

# ISRAEL PRAYER UPDATE

*Glory of Zion International Ministries*



## **MOUNT ZION FOLLOWING THE WEEKEND RAINS**

The slopes (which had burned last summer) are greening (see Psalm 147:8 below!).

**Saturday was *Rosh Hodesh Shevat*, the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> month in the Hebrew calendar.**

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

**Thus says the LORD of Hosts, “I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and ZION...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).***

***“Let us now revere YHVH our God, who gives rain, both the former and the latter, in its season. He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest” (Jeremiah 5:24).***

***“Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in YHVH your God; For He has given you the former rain faithfully, and He will cause the rain to come down for you—the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month” (Joel 2:23).***

***We notice that in our Update exactly a year ago (same Torah portion), we gave thanks for rain in Israel.*** This past weekend we were blessed with two days of strong rains in Jerusalem, and again we are thankful! It has not been an abundant rainy season in Israel; the Former Rains came late, after the fires last fall. The start of the 1<sup>st</sup> month (Nisan), heralding the “Latter Rains” (see Joel 2:23 above) is exactly two months away.

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY:**

- \* That Israelis will realize the need of rain, and call on the Lord of Harvest to send it.**
- \* That the Lord will have mercy on His land...and release waters from heaven—especially in the  
  
northern Galilee, which has been under drought conditions for several years.**
- \* That the Sea of Galilee, as well as the several aquifers which are scattered about the land would  
  
be filled.**

**2. DAVID’S SLING.**

***This week it was announced that the joint Israeli/U.S. missile defense system known as “David’s Sling” is nearing completion.*** It will bolster the central tier of Israel’s over-arching multi-layered defense system. *David’s Sling* is designed to intercept tactical ballistic missiles, medium to long-range rockets and cruise missiles fired at ranges of 40-300 kilometers. It would be particularly effective against the arsenal of longer-ranged rockets and missiles held by Hezbollah in Lebanon and by the Syrian. Other tiers of the system include the *Arrow*, to defend against long-range ballistic missiles (reachable from Iran), and *Iron Dome*, for use against shorter-range rockets (Gaza and parts of Lebanon). Tests conducted over the Mediterranean during the past week intercepting advanced missiles fired by F-15s proved successful. All tiers of the system are expected to be in place within the next two years; making it probably the most sophisticated system of its kind in the world.

With the *David’s Sling* segment set to be operational in Israel soon, it was announced this week that the Israeli and US governments are already “vetting” potential customers to whom the system might be sold. Interestingly, the one country especially mentioned in the Israel news media as a possible buyer of the system is Poland. Two weeks ago, Israel hosted a visit by Polish President Andrzej Duda. There are presently friendly relations between the two countries; during the President’s visit, he and our own President Rivlin expressed the desire that relations be enhanced at all levels.

We are grateful for the “cutting edge” God has given Israel in the realm of technological expertise—including that needed to provide for her defense in a world of many enemies, both close at hand and far away. However, we also believe it critical that we remember how David, going out from the Israeli army to face the giant Goliath, equipped himself, yes, with his sling and five smooth stones—but *his trust was not centered in those!* Rather, he came out **“in the name of YHVH of Armies, the God who puts Israel’s army in array”**—and a fervent knowledge that **“YHVH does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is YHVH’s!”** (1 Samuel 17:45, 47)

#### **PLEASE PRAY:**

**\* That God will prepare and array Israel in all she needs for her physical defense in the season ahead. That His blessings rest on all the countries whose expertise and resources are voluntarily joined with her in assistance to that end.**

**\* That the Lord raise up men and women in Israel’s military who will be strong and valorous in their fields—yet also be aware of Who’s power and favor must really be behind Israel’s victories over her enemies. Pray for men and women of faith who will have a zeal that ultimately “all” shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear (or sling or stones or missile, or rocket, or technological superiority), but “the battle is the LORD’s!”**

