

Prayer Update From Israel (September 30, 2013)

26 Tishrei 5774

HOPE AND A FUTURE!

“I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth”
(Genesis 9:13: See Torah Portion: *Noach* below)



**Rainbow over the Mount of Olives upon which the Lord’s feet will stand
upon His return (Zechariah 14:4)**

“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matt. 24:37).

1. ALLIANCES, APPEASEMENTS, AND A LONELY JOURNEY FOR NETANYAHU.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu left Saturday night for a three-day trip to the United States.

As has become something of a pattern, he was scheduled first to have a meeting in New York on Sunday with his friend Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, (in the end it had to be with a political associate of Harper’s), before flying on to Washington for a Monday meeting with U.S. President Obama. After that meeting and others with congressional leaders, he will fly back to New York on Monday evening for a speech at the UN General Assembly on Tuesday, followed by a meeting with UN Secretary-General Ban Kimoon.

So much has happened so very quickly over the past month. The United States was poised to launch a punitive strike on Syria in reaction to the Assad regime’s alleged use of poisonous gas on masses of civilians. When no real coalition of allies for the strike was forthcoming, it was

postponed by a surprise decision to send it to the U.S. congress for approval. The strike then virtually vanished from the radar with the astounding announcement by Syria's Russian ally Putin of an alternative path he had negotiated which would involve Syria's agreeing to surrender her stockpile of poisonous-gas. This "way out" of a military crisis was quickly, if cautiously, welcomed by the nations concerned. Now, any sort of "punitive" military action now appears to be out of the question. (It should be mentioned that almost immediately following Putin's announcement, news reports surfaced of weapons movements "spreading-out" to various out-lying regions of the country so as to avoid detection; these included unconfirmed reports by a Lebanon daily of some 20 trucks of materials being transferred over the border into Iraq.) The UN Security Council on Friday unanimously passed a draft resolution regarding elimination of Syria's chemical weapons, a resolution to which President Assad is reportedly fully committed.

This, after a week in which Iran's new President Hassan Rouhani spoke to the UN General Assembly with words far more conciliatory and moderate in tone than those of his fiery predecessor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. During the week Rouhani even seemed to come near to an acknowledgement of the Holocaust. And on Friday President Obama held an historic 15-minute phone conversation with the Iranian President, the first direct communication between an American and Iranian president since 1979. It should be remembered that the true Iranian "Commander in Chief" is the supreme spiritual leader Ali Khamenei. Rouhani reportedly assured Mr. Obama that Khamenei had issued a *fatwa* against development of nuclear weapons. The conversation was cordial, with the President (according to a message on Rouhani's Twitter page) saying goodbye with a Pharsi phrase meaning "may God be with you".

So, suddenly new channels of welcome negotiations as opposed to conflict seem to have opened between the nations and Syria and Iran. Yet, from Israel's perspective, it is far from certain what has really changed in either of these nations in relation to their hostility towards us and the fearful weapons with which they might manifest it. As Prime Minister Netanyahu travels to Washington, and New York, there is a sense that already his message of caution will be "against the flow". He will warn against being taken in by Rouhani's 'charm offensive'—will point out that as the nations move back into "negotiation" mode, the "centrifuges continue to spin"—will try to show that Iran is passing, if it has not already passed, the "red line" he warned of at the UN a year ago, the line beyond which she will have the capacity to build a nuclear weapon. It will be folly to take the pressure of sanctions and the threat of a military threat off of Iran until it takes the concrete, internationally verifiable steps necessary to halt its nuclear weapons program. In his speech last week, President Obama stated that the US's two primary goals regarding the Middle East are stopping Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. From here it appears that the pressure is easing against the threat of nuclear weapons, even as it is beginning to increase again regarding a Muslim nation in Judea and Samaria.

We are not speaking evil of all the 'stays' against conflict and the gestures towards negotiated settlements which have taken place over the past month. We are hopeful for negotiations which are made in truth and mutual accountability. Where this is not possible, there is "*a time for war, a time for peace*" (Ecclesiastes 3:8), and we believe that Our Lord may allow the machinations of man to hold back war which would try to erupt outside of its season. Meanwhile, we must be watchful and alert, and pray for discernment of the times, and in our prayers for our nations we must seek the counsels of the One who "*changes the times and the epochs: He removes kings*

and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding. It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in darkness, and the light dwells with Him” (Daniel 2:21-22).

