

Prayer Update From Israel (June 29, 2016)



This week we are travelling—arriving back in Israel in two days. So the Update will confine itself primarily to the Torah Portion.

Thank you for your prayers over the *Dor Haba* music camp. We hope to report more for you later—but thus far, we have reports that it went beyond expectations—the Holy Spirit was there in power from the very beginning in healing and teaching and mentoring. He is so Good to His children in Israel—bringing them together across racial and cultural divides into a unity and a harmony to offer a sweet aroma to Him, so that He may inhabit the praises of Israel! Thank you again for your support. Please pray that what was released in spirit and in truth will stay alive and working in the young Jewish, Israeli Arab and Palestinian Arab worshippers whom the Holy Spirit brought together this week. Pray a rear-guard over the many older ones who poured of their gifts into these young worshippers. In Hebrew, the word for “rear guard” has the same root (*asaph*) as the word meaning “to gather”. Pray that the Lord would “gather” spiritual and physical faculties of all who were used to teach, and those who were taught—that nothing of eternal value would fall away or be lost. That all which was expended would be restored—and this army would move FORWARD!

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.

NOTE: Below are the texts for the Parasha read in *Jerusalem*. Because in the *Diaspora* (i.e. communities of Jews outside of Israel) an extra day is celebrated at Passover (and this year, that day came on a Sabbath), the readings read outside of Israel are now behind one week from those read here. On August 6th, through the use of a special “double reading” covering the final chapters of the *Book of Numbers*, the readings both inside and outside of Israel will once again coincide.

The *Parashah* for this week 26 June—2 July 2016 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 vs

8-11), which prophecies how rejection of authority and “speaking 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 & Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem*

[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week (3-9 July 2016) are called *Chukat*—“Ordinance Of”: TORAH: Numbers 19:1—22:1; HAFTARAH: Judges 11:1-33]

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