Triennial Torah Study – 2nd Year 24/09/2011

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This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at: <u>https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf</u>

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Exodus 34

Since Moses had broken the tablets of the Ten Commandments that God had given him previously, God instructs him to carve out of stone two more tablets so that God could again write His commandments, the basis of the covenant relationship between Him and His people. This was an act of tremendous mercy on the part of God, who, despite the Israelites' terrible disobedience, was willing to renew His covenant relationship with them.

God then passes before Moses, showing him part of His glory. As He does, He proclaims the glory of His character—focusing on His tremendous mercy and graciousness, the very thing that enables the covenant relationship to be renewed (verses 5-7). Yet He still warns that sin has consequences (verse 7). Upon hearing this, Moses is quick to again seek God's merciful pardon of the people's sins, also asking again that God would "go among" them (verse 9).

God's response, He renews the covenant relationship. And He begins this renewal with the wonderful announcement that He will do an "awesome thing" in driving out the inhabitants of Canaan from before the people (verses 10-12). The Israelites were to make no treaties with the Canaanites, to prevent their being corrupted by pagan customs and ideas. They were certainly not to adopt pagan worship practices.

God considered His relationship to Israel to be one of marriage (Jeremiah 3:1-14). For the Israelites to "play the harlot" with pagan gods (Exodus 34:15-16)—to worship them or adopt their religious rites—was thus a kind of marital infidelity and spiritual adultery. But the phrase also had a direct literal application, as sexual rites with temple prostitutes, both male and female, was a major part of the disgusting and debasing pagan religions of the land the Israelites were to enter. Here, as with God's reaction to the golden calf incident in chapter 32, we see that pagan religious practices are abominable and utterly unacceptable to Him— something we should consider whenever we examine the origins of today's popular religious traditions and customs. It does

matter which Holy Days you keep. Notice that God also warns in this context that intermarriage with those outside the true faith is a dangerous path that can lead to compromising His truth.

God then goes on to repeat some of the terms of the covenant that He gave in chapters 2123. Exodus 34:26 repeats the prohibition from 23:19 about boiling a young goat in its mother's milk. Regarding the earlier verse, The Jerome Biblical Commentary states: "The legislation in 19b (and in Dt 14:21) puzzled commentators for centuries; however, the discovery and publication of the Ras Shamra literature (UM [Cyrus H. Gordon, Ugaritic Manual, 1955] 52:14, "Birth of the Gods") have eliminated this conundrum. It is now clear that this practice was a cultic one among the Canaanite neighbors of the Hebrews. Hence, the Israelites were to refrain from it, lest they also adopt some of the Canaanite cultic inferences." Referring to the same verse, Matthew Henry's Commentary states: "At the feast of ingathering, as it is called (v. 16), they [the Israelites] must give God thanks for the harvest-mercies they had received, and must depend upon him for the next harvest, and must not think to receive benefit by that superstitious usage of some of the Gentiles, who, it is said, at the end of their harvest, seethed a kid in its dam's milk, and sprinkled that milk-pottage, in a magical way, upon their gardens and fields, to make them more fruitful next year. But Israel must abhor such foolish customs."

As we are to avoid customs that originated in pagan worship, it would still seem prudent to refrain from intentionally boiling a young goat in its own mother's milk. Yet, on the basis of the restriction in question, Orthodox Jews will not eat meat and dairy products together at all. In fact, these foods must be prepared in different places with different utensils in order to be considered "kosher" by them. The Jews see a general principle in these verses-that what was given to nourish life (milk) not be used to destroy it. However, this was clearly not God's intent. Abraham, who kept God's statutes and laws (Genesis 26:5), had Sarah prepare meat and milk products together to serve to God (the preincarnate Christ) and two angels: "So [Abraham] took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate" (Genesis 18:8). Thus, even God Himself, while manifested in physical form, ate milk and meat together. Yet some Jews, while admitting the restriction is a narrow one, will argue against eating meat and dairy products together on the basis that there might be a chance, however remote, that a particular milk product was derived from the mother of the animal being eaten. But if we applied remote possibilities to our diet in general, we could never eat anything, for fear that a molecule of something unclean had somehow gotten onto it. This is certainly not what God had in mind.

