

## **PRAYER UPDATE FROM ISRAEL (October 10, 2011)**



### **1. SUKKOT (“FEAST OF TABERNACLES”) BEGINS AT SUNDOWN WEDNESDAY**

“On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a sabbath on the first day and a sabbath on the eighth day. Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. You shall live in booths (Hebrew: sukkot) for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am YHVH your God” (Leviticus 23:39-43).

Sukkot is plural for sukkah, which most often in the Scriptures refers to a small, rude, temporary shelter, far removed from the large tents or meeting halls which its English equivalent “Tabernacles” might nowadays bring to mind in some Christian circles. Nor is this Hebrew word used for the “Tabernacle” in which the Levites ministered to the LORD in the wilderness. In ancient times, sukkot were used as sheds for cattle (Genesis 33:17), as guard shacks for watchmen over vineyards (Isaiah 1:8), as thrown-up overnight shelters for warriors in the field (II Samuel 11:11). Jonah built for himself a sukkah outside Nineveh (Jonah 4:5) from which to observe what God might do to that city. In Psalm 27:5 David trusts that God will hide him in His sukkah in the “evil day”. As part of an annual fall “ingathering” festival after she had entered the land and was living in nice constructed houses (Exodus 23:16), Israel, was called to rejoice (see Scripture passage above) and feast before the Lord for seven days, resting on the first and eighth days—but for that occasion she was also called to build and spend time in sukkot. They were to be decorated with leafy, fruitful boughs of foliage, and bright fragrant fruit—to bring to mind how when she was out in the desert moving from place to place in temporary dwellings, God had nevertheless provided life and beauty.

Today, we still build these tiny shelters during this festival. As we rejoice in thanksgiving before the Lord for His provision and sustenance, we remind ourselves that we are nevertheless still abiding in temporary dwellings—that, as goes the old American spiritual, “this world is not my home, I’m just a-passin’ thru”—that “if our earthly house, this tent—this sukkah—is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavenlies!” (II Corinthians 5:1). Yet while we are here, this same LORD who accompanied Israel through the desert will be with us all the way. It is significant that during this season, many Jews read through the book of Ecclesiastes—that strange, poetic, unflinching examination of those passing “vanities” which we are tempted to attach our eyes and affections to during our journey through this earthly passage.

And finally—this is the season when Messianic Jews celebrate the coming into the world of the Holy One, Yeshua, in Beit Lehem (“House of Bread”—Bethlehem)—He Who Himself took on human flesh to “tabernacle” among us!

### **PLEASE PRAY:**

\*That Israelis discover that in order truly to “rejoice before the LORD for seven days”, they must come first into relationship with the One who came that their “joy might be full”.

\*For God’s presence to be in the “sukkot” of Messianic believers where many will have their devotions during this week. Many will also invite their neighbors to pay a visit there.

\*For safety and a great blessing over all the believers from the Nations who are coming up to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast this week. Pray that they release what God would have them release—and receive what He would have them receive while they are here. Pray for understanding and graciousness on behalf of Israelis to welcome and be thankful for their presence here at this time.

\*Many Jews follow a mystical Jewish tradition which demands hospitality, because the spirits of various Patriarchs are said to sometimes arrive as visitors (ushpazin) to the sukkot of the faithful during this season (This is in some ways not unlike the admonition to early Messianic believers, that they “not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it” (Hebrews 13:2).

PLEASE PRAY that the awakening and convicting Holy Spirit of Yeshua (whom the Patriarchs themselves longed to see) will visit many Jews in their sukkot throughout the world this week!

