

OIM UPDATE

January 2017

The arrival of the New Year brings with it cautious anticipation and optimistic expectations, tempered by the Biblical reality that “The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps” (Proverbs 16:9). In other words, despite the relative joy which many American followers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are experiencing due to a dramatic providential change in governmental leadership—as the political pendulum appears to have shifted from liberal to conservative—we are all *still* at the mercy of God’s sovereign will for His created order. Lest people from all nations of the world forget, Psalm 2 succinctly summarizes how the Holy One of Israel views the often inane machinations of humanity. Here in unequivocal terms, regardless of recent resolutions declared by the United Nations Security Council that impact the State of Israel and Zion as the apple of God’s eye (Zechariah 2:8), everyone on the planet is ultimately accountable to the words of Messiah Yeshua (Deuteronomy 18:15; Hebrews 12:25), the recognized Son of God:

“Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ‘Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!’ He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying, ‘But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain.’ I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; take warning, O judges of the earth. Worship the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling. **Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!**” (Psalm 2:1-12).

Thankfully by God’s merciful grace, many in the world today have freely received the offer of salvation by faith in the accomplished sacrificial work of the Messiah, and in so doing, not only worship Him, but are blessed to take refuge in Him. It is our fervent prayer that the timely respite from tumbling into the abyss of ungodly liberalism and secular humanism, will be used by the Holy Spirit to bring countless others around the globe to a salvific knowledge of Yeshua’s unconditional love for them.

As a result, in what we might term a “line extension” in time, prior to the eventual return of Yeshua the Messiah to rule and reign from Jerusalem—work to advance God’s Kingdom on Earth continues, with the spiritual impediments that the Holy One has sovereignly allowed. In light of the oracles of God which have been entrusted to and preserved by the Jewish people down through the millennia (Romans 3:2), humanity today has at the very least a vague roadmap for how the Almighty plans to exercise His will among the nations. With that in mind, this month’s lead article entitled, “2017: A Pivotal Year Ahead,” is an attempt to recognize that the Eternal One is a God of peace and not confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33), who at times allows His followers to obliquely through a mirror dimly (1 Corinthians 13:12), see His hands upon the levers of historical events. Personally, I believe this peek is for a “time such as this,” so that the encouragement received from prayers answered will elicit even greater prayers, and hopefully concrete actions in the days, weeks, months, and years to come before the Messiah’s ultimate return.

There is a huge volume of work to be undertaken, in order to complete God’s commission to every Believer to share the good news, and make disciples of those from every tongue, tribe, and nation. We must each individually ask the Creator God: *What did You create me for? How do You want me to accomplish Your purposes on Earth during my lifetime?*

For us at Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics, the answer has been consistent. **Dedicate your lives to serving Me, by helping Messianic people understand My ways and how I am restoring all things as promised** (Acts 3:19-21). Since 2002, our family has been intimately involved, in full time ministry, with the emerging and still-developing Messianic community of faith, as the Holy One has been working diligently to bring all of His people, Jewish and non-Jewish Believers, together as “one new man” or “one new humanity” (Ephesians 2:15). In particular, John McKee has been given significant intellect, spiritual maturity, and an incredible work ethic to produce articles, FAQ entries, books, commentaries, and audio and video podcasts for today’s Messianic people. I would encourage everyone to financially partnering with our efforts, as we certainly believe that the teachings we offer, will help today’s Messianic movement mature more rapidly.

With that in mind, may: **“The LORD bless you, and keep you; the LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace”** (Numbers 6:24-26).

Have a personally peaceful and spiritually fruitful 2017!
Mark Huey

2017

A PIVOTAL YEAR AHEAD

by Mark Huey

For the ardent student of the Bible, with an insatiable appetite to understand world history, and how humanity has traveled down through the annals of time, recent political events in the United States, coupled with geopolitical events around the globe, recognizably reflect God's sovereign hand upon the affairs of mankind. Certainly many astute observers, who are Believers in the Holy One of Israel—with the distinct benefit of the Holy Spirit or the Comforter/Teacher/Helper resident in the heart—can filter through the overwhelming input of true and false information, in order to discern what the Father is revealing to His children:

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you” (John 14:26).

During this time period through supplication and appeals to the Almighty One for His mercy, many in the faith community which calls upon the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through the beneficence of the accomplished work of Yeshua the Messiah, were led to read and contemplate an overabundance of opinions easily obtainable by access to the Internet. Prophecy teachers expounded eloquent theories, and predictive “words” were given by various people who generally claimed that they were “hearing from God” or “had a vision” about certain things which were on the horizon. Certainly, I would have to admit that I was especially excited to read how various voices were discerning a Cyrus-anointing (Isaiah 45) upon one of the U.S. presidential candidates, and I even began to pray and encourage others to ask for a Jehu-anointing on that same candidate (2 Kings 9-10). Thankfully, there are indications that these unique attributes appear to be evident to the next leader of the free world, even before the designated power to execute justice has been bestowed. Hence, the Biblical admonition to pray for those in authority (Romans 13), or soon to be, needs to continue by the faithful:

“First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, **for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”** (1 Timothy 2:2).

