

ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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The Land Unlocked

In the first month of 2008, my wife and I received an invitation to meet some Australian internet friends, Karalyn and Anna, in Israel, and they would purchase our tickets for us. What a blessing this was. It was a dream, a prayer, and a hope come true. Being poor farmers and shepherds, it is something that was not within reach through our own means. However, YHWH's ways are not our ways.

But this story actually began six years ago when one of these friends, Karalyn, purchased a plot of land. As she did this, YHWH brought a kohen (priest) into her life and she took this kohen out to this land and he blessed it. Upon blessing it, His Spirit said to Karalyn that this was now His land and she could not sell it except only by His direction. The purchase of this land was six years ago. YHWH indicated to her that He had a special purpose for this land that He would reveal later.

Then late last year in 2007, she received a phone call wanting to know if she was the owner of that particular piece of property and how much did she want for it. After praying she quoted a price that was three times the amount that she paid for it. The prospective buyer then said that he would get back to her on this. After a time the person re-contacted the owner to finalize the deal for three times the purchase price.

This bit of information is important to know and understand as it establishes the fact that YHWH began putting together this trip many years ago and that it would be full of His divine appointments, many of which would involve the number three.

One thing that was deeply impressed upon me in the early days after learning that we would be making this trip to Israel, was that I was supposed to plant an almond tree while there in the land. We will relate this in more detail below.

My son, Nechemyah, was scheduled to get out of the US army. However, the day of his release was being postponed time after time. After so many postponements I began to realize that YHWH was working and that His hand was in this. I began seeking Him to understand this. As I prayed I began to be impressed to fast before our trip to Israel, the impression was that I was to fast for 40 days, drinking only water and clear liquids like apple juice. I began seeking when I should begin this fast. I was also desirous to have my son home before I began this fast as I desired to have a Shabbat meal with him when he came home. I also was desirous to have a Shabbat meal with my family before I left for Israel. As it turned out Nechemyah came home on a day which would allow me to have exactly one Shabbat meal with him before I began the fast, then fast for forty days, with one Shabbat meal after the fast with my family, then leave for Israel. His timing was perfect!

The fast was going just fine until I reached the 33rd day of the fast. On this day in the evening I became violently ill. I began vomiting a very putrid brown substance. Now mind you I had not had any solid food for 33 days when this began to happen. I was deathly sick. The smell of this substance was quite foul, but not the typical bile. After vomiting for nearly an hour I went to bed at around 8pm. I was back up at midnight vomiting the putrid brown substance again, only worse. I prayed and prayed and asked YHWH the meaning of this and should I continue to fast or break my fast. I felt that I should break the fast. I ate a small container of yogurt and immediately began feeling some relief. I went back to bed.

Then when I arose in the morning I drove down to the river near our home and did a mikvah, a ritual immersion. This river is in a rather remote area. The water was quite cold, below 40 degrees F. While I stood in the water near the bridge three cars went over the bridge, one right after the other. I completed my mikvah and then drove home. As I was driving home I met three cars in a line, one right after the other. On the way to the river and on the way home I saw no other cars, only these two groups of three cars each. And this after completing 33 days of fasting. It was confirmation that this was from YHWH.

We investigated tickets on the internet and we discovered that we could purchase tickets for Israel cheaper from the US than if our friends did it from Australia. So the money was wired to us and we purchased the roundtrip tickets online. We were all set and ready to go. Our arrival date in Israel was to be on the 24th day of the 9th month, both evenly divisible by three. We needed to make arrangements for my mom to watch over our three girls while we were

traveling. Thus we needed to drive over to my mom's and drop the girls off and then go to the airport. So, we actually left our home on 9-21, again both numbers evenly divisible by three.

