



# Pray for Israel.....

*"...whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his own head"* Ezek.33:4.

*'O LORD, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear? Even cry out to You, 'Violence!' and You will not save. Why do You show me iniquity, and cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me...'*  
Habakkuk 1:2-3

## The Watchman Prayer Letter

September 2010

### Rosh HaShanah

*'Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month ... a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation..."'* Leviticus 23:23-24; c/f. Numbers 29:1.

Although Rosh HaShanah is generally understood to mean the beginning of the civil year in Israel, its spiritual significance is far greater. The actual Biblical term is *Shabbaton Zikaron Teruah*, or a *memorial Sabbath rest of joyful noise (i.e. shouting, blowing of ramshorns)*. The prophets of Israel, as well as the Apostle Paul in their eschatology, also attributed great importance to the blowing of trumpets in that they see in it an association with judgment; of the coming of the *Great and terrible Day of the LORD!*

Rosh HaShanah also signifies for the Jewish world the beginning of the *Days of Awe*, culminating with Yom Kippur on the tenth day of the month (Leviticus 23:26)— with a further blowing of trumpets. For the Jewish people it is the most solemn and holiest season of the year, where both judgment and forgiveness meet! In that sense it is the beginning of a new year free from the burden of sin and guilt!

For Christians – in general – these events have very little meaning, as they are considered to be among the superseded practices of Old Testament Judaism. Be that as it may, this year we would like to devote a little space to meditate on the question, whether there could still be some residual benefits to be gleaned for Christians from understanding their deeper meaning somewhat better.

The trumpet blasts of Rosh HaShanah are a reminder call for Jewish people that judgment has come. The preceding month of Elul was the time for self assessment, but now the heavenly court will assess human behaviour. There is still time for *repentance* (Hebr. *teshuvah*) as the day of Atonement is still a few days away. The meaning here is not just an act of contrition or saying sorry for the misdemeanours of the past year, but a wholehearted return to God. It is a time for everyone to repair and improve one's conduct in matters where he knows he is faulty and flawed.

At the recent CFI Conference in Jerusalem, at the end of May this year, Sharon Sanders delivered a particularly powerful message about how the church failed to make the Jewish people jealous. She spoke strongly on the fact that Christianity did not produce any fruit that lasted —let alone one that was palatable to the Jewish people. What Christians had sought to force upon them during the two thousand years past, was seriously toxic and may have contributed to the overall rejection of Yeshua's message, whose primary proclamation was also, *'Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand!'* (Mark 1:14-15).

### **Strategic Prayer Points:**

- Please pray that the Christian world may come to a genuine knowledge of the universal application of the Biblical Festivals and their spiritual significance
- Please pray that Christians world-wide may come to a deep understanding of the true meaning of repentance in relation to the Jewish People
- Please pray that a spirit of repentance from God would also sweep over Israel and the Jewish people world-wide, turning them back to Him, from assimilation, apostasy and atheism

\*\*\*

### **Yom Kippur**

*'And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you ... to make atonement for you before the Lord your God. ... it shall be a statute forever ... a sabbath of solemn rest, and **you shall afflict your souls**; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath."*

Leviticus 23:26-32

Yom Kippur is the final day of the *Days of Awe* and marks the conclusion of the ten-day process of repentance and restitution. It is the day of release when, according to Judaism, every Jewish person standing before a Holy God, should know his eternal position in the world to come.

Although Christian theology differs markedly from that of Judaism, the principles are essentially the same. Repentance is more than saying sorry, it is about a wholehearted embracing of the ways of our Heavenly Father and walking in them. Yeshua points out to his followers that it was incumbent on them to display a greater righteousness than that of the Pharisees of his day.

Perhaps we could make it our prayer this year to develop such a deep fervency and repentant lifestyles that the Jewish people will sit up and take notice and thus become provoked to jealousy over our relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Whom both Jews and Christians refer to as Father.

