

Prayer Update From Israel (February 6, 2011)



“Acclaim strength to God, over Israel is His pride and His strength in the skies.”
Psalm 68:35
(Trans: Robert Alter)

1. “NOT BY MIGHT, NOT BY POWER . . .”

This past week, during a conference on security in Herzliya, Israel’s Defense Minister Ehud Barak said that he sees Iran nearing a stage in her assumed development of a nuclear weapon “which may render any physical strike as impractical. . . . A nuclear Iran will be more complicated to deal with, more dangerous and more costly in blood than if it were stopped today. In other words, he who says in English “later” may find that “later is too late. . . . If sanctions don’t achieve the desired goal of stopping military nuclear program, there will be a need to consider taking action.” A speaker on behalf of military intelligence reported that Iran now has a stockpile of enriched uranium capable of manufacturing four nuclear weapons. Vice Premier Moshe Ya’alon said that Iran must be stopped “one way or another” and, drawing on his own military experience, disputed claims that underground Iranian nuclear sites would be impenetrable. (“Barak: If sanctions fail, Iran must be hit”, by Yaakov Katz: The Jerusalem Post (JPOST.com), 4 Feb 2012, 22:40 IST).

Meanwhile, Washington Post columnist David Ignatius wrote that US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta “believes there is strong likelihood that Israel will strike Iran in April, May or June—before Iran enters what Israelis described as a ‘zone of immunity’ to commence building a nuclear bomb.” Both Panetta and President Obama have warned Israel against making such a strike, saying it will jeopardize non-military efforts (“Panetta believes Israel will strike Iran soon” by Yitzhak Benhorin: ynet.news.com, 02 Feb 2012, 21:37). On Thursday a top IDF

officer Major General Aviv Kochavi estimated that around 200,000 missiles are aimed at Israel at any given time. He said further, that rather than technological advancement, Iran's ability to obtain nuclear weapons depended solely upon the will of its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ("Some 200,000 missiles aimed consistently at Israel, top IFF officer says" by Amos Harel: HAARETZ.com, 2 Feb 2012, 10:32).

That "supreme leader" on Friday said that "The Zionist regime [i.e. Israel] is a cancerous tumor and it will be removed." Khamenei further promised that "Iran would assist any country or organization that would fight the Zionist regime, which is now weaker than ever" ("Khamenei: Zionist regime is a cancer", by Dudi Cohen: ynetnews.com, 03 Feb 2012, 12:06).

And so, as Israel hears calls for restraint and patience from one quarter, she is hearing promises of her eminent annihilation from another—and she sees the window closing quickly on anything she might do to thwart that annihilation. Four atomic warheads may not sound like many, but it would take only one hitting tiny Israel to endanger her very existence. He who threatens this is not Saddam Hussein, who was motivated more by a zeal for pan-Arabism than religious interests. Rather, he is "Supreme Leader" of a Shiite Islamic "Republic", and his allegiance and motivation are knowingly spiritual. The mighty spiritual being seen by Daniel 2600 years ago (Daniel 10:13) had to be assisted by Micha'el, another heavenly power in order to overthrow the "Prince of Persia"—and this took 21 days and the fervent prayer of a human intercessor standing in the gap. Sunday, Prime Minister Netanyahu said, "Over the past few days we've been reminded about the environment in which we live. We've heard the Iranian leader's statements about destroying Israel, and we've seen the Syrian army slaughtering its own people. In this region, the only thing that ensures our existence, security and prosperity is power. We are committed to the continued cultivation of the State of Israel's military, economic and social power."

We love our Prime Minister and support him. But while it may be true that the only thing which our enemies understand will be a Power greater than their own—Israel's power alone will not save her. We must pray that Mr Netanyahu "be reminded of" one other thing—a word of the LORD given to his ancient predecessor Zerubbabel through the prophet Zechariah (4:6)—indeed, a Word inscribed in Hebrew across the bottom branches of the Menorah which stands before the Knesset building from which he governs, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit!" says the LORD of Armies!

