

Pray God's church and your country REPENT

Moses, Samuel, Jeremiah, Paul, Yeshua, Nehemiah... so many did!

by Philip Shields

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Summary: Preparing the last message – on being a Jonah or a Matthew – helped start this sermon. Philip gives clear signs if you're a Jonah or not. The books of Revelation, Daniel and the prophets have all been written. The time of great wrath is nearly here. Is it too late for our nation to repent? It's time we pray for that. I'll show you it's not too late for that. But where we start in our prayer is also all-important.

KEY words: national repentance, the Mark of Yahweh, Daniel's Prayer, Moses' prayers, praying for our country, sighing and crying, Nehemiah's prayer. As a hen gathers chicks. Jonah and Nineveh.

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Welcome brothers and sisters in the family of believers, who proclaim the true God in the Highest – Yahweh Most High – as our Father, and Yeshua (or Jesus the Christ) as our Savior, Master and King. This is Philip Shields with another message from Light on the Rock, where our focus is on building close relationships with Yahweh, Yeshua and with fellow mankind – especially in our marriages and families.

STORY of my recent email about Pittsburgh

A week ago – **around January 16-17**, I received an email from a religious group stating that someone there had had a vision or revelation from God. In this revelation, they saw Pittsburgh being destroyed in a huge fireball and massive destruction on January 19, 2012. It was very detailed and graphic in what exactly was to happen on January 19. I was totally stunned by the brazenness of this and did not bother mentioning it to anyone, not even my wife, because I didn't believe it and gave it no thought. Except, except for maybe 2 seconds it did cross my mind, "what if they were given a vision? What's my responsibility?"

But I had also been reading in Jeremiah how Yahweh warned against religious leaders who claimed to be speaking for Him; who claimed God had given them words to repeat to us.

I pray for inspiration, but I do not claim that I'm imparting any kind of vision or that I heard a mysterious voice telling me to tell you all something. No, not me. And I dismissed the email.

Well on Tuesday the 24th of January, I received another email from the same group, apologizing and repenting for missing something. That was fine as far as it went, but it went on to say how they felt very badly for giving HOPE to so many, and that HOPE had not materialized. That made me angry to read that!

"HOPE?" Hoping that Pittsburgh was going to be vaporized and disappointed when this great false prophecy didn't materialize? Someone was *disappointed* that that hadn't happened? Are you kidding me? I emailed them a reply to say that they were vocalizing the

epitome of the Jonah Syndrome – disappointed that hundreds of thousands weren't vaporized with their city. It's almost surreal. That's not like the people of God should be.

Brethren, that attitude is not of my Yahweh or yours. Remember when **James and John** wanted to call down fire from heaven to vaporize a town that had refused them lodging? Yeshua warned them – that's not My Spirit, and you know not what spirit you're of! **(Luke 9:51-56)**. "The Son of Man did not come to destroy lives but to save them."

I bring this up because I get the sense – and have for a long time – that there's almost a secret GLEE among some conservative Christians and Messianics when we see great tsunamis, earthquakes, disasters, tornadoes in places that don't usually have them – because somehow this is showing we're real close to the time of the end, to the Flight to the Place of Safety, or some believe the false teaching of the "Rapture" *before* the Tribulation – and there seems to be a secret perverse *glee* over these horrors as they happen.

Brothers and sisters, you heard me: that is perverse. It is not of my Father's spirit. Yah says, "WOE to you who desire – look forward to – the Day of the Lord" (or Day of Yahweh) – Amos 5:18. Woe to you! You know what a "woe" is? It's a curse.

That attitude clearly is being "a Jonah". If you haven't heard last Sabbath's sermon, be sure to hear it: "Are you a Jonah or a Matthew". That sermon helped inspire this one: **ARE YOU and I acting like a Jonah when it comes to Prophecy?**

Jonah was finally willing to preach the warning message, but only after was first vomited out. Remind you of anyone in Revelation 3? And, based on Jonah's reaction when Yahweh spared Nineveh when they repented, I can't imagine Jonah ever prayed for or *hoped* for Nineveh's repentance!

Now here's my question: Would YOU have prayed for Nineveh's repentance?