### **Strategic Prayer Points:**

- Please pray for the Jewish people this Yom Kippur that God would enable them to forgive us our sins against them

- Please pray that Christians everywhere would experience a change of heart toward Israel and the Jewish people
- Please pray that God would grant all of His people a fresh understanding of the meaning of Sin, Righteousness and Judgment (John 16:8)

\*\*\*

## Simchat Torah

The final celebration of this season is the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, *Simchat Torah*. It is the day when the cycle of Torah readings finishes and a new one begins.

This day and its significance is little known and/or understood in Christian circles. It was also the day when the High Priest – in Temple times – brought a golden pitcher filled with water from the pool of Siloam to the Temple. He would then pour out this precious water near the altar and beseech God to send the rain needed for the coming year.

Today the Jewish people still pray for rain on that day, but their chief rejoicing is in the Torah.

Although *Simchat Torah* is an entirely Jewish celebration today, its significance was understood by Yeshua for it is recorded in the Gospel of John (7:37-39).

In the context of this letter we see that day as a wonderful opportunity to thank our Heavenly Father for the gift of the Scriptures, which came to us through a Jewish Messiah and his Jewish disciples.

## Strategic Prayer Points:

- Please pray that God would provide the required rain for Israel to replenish the reservoirs throughout the land
- Please pray also that the Spirit of God would come like rain to refresh His people – both Jewish and Gentile

\*\*\*



**Please Pray especially for Jonathan Pollard and Gilad Shalit**



\*\*\*

## The Likelihood of another Lebanon War and the Nuclear Spectre of Iran

*Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'I will... have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name...'* Ezekiel 39:25

**Western Inaction** may well contribute, or even promote another, infinitely more devastating war.

This is an observation by Evelyn Gordon, writing for **commentarymagazine.com**

(<http://www.commentarymagazine.com/blogs/index.php/evelyn-gordon/338381>).

The recent unprovoked incident on the Israeli-Lebanese border highlights the precariousness of the truce that exists between Israel and Lebanon. There are also many indications that Lebanon is spoiling for another war with Israel, most likely prompted by the real powerbrokers of the region - Iran and Syria, via their proxy Hezbollah.

The point of concern is that the attackers were regular Lebanese Army soldiers, **not Hezbollah terrorists** for whom the government could disclaim responsibility.

The evenhanded call by Western Governments, for calm and restraint on both sides, carries the implicit message that the West is seeking to avoid another Israel-Lebanon war. Yet war is precisely where Western inaction is inexorably leading. The UN is forever ready to investigate Israel for the least – even if only perceived – misdemeanours, yet there is no demands for an international investigation or any other international reprimand for this outright provocation of a sovereign power – there are no consequences for Lebanon.

Thus the lesson for Beirut is that such incidents are all gain, no pain: by attacking Israel, it can earn credit and breathing space from the radicals — a serious concern for a government that exists only at their mercy — without incurring any penalties whatsoever from the West.

That provides Lebanon with a strong incentive to launch additional attacks, thus prodding Israel into a much larger ‘justifiable’ conflict. Influenced by Iran?!

On August 17, Israel National News reported former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, **John Bolton**, as saying that there are only three days left for Israel, or anyone, to attack Iran Nuclear facilities in Natanz if it wants to stop the Islamic Republic from manufacturing nuclear weapons. According to reports Russia would begin loading the Iranian reactor with fuel rods, thus signaling the point of no-return for a fall-out-free attack on Iran’s Nuclear facilities. Beyond August 21, an attack on Iran may/will have potentially disastrous fallout effects on the population of many regions, apart from those of a likely counterattack by Iran on Israel and possibly the USA.

### **Strategic Praise and Prayer Points:**

- Let us praise the Almighty that He is in control and that He has told us through the prophets what the outcome will be (Zechariah 12:1-9,10-13; 14:1-15)
- Let us pray that the leaders of Israel will act with wisdom and hear from God on how to proceed militarily in the days ahead
- Let us pray that the Israel as a nation will begin to look to the Most High for guidance in an increasing measure

\*\*\*

**Please pray for Frank as he heads to India on September 20 - October 4**

In Messiah

*Frank & Karen Selch*

[info@theolivetreeconnection.com](mailto:info@theolivetreeconnection.com)