**The Prayer Covenant:**

**INFLUENCE**

[Prayer Covenant]

**INFLUENCE**

**Make me an instrument of your grace, truth, forgiveness, righteousness and justice.**

Notice that we collect several of the prayer themes and ask God to make US instruments of these attributes. As we live out our relationship to God through Jesus, we are to have influence on others and our world to be more like Christ to transform our world.

This is my favorite line in the Prayer Covenant.

**INFLUENCE: impact, guidance, lead, impact the lives of others**

“True leadership cannot be awarded, appointed, or assigned. It comes only from influence, and that cannot be mandated. It must be earned. The only thing a title can buy is a little time-either to increase your level of influence with others or to undermine it.” John Maxwell

**Make me an** **instrument**: tool , implement , mechanism , utensil , apparatus … it speaks of utility, for value, usefulness, service

1 Kings 10:9 Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the Lord’s eternal love for Israel, he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness.”

2 Chronicles 9:8 Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the Lord your God. Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire to uphold them forever, he has made you king over them, to maintain justice and righteousness.”

John 13:34-35 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

“Prayer of St. Francis”:

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

To be consoled as to console,

To be understood as to understand,

To be loved as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive;

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

It is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life.

Attributed to Francis Bernadone, perhaps the most universally loved of Christian saints, who was born in Assisi, Italy, in 1181 or 1182. At the age of twenty-two, after a sudden illness that brought him almost to the point of death, he left his home and inheritance to follow an injunction that he felt he received from Christ himself: "Francis, go and rebuild my Church." Three great Franciscan orders quickly grew around the monks, nuns, and lay disciples who responded to his joyful example of universal love and selfless service.

The so-called Prayer of Saint Francis, is a widely known Christian prayer. Often wrongly attributed to the 13th-century saint Francis of Assisi, the prayer in its present form cannot be traced back further than 1912, when it was printed in Paris in French, in a small spiritual magazine called La Clochette (The Little Bell).

Around 1920, a French Franciscan priest printed the prayer on the back of an image of St. Francis, without attribution.[1] The prayer has been known in the United States since 1927, when its first known English translation (possibly still under copyright today) appeared in the Quaker magazine Friends' Intelligencer under the mistaken title "A prayer of St. Francis of Assissi".[3] Senator Albert W. Hawkes and the saint's namesake Cardinal Francis Spellman distributed millions of copies of the prayer during and just after World War II.[2]:92–95

The prayer has similarities to this saying of Blessed Giles of Assisi, one of the companions of St. Francis:

Blessed is he who loves and does not therefore desire to be loved; blessed is he who fears and does not therefore desire to be feared; blessed is he who serves and does not therefore desire to be served; blessed is he who behaves well toward others and does not desire that others behave well toward him; and because these are great things, the foolish do not rise to them.[4]

**Grace: unmerited favor or gift**

*John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

**Grace: unmerited favor or gift**

*Romans 3:21-26 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— 26 he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.*

**Truth: reality, God’s fact**

John 4:23-24 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

John 14:15 “If you love me, keep my commands. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

Ephesians 4:15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

**Forgiveness: to not hold one’s sins against them, to pay the price and cancel or erase sin’s price, then to be changes to be without sin.**

Ephesians 5:3-5 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. 5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

**Righteousness: to do what is right, to be godly, to be like Christ**

Psalm 11:7 For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice; the upright will see his face.

Psalm 33:5 The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

Psalm 89:14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

Psalm 99:4 The King is mighty, he loves justice— you have established equity; in Jacob you have done what is just and right.

Psalm 101:1 I will sing of your love and justice; to you, Lord, I will sing praise.

Amos 5:15 Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the Lord God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

Mag Baker, Women of Excellence Award, FB: I have a saying that I learned as a young girl from my grandmother. "Do the right thing and you have nothing to fear."

**Justice: Fairness, Righteousness, Honesty, Integrity**

Isaiah 16:5 In love a throne will be established; in faithfulness a man will sit on it— one from the house of David— one who in judging seeks justice and speeds the cause of righteousness… 8 “For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them.

Hosea 2:19 I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion.

Hosea 12:6 But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always.

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly with your God.

