

## *Prayer Update From Israel (January 23, 2017)*



*The Temple Mount, looking north from the window of Succat Hallel*

“Eternal God, bless President Donald J. Trump, and America, our great nation. Guide us to remember the words of the Psalmist: ***Who will dwell on your holy mountain, one who does what is right, and speaks the truth.*** Who knows that when you eat the labor of your hands you are praiseworthy. That he who sows in tears, shall reap in joy. Because the freedoms we enjoy are not granted in perpetuity, but must be reclaimed by each generation.”

**--From prayer by Rabbi Marvin Hier at Inauguration of Donald Trump.**

### **1. ISRAEL AND THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN AMERICA.**

***“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.” (Daniel 2:20-23 NIV).***

**I. *We are in a season of great and portentous shifts occurring across the western world***—changes in leaders (England, the United States; soon in France, the Netherlands, among others); changes in international alliances (“Brexit”); shifting demography of people-groups (within Syria, Iraq, the refugees emanating from these and many other countries). The astounding election of Donald Trump into the office of President of the United States and his inauguration this past Friday is, of course, the most recent and perhaps far-reaching seismic movement of Change. Amid the furor of controversy, the roiling spectrum of opinion across the media around the world—blessings, thanksgiving, relief; fury cursings and contempt, fear—one thing is for certain, much of what has come to be assumed (in some cases imposed) as “the norm” in America and among those whom she influences during recent years is about to be turned upside down. Whichever country we’re from, we had better be awake, alert, humbly seeking the counsels of God and to be carried along on the wave of what *He* is doing.

***Israel has, of course been closely observing the elections in the US.*** While pundits around the world were drawing positive or negative conclusions regarding Mr. Trump’s address on Friday, it is interesting to see, as reflected in the media here, what was catching Israeli attention: **“Trump hears sermon on biblical protection of Jerusalem before swearing-in”** read one headline. **“President Trump puts fight against ‘radical Islamic terrorism’ at heart of inauguration speech”** trumpeted another. After eight years of an American administration persistently reproachful of Israel and her policies, openly hostile to our Prime Minister, and seemingly indifferent to our concerns regarding threats of nations openly intent on our destruction, our present government and a majority of our people now find themselves looking forward cautiously but hopefully to a change regarding relations with our largest and closest ally. We have felt the US Congress with us—may we actually be on the brink of a season of friendly and harmonious alliance with both Legislative and Executive branches of that government? As of now, there seem to be strong signals that President Trump desires warm relations with Israel; that “settlements” and the “two state solution” are no longer the items for immediate critical focus. That he and Mr. Netanyahu may be able to work together in a mutually respectful way. Yesterday evening they spoke for 30 minutes on the phone. President Trump has invited the Prime Minister to meet with him in Washington next month.

**PLEASE PRAY:**

**\*For forging of a relationship between President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu blessed by the counsels of God. For the showing of genuine respect and honor between them.**

**\* For President Donald Trump, Daniel 2:20-23 (above). That He will acknowledge WHO has placed him in his seat of authority. That he will allow the light of God’s mercy to shine within him—revealing deep and hidden things. That he will learn humility in this office—look to the God he acknowledged in his speech for wisdom and knowledge—strong among them knowledge of the fear of the Lord regarding His sovereign land and people Israel.**

**\*For a strengthened alliance between the Israeli and American government. That leaders in both Israel and the United States will realize that their first allegiance is to their God—**

**and out of this will come the alliances with other nations which God will bless with His strength and protection.**

**\*For Prime Minister Netanyahu. That for as long as God has appointed him to lead Israel, he will remain in office—and be free. That he will seek Divine Guidance in his relationship with President Trump.**

## **II. AMONG THE FIRST THORNY ISSUES: MOVING OF THE US EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM.**

*On January 23, 1950, the First Knesset of Israel proclaimed “Jerusalem is and has always been the capital of Israel.”* Since late 1949, our government has operated from there. The US Embassy has been in Tel Aviv, its officials travelling regularly to Jerusalem to conduct business with Israeli officials. Soon after the Jordanian army was driven from its occupation of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria (50 years ago this coming May 24<sup>th</sup>), Israel annexed all of Jerusalem as her undivided capital. The annexation was not acknowledged by the international community; eventually all foreign embassies left the capital. This makes Israel the only nation whose foreign embassies reside outside its capital. Because Jerusalem’s permanent “status” is by the international community considered still unresolved, even considering it officially as a part of Israel is often denied. (If an American baby is born here, its place of birth will be “Jerusalem”—but not “Jerusalem, Israel.”)

