

Prayer Update From Israel (August 20, 2012)



“So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days. And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God!

(Nehemiah 6:15)

A recently discovered portion of a wall (lower two rows of stones above) thought to have been built by King Hezekiah. A section of the wall around Jerusalem was later repaired by Nehemiah upon his return from Babylon, and finished during the month of *Elul* (See No 2 below).

THE MONTH OF *ELUL*

Sunday August 19th began the month of *Elul*, the 6th month in the Hebrew religious calendar and the 12th of the civil year. This is traditionally a month of self-examination and repentance before the Lord in preparation for the High Holy Days of *Yom T’ruah* (The Day of Trumpets/Rosh Hashanah) and *Yom Kippur* (The Day of Atonement). As a call to this, it is customary in some Jewish circles to blow a blast on the shofar each morning (except the Sabbath) throughout the month. As mentioned last week, a further ancient practice is to recite *Psalm 27* each day from the First of *Elul* through the “Last Great Day” of the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot). This wonderful psalm reaffirms our trust in the Light and Salvation of our LORD (vs. 1), the importance of seeking His face, dwelling in His presence and gazing on His beauty (vss. 4,8), our place of safety in His *sukka* and tent (vs. 5), and our utter dependence on Him to deliver us from our adversaries (vs. 12). As quoted beneath the picture in the heading, it was during this month of *Elul* that Nehemiah finished rebuilding the Wall around Jerusalem (Nehemiah 6:15). **We see this as a time for inspecting our “walls,” securing all breaches, all places of vulnerability along our ‘borders’.**

PLEASE PRAY:

***For revelation that it is the Lord’s *kindness* (Romans 2:4b) that leads us to repentance; that many Jewish people will sense the Holy Spirit drawing them and will respond.**

***For an awareness amongst believers of the importance of examining and securing our spiritual borders.**

***That as with the returned remnant from Babylon (Ezra and Nehemiah) the LORD release spiritual guidance and leadership upon His returned people in our day. That He define Israel's physical borders and the lines of Jerusalem according to His desire (Psalm 147:14), in such a way as even Israel's enemies will "perceive was done by God" (Nehemiah 6:16). That He Himself becomes a "wall of fire around Jerusalem, and her Glory within" (Zechariah 2:5).**

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 Torah and Haftarah portions for this week 19-25 August is called *Shophetim* ("Judges"):

TORAH: Deuteronomy 16:18—21:9

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 51:12—52:12

****Deuteronomy 16:18-21. "You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. You shall follow what is altogether just (Literal Hebrew: "Righteousness! Righteousness you will pursue!"), that you may live and inherit the land which YHVH your God is giving you."***

The same Hebrew words are used for "judges" and "police officers" in Israel today. Their duties on behalf of the people are to be executed (vs. 18) with *mishpat-tzedek*—judgment which is righteous. These two words (*mishpat* and *tzedek*) are referred to in Psalm 89:14 as being the very "foundation" of God's throne. Interestingly, in the Hebrew translation of John 16:8, Yeshua tells us that the "Helper" He will send after His departure will convict the world "concerning sin and righteousness (*tzedek*) and judgment (*mishpat*)". This past Monday Israel's President Shimon Peres presided over the swearing in ceremony for 18 new judges in Israel. **PLEASE PRAY:** For the powerful conviction of this Helper (*Ruach haKodesh*—the Holy Spirit) to sweep through all the echelons—Administrative, Executive and Judicial—of Israel's Government. Alas, bribery and other forms of corruption mentioned in this passage seem especially to prey on the high places of our government today. They have in fact resulted in the stepping

down of more than one President and a Prime Minister, and spawned seemingly continual accusations and investigations of those in power. **Thank God though**, that righteous judgment *does* exist in our government, that there are governmental leaders striving to be *yashar*—straight and upright. Pray that their just actions be recognized—and that leaders whose ways are crooked would be exposed. *Pray for men and women bearing the righteousness which comes in Messiah to rise with favour into these positions, displacing darkness with His light, diffusing the governmental atmosphere over Israel with the fragrance of God’s holiness* (II Corinthians 2:14; 4:6; 5:21).

***Deuteronomy 17:7; 17:12b.** *“So you shall put away the evil from among you.” “So you shall put away the evil from Israel.”* The word for “put away” means *to root out or to burn*. **PLEASE PRAY:** for Israeli believers—that we will be merciless to evil we find within ourselves—rooting it out, destroying it, realizing that evil allowed to work within us individually pollutes not only ourselves but our nation.

