

Prayer Update From Israel (September 11, 2012)



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*.

*“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)*

WEDNESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER IS THE 25TH DAY OF ELUL. *This reminds us of the importance of seeking God’s aid in the inspection of our defenses, in discerning and securing all breaches, all places of vulnerability along our ‘borders—and of being diligent until the end to get the job done!* **PLEASE PRAY: That a wall of protection be completed in the spirit as well as physically around Israel (Note the closing words of Benjamin Netanyahu in prayer point “2” below)—that it be completed and in place exactly within God’s timing.**

1. PERSECUTED IRANIAN PASTOR YOUCEF RELEASED

After three years of imprisonment and a 2010 sentence to death by hanging for ‘apostasy’, word was received this morning that Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani has been released from prison in Iran and allowed to return home. Nadarkhani was arrested in 2009 for challenging the forced Islamic education of his children and for seeking to register a home congregation. (There are thought to be over 20,000 secret home Christian fellowships in Iran.) After a reported six hour hearing, he was acquitted of the apostasy charge, but charged with evangelizing Muslims for which he was given three years imprisonment, granted for time already served. His plight has been known, and for the past two years he has been the subject of intense intercession in the Body of Messiah around the world. The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) based in Washington had launched a global campaign on his behalf and Western leaders from the US, EU, and the individual governments of Britain, Germany and France had called on Iran for his release (“Iran releases persecuted Christian pastor”: *JPOST.com*, 8/9/12

22:53). Nadarkhani converted to Christianity at the age of 19. In many Islamic countries conversion from Islam is considered a capital offense. In the Palestinian Arab-controlled territories (Judea, Samaria and Gaza) this is so; Palestinian believers are amongst the most persecuted in the Middle East—often having to meet secretly, and change the venues for their worship.

PLEASE PRAY:

***Protection for Pastor Youcef, angels about his house and family, and wisdom as how best to proceed with the work of the Lord where he lives.**

***For supernatural light and guidance, power and courage in the Holy Spirit and growth to maturity in the underground Iranian church—as well as for the church in all Muslim countries in the Middle East. For grace in the “*tribulation and kingdom and patience of Yeshua the Messiah*” (Revelation 1:9)—to hold fast and strengthen the things which remain.**

***Psalm 31:5,14-16, 19 over believers in these areas: “*Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth...You are my God, my times are in Your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me. Make Your face to shine upon Your servants; save us for Your mercies’ sake. How great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You in the presence of the sons of men!*”**

***For God to rise up in his children and displace the powers binding and oppressing the people of Iran and holding back the redemptive purposes of God in that region.**

***For revelation to the Church in Iran regarding God’s love and purposes for His people Israel—and within Israel regarding how best to bless the families of Iran (Genesis 12:2-3).**

2. CANADA MAKES ITS MOVE

Friday Canada announced that it “has closed its embassy in Iran, effective immediately, and declared *persona non gratae* all remaining Iranian diplomats in Canada.” The diplomats have five days in which to leave the country. Canada’s Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird cited as reasons for this move Iran’s failure to comply with UN resolutions regarding its nuclear program and its threats against Israel, as well as its support for President Assad’s forces in the conflict in Syria: “*Canada’s position on the regime in Iran is well known. Canada views the Government of Iran as the most significant threat to global peace and security in the world today.*” (“Canada suspends diplomatic ties with Iran”: *ynetnews.com* 09/07/12 18:27).

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, a committed Christian, is probably the world leader with whom Israel’s Prime Minister Netanyahu feels the closest bond of genuine friendship. Mr. Netanyahu opened his weekly Cabinet meeting on Sunday with praise for Harper’s decision: “*I want to congratulate Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on the moral, courageous step he took.*” The Prime Minister spoke of the true leadership which this required and called on “responsible members” of the international community to follow Canada’s “determined example and set moral and practical red lines in front of the Iranians, lines that will stop the Iranian race to obtain nuclear weapons.” (“World must follow Canada’s example, cut ties with Iran”: *JPOST.com*; 9/9/12 13:00). Israel’s

President Shimon Peres also spoke of how *“Canada has proven once again that morals come before pragmatism. Canada has demonstrated that policy must reflect principles and values...I thank my colleague Governor-General David Johnston, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the whole nation of Canada for taking a stance based on the highest morals and hope that other nations will see Canada as a moral role model”* (Ibid.). In a later interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Netanyahu said that although he hadn't discussed Canada's move with Harper, perhaps the prime minister *“saw what I see: That last week 120 nations went to Tehran [for the Non-Aligned Movement conference] in the face of all this aggression, all this fanaticism, 120 nations were there and they stood silent.”* He said that Harper sent a message to the world saying, *“We can't stand for this as civilized nations. We have to build a wall, not of silence, but a wall of condemnation and resolve. Canada just put a very big brick in that wall that is necessary for the peace of the world.”* (“PM: Discussions underway with US on red lines for Iran”, by Herb Keiron: JPOST.com; 09/10/2012 5:05).

