

PRAYER UPDATE FROM ISRAEL (January 25, 2011)



This week, while travelling through the Judean Hills, we spotted our first almond tree in blossom. It is the first tree to awaken in Israel. The Hebrew name for “almond” is related to the word for diligence or watchfulness—one who is watching while others are still sleeping.

“And I said, ‘I see a branch of an almond tree.’ Then the LORD said to me, ‘You have seen well, I am watching over my word to perform it!’ (Jeremiah 1:11-12)

1. CONTINUING PRAYER FOR LEBANON

We would request that you continue with the prayer points (which we repeat below) given last week on behalf of the Lebanese governmental crisis. The first indictment was released from the UN investigation into the Hariri assassination was released this past week, but its nature has not yet been made public. The following article taken yesterday from the Arutz Sheva news service mirrors the concerns we expressed in that Update:

Deputy Prime Minister [of Israel] Silvan Shalom expressed grave concern Saturday over the real possibility of an Iranian-controlled Hizbullah regime taking control in Lebanon in the coming weeks. Shalom expressed the warning after an announcement by Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt that he would throw his party's support behind Hizbullah, as factions in Lebanon scrambled to build a new coalition. Hizbullah “will no longer be merely a terrorist group operating with Iran's backing, but a terrorist group in control of the country,” Shalom said at an event in Bat Yam. “This is a dangerous development that requires Israel's close attention. We will be prepared for all future developments.”

(“Daily Israel Report (Item 3)”, 23 Jan 11, Arutz Sheva (news@israelnationalnews.com))

PLEASE PRAY:

*That truth be presented to the world in the release of the UN tribunal.

*That no regional wars will break out before their times (Ecclesiastes 3:8). That believers will be in their positions (see Torah notes for last week) before any such outbreaks.

*That Israel will receive accurate intelligence reports regarding the military connections between Hezbollah and her allies and supporters—and will have wisdom in how best to make use of those reports.

*That powers of violence set against God’s covenant land of Israel and oblivious to His regard for the “Beauty of Lebanon” will have their power broken.

*That many hear “the voice of the LORD” in Lebanon, and trust in its power. For courage, hope and guidance of Believers in Lebanon...in spreading the truth that God is calling a Bride out of that country (see Song of Songs passage above).

*As in Ezekiel 31:15, Lebanon at present finds herself “clothed in gloom”. Hosea 14:5-7 using the metaphor of a cedar of Lebanon, speaks of being rooted, with growing young shoots; of having fragrance and being famous for her wine. Pray that that land may weather the storms, and be restored to its redemptive place and purpose...putting down roots into righteous soil...releasing the fragrance of the knowledge of God in His Messiah (II Cor 2:14) and that out of her gloom she discover the wine of holy joy.

2. ABBAS: “NO UNILATERAL PALESTINIAN STATE DECLARATION”

We prayed recently regarding the rapidly spreading action of nations “recognizing” a Palestinian state in territories taken by Israel from Jordan and Egypt during the ’67 War. This week, in a sharp turn-around, Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas stated that he has no intentions of declaring a state unilaterally, and that the PA has put on hold any plans it may have previously had to petition the UN to recognize such a state without a final-status agreement with Israel. The PA President further claimed that two years ago he had come to an agreement with Israel’s Defense Minister Barak on a plan which would keep Jerusalem a unified city, open for both Israeli and PA residents, with all residents and visitors having full access to all parts of the city, while at the same time being seen by both Israelis and Palestinians as their capital (“Daily Israel Report (Item 1)”, 23 Jan 11, Arutz Sheva (news@israelnationalnews.com)).

We believe that it was a divine move of God which in 1967, for the first time in over 2400 years, brought all of Jerusalem under Israeli rule. This divinely ordained physical shift in His covenant land and people was confirmed by the universal spiritual repercussions manifest immediately thereafter—an unprecedented move of the Holy Spirit throughout the Body of Messiah and the dawn of a new awakening among Jews to their Messiah around the world, which would result in establishment of a Messianic Body in Israel itself.

PLEASE PRAY:

*That that which God brought together will not be put asunder. That Jerusalem will stay under Israeli sovereignty and have leaders who rule and guide wisely and justly.

*That God will bring peace to Jerusalem...first of all to the souls of its inhabitants, both Jews and Arabs.

*That although there may yet be a number of “systems” of human government over Jerusalem (the present system is certainly far from His ideal) before the final one which God has promised (one which will include the descendants of Jacob worshipping Him on the Temple Mountain in Jerusalem—Ezekiel 20:40), God will continue raising up a Remnant of believers in the city...that “Elders in the Gates” will be reestablished over the Jerusalem and the Government of the Kingdom flourish amongst believers.

*For Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas...that the God who has Chosen Zion will moderate their negotiations so as to keep the destroyer from gaining footholds which would impeded His divine plan...the drawing of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the House of David to the point of revelation and repentance prophesied in Zechariah 12:10.

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. All texts are those of English translations of the Scriptures.

The readings for this week are called Mishpatim (“And these are the judgments which you shall set before them”).

