

Prayer Update From Israel (February 9, 2015)



Kalaniot near Bet Shemesh west of Jerusalem

“And Moses took the blood sprinkled it on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which YHVH has made with you according to all these words.’”

Exodus 24:8 (See Torah Portion below)

1. KALANIOT

Just preceding the dawning of Spring, right after the awakening of the almond trees come the scarlet anemones, in Israel known lovingly as *Kalaniot*. These tiny specks of red adorn the fields throughout the Middle East about this time each year. Their annual return is celebrated in a 70-year old popular Hebrew song by that name, one whose chorus most Israelis know by heart. Although a few will continue to bloom throughout the spring, their peak lasts for only a few weeks, during which time Israelis will flock to the hills on pretty days with picnic baskets and cameras, before a storm arrives to blow them all away. We visited such a hill west of Jerusalem last Wednesday, whose surface was carpeted with them.

It had been a difficult week, with pressures and violent threats growing on so many fronts, and a new psychological weapon being released via the media with the images of unspeakable cruelty and barbarism meted out upon the young Jordan officer captured by ISIL. We are in a season when we must not be unaware of what is going on about us, yet we must guard our minds. Satan works to weaken and paralyze the mind, capitalizing when possible upon the flesh’s fascination with that which is gruesome or terrifying, to plant within it cyclic images of terror and foreboding. Philippians 4:8 makes clear what sorts of images we must nourish and fortify our minds with so as to counter this darkness. And Psalm 27:4-6 shows how asking for and seeking out times of waiting in the Presence of the Lord will bring us protection in the evil day—then resulting in the raising of our “heads” to a place of clarity above the swirl and confusion of the enemy beneath. Yet as we gazed upon these fields covered in scarlet, we were strongly impressed with the one weapon and defense which surpasses all. *It is the Blood of the Lamb*. 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 (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.

PLEASE PRAY: For a deep revelation amongst believers in Israel of the shed blood of our Messiah—which, because in it is unquenchable life, is our renewal, our courage, our strength, our love, our hope!

And even as the *calaniot* remind us of the life shed yet springing up on behalf of our fallen souls and minds, it also is a harbinger of the redemption of this land out of which they spring—indeed, of the whole world which has been held bondage by man’s sin. This is beautifully expressed in the last verse of a song written some years ago by a friend Rachel Boskey,

**LORD WE LONG TO SEE THE DAY
WHEN MOURNING WILL BE DONE
YOUR GLORY IN JERUSALEM
THE PRESENCE OF YOUR SON
HE IS THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST
WHO SAT DOWN AT YOUR RIGHT HAND
HIS BLOOD WAS SHED
TO CLEANSE AND HEAL YOUR LAND
TO HEAL YOUR LAND**

**From : “Good to Israel” by Rachel Boskey
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2. STANDING FIRM!

This past week 1,700 Bible-believing Christian and Messianic supporters of Israel from a number of countries—US, Brazil, Pakistan, Sweden, Australia, India (with many others from around the globe in attendance online)—gathered in Loveland, Colorado for a three-day summit signaling the launch of what we believe to be a most critical new alliance, *Fellowship of Israel Related Ministries* (FIRM). With the appointing of 20 leaders from around the world, FIRM came into being last year. In the words of its founder Wayne Hilsden, “‘FIRM’ is a global fellowship of biblically grounded believers committed to cultivating Messiah-centered relationships to bless the inhabitants of Israel (Jew and non-Jew) and the Jewish community worldwide.” Hilsden is based in Jerusalem where he and his wife Ann have overseen the King of Kings Community there for over thirty years. His spiritual wisdom, integrity, and his skilled and gracious commitment as an encourager and peace-maker among the Body have won him deep respect and trust in the believing community throughout Israel. His burden in establishing FIRM was “not to take the place of existing Israel-oriented ministries,” but to “connect those ministries with one another and to create cooperation and synergy” within this specific community:

“All this really relates to an impression that the Lord gave to me directly to rally the troops worldwide. It has become apparent that many in the evangelical Christian church are not necessarily on board with Israel and that perspective is becoming a dominant voice in the media. Lies are being told, and they are especially addressing the younger generation of evangelical Christians. A sense of urgency came into my spirit that there is a force, primarily spiritual in nature, that is seeking to destroy the people of Israel. God is calling us to have a special plan for Israel that reaches well into the future and culminating at the time when the Lord returns.” (“‘A Sense of Urgency’ Compels New Ministry to Stand FIRM with Israel”: charismanews.com, 1/27/2015 7:00AM EST).