When we checked in at the airport in St. Louis, MO, we had three different flights, each on a different airplane. The first flight from St. Louis to Chicago we sat in row number 27, or 3 9s. The second flight from Chicago to Madrid we sat in row number 24, or 3 8s. The last flight from Madrid to Tel Aviv we sat in row number 18, or 3 6s. I remembered that from my understanding at the time, my first encounter with the number three was when my fast ended on the 33rd day and with the two separate groups of three cars. So here we have 3 11s; 3 9s; 3 8s; and 3 6s. As I was praying over these numbers, I was impressed that not only were these numbers important, but also those that were missing, namely the numbers 12, 10 and 7, numbers which are all important in Scripture and intimately associated with Israel. As Israel, particularly the ten tribes of the north are presently hidden among the nations of the world, so also were these numbers hidden in what YHWH was beginning to reveal to me.

We arrived in Israel and met up with our friends from Australia. From Australia there were a total of six and from the US my wife and I, to make up a total of eight in our group. This number is also important, as eight is the number of new beginnings. The significance of this would show up later as YHWH revealed His workings to us in the days to follow.

Our first trip to the Sea of Galilee occurred on 10-2, which is interesting to note as this is how YHWH divided the nation into two houses, with ten tribes in the northern house and two tribes in the southern house.

Upon walking down to the edge of the water, I stepped onto a large rock out in the midst of the water and squatted down to peer into the water. As I was looking my gaze fastened upon something gold in the water. I reached down and picked it up out of the water. It was a lock which was broken as it had the shackle missing. As I continued to squat there upon that rock I found a second lock. This one also was broken and had the shackle missing. I stood up and stepped back on the shore and started to walk away. As I did the Spirit said to go back to the water and I would find another lock and a key near it. So I turned around and walked back to the edge of the water and squatted down, thereupon finding another lock which was also broken with the shackle missing. As I continued to look in the water, I looked and behold, I saw something small and gold shining from under a rock. I moved the rock and lying upon a larger rock was a shiny golden key. This key not only fit each of the locks I had found, but it also worked each of the locks. Later, I would learn something quite significant about the locks that I had previously not known.

Two days later three of us attended a Shabbat meeting at a Kibbutz near to where we were staying. This Kibbutz is Messianic and run and founded by Ariel, a very beautiful and Spirit-filled man. It was such a blessing to attend this Shabbat meeting and to be a part of it. As Ariel spoke that morning he was to say several things that were of great importance to me and to all of Ephrayim. Ariel understands the two houses and he very much desires for tens of thousands of Ephrayim to return home and stand with their brother Yehudah.

Now mind you that I have been studying Scripture for nearly my whole life, and I have heard and read many things. But on this day I was to hear and learn something that I had never heard before, or at least do not remember ever having heard before. Ariel spoke about that location on the Yarden (Jordan) which the nation of Israel crossed near Yericho (Jericho). It is the same place where Eliyahu and then Elisha crossed upon dry ground. This is also where Yochanan haMatbiel (John the Immerser) also did his immersing. This place on the Yarden is known as the Lock of the Land or the Lock of Israel. When the waters were divided this is called "breaking the lock". I nearly jumped out of my chair when Ariel spoke these words. Please understand that before this I had no previous knowledge of any of this and here I am having just two days before this picked out of the waters of the Sea of Galilee which feed the Yarden River, three broken locks! Now I learn that the lock of Israel has been broken three times as recorded in Scripture. Isn't YHWH amazing!!!

One of the amazing things is that each one of these locks each had the shackle missing. I was to later learn upon our return home in a phone call from a friend, that with Yom Teruah of 2008, the captivity of Ephrayim had been completed and removed. And here I am holding three locks with their shackles removed. We are free because YHWH set us free!

But wait, brothers and sisters, this is far from being the whole story. Three days later we would return to the Kibbutz to talk with Ariel further. But before we get to that, let me explain what happened on the next day after Shabbat.

