

Jerusalem Day { יום ירושלים } Yom Yerushalayim

Written by Hannah Neshar www.voiceforisrael.net

“Proclaim this word: This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘I am very jealous for Jerusalem and Zion...I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and there my house will be rebuilt...‘My towns will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and will again choose Jerusalem.’” (Zechariah 1:14-17)

On Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day), all of Israel, and especially the inhabitants of Jerusalem, celebrate the reunification of Jerusalem and the re-establishment of Israeli control over the Old City in June 1967 after the Six Day War.

This day was declared a national and minor religious holiday by The Chief Rabbinate of Israel to publicly praise God for giving Israel the victory in the Six-Day War.

Finally, after 2,000 years, the fervent prayer of *"Next Year in Jerusalem"* had been answered. Jerusalem has always remained central to the heart and soul of the Jewish people.

In 1978, at the Camp David ‘peace talks’, US president Jimmy Carter pressured Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin to sign a document stating that he would agree to put the final status of Jerusalem on the bargaining table. Begin refused, explaining to the American president, “I understand that we may sacrifice a limb to save an entire body. But Jerusalem is Israel’s heart, the focus of our mission.”¹



[David Rubinger's](#) photograph of [IDF](#) paratroopers at [Jerusalem's Western Wall](#) shortly after its capture. From left to right: Zion Karasenti, Yitzhak Yifat, & Haim Oshri

As the Psalmist declared, **"If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill! If I do not remember you, let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth - If I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy."** (Psalm 137:5-6)

Times of the Gentiles Fulfilled?

Jerusalem has been conquered by many foreign nations over the centuries; but God in His mercy has restored Jewish sovereignty over the city of Jerusalem. What does this mean to non-Jewish

¹ <http://www.jpost.com/Not-Just-News/Jerusalem-Day-City-of-peace-403116>

followers of Yeshua outside the Land of Israel? This event could be extremely significant in the prophetic timetable - it could mean that the *'Times of the Gentiles'* has been fulfilled and that we are very close to Yeshua's return. Halleluyah!

As it is written, "**Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**" (Luke 21:24)

Scripture also tells us that a partial hardening (or blindness) will remain upon the Jewish people until this 'time of the Gentiles' has come into its fullness: "**Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.**" (Romans 11:25)

This is exciting because more Jewish people have come to faith in our Messiah Yeshua since 1967 than in all the years prior to this key time in history when Jerusalem was delivered back into Jewish hands.

L'hashlim – To Restore

A word within the name Yerushalayim **ירושלים** is l'hashlim **להשלים** which means *'to complete, reconcile or restore'*. If something is in need of completion or restoration, it must mean that something is missing, damaged or destroyed and in need of repair or rebuilding.

Jerusalem has been destroyed by conquering nations and re-built forty times! In fact, the Old City of Jerusalem today sits upon hundreds of feet of rubble – the ruins of its former destruction.



[Stepped Stone Structure](#) in [Ophel/City of David](#)

The story of Jerusalem is the story of all humanity. God is in the business of completing, restoring and rebuilding; He takes that which is broken or ruined and makes it whole and complete once again.

In the book of Joel, God promises to restore that which the locust have eaten (Joel 2:25).

In the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) Yeshua tells us of a son who became totally broken, having squandered his inheritance on wine, women and song; and yet his father (Abba) restored him to the family as a beloved son. This is a picture of God's grace and power to restore.

When God heals and restores, He doesn't just bring us back to our original condition; but He heals us and makes us whole and complete in new ways. No matter what we have done or what we have been through that has brought us to a state of ruin; God is our loving Heavenly Father who is faithful to His Word. His grace is bigger than our mistakes, failures and setbacks.

Opposition and Resistance – Those who Refuse to Join the Party

The people of Israel are rejoicing over the restoration of Jerusalem; but like the older brother in the story of the Prodigal son, there are some who do not wish to join in the party. Although many people will be singing, dancing and rejoicing in Israel on Jerusalem Day, not everyone is so happy about it and tensions run high in the Holy City on this day.