Speakers at the conference emphasized that their calling for a coming-together of ministries supporting Israel was in no way a call for advocating approval of Israel’s every action, a false stereotype which has come to be leveled at all Christian Zionists in recent years. Yet FIRM does stand against a rising tide of teaching in the Church, especially popular among millennial young adults, which holds that Israel’s call as a covenant people with a covenant land was ‘fulfilled’ with the coming of Christ and the birth of the church, a kind of ‘fulfillment theology’ which essentially concludes along with Replacement Theology that God is finished with Israel. It also stands against a growing perspective of Israel (and Christians who stand with her) as being an aggressive ruthless country with a disregard for the rights of Palestinian Arabs. Present at the conference and a board-member of FIRM was the founder of the Jerusalem Institute of Justice Calev Myers, an Israeli lawyer who advocates for both Jewish and Arab Israelis, and who “conducts seminars on college campuses throughout the West by engaging students in dialogue about human rights for all of Israel’s citizens, Jews, non-Jews, Arab Christians and Muslims.” (“‘Historic’ Israel Summit Launches FIRM Ministry”: charismanews.com; 2/6/2015 4:00PM EST). On the final day of the conference, over 500 students participated in special sessions on the Jewish roots of their faith, with members of Resurrection Christian School and Youth With a Mission joining in discussions led by Myers and other FIRM leaders (Ibid.).

Also on Friday, Pastor Jack Hayford, founding pastor of Church on the Way, spoke, asserting his conviction that the founding of FIRM could not have been more timely—that “we live in perilous times” where standing for righteousness, including standing with Israel, may mean persecution, perhaps even martyrdom. He emphasized the need for being adroit in spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10), and he urged those present and listening to take the “One Percent Challenge” issued at the conference—to devote 14 minutes (1% of every 24-hour day) to praying for Israel and the Jewish people (“Hayford Predicts Persecution for Christians Who Stand with Israel”: charismanews.com; 2/7/2015 10:19AM EST).

As the FELLOWSHIP OF ISRAEL-RELATED MINISTRIES is launched:

PLEASE PRAY:

***That the Spirit of God will gather ministries from around the World in whom He has fostered a love and holy zeal for Zion—his land and people Israel.**

***For Wayne Hilsden and the board members of FIRM—that they will be bound in strengthening bonds of unity, will hear and understand clearly what the Spirit is saying—and move in the instruction and timings of the Lord.**

***That in His leading, FIRM will find grace in His eyes, and be mantled with His favor and authority.**

***For Divine wisdom to attend them, that they will be able to face the difficult questions, and hear and know what should be done (Daniel 11:32-33).**

***For love and trust to be nurtured and watered by the Holy Spirit between FIRM and the Body of Messiah in Israel.**

(The information for this report was drawn from the three following articles in *charismanews.com* which we would encourage being read: **I.** “ ‘A Sense of Urgency’ Compels New ministry to Stand FIRM With Israel, 1/27/2015 7:00AM EST. **II.** ‘Historic’ Israel Summit Launches FIRM Ministry, 2/6/2015 4:00PM EST. **III.** “Hayford Predicts Persecution for Christians Who Stand With Israel 2/7/2015 10:19AM EST.”)

3. THE EAGLES ARE EARLY IN ISRAEL.

Yesterday the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel reported a strange phenomenon, significant flocks of eagles from Africa are passing through Israel on their way to western Asia—but *much earlier than usual*. It is not abnormal for a large variety of birds to make their way up the

‘land bridge’ of the Levant (western end of the Mediterranean) at certain times of the year. Israel has its own species of eagles—but these thousands from Africa (large, many with wingspans two meters wide) usually pass through a good deal later, riding an ‘air lift’ of hot air northward, then banking eastwards towards Mongolia and Kazakhstan. Yet, as one ornithologist explained, “*It’s not clear why these eagles are passing through here so early this year, because the plains of Asia will start to thaw only in a few weeks.*” (“Eagle season comes early to Israel”: jpost.com, 8 Feb 2015 15:43 IST).