Originally, after I had learned that we were going to Israel in the fall, YHWH had told me that I needed to plant a tree. I began searching for someplace to plant a tree. I came into contact with Pattie. She is a wonderful Spirit-filled talmid (disciple) of Yeshua and she worked very hard at helping me secure a location to plant an almond tree. The first location that we thought was going to work fell through. So the search was on again. And once again Pattie was leading the search. She directed me to a person by the name of Hannah who is also a Spirit-filled talmid of Yeshua. She and her brother run and operate a Biblical Garden in Ein Kerem that is open to the public. It is here that Hannah has many opportunities to share Yeshua with many people who would not otherwise know the truth about Him. They pray protection and angels over this

property every day. And when I walked through those gates I knew that this was the right place as the peace that is there is quite astonishing! But I am getting ahead of myself here. Please allow me to digress a little.

Upon arriving in Israel I began to try to make contact with Hannah. However, the more I tried the more that it did not happen. Pattie was also trying to get into contact with her as well, all to no avail. Since Pattie and Hannah are friends, it seemed rather important that contact was not happening. So, I began to pray about it. YHWH assured me that the planting of the tree would happen in His time and according to His plan. In fact, it would only happen three days prior to our leaving Israel. This too was part of His plan, a part that will only be revealed at some time in the future.

It was only after that Shabbat meeting at the kibbutz on 10-4 that I finally made contact with Hannah. We were able then to drive over to this Biblical Garden and meet up with her. Normally, this garden is closed on this day. After arriving and visiting for a few minutes Hannah rode with me as we drove over to a nursery to buy an almond tree. YHWH had already placed in my mind and heart what the tree would look like. So, when we walked in and over to the section which had the almond trees, I knew the moment I saw the tree that it was the correct tree. I purchased the tree along with a bag of compost and the nursery attendant gave me instructions on how to plant the tree.

As we drove Hannah and I got to know each other a little. The rest of the group stayed behind in Ein Kerem, which is just west of Jerusalem. It is interesting to note that this is the small village in which Elizabeth and Zechariah lived, the parents of Yochanan (John). This community was historically a community of kohenim who were off duty from serving in the temple.

We arrived back at the garden and unloaded the small tree and went into the garden. One of the things that had been impressed upon me was that I was to plant the tree near a large rock. Messiah Yeshua is our Rock! When Hannah showed me the location that she and her brother had discussed, I knew that it was perfect.

I set about to dig the hole. The ground was quite rocky and very hard. It probably took me about an hour to dig the hole in which I was going to plant this tree. I then mixed the soil from the hole with the compost that I had purchased and planted that small almond tree.

Before I had begun digging the tree I had taken off my hat, my outer shirt and removed my camera pouch from off of my belt and had placed them all on a rock wall nearby. After I finished digging what I did not realize at the time was that the camera bag had fallen off of the

wall onto the back side where I could not see it. So when I put my hat and shirt back on, I missed the camera bag. I did not realize it was missing until the next morning when I went to put the camera bag on my belt. I called Hannah and she went out and found the camera bag exactly where I expected it to be. She is shipping it to me in the US.

As I discovered that the camera bag was missing the Spirit began saying to me the reason that it had been left behind was important and that I needed to seek understanding on this one particular point. When I had found the three locks and the key, I put the locks in my pocket. But because the key was so small, I put it in the camera bag for safe keeping. So, when the camera bag was inadvertently left behind, so was that key. My impression was that this happened to reveal to me that the key to the land had been left behind or more specifically lost. However, it would be recovered shortly, when I received the camera bag. I have not yet received the camera bag, but am expecting to receive it any day now.

The almond tree that I planted was easy for me to recognize because when I look at it, it looks like a menorah to me. That is what I was looking for and that is what I saw when I looked at this tree. However, the others in our group did not see that. What they saw was the letter shin – **ש**. I had not seen the shin until someone had mentioned it. The letter shin stands for “El Shaddai.”

If we will remember that the menorah has fashioned into it almond blossoms that hold the oil. This is further verified when there was a contention as to who was the rightful high priest and it was Aharon’s rod that budded. It budded forth with almond blossoms and almonds. One of the significant truths about the menorah is that it signifies the seven manifold Spirits of the Almighty. It is the completeness of His light to us. We who are coming out of Christianity and returning to His Torah are coming into the knowledge and understanding of the completeness of His light to the world. When we walk in the fullness of that light, then He will be able to restore us in fullness and completeness.