After being in the presence of God this time, Moses came down from the mountain with his face shining—a muted reflection of the glory that had shone upon him while in God's presence. It appears that this happened each time Moses met with God hereafter. Moses would then appear before the people—and they would know he had come from God because his face was shining. Then, as Paul later explained, he would put on a veil to conceal the fading of this temporary glory (2 Corinthians 3:7, 13). We may view Moses' shining face as typical of the glory of God's character as it is reflected in us. In seeing it, others will know that we represent God and have

been close to Him. As time passes between our contacts with Him, our spiritual power and focus wanes, as does our example—something we don't want reflected. Then we go to God for renewal and are ready to let our light shine before others once again.

Jer 1-2

The Old Testament mentions nine different people named Jeremiah. The man God used to author this book was a priest and one of Israel's greatest prophets. Because of several biographical narratives in the book of Jeremiah, more is known about Jeremiah than any other prophet.

The Hebrew name Jeremiah apparently means "Exalted of the Eternal" or "Appointed by the Eternal." It may relate to the fact that the prophet was one of only a few people whom the Bible reveals to have been sanctified by God before birth for a special purpose—the others being John the Baptist, Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul (Luke 1:13-14; Isaiah 49:1, 5; Galatians 1:15). Jeremiah 1:5 may mean that, like John and Jesus, Jeremiah was chosen even before his conception for his commission.

Jeremiah's father Hilkiah (1:1) was apparently not the high priest Hilkiah of 2 Kings 22:8. The priests who lived at the priest-city of Anathoth (about 3 miles northeast of Jerusalem) were of the house of Ithamar (compare 1 Kings 2:26) while the high priests, since Zadok, were of the line of Eleazar.

Jeremiah's ministry began in the 13th year of Josiah (Jeremiah 1:2)—ca. 627 or 626 B.C.— when Zephaniah is also believed to have preached. The book bearing Jeremiah's name relates his words and works during the reigns of the last five kings of Judah—a span of about 40 years—and on into the first years of Judah's Babylonian captivity (verses 1-3). Josiah was a righteous ruler who was apparently close to Jeremiah—the king's great reformation coming five years after Jeremiah's preaching began. Upon Josiah's death, Jeremiah lamented for him (2 Chronicles 35:25). But the mostly superficial benefits of Josiah's reforms were soon replaced by moral and spiritual decay. Following him were four wicked rulers—Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and, finally, Zedekiah, whose reign was ended by Babylon's invasion of Judah.

"According to the traditional date, the time of [Jeremiah's] call (year 13 of Josiah's reign— Jeremiah 1:2) coincided approximately with the death of the last great Assyrian ruler, Ashurbanipal, an event which signaled the disintegration of the Assyrian empire under whose yoke Judah had served for nearly a century. Against the waning power and influence of the Assyrians, Judah asserted its independence under Josiah" (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, "Jeremiah, Book of"). This was no doubt assisted by the arrival of the Scythians, which soon followed. But following their eventual withdrawal, Judah found itself in a vulnerable position between two powers contending for dominance—Egypt and the Neo-Babylonian Empire—and the latter would emerge supreme. Jeremiah was appointed "a prophet to the nations" (verse 5)—to "all the kingdoms of the world" (25:26). And chapters 46-51 are directed to various gentile nations. However, "nations" would seem to refer primarily to the people of Judah and Israel. His preaching was, of course, in large measure directed to the people of Judah where he lived. But Jeremiah also prophesied to the house of Israel—which God had punished and sent into captivity nearly a century before he began preaching. Obviously, then, God's message is for Israel of the end time. Jeremiah wrote of a time of national trouble that is yet ahead for the modern descendants of the lost 10 tribes of Israel. A number of passages in Jeremiah clearly refer to events that will occur just before and after Christ's return at the end of this age.

