

Prayer Update From Israel (May 6, 2012)



*Day 41
Counting the Omer
(Leviticus 23:15-16)*

1. ISRAELI THUNDER IN SYRIA AND A JOURNEY TO CHINA

Friday the Israeli air force struck deep into Syria, targeting shipments of Iranian long-range Fateh-110 surface to surface missiles (capable of hitting virtually anywhere in Israel) thought to be headed to Hezbollah forces in Lebanon (probably as a sort of ‘pay-back’ to leader Hassan Nazrallah, whose forces have been aiding Assad in Syria). Then early Sunday morning Israel struck again, this time much more forcefully, hitting several sites on the outskirts of Damascus, likewise loaded with the powerful missiles, as well as a military research center which American officials have called the country’s main chemical weapons facility. Israel has repeatedly stated that it would not allow advanced weapons from Syria to fall into the hands of the Iranian-trained and supplied Shi’ite Muslim guerrillas in Lebanon. (Only last week Iran boasted that its arm extended all the way to the Mediterranean.) There is little doubt that Iran’s Hezbollah proxy in Lebanon would be ordered to release such weapons against Israel should she find her nuclear development facilities under attack. Although Israel reportedly did not alert the U.S. or anyone else of the attacks until they had already been carried out, the actions have already been justified by spokespersons for both the U.S. and British governments. Syria has called the attacks a “declaration of war” and vowed retaliation. Sunday afternoon their intelligence reports revealed that they were positioning missile batteries into place aimed at Israel. For its part, Israel has set up defensive Iron Dome missile batteries in Haifa and Safed.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Netanyahu had scheduled a five-day trip to China for this week. He is to meet with the new Chinese President, Xi Jinping and his new Prime Minister Li Keqiang. They may well rule for the next decade, and the Prime Minister hopes to use this opportunity to influence them for good regarding Israel. Besides seeking to provide Israel’s perspective on regional issues, the Prime Minister will have a number of media interviews, will address the Central Party School of the Communist Party, will discuss economic issues, and seek

to open doors for much more Israel-Sino trade and economic cooperation (“Netanyahu to leave for 5-day China visit” JPOST.com (*The Jerusalem Post*), 5 May 2013 8:24 IST). Sunday evening, after a two-hour delay for a last-minute security cabinet meeting regarding the crisis in the north, the Prime Minister boarded his plane. It has been a ticklish situation...if he had postponed the trip, it might have sent a message to Syria that Israel is preparing on cranking up the confrontation in the north. But if he went and war broke out, it would take hours for him to get back to lead the country. Another factor is that this is his third planned visit to China in recent years; the previous two both had to be postponed. In the end he determined to go, remaining in constant contact with Israel from the plane on his trip to Shanghai and throughout the visit. Defense Minister Ya’alon will serve as acting prime minister in his absence (“Despite tension in north, PM still going to China”; JPOST.com (*The Jerusalem Post*), 5 May 2013 14:10 IT).

We believe this gesture towards China to be of extreme importance. In it we see a manifestation in the natural of things which have already been going on in the spiritual. We have been aware during the past year of certain prophetic “words” by Christian leaders whose discernment we respect regarding a soon-coming strong connection between Israel and China. We have witnessed this beginning to take place already in the Body of Messiah within the two countries. Christian and Messianic speakers from Israel are visiting China and being granted audience among believers in that country to worship with them, learn from them, and to share from our perspective about God’s purposes for Israel, and China’s part in that. And in the past two years literally thousands of Chinese-speaking Asian believers from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan have flooded into Israel, arriving to bless her, to pray and worship and hear God here; to be trained and to receive understanding and revelation before returning to their countries.