TORAH: Exodus 21:1—24:18

HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 34:8-22, 33:25-26

NOTES

Last week’s Portion began with the appointments of judges in Israel, and the first three chapters of this week’s readings provide them with guidelines for the working out of righteous judgments (Mishpatim) in Israel’s governance. These include laws and ordinances, with instructions for different situations related to a number of moral issues and offenses. They might be seen as subheadings to the Ten Commandments of Chapter 20 (Laws related to the intercession between the people and heaven by the Priesthood will come later in Exodus and in the whole of Leviticus.). Chapter 23 also contains sections regarding God’s rest (Sabbaths) both for man, his animals, and for the land he will be living in. There are instructions regarding the three pilgrim

feasts, to be observed once the land is conquered. And there are instructions and revelations regarding that conquest itself, including the extent of the land's future boundaries. In a remarkable passage in Chapter 24, the LORD calls Moses, Aaron and his two sons, and 70 elders of the people to a special personal meeting with Himself. At the last, His Glory rests on Mount Sinai and Moses goes up into the cloud to be with God for forty days and forty nights. To the eyes of the Israelites, the glory of the LORD is "as a consuming fire on the mountain top."

*Exodus 22:21; 23:9. "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him...since you yourselves know the feelings of a stranger, for you also were strangers in the land of Egypt." The word "stranger" is Hebrew *ger*, a "sojourner, temporary dweller, new-comer with no inherited rights" (Brown-Driver-Briggs 1616). The Christians from the nations whom God sends for seasons to "sojourn" alongside the Children of the inheritance are their strongest and most faithful friends. Yet the enemy has placed elements into such places as the Ministry of the Interior and Airport Security which often demean and dishonor this friendship, even going to lengths to keep believers who have spent time in the land from returning. Of course, Israel, like every other country, must have laws and policies regarding her borders and limitations regarding residency for non-citizens, which should be respected as other laws. Yet in the past two years, the harassment of Believers seeking to stay for longer periods than an initial 'three months' has risen dramatically. PLEASE PRAY: that Israel's government will implement and enforce righteous laws regarding sojourners in Israel. Pray for protection and a 'place' for all those believers whom the Lord would send to dwell in the Land—that they will be allowed to stay the full length of time He ordains for them. Pray for patience and courage on behalf of these visitors...but also a respect for the laws of the land.

*Exodus 22:28. "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people." We find it instructive that the Hebrew words for "revile" and "curse" are the same two words used regarding the seed of Abraham in Genesis 12:3: "I will bless those who bless you, and those who revile you, I will curse." "Cursing" is a solemn prerogative of the Most High. PLEASE PRAY: for grace amongst believers in Israel to bless our leaders with intercession on their behalf—that, while not being blind to their faults, we do not curse them by reviling them with our words, either by mouth or on the internet. It is God who raises up authorities...it is to Him that we call if they misbehave.

*Exodus 23:20. "Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Be on your guard before him and obey his voice, to not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him." Although the Hebrew word for "angel" can also mean "messenger" and some commentators equate this angel with Moses himself, it is certain that a supernatural being is meant here. It is this being who will "bring them in" to the land (something which Moses will, alas, not ultimately be allowed to do). In this passage, God also mentions sending His "terror" ahead of Israel, along with "Hornets" (vss 27, 28). The battle would be won "little by little" until Israel would "become fruitful and take possession of the Land" (vs. 30); and the LORD would 'fix' her boundaries (vs 31). PLEASE PRAY: that Israel become again aware of the supernatural element which is required in her warfare; for believers to receive revelation in how best to "be on their guard" for the voice of angels (Vs. 23:20 above and Hebrews 1:14) who are ministering on their behalf. Pray for patience regarding the battle, in which at times victory must

be accomplished “little by little” (Vs 30); and an awareness that “fruitfulness” must precede taking full “possession of the Land” (Vs 30). Pray that God will “fix” Israel’s borders in His time according to His Word (Vs 31).

*Exodus 23:25-26. “So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.” Pray for believers to grasp these promises in faith in our own day.

*Exodus 24:9-11. “Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself, yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel; and they saw God, and they ate and drank.” Twice in this passage we are told that these leaders of Israel “saw God”. Since “no one has seen God at any time”, but “He who has seen the Son has seen the Father”—we believe that this can only have been an encounter with the pre-incarnate Yeshua. There are two different Hebrew words used here for ‘saw’. The first (root: ra’ah) most generally means simply “to see”. The second (root: ha’zah) has more to do with “gazing upon”...in fact, it is often used in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew in a prophetic sense. It is this word which is used in Psalm 27:4, where the poet’s greatest longing is to dwell in the LORD’s house so as to “gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple.” PLEASE PRAY: for leaders of present-day Israel to be granted to “see” the God of their father Israel/Jacob, and to have (and to take) opportunity to “gaze” at the beauty of His risen Son. Pray for an opening of the eyes of leaders in the Body of Messiah in Israel to “see” prophetically. In ancient Israel, these included worship leaders such as Heman (I Chron 25:5), Asaph (II Chron 29:30) and Jeduthan (II Chron 35:15) who all were called “seers” and whose descendants ‘prophesied’ on their instruments (I Chron 25:1).

*Exodus 24:17. “The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.”

PLEASE PRAY: Hebrews 12:28-29 into our lives as believers here in Israel—even as we would pray the same for you: “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”



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[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 30 Jan-5 Feb is called T'ruma (“that they take me a donation from every man”) and will include, TORAH: Exodus 25:1—27:19; HAFTARAH: I Kings 5:12-6:13.]