

Prayer Update From Israel (May 5, 2014)



This copy of the “Liberty Bell” in Philadelphia hangs in Gan haPa’amon, Jerusalem. Along its top is a passage from this week’s Torah Portion (see below), Lev. 25:10: “Proclaim LIBERTY throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof”

1. . ISRAEL’S 66th, AND LAYING FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE.

“It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; it was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face, for you loved them” (Psalm 44:3).

This past Thursday, May 1st, was the first day of the second Hebrew month, *Iyar*. This month is mentioned specifically (using the Canaanite name *Ziv*) in I Kings 6:1, 37. It was during this month that Solomon “began to build the house of the LORD” and “the foundation was laid.” And it was on the night of the fifth of *Iyar* in 1948 that the “foundation” for the modern state of Israel was laid when David Ben Gurion read the new Declaration of Independence, proclaiming that the new nation be called by the name *Israel*. That day will be celebrated this Tuesday, May 6th. It is preceded by a 24-hour period of memorial for the 23,169 who are known to have fallen in Israel’s wars and at the hands of terrorism. Sirens sounded throughout the nation at 8:00 on Sunday evening and will do so again at 11:00 Monday morning.

As *Yom haZikharon*, the Day of Remembrance, draws to an end, Jews will turn out to celebrate modern Israel’s 66th BIRTHDAY! *Yom Atzma’ut*—“*Independence Day*.” There will be revelry in the streets, food, fireworks, and a holiday on Tuesday. At the time of the establishment of the state 66 years ago, Israel’s population was only 806,000 souls. Today, it stands at 8,180,000

(around 157,000 more than at this time last year). The Central Bureau of Statistics reports that there are currently 6,135,000 Jews in Israel, making up 75 % of the population. The Arab population is 1,694,000—20.7%. Non-Arab Christians and other minorities make up 4.3 % of the population, 351,000 citizens. The Israeli population grew around 2% last year. 178,000 babies were born, 43,000 people passed away. About 75% of the Jewish population are *sabra*—“native-born”. Around 24,000 Jews “made *Aliyah*” (immigrated to Israel) during the past year (“Israel celebrates 66 years with 8,180,000 Israelis”: *ynetnews.com*: 1 May 2014 3:45 p.m.).

And we praise the LORD... that this year has continued to see the growth and influence of Messianic Jewish and the Arab Christian communities in the Land!

PLEASE PRAY:

***Thanksgiving that God has brought His ancient people back into their land of heritage—according to His Word, and established and prospered them in that Land for 66 years.**

***Grace from the God of all Comfort upon those who have been bereaved. Pray for revelation that He is also a God of Hope who loves them and has a Future and a Hope.**

***Protection for Israeli Jews during this day of celebration.**

***Many Arabs in Israel and the contested territories commemorate the day of Israel’s becoming a nation on the Gregorian date of 15 May, calling it *Nakba*—“Catastrophe”. Please pray for Muslim Arabs to come to Salvation in *Yasua* (Jesus)—and for God to grant them His council, wisdom and peace regarding His purposes for both Jews’ and Arabs’ place in His Land. Pray for racism to be broken down in Israel.**

***That all “foundations” which need to be laid during this month, both in the new government, in relations with our allies, and in the Body of Messiah in Israel be accomplished. “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is *Yeshua the Messiah!*” (I Corinthians 3:11).**

***That the Body of Messiah be maturing and be being prepared as ministers of the Spirit in the Land. Daniel 12:1-3 tells of a coming “*time of trouble*” for Israel “*such as never has been since there was a nation [1948?] till that time.*” We are not to draw back in fear as that time approaches—but it is important that the Body of Messiah be being made ready now—for it will be a time when “*those who know their God shall be strong and do what is necessary, and those with insight will instruct many*” (Daniel 11:32-33); a time when “*those with insight*” and “*those who turn many to righteousness*” will shine like stars in the darkness (12:3).**



Counting of the Omer

Day 20

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.

This week's Parashah is called *Be'har*—"On the Mount":

TORAH: Leviticus 25:1—26:2

HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 32:6-27

***Leviticus 25:2, 23:** *"When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD...for the Land is Mine, for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me."*

The land in which *Elohim* ordained that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob should dwell is precious to Him. Last week's readings spoke of His causing that land itself to spit out inhabitants who defiled it with gross sin. In this chapter Israel was commanded to allow the Land to observe its own regular 'sabbaths' to the LORD. Every seven years, the land was to be allowed to rest. Unfortunately, Israel chose to ignore this earnest direction from her Lord. When

Judah was eventually carried away captive in Babylon, the LORD said that for 70 years the land would now finally receive the rests which it had been denied.

PLEASE PRAY: that Israel will deal wisely with the land to which God has returned her, coming to realize that it is a holy charge as well as a gift. That she will come into a relationship with her God which will enable her in His timing to be entrusted with *all* of the land He has promised to return to her oversight (Ezekiel 36:4-8 teaches of a time when the very land currently under contention in Judea and Samaria will “put forth its branches” to bear fruit for the returned children of Jacob).

