

FROM OUR PASTOR

April 08, 2017

Warm Sabbath Greetings to Everyone,

Just two months away is an anniversary that will be celebrated by some, condemned by many, cause hatreds to flare, and will see calls for a new building of worship. June 7, 2017 will be the 50th year--or as some Jewish groups describe it "the Jubilee Year"--of the Israelis taking possession of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem for the first time since it was lost in 70 AD to the Romans. The story of the taking of East Jerusalem is quite remarkable. The war began on June 5th and within 48 hours the air forces of Egypt and Syria had been destroyed, and their armies in fast retreat. But Arab pride being what it is, President Nassar in Egypt told the world that his forces were winning and Israel was being destroyed. The deceived king of Jordan did not want to miss out on the spoils.

Sixdaywar.com gives this account: "Despite Israel's appeal to Jordan to stay out of the war, Jordanian forces fired artillery barrages from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Although Israeli forces did not respond initially, not wanting to open up a Jordanian front in the war, Jordan continued to attack and occupied UN headquarters in Jerusalem. Israeli forces fought back and within two days managed to repulse the Jordanian forces and retake eastern Jerusalem.

On June 7, 1967, IDF paratroopers advanced through the Old City toward the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, bringing Jerusalem's holiest site under Jewish control for the first time in 2000 years. There are sound recordings of the scene, as the commander of the brigade, Lt. General Mordechai (Motta) Gur, approaches the Old City and announces to his company commanders, "We're sitting right now on the ridge and we're seeing the Old City. Shortly we're going to go in to the Old City of Jerusalem, that all generations have dreamed about. We will be the first to enter the Old City..." and shortly afterwards, "The Temple Mount is in our hands! I repeat, the Temple Mount is in our hands!" General Rabbi Shlomo Goren, chief chaplain of the IDF, sounded the Shofar at the Western Wall to signify its liberation. To Israelis and Jews all over the world, this was a joyous and momentous occasion. Many considered it a gift from God."

Not wanting to bring Saudi Arabia and other nations into the fight, the Israelis decided to let the Jordanian Muslims keep control of the Dome of the Rock and El Aksa Mosque. Since that day there have been regular calls by various Jewish groups to demolish the two Muslim buildings and rebuild a Jewish Temple for sacrifices. There have also been reports in recent years of Arab digging and excavations below the buildings in an effort to remove historical evidence of previous Jewish ownership.

This year those wanting to build a new temple are increasing the pressure on the Israeli Government. The Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful Movement is urgently calling the government of Israel to "take brave historical Jubilee steps to mark the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Holy Temple and biblical Jerusalem."

Despite claims by some, the Bible does not predict a Jewish temple to be rebuilt prior to the return of Jesus Christ. It may or may not happen. The prophet Zechariah is very clear, though, warning that Jerusalem will be the focus of much political and military contention.

" Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. Zechariah 12:2-3" This coming June will see an anniversary like no other. One more reminder that we should pray daily to our Creator, "Your kingdom come, your will be done."

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