A petition by left-wing groups to prevent the traditional flag-bearing march to parade through the Muslim quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem was rejected by the High Court of Justice. A left-wing organization called “*Jerusalem Won’t Tolerate Racism*” is planning a counter demonstration to the march of flags through the Holy City.² Some Israelis hand out flowers to Arab residents of the Old City and East Jerusalem as a gesture of goodwill – to show them “*the beautiful face of Judaism.*”

Hundreds of Israeli police stand guard ‘just in case’ violence breaks out with some Arabs as it has in previous years. Despite the threat of violence, the annual flag carrying procession parades through the Old City including the Muslim Quarter in order to reach the Western Wall Plaza.



² Tensions high ahead of polarizing Jerusalem Day march, Haaretz News, May 17th, 2015

There, great celebrations are held including speeches by Israeli dignitaries; and joyful music, dancing and singing. The large majority of people (mainly youth) who participated in this march are not demonstrating against the Arabs; but rather sing and dance joyfully because of their love for this special city - Jerusalem.



Jewish youth gather outside Damascus gate on 'Jerusalem Day,' May 17, 2015 (photo: MARC ISRAEL SELLEM/THE JERUSALEM POST)

The meaning of the names of Jerusalem

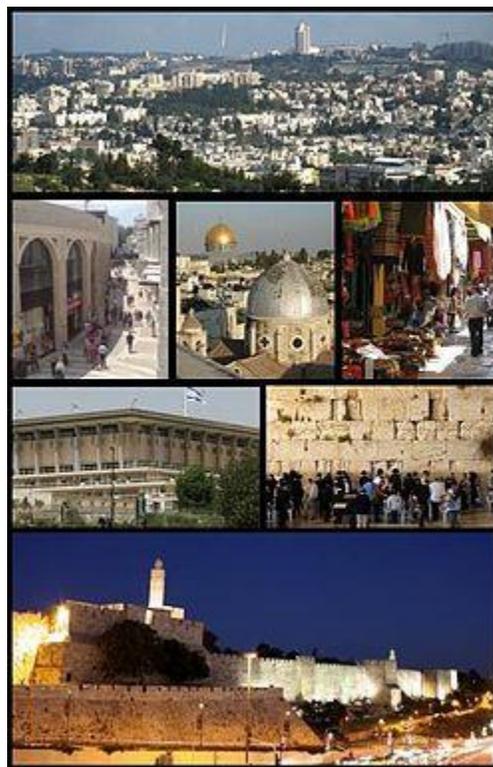
Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) has several other names in Scripture. Some of these include:

Ir T'filah (City of Prayer) "Pray for peace of Jerusalem. May all who love this city prosper." (Psalm 122:6)

Ir Ha'olamim (Eternal City) The 'New Jerusalem'

Ir Hakodesh עיר הקודש (Holy City) & Kalah Yafah (Beautiful Bride) "I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband." (Revelation 21:2)

Zion – used over 150 times in the Bible. Tziyon, ציון related to the word m'tzuyan מצוין (excellent)!



Ir Hanetzach נצח (City of Victory/ forever and ever) The word netzach means both victory and forever.

Ir David (City of David) עיר דוד “So David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing.” (2 Samuel 6:12)

Ir Eloheinu (City of our God) “Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised, in the city of our God, His holy mountain.” (Psalm 48:1)

Ir Neamanah (Faithful City) “Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City.” (Zechariah 8:3)

Ariel אֶרִיאֵל (Lion of God) “Ah, Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped! Add year to year; let the feasts run their round.” (Isaiah 29:1)



Lion of Judah emblem of Jerusalem

Ir Shalom (City of Peace) Yeru means “city” in ancient Semitic languages and Shalem means “peace” (wholeness).

City of Peace

In Israel today, Jerusalem seems a far cry from a ‘city of peace’. She is so often characterized by strife, division and violence; and yet peace (shalom) is her destiny.

Israeli people often greet one another with this word – SHALOM! שלום

But what does ‘shalom’ really mean? And how does this word give us a **prophetic word about the destiny of the city of Jerusalem itself?**

Shalom! Greetings! Hello.... Goodbye... peace. This common Hebrew word, with all its hidden meanings, is full of rich nourishment for our souls from the sap of the Hebraic olive tree.

