Prayer Update From Israel (October 12, 2015)

Wedding Dress over the Tower of David in Jerusalem

"For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth" **Isaiah 54:5.**

(See 2nd entry and Haftarah Portion below)

1. A NEW WAVE OF VIOLENCE IS SEEKING TO TAKE HOLD IN THE HOLY LAND.

Since the start of the High Holy days last month, Israel has been experiencing a wave of violence, which has, over the past week, accelerated at such a rate as to awaken in many the question of whether a third *Intifada* (Palestinian uprising) may have indeed begun. On Rosh Hashanah eve, Palestinian youths ambushed the car of 64-year-old Alexander Levlovitz, who was returning home from a New Year's dinner in Jerusalem, hurling stones which caused him to lose control. He died in the ensuing crash. Later in the week, and then especially during Sukkot, violence erupted almost daily on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, with Israeli security forces discovering rocks and bombs stockpiled in the Al Aqsa mosque and in nearby streets. On the first of October Rabbi Eitam Henkin and his wife Na'ama while driving between Itamar and Elon Moreh in the West Bank, had their car stopped by Islamic terrorists, who then executed

them in front of their four children, aged 9, 7, 4 and 9 months. Two days later, two Jewish men were stabbed to death inside Jerusalem's Lions Gate, one holding a two- year- old child, who with his mother was also injured. This last stabbing unleashed a new kind of deadly terrorist assault in Jerusalem and across the nation—the knife attack. A suicide bomber may be spotted because of the bulk beneath his clothing; a knife can only be discovered by a metal detector or a body search. It had happened before of course, but since the attack at Lions Gate, as though by signal there have been daily multiple stabbings throughout the nation, especially in the Old City of Jerusalem, these in addition to the other forms of violence. In one 48 hour period over the past week, over 150 attacks, including stabbings, shootings, stones thrown and vehicular rammings took place in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and other parts of Israel. ("Why is the world ignoring a wave of terror in Israel?: *The Telegraph,* 11 Oct 2015). All but one of the stabbing incidents was against Jews. (On the 9th of October a Jewish man who had been diagnosed with psychiatric problems went on a rampage, stabbing four Bedouin men in the southern town of Dimona.) The violent unrest is not just coming from the Territories. There have been major demonstrations in Israeli-Arab towns. And last night, a 20-year-old terrorist from Umm al-Fahm near Haifa ran over two soldiers waiting at a bus stop by a mall near Hadera on the coast. He then got out of his car and stabbed one of the wounded soldiers, a 19-year-old girl, and a 15 and 45-year-old who were with her before being subdued by the crowd. The female soldier remains in critical condition.

The current wave certainly has the marks of some sort of co-ordination, although at this stage, not the kind of strong infrastructure backing which fueled the four-year uprising which began in late 2000. That one was done with the knowledge and backing of then-PA Chairman Arafat. The current actions are probably linked with Hamas. But, although the present Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is, on the surface, going through the motions of ordering Palestinian security forces to try and stem the violence, it is difficult to be convinced. His speech before the 70th session of the UN General Assembly a little over a week ago affirmed a thinly veiled right for his people to rise up, as usual, the center of that right being the Muslim claim to sovereignty over the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. A few weeks earlier, in a speech in Arabic carried on Palestinian TV, his sentiments had been more forthright, *"we bless every drop of blood spilled for Jerusalem. With the help of Allah, every Shaheed (martyr) will be in heaven…Al-Aqsa* [mosque on the Temple Mount] *is ours and so is the Church of the holy Sepulcher. They* [Jews] *have no right to desecrate them with their filthy feet"* (Ibid.).

Within the Israeli government itself, Prime Minister Netanyahu last week directed the Attorney General to open a criminal investigation against Arab Member of the Knesset Haneen Zoabi, after she allegedly granted an interview to a Hamas newspaper in which she said *"Hundreds of thousands of worshipers should go to the Al-Aqsa Mosque to stand up against Israel's conspiracy to condone violence against east Jerusalem residents…Today there are only actions of individuals, and what is needed is popular support…thousands of people going out will turn these events into a true intifada"* ("Zoabi calls for 'popular intifada'…": *The Jerusalem Post,* 12 Oct 2015 9:37 IST).