PLEASE PRAY:

***That the God who makes peace on Israel’s borders, who strengthens the bars of the gates of Jerusalem (Psalm 147:14, 13) will protect Israel, and guide her leaders in their decisions regarding the weapons being arrayed against her in Syria, Lebanon and Iran.**

***That hostilities will not be allowed to break out before their time—that angelic forces will be positioned to keep evil substances from being fired and spread into Israel. That Israel will be divinely protected from the *“terror by night, or the arrow that flies by day...the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or the destruction that lays waste at noon”* (Psalm 91:56).**

***That Prime Minister Netanyahu will be granted divine wisdom, guidance, graciousness and discretion in reaching out on behalf of the Jewish nation to the nation and people of China. That God will bless this visit and that deeper relations may be established between Israel and China.**

***That God’s Kingdom Come in China. That China’s new leaders be influenced for good and godliness. That as international relations are strengthened between the two countries, so too may the relation between believers in the two countries—that a spiritual Bridge of Blessing be brought into position over which both peoples may be strengthened in wisdom and insight and the power to accomplish the purposes of God**

2. YOM YERUSHALAYIM



Rainbow over Mt Zion and the Mount of Olives—all within the Territory taken by Israel in 1967

This coming Wednesday is *Yom Yerushalayim*—“Jerusalem Day”. It marks the day (using the Hebrew calendar) 46 years ago that Israel wrested the Old City of Jerusalem from the Kingdom of Jordan in the Six Day War. For the first time in over 2400 years the entire city was under the governance of a sovereign Hebrew state. The spiritual warfare continues fierce over stewardship of that city as well as all the lands acquired by Israel during that war. This past year has seen a strong increase of pressure on Israel to relinquish and leave all of those lands. A UN resolution has been passed, essentially labeling all of that territory in Judea, Samaria, Gaza and Jerusalem itself a Palestinian “state”. And not only national governments...the business world, religions: this past week Internet giant GOOGLE decided to change the tagline of its Palestinian edition from “Palestinian territories” to “Palestine”. And the Church of Scotland published a paper denying that “Scripture” has any bearing or basis for Jewish claims to Israel. Without recognizing the guidance of her Lord, Israel has not really known what to do...sometimes her governments have been ready to give it all away, sometimes not. Only God has the answers and will define her borders as she comes into a place where she can maintain the righteousness which roots and exalts a nation.

Nevertheless, something incredible was released in the spirit world forty-six years ago when God placed his ancient People back in stewardship over His city Jerusalem—something which affected the world, and which has since germinated into a life which is growing in our midst—beginning to influence the whole: God was beginning something!

On the 43rd Day of the Counting of the Omer

Jerusalem Day is celebrated on the 43rd day of the Counting of the Omer. Asher Intrater a Messianic leader in Jerusalem, recently pointed out what he saw as a significant parallel:

“The ascension of Yeshua to heavenly Jerusalem and the Israeli recapture of Jerusalem in 1967 happened on the same day. Yeshua taught His disciples about the kingdom of God for approximately 40 days after being resurrected on the third day after Passover (Acts 1;3). The recapture of Jerusalem also occurred on day 43 of the counting of the Omer. This year that date falls on May 8.”

The word “Zion” bears the same root as the word for a “signpost” or a “pointing out” a “signaling”. When significant physical shifts occur here, they have spiritual repercussions which affect the world.

*The years immediately following the re-unification of Jerusalem saw the beginnings of a world-wide release of the Holy Spirit, one which transcended denominational bounds, releasing a new life and power into the Church.

*Birthed on this wave and reaching into the streets and counterculture of the ‘60’s, came the “Jesus Movement” which swept thousands of youth into the Kingdom.

*During this period Jews in the nations began coming to the Lord in large numbers. (Many believers had been taught that this was not supposed to take place until after the Church had been taken away. But we must allow God the freedom to perfect errors in our systems regarding the future.) And these “Messianic Jews” soon began discovering that their identity in Messiah made them one with the Gentile Body, while still retaining their Jewish heritage—including the Covenant given to their Fathers regarding the Land of Israel.

As a result of these factors, there is now a growing living Jewish expression of the Body in Israel. There is a growing youth movement which loves the Lord. Many of their spiritual “Abbas” and “Immas” (Fathers and Mothers) came to faith during the time mentioned above, immigrated to Israel—and are now seeing spiritual grandchildren rising up in the Land with a Song in their Hearts and a keen resolve to move out into the society and make a difference for Yeshua.