We know Yonah didn't preach repentance, but would you have prayed for their repentance, even as you preached to them? Or would you have been "a MATTHEW" inviting them to come to better know, to intimately come to know our amazing Abba, our Father Most High who is SO loving, SO merciful, SO encouraging, SO patient with us? I know, I know, I've experienced His amazing forgiveness, 2nd -3rd chances He has given me to get my life right. I know, I know – I've experienced firsthand His spankings, but I've also experienced his long quiet hugs after the spanking, assuring me of His unquenchable love for me – and for you.

Any of you who have ever deeply repented after your sins know what I'm talking about. So why would we have any sense of glee over God's spankings about to happen?

So, again, would you have prayed for Nineveh's repentance and forgiveness?

You'll know the answer by answering this question: Have you been praying for your country's repentance wherever you live – whether Australia, Britain, Canada, Philippines, Netherlands or the USA or wherever you live?

Nineveh was given 40 days. We know that Yahweh is going to come with strong discipline for the whole world, starting with his own people. I suspect He will start with His children, the "church" or *ekklesia*, based on what I read in Revelation to the 7 churches. Then He'll

spank the modern descendants of physical Israel and the nation called Israel in the Middle East. After that, He'll go after the Gentile nations until the whole world will know there is an Elohim, a God in heaven whose name is Yahweh, who rules heaven and earth and has come to take over the reins of power through His son Yeshua.

That's what we're talking about today. Frankly I've heard no end of sermons about what's going to happen in the end time, and there's almost a self-righteous glee to think we have some inside knowledge. But I haven't been hearing a lot of (or any?) sermons over the years urging brethren to be praying that our nations repent.

Could that be because we *are* like Jonah – and assume the world is past repentance, as they are so wicked? Have we so minimized the power of God's Spirit to work and to change whole nations, if he can change human beings one at a time who have been sinners? And yes, I know something about that. And I hope you do too.

Is it because we assume that since we have the detailed books of Daniel and Revelation and all the prophets and apostles' prophecies – that surely *it's too late* for even Yahweh Himself to change any of it. The dye is cast we say, the script has been written, the play has begun, the orchestra's playing – and it's too late! Is that what you think? I believe so!

The evidence clearly shows many of the *ekklesia* (called-out ones) believe it's too late for Yahweh to change His mind now; too late even if His people plead for their own forgiveness first, and then the forgiveness of His called-out ones, and then the forgiveness of our nations. That's what you really think, don't you!?

And that makes you a Jonah, if you think like that.

Well, in this teaching I want to challenge that thinking. I don't want to be a Jonah. I don't want to assume our peoples can't repent in enough numbers and fervency to change the course of history. I don't want to assume that we can't see a repeat of the story of Nineveh and how Yahweh changed His mind and did not destroy the city.

In this teaching I also want to challenge you with this question: **when have you ever prayed for your countrymen – for your whole country – to repent, and for Abba to be merciful to them?**

My Mom's prayer

When I was about 14 or so, I'll never forget hearing my Mom sobbing in her bedroom I knocked quietly and opened the door slowly and peered in, to see my Mom kneeling beside her bed, sobbing.

I slowly went in, inched my way beside her, and asked, "Mom, are you OK? What's the matter?" She had gone through a horrific divorce, was trying to raise 4 kids on her own, but I had no idea what was bothering her so. She sighed. "Philip, I'm just begging God please be merciful to our nation. It just pains me so much to see the way we are, the way we treat Him, and to know what's going to come on our nation because of our sins. I was just praying that our Father would lead our nation to repentance so he could forgive us and all the things we know are going to happen, maybe wouldn't have to happen."

I'll never forget that moment. Other than that moment, I can't recall anyone else who urged people to pray that our Abba lead his people – in a national way - to repentance and forgive their sin. There have been glimmers of it by some during the National Day of Prayer that we still observe every May. I'm sure someone has and I've just missed it. But other than that, I can't say I've seen much of it, and certainly not among the COG groups.

So back to my question: IS IT too late for our peoples to repent and for Yahweh to STOP the carnage He has prophesied is about to happen? And what if God's people would pray for the nation? Would HE hear those prayers? Would they have any impact?

