

ISRAEL PRAYER UPDATE

Glory of Zion International Ministries



Kalaniot in the Judean Hills

1. ON A HILLTOP NEAR YISH'AI.

*This past Shabbat was perhaps the first real day of Spring (Hebrew: **Aviv**) in Israel.* Like many Israelis, we went forth to greet the glorious weather with a picnic basket, blanket and camera. Our favorite place is a hilly area west of Jerusalem, just southwest of the town of Bet Shemesh. The white blossoms of Almond trees were still shining along the way; and after pulling off the road, clambering over a fence and through the trees we came upon our field. It was covered with outcroppings of ancient grey stones—and all in and around were thousands upon thousands of *kalaniot*—the scarlet anemones so beloved in Israel and throughout the Middle East. Although a few will continue to bloom here and there throughout the spring, this was their peak; within a few weeks the March winds will have blown them away. From where we settled, we could hear sounds of conversation and laughter; a little distance away the hills were moving with Israelis—Jews, Arabs, children, parents, the aged, all out to stroll and hike and relax, breathing in this beauty.

As we wrote a year ago, it is a sweet diversion, these outings. The pressures, tensions, the threat of violence are part of life here. And just across the border in Syria, in Iraq—so many woundings, violations, deaths; so much blood has been shed. *Yet, gazing over these fields covered in scarlet, we find ourselves strongly impressed with the one weapon and defense which surpasses all. It is the Blood of the Lamb.* This is not a “morbid” thought! Morbidity involves death; death is the result of sin. But there is no Death in *His* blood! The “life is in the

blood”, the life of the One who has defeated death and hell, who is our salvation, presently and in what is to come. It is the blood of One who loves us (love casts out fear), and released us from our sins (Rev. 1:5); it is the blood of the Anointed One (Messiah, the Christ) which cleanses our consciences from death to serve the God of Life (Hebrews 9:14); it is the blood which overcomes the Accuser with the word of our testimony—because, though our own lives fail, our hope is in *His* life which is in His blood. This is our living Hope and the Hope of Israel.

Later, as we were departing with joyous thoughts of thanksgiving in our hearts, our notice was drawn to a road sign at a nearby intersection. On the sign was the word **Yish'i**, with an arrow pointing back in the direction of the hills we had just left. *Yish'i* is Hebrew for “My Salvation”. It is the name, taken from Psalm 27:1, of a tiny community just over the hill. Yet for us it brought to mind the Israelis drawn towards and moving among the *kalaniot* on the scarlet hill—drawn with steadfast kindness by the one who has loved them with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3). Drawn to their Father—through the blood of His Son.

PLEASE PRAY: For a deep revelation in Israel of the shed blood of our Messiah Yeshua. It is our Salvation, within which we find renewal, courage—our strength, our love, our hope!



2. OCCULT SPELLS AND THE TIMELINESS OF GOD’S WORD THROUGH THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES.

Prayer alerts were sent out to Believers around the world this past weekend in regards to an occult call over the internet for cursing U.S. President Donald Trump. The call does not appear to have been a hoax, but rather, a serious campaign launched on Twitter under the name #BindTrump, with instructions for a “mass ritual” to release “*a spell to bind Donald Trump and all those who abet him....so that he may fail utterly.*” By the time it had been picked up and further promulgated by occultist Michael M. Hughes, it had already gone viral. The call contained instructions for releasing the curse on Friday night February 24th—and afterwards to be repeated “*on every waning crescent moon* (i.e. March 26th, April 24th, May 23rd, June 21st, etc.) *until he is removed from office.*” Along with the instructions it was recommended to “*say a prayer of protection and invoke blessing from your preferred spirit or deity.*” (It even contained the suggestion that it might be found helpful to read the 23rd Psalm aloud.) Many of the

messages were accompanied with a traditional illustration of a witch beneath the words “Witches, We Need You!”

It is remarkable that earlier the same evening that the first of these spells against Mr. Trump were being cast, and also the morning following, Holy Scriptures were being read aloud in Synagogues around the world (Parasha *Mishpatim*), which included the following two verses:

“You shall not permit a witch to live.” (Exodus 22:18).