As Israel prepares to celebrate Jerusalem Day this Wednesday:

PLEASE PRAY:

***That God will protect His inheritance in His city.**

***That God’s Kingdom come! in Jerusalem. That He extend her borders in His own timing.**

***Chief among those celebrating Jerusalem Day will be tens of thousands of “settlers”—Religious Jews who volunteered to move into their ancient heritage after it was opened in 1967. They were following a new paradigm—that God was allowing them into the ancient land of the Patriarchs to work it and prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah. It is**

they who have everything to lose if they should be forced out of that territory. Consequently, thousands of them will be coming to Jerusalem this week to march through the streets and finally to the Wailing Wall as a sign of solidarity with its having been returned to their people forever.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THESE ORTHODOX SETTLERS—THAT THE SOURCE OF THEIR TRUE SALVATION “YESHUA” WILL BE REVEALED TO THEM. THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE HOPE AND A FUTURE—AND COURAGE AND THAT THEY WILL BE TAUGHT OF THE LORD. PRAY AGAINST LAWLESSNESS, HATRED OF THEIR ENEMIES, AGAINST WITCHCRAFT AND SUPERSTITION. PRAY THAT THEY BE TRULY ROOTED IN THE LAND BY THE GOD OF THEIR FATHERS.

***That the Messianic remnant which has been planted in returned Israel be strengthened and grow in maturity in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit.**

***For the Body here to “Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Congregations” at this time, and apprehend what He is releasing. Last week’s portion from the Prophets included Jeremiah 17:5-8, where the LORD says that *those who make flesh their strength are under a curse, and don’t even recognize good when it comes. But those who trust in the LORD will be like a tree planted by the waters, not anxious in years of drought, and never ceasing to bear fruit.* Pray that we will trust in our LORD and not man—and not miss the Good when it comes!**

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 reading for this week May 5-11 is *Bemidbar*—“In the desert”:

TORAH: Numbers 1:1—4:20

HAFTARAH: Hosea 1:10—2:20

Bemidbar (“In the Desert/Wilderness”) is the Hebrew name for the book called “Numbers” (after the census lists of Chs. 1 & 26) in most English Bibles. The book describes key events

taking place between Israel's leaving Mount Sinai and her arrival at the borders of Canaan some 38 years later.

Numbers 2:2-3:** *“The sons of Israel shall camp, each by his own standard...On the east side, toward the rising of the sun, those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall camp according to their armies; and Nahshon the son of Amminadav shall be the leader of the children of Judah.”* The tribe of *Yehuda* (Judah), along with Issachar and Zebulun, was to camp facing the East. The Hebrew root for *Yehuda* is related to hands or arms raised in the giving of praise or thanks (cf. Gen 29:35). Judah was to camp on the side of the Tabernacle facing eastward—as though to “awaken the dawn” with praise (Ps 57:8). Psalm 63:1-4 bears a beautiful picture of this holy principal being demonstrated hundreds of years later by David (himself a descendant of Nahshon and Amminadav). He is also “in a desert”—and his Hebrew literally says, ***“Elohim, my God are you, I will ‘dawn’ you...my lips shall praise you...I will lift up the palms of my hands in Your name.” Numbers 10:14 will show that the tribe of *Yehuda* was also God's choice to be in the lead when the camp broke up and moved forward. And hundreds of years after David, Jehoshaphat would place singers in front of his army (II Chronicles 20:21) heading out to engage an overwhelming foe, singing *“Hodu la'Adonai ki tov, ki le-olam hasdo!”* (“Give thanks with the raising of your hands to the LORD for He is good, for to forever is his lovingkindness!”). **PLEASE PRAY: For praise, thanksgiving and worship to again rise to its place in the forefront of Israel—whose call includes being a praise in all the earth. Pray for strength and inspiration for those in houses of worship and prayer which have been raised up in recent years. Pray for believers in the Israeli Defense Force and police to have grace in making praise and thanksgiving a priority.** Since *Nahshon* was to be Judah's leader—his name has come in modern Hebrew to be one of the synonyms for “pioneer” (Tradition says that he was the first to place his foot in the Red Sea after the command came to cross over). **Pray for those called to pioneer worship in a resurrected Hebrew language in restored Israel today! There are many, both old and young, male and female, Jew and Gentile through whom praise and worship in the ancient language has begun again to be during the past 30 years.**