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## **2. LIGHT IS SHINING INTO AND THROUGH THE MEDIA IN ISRAEL!**

**We received the following encouraging report by our friend Asher Intrater as reported this week in the *Revive Israel Update*:**

**The third largest Hebrew newspaper in Israel is *Haaretz*. It is considered to be a left-wing, pro-human rights, anti-religious newspaper. In its holiday *Yom Kippur* edition, it published a large article about Messianic Jews' view of atonement, including a prominent headline and color photo. It was amazing that they would give place to such an article, and even more amazing that the quotes were reported relatively accurately.**

**The article was primarily an interview with Yael (fictitious name to protect her from persecution), a professional working woman, who lives in central Israel. She spoke of the sin of mankind, of atonement in Yeshua, of the Torah written in our hearts, of living out our faith in love and integrity. The headline quoted her as saying, "I'm already written in the Book of Life."**

**The article also examined the sociological aspects of our faith to live as loyal Israeli citizens, and the theological aspects of our faith as a legitimate continuation of the Hebrew Scriptures and of the First Century Messianic community. PLEASE PRAY: for grace and revelation on all who read this article (Asher Intrater. ©10/9/2011 *Revive Israel Ministries*).**

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### **3. PRAY AGAINST THE “ARROW THAT FLIES BY DAY”**

It is reported that thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of Russian-built shoulder-launched heat-seeking surface-to-air missiles have disappeared from abandoned military depots of the ousted Gaddafi regime in Libya. These are capable of easily bringing down a low-flying commercial jet liner. Although Libya's National Transitional Council claims to have located and disarmed hundreds of these weapons, most have simply disappeared—and Israel media reports have surfaced indicating that some have already found their way to terrorist groups in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip. Not only would an accumulation of these there put Israeli military aircraft patrolling the region at extremely dangerous risk, all commercial flights to and from Israel fly in low over Tel Aviv—and should some of these weapons be smuggled into Israel itself, a terrifying scenario could arise of almost any hidden alleyway in Tel Aviv serving as a lethal launching pad. In fact, only the God of Israel “who reveals deep and hidden things; Who knows what lies in darkness and Light dwells with Him” (Daniel 2:22) can be Israel's protection from death piercing our borders (Psalm 147:13-14).

#### **PLEASE PRAY:**

\*Psalm 91:5: “You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow (missile) that flies by day.”

\*Isaiah 60:18: “Violence (Hebrew: *hamas*) shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction within your borders; but you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise.”

\*Please pray Isaiah 37:33,35 over Tel Aviv: “He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there...for I will defend this city, to save it for My own sake and for My servant David’s sake.”—

\*Pray repentance over Tel Aviv. Pray for the Messianic workers in that city and neighboring Jaffa, who God has raised up to call that great city to turn from her blind and evil ways. We would pray that God’s heart be on Tel Aviv as it was on Nineveh. It was actually from this area (ancient Joppa) that Jonah left Israel to (eventually) preach repentance to Nineveh. May that mercy of God return to us now! “And should I not pity [Tel Aviv], that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left...?” (Jonah 4:11).

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### **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.

Because this week again contains special holy days, there are a number of extra readings designated for specific days. Among these, the following are especially significant:

#### **DAY 1** (Thursday 13 October):

**TORAH:** Leviticus 22:26—23:44  
Numbers 29:12-16

**HAFTARAH:** Zechariah 14:1-21

#### **DAY 2** (Friday 14 October) I Kings 8:2-21

#### **SABBATH** (15 October)

**TORAH:** Exodus 33:12—34:26  
Numbers 29:12-16

**HAFTARAH:** Ezekiel 38:18—39:15

During the Eight-Day festival: **Book of ECCLESIASTES**

We are grateful to the Father for each of you who stand with us on behalf of God's purposes and workings in the Land of Israel. We bless you from Zion and pray you the joys of this fall festival of Sukkot. May His presence strengthen and encourage, cheer, counsel and comfort you in the secret place of His Shelter—His Sukkah— throughout these eight days!



*Martin and Norma Sarvis  
Jerusalem*

[The readings for next week will be: (20 October) “Last Great Day of the Feast” (Morning): Torah: Deuteronomy 14:22—16:17; Numbers 29:35-39; Haftarah: I Kings 8:54-66; (Evening): “Simchat Torah”: Torah: Deuteronomy 33:1—34:12; Genesis 1:1—6:8; Haftarah: Joshua 1:1-18; (22 October) Torah: Genesis 1:1—6:8; Haftarah: Isaiah 42:5-21]

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