

## *Prayer Update From Israel (July 20, 2015)*



*“Between the Straits”*

*A narrow gorge near SdeBoker in the Negev south of Beer Sheva.*

### **1. QUDS DAY AND THE NEW IRANIAN AGREEMENT.**

*Friday July 10th was “Quds Day” (Jerusalem Day) in Iran.* Instituted by the Islamic Republic’s founder Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979, it has since taken place annually on the last Friday of Ramadan, both in Iran and in several other Muslim states. It is essentially a day for demonstrations by millions against Israel’s presence in the Holy Land, especially Jerusalem. Because YHVH, the covenant God of Israel, has declared that His Son—His *Anointed* (Messiah, Christ)—will one day reign over all nations from a throne on the Mountain in Jerusalem, dark spiritual powers with controlling influence over nations stir up rage and plots against that day coming into being (Psalm 2). They focus especially against the people of Israel (Jacob), whom God has chosen to be custodians of that land and to one day worship Him together upon that Mountain (Ezekiel 20:40). Their abhorrence of the word “**Zion**” and anything linked with it (Zionism, Zionist) is certainly linked to the fact that the LORD God of Heaven, whom they hate and fear, has proclaimed and decreed to “*set My King on My holy hill of **Zion**.*”

And so, “Quds Day” was established “*to express solidarity with the Palestinian people and oppose Zionism and Israel’s existence, as well as Israel’s control of Jerusalem*” (Wikipedia). On Wednesday July 8<sup>th</sup>, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) quoted one of the Ayatollahs who comprise a supervisory body around Iran’s Supreme Leader as saying that *Qud’s Day* is a “*universal cry against the Zionists*”; that shouting “*Death to the Zionist regime*” prevents Israeli “aggression.” (1) Accordingly, Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> saw millions of Iranians taking part in anti-Israel rallies (attended by their president Hassan Rouhani) chanting “Death to Israel”, at the same time decrying the United States which they see as being in collusion with the Jewish state, and Arabia which they regard as a Sunni enemy nation aligned with America.

*As this year's Quds Day activities were in full swing , representatives of Britain, China, France, Russia and the US and Germany (P5+1) were continuing negotiations with Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Zarif regarding containment of Iran's nuclear capabilities.* The US led meetings, which have been going on for 20 months, were taking place at the Palais Coburg, in Vienna. (The venue happens to be located directly across from Theodore Herzl Square. Herzl is often referred to as the "Father of modern Zionism.")

*They came to an end on Tuesday, with announcement that a landmark nuclear agreement between the P5+1 and Iran had been reached.* The American President soon after called Israel's PM Netanyahu with assurances that the plan reached will be verifiable, that Iran will be prevented from obtaining nuclear weapons, while maintaining a nuclear program which will be peaceful. That Israel will be protected. That if Iran is found in violation, sanctions will (after 24 days) again be imposed.

*For its part, Israel is more-than-skeptical.* In his speech before the joint chambers of the US Congress last year, Prime Minister Netanyahu warned about a 'bad deal'. What in the end has come forth could hardly, from Israel's perspective, be expected to pass as "good". It has not really curbed the nuclear capabilities of the Islamic Republic; there will not be true freedom for inspections of the facilities from outside; over \$100 billion of frozen funds will be released, which Iran is already implying will be used in continuing and strengthening its holds throughout the Middle East (Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen); Iran claims that it's ballistic missile program (which may already have capability of delivering conventional or non-conventional warheads to Israel) will not be affected by the agreement; nor apparently was the matter of Iran's official, leader-sanctioned and continually expressed position towards advancing the destruction of Israel even brought up. For some well-considered reasons from an Israeli perspective as to why this deal, if passed, brings not only Israel but all of the Middle East and beyond into grave danger, we would strongly recommend that our readers "google" and peruse the following two "op-eds" by David Horowitz and Avi Issacharoff of *The Times of Israel*: < **16 reasons nuke deal is an Iranian victory and a Western catastrophe**> and <**The day Obama awarded Iran hegemony in the Middle East**>.