Already many of you are probably thinking I'm wacko. I'm not. I know my Father. He is a merciful God who sometimes very *quickly* forgives and foregoes some of the punishment He was considering. Even wicked **King Ahab** got a reprieve (**1 Kings 21:25-29**). **King Manasseh** – very evil – when he humbled himself was also forgiven and restored to his position as a king, albeit a vassal king (**2 Chron. 33:10-13**). And again, Yahweh *changed* His mind for evil **Nineveh** when they repented (**Jonah 3:5-10**).

What would it mean if enough of our people would repent? And if God changed His mind? We'd all have to throw away all our prophecy charts some have worked so hard on. What if we didn't have to go through the total devastation that is prophesied on the whole world?

SOME of you think that because you're counting on escaping all these things that are about to happen, you don't care about this subject. You're SO relying on the Place of Safety to save your skin that you forget we may well have to go through much more than we first realize now *before* we go to any place of Safety.

And, if you're trying to save your own skin, you'll lose It, Yeshua says (Luke 17:33). I'll be showing from scripture how if we don't care about the people around us, we won't be part of those counted worthy to escape the coming wrath either. So this sermon is about showing we really care for everyone around us.

I don't think that even 1% of God's people are anywhere near ready mentally or in any other way, including me, for the total upheaval of every system we know: our economic system, religious freedoms, value of our money, the availability of edible food, and availability of clean drinking water, our government, our roads, our homes, our cities, our jobs – even our very friends – all of this is will be impacted totally. We will *all* be going through far more of this than I think we realize – *even if we go to a Place of Safety*. I'll speak on that more in upcoming sermons.

WHAT I'M NOT saying...

Don't read things into my statements. I do believe Yahweh's words are SURE. I'm NOT saying we shouldn't take His words very, very seriously. I'm not saying He'll postpone His wrath over and over. In many scriptures – see **Ezek. 12:21-27** – Yahweh makes it clear the time is coming when the final countdown of events start happening and He's not likely to be dissuaded.

Neither am I saying our Father is a softie. Scripture is clear that our Father is a most compassionate, forgiving, patient God over all – but it's also clear that though He is slow to

wrath, but when He *does* get angry, it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God (Heb. 10:31). I *am* saying that it's very clear to me that the Father's patience has just about run out. I've been reading the books of Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel lately – and in those books it is so clear that He wants us to know in the last days *He is really, really ticked off with His people – starting with those at the Sanctuary. Guess who that is.*

So I am NOT saying that the likelihood of national repentance is high.

- But it is clear that repentance is possible and even sought and preferred by Yahweh, as I'll show.
- It is clear our Elohim does not delight in the death of the wicked.
- It is clear He would rather have our repentance – and to forgive us – than to punish us.
- It is CLEAR that His heart is set on His children and chosen people. It is clear we have not only angered our Maker, but have really HURT His feelings by the callous way we have treated Him – after all He has done for us. In some future sermon I will read the dozens of verses where he bares His heart, as it were, and you feel His pain.
- It is clear that He is furious over the many idols and gods we have set up in our lives. He is angry at our violence – including killing *1/3 of a million* unborn babies in a recent year. He's had it with the way we have polluted and destroyed his creation. Our greed, our callous disregard for his commands, the way we treat one another – He's had it with our nations and is getting ready to spank.

So understand please, I'm not saying He can't get angry or that He's a soft touch. When Yahweh has had it with us, when Yahweh gets angry – and He does – we're about to get the spanking of our lives! And Yahweh is slow to anger, slow to spank – but when He does, He spans hard. *You cannot read about how He punished ancient Israel and Judah and think otherwise.*

And before Yeshua returns to the Mount of Olives, we will be faced first with **Satan's wrath – the Great tribulation** – and some of God's children will be shielded from it in a Place of Safety it seems. But not everyone will be.

