

Prayer Update From Israel (July 23, 2012)



The remains of a bus which was blown up by a suicide bomber at a Bulgaria airport Wednesday, killing five Israelis and injuring over 36 is transported away from the scene (See No 4 below).

IT HAS BEEN A WEEK OF GRAVE AND MOMENTOUS OCCURRENCES FOR ISRAEL.

1. ISRAEL'S LARGEST-EVER UNITY GOVERNMENT FALLS

“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.” Isaiah 1:26—From this week’s *Haftarah* (See below).

Last week Deputy-Prime Minister Shaul Mofaz decided after 73 days to pull his Kadima party out of the government. It had been the largest and potentially strongest government in Israeli history, with the power to bring about needed change in a number of areas, including the drafting of ultra-Orthodox Jews and Arabs, and a desperately-needed reformation of the country’s electoral system. It also put another leader with much military understanding and experience both as Chief of Staff and Minister of Defense into the “inner circle” of the cabinet. Now all of that has changed. In order to meet an August 1 deadline mandated by the Supreme Court come up with a new more-equitable law regarding the drafting of ultra-Orthodox Jews and Israeli Arabs into the military, Mr. Mofaz’s constituents quickly came up with a plan whereby 80% of ultra-Orthodox within a certain age group would be required to enlist within four years or face stiff penalties as draft dodgers. Prime Minister Netanyahu felt that implementation of such a drastic plan in so short a period of time would result in chaos, and suggested a plan which would be implemented more incrementally. Mr. Mofaz felt ‘red lines’ were being crossed, and opted to pull his large party out of the government. For now, the present government is

holding together—it appears that the Prime Minister has at least succeeded in holding off going to early elections until after the first of the year; two-and-a-half months ago, it seemed certain they would be in the fall. We are sobered to see what appeared to be a supernaturally-orchestrated strategic governmental positioning crumbled to naught by what appear to be proud inflexible agendas, petty resentments and an appalling lack of vision and perspective as regards Israel’s short-term as well as long-term needs. Yet we continue to entrust our government to the One who sees and tests the hidden thoughts in the hearts of men. He is *Elohei-Ma’archot Yisrael*—the God who “Arrays”—promotes and demotes, positions the armies of Israel.

PLEASE PRAY:

***That the God of Israel would position and secure a strong physical government over His people, one which will be able to be influenced by His Spirit in leading Israel through this next season.**

***For Prime Minister Netanyahu, that he seek and hear Divine counsel. That he move in integrity, wisdom—and humility as Israel’s leader—and remain in his position through all the “times and seasons” God has appointed for him (Daniel 2:21).**

***If there is something which God desires to counsel or even rebuke His Body in Israel through this seeming-fiasco, that we will have ears to hear and hearts to receive and to understand.**

2. SYRIA

On Wednesday a suicide bomber, reportedly a trusted body-guard, blew himself up at a meeting in the middle of Damascus killing a number of high-level security officials and wounding others. The killed included President Assad’s Defense Minister, an important former Defense Minister, and Assad’s Chief of Intelligence, who also happens to be his brother-in-law. Although the leaders were replaced within a few days, no one doubts but that this was a serious blow into the vitals of Mr Assad’s regime. Today it was reported that the attack did not come from the “Free Syrian Army” but a separate Islamist group. The violence on both sides has fiercely intensified since the attack. As the society continues to unravel, with many possible scenarios developing, Israel’s Chief of Staff canceled leave for soldiers in the north at mid-week, held high-level briefings with their commanders and had placed the forces there, especially in the area of the Golan Heights on the highest alert. This week Amnesty International sent a letter to Israel’s Defense Minister urging that Israel not turn back Syrians who might flee as refugees into the Israeli side of the Golan Heights as one side gains the ascendancy. A UN agency last month estimated that as many as 185,000 refugees may flee Syria this year. While wishing its actions to be as humanitarian as possible, Israel’s has said that it will do whatever necessary to keep waves of refugees from pouring into its territory.

It is interesting that in this week’s Torah Portion, Moses emphasizes the deliverance of Israel from the “Last of the Giants” Og king of Bashan was defeated there and the territory was given to the half-tribe of Manasseh as an inheritance (Deut. 3:11-13).

PLEASE PRAY:

***That God's strategies will be granted to Israel's leaders regarding protection of Israel's borders in case the Syrian regime falls (Psalm 147:14).**

Continued prayer points from last week:

***That the weapons of mass destruction in Syria not be disseminated amongst forces of lawlessness. That these evil materials will not be released upon human beings anywhere.**

***Psalm 91 over Israel (See above).**

***That our Christian brothers and sisters in Syria will be strengthened, protected, and equipped with spiritual strategies for their future. Pray for new houses of prayer and worship to be established throughout Syria—and for a spirit of holy unity in Jesus to be strengthened in the Body there.**

3. DESECRATION OF THE TRUTH IN THE HALLS OF JUSTICE

Last Monday many members of the Israel's Knesset discovered a package in their mailboxes. Within was a *Sefer haBritot*—"Book of Covenants". This includes a copy of the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) combined with *Brit haHadasha*—The New Covenant/New Testament in an edition published only recently; the first to have both Testaments in Hebrew combined with cross-references. It had been sent by its publisher, the Bible Society in Israel—a Messianic Jewish organization which prints and distributes religious books in land. Many MK's were upset to receive what to them is a book of another religion produced and dispensed by those (to them "missionaries") who wish to change their beliefs and take away their Judaism. (Only one of the 120 members of the Knesset, an Arab member, publically professes to be a Christian.) Some are said to have left the packages in the post office or returned them to sender...many obviously took them home.