**\* That the relationship between Israel and Poland would continue to be strengthened. For 1000 years the largest concentration of Jews in the world was in that land. There is reason to believe that God is doing a work in bringing these two peoples into a close alliance again. A wonderful museum has opened in Warsaw, chronicling Poland’s historical relationship with the Jews. Also, we have reports from a number of sources that the Holy Spirit is moving strongly in the Roman Catholic Church there—and that one of the first fruits of this move, among those who are yielding to it, is the awakening of a strong love for Israel!**

### **3. THE FIRST TO COME TO THEIR AID . . .**

Thursday night was storming, and in the hills of Samaria, a few miles north of Shilo, an Israeli bus traveling from a nearby settlement veered into a guardrail, broke through and plunged down the 230-foot embankment, coming to rest on its top. This is in an area of the contested “Territories” with communities of both Jews and Palestinian Arabs, but which is patrolled and under the oversight of Israel. A Palestinian family witnessed the crash from their home; they immediately called police, then tore out of their home, down the hill to render aid. When police, ambulances and troops arrived to help, there were the Arab family members down in the ravine in their pajamas in the pouring rain with flashlights trying to extract survivors and help those who were wounded. Working together, all were pulled from the wreckage, and taken up to the road where a medical helicopter was waiting. Two were dead, seven others wounded. A Captain medical officer at the scene credited the quick work of the Palestinian family with saving lives. One observer commented how the “complex reality” of the region was underscored by the arrival of troops to assist. They had been part of a brigade a few kilometers

away in hot pursuit of a Palestinian terrorist who during the previous 24 hours had carried out two shooting attacks. When word of the accident reached them, they decided to split up so that some could come assist. When they arrived at the bus, there were members of a Palestinian family working in the rain to administer aid to Jewish settlers trapped under the bus.

*When word of the accident was written up in Israeli newspapers, it was with a kind of wonder at the grace shown by this family to Jews in distress. “Palestinian Family was First to help Bus Crash Victims, Call Police” read one headline; “Palestinian Family saves Israeli lives in Nighttime Bus Crash” read another. There is great distrust and hostility between Arab and Jewish communities in this area. The name of the family wasn’t given—likely to protect them from reprisals by their own neighbors for daring to offer kindness to Israelis in distress.*

*We are touched by the actions of this “Good Samaritan” family—in the heart of modern-day Samaria. It is so essential that we realize, for all the contention and hatred roiling in this most-contested place on earth, that God’s merciful Spirit of grace is working, crossing through borders and ethnic and religious walls. And “a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.”*

#### **PLEASE PRAY:**

**\* Blessing upon the “nameless” Palestinian family which came to the aid of the stricken Israeli bus. Pray that the light of God’s Grace will shine into their lives, and illumine them on the path He has for them.**

**\* A capacity in Israel to see one’s “neighbor” beyond ethnic lines, even, when possible, beyond the lines drawn in active regional conflict. That we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, whoever they are—because God does. That we must not depersonalize the souls of those on “the other side.”**

**\* For the Spirit of God in kindness to draw Palestinian Arabs into revelation and the salvation of the One who loves them, who is the Savior of the World. When this happens, may it not be they more than any others who will be able to provoke their Hebrew neighbors to the jealousy Paul speaks of in Romans 10 and 11. So that All Israel shall be Saved!**

#### **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 29 January—4 February 2017 are called *Bo*—“Come”.

**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 Hodesh* (“Head of the Month”) for this *Rosh Hodashim* (“Head of Months”) will fall this year on **Tuesday March 28<sup>th</sup>**.

**\*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 April 10th (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...’”*



*Martin & Norma Sarvis*  
*Jerusalem*

[The readings for next week (5-11 February 2017) are called *B'Shalach*— “In the Sending”. TORAH: Exodus 13:17—17:16; 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”.]

You may give to our work in Israel by donating online (click [HERE](#) and add Sarvis Support in the comment line) or by calling *1-888-965-1099* or *1-940-382-7231*.