Yeshua (Jesus) used this greeting when he appeared to His disciples after His resurrection. On Yom Rishon (the first day of the week), Yeshua appeared to the disciples who were assembled and said, “**Shalom lachem**” (greetings or peace to you - plural). (John 20:19)



We also say shalom when saying goodbye to someone, unless of course we want to say rather, ‘see you later’ (l’hitraot). So people have just cause to claim that we Israelis don’t really know if we’re coming or going! ☺

Shalom, besides also meaning peace, carries within its root (shalem) שלם the concept of ‘completeness, wholeness, or perfection’. The Hebrew name of Jerusalem, Yerushalayim, contains this root also; therefore, within the very name of the Holy City of God lies hidden a prophetic promise!

Yir'u = they will see - and shalem = wholeness, completion, and perfection.

Amidst all the turbulence and strife that characterizes today's Jerusalem, when will its inhabitants see this promise of shalom come to pass? The people of Jerusalem will see this perfection, wholeness and completeness in Messiah, Yeshua at His second coming.

One day they will see Him come in the clouds; they will look upon Him whom they pierced, recognize Him as their true Messiah and mourn for Him as one mourns for an only Son. (Zechariah 12:10) Then there will be true shalom, peace, wholeness.

The ending of the word Yerushlayim, indicates a plurality in Hebrew. For example, a boy, is ‘yeled; but ‘boys’ (plural) is yeladim. Why the plural ending? It is for two reasons:

- 1) There are two cities of Jerusalem – the modern capital of Israel and the New Jerusalem above which is eternal.
- 2) There will be two appearances of the ‘perfect one’, the Messiah, Yeshua. He came once and He will come again.

Also contained within the name of Yerushalayim is Y-R-Sh (ישר) which means ‘*inheritance*’. “A Psalm of Asaph. O God, the nations have come into your inheritance; they have defiled your holy temple; they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.” (Psalm 79:1)

Besides these, the root of shalom contains yet another meaning. “L’shalem” לשלם, means ‘to pay’. Thus we can more fully understand Yeshua's words as He died on the cross. **“So when Jesus (Yeshua) had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave us His spirit”.** (John 19:30)

In Hebrew, which is most likely the language he spoke as his native tongue, Yeshua likely said, “Nishlam” , נשלם

From the above explanation, we can understand more fully his last words to us. Not only was He saying, “It is finished”; but also, “It is completed, wholly perfected, and PAID IN FULL.”

What did He fully pay for with His death on the cross? The price required by the God of justice for all of our sins. The Cohen Hagadol (High Priest) used to stand in the temple, ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which could never fully remove the sins of the people.

“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” (Hebrews 10:11-14)

In Him, we have become ‘shalem’ –whole, perfect and complete. Halleluyah! Ben-Yehuda’s pocket English-Hebrew dictionary also includes the following definitions: *‘full, sound, safe, healthy, to be safe; to be at peace’*. Now we may receive these characteristics that Yeshua has already paid for.

In Israel, after greeting someone with the word, Shalom, we then usually go on to ask,

“Mah Shlomech?
(feminine form)

or mah shlomchah (masculine)?”

This also derives from the root, (shalem), and translates literally as ‘What is your welfare?’

In other more common words, however, we usually mean, “How are you doing?”

Usually this is a routine, casual greeting, not an expression of our genuine interest in the welfare of the person. We have all probably had the experience of answering this question honestly when we are not feeling so great, only to have them withdraw in alarm or confusion.

Or sometimes we ask someone how they are doing and, after listening to their tale of woe for several minutes, are not so glad that we even asked! We usually expect people to simply reply, okay (B’seder) or good (tov), even if we’re not really so okay or so good.

What is even worse is for no one to even care enough to ask, “Mah shlomech or mah shlomchah”? Some people are so isolated, withdrawn, and discouraged. To feel that no one cares about our welfare whatsoever, even to ask at the most casual level, ‘*How are you?*’ is indeed a profoundly lonely and painful state of being.