*Rev. 12:17 says Satan then goes after the remnant of the church – and describes them as those who “keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17). They will go through the worst time of torture and trouble the world has ever seen (Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:19; Daniel 12:1). There will be many who will be martyrs as they witness for Yeshua. Scripture says beheading will be the preferred method of execution (Rev. 20:4). John the Baptist was beheaded after all, so why should we not have to face it? Many of our forefathers were. Many of our brethren once more will show their willingness to die for the Truth and for the name of our God. **The Fifth Seal** of Revelation is about martyrdom of many of the children of God (Rev. 6:9-11).*

Then we will have **Yahweh's wrath – the “Day of the LORD”** – the Day of Yahweh. By the time He is done with this earth, and its people – there will probably be no cities left standing. Whole mountain ranges will be gone. Talk about the scope of the earthquakes that would cause that. Numerous islands will disappear. Most of the crops will be destroyed. Between natural and man-made disasters and nuclear war – it's going to be a total mess. No wonder Scripture says “Woe to you who desire the Day of the LORD” (Amos 5:18).

YAHWEH'S HEART is a MERCIFUL Heart

So I know this is all coming. I know there's coming a great martyrdom – Satan's wrath. I also know our Yahweh can get very, very angry. I know Scripture speaks both of the "goodness of our God" – as well as "His severity". Look it up in Romans 11:22.

So don't take this sermon to mean that Philip Shields thinks Father is a push-over. Not in the least. But I do know there was the story of Nineveh. I also know the stories of other times Yahweh changed His mind when He saw the heart of a group of people had turned back to Him. I *do* know He does not delight in the death of the wicked. I do know His heart's desire is that everyone would repent and come to be saved.

Ezekiel 33:10-11

10 "Therefore you, O son of man, say to the house of Israel: 'Thus you say, "If our transgressions and our sins lie upon us, and we pine away in them, how can we then live?"' 11 Say to them: 'As I live,' says Adonai Yahweh, ***'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.*** Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?"

That is my Father's heart. Knowing this, I preach this sermon. We need to pray that our nations repent. *If we're like ABBA, we won't desire the death and destruction about to happen either.*

So will you join with me and start immediately praying that your city, your state or province and your nation will repent. Will you join me and pray for our President or your prime minister – that they will come to their senses and lead the nation. I know, I know – it sounds so impossible, so improbable – but brethren! *That's what Jonah thought about the Ninevites and their king too!* Let's not be "a Jonah" and just stop with the warning message.

OTHERS WHO PRAYED FOR THEIR CITIES AND NATIONS

- IN a way, **Abraham** did. Read Genesis 18 sometime. In a direct conversation (prayer) to Yahweh, he **asked for Sodom to be spared if there be 10 righteous. Would you have prayed for Sodom?** *Are* you praying for the equivalent cities today? Already, some of you are giving quick come-backs as to why Gen 18 was different than what we see today. But just ten in a whole city! Just 10!
- How about this one? **YAHWEH HIMSELF is telling our nations to repent! Shouldn't we heed Him and follow His example?**

Ezekiel 18:27-32

27 Again, when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. 28 Because he considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 29 Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of Adonay is not fair.' O house of Israel, is it not My ways which are fair, and your ways which are not fair.

30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says Adonay Yahweh. **"Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. 31 Cast away from you all the transgressions** which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. **For why should you die, O house of Israel? 32 For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,"** says Adonay Yahweh. "Therefore turn and live!" [Adonai Yahweh means "my Master Yahweh"]

Surely I could STOP the message right there. Yahweh Himself is saying to the nation – "It's NOT too late! Repent!

Now I fully realize there are verses in Jeremiah where Yahweh says "don't even try praying for these people because I've *had it* with them and they're getting punished." I'm familiar with those verses. I just read them last night. But I also think Yahweh is showing himself as a father who knows He is going to spank – but also like a loving father, when He sees His children truly sorry, the spanking may not last as long, or happen at all.

In Jer. 7 and 11, Yahweh tells Jeremiah not to pray for the people. You can read it again in Jer. 14:11-12. Yet in that very same chapter, verses 19-22—Jeremiah *does* pray for the nation, using the very words Yahweh gives him. Read it yourself!

Jeremiah 14:19-22

Have You utterly rejected Judah?

Has Your soul loathed Zion?

Why have You stricken us so that there is no healing for us?