I was not able to share the fullness of this story to Hannah at the time that I planted the tree, because I simply did not fully understand it myself. Much of what you are reading today has been revealed to me after the fact. I did not understand the full significance of the almond tree until a friend pointed it out to me. YHWH said to plant an almond tree, so I simply planted an almond tree. While I wondered about why an almond tree, I did not ask YHWH why an almond tree. I am quite sure that the full extent of all that happened to me while in Israel is still to be revealed to me. There are many things that I still do not understand, but that understanding will come about in His time.

As Hannah and I were saying our goodbyes, she asked if I would send her the complete story. I replied with that the planting of the almond tree was only the beginning, not the end of the story. She was thankful to be a part of what was happening and asked to be kept up to date, which I hope to do. She is one of our heavenly Father's beautiful people and I know that He has placed this tree in the care of the right person.

On our last full day in Israel, upon waking up and getting ready for the day, Gwenda, the daughter of Anna, asked if she could do a mikvah. The significance of this is more than just astounding, as during these two weeks, YHWH had done a wonderful and powerful work in Gwenda's life. She, like many of us, had had a terrible experience inside a cult and it had left her scarred and hurting. But YHWH had done a mighty and powerful work in her life and she desired to do a mikvah before we left Israel. So, we packed up the van and headed for the Sea of Galilee. Now I must tell you that YHWH had already impressed upon me that I was to find a lock that was not broken before we left Israel. I did not know when or how. As Gwenda stepped into the water she reached down into the water and picked up three small keys, which she handed to me. After taking another step in the water, she bent down and picked up a broken lock, one with the shackle missing. After about five more steps, she picked up a second broken lock; it also had the shackle missing.

She proceeded out into the sea and we completed her mikvah into the name of Yeshua. Upon her return to shore, as we were talking, she said that she was ready to go. I said that she needed to go back out into the water and find another lock; then we would leave. She returned to the water, about knee deep and in about fifteen seconds found the third lock. But this lock was a different make than the other five locks. Also, this lock had three keys with it. Not only that, but the lock had the shackle still intact, but the lock was unlocked.

So now we have found two sets of three locks. Surely YHWH is giving a message to us through these locks. He has removed our shackles and unlocked the locks of our captivity and it is time for us to return home to the land which He promised to our fathers, to Avraham, to Yitzchak and to Ya'aqov.

When we went and spoke to Ariel, one of the things that he talked about was that the Shemitah year had just ended with Yom Teruah a few days earlier. We were now in the first year of a new seven year cycle. Before Yom Teruah we did not see any farmers working in their fields. After Yom Teruah there were farmers everywhere working in their fields, plowing and getting their fields ready to receive new seed for a new crop. Likewise, he said, His people are now ready to be gathered together. He spoke from the present Torah portion in Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:12, and in particular the first word of that verse. The word is קָהַל – q'hel,

which means “to gather together to form one unit.” He used the illustration of a person’s ten fingers. These ten fingers in and by themselves are useless to carry water. However, if they come together to form a cup, then they can carry water.

Likewise, it is time for Ephrayim, the ten tribes of northern Israel, to come together with one purpose as the fingers of a man’s hand and form a cup that we might carry the living water to the rest of the world. It is time for this to happen. Our captivity is finished. The shackles have been removed. It is time to end our dispersion throughout all the nations of the world. It is time for us to be a nation once again. It is time for us to go home!

Our two weeks in the land was quickly coming to an end. We were not really ready to leave, but I knew that I had accomplished and met all the divine appointments that YHWH had made for me. I was full of shalom.

After we had been in Israel for only a few days, about ten days before we were to leave, the Spirit of YHWH began speaking to me about the return flights home. He strongly impressed upon me, that of the rows we would sit in on the flights home, only one of them would be evenly divisible by three: the second flight. There were to be three flights again on the return home. The first flight would be important and comforting to us. But it was the third flight that I was to pay particular attention to as it would be a single digit. My impression was that this number would be a key to understanding the threes. We had flown economy class all the way, so this did not really make sense to me at the time. I simply acknowledged it and filed it away.

