

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem - *Shaal Shalom Yerushalayim*

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Introduction

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem (*Shaal Shalom Yerushalayim*)

What does this mean? Does it mean that we wish the modern day city of Jerusalem to be in a state of peace? It could certainly mean that, and that would be nice as the nations surrounding her and by extension Israel seek for her destruction. Upon researching this phrase, I quickly found out that it was found in Psalms 122:6.

This certainly wasn't the first time I had heard these words in fact, they are part of my twice daily prayers^A. Upon reading the context of this verse I was amazed as it was not what I thought it was. I therefore decided I want to investigate this hermeneutically from its biblical context and let the bible tell me what this means.

This is the purpose of this article

Background

I remember watching a show hosted by [Zola Levitt](#) where he always would close the show by saying “*Shaal Shalom Yerushalayim* Pray for the peace of Jerusalem”. He would say it was like it was almost a commandment. Back in the days when I watched more television than I do now, I would watch his show and others like it. For the most part watching any TV show on religion was torturous as they were almost exclusively TV Evangelist who were light on content and heavy on a feel good message. But, comparatively speaking, Zola Levitt was interesting because he was willing to look at things from a Jewish mindset (something that was new to me). I'm not sure if he subscribed to Messianic Judaism but it wouldn't surprise me if he did as his message was in alignment with that theology. A detailed criticism of [Messianic Judaism](#) is beyond the scope of this article but I do want to point some things out that's relevant.

^A See “My Twice Daily Prayer4.pdf”

Messianic Judaism

First off let me say, I don't subscribe to Messianic Judaism as I am "Two house one covenant" and the label I would use for myself is *Netser*^B. Although I can accept the good intention of Messianic Judaism to try to bring these two great religions of Judaism and Christianity together, I reject their approach because as it's not wholly scriptural^C. As a theology it attempts to merge Rabbinical Judaism and Constantine Christianity which will not work because, amongst other things, an integral part of both religions is that they define themselves as not being the other religion.

Because Messianic Judaism tries to juggle these two faiths, they make ridiculous^D theological decisions. The attitude is that if you "gentiles" want to commune with us as believers in Y'shua we will allow it but the Jews of the congregation are the ones with the covenant and they are the authority^E.

So why do I bring this up? It's because it fits into the Evangelical / Fundamentalist Christian concept of "having a special place in my heart for Israel and the Jews".^F I mention Evangelical / Fundamentalist Christians because they are the most likely to seek out the Hebraic roots of their faith and to participate in various Messianic Judaism type organization.

I believe my analysis has been fair so far and now I would like to delve into the possible motives of why Zola Levitt et. al. would want to say the phrase "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem". Let me say first that questioning motives is always risky^G as you allow your adversaries to speak ill of you. Having said that I'm willing to take the risk as I'm truly trying to understand the word and intention of Elohim from the context it was given.

If "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" is presented as something like a commandment and not doing that will make you feel guilty then you will be motivated to do something about this. If you're convinced that this is where your heart is then how hard would it be to give support (in whatever form) to the modern state of Israel or to be motivated to give to those who subscribe to Messianic Judaism^H.

But is that an honest understanding given the context of the whole chapter of Psalms 122? Let me know go through this chapter verse by verse and give my commentary.

Psalms 122 – A verse by verse commentary^I

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| ¹⁻² ¹ A Song of degrees of David. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of YHVH. ² |
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^B See "Netser-vs-Messianic.doc"

^C See [sola scriptura](#) and "Response-to-One-House-Two-Covenant-Statement-of-Faith.doc"

^D I'm being nice by using the word ridiculous.

^E They also make no distinction between the term Jew and Israel. To be fair neither does, Rabbinical Judaism or Christianity.

^F For the record, this is where I got the majority of my Christian theology from.

^G So is speaking ill of the dead; Zola Levitt died in 2006. Also I'm not sure how much "ill" I'm speaking because, at least from a political perspective, I support what they are doing. I do object however when people feel they need to use the scriptures in less than a fully honest way so as to support political agendas. For more on this see my thoughts on [Covenant Conservatism](#).

^H TODO these last two sentences need to be reworded.

^I This is the Kings James version with a few words (e.g. YHVH and Yah for the LORD) with my commentary is under each verse.