*On October 23, 1995, the US 104<sup>th</sup> Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 for initiating and funding the moving of the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem—to be completed no later than May 31, 1999.* The act also called for Jerusalem to remain an undivided city and for it to be recognized as the capital of the State of Israel (Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995—Wikipedia). Then President Bill Clinton refused to sign the bill into law, forcing it after ten days to become valid by default. The bill, however, contained a waiver, allowing a President to suspend its execution every six months if he deems it necessary in the interest of US national security interests. Since that time, Presidents Bill Clinton, George W Bush and Barack Obama have all continually made use of this waiver. There are many concerns—probably chief amongst them, a desire not to anger what America considers to be current allies—Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan. **We believe there to be deeper, spiritual powers at work here—powers which do not want the return of an acknowledged Hebrew/Jewish presence and authority to the city.** (See “gates of hell” threat below, and Scriptures in 1<sup>st</sup> prayer point below.)

*Although previous presidents have promised while campaigning to move the Embassy, Donald Trump appears to be the first to seriously plan on doing it.* This past week, his press secretary affirmed once again that he has not forgotten his pledge. Awareness of this intention has raised expected turbulence in many sectors. On January 14<sup>th</sup> a Fatah Palestinian official declared that if Trump follows through, **“all chances for peace and stability will be lost...The gates of hell will be opened in the region and the world.”** (“Fatah official: Moving US embassy in Israel will ‘open the gates of hell’”: The Jerusalem Post, 15 Jan 2017 13:26 IST; Emphases ours.). The Kingdom of Jordan has threatened that doing so will be “crossing red lines”, and this past Sunday King Abdullah II held special consultations with Palestinian President Abbas regarding this issue. A Jordanian minister afterwards stated that relocation of the embassy would

*“constitute a death blow to Washington’s role as a fair mediator in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians and disregard for international resolutions that consider Jerusalem occupied territory”* (“Abbas, Jordanian king agree to fight against US embassy relocation to Jerusalem”: ynet news.com; 22 Jan 17 19:00; Emphases ours.). And during the recent Paris Peace Conference, France’s foreign minister called Trump’s proposal a “provocation” which he “*can’t do*”; that it would have “extremely serious consequences.”

**PLEASE PRAY:**

**\* That governments of nations would cease separating Israel and its government from the city in the Jewish State which God has called all His covenant people to bless and not to forget—where His holy mountain is, upon which He has promised that “*the house of Israel, all of them in the land, will serve me...*” (Ezekiel 20:40).**

**\* That God will guide President Trump regarding movement of the US Embassy—that he will move in courage and integrity—and in God’s perfect timing. That Israel’s leaders will move with discretion in her efforts to encourage the move.**

**\* That other countries will be encouraged to move their embassies to the true capital of Israel.**

**2. FRENCH COURT OF APPEALS DECLARES ISRAEL IS “LEGAL OCCUPANT OF THE WEST BANK” (Judea and Samaria).**

**The following significant report is by our friend Gene Little.**

In a stunning decision handed down by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chamber of the French Court of Appeals in Versailles France, on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017; Israel was declared to be the “legal occupant of the West Bank.” A legal suit brought by the Palestinian Authority against Israel’s light rail and the French companies that built it was dismissed in a court action. Overlooked by the media, this is the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, that an independent, non-Israeli court has been called upon to examine the legal status of West Bank territories under international law, beyond the political claims of the parties. Keep in mind though, that the Court’s findings have no effect in international law. What they do, and it’s of the utmost importance, is to clarify the legal reality.