**Justice: Fairness, Righteousness, Honesty, Integrity**

Matthew 12:18 “Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

Luke 11:42 “Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.

**New Colossus**, (Emma Lazarus)

(1849–1887), written in 1883. In 1903, the poem was engraved on a bronze plaque and mounted inside the lower level of the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty.

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,

With conquering limbs astride from land to land;

Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand

A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame

Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name

Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand

Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command

The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she

With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,

I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Luke 4:18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,

because he has anointed me

to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners

and recovery of sight for the blind,

to set the oppressed free,

19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” [Isa 61:1,2; 58:6]

21 He began by saying to them,

“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

After the last tear falls by Andrew Peterson

After the last tear falls, after the last secret's told

After the last bullet tears through flesh and bone

After the last child starves and the last girl walks the boulevard

After the last year that's just too hard

There is love

Love, love, love

There is love

Love, love, love

There is love

After the last disgrace, after the last lie to save some face

After the last brutal jab from a poison tongue

After the last dirty politician, after the last meal down at the mission

After the last lonely night in prison

There is love

Love, love, love

There is love

Love, love, love

There is love

And in the end, the end is oceans and oceans of love and love again

image: http://static.urx.io/units/web/urx-unit-loader.gif

We'll see how the tears that have fallen

Were caught in the palms of the Giver of love and the Lover of all

And we'll look back on these tears as old tales

'Cause after the last plan fails, after the last siren wails

After the last young husband sails off to join the war

After the last, this marriage is over

After the last young girl's innocence is stolen

After the last years of silence that won't let a heart open

There is love

Love, love, love

There is love

And in the end, the end is oceans and oceans of love and love again

We'll see how the tears that have fallen

Were caught in the palms of the Giver of love and the Lover of all

And we'll look back on these tears as old tales

'Cause after the last tear falls there is love

**Steve Maman** is a Canadian Jewish businessman who has made it his mission to rescue Christian and Yazidi girls from ISIS.

In August 2014, jihadists in Iraq captured thousands of women and girls, and forced them into sex slavery. They are raped by dozens of men every day.

Steve heard about this unspeakable tragedy, and instead of simply expressing outrage like most of us, he took action.

Steve formed a nonprofit foundation called the Liberation of Christian and Yazidi Children of Iraq (CYCI).

"What motivated me is being Jewish, being part of a people that survived the Holocaust. We waited for six years for people to come and help us,” Steve said.

So far Steve has raised over $500,000, mostly from Moroccan Jews like himself.

He put together a team of negotiators inside ISIS-held areas, who redeem the captives for $2000 to $4000 each.

As Rambam (the great Torah scholar Moses Maimonides) teaches, there is no greater mitzvah than redeeming captives, for the problems of the captive include hunger, thirst, lack of clothes, and danger of death. Ignoring the need to redeem captives violates these Torah laws: "Do not harden your heart or shut your hand against your needy fellow" (Deut 15:7), and "Do not stand idly by while your neighbor’s blood is shed" (Lev. 19:16). (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Matanot Aniyim 8:10)

Says Steve, "There are millions of inhabitants in Mosul and they're not all ISIS, so we, within those millions of people, have found teams that were willing to work with us in order to get those girls out."

Some have accused Steve of encouraging ISIS by making it profitable for them to kidnap girls.

Steve’s response: “ISIS is worth today $4 billion. Do you think that my little two or three thousand dollars per child is going to help the power and might of ISIS? You’d have to stand up and tell the 1,200 survivors saved by Oskar Schindler and their 15,000 descendants, that they were liberated unlawfully because Oskar Schindler gave money to the Nazis."

Thus far, Steve has rescued 128 girls from ISIS.

In a recent interview, Steve said, "May God bless my mission with world leaders being aware of what I do and of what can be done. The ones I wish to help are praying to God after every rape that he ends their pain and humiliation. It is reported they wish they be killed rather than live with such a fate. God give them the strength to hold on to life for a bit longer until I get to them, God willing.”

Amen!

For embracing the Torah value of redeeming the captive, we honor Steve Maman as this week’s Thursday Hero at Accidental Talmudist.

Learn more about CYCI at www.liberationiraq.com

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Slide 19

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