Numbers 4:4-6, 15. *“This is the work of the descendants of Kohath in the tent of meeting, concerning the most holy things. When the camp sets out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and they shall take down the veil of the screen and cover the ark of the testimony with it; and they shall lay a covering of porpoise skin on it, and shall spread over it a cloth of pure blue, and shall insert its poles...When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy objects and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is to set out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them, so that they will not touch the holy objects and dies. These are the things in the tent of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.”*

It is strange the pictures and figurines one may see in souvenir shop windows in Jerusalem depicting Levites carrying the golden Ark of the Covenant, with the *aron*—“chest” and its Cherubim plainly visible. As this and other passages make clear, no one *ever* was allowed to look upon the holy Ark, except the High Priest on the Day of Atonement (and then amidst clouds of incense). On the road, it was not paraded out for everyone to gaze upon. Before leaving, the Aaronic priests (not the other Levites) came in, took down the veil; it appears that they then moved forward holding it as a screen, until, upon reaching the Ark, they draped it over the holy

object as a covering. Upon this, other coverings were then laid (upon this holy chest upon which *kippur*—another word for ‘covering’—was made in blood once a year on behalf of the people’s sin). But the Ark of the Presence was Holy...and touching it or even looking upon it was more than even the especially set-apart priests were allowed to do. Each person involved must embrace the special responsibility of his office—and not seek another. The Levites cared for the outer courts; from among the Levites, the sons of Kohath would be the ‘carriers’ of the Ark; from among the Levites, only descendants of Aaron (*kohanim*—“priests”) could approach the holiest chamber to dismantle it—and from within the descendants of Aaron, only he and his successor could actually come within the veil—once a year.

***Hosea 1:10:** “*Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ there it shall be said to them, ‘You are sons of the Life-God.’*” **PLEASE PRAY:** For more and more of the millions of returned Children of Jacob to be awakened to their true identity—to recognize that they are not merely an ancient people related to certain Patriarchs; they are, in fact, beloved children of the Life-God Himself (Heb: *El Hai*), Who has sent forth His Son that they may “*have life, and that they may have it more abundantly*” (John 10:10)!

***Hosea 2:16; 19-20; 16:** “*‘And it shall be, in that day,’ says the LORD, ‘that you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ and no longer call Me ‘My Master’...I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD.’*” **PLEASE PRAY:** For awakening of a longing in Israeli hearts for these wonderful attributes—*righteousness, justice, loving kindness, mercy, faithfulness*---with which her God is wooing her. Pray that grace will be released on that longing which will result in the ‘knowledge’ of her Lord prophesied at the end of the verse! It is interesting that in verse 16, the substituted word “my husband” is “*ishi*”, which literally means ‘my man’. This knowledge can only come in the knowledge of “*the man Yeshua the Messiah!*”

***Hosea 2:14-16 (NIV):** “*Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her. There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will sing as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt.*” *Achor* means ‘trouble’. “Door (or ‘Opening’) of Hope” is *Petah Tiqva* (There is a large city by that name in central Israel). **PLEASE PRAY** that Israel will find grace to lift her eyes from her troubles to the God of Hope (Romans 15:13), finding entrance into His life through the Door which He has provided (John 10:9).



*Martin and Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem*

[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 12-18 May will be *Naso*—“Raise” (a census): TORAH: Numbers 4:21—7:89 ; HAFTARAH: Judges 13:2-25. For Shavuot/Pentecost on Wednesday May 15th, the readings will be TORAH: Exodus 19:1—20:26 & Numbers 28:26-31; HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 1:1-28, 3:12 and the Scroll/Book of *RUTH*.]

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