When we checked in at the airport in Israel, the agent was unable to give us boarding passes for our third flight for two reasons. One was that it was a different carrier, and even more importantly, when we reached Chicago we had to pass through US customs before proceeding on with the next flight. We will discuss more about the third flight shortly.

Our first flight home we sat in row 25 or 5 5s. 25 can be expressed as 5×5 , which can also be read as 5 by 5, depending on the context. One of the significant things about this trip was the friendship that had grown between my wife Batya and Anna. This friendship had begun several years ago over the internet. Now Anna is getting up there in age as she is a holocaust survivor from Holland. Her father was in the lineage of a kohen. However, he was also a believer. Batya and Anna became even closer during these two weeks. One of the things that Batya had prayed and asked our heavenly Father for was for her to be able to meet Anna in this life. He answered that prayer in such a wonderful manner! But when it came time to part at the airport there were a lot of tears. Batya broke down and wept very hard. She wept off and on for much

of the first flight. At one point while we were in the airplane waiting for takeoff, Batya asked me about the seat number, stating that it was not divisible by three. This is what I said to her.

We are in row 25. YHWH has placed us in this row because He knows our hearts, that our hearts are for Him and desirous of staying in His land with His people. There is a phrase in radio traffic, particularly in aircraft radio broadcasts, that when the other party asks how he is being received that the proper response is, "I read you five by five." This means that one is coming through loud and clear. Our heavenly Father was saying to us that He was hearing the cry of our hearts 5 by 5; He was hearing us loud and clear.

The second flight we sat in row number 33. This was to complete the circuit and further confirmation that I had done all that needed to be done on this trip. As you will recall from earlier this was the number of days that I had fasted before the trip. Now here we are at the end of our trip and once again we see the number 33.

This flight was delayed in taking off. When we arrived in Chicago we sat on the tarmac for about 20 minutes waiting for a gate assignment. We only had an hour and a half between flights. Now we were down to only one hour by the time we were disembarking from the plane. And we had to go through customs and get boarding passes. We got through customs without any hassle, which I was more than thankful for. Then we got checked in and got our boarding passes for the last and third flight to St. Louis. But there was a problem. Where we had gotten off of that flight, was at the far right terminal of the airport, terminal five. Our next flight was from terminal one, clear across the airport. We caught a tram and practically ran to the next flight only to find out that it, too, was delayed in leaving. Isn't our heavenly Father so kind and gracious to us? HalleluYah!

So we had the opportunity to sit and relax and calm down a bit and to reflect upon the flight. We were going to be sitting in row number four. It was an express flight in which there are no first class seats. It was only a forty-five minute flight. YHWH has not yet revealed to me the full significance of this number, but I know that He will do so in His time. It is interesting to note that while there were six flights altogether (which is divisible by three), only on four of them did we sit in rows that could be evenly divisible by three. Four flights and the last flight we sat in row four. What are the odds of this just happening? The odds are so astronomical that it would be absolutely impossible. It is also important to point out that I did not have any influence whatsoever in which rows we sat in, that was the airlines' doing. Actually, it was YHWH's doing, through the airlines.

This is my impression concerning the number three, of which there were many. Let me make a comment about the significance of this repeated number on this trip. There were other threes that showed up. I have only shared these few with you to show the significance of what YHWH is now doing. My impression is that the first wave of Ephramites to return to His land will do so inside of the next three years. Of course, I will continue to pray and seek His will and His interpretation on all that happened to me during this trip. But I know that we are in a prophetic time and we must walk in obedience to His Spirit in order not to miss any of His appointments that He has for us. I will end this with a quote from one of the prophets.

May YHWH grant to us the fullness of His Spirit, that we might walk in the fullness of His love and power and not our own, in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach.

Amein and Amein.

Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, "This is the word of YHWH to Zerubbabel, saying, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says YHWH Tzava'ot."

Zecharyah (Zechariah) 4:6

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