We do not at this time have a clear picture as to what this represents—yet, a natural phenomenon involving eagles certainly alerts our attention! Please pray that if the Lord is trying to tell His body in Israel, or those who intercede for them, something, we will hear and understand. Meanwhile, we list below several important O.T. Scripture passages related physically and symbolically to their presence. Eagles in Scripture may be used as symbols of God’s care and protection, of His nurture and training, of His strength available to those who trust in Him; of the necessity of sharp, clear and far-reaching vision; but also of fields of battle.

“You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself” (Exodus 19:4; From last week’s Torah Portion).

“He found him [His people, Jacob] 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 alone led him, and there was no foreign god with him. He made him ride in the heights of the earth, that he might eat the produce of the fields; He made him draw honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock” (Deuteronomy 32: 10-13).

“Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes his nest on high? On the rock he dwells and makes his home, on the rocky crag and stronghold. From there he spies out the prey; his eyes behold it from far away. His young ones suck up blood, and where the slain are, there is he.” (Job 39:27-30).

“Those who hope in the LORD shall exchange their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

THIS WEEK’S TORAH PORTION:

From ancient times there has been a weekly portion (Parasha) 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 8-14 February 2015 are called *Mishpatim*—“Judgments”.

TORAH: Exodus 21:1—24:18

(Shabbat Sh’kalim) Add Exodus 30:11-16

HAFTARAH (Shabbat Sh’kalim): II Kings 11:17-12:17

NOTE: The normally-read *Haftarah* is Jeremiah 34:8-22; 33:25-26 (which we recommend reading, because of its relation to the Exodus portion). However, since the day for traditionally honoring the giving of a “Shekel Tax” for the Tabernacle/Temple falls this year on the Sabbath preceding the 1st of Adar, an additional Torah portion Exodus 30:11-16 and a different *Haftarah* which mentions “each man’s census money” (II Kings 12:4) are read in synagogues.

Mishpatim—“Judgments”



Last week's Portion began with the appointments of judges in Israel. The first three chapters of this week's readings provide these judges with guidelines for the working out of righteous judgments (*mishpatim*) in Israel's governance. They include laws and ordinances, with instructions for situations related to various moral issues and offenses. These might be seen as subheadings to the Ten Commandments of Chapter 20 (Instructions for the Priesthood related to its intercession between the people and heaven will come later in Exodus and in the entire Book of Leviticus.). Chapter 23 also contains sections regarding God's rest (Sabbaths), both for man, his animals, and for the land they will be living in. There are instructions regarding the three "pilgrim feasts", which will be observed once the land is conquered. And there are revelations and instructions pertaining to that conquest itself, including the extent of the land's future boundaries. In a remarkable passage in Chapter 24, YHVH calls Moses, Aaron and his two sons, and 70 elders of the people to a special personal meeting with Himself. At the last, His Glory rests on Mount Sinai and Moses goes up into the cloud to be with God for forty days and forty nights. To the eyes of the Israelites, the glory of the LORD is "*as a consuming fire on the mountain top.*"

*Exodus 21:2. "*If you buy a Hebrew servant...*" There are passages in this reading dealing with the fair treatment of servants or slaves. They are instructions specifically for Israel and the circumstances she would encounter as a people set apart and with her God present with her. During this period it appears to have been permitted for a family beset by financial difficulties to sell their services to a fellow Hebrew. But such arrangements were to be administered within certain guidelines, and for a restricted period of time, with release coming on the seventh year (Israel's failure to follow these guidelines is part of the subject of this week's usual *Haftarah* in Jeremiah). Other passages in this reading deal with treatment of those captured after being brought into servitude on the battlefield (always excepting the nations within Canaan itself, who were under God's judgment and were not to be given quarter). In the New Covenant, instructions were given to believers regarding servants and their masters (Ephesians 6:5-9; I Peter 2:18-25), with a special reminder to masters that "*your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.*"

*Exodus 21:5-6 (NKJV). "*But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' then his master shall bring him to the judges...*" The word here translated "judges" is actually Hebrew *Elohim* – "God". The judgments made by Moses

(Exodus 18:19) and by the “judges” set up at the counsel of Jethro 18:17-27 were considered to be those of God Himself (See also Deuteronomy 1:17a: “*You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man’s presence, for the judgment is God’s...*”).