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| Our feet ^J shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. |
| (King) David starts speaking in this chapter and is reiterating what was said to him. As I read this, I get a sense of King David poetically having a vision into the future like during the millennial Kingdom (see commentary of verse 5). |
| ³ Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact ^K together: |
| Q. Why is Jerusalem bound together with unity / togetherness? A. The citizens of this kingdom know, understand and operate under the unified law called Torah. (Mat 5:17-19). To put it another way, the two houses will be put together like it was under King David who is the author of this psalm. I would say it's still "two house" but in the good sense of the term because the House of YHVH will tabernacle with the entire house of Israel ^L . |
| ⁴ Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of Yah, unto the testimony ^M of Israel, to give thanks ^N unto the name of YHVH. |
| Is it the non-Israelite nations that will go up and/or the tribes of Israel that will go up? It seems to me that the non-Israelite nations will give their testimony and petitions to the tribes of Israel and with that testimony they will adjudicate ^O their matter (whatever it is). The testimony of the non-Israelite nations will be a praise (<i>yadah</i> also translated as confession). Q. The testimony of the non-Israelite nations (tribes) will be given to whom? A. The tribes of Yah who will adjudicate any matter that they receive from the Non-Israelite nations. The adjudication process will be recognized and respected because it's under the power and authority (<i>LeSheM</i>) of YHVH (to support this further, see the next verse). The idea that this is a legal matter can further be supported by the phrase "giving thanks" (<i>Yadah</i>), which can also be translated as confess which is a legal term. I would also say it's acceptable that <i>Yadah</i> should be translated as praising or being thankful. But then the question is why are they thankful i.e. what are they receiving to be thankful for? I explore this in verse 6. |
| ⁵ For there are set ^P thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. |
| See Rev 21:24-27 , where Israel, a Kingdom of priests (Exo 19:6) will judge the nations. The tribes of Israel will adjudicate any matter that they receive from the Non-Israelite nations. What is the role of a priest but to be an intercessor between the people (the nations) and Elohim. It's worth comparing the tribes of Yah" (see previous verse) with "the house of David" found in this verse. The house of David, is a clear reference to Y'shua HaMashiach who not only comes from the House of Judah and more specifically the Tribe of Judah, but even more specific from The house of David. With Y'shua HaMashiach as the lord of lords and king of kings he will set i.e. establish the thrones for the tribes, not unlike how he established his twelve apostles. It's not that the tribes are all from the House of David, |

^J "Our feet [H7272 ReGeL](#)..." ToDo: reference my document(s) that go into greater detail on this word.

^K "...that is compact [H7945 SheL H2266 ChBaR](#) together [H3162 YaChaD](#) :". In the Hebrew, "that is compact" is just one word *shechubberah-lah*.

^L For more details, see "Two-House.doc" where I comment about the Tents of Jacob and the word *Mahanaim*.

^M testimony [H5715 eduth](#)

^N to give thanks [H3034 YaDaH Praise, Confess](#)

^O **Adjudication**: in practice. The giving or pronouncing a judgment in a cause; a judgment. (source Bouvier's)

^P ... are set [H3427 YaShaB](#) ...

but established by the one (HaMashiach) who is from the House of David.

As the verse clearly says, the thrones (*Kisseh*) are for judgment (*Mishpat*), which is another example of the context of this chapter which is about law and adjudication. Why? For the purpose of peace, see the next verse.

⁶ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee

This is the verse in question, or at least the verse that's the most remembered because it's the most oft quoted. My point here is that you need to understand the context of this verse by putting it in the context of the whole chapter. Note, that even the words "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" isn't the whole verse as the rest of the verse is "...they shall prosper that love thee."

This begs many questions to be asked. The first is who is "they" which can only be answered contextually not only from the surrounding verses but contextual in time. The remaining questions to be asked are definitional like what does Pray, Peace, Prosper and Love mean?

1: **they**: Who are "they"? As I have already alluded to, they are those non Israelites nations that go up to the city, in the time frame of the Millennial Kingdom. It could also mean the Israelite nations (who have access to the Kingdom) who go up on behalf of the non-Israelite nations.

2.a: **pray** (*Shael*)

What is it that **they** (1) want, or what are **they** doing? What **they** are doing is praying i.e. asking adjudication on matters that only the judges of Israel can resolve. The judges are the twelve tribes of Israel in the city of Jerusalem. When it is resolved they will receive Shalom. Not just any old peace like *pax romana*, but the far more valuable peace which comes from Jerusalem.