PLEASE PRAY:

****Psalm 68 over Israel: "Let Elohim arise and His enemies be scattered; let those also who hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of Elohim...the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of thousands...Ascribe strength to God; His excellence is over Israel, and His strength is in the clouds. O God, You are more awesome than Your holy places. The God of Israel is He who gives strength and power to His people. Blessed be Elohim!"***

**That the LORD who Watches over Israel (Psalm 121) will instruct her leaders how to prepare her people for what is to come, that the necessary sacrifices will be made to do this. This week Israel's Home Front Defense Minister presents his annual report on the public's state of readiness. It is expected to announce that despite improvements, there are many gaps in the HF's ability to function under the expected missile barrages should Israel be forced into war. Further, fewer than four million citizens have received the updated gas masks which all citizens are supposed to have—and now the number of available ones have run out because of budget cuts. It is known that many of the missiles in Syria are armed with poisonous gas, and likely some of those now arming Iran-backed Hezbollah forces in southern Lebanon.*

**That YHVH Tzva'ot Elohei-Ma'arkhot-Yisrael—"Yehovah of Armies, The Arraying-God of Israel" (I Samuel 17:45) will guide and position Israel's physical army (as well as His heavenly ones) in His action and timing. That the faith of believers in the Israeli Defense Force will shine as lights of excellence, hope, courage, efficiency and mercy.*

**That no war will break out except it be in the timing of the LORD, that if it be necessary to destroy the nuclear weapons capabilities of Iran, the operation be guarded and guided to be as efficient as possible with the least possible loss of life.*

**For praise and worship amongst Israeli believers. Zechariah 10:3 says, "For the LORD of Armies will visit His flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as His royal horse in the battle." Although we believe that this likely refers to a physical fulfillment, we see also a spiritual application: "Judah" originally is related to "praise" or "giving of thanks with extended hands" (Thus his naming in Genesis 29:35). In this usage we can see that royal high praise is that which the LORD uses to carry His Presence into war. Pray for warfare praise and worship to be released among the Body of Messiah in Israel!*

**Please pray for the vast number of believers in Iran...we have seen reports that they are under increased persecution. Pray that they stand and be granted supernatural courage and works of the Holy Spirit to stand in their positioning and shine in the darkness.*

2. TANIN OFF ISRAEL'S COAST

Yesterday the pipeline transferring gas from Egypt to Israel and Jordan was blown up. This makes at least twelve times that it has been sabotaged since the fall of Hosni Mubarak early last year. Israel has used this gas to produce around 1/5th of its electricity. There are serious doubts as to whether the Muslim-Brotherhood-dominated government expected to evolve from the present turmoil in Egypt will allow the gas to continue to flow to Israel; most certainly not at prices enjoyed during the Mubarak period. With the same reports on the Egyptian gas-line explosion, came news of another Israeli natural gas discovery! The seventh in recent years, this field lies 120 kilometers off her northwestern coastline. Only preliminary tests have been made—but they seem to point towards another enormous reservoir of natural gas.

We find it interesting that the name of the newest oil field is Tanin. We examined this word in a recent Torah Portion, how, although sometimes translated “serpent”, it is different than the word usually used for snake (nachash). It may be a crocodile (its usual meaning in modern Hebrew); it is also translated in the Bible variously as a “great sea monster”, created by God (Genesis 1:21 NASB), or used as a metaphor for spiritual or physical powers, often in opposition to God (Psalm 74:13; Jeremiah 51:34; Ezekiel 29:3). It can also be translated “dragon” (Isaiah 27:1 NASB; Psalm 91:13 NASB, margin). When Moses stood before the LORD at the Burning Bush (Exodus 4:3, 7:15) his rod became a nachash—snake; but when he and Aaron stood before Pharaoh and the rod was cast down, it became something else—a tanin, perhaps a crocodile, which was feared and worshiped along the Nile. The court magicians threw down their rods and they became “tanninim”—but Moses’ tanin devoured all of theirs.

Petroleum has become a modern necessity to the functioning of nations. It may be a God-given blessing for which man gives thanks—or it may become a monster which is worshipped and through which nations which have it hold others that don’t in their power. Yet it is God who made it, and as with the tanin in Ezekiel 29:3 (which there symbolized the King of Egypt), he can humble and “put a hook in the jaws” of those who worship or misuse it—or use it as a means of persecuting His covenant land and people and those who stand with them. When it is God’s time for His people to have their own supply of oil, He is capable of miraculously turning their present resources into that tanin—one with a capacity to swallow those of their oppressors (Deuteronomy 33:24).

PLEASE PRAY:

**For wisdom, integrity, skill and financial resources for the establishment of the seven petroleum fields in Israel—that they be harnessed and become operable as quickly as possible—so as to meet Israel’s homeland needs as well as providing commerce with other lands.*

**Divine protection over these projects and the fields.*

**For humility and gratefulness for God’s blessings to us...for “the precious things of the earth and its fullness, and the favour of Him who dwelt in the bush” (Deuteronomy 33:16).*

**That as resources are discovered to maintain and nourish returned Israel, probably the most important of all, water, will be found as promised in Isaiah 41:17-20, “That they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORDE has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it.”*

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 Yitro—"And Yitro (English: Jethro) the Priest of Midian":

TORAH: Exodus 18:1—20:26

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 6:1—7:6; 9:6-7

***Exodus 18:21-22:** "Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders...let them judge the people at all times..."