***Exodus 22:21; 23:9.** “*You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him....since you yourselves know the feelings of a stranger, for you also were strangers in the land of Egypt.*” The word “stranger” is Hebrew *ger*, a “sojourner, temporary dweller, new-comer with no inherited rights” (Brown-Driver-Briggs 1616).

I. As we reported last year, Israel today continues to experience a very serious, perplexing, and painful dilemma regarding tens of thousands of peoples from the continent of Africa, in particular the countries of Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan, who have made their way across Egypt and crossed into Israel along her long border with the Sinai Peninsula. Some of these people are genuinely fleeing repressive, tyrannical regimes and are seeking asylum as political refugees in Israel. More are here seeking a better economic situation than that in the country from which they’ve come. It is estimated that between 60- and 70,000 migrants have crossed into Israel during the past five years alone—and there are around 120,000 guest workers with lapsed visas. This comes to around 1% of the population of this tiny country (“Dealing with illegal immigration”: *The Times of Israel*, 7 Jan 2014 12:24pm). These numbers have flooded into south Tel Aviv and areas of Arad and Eilat. With no official status, they cannot legally work, and the neighborhoods into which they have accumulated are degenerating into beds of squalor and crime. Israel has in some ways brought this upon herself—each administration failing to recognize and deal with the situation, until our present Prime Minister ordered a fence built along the border to stem the tide (which to a large extent, it has). Meanwhile, Israel has drawn international criticism for her attempts to handle the crisis—detention centers, returning some of the migrants to their home countries. Such detention centers bring back painful memories of when Jews were herded into similar enclosures in Cyprus to keep them out of Israel during the last years of the British Mandate. But those were people who had been promised access to the land (by both the Balfour Declaration and the international laws reached at San Remo), not to mention who were entitled to it by divine covenant. What is Israel to do?

PLEASE PRAY: For a wise and humane solution for Israel in dealing with the huge number of illegal residents in her midst. That God will grant fair judgment in allowing those to stay whom He has ordained to dwell as *ger'im* in the land of Israel. That the spiritual powers which are using this dilemma as a means of weakening Israel will be bound (Many of these migrants are Muslim and have no paradigm for the existence of a land under divinely ordained Jewish oversight.). Meanwhile, we are aware of a number of believing outreaches which God has to minister to the brokenness of some of the refugees. Pray that the love and grace of God in Messiah Yeshua will strengthen and provide new hope and future for many of these people, both to those who are allowed to stay, and to those who would be able to take it back with them to the countries from which they have come.

II. In our present day, Christians from the nations whom God sends for seasons to “sojourn” alongside the children of the inheritance are among Israel’s strongest and most

faithful friends. Yet the enemy seeks to position his agents in such places as the Ministry of the Interior and Airport Security, which often demean and dishonor this friendship, going to lengths to keep Gentile believers from entering Israel, and those who have spent time in the land from returning. Of course, like every other country, Israel must have laws and policies regarding her borders and limitations regarding residency for non-citizens, which should be respected as other laws. Yet in recent years, the harassment of Believers desiring to stay for longer periods than an initial ‘three months’ has risen dramatically. **PLEASE PRAY: that Israel’s government will implement and enforce righteous laws regarding sojourners in Israel. Pray for protection and a ‘place’ for all those believers whom the Lord would send to dwell in the Land—that they will be allowed to stay the full length of time which He ordains for them. Pray for patience and courage on behalf of these visitors...but also a respect for the laws of the land.**

***Exodus 22:22-24.** *“You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry, and My wrath will become hot...”* The plight of these people has always been and continues to be close to God’s heart. *“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world”* (James 1:27).