Translation notes. This is translated far more frequently as "ask" not "pray". Pray is an old English term, *Shaal* is only translated once (out of 169) in the KJV as pray.

Pray isn't really a bad translation (at least not for those who love law) because it's a legal term, here is what Bouvier's says about prayer

chancery. **pleadings**.

1. **That part of a bill which asks for relief.**

2. The skill of the solicitor is to be exercised in framing this part of the bill. An accurate specification of the matters to be decreed in complicated cases, requires great discernment and experience; Coop. Eq. Pl. 13; it is varied as the case is made out, **concluding always with a prayer of general relief, at the discretion of the court.**

2.b: **peace** (*Shalom*) This is the peace of Jerusalem, the true peace that comes from the Creator of the Universe, and in the millennial Kingdom Jerusalem is the only place you can get it. It's not Jerusalem that needs prayer for peace, as it already has it. The reality is that Jerusalem is the one that dispenses shalom. The prayer is a legal motion to be asked for by those who are not in the physical jurisdictional boundaries of Jerusalem i.e. the Non-Israelites. The Non-Israelites are asking for legal matters that need to be judged, and once that's done the matter is resolved and they will have peace ... *shalom*.

2.c: **prosper** (*Shalah*) If you keep the commandments, you can claim a right of blessings and protections from YHVH via the Mt. Sinai contract/covenant.^Q

2.d: **love** (*Ahav*) "If you love me keep my commandments" (Joh 14:15, Joh 14:23). It's not about loving a

^Q TODO: Tie in Genesis 15 and the covenant of the pieces. In this chapter a trust is setup and from that trust beneficiaries can prosper they can prosper they can petition for assets from the trust.

city, but loving what the city represents and the law that the citizens of that city honor and respect. The law is the Torah and the Torah is Israel's contract / covenant with the Creator of the Universe. If you keep the Torah you will receive protection (i.e. live in peace *Shalom*) and blessings (i.e. you will prosper)^R.

⁷⁻⁹ ⁷ Peace be within thy walls, *and* prosperity within thy palaces. ⁸ For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace *be* within thee. ⁹ Because of the house of YHVH our God (*Elohenu*) I will seek thy good.

Where does peace and prosperity exist during the millennial Kingdom but inside the gates of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be that shining city on the hill, and, as I like to say, emitting the rays of Torah. Why? Because that is where the house of YHVH is and the citizens of the city accept him as their Elohim. It's man's proclivity to seek the light, so the rays of Torah will attract those who aren't in the city and thereby seeking its goodness.

"For my brethren and companions' sake..." Could this mean the brethren of David, a Jew, are the rest of Israel (Ephraim, Manasseh etc.) and could their companions be the nations?

"...I will seek thy good": This is what a beneficiary seeks from a trustee.

Pax Romana Compared to the Peace of Jerusalem

How does [*Pax Romana*](#)^S (which is Latin for the Peace of Rome) compare to the peace^T of Jerusalem? I wish to explore etymologically this Hebrew word and project my thoughts into legal concepts (as this is my proclivity) and then contrast that with Pax Romana.

The Strong's definition for Jerusalem ([H3389](#)) says that it's a combination of two words Yarah ([H3384](#)) and Shalom ([H7999](#)). The Hebrew word Torah^U ([H8451](#)) which is translated as law, is a word I'm most interested in. With Torah closely connected to Yarah, it's easy to come to an understanding that Jerusalem can be thought of as "The Law of Shalom".

Pax Romana is simply the absence of war and of the two concepts of peace is not the preferred one. The Hebrew concept of Shalom isn't just lack of war but it is much richer and includes a wholeness or completeness. You're not only at peace with man, you're at peace with your Elohim, which is very good because he is the one that protects you and blesses you.

^R TODO: further explanation is required. Consider adding the secrets of the "sacred contract" found in Genesis 12:2-3

^S "**Pax Romana** (Latin for "Roman peace") was the long period of relative peace and minimal expansion by military force experienced by the Roman Empire in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. ... Its span was about 206 years (27 BC to 180 AD)."