Of course, the agreement faces a strong battle in the US congress, which has 60 days to come to a decision on it. Senators voting against it would need to muster a 67-vote majority to override President Obama's promised veto.

*This past Saturday (four days after the landmark agreement was reached),* Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei publically hailed his people for their calls, during the previous week for the destruction of Israel and America, adding his hopes that Allah would answer their prayers. As observed by Benjamin Netanyahu during opening remarks at his weekly Cabinet meeting Sunday morning, "If anyone thought that the far-reaching concessions to Iran will change its policy, they received an overwhelmingly aggressive response from the defiant speech from the ruler of Iran, Khamenei, over the weekend."

**PLEASE PRAY:**

**\*For wisdom and courage for lawmakers in examining the particulars of this agreement—that if what might be released with its passage is not within the timings of God, it will be rejected.**

**\*For wisdom and courage for PM Netanyahu, who has already been branded by both American and English leaders as ‘not interested’ in peace, nor possessed of a better alternative plan (neither of these is true). Pray that he remain in his position so long as is required to accomplish all that God has ordained in placing him there—and that he understand and move in the timings of the Lord.**

**\*For Believers in the Middle East and also around the world, to realize the spiritual arena within which these events are taking place—and to be granted spiritual “insight” into the realities which must soon be faced (Daniel 9:22; 11:32-35).**

**\*For spiritual discernment which will cut through the powerful deception being released through the agency of the re-arisen Prince of Persia (Daniel 9:25; 10:13).**

**\*For revelation, discernment and *hearing* to walk “in step” with the armies of heaven so as to “act promptly” when it is time (II Samuel 5:24)—realizing that if it took angelic armies to defeat the Prince of Persia during Daniel’s time, it certainly will in ours.**

**\*That God’s redemptive purposes for all the countries in this region, including Iran, will move forward. That the Body of Messiah in all of these lands will “know their God, Be Strong, and Take Action” (Daniel 11:32).**

(1) “Tehran’s anti-Israel Quds day falls on date of new Iran deadline”: *The Jerusalem Post*, 9 July 2015 8:56IST.

## **2. TISHA B’AV & PRAYING FOR RETURN OF THE GLORY!**

***Saturday July 25<sup>th</sup> will be the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the Hebrew month Av—Tisha B’Av.*** From ancient times it has been observed as a fast day (it is mentioned as the “Fast of the Fifth Month” in Zechariah 7:3-5, 8:19), and commemorates the destruction of the Temple of Yehovah in Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. In Jewish tradition as well as recorded history many other calamitous events have taken place on or near that date— \*the Return of the Spies with an “evil report” after scouting out Canaan (Numbers 13); \*destruction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple by Titus in 70 C.E., \*the order by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella for expulsion of all Jews refusing conversion from Spain in 1492. In more modern times— \*67 Jewish adults and children were massacred by Muslim Arabs in Hebron in 1929; \*in 1994 the Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, Argentina was bombed, killing 86 and wounding more than 300; \*On the 10<sup>th</sup> of Av in 2005 thousands of Jews began to be forcibly expelled from 25 towns and settlements in the Gaza Strip and Northern Samaria. This is only a small selection of dire occurrences on this date. It seems that forces of darkness are stirred to increase their activity against the Covenant people at this time.

***\*We believe it is important to pray for God’s watchful protection over His people (Psalm 121) during this season. Please pray for “Magen Avraham”—the shield of Abraham (Genesis 15:1) to be over all the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Pray that Angels watch over and protect those “who will inherit salvation” (Hebrews 1:14).***

Because of these events, this has for many become a season of fear and superstition; especially these last nine days “between the straits.”