***Exodus 22:28.** *“You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.”* 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 to call if they misbehave.**

***Exodus 23:20.** *“Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Be on your guard before him and obey his voice, to not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him.”* Although the Hebrew word for “angel” can also mean “messenger” (some Jewish commentators even equate this angel with Moses himself), it is virtually certain that a supernatural being is referred to here. It is this being who will “bring them in” to the land (something which Moses will, alas, not ultimately be allowed to take part in). In this passage, God also mentions sending His “terror” ahead of Israel, along with “hornets” (vss. 27, 28). The battle would be won “little by little” until Israel would “become fruitful and take possession of the Land” (vs. 30); and the LORD would ‘fix’ her boundaries (vs 31). **PLEASE PRAY: that Israel become again aware of the supernatural element which is required in her warfare. Pray for believers to receive revelation in how best to “be on their guard” for the voice of angels whose assignments from God include ministering on their behalf (Hebrews 1:14). Pray for patience regarding the battle, in which at times victory must be accomplished “little by little” (Vs 30); and for an awareness that “fruitfulness” must precede taking full “possession of the Land” (Vs 30). Pray that Israel’s borders would be “fixed in God’s timing according to His Word (Vs 31).**

***Exodus 23:25-26.** *“So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.”* **PLEASE PRAY:** for believers in Israel to grasp these promises in faith in our own day.

***Exodus 24:6-8.** *“And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, ‘All that YHVH has said we will do, and be obedient.’ And Moses took the blood sprinkled it on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which YHVH has made with you according to all these words.’”* Perhaps in this case the blood was sprinkled upon the seventy elders as representative of the million+ congregation of Israel. Hebrews 9:19-22 appears to quote from this passage to show that *“according to the Torah, almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission”*—*“But (Hebrews 9:11-15) Messiah came as High Priest of the good things to come...Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption...How much more shall the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? For this reason He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the First Covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”* **PLEASE PRAY:** That through this same **“Eternal Spirit”** revelation would come to Jews that a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31) is come—in the blood of Messiah Yeshua (Luke 22:20) which has been shed for them and for all children of Adam.

***Exodus 24:9-11.** *“Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself, yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel; and they saw God, and they ate and drank.”* Twice in this passage we are told that these leaders of Israel “saw God”. Since “no one has seen God at any time”, but “He who has seen the Son has seen the Father”—we believe that this can only have been an encounter with the pre-incarnate Yeshua. There are two different Hebrew words used here for ‘saw’. The first (root: *ra’ah*) most generally means simply “to see”. The second (root: *ha’zah*) has more to do with “gazing upon”...in fact, it is often used in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew in a prophetic sense. It is this word which is used in Psalm 27:4, where the poet’s greatest longing is to dwell in the LORD’s house so as to “gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple.” **PLEASE PRAY:** for leaders of present-day Israel to be granted to “see” the God of their father Israel/Jacob, and to have (and to take) opportunity to “gaze” at the beauty of His risen Son. Pray for an opening of the eyes of leaders in the Body of Messiah in Israel to “see” prophetically. In ancient Israel, these included worship leaders such as Heman (I Chron. 25:5), Asaph (II Chron. 29:30) and Jeduthan (II Chron. 35:15) who were referred to as “seers” and whose descendants ‘prophesied’ on their instruments (I Chron. 25:1).

***Exodus 24:17.** *“The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.”*

PLEASE PRAY: Hebrews 12:28-29 into our lives as believers here in Israel—even as we would pray the same for you: *“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”*

***Jeremiah 33:25-26.** *“Thus says the LORD: ‘If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed order of heaven and earth, then I will reject the offspring of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them.’”* **PLEASE PRAY:** For leaders of God’s choosing to arise into the offices of leadership in the Land—those in whom will awaken the lineage with the anointing, the courage and wisdom, and passion after God that David the king had in His day.



*Martin & Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem*

[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 15-21 February 2015 are called *T'rumah*—“Donations”. TORAH: Exodus 25:1—27:19; HAFTARAH: I Kings 5:12—6:13]

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