One of the greatest values of this book is its universal application in understanding the righteous nature of God and the rebellious nature of man, desperately in need of transformation. According to The Expositor's Bible Commentary, "Jeremiah preached more about repentance than any other prophet" (introductory notes on Jeremiah). For a time, Jeremiah's message was for the people of his day to repent or else be taken captive by

Babylon. Yet, because the response was resentment rather than repentance, God revealed to Jeremiah that Jerusalem's fall and the people's captivity had become the inevitable punishment. Following that revelation, Jeremiah continued to exhort the people to repent, but he also preached that God's will was for them to submit to Babylon—with assurance that, if they did, they would receive mercy. However the populace, especially the authorities, viewed this message as pessimistic, heretical, unpatriotic and even treasonous. As a result, Jeremiah repeatedly suffered rejection, hostility, ridicule, persecution, and threats against his life. For a while he was actually imprisoned.

Besides this book that bears his name, Jeremiah is also credited with writing the book of Lamentations—a term that has become almost synonymous with the prophet. Indeed, much of the book of Jeremiah can be described as a lament about the people's lack of obedience to God and the tragic fate awaiting them. Based on the prophet, the English language contains the word "jeremiad," defined as "an elaborate and prolonged lamentation or a tale of woe" (American Heritage Dictionary, 1969). That should not be surprising. The Jeremiah of popular imagination is a stern and gloomy doomsayer. But that is an extreme and unfair characterization of the prophet. His messages, which were critical of the people's conduct and warned of punishment, were not his own inventions. Rather, he was conveying God's messages. Moreover, these messages included the wonderful promise of mercy and deliverance if the people would repent. And Jeremiah 1:10 clearly reveals that his commission was to include positive and negative—constructive and destructive—elements. His book also contains joyous prophecies of the coming Messiah, a new covenant and a blissful new age to come.

Part of the unfair portrayal of Jeremiah's personality is the picture of a chronically depressed person. Yet while he did suffer frequent melancholy, this was a reflection of the great stress and sacrifices of his life, not of inherent weakness. A prophet's lonely life of being the bearer of bad news was a heavy and depressing burden to bear, especially for one so deeply concerned and

tender hearted as Jeremiah. He felt anger and disgust at the apostasy and idolatry of the people, but he grieved as well, knowing the ominous fate awaiting his beloved countrymen. Added to that, he felt perplexed and humiliated when many years were passing and his prophecies were not materializing.

Jeremiah is sometimes called the "weeping prophet" (see 9:1, 10; 13:17; 48:32), but mourning for others over their wickedness and future suffering is a spiritual strength, not a weakness (Ezekiel 9:4; 21:6; Amos 6:6; Matthew 5:4). Other strengths of Jeremiah were his faith in God, devotion to prayer, faithfulness in fulfilling his calling, and unflinching courage in the face of hostility and danger. Jeremiah's life has parallels with the life of Christ, who was a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3; Matthew 16:14).

Eventually, Jeremiah will see his prophecies of the immediate future come to pass. Following the righteous reign of Josiah, a period of national decline will end with Judah's fall to the Babylonians. But the prophet's work does not end with that calamity, as we will see.

Of all the prophetic books, Jeremiah is the longest. It "is longer than Isaiah or Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets combined are about a third shorter. The claim has been made that it is the longest book in the Bible" (Expositor's). It is also the most complex of the prophetic books. It is not arranged chronologically or topically. That may partly be because Jeremiah was mainly a preacher rather than a writer, who later dictated events and messages after the fact. (Jeremiah dictated much of the book to his secretary Baruch.) As it is, "the organization of the oracles, prose sermons, and other material is based on content, audience, and connective links" (Nelson Study Bible, introductory notes on Jeremiah). The Bible Reading Program will not cover the chapters in the biblical order, but will rather put the sections in the apparent chronological order to follow the story flow of Jeremiah's life—placing his messages in that context.

When God called and commissioned Jeremiah, he was modest and reluctant, citing his youth as a handicap to speaking from experience and with authority. The Bible Reader's Companion states, "He was called by God as a na'ar (1:6), a youth some 16 to 18 years old" (note on verse 6). However, youthfulness is relative and his age was not important, since his safety and success was dependent on God, not on himself (verses 7-8, 17-19). Indeed, this would have provided evidence of God's direction and inspiration—as well as serving as a point of shame for the nation's elders who had been failing in their responsibilities. The king on the throne now was young too—and he would lead the nation in wonderful reforms.