***Deuteronomy 17:16.** *“But he [any future Israeli king Israel] shall not multiply horses for himself...neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.”*

Deuteronomy 17:18. *“Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.”*

This literally commands each Israeli king to physically-personally write out for himself *a second copy* (Hebrew) of God’s Law. Did David do this? We don’t know...but it is significant that although he dearly loved God’s law, the above commandment against multiplying wives appears to have been either overlooked or ignored. He took a number of wives and concubines, some no-doubt as part of political alliances (II Sam. 5:13; I Chron. 14:3). Might the resultant variety and comparisons have had a part in ‘setting him up’ for the failure with Bathsheba? Did Solomon “write out his own second copy by hand” so as to be careful to observe “*all the words*” the Lord had given? He not only multiplied women (over 1000 wives and concubines), but also “*horses*” (I Kings 10:26-29) and “*silver and gold for himself*” (I Kings 10:14, 27). In the end his heart was turned completely away from his God, and at his death the kingdom was split in two. **PLEASE PRAY:** *that Israel’s leaders will search the Scriptures. Our present Prime Minister has testified to regularly studying the Scriptures. Pray that he will indeed “read it all the days of his life”...and that the Holy Spirit of his God will grant him wisdom (and his children after him); that his understanding would be opened that he might “comprehend the Scriptures”—including what is written about his Messiah Yeshua/Jesus in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms! (Luke 24:44-45).*

***Deuteronomy 18:10-12.** *“There shall not be found among you anyone...who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD...”* It is sobering to read that

it is not only these sins but “*those who do them*” who are an abomination to the LORD. There is much fascination with the occult in Israel. **PLEASE PRAY:** for revelation regarding the fixed law that even as one who brings an idol into his house is ‘doomed to destruction like it’ (Deut 7:26), so anyone who engages in these occult practices places him or herself under the abomination of Almighty God. Pray for many to “come out” from this darkness into the Light! “*For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil*” (I John 3:8).

***Deuteronomy 18:18.** “*I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which he speaks in My name, I will require it of him.*” **PLEASE PRAY:** for this generation of Israelis to “hear the words” which the Father “put into the mouth” of His Prophet Yeshua, who was indeed “raised up for them”; and who “spoke in His Father’s name”. Pray for Israelis to obtain copies of the New Covenant Scriptures and find these words for themselves.

***Deuteronomy 20:9.** “*And so it shall be, when the officers have finished speaking to the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.*” **PLEASE PRAY:** that God will move regarding our military leadership, that Israel will have a strong, unified military and governmental leadership in place before any major outbreak of hostilities which would involve mobilization of our military forces. Pray for *Elohei Ma’archot Yisrael*—the God of the Arraying of Israel (I Samuel 17:45)—to place the leaders of His choosing in each of these critical positions for this coming season. We received word only today of a very positive article in a Jerusalem Hebrew newspaper entitled “Messianic in Uniform”, which included the testimony of a young soldier whom we have known since he was a young teenager.

“WHEN YOU ARE ON THE VERGE OF WAR”

***Deuteronomy 20:2-4.** “*So it shall be, when you are on the verge of war, that the priest shall approach and speak to the people. And he shall say to them,*

‘Hear, O Israel: Today you are on the verge of war with your enemies. Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them; for the LORD your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.’”

Haftarah

***Isaiah 51:16.** “*And I have put My words in your mouth; I have covered you with the shadow of My hand, that I may plant the heavens, lay the foundations of the earth, and say to Zion, ‘You are my people.’*”

***Isaiah 52:1-2.** “*Awake! Awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city...Shake yourself from the dust, arise; Sit down, O Jerusalem! Loose yourself from the bonds of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion!*”

***Isaiah 52:7.** *“How beautifully the feet of those bringing good news adorn the mountains— those who proclaim shalom, who bring glad tidings of good, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”*

***Isaiah 52:8:** *“Your watchmen shall lift up their voices, with their voices they shall sing together; for they shall see eye to eye when the LORD brings back Zion.”* **PLEASE PRAY:** for clarity and singleness of vision amongst those God is bringing back to Zion—and among those watchmen already there who are praying for them.

***Isaiah 52:11-12.** *“Depart! Depart! Go out from there, touch nothing unclean...go out from the midst of her, be clean...For the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.”* This passage seems to have applied first of all prophetically to those in captivity in Babylon, encouraging them regarding their return to Israel. **PLEASE PRAY:** for believing Jews still in the nations whom God is calling back to their Land—that when He speaks, they will hear His voice and GO...trusting Him to “go before”...and also to be their “rear guard.” The Hebrew word for “**rear guard**” has within it the concept of “gathering” as well as guarding against attack from behind. **Pray that God will gather the loose-ends of those He is calling—pressing them forward through the gates into their calling and place of inheritance.**



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[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 26 August—1 September are called *Ki-Tetzeh* (“When you go out...”): TORAH: Deuteronomy 21:10—25:19; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 54:1-10]

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