

Prayer Update From Israel (June 16, 2015)



Ramadan—“intense scorching heat”

1. RAMADAN.

“This is what YHVH says, ‘Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD [i.e. YHVH, the Covenant God of Israel]. He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives” (Jeremiah 17:5-6, NIV).

This year the beginning of the Muslim month of *Ramadan* (Thursday 18 June) coincides with the first day of the 4th month in the Hebrew calendar (*Tammuz*). *Ramadan* means “*intense scorching heat or dryness, especially as of the ground.*” Fasting during daylight hours (to include both food and water) is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, and except for certain specific cases, the fast is binding upon all adult Muslims, regardless of sex. The month migrates backwards through the seasons, coming each year about eleven days earlier than that previous. This means that it occurs again this year in the very heat of the fierce Middle Eastern summer, placing a frightfully difficult physical hardship on those Muslims living and working here. It is sometimes explained that *Ramadan* “scorches out sins with good deeds, even as the sun burns the ground.”

Yet “*without the shedding of blood, there is no remission for sins*” (Heb. 9:22). Dependent only upon his own righteous works, man is under a curse (see Jeremiah 17:5-6 above), and only the dryness remains.

PLEASE PRAY:

***For mercy for the millions of Muslims who will be fasting each day of *Ramadan* and trying to do good deeds for cleansing from sin. That they will be freed from the bondage of the “scorching heat and dryness” of Islam, and will come to the Waters of *Yasua/Issa/Jesus* (Isaiah 55:1; John 7:37). Pray for miracles of illumination amongst Muslims—that those who are truly seeking Truth will find it and be set free.**

*** One Muslim hadith declares that “*When the month of Ramadan begins, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of [Hell-] Fire are closed and the devils are chained*”. But of course the opposite is true! During this time in which fervent fasting and worship to another god is taking place, the demonic is given reign, and great turbulence may be stirred up in the heavenlies over those nations. Pray for protection over Israel during this month—that the Body of Messiah here (and throughout the world) would be sober-minded, alert and attentive to the direction of the Holy Spirit.**

***For that sounds of high praise and worship to the true God of Israel and His holy Messiah will break through the heavenlies during these days, supernaturally over-riding the false sound emanating from mosques.**

2. ELAV -2015.



The *Elav* (“Unto Him”) summer conference for youth and young adults is only three weeks away. For the first time in many years, it will be held in Jerusalem. This powerful summer gathering of Jewish and Arab youth and young adults (they will be coming from Israel, the “Territories” and several neighboring countries) has proven to be a critical annual venue in Israel for strengthening, encouraging and equipping an army of young Believers for the very real challenges they face daily in this region. Racial barriers have come down, young people have been set free from spiritual bondages; vision has been released. Last year, the conference found itself strategically placed by the Lord at the beginning of a time of much violence and racial turmoil in the country (including a war which broke out even as it was drawing to a close). Yet in the midst of this time, Jewish and Arab young people were worshipping and praising and becoming bonded in the love of God. We are convinced that in the strong corporate praise, worship and intercession, the very atmosphere over our nation was affected in a redeeming way and powers of darkness, seeking occasion, were held back. This year the theme focused upon will be “Pursuing God’s Heart.”

PLEASE PRAY FOR THIS CONFERENCE. For guidance, we present the following prayer points sent out last week by Rick and Patti Ridings, Directors of *Succat Hallel* in Jerusalem, which is sponsoring the conference:

How to Pray for Elav Israeli Youth/Young Adult Conference 8-10 July, 2015

Thank you so much to all of you who are praying for Elav 2015. Here are some ways to pray in these last weeks before the conference:

- 1. Pray that no war, terror activity, or security situation would arise to hinder the conference, or the attendance. In the past few days, there has been an increase of rockets fired into Israel, ISIS has been moving near the Golan border with Israel, etc.** Please pray that nothing will happen to hinder the release of the entry permits that have been requested for the Palestinian youth wanting to come. Pray that the relationships between the Jewish and Arab youth will go even deeper this year, with more true friendships forming.
- 2. Praise God with us that we have a group of about 15 hoping to come from Jordan, and 10 from Egypt. Please pray for the quick release of their visas to come.**
- 3. Pray that there will be a real surge of desire to come among those Israeli youth who are still deciding whether or not to come.** Pray that they will all come with a hunger to meet with God, and that they will all have life changing encounters with God. Pray they will receive permission from their parents where needed.
- 4. Pray for fresh anointing to be upon every speaker, worship leader, worship team, and ministry team member.** Pray that ministry team members will be anointed for words of knowledge, miracles, healings, and deliverance.
- 5. Please pray strength, health, and protection for all involved, and for our families. Moving the conference back to Jerusalem means we really need more prayer for protection.**
- 6. Pray protection and shalom over all the administration, registration, sound and light equipment, and all other logistics.**
- 7. Pray that the youth attending will come to the optional prayer/worship sessions at Succat Hallel (2 blocks away from the venue) in between the sessions, and receive a vision that they can do this same kind of “waiting upon God” back home after Elav 2015.**
- 8. Pray that this will not be just a “meeting”, but the birthing of a great worship and prayer “movement” and harvest among the youth of Israel and the surrounding nations.**

May we encourage you to join us in adding *fasting* to your prayers sometime in the days or weeks before 8-10 July?? Thank you again for standing with the youth of Israel in this very practical way.