I have thought, at times, that being a single mom can mean going on a forty day fast and no one even notices! ☺ At times like these, we can feel forgotten, forsaken, and abandoned. We may wonder if anyone really cares? Does God even care?

Zion has, at times, felt like this in her times of distress: **“But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me.”** (Isaiah 49:14)

God has not forsaken Zion; as a mother comforts her tender babe, so does the Lord comfort and reassure Zion, **“Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you.”**(Isaiah 49:15)

God holds up His palms for her to see the visual evidence of His eternal love, **“See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your wall are continually before Me.”**(Isaiah 49:16)

We like to apply this Scripture to ourselves, personally; but in actuality, God is speaking this Word specifically towards the people and land of Zion. God will never forsake His inheritance, despite her sins. This stands as evidence of His faithfulness and His amazing grace.

“For Israel is not forsaken nor Judah, by his God, the Lord of hosts, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.” (Jeremiah 51:5)

The Hebrew word used here is not ‘forsaken’, as in the former Scripture, but refers to ‘widowhood’. Israel is not a widow; the Lord is still her bridegroom and is very much alive. God’s promises for His Bride are so wonderful:

“Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, so that no one went through you, I will make you an eternal excellence, a joy of many generations...”

Violence (Hamas in Hebrew) shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction within your borders; But you shall call your walls Salvation (Yeshuah), and your gates Praise (T’hilah)” (Isaiah 60:15&18)

When will this glorious day come? When the Lord returns to be to us an everlasting light and our God our glory, the days of our mourning will be ended. How we look to that day! We are to say to the daughter of Zion, Surely your salvation is coming! (Isaiah 62:11)

“You (Zion) shall no longer be termed forsaken (Azuvah), nor shall your land any more be termed desolate; but you shall be called Hephzi-bah (my delight is in her), and your land Beulah (married), for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married...” (Isaiah 62:4-5)

God is eternally married, not only to the people of Israel, but also to the Land. We must not forget these prophetic promises. Not only do they encourage us personally in the faithful, unchangeable, amazingly merciful character of our Redeemer, but they give us a glimpse into the window of the future to see God’s plan for Israel and for the nations.

" Adonai ...declares: 'I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves'" (Zechariah 12:2-3).



Israeli children trying to move rock on display at Jerusalem Science museum

Jerusalem will be the focal point of this coming world conflict. A Messianic rabbi gave me this explanation for why living in Jerusalem is such a continual battle, even more so than the rest of Israel. He said, "*The enemy, hasatan, sends his emissaries all over the world to do his bidding, but Jerusalem - he watches over himself.*" It is his intention to one day take the Messiah's rightful place on the throne of David in Jerusalem - to set himself up in the temple and proclaim himself God." (2Thessalonians 2:4).

Jerusalem may still be full of strife as nations fight and argue over who will get a piece of her; and much weeping goes on because of the continual terrorist attacks in Jerusalem; but God's Word promises that one day, the people of Israel will truly rejoice, and no longer weep on the streets.



Jewish woman grieving over the loss of a loved one

"I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying." (Isaiah 65:19)

Until this wonderful day, we have much work to do for the Lord – to keep watch over Jerusalem and to call upon Adonai to fulfill His promises for her:

"I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night, You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, and give him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth." (Isaiah 62:6-7)

A friend of mine tried to describe the electrified atmosphere and the incredible noise of the fans at his favorite football team's games. But I was thinking that even this kind of cheering cannot compare to that which will be experienced in Jerusalem when the Messiah returns.



He will come down to fight for Mount Zion and to defend Jerusalem. Indeed, it will be another Passover (in Hebrew the word is Pesach). **"So will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem. Defending, He will also deliver it; Passing over, He will preserve it."** (Isaiah 31:5)

And so, in the midst of all this political, religious, and spiritual tension here in Jerusalem, we have much to be hopeful about, much to look forward to, and much to petition the Lord to fulfill regarding this city that He calls His dwelling place forever!