***\*Please pray Numbers 23:23: “For there is no sorcery against Jacob, nor any divination against Israel.” Pray against superstition, but that Jews would be led to submit their spirits into the hand of their Redeemer, realizing that their times are safe in His Hand! That in the light of His face, they are delivered from the hand of their enemies (Psalm 31:5, 15-16).***

On this day, many religious Jews seek to meditate soberly upon the destruction of the First Temple. We believe this to be right and good. Yet, before the burning of that beautiful building, something much more terrible had occurred. I Samuel 4:21 tells of a day some 450 years earlier, when the Ark of God had just been stolen, and the dying wife of one of the slain priests gave birth to a son, who was given the name *Ee-Khavod* (Ichabod)—“without glory” or “the glory is departed”. During David’s reign, the Glory was returned. Now in 586 BD, Jerusalem had fallen and the Temple was destroyed. But what was incomparably worse had taken place sometime earlier, when the very Glory of the Presence of the LORD—the Glory whose presence had *made* the building holy—had again departed, leaving behind a defiled and empty shell (Ezekiel 10:3, 18-19; 11:23).

***But that Glory is going to return!*** –when the One who is “the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature (Heb. 1:3) is recognized and received. In Zechariah 2:5 the LORD declares, “***For I will be a wall of fire around her*** (i.e. Jerusalem), ***and I will be her glory within!***”

**A prayer recited in Synagogues from the Siddur reads,**

***“Our eyes shall behold Your return with mercy to Zion. Blessed are You, LORD, that brings back His divine presence to Zion”***

**PLEASE PRAY:**

**\* That the Glory of the LORD will return to Jerusalem—that His Spirit will awaken a longing for that glory in Jewish hearts—and revelation so that He will be recognized and received when He comes.**

**\*Pray that the day hasten when “The fast of the fifth month...shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah!” (Zechariah 8:18).**

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**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 Parasha for this week 19-25 July 2015 is called *D'varim*—"Words":

**TORAH:** Deuteronomy 1:1—3:22

**HAFTARAH:** Isaiah 1:1-27 (*Shabbat Chazon*—"Sabbath of Vision")

(This "Sabbath of Vision" is so-called because the *Haftarah* for the Sabbath coming on or before *Tish'a B'Av* (the Ninth of Av—observed 26 July this year) is always taken from the first chapter of Isaiah, which begins "*The vision...*". It is the third and final "*Haftarah of Affliction/Admonition.*")

This week we enter the *Book of Deuteronomy* (Hebrew: *D'varim*—"Words"), a great collection of addresses given by Moses to Israel shortly before his death. It includes reminiscences regarding where they have been, what God has done, final instructions, warnings and admonitions regarding what is ahead.

**\*Deuteronomy 1:2-3.** "*It is eleven days' journey from Horev by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea. Now it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spoke to the children of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him as commandments to them...*"

The implication is that the 40-year journey to Canaan from Mount Sinai (Horeb) might have lasted only eleven days, but for the peoples' rebellion and unbelief (Hebrews 3:16-19).

**\*Deuteronomy 1:7-8.** "*Turn and take your journey, and go to...the mountains and in the lowland, in the South and on the seacoast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the River Euphrates. See, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to give to them and their descendants after them.*"

After over 2000 years, Israel has miraculously regained her ancient tongue, and begun to be gathered and returned to a portion of the land described here; she is once again a great nation, one to be reckoned with in the world. Her circumstances 'on the ground' are, however, still very different from when she was first set marching into Canaan by her God.

