

PRAYER UPDATE FROM ISRAEL (August 1, 2011)



“Then Aaron the priest went up to Mount Hor at the command of the LORD, and died there in the fortieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month [i.e. 1st of Av]. Aaron was one hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.”

1. MONDAY AUGUST 1ST BEGINS THE HEBREW MONTH OF “AV”.

Today, Monday August 1st is *Rosh Hodesh*, the “head” of the Fifth Month in the Hebrew Biblical calendar. Since the return from Captivity in Babylon, the month has been called by the Babylonian name, *Av*.

This day is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible (see above) as that of the death of Aaron the High Priest. Aaron had not been without serious failings—in the incident of the golden calf, with his brother Moses in the striking of the rock when God had commanded to speak to it. But he had also fallen on his face with Moses in intercession to God when they sinned, and he had for decades “borne iniquity” (Numbers 18:1) as he went about his duties in the Tabernacle on behalf of all of the people. Now his mantle had been passed on to the next generation...who would likewise be fallible, who would also one day die. This passing of the first High Priest, from whom the “Aaronic” priesthood would take its name reminds us of a “greater” priesthood, that of *Malki-tzedek* (King of Righteousness), and the greater Priest of that order who would take Aaron’s place as an intercessor between the Father and all Humankind.

“There were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Hebrews 8:23-25).

Av in Hebrew means “father”. Although the name as used for a particular month was of Babylonian origin, it happens to bear the same spelling and pronunciation as the Hebrew word. As we pray over our land and people at the beginning of this new month, we recall a verse

from last week's Haftarah portion, Jeremiah 3:4: ***“Will you not from this time cry to Me, My Father, You are the guide of my youth?”*** And as we continue through this season during which Darkness has repeatedly sought to take occasion for evil against the covenant land and people, **we find it a time for especial watchfulness over Israel and Jews throughout the world, holding them up before the *“Father of Lights”* (James 1:17).**

In a rare coincidence, it happens this year that the Muslim fast month of *Ramadan* also begins on this day. “Ramadan” comes from an Arabic root related to “intense heat, scorched ground and shortness of rations.” During the month, Muslims are forbidden from eating or drinking between sunup and sundown. Tens of thousands will attend meetings on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem over the course of this month.

PLEASE PRAY:

***For the Body of Messiah in Israel to come into a deeper awareness of the work of Yeshua (Jesus) as our High Priest. Last year the Bible Society in Israel released a small booklet containing an annotated Hebrew language printing of the Book of Hebrews. Please pray that this wonderful Book centered on the Priesthood of Messiah, written specifically to First Century Messianic Jews, would be rediscovered by Israeli Jews in the 20th Century!**

***For an awakened longing for Fatherhood in Israel—for an awareness that the God of Israel's “fathers”—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—is in fact, the One from whom all fatherhood gets its name (Ephesians 3:14-15). That Yeshua the Messiah has opened a way to bring us as fellow sons and daughters to His Father!**

***For dreams and visions during the month called by Muslims *Ramadan* to reveal the true nature of the God in Heaven. Over the inside doorways of the buildings on the Temple Mount are inscribed a quotation from the Muslim holy book, to the effect that *“Allah is great and has no son”*. Pray for revelation that *El Elyon*, the Most High God does have a Son, the knowledge of whom frees us from bondage and dead works, and brings us near to the Father.**

For protection in Israel from demonic power released from millions fasting before a God of a different covenant (Most Muslims are taught to believe that the person Abraham was told to sacrifice was Ishmael, not Isaac). Pray that the Body of Messiah in Israel and Jerusalem will be unified and anointed throughout the month in its praise to the One True God, in the name of Yeshua His son. That rather than resorting to a defensive stance, the *Body move forward in Her praise and worship this month, in spirit and in truth. That she take territory and defeat the enemy by the Word of her testimony, the Blood of the Lamb, and that she love not her own life even unto death! That many be brought out of the wilderness into Life!

2. PROTESTS, DEMONSTRATIONS, THE NEED OF SOLUTIONS...WITHIN THE LAW.

For months Israel has watched as revolutionary waves of demonstrations and protests dubbed “Arab Spring” have rolled over the territories of her Middle Eastern neighbors. Yet, nothing similar seemed to be taking hold here. Now, in a strange way, with almost “no clues or signs beforehand”, the past week has found Israel bursting forth in various kinds of protests, strikes and demonstrations. There were strikes and demonstrations by doctors and medical workers, homosexuals, people protesting the high prices of raising families (with hundreds and hundreds pushing baby-carriers), and on Saturday some 150,000 took part in demonstrations, with tent-cities being erected in many cities to draw attention to the frightfully high costs of buying or even renting homes throughout Israel. Monday many municipalities declared a one-day strike in sympathy with the protestors. The Prime Minister has called a round-table of leaders to try and find measures which would calm the protests and address the issues.

From the outside, Israel’s economy is seen as presently being in a very good place, and unemployment is at the lowest in almost 25 years. Nor for some time now, has Israel been subjected to sustained violent conflict on any of her borders. Yet there is no question that the issues being protested against are very real. The cost of housing has indeed risen to unprecedented heights. Everywhere there seem to be new “luxury” apartments going up...yet all of these are far beyond the means of most Israelis. Most seem to be being bought up by foreign investors. Rental property has also continued to soar. Many Israeli families, even where both spouses work, are finding their paychecks gobbled up by rent-costs, leaving precious little to live on and raise their families. As one student union president said, when granted with others an audience with President Shimon Peres, “What we all here have in common is that ultimately we want to see Israel as our home. We are fighting for the right to build a future for ourselves in Israel.”

There is no question that something must be done. But worthy solutions cannot be provided overnight. We are grateful that as of yet, there haven’t been extremely serious confrontations or violence in these protests. Yet something is making us uneasy. We are seeing the left-wing media capitalizing on the unrest as a means for steering accusation and blame in the direction of our Prime Minister, casting doubt about his capability to cope with the crisis, in fact insinuating that it is his incompetence which has brought it about in the first place. And along with those many concerned voices very worthily seeking to make themselves heard, there are others taking occasion to comingle that concern with anger which may be ignited into full-blown rage against authority in general. **In the timing and volatile nature of the present uprisings, we sense a spiritual agenda at work to weaken, if not *bring down*, the present government so as to leave Israel unprepared for a much more serious crisis which is coming. We sense approaching storms just over the horizon...storms which will require a strong united leadership if Israel is to withstand. It is our belief that the Lord placed Benjamin Netanyahu into his present position as Prime Minister, and it is the Lord who has enabled his coalition, against all odds, to endure this far. We do not believe it is because of an abundance of innate heroic qualities in Mr. Netanyahu (opposite ones have certainly surfaced in the past); we do believe him now to be a man whom the Lord has found whom He is able to make to stand.**

PLEASE PRAY:

***For God to have mercy on those He has brought back to live in His covenant land, enabling them to work and prosper with their families in the Land (Psalm 118:25).**

***For spirits assigned to awaken lawlessness and rage within the current uprisings to be bound. For men and women of integrity to rise to the surface among those demonstrating for a change.**

***For wisdom and honesty and courage in the present administration in being able to effect changes which will bring real viable solutions to the housing and cost of living crises in Israel.**

***That Israel will have and maintain strong leadership in her government and military going into the fall.**

***For Prime Minister Netanyahu, that his mind and integrity be preserved and strengthened. That he look to God for His strength and preservation, that he have grace to remain in office until He has fulfilled all appointed for him in being divinely placed in that positioning.**

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 reading for this week 31 July—6 August 2011 is called *D'varim* ("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).

***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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