Among measures to confront the crisis, the government has called up 16 extra Border Police companies, with more than 1000 trained officers to assist the police in Jerusalem. Security is being heightened in other ways throughout the country. Last week, the Mayor of Jerusalem encouraged all Israeli citizens who have licenses to carry a firearm, to carry one on their body when going out and about in the city. Among Israelis in the street there is a growing unease. Stores are selling-out in pepper spray and other items for self-defense. Defense classes are springing up throughout the country. One admonition towards alertness is for Israelis to get their noses out of their cellphones when out in public.

Although the enemy would certainly like for there to be another major uprising (Ismail Haniyeh, a Hamas deputy chief in Gaza, declared on Friday that the *"Al-Aqsa intifada has been revived and we intend to join!"*), our sense is that the necessary *spiritual* infrastructure, such as that which was released and coordinated through Hamas-founder Sheik Ahmed Yassin during the 2000-2004 uprising, is not at this time firmly in place. We are convinced that it was through the strategic concerted intercession of God's people that the demonic network in place at that time was finally destroyed. We must now seek God for His strategies that another such network not be constructed.

PLEASE PRAY:

Over Jerusalem and all Israel:** ***"My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge; My savior, You save me from violence" (II Samuel 22:3). ***"Consider the covenant; For the dark places of the land are full of the habitations of violence"***(Psalm 74:20).

***That the LORD who guards over Israel (Psalm 121) will instruct His people in what to do. That He who reveals deep and hidden things and knows what lies in darkness (Daniel 2:22), will uncover plots in the Land.**

***That Israel's Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu will seek God for assistance in strategizing how to address this awakened scourge in the Land.**

***That Angels will guard over those "who will inherit salvation" (Hebrews 1:14). *For the Israeli soldiers who are deployed throughout the land, many in situations of intense danger. Pray for integrity, wisdom and courage among their leaders.**

***That Israel will turn to God as her defense, from within as well as from without.**

***That a demonic network of violence will not be allowed to be assembled within Israel at this time.**

***That the young Muslim men and women (the majority of the attackers so far have been young below the age of 24—and several have been women)…that the deception which is controlling them would be pierced with the Light of God's grace and mercy. That they will be set free to look to the true God whose Son is their salvation.**

2. A WEDDING DRESS OVER JERUSALEM.

A couple of weeks ago Jerusalemites driving northward past Jaffa Gate were startled to see an enormous wedding dress blowing in the breeze above David's Citadel. It turns out that the dress is there to draw attention to an avant-garde art exhibition in the tower. The garment represents only a part of the exhibit as a whole. Certainly the majority of those who see it will know nothing of the display--it's just a wedding dress in the sky. But its presence above the Old Gate of Jerusalem spoke to us. Whatever the personal motives of those who mounted it, ***what may the God who is returning with zeal to Jerusalem be saying in allowing such a sign to fly over His city?*** Weddings certainly found important places in both Testaments of Holy Scripture. They often betokened anticipation and great joy. But they also were used in stories to warn of the necessity for personal preparation. This certainly occurs in Matthew 22 with Yeshua's parable regarding the responses of those invited by a King to the wedding of His son. And in Chapter 25

of the same book, which emphasizes the importance of being prepared and alert for the coming of the Bridegroom.

PLEASE PRAY:

***That Israel and Jerusalem (with all the world) will awaken to her Husband … realize His love for her … and that He is coming soon to dwell in her midst!**

***"I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert, through a land not sown. Israel was holy to the LORD, the firstfruits of his harvest…"* (Jeremiah 2:2 NIV).**

***"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, til her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch. The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow. You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD'S hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God. No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah* (My Desire is in Her), and your land *Be'ulah (*Husbanded)*…for YHVH will take delight in you, and your land will be married. As a young man marries a maiden, so will your sons marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you"* (Isaiah 62:1-5).**

***"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready"* (Revelation 19:7).**

<u>THIS WEEK'S TORAH PORTION</u>:

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.

***Bul/Cheshvan*—the Eighth Month**

NOTICE: This Wednesday October 14th will be *Rosh Hodesh* (Head of the Month) for the Eighth Hebrew month. Today, the Babylonian name *Cheshvan* is used on modern Hebrew calendars; in ancient times the Canaanite name *Bul* was used, as in I Kings 6:38 where, after seven years, Solomon completed the House of the LORD in Jerusalem. Let us ask God for grace over this new month—for vision, instruction, courage and love and attentiveness to His ways!

