

Prayer Update From Israel (July 30, 2012)



A little flock on the slope of Mount Zion.

“Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, in His arm He will gather the lambs and carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes” Isaiah 40:11; from this week’s *Haftarah* (See below).

This week we will confine our points for intercession to those raised in the exceptionally rich and substantive Torah and *Haftarah* portions. We have made suggestions, but ask the Holy Spirit to guide your prayers as you read!

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 readings for this week 29 July—4 August are called *V’Et’chanan*—“Suppliated”:

TORAH: Deuteronomy 3:23—7:11

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 40:1-26

TORAH

This week's is a rich and powerful Reading. In addition to the "preparations and warnings for crossing-over and possessing inheritance" (3:27-28; 4:14, 21-22, 26-28; 6:1), it contains the 'Ten Commandments' (5:6-21); the *Shema* "Hear O Israel" (6:4); instructions regarding knowing and memorizing God's Word within the homes, and other often touchingly earnest counsels and admonitions of Moses to Israel.

***Deuteronomy 3:28.** *"And charge Yehoshua (Joshua), and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see."*

PLEASE PRAY: for God to raise up spiritual leaders in the Land—that these be noticed by alert and obedient elders who will *charge, encourage and strengthen* them in the power and direction of their calling—that the new godly generation will love and trust their God, fight the battles necessary and inherit the land.

***Deuteronomy 4:7.** *"For who is the great nation whose gods are near to it the way YHVH our God is to us in all the ways in which we call to Him?"*

***Deuteronomy 4:29-31.** *"But from there [i.e. scattered throughout the world] you [the Hebrew people] will seek YHVH your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the last days, when you turn to YHVH your God and obey his voice, (For YHVH your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them."*

PLEASE PRAY: For awakening of a powerful longing in the hearts of Jews still in the nations, a longing after the God of their Fathers and faith in this word that He will hear when they turn to Him.

***Deuteronomy 4:43.** *"Betzer in the wilderness on the plateau for the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites."*

These are Cities of Refuge in land taken by Israel from the Amorites, running along the eastern side of the Jordan River to Mount Hermon, and area once known as the "Land of the Giants" (Deut. 2:20; 3:13), until *Og* the last and greatest was defeated by Israel before crossing over into Canaan (3:3-11). The location of the first two lies within land presently claimed by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (Which kingdom came officially into being in 1946), the last is in the Golan Heights, taken by Israel from Syria in the 1967 War. Zechariah 10:10 prophesies that someday Jews will return to Gilead and even portions of Lebanon.

PLEASE PRAY: That the Israeli government will honour God's timetable regarding these lands. That they will not despise the land once taken by Moses and bequeathed to Manasseh (the present Golan), now returned to His people in these last days. Pray that

this strategic land will not be bartered for a false peace with our neighbors. Pray that God's Kingdom come!—that in His way and timing the LORD of Hosts bring the land promised to his Covenant people into the borders He has purposed.

***Deuteronomy 6:4-5.** ***“HEAR!** [Hebrew: *Shma!*] **ISRAEL; YHVH OUR GOD, YHVH ONE!**”*

There are other *“Hear, O Israel’s”* in Deuteronomy (4:1, 6:3, 9:1, 20:3, 33:7)—but this one has become the central cry of Jews throughout the world for centuries, and continues to be sung each week in Synagogues (including most Messianic ones). It takes revelation, removal of the ‘veil’, for this people to realize that Yeshua (Jesus) being the Son of God (Proverbs 30:4) as well as Son of Man does not violate this proclamation. It is a deep, eternal truth that *He and His Father are ONE!* (John 10:30). Satan hates this truth being voiced—when Yeshua proclaimed it, the religious Jews present took up stones to kill him.

PLEASE PRAY for this revelation of the *one-ness* of the Father and the Son, and that the voice and false message of the Deceiver be silenced in the ears of the Jewish people.

Deuteronomy 6:5.** ***“You shall love YHVH your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

Yeshua quoted this verse in the New Covenant, calling it the First and Greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37-38; Mark 12:29-30). *“All your strength”* is unique in the Hebrew. Rather than a usual expression for “strength”, the word *me’od* is used. Elsewhere in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew *me’od* is an adverb meaning “very.” Webster’s describes the adverb “very” this way: *“In a high degree; to a great extent; extremely; exceedingly; used as a qualifier before an adjective or another adverb.”* Yet here *me’od* or “very” is used as a *noun!* To love our God with all of our very *“veriness”*—in every way, “in a high degree”; “to a great extent”; “extremely”; “exceedingly”.