Grace and shalom, Rick and Patti Ridings

<http://www.succathallel.com>

The cost of mounting this holy and timely gathering is enormous. It amounts to about \$150 for each Jewish or Arab young person who attends. Please pray that provision for all desiring to come will be released by the first of July. Those wishing to have a part in contributing towards this may find information for doing so by going to <http://www.succathallel.com/donate/> (With any donation, please mention that it is “For Elav”).

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, and follow the texts read in Ashkenazy Jewish synagogues..

The Parasha for this week 14-20 June 2015 is called *Korach*—“Korah”

TORAH: Numbers 16:1—18:32

HAFTARAH: I Samuel 11:14—12:22

This week’s Portion focuses on the rebellion of Korah.

***Numbers 16:3; 16:7b: KORACH AND FOLLOWERS TO MOSES:** *“You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?”* **MOSES:** *“Take censers, Korah and all your company; put fire in them and put incense in them before the LORD tomorrow, and it shall be that the man whom the LORD chooses is the holy one. You take too much upon yourselves, you sons of Levi.”*

Perhaps we see here one reason for the severity with which the LORD dealt with Miriam and Aaron in Chapter 12. If those in the office of Prophet and Priest are discontent with their “place” in relation to the positions of others whom the LORD has chosen and appointed, will not their behavior be seen as license by their followers to do likewise? Moses had not appointed

himself as leader over Israel, God had. Ironically, Korah was speaking a truth when he claimed that “*all the congregation is holy, every one of them*”.

The congregation as a whole *was* holy (i.e. “set apart”) from other nations. And within that congregation, tribes and families and individuals were also “set apart”. Being set apart implies boundaries both from without and from within which must be respected by those whose “setting apart” is to other purposes and responsibilities. **PLEASE PRAY: for unity amongst believers in Israel—for humility, respect and honor towards the gifts and callings of each. For realization that it is the Holy Spirit who makes these distinctions; it is ‘taking too much upon ourselves’ when we criticize or envy them.**

PRAY ALSO, that within Israeli congregations godly discipline be exercised in the love and fear of the LORD. It may be helpful to read the *Book of Jude* in this respect (especially vss 8-11), which prophecies how rejection of authority and “peaking evil of dignitaries—“the rebellion of Korah”—will resurface in latter days. Verses 20-22 address how it must be responded to when it occurs

***Numbers 16:22.** “*Then they fell on their faces, and said, ‘O God, the God of the Spirits of All Flesh, shall one man sin, and You be angry with all the congregation?’*”

As we have noted in past readings, throughout the Torah names for God surface whose elements reveal new perspectives on His attributes. This name—“*God of the Spirits of all Flesh*” will appear again in Numbers 27:15-16, “*Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying: ‘Let YHVH, the God of the Spirits of All Flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of YHVH may not be like sheep which have no shepherd.’*” This man was, of course, Joshua—“a man in whom is the Spirit...” (vs 18).

***Numbers 16:30.** “*But if the LORD creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have rejected YHVH.*”

Better renderings of the Hebrew word here rendered ‘rejected’ would be “*spurned*”, “*abused*”, “*treated with contempt*”, “*blasphemed*.”

***Numbers 16:48:** “*Then Aaron took the censer as Moses had commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped.*”

In the midst of a rebellious people, the LORD is searching for those who will “stand in the gap” on their behalf and on behalf of His land (“*So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found no one. Therefore, I have poured out My indignation on them...*” –Ezekiel 22:30). **PLEASE PRAY: For sensitivity and readiness on behalf of God’s Intercessors—willingness, surrender and resolve to share His burden, so as to be released at just the right**

time to “stand between the dead and the living” (and with discernment to differentiate between the two)—to “make a wall” and stand in the gap so that plague will be stopped.

***Numbers 17:10.** *“And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Bring Aaron’s rod back before the Testimony, to be kept as a sign against the rebels, that you may put their complaints away from Me, lest they die.’”*

“Rebels” is literally *b’nei-meri*—“sons (or children) of bitterness”. Lest we be too quick to distance ourselves from those who fell in Korah’s rebellion and the mutinous disruptions which followed, we should note that in the Hebrew translation of Ephesians 2:1-3, exactly the same words *b’nei-meri* are used to translate “sons of disobedience”—“*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God...*”(Emphasis ours).

***I Samuel 12:21-22:** *“You must not turn aside, for then you would go after futile things which cannot profit or deliver, because they are futile. For the LORD will not abandon His people on account of His great name, because the LORD has been pleased to make you a people for Himself”* (NASB).

The word “futile” (or “emptiness”) is Hebrew *tohu*, the same word used of the state of the earth (Genesis 1:2) before Elohim began breathing His Life into it (Psalm 33:6).

PLEASE PRAY: For Israeli believers and those who intercede for her, that our faith would not be distracted into reasonings which are emptiness or void—but rather that we would base our hope and prayers on God’s faithfulness to honor His Name. That we would be encouraged in the knowledge that it is “His pleasure” to make Israel a “*people for Himself.*”



*Martin and Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem*

**[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week (21-27 June 2015) are called *Chukat*—
“Ordinance of...”: TORAH: Numbers 19:1—22:1; HAFTARAH: Judges 11:1-33]**

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