The readings for this week 11-17 October 2015 are called *Noach* (Noah):

TORAH: Genesis 6:9—11:32

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 54:1—55:5

***Genesis 6:9*. "Noah was a just man, perfect (or, "blameless") in his generations; Noah walked with God."**

"Perfect" or "blameless" are translations of the Hebrew word *tome*, which may, as in Psalm 25:21, also be rendered "integrity": *"Let **integrity** and uprightness guard me for I wait for you"* (NKJV). In Psalm 101 David uses this word three times regarding his every-day walk within his house, *"I will ponder the way that is **blameless**. Oh when will you come to me? I will walk with **integrity** of heart within my house. I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away, it shall not cling to me…My eyes shall be upon the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; He who walks in a **blameless** way is the one who will minister to me"* (Psalm 101:2-4, 6). Even as Noah, living in a perverse and exceedingly sinful world, was through his "walk with God" enabled to govern his personal walk and that of his house with integrity, it is of paramount importance that those of us living in a time which is rapidly becoming *"as it was in the days of Noah"* to hold close to our "walk with God", to in integrity ponder the way we walk, the things we allow access into our dwellings (and thence into

our eyes and those of our families!), and with whom we associate and allow ourselves to be influenced.

***<u>Genesis 6:11-13</u>. "Now the earth had <u>*gone to ruin*</u> before God, the earth was filled with wrongdoing. God saw the earth, and here: it had <u>*gone to ruin*</u>, for all flesh had <u>*ruined*</u> its way upon the earth. God said to Noah: An end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is filled with wrongdoing through them: here, I am about to <u>*bring ruin*</u> upon them, along with the earth" (*Everett Fox translation; emphases ours*).**

Flesh, given its lead, brings ruin and destruction. As aluded to above, in the New Covenant, Yeshua prophesied that in latter days it will again be *"as it was in the days of Noah".* Zechariah 2:11-13 instructs us that in those days, as Messiah draws near to *"again take possession of Judah and to choose Jerusalem"*, and the LORD is *"aroused from His holy habitation"*—it will be imperative for Believers that they (as did Noah) say *"HUSH"* (Hebrew: *Hass!* vs 13) to the flesh. Either we crucify it in the power of the Holy Spirit, or it will, as in the days of Noah, *be our ruin.*

<u>Genesis 6:14</u>. *"Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms* [or *nests*] *in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch." The English word "ark" is used here for Hebrew *teva* which means a box or case (the word is used for 'mailbox' in Israel today). It is the same as that used to shelter the baby Moses in Exodus 2:3 (The "Ark of the Covenant" uses a different Hebrew word).

There is much redemption pictured here. The very Hebrew word translated "cover" and "pitch" (*kopher*) is identical with the word for *atonement.* In I Peter 3:18-22 the apostle Peter pictures the ark as a type of our salvation in Yeshua, our consciences being baptized through His death and resurrection.

***<u>Genesis 7:4</u>. "For after seven more days, I will cause it to rain on the earth…"** *It is God who "causes it to rain on the earth".* With the rains in Israel this past Wednesday, we have now entered into the time of the "Former Rains" in Israel (these come in the fall and winter, the "Latter Rains" arrive in spring). **PLEASE PRAY** that God will have mercy upon Israel and, as He did in Noah's day, open the windows of heaven—not for judgment but in mercy. As we have often mentioned, Isaiah 41:17-20 speaks of a time when Israel will cry out for water and be heard by her God—Who will do creative works to release water in unexpected places to the end *"that*

they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it."

<u>Genesis 7:15</u>. "They (the animals) came to Noah into the ark…of all flesh in which is the spirit of life".

***<u>Genesis 9:4a</u>. "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs* (NKJV).** God is the One who has now "given" humankind meat to eat, as well as plants. We are to honor each man's conscience before God with regard to personal decisions to eat or not eat meat (Romans 14). However, it is difficult to reconcile with this Scripture the teachings of some who hold that God's ideal for humankind today is the meatless sustenance afforded them in Eden and before the Flood. That was a season which has been taken away and may not, we suspect, be returned until the final *"revealing of the sons of God"* (Romans 8:19-25).