Moses is counseled by his father-in-law to set up a system of "judges" amongst the people. Yet the word for "select" here is not the same as that for "chose" in verse 25. Rather it is Hebrew "hazeh"—to watch, envision, see prophetically, foresee. It is of critical importance for the Body of Messiah in Israel that the choosing of leaders of godly fear, truth and honesty be done with supernatural vision and prophetic insight.

***Exodus 19:4b.** "...I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself." Compare Deuteronomy 32:10-12, "He found him in a desert land and in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so YHVH (the LORD) alone led him, and there was no foreign god with him."

Exodus 19:5.** "And now, if you will truly heed My voice and guard My covenant, you will become for Me a treasure among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine." Compare Psalm 25:10, "All the paths of the LORD are grace and truth (Heb: chesid and emet), to such as guard His covenant and His testimonies." ***PLEASE PRAY: For Israelis to realize that God still longs to "bring her to Himself", that He has released a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-33) in the blood of His Son Yeshua, in whom "grace and truth are realized" (John 1:17); that as she embraces that Covenant, she will find that He is still speaking, and as she hears and responds to His voice, she will find again the treasured place in His heart.

***Exodus 19:6, 10.** "You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation... 'Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes.'" Revelation 1:5-6 teaches that becoming a kingdom of priests and a holy nation comes about through the love of Yeshua and the washing away of sins by His blood.

***Exodus 19:16-20.** "Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thundering and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the shofar was

very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled...Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because YHVH descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the shofar sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and Elohim answered him by voice. Then YHVH came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And YHVH called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.” Compare Hebrews 12:18-29, “For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a shofar and the voice...But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn registered in Heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Yeshua the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. See that you do not refuse Him who speaks...Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.”

***Exodus 20:4.** “You shall not make for yourself a carved image...you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I am YHVH your God, a Jealous god...” This word for “Jealous” (kana) is used in its noun form in the last sentence of this week’s Reading from the Prophets, Isaiah 9:7. However, there it is translated “zeal” (through which the LORD will establish the government of His SON forever). Righteous jealousy or zeal is always released on behalf of someone or something which is intensely loved. However, when activated in the flesh for selfish motives, the same word is translated “envy”.

***Exodus 20:13.** “You shall not murder.” In some older English translations the word “kill” was used. But the word for kill and that for murder are different words in the Hebrew.

Exodus 20:21.** “So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick cloud where God was.” This “thick cloud” (araphel) is translated “deep darkness” in Isaiah 60:2. But that darkness is over the “peoples”, and will be dispelled by the rising of the LORD, when His glory shall be “seen.” Today in Modern Hebrew araphel means “fog”—and Israel for the most part is “in a fog” regarding finding her God. ***PLEASE PRAY: For the veil to be removed from the eyes of God’s ancient people—that a light rise in their hearts and God’s glory will be seen—that they will be drawn into the “Cloud of Unknowing” to discover the One who has known them from afar and drawn them in lovingkindness.

***Exodus 20:26.** “Nor shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.” It was God who first provided suitable clothing for hiding that which had awakened shame in Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:21). It would only be through the work of the Son that all humankind can again find themselves clothed, in His righteousness, and our shame taken away. “Clothe yourselves with the Lord Yeshua Messiah, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature” (Romans 13:14).

An exceptionally powerful Haftarah

Isaiah 6:1-7:6; 9:6-7

The readings from the Prophets for this week (Isaiah 6:1-7:6) contain, in parallel to the manifestation of the LORD's presence in power on Mount Sinai, the awesome revelation of Holiness made to the prophet Isaiah. Before the holy presence of the LORD "high and lifted up"—the seraphim, the Voice, the shaking and smoke, Isaiah sees himself as unclean and his lips as unclean. Yet his lips are touched with the coal, his iniquity taken away, and his sin purged. And he is given a message for his people—a message describing a "veil" which would settle upon the House of Israel (and which continues until the present day)...and the promise of a remnant. After a shorter message of instruction related to current events, the reading incredibly leaps two chapters to Isaiah 9:6-7, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of HOSTS will perform this!"

PLEASE PRAY: For divine revelation of the Holiness of the LORD to accompany this reading—and of His Zeal and Jealousy which has already seen the birth of the "Child"—who will soon be released to return and rule over His kingdom in judgment and justice forever!



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[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 12-18 February Mishpatim ("Now these are the Judgments which you shall set before them") will be, TORAH: Exodus 21:1—24:18; HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 34:8-22, 33:25-26]

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