We looked for peace, but there was no good;

And for the time of healing, and there was trouble.

20 We acknowledge, O Yahweh, our wickedness

And the iniquity of our fathers,

For we have sinned against You.

21 Do not abhor us, for Your name's sake;

Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory.

Remember, do not break Your covenant with us.

22 Are there any among the idols of the nations that can cause rain?

Or can the heavens give showers?

Are You not He, O Yahweh our God?

Therefore we will wait for You,

Since You have made all these.

But like I said, Yahweh's finally had it – and the very next verse look at what Yahweh says (yes, I'm aware of all this):

Jeremiah 15:1

Then Yahweh said to me, "***Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind would not be favorable toward this people.*** Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth.

So some of you would say, "there you have it. It's clear. Yahweh doesn't want us praying for this evil world and nation." I totally disagree. If you keep reading in Jeremiah, which I've done a lot lately, over and over and over our Yahweh pleads with the nation to repent.

3 chapters later, in Jeremiah 18:5-11 we read this:

Jeremiah 18:5-11

5 **Then the Word of Yahweh came to me**, saying: 6 "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says Yahweh. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel! 7 **The instant** I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, 8 ***if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.*** 9 And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, 10 if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.

11 "Now therefore, **speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem**, saying, "Thus says Yahweh: "Behold, I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. **Return now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.**""

Are we hearing Abba? He wants the nation to repent. He doesn't want to *have to do* what He's said He would do. He's offering the chance for repentance even after He has spoken His words against a nation. I'm not hearing a lot of others saying this. It's time we Pastors speak up for the repentance of our nations.

There are many more examples of prayers in behalf of our nation!

- **MOSES** prayed for the nation on several occasions
On Mt. Sinai, Yahweh said He was ready to blot out Israel and start over with Moses. You can read Moses' prayer for the evil nation in Ex. 31: Deut 9:20-29; Psalm 106:23.

Exodus 32:9-12

9 And Yahweh said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people! 10 Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation."

11 Then Moses pleaded with Yahweh his Elohim, and said: "Yahweh, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?

Over and over, Moses prayed for the nation. In Numbers 14, after the nation was rebelling upon hearing the bad report of 10 of the 12 spies and were ready again to stone Moses:

Numbers 14:11-13

11 Then Yahweh said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? 12 I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, **and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.**"

13 And Moses said to Yahweh: "Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them..."

Yahweh also told Moses and Aaron to get away from the rebels Yahweh was about to kill with a plague. God ordered them to distance themselves – and here was a time when a man stood in the breach and begged for Yahweh's mercy. What we're about to read happened the day after the rebellion of Korah and the 250 rebellious elders had been killed by God.

Numbers 16:41-50

On the next day all the congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of Yahweh." 42 Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly the cloud covered it, and the glory of Yahweh appeared. 43 Then Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of meeting.

44 And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, 45 "Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment."

And they fell on their faces. [They did not distance themselves!]

46 So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense on it, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from Yahweh. The plague has begun." 47 Then Aaron took it as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. 48 And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped. 49 Now those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the Korah incident. 50 So Aaron returned to Moses at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, for the plague had stopped.

Brethren, when we see the plagues coming on our nation – the hurricanes, the tornadoes, the dirty bomb attacks that will come, the terrorism in our land that will come, the earthquakes, droughts, famines, floods – will we be standing in the midst of the plague as Aaron did, begging for Yah's mercy on His people?

I hope so. That is the spirit of a true child of Yahweh.

Even when they were ready to stone him! **Numbers 21:7** – "so Moses prayed for the people" – the time the serpents were in the camp. The people repented and asked for prayers and forgiveness. Would you and I have?

You know the sad, sad thing of all? When Yahweh announced His punishment on Moses for striking the rock and that Moses would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land, there's no record I'm aware of, of *anyone* interceding for Moses! Not one. Let that sink in.

But, you say – "the children of Yahweh today is the assembly of called-out ones, the EKKLESIA. It's not the nation of Israel or the 10 tribes", whom many of us believe are USA, UK, and the northwestern nations of Europe and

Canada and Australia. And Father loves us, the church. He's really pleased with the church right now...