“You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.” (Exodus 22:28).

“You shall not permit a witch to live.” (Exodus 22:18).

Witchcraft is fueled by a desire for unlawful power. In Scripture it is linked with rebellion (I Sam. 15:23). Man’s first temptation was to rebel against the authority of God’s word. Yielding to that temptation resulted in death for both Adam and Eve and their descendants. As the God of *Life*, Elohim hates witchcraft. It an evil still moving in the world, will have still been deceiving and leading people astray when it is finally destroyed (Revelation 21:8, 22:15). Until that day, its power is broken by a walk of obedience to the authority of His Son Yeshua/Jesus—and through the power of His blood.

Exodus 22:28.** ***“You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.” As we wrote last week, 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 will 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 have recourse if they misbehave.

[Dominating this morning’s news were accounts of the fiasco which took place in Los Angeles last night at the climactic moment of the Academy Awards, when the wrong film was announced as winner of “Best Picture.” A British paper reported that throughout the evening, “The awards were handed out in between jokes and attacks on President Donald Trump”. God is not mocked. We are not to revile or curse our rulers.]

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 26 February—4 March 2017 are called *T'rumah*—“Donation”.

TORAH: Exodus 25:1—27:19

HAFTARAH: I Kings 5:12—6:13

MISHKAN—“DWELLING PLACE”

The rest of the book of Exodus (except for the incident regarding the golden calf) will be related to the setting up of the “Tabernacle.” The Hebrew for this word is *mishkan*—which means “a dwelling place.” Its root *shakhan* is used in the modern Hebrew word for “neighbor”—someone who “dwells” nearby. (*) God longs to *shokhen* with, to dwell—to “neighbor” closely with His people. The word is used in Exodus 25:8 when He instructs that a “holy place” (sanctuary) be constructed so that He may **dwel** within Israel. This would be the tent-covered Tabernacle used in the wilderness and in the days of the Judges. At the end of this week's Haftarah (I Kings 6:13) Solomon, some 500 years later, has completed a Temple on Mount Moriah—and the same words are again repeated, “*And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.*” Around 440 years later still, a pre-incarnate Yeshua twice more released these words through the prophet Zechariah, “*Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst. Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of Hosts has sent Me to you.*” (Zechariah 2:10-11).

Yet, “*the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands*” (Acts 7:48), and today, through the work of the Messiah Yeshua, His Body on earth is “*being built together for a dwelling place (Hebrew translation: *mishkan*) of God in the Spirit*” (Ephesian 2:22). Finally, John tells us of a day when a Voice from heaven will proclaim, “*Behold, the tabernacle (Hebrew translation: *mishkan*) of God is with the children of Adam, and He will **dwel** (*shokhen*) with them and they shall be His people. Elohim Himself will be with them and be their God*” (Revelation 21:3-4).

(*) In English Bibles, a different Hebrew word *succa*, meaning “a temporary shelter,” is often also translated “tabernacle”—the *Feast of Tabernacles* in the fall uses the plural of this word *Succot*.

***Exodus 25:2.** “*Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering.*”

***Exodus 25:10.** *“And they shall make an ark of acacia wood...”* The word “ark” is *aron*, a word used today for a cabinet, closet or wardrobe (Noah’s “ark” and that of the baby Moses is a different word *teva*, meaning ‘box’). This ark would later be called the *“Ark of the Testimony, -- of the Covenant”*, *--of God*”, and *“the Ark of YHVH (the LORD)”*.

