

Prayer Update From Israel (September 25, 2012)



Goat herd on the slopes of Mount Zion

“Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before YHVH, to make atonement upon it, and let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness” (Leviticus 16:8-10). Wednesday is Yom Kippur.

1. WHOSE REPORT WILL YOU BELIEVE?

“Many are saying, ‘Who will show us any good?’ Lift up on us the light of your face, LORD!” (Psalm 4:6).

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident.” (Psalm 27:1-3).

Webster’s New World Dictionary (College Ed. © 1994) defines “media” this way: “All the means of communication, as newspapers, radio, and TV, that provide the public with news, entertainment, etc., usually along with advertising.” For such “means” we should be thankful; they provide the pathways for much blessing. Evil regarding “the media” has to do with a lack of integrity and morality with which those means are utilized, not with the means themselves. With the internet, it is now possible for *anyone*, no matter how unqualified, to send out around the world a weak and faulty message dressed up as knowledgeable. By dropping a few impressive features they

assume will grant ‘credibility’ to their perceived audience, they may within a few hours deceive, confuse or discourage many. We must pray for integrity and discernment in reading the reports we receive, and when there is a doubt seek to verify from a credible source.

This is rather distressingly illustrated by a message regarding Israel which has been shooting around the world during the past two weeks. We and others in the Land have received many worried inquiries from both believers and non-believers about it. The message appears in several forms—a “Special Investigative Report”—“Something Unusual is Happening in Israel”, etc. It is supposedly written by someone whose “brother and family live in Jerusalem”. The brother is said to be a “minister and a former Navy SEAL whose office is close to one of Israel’s largest underground military bases.” This “minister” is said to have called his brother to inform him that he is “sending his family back to the US immediately” due to the gravity of what he is seeing and what he has been told by (undisclosed) military contacts. The report goes on—many of you will have seen it—“very large armored columns moving fast toward the Sinai”; top military leaders meeting with Rabbis; huge numbers of soldiers at the Western Wall; it concludes with various prognostications regarding an eminent Israeli attack on Iran and the indifference of “Obama”.

We will not elaborate extensively—except to say that we and all Israeli’s we know who have seen this find it very much misleading. It is sensationalistic, exaggerated, in several cases based on very faulty observation and conclusions. Perhaps worst of all, it appears to be fueled by and to be set on disseminating one thing—*fear*.

* *“In Jerusalem”, “A minister”, “A former Navy SEAL”, “Office close to one of Israel’s largest underground military bases.”* Although they may impress some, *none* of these factors in and of themselves establish the writer’s “brother” as being in any way more reliable a source for what is going on in Israel than anyone else. For example, how does former experience in a particular nautical division of the US military have any bearing whatsoever in establishing one’s credibility as a war-preparations analyst in the heart of a Middle Eastern nation. Yet “Navy SEAL” has come to carry an impressive finality of authority in the imagination of many Americans, reaching far beyond the arena of expertise for which those men are trained. BE CAUTIOUS when you receive a message whose author has felt obliged to pile up too many impressive-sounding factors in order to establish credibility.

* *“Hundreds of IDF soldiers at the Wailing Wall.”* This happens almost *every* week, when large bodies of soldiers graduate from one level of their training; they come to the Wall for the ceremony.

* *“Very large Israeli armored columns moving fast toward the Sinai where Egypt has now moved in Armor.”* During this period there have been two enormous exercises (one planned and one unplanned), but they took place in the Golan Heights far to the north and had much more to do with the situations roiling in Syria.

* *“He is convinced that barring something extraordinary Israel will attack Iran—with or without the US—and very soon.”* This has been seen as a very possible scenario in all media for months.

* *“He called to tell me that he is sending his family back to the US immediately due to what he is seeing happen...”* **This is perhaps the most disturbing disclosure of this writer.** It may excite

his readers in another land, but his implication that getting out of harm's way is slim comfort to the Israeli's he is leaving to face their fate alone. Is this God's desire for those He has sent from the nations to stand with Israel—to send away their families and leave immediately when things get difficult? We are not implying that it is not within God's will and purposes for some to leave should Israel go to war. But out of *fear*? Where is Psalm 27:1-3 (see above) in this picture? **This writer is not alone—we have close friends from the nations whom God has established in leadership in the Body in Israel who have recently received “prophetic words” from abroad, urging them that they and their families are to get out of Israel while there is time.** We have recently been re-reading Hannah Hurnard's book *Watchmen on the Walls* about her time with a few other courageous Christians during the siege of Jerusalem in 1948. Only a tiny number of Believers from abroad stayed—most were ordered home by their sending organizations.

PLEASE PRAY:

*For discernment in the Body of Messiah in Israel regarding “intelligence” reports about Israel sent out on the Internet.

*That the present erroneous message be exposed and disappear.