**PLEASE PRAY:**

**\*That God would establish Israel's boundaries according to His timetable. That He will give her leaders revelation regarding those boundaries. Where are the boundaries to lie at present? (Obviously Israel does not at this time lay claim to all of the territory lying within Lebanon, Syria and the present-day Kingdom of Jordan originally promised to her.) How is Israel to relate to non-Jewish peoples who are presently dwelling in portions of these lands?**

**\*That God's "kingdom come" among Jewish people living in both internationally recognized Israel and the disputed territories—that Jacob's children have supernatural revelation regarding both the Kingdom of Heaven and their place in it here on earth in the land of their Fathers.**

**\*Deuteronomy 1:16-17.** *"Then I commanded your judges at that time, saying, 'Hear the cases between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the stranger who is with him. 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....'"* **Isaiah: 1:26** (From this week's Haftarah). *"I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the 'City of Righteousness', 'The Faithful City.'"*

**In Israel, there is no "trial by jury"—rather, the "judge" (or a group of judges) decides each case. We are grateful for the integrity and rightness evident in the decisions often made in the civilian courts—everyday 'traffic' courts, misdemeanor courts, etc. At the same time, we are aware of cases in which judges appear to have been strongly influenced in their rulings by Orthodox intimidation, or other factors related to "political correctness". And the higher courts are often influenced by spiritual powers of which they are not aware. Our Supreme Court building itself was designed and laid out for construction under obviously strong Masonic influence; part of its outer décor includes a 'pyramid' structure atop the roof.**

**PLEASE PRAY:** That righteousness be supernaturally restored to Israel's courts. That God anoint and raise up righteous judges as of old—such as Othniel, Ehud, Jephthah, Deborah and Samuel—who will be protected in their youth, and in times of need and repentance rise into their places in wisdom, truth and favor. *"Righteousness exalts a nation..."* (Proverbs 14:34); *"For the word of the LORD is right, and all His work is done in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice..."* (Psalm 33:4-5).

**\* Deuteronomy 2:10-12; 20; 22; 3:11.** In these passages Moses carefully lists the *Emim* (2:10); *Horites* (2:12,22); *Zuzim/Zamzumim* (2:20), and *Rephaim* (2:11; 3:11) as peoples "great, numerous and tall" who had nevertheless been easily conquered by the time Israel came to enter the Promised Land. It was terror-rumors of these same peoples which had contributed to the evil report of the ten spies forty years before (Numbers 13). If only they could have considered (as perhaps did Joshua and Caleb) that Chedorlaomer, who had defeated all of these giant races

(Genesis 14:5, 16), had himself been subdued by their father Abraham through faith in the power of his God, they might have brought back a different report.

Notably absent from the list of “giants” in Deuteronomy 2-3 is any mention of the *Nephilim*, mentioned by the ten spies in their terror in Numbers 13:33. As noted previously, the *only* place where “Nephilim” are mentioned after the Flood is in that evil report of the spies (including their theory that “the descendants of *Anak* came from the *Nephilim*”). It is the opinion of the writers that, for all the recent interest in *Nephilim*, both in secular and some Christian circles, Biblical evidence points to their identification with the “*angels who did not keep their proper domain... (whom) God has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day*” (Jude 6).

**PLEASE PRAY there when faced by evil terrors and spiritual giants which still linger, we will remember the God who was the shield of Abraham (Genesis 15:1) and his victory over all such powers.**

**\*Isaiah 1:16-18.** *“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together,” says the LORD, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.’”*

**PLEASE PRAY: That these words will pierce Jewish hearts through the Holy Spirit when they are read in synagogues this weekend—that Jews will find the Way revealed and open for them to come into this cleansing!**

**\*Isaiah 1:27.** *“Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and her penitents with righteousness.”*

**Praise God for a redemption which is altogether *just*...and which brings all who *repent* (both Jew and Gentile) into a place of true *righteousness* before the Father—**

***“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”*** (II Corinthians 5:21).



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[The *Parashah* for next week 26 July—1 August 2015 is a called *Va'Et'chanan*—“And I Pleaded...”: TORAH: Deuteronomy 3:23—7:11; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 40:1-26 (*Shabbat Nachamu*). . *Tisha b'Av*—“The 9<sup>th</sup> of Av”. This falls on Saturday 25 July, but will be observed the following day July 26. There will be special readings: Saturday evening Book of Lamentations; Sunday: TORAH: Deuteronomy 4:25-40; HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 8:13—9:23.]

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