

Prayer Update From Israel (January 11, 2016)



Modern Mount Zion

Today (11 January) is *Rosh Hodesh Shevat*, the first of the 11th month in the Hebrew calendar.

This month is mentioned by name in Zechariah 1:7, when the prophet is told by an angel to proclaim:

Thus says the LORD of Hosts, "I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion. But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster." Therefore thus says the LORD, "I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem...My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem...For I will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst."

1. THANKSGIVING FOR RAIN.

"Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praises on the harp to our God, Who covers the heavens with clouds, Who prepares rain for the earth, Who makes grass to grow on the mountains (Psalm 147:7-8).

"Ask the LORD for rain in the time of the latter rain. The LORD will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, Grass in the field for everyone" (Zechariah 10:1).

We wish always to express our gratefulness to God for rains in Israel. Generally the rains come only between late October and early May. The "former rains" begin in the fall and

continue through February; the “latter rains” are what fall from around Passover until the end. Although the present season had seen quite a few periods of storms around the country, including Jerusalem, there had been very little rainfall in the critically important region of the Galilee and other agricultural centers of the north. During the past few weeks, there have been periods of plentiful rains throughout these regions, including snow on the Golan Heights. The Sea of Galilee, which has been dangerously low, has risen several centimeters.

Please pray God’s mercies over this dry and thirsty land—that there will be plentiful rains during this former season and on through the latter one—that the Sea of Galilee and the aquifers would be filled.

2. HE WHO WATCHES OVER ISRAEL.

“But I have made Esau bare; I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself.” (Jeremiah 49:10).

“But the LORD has been my defense, and my God the rock of my refuge. He has brought on them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; the LORD our God shall cut them off” (Psalm 94:22-23).

We are grateful for the mercies of God over Israel, preserving him from the destroyer. The God of his Fathers continues to release grace and mercy and protection over His land and people of Covenant. As they are still being gathered and, for the most part, still have not come into the life of His *New Covenant* (Jeremiah 31:31)—“*He who watches over Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.*” In Psalm 25:19-22, David calls on the Lord to “*look upon my enemies, for they are many, and they hate me with violent hatred. Guard my soul and deliver me...Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his distresses.*” The Biblical Hebrew word for “cruel violence” used in this verse happens to be *hamas*, spelled and pronounced the same as the Arabic acronym for the terrorist Islamic Resistance Movement. David’s God is still Israel’s only guard, deliverer and redemption from the powers of cruel violence, against which alone, she would be helpless.

In the last 2 1/2 weeks the Israel security agency Shin Bet has broken open three Hamas cells preparing major attacks within Israel. In late December a large-scale operation plotting bombings and suicide bombing attacks in Israel was apprehended in the Abu Dis area outside of Jerusalem. A week ago the agency thwarted a plan to kidnap and murder Israelis in order to trade their bodies for Palestinian prisoners. This week other plots was uncovered, including one to plant bombs and blow up Prime Minister Netanyahu while he would be speaking in an Arena in southern Jerusalem.

Having lived in Israel for many years, the authors can testify that the number of apprehensions such as these are far greater than what makes it into the news media outside the country. And although we are grateful for the skill, the courage, and the efficiency of our security forces, it would be folly to attribute these repeated “deliverances” to Israel’s prowess alone. The Captain of the Armies of the LORD—the One who arrays the Armies of Israel—is overseeing it all. Included in His “armies” are angelic forces, as well as ***you in the nations who hold up Israel in your prayers.*** Those prayers not only assist in exposing plots on the ground—

they are serving to confound powers of darkness in the heavenlies, and (as with Daniel) helping to bring the physical armies in Israel into array with those warring on her behalf in the Heavens.

PLEASE PRAY:

*** For God’s mercies upon those men and women intrusted with Israel’s internal security. For alertness, integrity and righteous judgment to govern their actions.**

*** For authorities “appointed by God...for good...to execute wrath on him who practices evil” (Romans 13:2-4). For the spread of the Gospel amongst those in Israel’s security agencies, in her police force and in her border control.**

*** For the awakening of a longing for *righteousness* in Israel. This is what exalts a nation! For the remnant who already are walking in the righteousness of Messiah, as they intercede on behalf of Israel for protection from her enemies. “*Lead us, O LORD, in Your righteousness because of our enemies; Make your way straight before our face*” (Psalm 5:8).**

3. PRAY FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR.

“For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: Afflicting the just and taking bribes; diverting the poor from justice at the gate” (Amos 5:12).