The Versailles Court of Appeals conclusions are as resounding as the silence in which they were received in the media: Israel has real rights in the territories, its decision to build a light rail in the West Bank (East Jerusalem) or anything else in the area is legal, and the judges have rejected all the arguments presented by the Palestinians. For more information on this decision, please go to : ([www.dreuz.info/2017/01/13/israel-is-the-legal-occupant-of-the-west-bank-says-the-court-of-appeal-of-versailles-france/](http://www.dreuz.info/2017/01/13/israel-is-the-legal-occupant-of-the-west-bank-says-the-court-of-appeal-of-versailles-france/)). **–Dr Gene Little ; Jerusalem Greetings, 20 Jan 2017**

**The San Remo Agreement of 1920 leading to a declaration by the League of Nations, which became International Law in 1923 (and which has never been rescinded) also gave Jews legal right to live in the land west of the Jordan River (which includes Judea and**

Samaria). Although the above ruling in Versailles was made over a week-and-a-half ago, it has scarcely seen the light of day in western or middle-Eastern media.

**PLEASE PRAY:**

\* That the LORD of Heaven, upon whose shoulders true righteous government rests, will uphold righteous degrees regarding dwelling in land which He has bequeathed by covenant to Jacob's seed.

\* His blessing upon those with the courage and righteous sense to issue such decrees!

\* That He will bring His people Israel into that land, and establish them in righteousness there—to live and dwell in harmony with what other peoples He chooses also to dwell there.

**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 22-28 January 2017 are called *Va'era*—“And I Appeared” (--to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as *El Shaddai*.)

**TORAH:** Exodus 6:2—9:35

**HAFTARAH:** Ezekiel 28:25—29:21

(NOTE: Because this week's Sabbath falls on *Rosh Chodesh* (Beginning of the 11th Month *Shevat*), a special passage from the Prophets Isaiah 66:1-24 will in many synagogues be added to or replace the reading from Ezekiel)

\*Exodus 6:26b; 7:4. “*These are the same Aaron and Moses to whom YHVH said, ‘Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies.’*” (NKJV)... “*And Pharaoh will not heed you, and I shall set my hand against Egypt and I shall bring out my battalions [or, “armies”], My people the Israelites, from the land of Egypt with great*

*retributions, that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD [YHVH], when I stretch out My hand over Egypt and bring out the Israelites from their midst.” (Alter).*

YHVH (The LORD) is Sovereign over many “armies.” This is first shown in **Genesis 2:1** when “*The heavens and the earth, and all the armies/hosts (Hebrew: tzevaoth) of them, were finished.*” In **Joshua 5:14**, a Being appears before Joshua who is “*Captain of the Armies of YHVH*”. From **I Samuel 1:3** onwards, the name *YHVH-Tzevaoth* (Yehovah of Armies/LORD of Hosts) will be used over two hundred-fifty times in the Hebrew Bible. As we have often pointed out, when David meets Goliath in battle, he testifies his trust in this Name: “*I come to you in the name of YHVH of Armies...*”—but he also adds another, “*Elohei-ma’arkhot Yisrael*”—*God of Israel’s Arraying.*” The masses of Israelites in Egypt had no idea that they were already an army—yet, as the above verses show, in God’s eyes, they were. Indeed, we shall see in **Exodus 12:41** how “*all the armies of YHVH*” would go forth from the land of Egypt, and **Exodus 13:18** (NAS) adds, they would be in “*martial array!*” When we come into the Kingdom, we enter (or become aware of) a war which is already raging. Yet, not to be bewildered or afraid! Our Captain already has a “positioning” for us in which to begin, and He will oversee our advancement!

**PLEASE PRAY:** *That the latter-day Army of the Lord in Israel will have confidence in its Captain, and come into array at His command!*

**\*Exodus 7:1.** “*So the LORD said to Moses: ‘See, I have made you Elohim (literal Hebrew) to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet.’* In a very real way, we are God’s body through whom He looses His will “*on earth as it is in Heaven.*”

**\*Exodus 7:9-10.** “*When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, ‘Show a miracle for yourselves.’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and let it become a serpent’...and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent*” (NKJV).