*That

*For courage for believers in Israel, both citizens and those joining them from the nations, to *stand in the places to which they have been assigned by the Holy Spirit* and not listen to fearful words intended by the enemy to dishearten them. Speak the message from last week's Torah Portion given to all the people Jew and Gentile whom God was sending under Joshua into the Promised Land, **“*Hizku v'Imtzu!—Be Strong and Courageous—all of you! Do not fear nor dread them, for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you!*” (Deuteronomy 31:6).**

2. FALSE MESSIAH'S

“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ [Or, ‘Look, he is in Tel Aviv?'] do not believe it.” (Matthew 24:23).

“ISRAEL'S NEXT LEADER IS: MOSHIACH! [i.e. Messiah] MOSHIACH IS IN TEL AVIV! THE WORLD WILL SOON EXPERIENCE CATASTROPHIC DISASTERS: EARTHQUAKES, MEGA TSUNAMIS AND VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS!...AMERICA WILL SINK UNDER THE OCEAN'S WATER!...JEWS IN THE DIASPORA: MAKE ALIYAH TO ISRAEL RIGHT AWAY! YOU ARE IN DANGER...THOSE WHO REMAIN AMONG THE GENTILES WILL LOSE THEIR LIVES ALONG WITH THEM IN PLAGUES THAT ALMIGHTY WILL SOON AFFLICT THEM...” --thus ran a portion of a moving inch-high ribbon of paid advertising space above the title and front-page headlines of the on-line Israeli English-language *Jerusalem Post* for more than a week recently. If one clicked the running text, he would be treated to at least eight pages of dire prophecies of doom. Not that some of the predictions may not prove accurate—but in the midst of the coming horrors was the repeated phrase, “Moshiach [i.e. *Mashiach—Messiah—Christ—Anointed One*]. This is not the jolly-looking late-Rabbi Shneerson whose picture adorns the billboards around the airport, also claiming to be

“Mashiach”. It is a newcomer. But he obviously has a growing following. Yeshua said such would increase in number towards the end. Perhaps easy to spot and ridicule now—but Yeshua said they would begin to do real signs and wonders—and that even the “Elect” had best not consider themselves beyond deception.

PLEASE PRAY:

***That false messiah’s be exposed.**

***That believers be granted humility to seek wisdom and discernment from above—both so as not to be deceived—but also to be able to help and deliver those out of bondage who are being deceived.**

3. YOM KIPPUR

Tuesday evening (September 25th) at sundown begins *Yom Kippur*—the Day of Atonement. At that time, the entire public Jewish sector of Israel essentially closes down. Leviticus 23:26-32 solemnly commands Jews to deny themselves and to abstain from work on this day, with dire consequences if they don’t. Except for the occasional Arab driver or an emergency vehicle, the streets will be free of traffic; in fact, later in the evening and on Saturday morning many streets will be filled with children on bicycles and skateboards. Millions of Jews will humble themselves by fasting for 25 hours from both food and water. *Kippur* may be translated ‘ransom by means of a substitute.’ On this day in Biblical times one goat was slain, and another, with the sins of the nation confessed over it, was led far into the Judean desert and released. It was considered ‘damned’; today a common curse word in Israel is *azazel*--the Hebrew word translated into English “scapegoat”.

As the ninth chapter of a First Century epistle written to Messianic Jews emphasizes, “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” Yet with the destruction of the Second Temple, blood sacrifice in Judaism came to an end. On *Yom Kippur* all religious Jews and many non-religious will spend the day in the Synagogues, confessing their sins and seeking forgiveness and a “Good Signature” in the *Book of Life* for the coming year. Yet something is missing. A question which rabbinic Judaism has never been able satisfactorily to answer is, “But, where is the *blood*?” There are various ways in which its necessity is traditionally argued away. Many obviously do not find these convincing—during the days before *Yom Kippur* a place in Jerusalem’s large open-air market may annually be found reserved for stacks and stacks of coops bearing live chickens. Here one may pay an ultra-Orthodox man to be allowed to swing a chicken over one’s head as he or she recites the following, “*This is my substitute, this is my commutation; this chicken goes to death; but may I be gathered and enter into a long and happy life and into shalom.*” The bird is then slain and its body given to the poor for food. We do not ridicule those blindly seeking cleansing through this practice; yet this, no more than in ancient times, “*can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.*”

It is a not uncommon testimony among Messianic Jews that awareness of this question, “But where is the sacrifice, where is the blood?” rising in a young heart, would later be recognized as having been one of the earliest stirrings by the Holy Spirit in preparing the way to discovery of the true Messiah.

As there were two goats, there must be both a blood sacrifice for sin and a “sin-bearer”. Yochanan (John) saw Yeshua coming to him as he was immersing those who had repented in the Jordan River, and he called out, “*Hineh! Seh haElohim ha’noseh hatat ha’Olam!*”—“*Look! The Lamb of God who carries away the sin of the world.*” King David understood this. In **Psalm 25** he twice asks for forgiveness of sins...yet the word often translated forgiveness in verse 18 is different than that used in vs. 11; in the first the word means “forgive”, in the second it literally means “bear away”. Forgiveness of sin requires both a blood sacrifice to cleanse, and a sin bearer to take it away. Verse 22 calls on Elohim to ‘**Redeem** Israel from all his troubles.’ She can never do it herself—only her God can provide the complete redemption, and that through the work of His Son.