Last week we requested prayer regarding the assumed ascension of Aryeh Deri of the *Shas* party into the leadership role of Israel’s Ministry of the Interior. Sunday, he was approved by the Cabinet and granted the coveted position. Deri held the post 22 years ago, but was forced to resign for abusing his position through bribery. He later was jailed for around two years for corruption. In Israel it is possible for someone who has committed even such a breach of moral integrity and public trust to return to a governmental position after being out for seven years. (Last May a bill was introduced which would have forbidden one convicted of a crime including turpitude from holding a position as minister, member of the Knesset or mayor, but this bill was not passed.) Last week, the Prime Minister requested the Attorney General examine the laws of the land to see if there would be any legal impediments to Deri’s appointment. The AG reported that technically there are no legal grounds for disqualifying Deri from the post. He added that his statements touched only on the legal validity of Deri’s appointment—they did not imply that therefore such an appointment would be “good and appropriate.” We find this appointment not only inappropriate, but highly regrettable, a shameful indictment of a flawed governmental system, which would allow for someone who has flagrantly abused his position to return to it. (It is interesting that virtually all of the announcements in the media concerning the appointment bore within their headlines mention of Deri’s past felonies and the time he had served.)

In assuming his place in the cabinet, one of the priorities with which Deri was charged by the prime minister was “*preventing illegal migrants from entering the country while expelling those who are already in Israel.*” If he follows tenets espoused by his party in past in the past, “illegal” will include racially-heritaged Jews who have acknowledged Yeshua as their Messiah and Savior.

PLEASE PRAY:

***That no weapon formed against the Gates of Israel through the placing of an anti-Messiah leader in oversight of those gates will prosper. (The MOI is literally a “gateway” into the nation.)**

*** Under the protection and in the authority of the blood of Yeshua, that “*there is no sorcery against Jacob, nor any divination against Israel.*” (Numbers 23:23). The party which is being granted this portfolio is known for its practice of the occult. Pray that the ministry offices will not become permeated with emissaries of an occult, anti-Messiah (anti-Christ) agenda.**

*** Isaiah 28:6. “*For a spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment, and for strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.*” That the gates of *aliyah* (returning of Jews to the Land) will be kept open for all those who hear the sound of the “great shofar” (Isaiah 28:13) to return – including Messianic Jews!**

*** That Israel’s system of government will be brought into a system of righteousness, under the reverence of the One upon whose shoulders government rests.**

*** For the grace of God to minister to Aryeh Deri, so convict him of sin, righteousness and judgment. That if it be possible, he may be turned to the only One in whom righteousness may be received (Psalm 4:1; II Corinthians 5:21), Messiah Yeshua, the Son of David and the Son of God.**

THIS WEEK’S TORAH PORTION:

From ancient times there has been a weekly portion (Parashah) from the first five books of Moses (The Torah) and an ending (Haftarah) from the Prophets read on the Sabbath in synagogues around the world. This portion is given a Hebrew name drawn from the opening words of the Torah passage. An illustration of this practice appears to have been recorded in Luke 4:16 where Yeshua (Jesus) arrived in the synagogue in Nazareth and was asked to read the portion (Isaiah 61) from the Prophets. We have found that in perusing these weekly readings, not only are we provided opportunity to identify in the context of God’s Word with millions of Jewish people around the world, but very often the Holy Spirit will illumine specific passages pertinent that week in our intercession for the Land and people of Israel. The Haftarah, unless otherwise noted, will be that read in Ashkenazy synagogues around the world. The references for all texts are those found in English translations of the Scriptures.