The Hebrew here translated “serpent” is a different word and may designate a different creature than that used for the snake from which Moses fled (Exodus 4:3 and 7:15). There the word was *nakhash*, the common Hebrew word for snake (such as that which tempted Eve in Eden). Here the word is *tanin*, used in modern Hebrew for “crocodile” or “alligator” (The Nile Crocodile has been feared from ancient times for its propensity, more than any other of the species, to prey upon humans). In Genesis 1:21 *tanin* is a “great sea creature” *created by God*. But this creature is also often used as a metaphor for spiritual or physical powers in opposition to God. In Ezekiel 29:3 (Part of this week’s Haftarah), this word *tanin* is translated “monster” (NKJV), and depicts another Pharaoh (or the spiritual power controlling him), “*Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt, O great monster (tanin) who lies in the midst of his rivers, who has said, ‘My River is my own; I have made it for myself.’ But I will put hooks in your jaws...*” (The word is also translated “monster” in Jeremiah 51:34 where it pictures Nebuchadnezzar swallowing up sinful Israel “like a *tannin*.”). In Psalm 74:13 it is depicted as a many headed “sea monster” (NASB) whose heads God can break in delivering those who trust in him. And in Isaiah 27:1 the NASB reads, “*And He will kill the dragon (tanin) who lives in the sea.*”

In modern Hebrew translations of the New Covenant Scriptures, the “great, fiery red dragon having seven heads” of Revelation 12:3, who stands before the woman clothed with the sun to devour her baby, is called a *tanin*...and in 12:9 both *tanin* (dragon) and *nakhash* (serpent) are equated with “the Devil and Satan.” Lastly, in Psalm 91:13 (NASB, margin) “*tanin*” is the ***dragon which those who dwell in the shelter of the Most High and abide under the shadow of the Almighty, will trample underfoot!***

And so, the rod which had become a serpent (*nakhash* Exodus 7:15), through Moses’ obedient faith became in his and Aaron’s hands “*the rod of God*” (4:20), which could become a different fearful creature (*tanin*) which swallowed up other fearful creatures (7:12), or it could become a scepter of authority which could turn the waters of the Nile, over which the Pharaohs claimed sovereignty (Ezek 29:3 above), into blood (7:17).

**In short, the rod became the symbol of authority through which Moses would “be God” to Pharaoh (7:1), through whom YHVH would manifest Himself as the supreme spiritual Power who would defeat, subdue and swallow up all other opposing spiritual powers.**

**\*Exodus 7:14.** “*So the LORD said to Moses: ‘Pharaoh’s heart is hard; he refuses to let the people go.’*” The LORD knew that Pharaoh’s heart was hard (Two words are used for “hard” or “hardened” in these passages, one meaning “heavy” or “settled”, the other “tightened”, “strengthened” or “fortified”). Through the early signs, wonders and plagues, we see Pharaoh’s heart growing hard according to its own nature (7:13, 22), or his actively hardening his own heart (8:15). In 8:29, 32, after the plague of flies, Moses especially warns him against continuing to do this, “*But Pharaoh made his heart heavy and insensitive this time also.*” Finally, in 9:12 it is specifically stated that “*the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh.*” We have here depicted both the choice and responsibility of man—and the foreknowledge and sovereignty of God. After Moses prays that the rain, hail and thunder cease, Pharaoh “*sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants. So the heart of Pharaoh was hard.*”

**\*Exodus 8:23.** “*And I shall set a ransom between My people [in Goshen] and your people.*” (Robert Alter Translation; see also NASB margin). The word “ransom” is often translated here as “difference”—but everywhere else in the Bible the root means “to ransom, to redeem, to rescue from danger”. It is in the last sentence of Psalm 25— “*Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.*” Israel would here come to see that his God was already redeeming him out of his troubles. Through the work of his Messiah, the LORD would eventually redeem not only Israel but all peoples from the bondage of sin.

**\*Ezekiel 28:25-26.** “*Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob. And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I am YHVH their God.’*”

In praying for Israel’s restoration, it is important that we not only pray for her return to the Land, but that afterward, within *that Land*, the God of her Fathers will come to be hallowed in her

midst. Nowhere is Israel promised safety for herself or her roots in the Land just because she has been returned there. We pray for the work of the Holy Spirit in awakening awareness of sin and uncleanness and a longing for cleansing, holiness and restoration—for removal of the veil over Jewish hearts, and illumination of the truth of the love and life of Israel’s God and Savior. Zion continues to serve as a “signpost” to the nations (that is what the root of the word probably means). But it is also God’s heart and purpose that she will be a signal in the eyes of the world of a place *where HE is hallowed!* He has promised a day when He will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem (Zechariah 2:5) *and her glory within!*



*Martin & Norma Sarvis*  
*Jerusalem*

[The readings for next week (29 January—4 February 2017) are called *Bo—*  
*“Come”*. TORAH: Exodus 10:1—13:16; HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 46:13-28]

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