Jeremiah's young age at his calling should also serve as an inspiration for any young person reading God's Word who understands the truth and is stirred with a strong conviction to act on what he or she knows. God calls and works with young people too.

In verse 10 God gives Jeremiah a mysterious commission: "See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant" (New Revised Standard Version). "The words root out, pull down, destroy, throw down, build, and plant are repeated at key points in the Book of Jeremiah to reaffirm Jeremiah's call (18:7; 24:6; 31:28; 42:10; 45:4)" (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 10). Based on Jeremiah's life hereafter, it is easy to ascertain what God meant by plucking up, pulling down, destroying and overthrowing. This great prophet repeatedly warned the Jews to repent of their disobedience—but they scorned him. So God used him to pronounce judgment on the nation: the people and the kings of David's line would be overthrown in the Babylonian conquest and uprooted—to Babylon.

But the latter part of the prophet's commission yet remained: "to build and to plant." What did this involve? From Jeremiah 45:4 we can see that building and planting in this context originally entailed God's planting His people in the land and building a kingdom of them there—now to be pulled up and destroyed. So the commission would seem to involve planting people in another place in order to establish a kingdom elsewhere. We will examine this question further toward the end of the book.

God here gives the sign of an almond tree, "which blossoms when other trees are still dormant.... as a harbinger of spring, as though it 'watched over' the beginning of the season. In a similar fashion, God was 'watching over' His word, ready to bring judgment on Israel" (note on 1:11-12). Jeremiah also saw a boiling pot tilted southward, "indicating the direction in which the pot's contents would be spilled. The calamity suggested by this vision was an enemy attack on Judah and Jerusalem from the north. In 20:4, Jeremiah finally identifies this enemy as Babylon. Babylon was itself east of Jerusalem, but the road went around the desert and approached from the north" (note on verses 13-14). Interestingly, the enemy to the northeast when Jeremiah started prophesying was still Assyria. But that would soon change. Indeed, the book of Jeremiah refers to Babylon 164 times, more references than in all the rest of the Bible.

Jeremiah foretold that Babylon, the destroyer of Judah, would herself be destroyed by the Medes and Persians, never to rise again. Some of the prophecies in this regard are dual, referring also to the rise and fall of the end-time political, economic and religious system called Babylon—located to the northwest of Judah (thus still north)—while some prophecies refer exclusively to the end time.

Preaching God's message brought Jeremiah a great deal of suffering, but God emphatically charged him, "Do not be afraid of their [intimidating] faces" (1:8, 17)—as He, the Almighty Deliverer, would provide impregnable defense (1:18-19). We too can take encouragement from these words as we carry out the commission God has given His Church to preach His true gospel to the end of the age (see Matthew 28:19-20).

Chapter 2

Jeremiah was to "go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem," yet his message was about all Israel (Jeremiah 2:1-3). And then God's message was to go to the "house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel" (verse 4). Yet remember that the northern kingdom of Israel had been

taken into captivity a century earlier. Still, we do know that, around three years after Jeremiah's ministry began, a small percentage of Israelites actually returned to the land for a short period—that is, the Scythians who overran the region. Thus, it is likely that Jeremiah's message was intended in some measure for Jews and Israelites of His day. But notice again that the message was for "all the families of the house of Israel." Because the Israelites were scattered throughout the Assyrian Empire at the time Jeremiah prophesied, with many near the Black and Caspian Seas, we may safely assume that his message was never delivered to them in that age.

Since God would not deliver a message to people who could never hear it, these prophecies must then be dual, directed more to the descendants of Israel in the latter days, particularly since the descriptions in this chapter and much of the book certainly fit our American and British societies and much of the world today. (In the book of Jeremiah, "Israel" is named almost as much as "Judah." And "Jerusalem"—ancient capital of all 12 tribes—sometimes clearly refers more to Israel than to Judah.)

The Israelites have a short memory, soon forgetting the source of past and present blessings (verses 7, 32), and quickly turning to myriad forms of idolatry. "Those who handle the law" (verse 8) have turned from the true God and His law to false gods! Whereas most cultures

cling to their traditions and gods, Israel, chosen by God to receive the true religion (the only way that brings true reward!), has been quick to forsake God and to do so "for what does not profit" (verse 11). These are the "two evils" here—forsaking God and substituting false gods (verse 13). "God, the fountain of living waters, offered a limitless supply of fresh, life-giving sustenance. Instead the people chose broken cisterns, which were useless for storing water and useless for sustaining life" (The Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 13). God proclaims a dire penalty for rejecting Him, "the fountain of living waters," in Jeremiah 17:13.