***Exodus 25:13-15.** *“You shall cast four rings of gold for it [the Ark of the Covenant], and put them in its four corners...and you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it.”* It is remarkable the lengths this passage goes to stress the importance of the poles and that they are to *stay* in the rings at all times! Yet by the time of David, even though he read the Torah continually and loved it, this would have faded to that of a minor, unimportant “detail” in his mind. Tragedy would occur when he allowed the Ark to be carried a different way (II Samuel 6:1-8). It is crucial to employ the *whole* counsel of God; there are no details of His instructions which are more important than others. *“Thy Word O LORD is Truth!”*

We would also stress here that ALL of the articles of the Tabernacle were essential in the completion of the perfection of the whole—whether the beautiful golden menorah, the cherubim, the intricately embroidered inner curtains, or the more homely boards for the sides, the skins over the top, the instruments of bronze such as the *“pans to receive the ashes, the shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans”* (27:3). ***So with those human “vessels” making up the Body of Messiah on earth today...*** some may be in positionings which appear more honorable than others, but before God, each part being in the place for which it has been specially fashioned by the *Master Artisan* in His preparing the Whole, ***that*** is the important thing.

***Exodus 25:17.** *“You shall make a mercy seat (Hebrew: *kaporet*) of pure gold.”* *Kaporet* means both “atonement” and “covering”. Upon this the blood would be sprinkled on the Day of Atonement. It was above this that the Presence of the LORD would dwell between the Cherubim, Hence the (non-Biblical) word *shekinah*, related to *shakhan* above, refers to the manifest dwelling-presence of the LORD.

***Exodus 25:22.** *“You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.”* “Meet with you” here means “at an appointed fixed time and place.” In God’s mercies, we now *“have boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Yeshua, by a new and living way which he consecrated for us”*—so as to meet with and be spoken with by our Father (Hebrews 10:19-20).

***Exodus 25:30.** *“And you shall set the showbread on the table before Me always.”* Showbread is literally *“Bread of the Face”* or *“Bread of the Presence”*. Leviticus 24:5-9 clarifies that it would consist of 12 loaves made from wheat flour, corresponding to the 12 tribes of Israel. Each Sabbath they were placed before God on the golden table, across from the menorah whose light shone upon it. Psalm 44:3 says that Israel’s victories did not come by her own prowess, but *“It was Your right hand, Your arm and the Light of Your Face, for You loved them!”*

***Exodus 25:33.** *“Three bowls [of the menorah] shall be made like almond blossoms on one branch...”* The Hebrew for “almond” or “almond blossoms” which were to decorate the Menorah is *sha’ked*. This is also the root for another similar-sounding Hebrew word *sha’kad* meaning “to watch, to wake, to be diligent.” This is the word used in Psalm 127:1, *“Unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.”* Since the almond is the first tree to blossom in Israel, in mid-winter while other trees are still sleeping, it bears this same root and has become a symbol for wakefulness, and alertness. This is why both of these words are used in Jeremiah 1:11-12. The LORD asks Jeremiah what he sees, and he responds, *“The branch of an almond (sha’ked) tree.”* The LORD responds, *“You have seen well, for I am watching over (sha’kad) my word to perform it.”*

Even so, the menorah, which illumined the darkness when all else were sleeping was decorated with these flowers—among other things, a symbol of He who watches over Israel and neither slumbers nor sleeps—who also watches over His word regarding her to perform it. As we write, the hills around Jerusalem are still shining with these flowers. **PLEASE PRAY for the Body in Israel to be alert, and awake, diligently seeking the Light of the Spirit to illumine the Word which nourishes us with life and guidance during this hour!**

***Exodus 25:40.** *“And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.”* All of these things—the Ark; the rings of gold; the poles of acacia wood; the Mercy Seat; the Cherubim; the Table of Showbread; the golden Menorah— point to the work of Yeshua, our heavenly High Priest and mediator of a New Covenant, *“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people...For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more”* (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:3-13).



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[The readings for next week (5-11 March) are called *Tetsaveh*—
“Command/Charge.” TORAH: Exodus 27:20—30:10 (+Deuteronomy 25:17-19);
HAFTARAH: I Samuel 15:2-34. NOTE: This is one of four special Shabbats before

Passover having additional Torah and replacement *Haftarah* readings. Because this Shabbat comes just before Purim, it is called *Shabbat-Zachor*— “Remember! (what Amalek did to you).” It contains an additional Torah reading, and the usual *Haftarah* (Ezekiel 43:10-27) is replaced by the reading from I Samuel.]

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