Prayer Update From Israel (August 26, 2016)

Southeastern corner of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem as viewed from across the Ben Hinnom Valley.

"But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go."
(Deuteronomy 12:5 See Torah Portion below)

1. SCHOOL STARTS!

"*All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children."* **(**Isaiah 54:13-14; See Haftarah portion below**)**

Please pray for well over 2,000,000 Israeli children and young people who are starting or returning to school. (Arab schools have just opened, Jewish will open later in the week.) Israel is presently suffering an acute shortage of thousands of teachers for such core subjects as math, English, Bible, physics, chemistry and biology. In some cases, students wishing to specialize in such subjects are required to be driven to other schools several times a week in order to receive teaching. A number of factors are thought to be behind the shortage: the retirement of veteran teachers; the difficulty of young teachers integrating due to low salaries; a social disdain for the profession; overcrowded classrooms; low numbers of students enrolling in teaching programs in higher education ("Teacher shortage looms as new school year begins": *ynet* news.com; 08/28/16 22:28).

We are grateful for the work done for youth by the Holy Spirit this summer through the various believing camps, conferences and gatherings in Israel. These included the *Dor Haba* worship camp, the *Katzir* camp for teens, and the just-completed *Elav* conference for Jewish and Arab Israeli and Palestinian young people in Jerusalem about which many of you prayed—and which God blessed beyond all expectations! Rather than merely producing summer-relief for bored young people, these released training in godly values, encouragement in the things of God,

awakening of the joy and power of corporate praise and worship, and networking with other believing youth, all of which will stand them in good stead as they launch into the Fall Term.

PLEASE PRAY:

*** That teachers with moral Biblical values would be courageous in influencing and training their students in the ways of truth.**

*** For leaders in the Ministry of Education, and other government branches with which it works, to know what is necessary in bringing into place an infrastructure which will be adequate for the educational needs facing Israel today.**

***The secular Israeli religious school systems have become infiltrated with many streams of evil, intent upon capturing the minds of Israel's children through New Age, witchcraft, and teachings on sexuality which do not line up with the Hebrew Bible. Pray for angels to guard and protect the minds of young people from demonic influence in the classrooms.**

***Pray for the Holy Spirit of Truth to awaken the consciences of Israel's youth to sense the difference in sin and righteousness—and to long for that which is good and true.**

***For the growing number of believing children in the schools—to connect and network with other believers; to be testimonies of the love and hope of Yeshua to their classmates—to be lights, growing ever stronger as they progress through their years of studies.**

*** That God stir up a vision and resolve in those who are to become teachers in the disciplines which are needed to make Israel strong. For Messianic Jews and Christian Arabs to rise up into teaching and administrative positions in the Israeli schools.**

***It is still required in most secular schools that students take classes in Biblical Hebrew and the *Tanach* (Hebrew Bible) as an element of their heritage. However, in many cases the teachers do not themselves believe or revere the Bible and are pleased to pass their skepticism on to their students. PLEASE PRAY that the Holy Spirit would cut across the spirit of unbelief and inspire students to search their Scriptures, within which is revealed the Father and the Son!**

<u>THIS WEEK'S TORAH PORTION</u>:

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. The Haftarah, unless otherwise noted, will be that read in Ashkenazy synagogues around the world. The references for all texts are those found in English translations of the Scriptures.

The *Parashah* for this week 28 August—3 September 2016 is called *R'eh*- "See!":

TORAH: Deuteronomy 11:26—16:17

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 54:11—55:5

NOTE: Because *Rosh Chodesh* for the Sixth Month *Elul* falls on Saturday or Sunday September 3/4, some Synagogues will conclude their services with Isaiah 66:1-24, 23 and/or I Samuel 20:18, 42.

***Deuteronomy 11:26.** *"See! I am setting before you today blessing and curse."*

PLEASE PRAY: *For sight to see the difference between blessed ways, and those whose very nature brings a curse—for grace to "ask for the ancient paths, the good way," to see and to walk in it!* (Jeremiah 6:16; 18:15).

***Deuteronomy 12:2, 5.** *"You shall utterly destroy all the **places** where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods…But you shall seek the **place** where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go."*

At least 16 times in the Torah portion this 'place' (singular) is mentioned where Israel's one God YHVH would choose to put His name and to dwell— one place, as compared to the *many* places where the multiple gods of Canaan were worshipped. Those places were to be utterly destroyed, and with them the very *names* of the gods which had been worshipped there (12:3). The ***place*** where the One God *of Israel* would in a unique way dwell among His people was, of course, Jerusalem. This had been alluded to in a prophetic song by Moses 40 years before, just after the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 15:17).