We have no “Word from the LORD” on this, but with the lightening alliances coming together to our north and elsewhere, with their resultant atmosphere of appeasement, *we find our attention drawn to the Haftarah of Sukkot, a week ago this Saturday—Ezekiel 38:18—39:16*—which also concerns a last-days alliance—*Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal (38:2-3 NASB), Persia, Cush* (Southern Nile region, possibly Sudan), and *Put* (Libya) (38:5)—an alliance which will be judged by the LORD, brought up from the far north to the “*Mountains of Israel*” (i.e. Judea and Samaria, West Bank—site of a proposed Palestinian State), where they will fall at the hands of *Adonai YHVH*, the Lord GOD (39:1-4). “*Then the nations shall know that I am YHVH* (Yehovah, the LORD), the Holy One in Israel!” (39:7b)

PLEASE PRAY:

***That Israel’s Prime Minister Netanyahu will be protected on his trip to the U.S.—from confusing, seducing, distracting spirits. That in God’s mercies he will walk humbly and hear and be influenced by the counsels of God.**

***For those with ears to hear to hear what the Spirit is speaking over the office of the U.S. President and over the halls of the U.N.**

***For power and truth to come forth in Netanyahu’s speech to the UN on Tuesday.**

***For the people who know their God throughout the world to awaken in the Spirit and to do what needs to be done; and for those with insight to instruct many (Daniel 11:32-33).**

***For Israel’s government to come into line to be influenced by and follow the strategies of heaven regarding what needs to be done for the nation to be protected from her enemies.**

***That God’s Kingdom Come!—That many in the nations and in Israel come to know that the LORD is God—the Holy One of Israel!**

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 are called *Noach*—“Noah”—a name related to *rest, calm, comfort and consolation*.

TORAH: Genesis 6:9—11:32

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 54:1—55:5

Note: Because the “head” of the eighth month on the Hebrew calendar (*Rosh Chodesh Bul/Cheshvan*), falls on this coming Saturday, many Synagogues will substitute a special Haftarah reading: Isaiah 66:1-24, 23).

***Genesis 6:9.** “Noah was a just man, perfect (or, “blameless”) in his generations; Noah walked with God.”

“Perfect” of “Blameless” is a form of the Hebrew word *tome* translated “integrity” in Psalm 25:21: “*Let integrity and uprightness guard me for I wait for you*” (NKJV). In Psalm 101 David uses this word three times regarding his walk within his house. He tells us, “*I will ponder the way that is blameless. Oh when will you come to me? I will walk with integrity of heart within my house. I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away, it shall not cling to me.*” (Psalm 101:2-4)

***Genesis 6:11-13.** “Now the earth had gone to ruin before God, the earth was filled with wrongdoing. God saw the earth, and here: it had gone to ruin, for all flesh had ruined its way upon the earth. God said to Noah: An end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is filled with wrongdoing through them: here, I am about to bring ruin upon them, along with the earth” (*Everett Fox translation; emphases ours*).

Flesh, given its lead, brings ruin and destruction. In the New Covenant Yeshua prophesied that in latter days, it will again be “*as it was in the days of Noah*”. Zechariah 2:11-13 instructs us that in those days, as Messiah draws near to “*again take possession of Judah and to choose Jerusalem*”, and the LORD is “*aroused from His holy habitation*”, it will be imperative for Believers that they (as did Noah) say “*HUSH*” (Hebrew: *Hass! Vs 13*) to the flesh. *Either we crucify it in the power of the Holy Spirit, or it will, as in the days of Noah, be our ruin.*

***Genesis 6:14.** “*Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms [or nests] in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.*” The English word “ark” is used here for Hebrew *teva* which means a box or case (the word is used for ‘mailbox’ in Israel today). It is the same as that used to shelter the baby Moses in Exodus 2:3 (The “Ark of the Covenant” uses a different Hebrew word).

There is much redemption pictured here. The very word translated “cover” and “pitch” (*kopher*) is identical with the word for *atonement*. In I Peter 3:18-22 the apostle Peter pictures the ark as a type of our salvation in Yeshua, our consciences being baptized through His death and resurrection.

***Genesis 7:4.** “For after seven more days, I will cause it to rain on the earth...” *It is God who “causes it to rain on the earth”.* As mentioned last week, we have now entered into the time of the “Former Rains” in Israel (these come in the fall and winter, the “Latter Rains” come in spring). **PLEASE PRAY** that God will have mercy upon Israel and, as He did in Noah’s day, open the windows of heaven—not for judgment but in mercy. As we have often mentioned, Isaiah 41:17-20 speaks of a time when Israel will cry out for water and be heard by her God—Who will do creative works to release water in unexpected places to the end “*that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it.*”

***Genesis 7:15.** “*They (the animals) came to Noah into the ark...of all flesh in which is the spirit of life*”.

***Genesis 9:4a.** “*Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs (NKJV).* God is the One who has now “given” humankind meat to eat, as well as plants. We are to honor each man’s conscience before God with regard to personal decisions to eat or not eat meat. However, it is difficult to reconcile with this Scripture the teachings of some who hold that God’s ideal for humankind today is the meatless sustenance afforded them in Eden and before the Flood.