Really? Have you not read Revelation 2 and 3?

- **SAMUEL** tells us something very revealing after they had picked a king to reign over them.

1 Samuel 12:19-

19 And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to Yahweh your Elohim, that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking a king for ourselves."

20 Then Samuel said to the people, "Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness; yet do not turn aside from following Yahweh, but serve Yahweh with all your heart. 21 And do not turn aside; for then you would go after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they are nothing.

22 For Yahweh will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased Yahweh to make you His people.

23 **Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Yahweh in ceasing to pray for you;** but I will teach you the good and the right way. 24 Only fear Yahweh, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you. 25 But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king."

NOTE Verse 23 – "that I should SIN against Yahweh in ceasing to pray for you."

Again: when was the last time you prayed for your country? Have you ever done so? Let's start! If we're not, we're sinning. That's what Samuel said!

Scripture is full of examples of other prayers for the people of the land.
Hezekiah asked Yahweh's forgiveness too when they didn't cleanse themselves properly for the Passover. Jeremiah – upon seeing the destruction of Jerusalem, said this:

Lamentations 3:47-50

47 Fear and a snare have come upon us, Desolation and destruction.

48 My eyes overflow with *rivers* of water

For the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 **My eyes flow and do not cease, Without interruption,**

50 **Till Yahweh from heaven looks down and sees.**

This is what I'm talking about.

- ***PAUL'S PRAYERS FOR THE NATION***

Romans 9:1-5 NIV

I speak the truth in Christ — I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit— 2 I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 **For I could**

wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, 4 the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. 5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

Paul was willing to give up his own salvation if doing so would assure the salvation of his people. Some naysayers will still say, "ah, yes, but he isn't praying for them." Those people simply don't know their Scriptures. All they need to do is keep reading:

Romans 10:1

Brethren, ***my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.***

I'll cover it much more, later in the sermon... but I hope it's clear, Paul said his heart's desire and prayer is that Israel may be saved.

When was the last time *you* prayed that prayer? You see, Paul would agree with this sermon! It's something he did, it's something his heart was in! That's what this sermon is about!

AGAIN, WHY SHOULD WE BE PRAYING FOR THE NATION?

Because we are God's children, called by His Name, and when we pray, He is more likely to hear. Of course we should be praying our hearts out!

Yahweh actually tells us in the recorded dream to Solomon, that He is willing to relent even after He begins punishing for our sins. When we read this, remember we are the House of God today, the Temple of His Spirit. Don't limit these words to just the physical nation or the physical temple.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

16 Do you not know that ***YOU are the Temple of God*** and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

The temple Solomon built used to be called "the House of the LORD" – or "the House of Yahweh", as it should be. But now notice who and what is the House of Yahweh, the house of God, today. Why? Because God talks about His House, the temple, in His words to Solomon.

1 Timothy 3:14-16

These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; 15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself ***in the house of God, which is the church (ekklesia) of the living God***, the pillar and ground of the truth.

For that matter, when you read Yahweh's words to Solomon about Israel, remember the ekklesia is the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16).

So I'm going to add another dimension: the Spiritual Israel of Yahweh – the called out ones – is also in dire need of fervent prayer. We're not unified. We're the "Splintered Church of God". I even hesitate to add the words "of God". We're not demonstrating unity, love, harmony that we should if we truly were God's children. You know John 13:34-35.

So what we're about to read applies nationally as well as spiritually to the *ekklesia*, the body of called-out ones who wish to please the true living Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I say again, don't just read Yahweh's words to Solomon as words just targeted at just national Israel – but read them also as a warning to the church of God, to the assembly of Yahweh, the body of called-out ones. Remember as we read this, that where it says "the LORD", I render it correctly as "Yahweh". Remember He hears you.

2 Chronicles 7:12-22

12 Then Yahweh appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: **"I have heard your prayer**, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice [compare 1 Pet. 2:5]

13 When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, **14 if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**

[Who are Yahweh's people? Those called by His name? Let's wake up! This is speaking to us, brethren, even more so now than to Solomon! These things are recorded for our admonition! So let's read it again. Are we hearing a lot of answered prayer for the many physical and health conditions in the body of Christ?]