PLEASE PRAY: *For the peace of Jerusalem…that God's glory would return there, that the believing Body of Messiah would be established there in maturity and unity. Pray that God would raise up wise and anointed Messianic leaders to be Elders in the Gates of Zion. That as God "chose" Jerusalem after first bringing Israel into the land following the Exodus, He would now, with the return of His people from around the world, "take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and again choose Jerusalem" (Zechariah 2:12).*

***Deuteronomy 12:8.** *"You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes…"*

God had a special order for worship and government waiting for the people when they would enter the land—it wasn't to be "everyone for himself". They were rather to *"do what is right in the sight of YHVH your God"* (12:25, 28). During the next 400 years, there would be periods in which the people followed this directive. In the Land, there would be Judges (the title for next

week's *Parasha*) for civil matters, and the Priesthood to keep worship "in line". But alas, eventually Moses' admonition would be forgotten—

the closing words of the Book of Judges read, *"Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."*

***Deuteronomy 12:16; 12:23.** *"Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it on the earth like water." "Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, for the blood is the life* (Hebrew: *nefesh*—soul); *you may not eat the life with the meat."*

Although this prohibition is repeated throughout the Law of Moses, it had in fact been long before forbidden by God. In fact, in God's instructions to Noah shortly after the Flood (Genesis 9:4-5), consumption of blood was placed right alongside murder. Thousands of years later, after Yeshua had died, been raised and had returned to Heaven, the high council of Messianic (Christian) believers in Jerusalem forbade the consumption of blood by all Gentile as well as Jewish believers (Acts 15:20,29). We therefore see this as a command not only for Jewish people, but for all the children of Adam. Nor do we see in it an issue of "Law" and "legalism" vs "Grace" and "Freedom in the Spirit". It is a matter of obedience as opposed to disobedience; truth versus error and deception.

***Deuteronomy 14:2.** *"For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be for Him a specially treasured people of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."*

***Deuteronomy 14:26.** *"You may spend the money for whatever your heart desires; for oxen, or sheep, or wine, or strong drink, or whatever your heart desires; and there you shall eat in the presence of the LORD your God and rejoice, you and your household."*

As mentioned in *Parashat-Noach* last October 17, the Bible does not teach that partaking of wine or other intoxicating drink in moderation is sin; in fact, it strongly implies that God intends such drink may be a joy and a blessing for humankind if taken, as stipulated here, ***before the LORD our God*** (i.e. within the light of His presence). In Genesis 43:34 Joseph's brothers *"drank and were merry with him."* And according to John 2:1-11, Yeshua's first recorded miracle in which He "*manifested His glory*" was turning water at a Jewish wedding into wine.

However, Proverbs 20:1 cautions against its misuse, *"Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise."* And in Isaiah 28:1, 7 God issues an extremely serious warning to religious leaders who err in the misuse of alcohol: they tarnish the beauty of the ministry which they lead, and if they persist, the prophetic vision and judgment with which God equipped them for administration over His people will begin to fail them.

So Believers are allowed to partake of such drink, yet, not in drunkenness, but in the self-control (temperance) of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26). They may at times be led to abstain from strong drink, as those who chose to separate themselves to the Lord by a *Nazirite* vow would abstain from wine and strong drink all the days of their separation (Numbers 6:2-4). Nor are those who move in a freedom to drink wine to judge or seek to coerce those whose conscience forbids them from that freedom (Romans 14).

"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, submitting to one another out of reverence for Messiah."

(Ephesians 5:18)

***Deuteronomy 16:1.** *"Observe the month of Aviv* (The "First Month"; Babylonian and modern usage: *Nisan*)*, and keep the Passover to YHVH your God, for in the month of Aviv YHVH your God brought you out of Egypt by night."*

***Deuteronomy 16:16.** *"Three times a year all your males shall appear before YHVH your God in the place which He chooses; at the Feast of Unleavened Bread* (Pesach/Passover)*, at the Feast of Weeks* (Shavuot)*, and at the feast of Tabernacles* (Sukkot)*; and they shall not appear before YHVH empty handed."*

***Isaiah 54:11:** *"O you afflicted one, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, and lay your foundations with sapphires."*

PLEASE PRAY: ***That Israel's sense of identity be restored—not an identity related to her rejection, suffering, persecution and the Holocaust; but rather, that of a people chosen to be set apart as a special treasure of the God Who created the Universe.***

***Isaiah 54:13-14.** *"All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children."*

PLEASE PRAY: For the present generation of Israeli children…that the loving jealousy of God would be loosed over them, cutting through the evil values being taught in so many homes and schools in Israel, awakening a zeal for Truth; that they would respond to the Holy Spirit and ask for the ancient paths where they will find rest for their souls (Jeremiah 6:16).

***Isaiah 54:14.** *"In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you."* **For Israel to be delivered from terrorism she must first become established in righteousness.** *"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"* (II Corinthians 5:21 NASB).

PLEASE PRAY: ***That in God's mercy the Spirit which was sent to convict the world concerning Sin and Righteousness and Judgment (John 16:8) will move strongly across all of Israel.***

***Isaiah 54:17.** *"No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me," says the LORD."*

***Isaiah 55:3.** *"Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live…"*

PLEASE PRAY: ***"That Israeli ears will be opened to hear the living Word. There are many "winds" blowing in Israel right now (In Hebrew "wind" and "spirit" are the same word). Pray that believers in Israel will "have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the congregations."***

***Isaiah 55:5b.** *"…For He has glorified you."* The Hebrew word for "glorified" here might better be rendered "*beautified you*." It is the verb form of the same word used in Isaiah 61:3, where the Spirit anoints the Messiah to give those who mourn in Zion "*beauty* for ashes."

PLEASE PRAY: For Israel to come to realize that the one whom she has been resisting for 2000 years is the very One who longs to make her beautiful…and shall!

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[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week (4-10 September 2016) are called *Shophetim*—"Judges." TORAH: Deuteronomy 16:18—21:9 ; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 54:12—52:12.

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