As He often does, God colorfully portrays the utter stupidity of making gods of wood and stone, but Israel and Judah make as many dumb deities as the number of cities in Judah (2:27-28). "See if they can save you in the time of your trouble!" God taunts (compare verse 28). Today, our peoples still trust in worthless and inanimate things to save us—such as our weapons of war and our money. And some still serve actual idols, seeing power in crosses, statues of Mary, good luck charms, etc. And then there is a wrong trust in other people, directly condemned elsewhere in Jeremiah (17:5).

Verses 14-16 of chapter 2 show that though God had freed Israel from slavery, the nation subjected itself to vassalage and subsequent plunder and slavery by the Assyrians after making a failed deal with the Egyptians (Noph and Tahpanhes, also known as Memphis and Daphne, were principal cities in northern Egypt). In verse 18, Sihor, meaning "Black," is a reference to the Nile River, while "the River" associated with Assyria is the Euphrates. Judah is here basically warned, "Why trust in Egypt or Assyria when they cannot save?" This should serve as a warning to us now. For modern Israelites often make the mistake of putting more trust in alliances than in Almighty God (compare verses 36-37).

Jeremiah repeatedly portrays Israel and Judah as an unfaithful wife who has both deserted her loving, generous husband and also committed adultery, "playing the harlot," with multiple lovers false gods and national allies (verse 20). She takes steps to "wash" herself (verse 22) —efforts to feel and appear righteous. But it is her heart that needs washing—her thoughts purified (compare 4:14). And only through true repentance, God's forgiveness and God's power can one be truly spiritually cleansed. Israel is adulterous not just by being seduced, but by actively enticing partners like a female animal in heat (verses 23-25).

Worse, not only has Israel not received correction, but God rebukes the people: "Your sword has devoured your prophets like a destroying lion" (verse 30). Sadly, Israel and Judah have always rejected God's true servants—even subjecting them to martyrdom. While that is not happening right now, times are prophesied to get much worse. God also says, "On your skirts is found the blood of the lives of the poor innocents" (verse 34). Today there is little difference. The most innocent are the children. Few children now are sacrificed to fire, but many are murdered, many more unborn children are slaughtered, and society is so twisted, corrupt and degenerate that nearly all children are set on a path of life that leads to death.

Because obedience to God's absolute laws brings automatic blessings, and disobedience brings automatic penalties, He tells Israel, "You've brought this on yourself" (compare verse 17) and "Your own wickedness will correct you" (verse 19). While a national warning, it is incumbent upon each of us individually to respond. If we are living contrary to God's way, that will eventually catch up with us. Indeed, that is surely producing consequences already. Let us all, then, turn to God now and remain loyal—and avoid the suffering sin brings.

Prov 6

The first part of this chapter (6:1-19) presents us with four teachings; to seek freedom from unwise pledges (verses 1-5), to learn industriousness and avoid laziness by following the example of the ant (verses 6-11), to not be as the scoundrel (verses 12-15) and to hate the things God hates (verses 16-19).

"The four warnings of 6:1-19 are separate from the instructions on adultery; without this section, that theme would continue uninterrupted in chapters 5-7. Remembering that evil deeds ensnare the wicked (5:22), we might read 6:1-19 as an [inserted] exposition of that theme. The excursus also reminds the reader that not all enticements to folly come from women" (NIV Application Commentary, note on 6:1-19).

Regarding pledges, verses 1-5 "warn against putting up surety (see 11:15), or cosigning a loan. This does not mean we should never be generous or helpful if we have the means, only that we should not promise what we cannot deliver. In Solomon's day, a cosigner who could not pay could lose all he had and be reduced to slavery besides. Even though laws differ today, inability to pay a debt is still a form of bondage and can be a serious problem. Modern conditions are different than in Old Testament times, but the warning still applies" (Nelson Study Bible, note on verses 1-5).

