



May 2014



Menorah in front of the Knesset in Jerusalem

Shalom B'shem Yeshua!

A Month of Memorials

While we observed and celebrated one very significant event during the month of April—the Passover—there are five days of remembrance on the Hebrew calendar during the month of May. If we include Mother's Day, celebrated in the U.S. in May, we have six holidays this month.

The first two holidays which are celebrated in Israel in May begin with the word, "Yom," which means "day" in Hebrew. It has been our observation that the word "day" or "today" has a deeper significance in the Land of Israel than in our country. The Israelis know that they have "today," but never are sure about "tomorrow." Surrounded by enemies on all sides, Israelis always seem to have their joy tempered with a hint of sadness. While our Memorial Day is more about picnics, hot dogs, hamburgers, parades, pool openings and American flags, Israel's Memorial Day is a poignant reminder of the lost IDF soldiers who lived next door, or were family members. War, to most of us as Americans, is far away (except when our loved ones serve in the U.S. military)! War, to Israelis, is a daily reality—on their own soil, due to persistent terrorism.

Yom HaZikaron: May 5, 2014

Monday, May 5, 2014 is Israel's Memorial Day. It is a day of solemnity, a twenty-four hour memorial period. It is a day of honoring not only those who died in the War of Independence, but those who died in subsequent wars as well. Almost every Israeli has lost someone in the wars. Israelis visit the graves of those who died defending their country. They honor their dead in a very touching way.

In the morning of May 5, sirens will be sounded at the same time throughout the country of Israel. At that moment, EVERYONE—whether in cars, in the streets, at school, in factories, in shops—STANDS STILL for a minute of silent prayer. Imagine an entire nation doing that? We have been in Israel on Yom HaZikaron and participated in this country-wide memorial. VERY MOVING. At dusk, when the first stars appear, sirens sound again, indicating that mourning is over, and that the festivities of the next memorial, Yom Ha'Atzmaut, may begin.

Yom Ha'Atzmaut: May 6, 2014

Tuesday, May 6, 2014, is Israel's Independence Day. Being in Israel on this holiday is like experiencing Ps. 30:11 coming to life: *"You have turned for me my mourning into dancing."*

Yom Ha'Atzmaut commemorates the Israeli Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948. On this day, Jewish leadership, led by future Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, declared the establishment of the State of Israel (a Jewish state in *Eretz Yisrael*) to be "by virtue of our natural and historic right, on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly." Independence was declared eight hours before the end of the British Mandate of Palestine, due to terminate on May 15, 1948. This event was historic and biblical. The Jewish prophet Isaiah had foretold that a nation would be born in a day. Israel was! *"Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children."* (Is. 66:8)

A people who had been exiled from their homeland for two thousand years, who had endured countless persecutions and expulsions, somehow maintaining their identity, was now coming home—being regathered to their own country. The Land was being returned to those who, according to the Bible, hold the title deed! Unfortunately, their joy was short lived. The surrounding Arab states did not recognize the new Jewish state. Instead, the armies of five Arab nations purposed to annihilate it at its birth. God intervened on behalf of His People. Israel lived, despite all odds. Jews today rejoice over this victory, while their Arab neighbors call this holiday "al-Nakba"—"the catastrophe."

What do Israelis do? They celebrate! On the eve of Yom Ha'Atzmaut, the celebrations begin on Mt. Herzl in Jerusalem, with the lighting of twelve torches symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel. Dancing in the streets, fireworks, and outdoor entertainment begin. We have been there for it—Quite a celebration! The following day, the major event is a parade by the IDF. This is also the day for the annual International Bible Competition, "*Hidon Ha-Tanach*," in Hebrew. This competition, held in Jerusalem, gathers high school students from across the Jewish world to showcase their scriptural knowledge on national television. The Bible Quiz actually has its roots in early Zionism. Many of the Zionists of the 19th century viewed the Bible as the perfect model for Jewish national rebirth in its homeland. They rejected the Talmud as legalistic and restrictive, and chose to use the "first" Jewish book as their guide (from an article by Joshua Teplitzky on the internet).

David Ben Gurion consistently adopted messages from the Bible to describe the State's "destiny." He even held regular Bible studies in his home. In 1958, Ben-Gurion enthusiastically welcomed the creation of a *Hidon*—at first a Bible Quiz for adults. In 1963, on Yom Ha'Atzmaut, Israel held its first international Bible Quiz for Jewish youth. Ben-Gurion rejoiced to see "the spiritual parade alongside the military parade"—a fulfillment of the Zionist triad of a people, a land, and a book.