15 Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place. 16 For now I have chosen and sanctified this house [the temple], that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.

Continue reading on your own to verse 22 later on and see the warning to the church – that we can't get lukewarm with God and start doing wrong things, i.e., sin. He did cast out those people.

But ***'If my people would pray'*** – brethren! There's impact in our prayers. We're His people. We need to use our relationship with Yahweh to intercede! Both for physical and spiritual Israel.

And don't think that since we're the church – supposedly the Bride of Christ –that we can feel smug and assume no harm will befall us, because WE are the Temple of the Lord (Yahweh), WE are the "House of Yahweh" or "House of God". So many feel they have nothing to worry about as long as they are "in the Church". Listen to what Yahweh told Jeremiah on this issue.

Jeremiah 7:1-4

The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying, 2 "Stand in the gate of Yahweh's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, all you of Judah who enter in at these gates to worship Yahweh!'" 3 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will

cause you to dwell in this place. 4 **Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh are these.'**

It is as applicable today as ever. Yahweh's is faithful to His word. ***I don't care if anyone else is saying this—it's time someone says it: if enough people in our NATION today, starting with the people of God's church – repent, we could see a repeat of the miracle of Jonah's preaching: when Yahweh was merciful to a very heathen, depraved, violent and sinful city-state of Nineveh.***

Brethren, how about Daniel? Nehemiah? Hezekiah? Josiah? And so many others as well.

The key to a successful prayer for the nation is to copy the HEART and the prayers of Nehemiah and Daniel.

Here was their formula:

- 1. Start by admitting your own sins. Ask for your own forgiveness. Repent for your own sins first.***
- 2. Then remind Yahweh what a gracious and forgiving Elohim He is***
- 3. Then ask him to bring the nation to repentance, and ask Him to forgive them.***

How urgent is this?

Joel 2:15-17

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly;
16 Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes;

***Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber,
And the bride from her dressing room.***

***17 Let the priests, who minister to Yahweh,
Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, "Spare Your
people, O Yahweh,***

And do not give Your heritage to reproach,

That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'"

Isaiah 62:6-7

6 I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem;
They shall never hold their peace day or night.

You who make mention of Yahweh do not keep silent, [that's His children!]

***7 And give Him no rest till He establishes
And till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.***

YESHUA'S EXAMPLE

What was our Yeshua's example? We know what He prayed on the cross: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." But there's more. You're probably familiar with **Matthew 23:37-39** when He says He would have gathered them as a hen does its chicks.

Here's another one:

Luke 19:41-45

41 Now as He drew near, **He saw the city and wept over it**, [when did you and I last weep over this nation, or our capital city, or our people?]

42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

And when James and John wanted to blot out a Samaritan town for not welcoming them, calling down fire from heaven, Yeshua rebuked them. "You know not what spirit you're of". ***Are we of that spirit?***

When Nehemiah heard about the state of disrepair Jerusalem was in:

Nehemiah 1:4-2:1

4 So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

[Have you and I ever wept over the state of the church, or our nation? Next he's going to ask for help- but He starts with something else...]

5 And I said: "I pray, Yahweh Elohim of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments, 6 please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned.

[Start with your own humble acknowledgement of your sins.]

7 **WE** have acted very corruptly against You, and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses. 8 Remember, I pray, the word that You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations; 9 **but if you return to Me, and keep My commandments and do them, though some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, yet I will gather them from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.'** 10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power, and by Your strong hand.

11 O Yahweh, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to **fear Your name**; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

For I was the king's cupbearer.

If we want something to happen among the called-out ones who are so fractured right now, or in our cities and nation – it's starts with my – and your – repentance. My repentance. Your repentance. Then we can dare pray for the nation to repent, and preach repentance.

This is also the model for Daniel's prayer of Daniel 9. When he knew the 70 year punishment was about up, he didn't take it for granted. He beseeched God to open the way for his brethren to return and rebuild Jerusalem. And Daniel prayed for his nation.