Nevertheless, from a Biblical perspective, the chosen of God down through the ages have always had challenges presented to them by nefarious forces seen and unseen. In fact, when one analyzes the recorded history of Israel in the Bible, there are distinct patterns recognizable by anniversaries which appear to affirm that the Lord is the Author and Perfecter of our faith

(Hebrews 12:2).

One obvious reoccurrence has been the events that have taken place on the Ninth of Av, which most notably include the destruction of the First and Second Temples on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. But according to Jewish history, the Ninth of Av, and the horrific things associated with it, actually began centuries earlier (1313 B.C.E.), when the twelve spies returned from Canaan on the Eighth of Av. On the Ninth of Av, the ten faithless spies gave a bad report which discouraged the Israelites fleeing from Egypt, resulting in forty years of wandering in the desert. This was followed by the destruction of the First Temple (423 B.C.E.) and the Second Temple (69 C.E.). Additionally, the Battle of Betar, the final butchering of Jews from the rebellion of Bar Kochba in 133 C.E., was also on this day. Much later, the expulsion of Jews from England in 1290 and Spain in 1492 both occurred on the Ninth of Av. And finally, the day that Germany declared war on Russia to begin World War I was on the Ninth of Av, 1914. Surely, the patterns realized on the Ninth of Av have made this a day to live in infamy down through the centuries in Jewish history. With this notable example, God has used some providential patterns on the annual calendar to remind people that He is in charge of what actually occurs or what He allows among the created order.

However, in addition to actual days on the Hebrew calendar, the Eternal God of Creation has also set in motion other time markers which occur less frequently, that we may be reminded of how He is a God of order who uses time as a means to establish patterns of behavior. Obviously, the seven-day week is a pattern set in motion. When one researches the history of the seven-day week, there is attribution sought by various ancient cultures in antiquity. Yet, for those who believe in the authority of the Holy Scriptures, it is clear that the seven-day week reflects back upon the account of Creation found in Genesis chs. 1-2. Failed attempts by post-revolution France in the late 1700s and the Soviet Union in the 1930s, to alter the seven-day calendar, did not prevail—and for the most part, both Western Civilization and the commercial world in general, have embraced and utilize the seven-day work week. There is variance among cultures as to what day is considered the first day of the week, but for the most part, in order to maintain proper order and transactional accountability, the seven-day week has become almost universally accepted in the Twenty-First Century.

Of course, a natural extension of the seven-day week found in the Holy Scriptures are patterns adopted for seven days, and even seven years. Recall the seven years of plenty versus the seven years of famine found in Genesis 41, when Joseph correctly interpreted Pharaoh's dreams. These critical events ultimately leading to the preservation of the children of Israel, foreshadowed the eventual codification of the Sabbatical year and the year of jubilee as recorded in Leviticus 25:

“The LORD then spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai, saying, ‘Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, “When you come into the land which I shall give you, then the land shall have a sabbath to the LORD. Six years you shall sow your

field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop, but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard. Your harvest's aftergrowth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a sabbatical year. All of you shall have the sabbath *products* of the land for food; yourself, and your male and female slaves, and your hired man and your foreign resident, those who live as aliens with you. Even your cattle and the animals that are in your land shall have all its crops to eat. You are also to count off seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years, so that you have the time of the seven sabbaths of years, *namely, forty-nine years*. You shall then sound a ram's horn abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall sound a horn all through your land. You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family. You shall have the fiftieth year as a jubilee; you shall not sow, nor reap its aftergrowth, nor gather in *from* its untrimmed vines. For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you. You shall eat its crops out of the field. On this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his own property"" (Leviticus 25:1-13).

In Ancient Israel there was a pattern established for the seven-year Sabbatical rest, a special time of release after seven sevens (forty nine) and then the year of jubilee on the fiftieth year. Today there is much contentious debate about what exactly are "years of jubilee." At this point in world history, Jewish and Christian theologians and scholars are not in agreement on the timing of the years, or even whether it is applicable for our modern setting. Nevertheless, yearly patterns do occur—and regardless of whether the Jewish year 5777 which began last Fall is a "jubilee year"—2017 (and 2018) will have some very significant anniversaries, falling into fifty, seventy, and one hundred year patterns.