***Leviticus 25:8-10** (Trans: Alter): *“And you shall count you seven Sabbaths of years, seven years seven times, and the days of the seven Sabbaths of years shall come to forty-nine years. And you shall send round a blasting ram’s horn, in the seventh month on the tenth of the month, on the Day of Atonement, you shall send round a ram’s horn through all your land. And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and call a release [or liberty] in the land to all its inhabitants. A jubilee it shall be for you, and you shall go back each man to his holding and each man to his clan, you shall go back. It is a jubilee, the fiftieth year it shall be for you. You shall not sow and you shall not reap its aftergrowths and you shall not pick its untrimmed vines. For it is a jubilee. It shall be holy for you.”*

Just as we are presently ‘counting the omer’ up to the fiftieth day (Pentecost) upon which the Spirit of Freedom (II Corinthians 3:17) was released, the Hebrews in the land were to also count seven “Sabbaths of Years” and then proclaim *Dror!*— “*Release!*” “*Freedom!*” “*Liberty!*” It was a year of “freeing up”—both the land, and those Israelites who had placed themselves, because of financial hardship, under servitude to their brothers. It was to be a “Jubilee”! The name is related to the Hebrew *yovel*—which is another name for a *shofar* or “ram’s horn” (The word is actually combined in usage with the word *shofar* in Joshua 6:4). It is significant that in this 50th year, this horn was carried round proclaiming freedom on *Yom Kippur* the “Day of Atonement”—the very day in which the congregation was released from its sin for the previous year. And it was significant that the blasts were made with a ram’s horn. The “ram caught by its *horn* in the thicket” (Genesis 22:13) had signified the atoning, substitutionary sacrifice for Isaac (God had provided the Lamb). Such a horn would release its redemptive sound every fifty years upon God’s *Day of Atonement* to proclaim freedom from slavery and debt. It is significant that today, the fast of *Yom Kippur* always comes to an end with one long blast of the shofar. We believe this to signify the coming Great Day when the “last shofar” of God (I Cor. 15:52, Hebrew translation) is sounded to proclaim eternal freedom from death and our fallen earthly natures, and Celebration in Heaven and on Earth with the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World!

Not by might and not by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD

***Leviticus 25:10b.** “...Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof.”

As alluded to beneath the picture above, this portion of Lev. 25:10 is quoted on the American “Liberty Bell” in Philadelphia, founded in 1753. A park just southwest of the Old City in Jerusalem has a replica of this bell, and is in fact named “Bell Park”. But it is important for Israelis to realize that the word *dror* in the context of this verse is by no means referring to a humanistic general liberty from all human constraints. Rather, it is a God-ordained *release* from oppression and bondage to a freedom in His presence! It is the same word used in Isaiah 61 where the “Spirit of the Lord GOD” (Adonai YHVH) is present to “*proclaim liberty to the captives*”. We are grateful for the freedoms we have in the nation of Israel. But for our people to be really free, it will take a work of the “Spirit of the Lord GOD! II Corinthians 3:17 of the New Covenant Scriptures reads, “*Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom!*”

PLEASE PRAY FOR A RELEASE OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD OVER ISRAEL TO BRING US INTO A TRUE FREEDOM: *through grace and supplication* to see, be convicted for, and freed from our sin (Zech. 12:10); *through washing of regeneration and renewing* to become clean and born anew (Titus 3:5); *through the love of God having been shed abroad in our hearts*, to be filled with hope, no longer disappointed and ashamed (Romans 5:5); *through being filled*, to speak the word of God with boldness, stretching out our hands to heal, that signs and wonders may be done through the name of God’s holy Servant Yeshua! (Acts 4:29-31) .

“ ‘...and I will not hide my face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel,’ says the Lord GOD” (Ezekiel 39:29).

***Leviticus 25:18-19.** “So you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them; and you will dwell in the land in safety. Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety.” It is essential to realize in our prayers, that Israel’s capacity to dwell safely in the land, and the land’s capacity itself to stay fertile and productive, is related to her relationship with her God. Israel is in a period of grace as her gathering is completed—but God has brought her back to give her revelation and understanding of herself, to be cleansed and to return to her God (Ezekiel 36, 37; Jeremiah 31). The fact that she is a “chosen people” does not in and of itself guarantee her safety. We must pray that the veil be removed, and she return to the Shepherd of her soul.

***Leviticus 25:23.** “The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners (“sojourning settlers”) with Me.”

Jeremiah 32:6-27

***Jeremiah 32:15, 17.** *“For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.’ ... ‘Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard [wonderful] for You...”* **PLEASE PRAY: for believers in Israel to have means and favor to be able to purchase property—so as to truly “put down their roots” into the land for themselves and their descendants. That, as impossible as this often seems, we would realize that NOTHING is too difficult for our God to do on our behalf, who has promised again to root us and grant us ‘houses, fields and vineyards’ in His Land.**



*Martin and Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem*

[The readings for next week are called *Be'chukkothai*—“In my Statutes”. TORAH: Leviticus 26:3—27:34; HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 16:19—17:14]

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