



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

November 2009

After Succoth...

“Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation; I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety..” Jeremiah 32:37

Succoth is the last Biblical Festival of the year, commanded by God, on Israel’s religious calendar. It is a wonderful celebration that looks back on the time of the Wilderness Wanderings, when God cared for the children of Israel in a miraculous way for almost 40 years. It also looks forward to the World to Come, when they will again dwell in safety with God in their midst.

The promise above was uttered by Jeremiah more than 2500 years ago, which may, possibly, only refer to the time of the Babylonian Exile. However, the prophet Ezekiel who lived after Jeremiah, pointed to a further, future exile (20:35-44) followed by a restoration! Since there are many Scriptural references, which point to a (final) restoration that would see God dwelling in the midst of a redeemed Israel, we are fairly safe in making the assumption that a full restoration – for His Name’s sake (c/f. Ezekiel 36:22) - has always been God’s intention for His people Israel.

At the time of writing, renewed efforts are being made in the UN to deny the Jewish people the fulfillment of this promise. The ‘**Goldstone Report**’ is one of the weapons many nations of the world are seeking to employ in their fight against Israel’s very existence. On **Sunday, Oct 18, 2009**, the Jerusalem Post reported that the **United Nations Human Rights Council** in Geneva approved the Goldstone Report, which accuses Israel of deliberately targeting civilians during the December-January war in Gaza. **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay** endorsed the report and, although she condemned both Israeli and Palestinian actions, the move has been accurately described by observers as a naked attempt to demonize Israel.

Having said this, it is important not to automatically whitewash everything Israel does, but to balance our views against the Scripture and established international laws. The challenge, which every believer faces concerning these issues is, when we make a stand for Israel, is our defense is based on the Eternal Word of God or not! Or, do we stand with the nations of the world to blindly endorse the persistent hate mongering within the UN and other international political bodies?

Strategic Prayer points:

- Please pray that God will raise up courageous men and women in the UN to stand for truth and righteousness
- Intercede for Israel that God would bring down the stronghold of the enemy and every perverse and lying tongue; Proverbs 2:12; 2 Corinthians 10:4
- Church leaders throughout the world need to be upheld and strengthened through prayer, that God may enable them to teach the undiluted truth from the Bible without compromise
- Pray for God's empowering among believers to take up the above challenge to make that courageous stand concerning Israel regardless of personal cost

Where Is Sderot?

Sderot is **just** a medium-sized Israeli town less than 2 km from the Gaza strip, but it has received the attention of over 12,000 thousand kassam-rocket attacks since 2001, and especially since Israel vacated Gush Katif. Kassam Avenue, as it is referred to by the citizens of Sderot, hardly receives a mention these days because, as someone said, "*the kassam attacks have slowed down to a trickle during the ceasefire!*" However, the immorality of these attacks somehow escapes the attention of the Worlds Media and Political leaders!

If Sderot was a military garrison, then these attacks would be against soldiers. But Sderot has kindergartens and schools, which have hardly known a day without the '*Code Red*' alert. There is **no moral equivalence** between the philosophy of Hamas and the world-view of the people of Sderot: Hamas, on the one hand, teaches their children about **the glory that can be attained** through **dying for Allah**, whereas on the other hand, the children of Sderot are taught that **it is living**, which brings **glory TO God!** Nor is there a moral equivalence between attacks on unarmed civilians and especially children and the defense against such indiscriminate attacks, for which the IDF is frequently criticized.

Who, in the world can imagine the daily dread and terror at the sound of the alarm sirens the people of southern Israel, especially the children Sderot have been living under?

Strategic Prayer points:

- Please pray for CFI relief workers who faithfully assist the people of Sderot and other communities under attack from Israel's enemies
- Please pray for the people of Sderot that they may not weaken under the continuing (albeit diminished) onslaught of Gazan rockets. May God grant them spiritual, psychological and physical strength to endure
- May God continue to surround the city with His shield to deflect the kassams to areas where they cannot cause any physical harm to life and limb
- Please pray for a revival in Sderot that God would open more and more people's eyes to recognize that He is their true shield
- Continuing prayer is needed for Sderot Media Centre that their message would find a favourable reception as it goes out to many parts of the world

What About Jacob's Trouble?

"Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob" says the LORD, "Nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from afar, and your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, and no one shall make him afraid."

Jeremiah 30:10

The reference by Jeremiah to Jacob's trouble is frequently associated with eschatological events that foretell unimaginable suffering for the Jewish people. The Bible is actually quite silent concerning any degree of suffering during that period whenever it comes to pass. However, we need to ask ourselves the question, has there ever been a time throughout the ages (worth measuring) when the descendants of Jacob have NOT been exposed to persecution and suffering – much of it unimaginable to the average mind?

Although the reference in Jeremiah 30:7 may well refer to a day of judgment at the end of the ages, when men will literally double up with pain in their innermost being for rejecting God. However, in the here and now, Jacob's trouble is essentially that he is alone in an ocean of hostility that is continually being whipped up by the storms of 'God hatred'. Jacob, i.e. Israel, needs us who undeservedly received God's Grace, who were made partakers of the Covenants and the Promises and grafted into the commonwealth of Israel, to come to his aid, his defence wherever the need may be. Since it begins with prayer, will you encourage your church to learn more about Israel and the Jewish people and to begin to intercede for them?

Strategic Prayer points:

- Pray earnestly for the people of Israel as they are faced with so much opposition, that they would begin turn in faith and trust toward their Rock and Redeemer (Psalm 78:35; 18:2,31; 61:2)
- Please pray that God would continue to raise up faithful supporters of Israel all over the world - to stand as prayerful watchmen on the spiritual walls of Jerusalem
- For God to pour out His Spirit of unity and supplication upon all who support Israel that we may become a mighty barrier against the fiery darts of Israel's enemies

Request: *If you know of any specific issues, e.g. anti-Semitism, concerning the Jewish people and/or Israel in the area in which you live, please email us at info@theolivetreeconnection.com so that we may include them in the next **Watchman Prayerletter** – perhaps as a special **ALERT!***

In Messiah

Frank & Karen Selch