Another serious entrapment is laziness. Thus we are directed to the example of ants. They have work to do and get it done (verses 6-8). Verses 9-11 are not telling us to avoid needed sleep. Rather, unless health prevents us we must not "sleep the day away." We all have much to do and only so much time to do it in. Laziness and lack of industry can ultimately leave us materially impoverished but even worse, it can keep us from spiritual responsibilities such as prayer and Bible study, leaving us spiritually impoverished and in danger of drifting from God.

In verses 12-15, the "scoundrel and villain" (NIV) is "a troublemaker. Unlike the sluggard, whose only desire is another place to nap, the troublemaker cannot wait to cause more problems or to get into more mischief. Unlike the sluggard (see v. 6), he is too busy, though he is doing the wrong things. He delights in bringing dissensions. But like the sluggard, he does not realize that calamity awaits him" (note on verses 12-15).

Verses 16-19 then present wickedness more generally. "This passage is a numerical proverb (see 30:15-31) that describes seven things that the Lord hates. The use of numerical progression six, even seven in these proverbs is a rhetorical device that embellishes the poetry, provides a memory aid, and builds to a climax. It gives the impression that there is more to be said about the topic" (note on verses 16-19). Commentator Tremper Longman says, "Such a device is a way of saying that there are a number of different examples of the phenomenon, only a few of which are given" (How to Read Proverbs, p. 45). He also points out that such language was used in surrounding ancient cultures: "Compare Proverbs 6:16-19 with a passage from a Ugaritic myth and from the Ahiqar text [mentioned in our introduction]'Truly (there are) two sacrifices Baal hates, three the rider on the clouds [rejects] a sacrifice of shame and a sacrifice of meanness and a sacrifice where handmaids debauch.' (KTU 1.4. III. 17-21). [And] 'There are two things which are good, and a third which is pleasing to Shamash: one who drinks and shares it, one who masters wisdom {and observes it}; and one who hears a word but tells it not.' (lines 92-93a)" (p. 76).

"In a list of this type, the last item is the most prominent" (Nelson, note on verses 16-19). In both the characteristics of the scoundrel (verses 12-14) and the seven things God hates (verses 16-19), the last item listed is sowing discord causing trouble between other people, especially between brothers, those who would otherwise be close. God views this as utterly despicable. How much worse it is today when people cause divisions between His spiritual children in His Church. God desires the unity of His people (see Psalm 133:1).

The latter part of chapter 6 constitutes the sixth exhortation of the prologue (verses 20-35), a further warning against the danger of adultery. Verses 27-29 emphasize cause and effect and the absolute inevitability of bad consequences of any immoral actions. Verse 32 deserves reflection. It seems to say that immorality is the most self-destructive of all sins destructive of one's "soul" his life and being even when there are no apparent physical penalties. The apostle Paul may have been referring to this verse when he said in 1 Corinthians 6:18: "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin

that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body."

The statement in verse 30 about a hungry person stealing to satisfy himself not being despised is not meant to condone theft. Indeed, it is immediately followed by the fact that if he is caught he will be forced to make restitution. The point of this statement here is that theft in such instances is at least understandable as a means to survival and because it is possible to rectify. Sleeping with another man's wife, on the other hand, never makes sense as it is just the opposite of a means to survival it is the pathway to death, especially from a jealous husband who cannot be appeased.

Acts 4

We read in verse 1-2 how the Sadducees were greatly upset at the apostle teaching of the resurrection from the dead. This was a controversial debate of that time. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dean while the Sadducees did not.

And this is what Peter and John were proclaiming. It was great news that now they had a definite answer. There is life after death and they knew it because of Yehshua coming out of the grave.

The Sadducees could say little with the person who had been made whole standing right there in front of them. IN verse 16 they admit they could not deny it.

Here is a prayer we all should emulate.

Act 4:29 "And now, ????, look on their threats, and give to Your servants all boldness to speak Your word, 30 by stretching out Your hand for healing, and signs, and wonders to take place through the Name of Your set-apart Servant ?????." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they came together was shaken. And they were all filled with the Set-apart Spirit, and they spoke the word of Elohim with boldness.