<u>Genesis 9:4b</u>. "But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood."

The word usually translated "life" in Hebrew is ***chaim***. Yet here, the word ***nephesh***—"soul" is used—*"But you shall not eat flesh* ***with its soul****, that is, its blood."*

This will be reiterated in Leviticus 17:13-14, *"Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; for it is the* ***soul*** *of all flesh. Its blood sustains its* ***soul****. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the* ***soul*** *of all flesh is its blood."*

In Genesis 2:7, *"The LORD God formed man of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of* ***life*** [i.e. *chaim*], and man became a living **soul** [i.e. *nephesh*]***".*** The animals also were called *nephesh-chayah*—"living souls" (1:24), but they were not "formed by God" from the earth as was Man; nor did God personally breath His into them the breath of life, nor release a creative act making them into His image 1:26-27). So "soul" relates to a life-factor in the blood of living creatures—but different in man from that in animals. We are not implying that the individual spirit of a human being is present in every drop of his blood. But blood carries life throughout the body, it is precious to the God of Life, and was not to be consumed as a nourishment-source for man. This is not just a prohibition under the Mosaic "Law" (Leviticus

passage above); it was prohibited here to Noah and his descendants by God long before that Law, and it was prohibited for the Believing Body of Messiah (both Jew and Gentile) after the Lord's return to heaven (Acts 15:20).

When Cain murdered Abel, the *"voice of* [his] *brothers blood cried out"* to God from the ground.

The *soul* that sins must die, and all have sinned…so death reigns in the very blood-line of all children of Adam. ***Except for One.*** The Blood of the virgin-born Savior, the "Second Adam", Yeshua, was pure and without sin **(Hebrews 4:15).** Thus, it could *"sprinkle many nations"* **(Isaiah 52:15)** with a *"sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel* **(Hebrews 12:24)**. God made *"His soul an offering for sin"* **(Isaiah 53:10)**—and with the shedding of His blood, *"He poured out His soul* (*nephesh*) unto death" and *"bore the sin of many"* **(53:12).**

<u>Genesis 10:25</u>. *"To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided…" The word may mean "split apart", "broken away into sections." Some have suggested that this may actually allude to a period in which certain of the continental shiftings discernible on modern-day maps took place. Which might explain why, for instance, the four rivers branching out from the large one coming out of Eden (Genesis 2:10-14) no longer appear to be in that same relation to each other. Some even suggest that before this shifting, Eden was itself located where Jerusalem is today…making the place where the "First Adam" sinned the place where that sin was atoned for in the death of the "Second Adam" *Yeshua*. It is interesting that Jewish tradition teaches that Adam and Eve are both buried in Hebron, only 30 km south of Jerusalem on the plot of land purchased by Abraham (Genesis 23) as a burial place for Sarah, and which eventually held Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah.

Haftarah

This week's reading from the prophet Isaiah is filled with God's heart and merciful plan for His people Israel. Ask God to use these verses to help in your prayers. Pray that the souls of those who hear them read in synagogues this weekend will be quickened with divine revelation! Pray that Israel will know that she is loved, that she will be convicted of her sin and need for a Redeemer, that she will understand that the LORD Himself is her only Redeemer and that her righteousness comes from Him!

<u>Isaiah 54:5</u>. *"For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth." The God of *all the earth* has sovereignly chosen to identify Himself with the name He gave to his servant Jacob—Israel. Nations or religions which will not humble themselves to acknowledge this "identification" will find themselves standing against the very God of all nations and the universe itself.

<u>Isaiah 54:7-10</u>. *"'For a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you. With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you,' says the LORD, your Redeemer. 'For this is like the waters of Noah to Me, For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you. For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of shalom be removed,' says the LORD who has mercy on you".

<u>Isaiah 54:13-15</u>. *"All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children. In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you. Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me, whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake."

<u>Isaiah 54:17</u>. *" 'No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me,' says the LORD."

<u>Isaiah 55:1-3</u>. *"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you—the sure mercies of David."

Martin and Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem

[The readings for next week (18-24 October) are called *Lekh Lekha*—"Go Forth, Yourself". TORAH: Genesis 12:1—17:27; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 40:27—41:16]

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