Personally, because modern man has become accustomed to following the news cycles promoted by the increasingly ubiquitous Internet and social media feeds, I expect considerable opinionated outlets to make the world aware of events which directly affect Israel. After all, Zion has always been the apple of God's eye (Zechariah 2:8), and followers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob know that the nations of the world will constantly be at odds with God's chosen people and the plans He has for Israel. So let us examine some of the anniversaries which will be referenced in books, articles, governmental speeches, news media interviews, movies, and television in the coming months—which will keep Israel in the forefront of people's minds. After all, the God of Creation has made certain absolute promises regarding the restoration of Israel to the Promised Land, that He must eventually fulfill.

Consider, for example, the recent U.N. Resolution 2334 of 23 December, 2016, where in a speech from the U.S. State Department, Secretary of State John Kerry referenced the upcoming 120 year anniversary of the August 1897 First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. There, after the Congress adjourned, Theodore Herzl (the recognized father of modern Israel) on September 3, 1897, prophetically wrote in his diary:

"In Basel I founded the Jewish State...If I said this aloud today, I would be answered by universal laughter. Perhaps in five years, and certainly in fifty, everyone will agree."

Providentially, the nascent United Nations passed U.N. Resolution 181 on 29 November 1947 (almost fifty years to the day), which declared a partition of the region under the post-World War I British Mandate. The area which was known as "Palestine," actually became the territory for the formation of the modern State of Israel.

However, it was Secretary Kerry's reference to 120 years in his speech which caught my attention, primarily because of a verse spoken by God recorded after the Flood of Noah's time:

"Then the LORD said, 'My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years'" (Genesis 6:3).

As I pondered all of the striving which has taken place over the past 120 years (since 1897) regarding the Promised Land and the restoration of the Jewish people to their ancestral home, some historical patterns came to mind which were monumental anniversaries in fifty, seventy, and one hundred (2 times 50) year increments.

In the year 1917, there were two circumstances which were incredibly instrumental in allowing the Jewish people to return to the Promised Land in increasing numbers. The first was a letter written on 2 November, 1917 by Lord Arthur James Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, to Walter Rothschild, 2nd Baron Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community, for transmission to the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland. In a document that became known as the "Balfour Declaration," it was forthrightly stated.

His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

In November 2017, people in Israel, the worldwide Jewish community, and friends of Israel all over the world—most especially Messiah followers who understand God's promises to restore Israel to its historical land—will be recognizing the one-hundredth anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, and what it meant to the changing tides of history.

The second major event of 1917, for the restoration of Israel, occurred in December 1917, when General Edmund Allenby of the British Expeditionary Forces captured Jerusalem from the failing Ottoman Empire. For the first time in four hundred years, the ancient revered city of Jerusalem was no longer under the control of Arab, Muslim, or Turkish forces. Jews were allowed to return and live relatively peaceably in their ancient capital city. By 1922, the formal British Mandate was established by the League of Nations as a protectorate to maintain order in the region. The British Mandate of Palestine was the ad-

ministrative authority of the region from 1920-1948, but this period of time between the World Wars also obviously witnessed European powers vying for political and military dominance. With the end of World War I in 1918, the demise of the Ottoman Empire, the defeat of the German Empire and Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the communist revolution in Russia, the British and the French were in the best position to maintain order in the Middle East.

However, it was not until after World War II and the Holocaust with the defeat of Nazi Germany and the Axis powers, when on 29 November 1947, the United Nations agreed to U.N. Resolution 181 which formally declared a Jewish state and Arab state, with Jerusalem declared a *corpus separatum* or international city. The seventieth anniversary of this resolution will be taking place in the Fall of 2017, along with the one-hundredth anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. Needless to say, the news cycles will be filled with stories about these critical events which have impacted the history of the modern Middle East. *This is especially true as the enemies of Israel continue to try to delegitimize the State of Israel and its right to exist.* The proposed two-state solution, which is most contrary to the Bible, has been promoted with a vicious attempt in recent years via the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions or BDS Movement against Israel—something not only proposed by various countries against Israel, but is seeing increasing support in various sectors of evangelical Christianity.

But 2017 will also see another anniversary which compliments the defeat of the Turks and capture of Jerusalem by the British in 1917. 2017 will be the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of Jerusalem from the Jordanians following the Six Day War, on June 7, 1967. **(Do you see a pattern? 1917-50 years to 1967 -50 years to 2017. Are these potential jubilees? Or are they simply coincidences?)** On that day, the Israeli Defense Forces overwhelmed the efforts of the armies of Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon to defeat and destroy Israel. Instead, the God of Israel prevailed in miraculous ways, and the outmanned Israeli army had an incredible victory which sent their enemies back from the Golan Heights, across the Jordan River, the Gaza Strip, and even beyond the Suez Canal. The captured territories from this war established boundaries that were defensible. So, when the fiftieth anniversary of this implausible Israeli victory is recognized and celebrated, it will doubtlessly spark recriminations coming from the world at large, from those who want Israel to give back all of these lands. This, in fact, is what the recent U.N. Resolution 2334 has set in place for the coming year. Thankfully, we will have a new administration in government of the United States which has a completely different approach on how America should be handling its relationship with the State of Israel.