However, one MK, Michael Ben Ari of the National Union party, chose to have himself filmed gleefully tearing the New Testament out of his Bible and throwing the pages into a garbage can. He was quoted as saying, "***This abominable book (The New Testament) galvanized the murder of millions of Jews during the Inquisition and during auto da fe instances...Sending this book to MK's is a provocation. There is no doubt that this book and all it represents belongs in the garbage can of history.***"

We do not deny that, tragically, since the time of Yeshua there have been many periods of history in which Jews have been persecuted by Gentiles in the name of "Christ." We believe that these actions, fostered by Satan in order to keep the Jewish people from their true Messiah, in no way reflect God's true message for all mankind as revealed in the life, work and message of Yeshua/Jesus and His followers. Because of these historical atrocities, it is understandable that Christianity is regarded with suspicion by many Jews—with zealous hatred by others.

Yet, these Bibles were not sent by Gentiles of another faith, they were sent by fellow Israeli Jews... Israeli citizens who believe they have found a holy connection between the messages in both of these Books—a message of life and truth which they believe could bring life, understanding and guidance to those within their government who would take time to examine them. Whether or not the method chosen for disseminating the Bibles was the wisest we will not attempt to judge. What is sobering is that an elected member of the Israeli government would choose to publically display such a desecration of a holy book revered not only by thousands who support his nation, but by a growing section of his own people.

A number of MK's have since expressed shock at Ben Ari's actions—some asking how this was different from someone in another country publically burning a Torah Scroll. A government spokesperson said, *“We totally deplore this behavior and condemn it outright. This action stands in complete contrast to our values and our traditions. Israel is a tolerant society, but we have zero tolerance for this despicable and hateful act.”*

PLEASE PRAY:

***That as Messiah continues to be formed in modern Israel, and His testimony be put forth again by Jewish believers...many people in all echelons of society—including the government—will hear and be drawn.**

***That Knesset Members who received the book will be drawn *“with an everlasting love and their God's kindness”* (Jeremiah 31:3) into investigating its contents.**

***That Mr Ben Ari, like Shaul/Paul before him, would acquire a zeal for God “according to knowledge” (Romans 10:2). That He would be convicted by the Spirit of his error and blasphemy—and receive revelation of the One whom God has sent (Zechariah 2:11).**

***That God would forgive Israel's government for its members publically despising and repudiating (even in their ignorance) the Truth. That righteousness and justice would in truth begin to be restored into the halls of the Knesset and Supreme Court (Isaiah 1:26-27 this week's *Haftarah*).**

4. SLAUGHTER IN BULGARIA.

***“O that my head were waters and my eyes a fountain of tears that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!”* (Jeremiah 9:1).**

Wednesday a bus at the Bulgarian Burgas airport terminal was preparing to transfer a large party of Israelis on holiday to their hotel when it blew up. Five Israeli citizens in addition to the bus driver and the suicide bomber were slain. At least 36 were wounded. One woman Kochava (Star) Shriki had received word shortly before boarding the plane that, after years of unsuccessful trying, she was finally pregnant. Her husband Yitzhak (Isaac), himself injured, searched frantically for her in the rubble and later in the hospital. Only the following morning did he discover that she was among the dead. Two friends Itzik Colangi and Amir Menashe from Petah Tikva had brought their wives to celebrate the birth of Itzik's first child four months before (Amir and his wife have a ten-

month-old son). Both were killed while placing their luggage into the bus. Both of their wives are among the injured, Itzik's wife Gilat in severe condition. Elior Price, a student, and her childhood friend, Maor Harosh from Acre, were killed and a friend travelling with them severely injured. The many wounded suffered broken limbs, cuts, burns, multiple physical injuries, not to mention the physical and emotional trauma resulting from such horrendous violation. Within 24 hours Israel had brought the slain and the wounded home—the coffins of the dead, draped in flags, were carried from the planes by soldiers as the Psalms were read.

Their only reason for being targeted was that they were Israeli Jews. It was a premeditated, carefully planned assault upon the Covenant people of God. Both Israeli and American intelligence point towards the Iranian Hezbollah terrorist organization as being responsible. It came on the 18th anniversary of the attack on the Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, Argentina which left 85 killed and 300 wounded.

PLEASE PRAY:

***For the families and loved ones of those killed in Bulgaria. That they will receive angelic protection for their souls—and would be guided through the present darkness to light and hope and a future.**

***The same for all who were on the bus and survived. That out of the mangling and brokenness and trauma their hearts and bodies will find healing and they will be led to restoration and to the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls (I Peter 2:25).**

***For Prime Minister Netanyahu and his advisors—that they be granted Heavenly knowledge and counsel in knowing how and when to respond to this attack on his people.**

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.

For this week 22-28 July 2012 is called *Dvarim*—"Words":

TORAH: Deuteronomy 1:1—3:22

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 1:1-27

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

***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—that He will give her leaders revelation regarding those boundaries, according to His timetable. Where are they to lie at present (Obviously Israel does not at this time lay claim to all of the territory in Lebanon, Syria and the 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.** *“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” 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. And the higher courts are often influenced by spiritual powers of which they are not aware. Our Supreme Court building was itself designed and laid

out for construction under obviously strong Masonic influence—and 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 favour. *“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; 2:12,22; 2:20; 2:11; 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 in their terror by the ten spies 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 Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 7-13 August will be *V'Et'chanan* (“Supplanted”): TORAH: Deuteronomy 3:23—7:11; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 40:1-26.]

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