Yom Ha'Em: May 11, 2014

Sunday, May 11, 2014, is Mother's Day in the U.S.A. In Israel, Mother's Day is on Shevat 30—usually in the month of February. The Israeli celebration occurs on the date of the death of Henrietta Szold, a woman who, although she had no biological children, is considered a "mother" of many children. She began the organization "Youth Aliyah" which rescued Jewish children from Nazi Germany. As we celebrate Mother's Day in our country this May, let us remember that there are many women who have never been physical mothers, but spiritual nurturers, who have "saved" many lives through their love and prayers. Everyone had a natural mother. Our mothers loved us the best they could, but never the way many people wanted to be loved. There is only One—God—Who loves us with a perfect love. He tells us in His Word that we are to honor our mother (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16). Yeshua reaffirmed this commandment (Matt. 19:19), and demonstrated it through action, even as He hung on the tree. He said to His beloved disciple John, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home." (John 19:27) If your mother is still alive, honor her. If she is deceased, honor her memory. God will be pleased.

Second Passover: May 14, 2014

Wednesday, May 14, 2014, is a little-known holiday on the Hebrew calendar. It is *Pesach Sheni*, the Second Passover, and occurs one month after Passover. *Pesach Sheni* has a biblical basis. In the 9th chapter of the Book of Numbers, the Torah relates the circumstances that led to the institution of the "Second Passover": "*Now there were certain men who were defiled by a human corpse, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day [14th of Nissan]; and they came before Moses and Aaron that day. And those men said to him, 'We became defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of the LORD at its appointed time among the children of Israel?' And Moses said to them, 'Stand still, that I may hear what the LORD will command concerning you.'* Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, '*Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or is far away on a journey, he may still keep the LORD's*

Passover. On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it." (Numbers 9:6-12) God's grace. Did you miss Passover in April? You have a second chance in May! God is a God of second chances. You can invite others to a seder who missed the first one, or celebrate the Lord's Seder (communion) in your home with matzah and fruit of the vine (your choice).

The ones who missed the Passover of Nisan 14 voiced a cry of the heart that did not want to miss out on the special appointment (*moed*) with God. Some versions of the Bible translate their petition as, "*Why shall we be deprived?*" God responded to their yearning heart. He still responds to yearning hearts. He wants all His children to experience new life, deliverance, freedom, and redemption—through the blood of the Passover Lamb Yeshua! If we sincerely want to get things right with God, He will always make a way for us. He is not only the God of the second chance, but the third, fourth...

Lag B'Omer: May 18, 2014

Lag B'Omer is a minor Israeli holiday with an obscure origin. It is celebrated on the eighteenth day of the Hebrew month Iyar, which is May 18th this year. "Lag" is colloquial for the Hebrew letters lamed and gimel ל"ג, which numerically equal thirty-three. Thus, Lag B'Omer means the thirty-third day of counting the omer, a sheaf of grain tied together. Omer also means a specific measure of grain. The Torah (Lev. 23:10) instructs God's people to harvest the first omer of barley, the first grain to ripen in spring, at the end of the first day of Passover. This omer was to be brought to the Temple in Jerusalem. From that night onward, forty-nine days were counted (called "counting the omer"), and on the fiftieth day, Shavuot or the Festival of Weeks began. Counting the omer served to connect two major agricultural events in Israel—the barley harvest and the beginning of the wheat harvest.

Why is there a holiday on the thirty-third day? There are many theories, one of which is that it was initiated to provide a respite from the somberness of the fifty-day omer period (in Hebrew, *Sefirat HaOmer*) which is a period of semi-mourning. During the Omer period there are no marriages, parties, concerts, wearing of new clothes, or haircuts. Why the mourning? One theory is that, after the destruction of the second Temple people felt sadness when they could no longer bring their barley and wheat bread to the Temple. Somehow, the tradition took. However, there are other theories.

What everyone agrees upon is that prohibitions are lifted on Lag B'Omer. Scores of weddings occur on that day! Israelis also go to the woods and fields with their children, who play with bows and arrows and enjoy bonfires. Some Orthodox Jews include in the festivities of the day the first haircut for three-year-old boys.

Aren't you glad that in Messiah Yeshua we are able to rejoice every day? His joy is our portion in spite of circumstances. The New Covenant makes the difference. The Apostle Paul reminds us to... "*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Messiah Yeshua for YOU.*" (1 Thes. 5:16-18)