God says of Zion, **"And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you."** (Isaiah 62:5)

There will come a day when God will restore all things: **"A song shall be heard in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. A voice of joy and a voice of gladness; a voice of the bride and a voice of the bridegroom."** (Jeremiah 33:11)



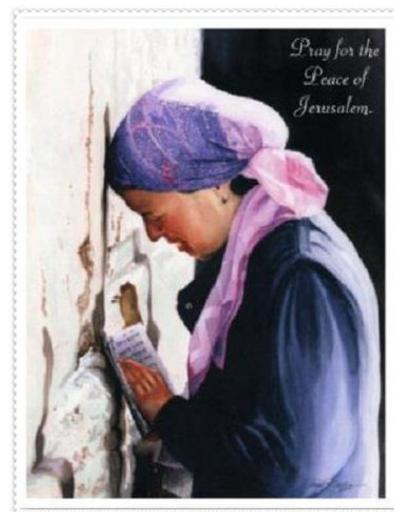
Jewish wedding (photo: Go Israel)

Pray for the Peace (Shalom) of Jerusalem

We are so thankful to those who pray for the peace (shalom) of Jerusalem. **"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May they prosper who love you."** (Psalm 122:6)

Some churches participate in the international 'Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem' prayer initiative where Christians all over the world gather this one day specifically to pray for Jerusalem. This is good; it is wonderful that God's people in the nations are praying for Israel and Jerusalem in particular.

The Hebrew Scripture, however, does not use the word 'to pray' (l'hitpalel) in this instance; but rather 'to ask': **"*Shaal*u sh'lom Yerushalayim"** **Sha'al** is a word meaning 'ask or inquire.'



"Ask/ inquire about the welfare (sh'lom) of Jerusalem."

What does this mean to God's people from the nations of the world? It means that they are to inquire, "*Mah Shlomech?*" – to ask, "*Hey! How are you guys doing over there?*"

Israel needs to know that someone cares; that she is not utterly forgotten and forsaken. We know that God loves us; but often He uses people in the flesh to bring us the message.

We thank God for the love, prayers and generous support of God's faithful remnant in the nations. It is so encouraging to hear, "*How are you guys doing? Is there anything you need? How can we pray for you?*"

May you be blessed and prosper, you who love Jerusalem and Zion.



Sign at Garden Tomb, Jerusalem

God has given a united Jerusalem back to the Jewish people; He is restoring that which was lost. Everything we see in this nation – the thriving economy, agriculture, democratic political system, education and health care – these are all miracles and testimonies to God's amazing grace and awesome power.



‘Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls because of the multitude of men and cattle within it. For I,’ declares the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’” (Zechariah 2:4-5)

This is just the beginning, however; there is a greater and even more miraculous restoration to come – the spiritual restoration of Zion and Jerusalem which will take place once the Jewish people are back in the Land.

“For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.” (Ezekiel 36:24-28)

One day God will turn the hearts of His people back to Himself. How we long for that day; but until it arrives comes, let us stand strong together for a united Jerusalem. We warmly welcome you to come join with us in the celebrations. Let us rejoice - for that which was divided, lost, broken, ruined and destroyed has been redeemed, restored and re-built.

There is nothing in our lives that God cannot restore. He will complete (l'hashlim) the good work He has started in us. Halleluyah! Let us stand upon His promises:

“Kol Yisrael Yivashah (All Israel will be saved!); as it is written,

**“THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION,
HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.”**

**“THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM,
WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.”**

(Romans 11:26-27)



“Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” declares the LORD. “Many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that



the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. The LORD will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.” (Zechariah 2:10-12)

Shalom, shalom Jerusalem, Peace be to you,

When Messiah comes to take us home, May His praise be found in you.³

³ Paul Wilbur, [Shalom Shalom Jerusalem](#), Hosanna!Music

About the Author:

Hannah Neshar grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and received her education in a religious Hebrew school in Canada.

During a crisis pregnancy, she came to know Jesus (Yeshua) as her Messiah and Savior. She now lives in Israel with her children and grandchildren, teaching the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.

If you appreciate these teachings, your donations are greatly appreciated. It is through your generous financial and prayer support that we can continue to send the Word forth from Zion and Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3).

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