious God has been releasing in recent months regarding the strengthening of ties in the spirit between Israel and South Africa. Throughout this past year we have met up with groups of South African believers traveling to Israel—flooding into the worship room at Succat Hallel and other prayer rooms to uphold this nation and their own in Zion, and to join in releasing praise in Israel--which God inhabits! (Psalm 22:3). And there has been a flow of those visiting that land. A worship leader, a founding member of the *Succat Hallel* house of prayer in Jerusalem, was sent with his family from their present home in America to work for several months strengthening and helping to establish houses of prayer in and round Cape Town.

This past November the Lord released a vision to a leader in Jerusalem. He was shown a rod being stricken into the waters off the tip of South Africa, which would set off a light and shaking which would reverberate northward through the continent, causing walls of witchcraft to crumble, idols to fall, and people to repent and worship Jesus. The domino-effect would proceed to Egypt, bringing down ancient occult powers—preparing the way for breakthrough along the Isaiah 19 Highway which passes from there through the Middle East. In a remarkable progression of circumstances, a month later believers had been networked all the way from Cape Town through the continent, gathering together (sometimes in groups up to 1000) for a prophetic day to come before God. And on the 11th of November a Messianic Jew from Israel born in South Africa struck a staff of almond wood into the waters beneath Cape Town, even as others all the way to Jerusalem were striking staffs into water and worshipping and calling on the Lord. It was a simple act of obedience—but out of it came a revelation of a network of Holiness the Lord already has in place throughout Africa and up the Mediterranean coast to Jerusalem.

Last month our dear friend Apostle Chuck Pierce was invited to this same area. While there, he was granted audience in the National Parliament with the Chief Justice and Queen of Limpopo in attendance. Together they were led to release a prophetic decree that God's Word would be set in motion in South Africa. He and his team were also able to meet with business leaders, and leaders of the Khoi First Peoples of South Africa. Apostle Chuck was “*sovereignly led to mantle the Khoi into their identity for the future. Not only will this enable them to take their place in the land, but also for South Africa to arise and become the nation she is called to be for all of Africa!*” On March 12th, the day following Chuck's initial report of the meeting in Parliament, the YNET news service in Israel led with the announcement, “*Foreign Ministry director visits South Africa in effort to mend ties—Following several years of high tensions, the Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry is on an official visit to Pretoria. Jerusalem hopes to build closer relations with African countries*”.

MAY THE MIGHT AND STRENGTH OF GOD'S ETERNAL WORD RISE UP ON BEHALF OF SOUTH AFRICA AND HER ALLIANCE WITH ISRAEL.

A powerful song sung by the Body of Messiah there includes these words (translated from Afrikaans):

There is might in His word, His voice thunders like the waters; His faithfulness like the sun on the blue sea; Because Yours is the Might, and the Glory and Strength, and Yours is the Honour and the Praise—because You Reign!

PLEASE PRAY:

* That the nation of South Africa will rise into its place, its positioning in God's purposes for all the continent of Africa.

*That the Body of Messiah there be strengthened, encouraged—that the networking which is already beginning to be established be strengthened—and that its leaders be granted divine insight through which they will be able to instruct many (Daniel 11:33; 12:3, 10).

* That God's word regarding the light and shaking of witchcraft through that continent not return until it has accomplished all He sent it forth to do.

*That Believers in South Africa and Israel come into harmony in the Spirit—caring for each other, bearing each other's burdens, going before the Lord on behalf of each other—*That as warfare grows, the lines of holy spirit communication which must be in place between these two nations come into their God-appointed place and be strengthened!* (Psalm 19:4).

Information for this report was drawn from:

* "Foreign Ministry director visits South Africa in effort to mend ties": ynetnews.com, 12 Mar 16 21:57).

* "Diplomacy: South Africa's softening stance toward Jerusalem": *The Jerusalem Post*: 26 Mar 16 15:44 EST)

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.

Friday night begins Israel's Biblical New Year

As with last week, this is one of two special Shabbats in preparation for Pesach/Passover containing an additional Torah reading and a replacement for the usually-read *Haftarah* reading (II Kings 4:42-5:19a). This one is called *Shabbat HaChodesh* because it coincides with *Chodesh haChodeshim*—the “Beginning of Months” . This was to be the beginning of months for the Hebrews, so we also read again the account of its establishment in Exodus 12. (The agricultural new year comes at *Rosh HaShanah* in the fall). The month is called *Aviv* or *Nisan*. This year the “New Year” begins on Saturday April 9th , commencing the previous evening at sundown.

The readings for this week 3-9 April 2016 are called *Thazria*—“Quicken with Seed/Conceive”:

TORAH: Leviticus 12:1—13:59

Shabbat haChodesh: Exodus 12:1-20

HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 45:16—46:18

After last week's focus on the importance of Israel's being 'set apart', of her distinguishing between the holy and unholy, the unclean and clean (Lev. 10:10)—this and next 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 the 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!



Martin & Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem

[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 10-16 April 2016 are called : *Metsora-* “Infected One”: TORAH: Leviticus 3:4—4:6; HAFTARAH (*Shabbat haGadol*): Malachi 3:4—4:6]

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