Yom Yerushalayim: May 28, 2014

Wednesday, May 28, 2014, is the final Israeli holiday in May. It is "Jerusalem Day," and begins at sundown on May 27. Yom Yerushalayim commemorates Jerusalem's reunification in 1967. After the Arab-Israeli War of 1948, the city was divided, with East Jerusalem, including the Old City and the Western Wall, controlled by Jordanian forces. In June of 1967, the Israelis, realizing that a massive coordinated attack on Israel by Syria, Jordan and Egypt was about to take place, made a preventative military attack on the Arab nations. This was called the Six Day War and was fought between June 5th and June 10th. The Israelis re-captured the Sinai, the Golan Heights and the West Bank of the Jordan River. Most importantly, the Old City of Jerusalem came under Jewish control once more. Jerusalem became a united city, as prophesied in Psalm 122:3: "*Jerusalem is built as a city that*

is compact together..." Rachmiel Frydland, of blessed memory, gave a modern translation of this verse: "Jerusalem will no more be a divided city, but one that is united together." That is exactly what happened in June, 1967. Tears flowed freely, as members of the IDF reached the Kotel, the Western Wall, to pray there for the first time in nineteen years.

The odds of victory, immensely stacked against Israel, were once more overruled by the sovereignty of the God of Israel. Jerusalem is His city. He says this over and over in the Holy Scriptures (1 Kin. 14:21; 2 Chron. 6:5-6; Is. 45:13; Is. 11:9; Ps. 2:6; Ps. 87:1-2; Ps. 132:13-14). It is the heart and soul of the Jewish people, not only in Israel, but worldwide. But Jerusalem is an end-time stumbling stone (Zech. 12:2-3) and the Arab Muslim cry that rang out in Jerusalem in 1967 is still heard today: Itbah Al-Yahud, "Slaughter the Jews."

The Jews can not be annihilated as a people because the Bible makes it clear that Yeshua will be welcomed back with Hebrew words: *Baruch haba b'shem Adonai* (Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord) (Matt. 23:37-39). Jerusalem can never be the capital of a Palestinian State because a Jewish Messiah would not return there (Zech. 14:4).

The Arab Muslims will never back down on their claim to Jerusalem because in the world of Islam, wherever the Muslim foot has once "trod triumphal," the land remains Islamic forever. If it is lost, it is a religious duty to wage war ceaselessly until it is recovered. The solution? The return of Yeshua to set up His throne in Jerusalem, the City of the Great King (Ps. 48:2)!

Last month, the Palestinian Authority (PA) reiterated its claim of Jerusalem as its capital, and its demand that Israel withdraw from all land liberated in the 1967 Six Day War. On April 6, 2014, Jerusalem's Mayor Nir Barkat made the following comments: "Jerusalem is a prosperous, well-maintained and well-ordered place that provides good living conditions for everyone, Israeli and Arab—and the Arab residents of the city know it. The future is better for the Arabs with a united Jerusalem. They are invited to take part in it with us."

Thousands of Israelis will travel to the city of Jerusalem on May 28 to demonstrate solidarity with the city. Yom Yerushalayim has gradually become a "pilgrimage" day, with many Israelis hiking to Jerusalem. In schools throughout Israel the entire week before the holiday is dedicated to teaching about the history and geography of the city. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will have the last word on Jerusalem. Until then, the "situation" remains. *"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!"* (Ps. 122:6)

Remembering Zion, God's Chosen City,

Neil & Jamie

Jewish Jewels Television Airtime Schedule - May 2014

LOCAL TV STATIONS

<u>AIRTIME:</u>	<u>STATE:</u>	<u>CITY:</u>	<u>STATIONS:</u>
TUE 6:00 PM	AK	North Pole	KJNP TV 4
MON 10:00 PM	FL	Tampa/St. Pete.	WCLF TV 22
THU 11:30 AM	FL	Miami/Ft. Laud.	WHFT TV 45
SUN 1:30 PM	FL	Tallahassee	WVUP TV 45
SAT 10:30 PM	FL	West Palm Beach	WFGC TV 61
SUN 2:30 PM	GA	Columbus	WYBU TV 16
SUN 1:30 PM	IA	Dubuque	KFXB TV 40
THU 6:30 AM	ID	Twin Falls	KJCY TV 38
SUN 1:30 PM	MO	New Bloomfield	KNLJ TV 25
THU 8:30 AM	NC	Goldsboro	WHFL TV 43
SUN 4:00 PM	NJ/NY	NYC/New Jersey	WMBC TV 63
THU 5:30 AM	OR	The Dalles	KRHP TV 14

SATELLITE NETWORKS (EST)

DirecTV

SUN 4:00 PM Ch. 93 or 900 - WMBC

FRI 8:30 PM Ch. 376 - CTN (Christian Television Network)

MON 11:30 PM Ch. 371 - Church Channel

Dish Network

FRI 8:30 PM Ch. 376 - CTN (Christian Television Network)

MON 11:30 PM Ch. 258 - Church Channel



CABLE NETWORKS (EST)

AT&T U-Verse

MON 11:30 PM Ch. 565 - Church Channel

For other cable networks check local listings....

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