The readings for this week 10-16 January 2016 are called *Bo*—“Come” (...in to Pharaoh)

TORAH: Exodus 10:1—13:16

HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 46:13-28

***Exodus 10:3.** *“Thus says YHVH Elohei-ha’Ivrim (“Yehovah the Hebrews-God”): ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Send My people that they may serve Me.’”*

As in Ex. 9:1, the LORD here identifies his Name *YHVH* and godhead *Elohim* with the Hebrews as a race—a people extending back many generations before the fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (with whom He had identified Himself to Moses in the Burning Bush). He is thus also the God of the race which Pharaoh’s father had tried to exterminate 80 years previously (Ex 1:16). **PLEASE PRAY: for an awakened awareness in Israel that it is this same God who identified Himself by Name with the Hebrew race to Pharaoh...who has miraculously kept it in existence for over 4000 years—and who still chooses to identify Himself with this race for good and not evil.**

***Exodus 10:21-23.** *“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt...and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.’”*

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it...That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world” (John 1:4-5,9). **PLEASE PRAY: that darkness will be felt and hated—that the true Light will shine into both Egypt and Israel today, bringing illumination, hope and security to the inner “dwellings” of both of these peoples.**

***Exodus 10:28-29.** *“Then Pharaoh said to him, ‘Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!’” So Moses said, ‘You have spoken well. I will never see your face again.’”*

In Ex 7:1, the LORD says, “See, I have made you *Elohim* to Pharaoh...” The concept of finding hope, strength, encouragement and salvation in the light of the LORD’s face runs throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (See Psalms 44:3, 80:3,7,19). Often, the word translated “face” (*panim*) is also synonymous with the word “presence”. In Psalm 27:8-9, David’s response to the admonition “*Bakshu-Phanai!—Seek My Face!*” is a heartfelt, “*Your face O LORD will I seek...Do not hide your face from me...*” By rejecting Moses’ face, Pharaoh was rejecting the presence, the life, the hope of Moses’ God...and eventually God allowed him to be granted his request. **PLEASE PRAY: For secular, religious, Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox Jews to hear and respond to the call which God causes to be released in the hearts of all men, “Bakshu-Phanai!—Seek my Face!”**

***Exodus 12:2.** *“This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.”*

In Exodus 13:4 and Deuteronomy 16:1 this month is called by the Canaanite name *Aviv*, a name now used in Israel for “springtime.” Since the return from Babylonian captivity, a Babylonian

name *Nisan* has been used on Hebrew calendars. The “number” of the year for the Hebrew calendar (this year 5776) is calculated on the Hebrew calendar from the *Feast of Trumpets* in the fall (a day related in Hebrew tradition to the creation of the world). The month of *Aviv/Nisan*, however, marks the “Beginning of Months” for the Hebrew *religious* calendar (from which date all the Biblical Feasts are calculated). *Rosh Chodesh* (“Head of the Month”) for this *Rosh Chodashim* (“Head of Months”) will fall this year on Saturday April 9th . .

***Exodus 12:12-13.** *“For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt...and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am YHVH. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.”*

At the very beginning (see Ex. 4:22-23) YHVH had warned Pharaoh that refusal to release *His* “firstborn” Israel to serve Him, would result in the killing of Pharaoh’s own firstborn. It was the YHVH (the LORD), not a created ‘angel’, Who would pass through (Heb: *avar*) the land executing judgment. However, the word translated “pass over” in verse 13 (*pasach*) means to “skip” or “step over”—thus sparing those under the blood from the judgment coming upon all the other firstborn. **PLEASE PRAY:** **That this weekend when this passage is read in synagogues—and at Seder tables on the evening of next April 22nd (Passover) when it will be read again in Jewish homes around the world—that the message of the BLOOD of the Lamb which covers and diverts judgment would be imbued with supernatural revelation to the descendants of Jacob. Pray that the Holy Spirit would move Jewish hearts to recognize the “Lamb of God, who carries away the sin of the world”—the Pesach Lamb who was “stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted...He was wounded for our transgressions...and by His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:4-5).**

***Jeremiah 46:27.** *“But do not fear, O My servant Jacob, and do not be dismayed, O Israel! For behold, I will save you from afar, and your offspring from the land of their captivity; Jacob shall return, have rest and be at ease; No one shall make him afraid. Do not fear, O Jacob My servant,’ says the LORD, ‘For I am with you...”*”



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[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 17-23 January 2016: *B'Shalach*—“In the Sending” (...of the people away by Pharaoh): TORAH: Exodus: 13:17; HAFTARAH: Judges 4:4—5:31. NOTE: Because this week’s Torah and Haftarah readings contain two of the great recorded songs of the Bible (the *Song of the Sea* and the *Song of Barak and Deborah*), this Sabbath is sometimes known as *Shabbat Shirah*—“Sabbath of Song”.]

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