PLEASE PRAY:

***God's blessing on Canada for taking a stand on behalf of Israel against a regime which has repeatedly called publically for her annihilation.**

***For continued favor and wisdom on the leadership of Prime Minister Stephen Harper...that integrity and uprightness continue to guard him as, on behalf of his nation and of the “redemption of Israel from all her enemies”, he continues to hope and wait on His God (Psalm 25:21-22).**

***A dividing-line is emerging for all nations regarding their stance with Israel. Pray that Canada may indeed be seen as a ‘role model’ in her stance—that there will be moral courage for sheep to come out from amongst the goats while there is time.**

3. ROCKET BARRAGES CONTINUE OVER HER SOUTHWEST BORDERS. HOW MUCH LONGER...?

Saturday night Grad rockets from Gaza fell into the town of Netivot and into Beersheba. Two houses were seriously damaged in Netivot, with residents of one barely making it into their more-fortified bathroom before the roof and walls came down. Seven were injured and schools were closed in the two cities on Sunday. The injuries were minor—but how long can this go on before there are serious injuries and multiple deaths? Meanwhile, earlier this week Defense Minister Barak warned that Israel has the means if necessary to ‘reoccupy the Gaza strip.’ After wresting the Strip from Egypt in the '67 War, Israeli troops occupied it until the Oslo treaties of the early '90s, afterwards only retaining a presence to guard the Israeli settlements in the area until those were uprooted in in the “Disengagement” operation of 2005. As with her pullout from Lebanon in 2000, Israel's absence has been the occasion for a flood of military hardware into these areas for use against their neighbor who is no longer there. Yet under the present threats from Hezbollah and Syria to the north and Iran to the east, opening a large and determined front in our southwest would be a grave and dangerous decision.

PLEASE PRAY:

***For divine protection of the Israeli citizens living within range of the Gazan rockets. Pray for a clear and spreading testimony from the Messianic Jews and believing visitors from the nations whom the Lord has positioned in that area.**

***For Israel to ‘know what to do’ about stemming the attacks—for wisdom, courage, unity and timing in the governmental and military leaders. Pray for divine apprehension of ‘intelligence’ reports regarding the plans of our enemies.**

***For confusion amongst the different violent factions in Gaza. Pray against satan’s desire for a great loss of life there, which would almost certainly take place were Israel required to reinter.**

***Pray for the persecuted believers in Gaza that they will be bold and move in signs and wonders in their faith. Pray that there will be many Gazans who become disillusioned with their present leadership, way of life, and religion—that they begin to come to a place where they will see the truth and hope of Christianity.**

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 9-15 September is called *Nitsavim* “You Stand positioned (-today before the LORD your God)”

TORAH: Deuteronomy 29:10—30:20

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 61:10—63:9

***Deuteronomy 29:10.** *“All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones and your wives—also the stranger who is in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water...”* The Hebrew word used here for “stand” is a military term meaning to “be stationed”, “be positioned”. *Elohei Ma’archot Yisrael*—“The God of Israel’s Arraying” (I Samuel 17:45b) has a ‘positioning’ for each of us in the war, whatever our age, our sex, our race, or supposed social status.

***Deuteronomy 29:14.** *“I make this covenant and this oath, not with you alone, but with who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, as well as with who is not here with us today...”* God’s word over Israel *for life* (see 30:19!) was not only for those present, but for the generations down through the ages whose seed was present in the bodies of those standing before him and hearing this word. This release of an eternally efficacious word from the Lord was continued beautifully some 2000 years later by Yeshua in His “High Priestly” prayer, John 17:20-21, *“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as*

You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”

***Deuteronomy 29:18.** *“...that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood.”* This condition came from “following the dictates of the heart” (vs. 19b) and could finally result in being “uprooted” (vs. 28). Hebrews 12:14-15 in the New Covenant seems to have had this verse in mind, *“Pursue peace with all, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled...”*

***Deuteronomy 30:8.** *“And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”* Another translation of this last phrase is, *“for your life’s sake.”* God is a “Life-God” (*Elohim Chaim—El Chai*). We cannot follow the “dictates of the heart” (see 29:19 above) as it is—God desires to cut away what is necessary, not only in our hearts, but in those who will come forth from us—“our descendants” (29:14). Then we will *be able* to “Love the LORD our God with all our hearts and souls that we may live!”

***Deuteronomy 30:9.** *“For the LORD will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers, if you obey...”*

***Deuteronomy 30:11.** *“For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off...but the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.”* *“Too mysterious”* is the same in the Hebrew as *“Is there anything too wonderful for Me?”* in Jeremiah 32:27. The righteous live by Faith and that which is impossible becomes possible, *“For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”* (Romans 10:10).

***Deuteronomy 30:19.** *“I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”* God gives the revelation, the grace and power to “choose life”, even before we are capable of loving and obeying and clinging to Him. *“Length of your days”* is the same as *“forever”*, the last word of the 23rd Psalm. The desire to dwell in the house of the Lord forever begins with the free choice which He is offering us!

***Isaiah 62:1.** *“For Zion’s sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a flaming torch.”*

***Isaiah 62:6.** *“I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; They shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and til He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”*

***Isaiah 63:9.** *“In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Face saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old.”*



*Martin and Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem*

[The readings for next week September 16-22 are called *VaYelech* “Went” :
TORAH: Deuteronomy 31:1-30; HAFTARAH Hosea 14:1-9; Joel 2:11-27; Micah
7:18-20. The HIGH HOLY DAYS begin this week. *Yom T’ruah* (“Feast of
Trumpets”/*Rosh HaShana*) is Monday Sept. 17th (beginning at sundown the
previous evening). There are readings for two days Sept. 17-18. Day One (Sept.
17): TORAH: Genesis 21:1-34; Numbers 29:1-6; HAFTARAH: I Samuel 1:1—
2:10; ROSH CHODESH *Tishrei*: Numbers 28:1-15. Day Two (Sept. 18): TORAH:
Genesis 22:1-24; Numbers 29:1-6; HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 31:1-20.]

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