HOW? Again, by starting with his own repentance. You can read it in Daniel 9. And how did Yahweh answer? Very dramatically. Yahweh sent His archangel Gabriel instantly, flying swiftly right thru Daniel's window, into his room!

THE DANIEL PRAYER

Context: Daniel was a young man, probably of royal descent, when he was captured and taken to Babylon as a captive when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah. Northern 10-tribed Israel itself had long gone captive into Assyria – the area of modern Iraq today – over a hundred years earlier. ‘

By the time we come to Daniel 9, the Medo-Persian Empire had conquered Babylon – and Daniel is still there. He's now at least in his 80's or older. He realized that almost 70 years have elapsed, and he remembered Jeremiah's prophecy! Daniel is no longer a young man. Daniel is now ruled by the Persians – the area we now know today as IRAN, by the way.

Daniel 9:1-15

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans – 2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of Yahweh through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem (Jer. 29:7, 10-14).

3 Then I set my face toward Adonai Elohim to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. 4 And I prayed to Yahweh ***my*** God, and **made confession, and said, "O Adonai, great and awesome El, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments...**

5 WE have sinned and committed iniquity; WE have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. 6 Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. 7 **Adonai, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day –** to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and

those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

8 "O Yahweh, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 9 To Adonai Eloheynuw belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. 10 We have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh Eloheynuw (Yahweh our God), to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. 11 Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. 12 And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.

13 "As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before Yahweh our Elohim, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. 14 Therefore Yahweh has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for Yahweh our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. 15 And now, Yahweh our Elohim, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day — we have sinned, we have done wickedly!

And what happened?

V. 20 – While I was speaking, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before Yahweh Elohay (my God) for the holy mountain of my God....the archangel Gabriel swoops in with a revelation.

But notice that Daniel had a heart for his countrymen, for Israel. Just like Paul, just like Jeremiah, Moses, Samuel and so many.

Now we're the ones on stage. It's our turn. The mantle has been put on our shoulders to carry the task of preparing for the coming of Messiah and urging the nations to repent.

It's our turn to be like Father, to show we're of the same family – for HE so loved the people of the world that He sent His only Son to die for them. ***That's my Dad! That's my Father! That's my*** amazing Abba and yours. That's what he's like! He doesn't desire the death of the wicked! No, No, NO! And if we're of the KIN-DOM of God, of that family and kin – we will have the same mind. WE will be saying, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." We will be praying for "our enemies", thus showing we are part of our Father's way of thinking (See the end of Matthew 5).

Have you EVER prayed that prayer for your country and the world? Do you so love the world that you would give your only Son for them? If Father's spirit is in us, and we in Him, we will have those thoughts.

Those of you who will hear this will be noticed by Yahweh. Praying for the land will also be good for us.

Ezekiel 9:3-11

3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side; 4 and Yahweh said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, **and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.**"

5 To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. 6 Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the temple. 7 Then He said to them, "Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" And they went out and killed in the city.

8 So it was, that while they were killing them, I was left alone; and I fell on my face and cried out, and said, "Ah, Adonay Yahweh! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?"

And here now we see Ezekiel pleading for God's mercy! It just keeps happening. Yahweh's children are all of the same mind, Yeshua's mind – a mind and heart of loving even the sinners in our midst.

Brethren, time is short. Let's repent of our self-centered preaching to date – feeding ourselves. We need to be preaching repentance to our people, and praying they will repent. We will be pleading for Yahweh's mercy. We need to be sighing and crying for what we see. We need to be willing to die for our countrymen. We need to be happy if our Father sends sun when needed and rain when needed – on the just and the unjust. We need to be praying for our enemies– even when they wish us harm, as Moses did, as Stephen did, as Jesus did, as all of God's family does! That's HIS way. That's the Way of Yahweh's family.

Now, go SPREAD this word! Encourage as many as you can to hear this message and to spend time on our knees repenting for our sins, for what we're seeing in the church and its fracturing, and for our lethargy. THEN, let's come together as one and pray for our country that they will repent. We will plead for God's mercy, as we have read so many of the others have done.

PRAY for your country to repent. PRAY for God's mercy. Start with your OWN repentance.

Until next time, this has been Philip with this message from Light on the Rock....