As all are aware, a present great “trouble” for Israel has arisen within the nation of Iran. Yesterday in New York Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad again called for “elimination” of Israel. Tomorrow on Yom Kippur—the holiest day of the Hebrew Year—this man has been allowed to address the General Assembly of the United Nations. “Redeem Israel O God from all his troubles!”

PLEASE PRAY:

***That during this time of soul searching, the Holy Spirit of God would move on Jewish hearts around the world, convicting of sin, righteousness and judgment—and in kindness leading to repentance, life, freedom.**

***That in that kindness would be revelation that it is impossible to atone for our own sin and to be made righteous by our own efforts.**

***That there would be revelation about the Blood of Messiah—how the blood of bulls and goats in the past—or of a chicken today—is not enough.**

***For Israel’s protection from her enemies during this day. 39 years ago she was attacked by Egypt and Syria while most of the nation was in the synagogues.**

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. All texts are those of English translations of the Scriptures.

The reading for this week 23-29 September is called *Ha’Azinu*—“Give Ear”:

TORAH: Deuteronomy 32:1-52

HAFTARAH: II Samuel 22:1-51

The Torah Portion this weekend is comprised of what is often called the *Song of Moses* (The song recorded in Exodus 15 after crossing the Red Sea is more often known as the *Song of the Sea*). It is a song of testimony which God gave to Moses to teach to the Children of Israel, who in turn were to teach it to their children after they had crossed into Canaan. Perhaps it is portions of this song which are prophesied in Revelation 15:2-4 as someday being sung with the *Song of the Lamb*. This song contains some of the grimmest promises in Scripture of the consequences awaiting the descendants of those standing before Moses when they choose to go away from the Life-God. But it must be seen in a context of the merciful God calling out to Israel two chapters earlier (30:19-20): *“Choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love YHVH your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which YHVH swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”*****

The ROCK.

***Deuteronomy 32:3-4.** *“For the name of YHWH I proclaim, give greatness to our God! The Rock, whole-and-perfect are his deeds, for all his ways are just. A God steadfast, (with) no corruption, equitable and upright is he”* (Everett Fox Translation).

This word “rock” (Hebrew: *Tzur*—a rock, a cliff, a fortress) is used over *six times* in this song: It is one of the attributes of God’s greatness (vs. 4); a source of oil/anoointing (vs. 13b); the source of Jerusalem’s salvation (vs. 15b); the One from whom Israel was actually birthed (vs. 18); the source of strength for victory in warfare (vs. 30). In verse 13a the rock (a different Hebrew word) is a source of honey or sweetness.

This week’s Haftarah is **II Samuel 22** (almost an exact reading of Psalm 18). It begins, *“The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer...”*, and ends, *“The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let God be exalted, the Rock of my salvation...!”* I Corinthians 10:4 reveals that this same divine Rock (the Hebrew translation also uses the word *Tzur*) *“followed them, and that Rock was Messiah.”* **PLEASE PRAY: for revelation as these words are read, that Israelis and Jews around the world will become aware of and return to their Rock. He is their only place of shelter from the approaching storms. He is a source for their salvation, for life, for anointing, victory, and true sweetness and strength.**

***Deuteronomy 32:7a, 9a, 10-14.** *“Remember the days of old...For the LORD’s portion is His people...He found him...encircled him...instructed him...guarded him...led him...made him ride on heights...made him suckle honey from the rock...”* **PLEASE PRAY: That Jacob “remember the days of old...”**

***Deuteronomy 32:21b.** *“But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation.”* In Romans 10:19 and 11:11-15, Paul quotes this verse as actually being related to salvation coming to the Gentiles and eventually, through Israel’s jealousy precipitating her own restoration, which will in turn release “life from the dead” throughout the world. **PLEASE PRAY: For the light and truth of Messiah among Gentiles to be seen and to awaken in Jewish consciousness a jealousy, a holy longing, which will draw them back to the Truth.**

***Deuteronomy 32:36, 43b.** *“For the LORD will judge His people and have compassion on His servants when He sees that their power is gone, and there is no one remaining, bond or free...He will provide atonement for His land and His people.”* Salvation has always come by Grace through Faith. It is according to His mercy that He saves us. It is interesting here that in the Hebrew the last line of this poem reads literally, **“and will atone His land His people.”** There is no “and” between the Land and the People, they are *together—indivisible—ONE*. The eternal Covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their seed is forever connected with a certain portion of the earth (*adama*) which He has created. The people are “His”—this particular portion of the earth He had created is His—He has sovereignly determined that they be and remain together. The people sinned; the land was polluted and expelled them. Only God could provide the necessary atonement to cleanse the Land, and the People—and to bring them together again. The people are not yet all clean, they have not all been reunited with the Land. But the *atonement* has been made. The word for atonement here is that from which *Yom Kippur* takes its name—a holy covering.

PLEASE PRAY: For light from above to illumine these words—that Jews, as they experience **Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement this year, will gain understanding that the LORD has “judged His people”—has “had compassion on His servants”, and that He has “made atonement for His Land—His People”—and not for them only but for all His world!**



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