Origins of the term: "...The Latin word pax, most often translated "peace," as in the nominative case in Latin, also means "treaty" or "accord." The Roman legal system, which forms the basis of many Western court systems today, unified the administration of justice in the courts throughout the provinces. ... The concept of a Pax Romana was first described by Edward Gibbon in Chapter Two of The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Source Wikipedia

^T Peace is what is most often translated from the Hebrew *Shalom*.

^U For more details, see "Word Study - commandments statutes decrees ordinances charges judgments.doc"

Conclusion

My analysis concludes that to “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” is something that occurs in the Messianic Kingdom. The prayer for peace is for those who are not in the Kingdom because those who are in the Kingdom already have it. Instead of “pray for the peace of Jerusalem”, what should our prayer be?

We should be praying for and actively pursuing the conditioning of our heart, soul and spirit^V so that it is you, as an unashamed Israelite, who is sought after for this awesome *shalom* that comes from YHVH. How do we assure that we are the ones who possess this shalom and are being sought after rather than being those who are seeking it? Read [Mat 5:17-19](#).

The kind of peace that exists in the Millennial Kingdom will occur when all (as in all twelve tribes) of Israel are unified (*echad*) in one accord. Another question is, has the remedy for this (at least in part) already occurred, but the world is waiting for all tribes to accept the remedy and to act accordingly? I’m thinking here of Y’shua when he said, that the “Kingdom of Heaven is at hand”^W, and that the House of Israel has been redeemed as the bill of divorce has been paid for (see .

What is the essence of Shalom that is possessed by the Millennial Kingdom Jerusalem residents? It’s the ability to adjudicate matters as that is the context of Psalms 122.

See how King David expresses this in another one of his famous psalms

A Song of degrees of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!^X Psa 133:1 KJV

In the Millennial Kingdom I don’t believe that conflicts between men are going to magically vanish. The question therefore is not will there be conflicts but how they will be resolved. Will they be resolved in such a way that all parties will have confidence that no matter what the judgment is, the process of adjudication will be done in righteousness^Y.

It’s not good when we allow scriptural phrases like “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” to be turned into slogans without giving any respect for its context. This is applicable even more when done with regard to the weightier matters of scripture (it’s my testimony that the weightier matters of Torah is the law and it’s proceedings).

If you accept my analysis / midrash, doesn’t Messianic Judaism, and by extension Rabbinical Judaism and Constantine Christianity, have a problem? I say this because all tribes need to be united for the conditions of “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” to come to be.

Could one also already argue that the remedy for this already exists? I will close by asking the question “what did Y’shua mean when he said “The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand”.^Z

^V **Deu 6:4-5** KJV ⁴ Hear, O Israel: YHVH our Elohim is one YHVH: ⁵ And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

^W See Series\Kingdom-of-Heaven-and-Kingdom-of-God, article #???

^X "... to dwell **H3427 Yashab** together in unity! **H1571 Gam** **H3162 Yachad**

^Y This is due process. **Deu 16:20** KJV “That which is **altogether just shalt thou follow**, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.” In Hebrew it’s “**tzedeik tzedeik teerdoph**” righteous righteous you shall ~~follow~~ pursue.

^Z See my document “Prince-of-Peace-Sar-Shalom.doc”.

Appendix

Revelation 21:10-27 (KJV)

Verse Notes: 10: context is Jerusalem, 21: twelve gates, 24: saved nations & kingdoms of the earth glorify and honor it

¹⁰ And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹ Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; ¹² And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³ On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. ¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. ¹⁶ And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. ¹⁷ And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. ¹⁸ And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass. ¹⁹ And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; ²⁰ The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. ²¹ And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass. ²² And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. ²³ And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof. ²⁴ And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. ²⁵ And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. ²⁶ And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. ²⁷ And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Matthew 5:17-19 KJV

¹⁷⁻¹⁹ ¹⁷ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. ¹⁸ For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven

My Goal

“My goal is to not only make it into the kingdom of heaven, but be called great by the witness and testimony of others when I get there because I was a good and effective Torah teacher. What makes an effective Torah teacher (*moreh torah*) in this day and age? It is one who explains religion through the understanding of Israel’s covenant with her Elohim.”

In context to this article (Psalms 122) is this not a reasonable goal for all who wish to be in possession of

ToDo: or should this reference Series\Kingdom-of-Heaven-and-Kingdom-of-God, article #???

the Shalom of [JeruShalom](#)?