Only once in the Hebrew Bible is this passage repeated—in reference to the Israelite leader, King Josiah (II Kings 23:25), *“Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Torah of Moses, nor after him did any arise like him.”* “With all our heart” implies a tender and humble heart. Significantly, 22:19 reveals that God heard and responded to Josiah *“because his heart was tender, and he humbled himself before the LORD when he heard what he had spoken.”* .

Might we not pray for the current leader of Israel that he will have a softened heart like Josiah which might be pierced when he reads God’s word?

Does he read God’s Word? As mentioned previously, a few years ago, during an interview on the Larry King Show Prime Minister Netanyahu responded to the question, “Are you ever able to really relax?” with the following words,

“You know, yes. And I’ll tell you when. Every Saturday, our Sabbath, we have a day off. It’s a very good idea that this institution was brought into the world. So I have a day off. And every Saturday, I take an hour and a half, and I read from the Bible with my younger boy...I relax then. I draw a lot of spiritual strength. You know, I used to teach him. He is now 15. But in the last couple of years, he teaches me. So, yes, I draw enormous reservoirs of strength and I think that is needed for all leaders, but especially for the leaders of Israel.”

We would remind you also of the Prime Minister’s hosting of a Bible Study in the yard of his home last May, a reawakening of a tradition begun by Ben Gurion and Began before him which he has said he plans to continue.

***Deuteronomy 6:6-9.** *“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them (Literally, “teach them by memory”) diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts (Hebrew: mezuzot) of your house and on your gates.”*



(Photograph of a Hebrew manuscript of Scripture which would be rolled and placed within a *mezuzah*.)

It is so important to read, learn and memorize God’s word. That is obviously the sense here—the placing of portions about the house as an aid in learning. Every Jewish house has a *mezuzah* on its doorpost. This is a little box with the letter *Shin* on it (Standing for *Shaddai*—“Almighty”) and bearing within a tiny scroll of parchment or paper with words from this passage Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21. Observant Jews touch the *mezuzah* upon entering or leaving a dwelling and then touch their fingers to their lips as a sign of love for the Word. There is certainly nothing in and of itself wrong with this. However, as so often happens with such traditions, for many it has become laden with legalism or superstition. People with no belief whatsoever in the Word or the God who gave it will nevertheless touch a *mezuzah* with the hope of its bringing luck. And there is a distressingly frequent scenario in which a family in anguish over a tragedy taking place within their apartment receives the diagnosis from their rabbi that it befell them because

of this or that small imperfection in the way their *mezuzah* had been mounted; or it hadn't been cleaned; or the scroll within it hadn't been 'blessed' properly. Such unscriptural, unfeeling legalism crushes the spirit of those religious Jews trying to do right and brings down the fury and contempt of secular Jews, driving them even further away from the God of their Fathers.

PLEASE PRAY: For Israelis to return to the Word of God; that they will embrace it, and that the Holy Spirit will awaken its life within them. Pray against occult and legalistic deception regarding the Living Word. Pray for Jews to investigate the God-breathed pages of the New Covenant as well as the Old!

HAFTARAH

***Isaiah 40:1-2, 9 (NIV).** *“Comfort, comfort My people!’ says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem... You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, ‘Here is your God!’”*

From the Sabbath following the 9th of Av until *Rosh Hashanah* (17 September this year), the readings from the Prophets will be taken from Isaiah, focusing like a balm upon the *comfort* and *love* which God has for His people. **PLEASE PRAY** that Israel's ears will be opened to the Voice of Good News coming from her Father. **Pray that the voice of the bearer of Good News to Zion (Meveseret Tzion) will be released strong and clear from high places around the Holy City!**

***Isaiah 40:11.** *“He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.”* **PLEASE PRAY** for revelation and dreams amongst Jews regarding the One who said, *“I am the good shepherd; and I know my sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep”* (John 10:14-15).

***Isaiah 40:26.** *“Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power; not one is missing.”* **PLEASE PRAY** that Israelis remember God's word to Abraham our father, how *“He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’”*...that they realize WHO is the “Word” referred to in Psalm 33:4-6 who made all these, *“For the Word of the LORD is right, and all His work is done in truth. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD. By the Word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.”*



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**[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 5-11 August will be *Ekev*—“In consequence of” (the Children of Israel heeding God’s Judgements):
TORAH: Deuteronomy 7:12—11:25; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 49:14—51:3.]**

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