***Genesis 9:4b.** “*But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.*”

The word usually translated “life” in Hebrew is *chaim*. Yet here, the word *nephesh*—“soul” is used—“*But you shall not eat flesh with its soul, that is, its blood.*”

This will be reiterated in Leviticus 17:13-14, “*Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; for it is the soul of all flesh. Its blood sustains its soul. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the soul of all flesh is its blood.’*”

In Genesis 2:7, “*The LORD God formed man of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life [i.e. chaim], and man became a living soul [i.e. nephesh].*”

When Cain murdered Abel, the “*voice of [his] brothers blood cried out*” to God from the ground.

The *soul* that sins must die, and all have sinned...so death reigns in the very blood-line of all children of Adam. **Except for One.** The Blood of the virgin-born Savior, the “Second Adam”, Yeshua, was pure and without sin (**Hebrews 4:15**). Thus, it could “*sprinkle many nations*” (**Isaiah 52:15**) with a “*sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel (Hebrews 12:24)*”. God made “*His soul an offering for sin*” (**Isaiah 53:10**)—and with the shedding of His blood, “*He poured out His soul (nephesh) unto death*” and “*bore the sin of many*” (**53:12**).

***Genesis 9:20-21.** “*And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. Then he drank of the wine and was intoxicated (root: shekhar), and became uncovered in his tent.*”

This is the first place in the Bible where intoxicating drink is mentioned. The Hebrew word for wine is *ya'in*, and the root word for both intoxicating drink and “becoming intoxicated” is *shekhar*. In this week's reading, Noah discovered the intoxicating properties of fermented grape juice and was put to shame by its misuse. If one unwisely allows oneself to be led astray by alcohol, it becomes a mocker leading into foolish acts and violence.

(Prov. 20:1) *“Wine is a mocker, Strong drink (shekhar) is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.”*

God speaks 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.

(Isaiah 28:1, 7) *“Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards (shekhar) of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower which is at the head of the verdant valleys, to those who are overcome with wine!...But they have erred through wine, and through intoxicating drink (shekhar) are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink (shekhar), they are swallowed up by wine, they are out of the way through intoxicating drink (shekhar); they err in vision, they stumble in judgment”* (Emphases ours).

Yet the Bible does not teach that partaking of wine 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 **before the LORD our God (in the light of His presence): Deuteronomy 14:22-26**—*“You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or if the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the LORD your God has blessed you, then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses. And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or strong drink (shekhar), for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there **before the LORD your God**, and you shall rejoice, you and your household”* (Emphases ours). **Genesis 43:34**—*“So they (i.e. Joseph's brothers) drank and were merry (shekhar) with him.”* **John 2:1-11**—Yeshua's first recorded miracle in which He “manifested His glory” was turning water at a Jewish wedding into wine.

Yet, not in drunkenness, but in the self-control (temperance) of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26). Believers may 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 (*shekhar*) 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)

***Genesis 10:25.** *"To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided..."* The word may mean "split apart", "broken away into sections." Some have suggested that this may actually allude to a period in which at least some of the continental shiftings discernible on modern-day maps took place. Which might explain why, for instance, the four rivers branching out from the large one coming out of Eden (Genesis 2:10-14) no longer appear to be in that same relation to each other. Some even suggest that before this shifting, Eden itself was located where Jerusalem is today...making the place where the "First Adam" sinned the place where that sin was atoned for in the death of the "Second Adam", Yeshua. It is interesting that Jewish tradition teaches that Adam and Eve are both buried in Hebron, only 30 km south of Jerusalem on the plot of land purchased by Abraham (Genesis 23) as a burial place for Sarah, and which eventually held Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah.

Haftarah

This week's reading from the prophet Isaiah is filled with God's heart and merciful plan for His people Israel. Ask God to use these verses to help in your prayers. Pray that the souls of those who hear them read in synagogues this weekend will be quickened with divine revelation! Pray that Israel will know that she is loved, that she will be convicted of her sin and need for a Redeemer, that she will understand that the LORD Himself is her only Redeemer and that her righteousness comes from Him!

***Isaiah 54:5.** *"For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth."* The God of *all the earth* has sovereignly chosen to identify Himself with the name He gave to his servant Jacob—Israel. Nations or religions which will not humble themselves to acknowledge this "identification" will find themselves standing against the very God of all nations and the universe itself.

***Isaiah 54:7-10.** *" 'For a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you. With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you,' says the LORD, your Redeemer. 'For this is like the waters of Noah to Me, For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you. For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of shalom be removed,' says the LORD who has mercy on you"*

****Isaiah 54:13-15.*** “*All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children. 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. Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me, whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake.*”

****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 55:1-3.*** “*Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you—the sure mercies of David.*”



***Martin & Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem***

[The readings for next week (6-12 October 2013) is called *Lech Lecha*—“Go Forth, Yourself!” TORAH: Genesis 12:1—17:27; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 40:27—41:16]

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