Please be mindful that these anniversaries, and all of the potential controversies that the nations and peoples of the world will generate to come against Israel—are merely a prelude to what will be taking place in May 2018 as the State of Israel celebrates its seventieth anniversary. Providentially, the one-hundredth anniversary of the conclusion of World War I will be remembered on November 11, 2018. Significant world events will be remembered simulta-

neously, with overlapping discussions in academia, among the intelligentsia, the media, in religious circles, and virtually everywhere with the omnipresent access of information to the mass of humanity.

I believe this will be an excellent time to be knowledgeable about these anniversaries and how they will impact Israel and the believing community at large, because I believe they reveal some aspect of the mysteries of God (Deuteronomy 29:29). Conversations will be plentiful by many who are searching for answers about what will be characterized as “controversial topics” which are harmful to global peace and security. As followers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Yeshua the Messiah—there will be ample opportunity to share the hope that is within us. The Apostle Paul put it this way:

“Of *this [assembly]* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching* of the word of God, *that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory.* We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Messiah. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me” (Colossians 1:25-29).

It is my prayer that 2017 will be a very special year for each of us, as we enter into this season when the subject of God and Israel will be on many hearts. I urge you to be equipped, because I believe the parable of the fig tree or Israel’s restoration, applies to us, given the series of anniversaries getting ready to take place. If that is so, then Yeshua’s warnings to His generation are apropos for us today:

“**But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.**’ Then He told them a parable: **‘Behold the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap; for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man’**” (Luke 21:28-36).

2017 will be a pivotal year for those with hearts prepared to share the hope that is within them. May we all be so ready, as we ask the Holy One to use each of us to advance His Kingdom on Earth, until the Messianic restoration of all things...

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS UPDATE

January 2017

Dear Friends:

In the days leading up to the close of 2016, I was diligently seeking and entreating the Lord



for an answer about how I was to proceed in 2017—and particularly proceed with the newfound time that has been granted to us as Messianic people, via the results of the U.S. presidential election. The answer that I received to my prayers was very clear, but for me personally, also was quite heavy: *You need to approach ministry as philanthropy, and you need to live your life as one giant tithe.*

One of the direct words of Yeshua to His Disciples was indeed, “Freely you received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8). While there are legitimate expenses that need to be taken care of in ministry and for one’s life (Matthew 6:25-33), the Lord hardly sent out His Disciples into the Mediterranean to establish hippodromes akin to some of the mega-churches that we see today. Ministry takes place as the spiritual and mental needs of men and women are answered, as the various situations present themselves—and those called to full time service decisively contribute to the objectives of the Kingdom! In my case, God has granted me significant gifts as they involve researching the issues of the day, and providing Messianic people with answers to some of their significant questions.

Today in 2017, these answers need to be “freely” provided—definitely provided “freely” in the sense that they are readily available, upon point of need. *For many, having such answers available might very well be a matter of continuing in Messiah faith, or denying Him.* As I have noticed throughout my social media interactions of 2016, there is a great deal of information floating around the Internet via the label of

“Messianic” or “Hebrew Roots,” which is going to do far more to confuse people than provide a fair resolution to legitimate questions and inquiries. Sitting on the sidelines is not going to do anything, if those who have a better approach just passively wait for people to visit their website. So, after a year in 2016 of getting my “feet wet” with some of the social media tools available to me via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest—and having redesigned websites compatible with all mobile devices—**what is my “vision” for the future?**

In no uncertain terms, I want the Messianic Apologetics website to be *a massive online depository of information and teaching, addressing the theological and spiritual issues of the broad Messianic movement*. I want every written article to have an associated audio or video teaching to be accessible with it. I want to be able to offer at least one new audio or video podcast for every four out of the seven days of the week. When people see a teaching from a sensationalist in an online venue such as YouTube, I want a Messianic Apologetics podcast to be listed right alongside it. *I want a completely free and open voice to speak about the issues which matter to today’s Messianic people, no matter how inconvenient they may be to the establishment, or how frequently we have dismissed them*. But most importantly, given the fragility of many in today’s Messianic world of ideas—I want to be a significant, stabilizing influence, as we enter into this final stretch of history before the Messiah’s return, with the 2020s soon on our doorstep.

Thank you for joining with us in these endeavors. Your support—be it simply following us on social media, receiving our e-mails, but most especially joining with us in your regular offerings and donations—**is really going a long way!**

Until next month...

J.K. McKee