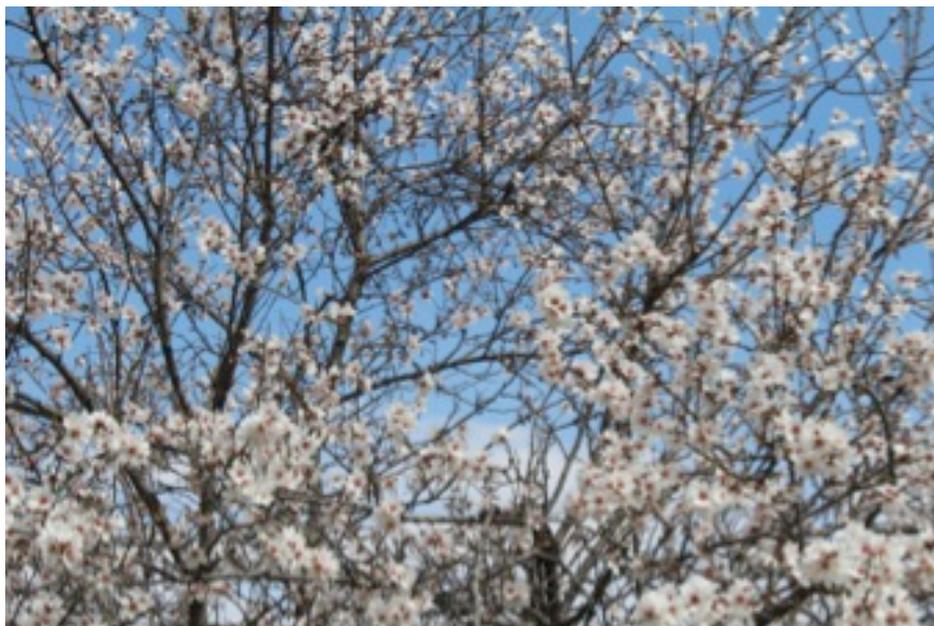


## **PRAYER UPDATE FROM ISRAEL (February 17, 2014)**



### **Almond Blossoms in Jerusalem**

*“I am ever wakeful over my Word to bring it to pass!”*

#### **1. EXPLOSION IN TABA**

Sunday afternoon a tour bus bearing 31 South Korean Christian tourists from the same church in Jincheon, Korea was blown up while waiting about 100 yards from the Taba border-crossing separating the Sinai Peninsula from Israel. Reports from Egypt indicate that three Koreans (two Korean guides and one member of the church) and the Egyptian driver were killed. At least 13 were said to have been injured, eight seriously. It is thought that the bomb may have been planted under the drivers' seat at a stop along the way, then set off remotely by someone on the Egyptian side of the border. According to an AP report, the group were all members of the Jincheon Jungang Presbyterian Church, south of Seoul, on a trip to celebrate the 60th anniversary of their church. Many had saved for years for the tour of holy sites in Egypt, Israel and Turkey. Having set out from Cairo, the group had earlier in the day visited the St. Catherine monastery (considered by some to be the site of the original Mount Sinai). Immediately following the bombing, Israel dispatched two dozen ambulances to the border, offering assistance in transporting the wounded to a hospital in nearby Eilat, but their offer was refused by Egyptian authorities. The Koreans were eventually said to have been transported to Sharm e-Sheikh to the south.

It is not certain who was responsible for this attack. Analysts are leaning towards the al-Qaeda-linked Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, a reigning Salafist-jihadist group in the lawless Sinai Peninsula. The ousted Muslim Brotherhood President Morsi is presently on trial in Cairo. It is thought that the attack may have been levelled against General Abdel el-Sissi's regime through bringing harm to the tourist trade.

Attacks in Egypt and the Sinai since Morsi's ouster have already been responsible for a drop in tourist revenue of 41 percent last year. At the same time, it is a strike against Israel—and Christianity. An estimated 1.8 million Christians visit Israel each year, large numbers of whom enter the country through the Egyptian-controlled Sinai Peninsula (“Taba terror attack sends dual murderous message”: *The Times of Israel*; 17 Feb 2014, 12:11 a.m.).

We are deeply grieved by this cowardly and barbaric slaughter of our South Korean brothers and sisters.. Thousands visit Israel each year; many study here or have acquired work visas. We count a number among our personal friends and acquaintances. Koreans cover several watches at Succat Hallel (the 24/7 worship-intercession ministry with which the writers are associated) and there is a Korean-run prayer house on the other side of the city. During the past 30 years, the zeal and anointing of believers from that land have resulted in outposts of the Kingdom being established all over the world—often in difficult and out-of-the-way locations. We are grateful for their love and support for Israel; their presence here is a tremendous blessing.

**PLEASE PRAY:**

**\*For angelic ministry to the wounded survivors of the attack. Although reports say that 13 are injured, it would be a rarity for anyone to escape an experience like this without at least suffering severe trauma. Pray for restoration in body, soul and spirit for all who were on the bus.**

**\*For the supernatural ministry of the “*Father of mercies and God of all comfort*” (II Corinthians 1:3) to attend to the members of the group and to the families of the dead and wounded in Korea.**

**\*Encouragement in the Spirit for the Korean Body of Messiah in Israel and those whom He will yet send here: “*Now may our Lord Yeshua the Messiah Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work*” (II Thessalonians 2:16-17).**

**\*That Lawlessness will be overcome with Light in the Sinai Peninsula. Indeed, that from Egypt through the Peninsula and up through Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Turkey preparation for the “Highway” promised in Isaiah 19:23-25 will be laid in righteousness, love, courage and**

the fear of the LORD.

**\*Psalm 129:5:** *“Let all those who hate Zion be put to shame and turned back.”*

**\*That the God of Encouragement release love (which casts out fear) and courage into all of those whom He desires to visit Israel. That all whom He is truly calling to visit here will strengthen themselves in the Holy Spirit and come. One of the most-heard enquiries from believers contemplating a visit to Israel is, “Is it safe?” Of course, how can such a question be answered? We are in a warfare (as is the whole world)...but if our Commander sends us somewhere, the safest place in the world is that place. But have on your armor—and have your way prepared in prayer. A literal translation of Psalm 27:14 is, “Hope in the LORD. BE STRONG! And He will infuse courage into your heart...Yes, Hope in the LORD!**

### **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 16-22 February 2014 are called *VaYakhel*—“And He Assembled”**

**TORAH: Exodus 35:1—38:20**

**HAFTARAH: I Kings 7:40-50 (Ashkenazy Synagogues)**

**I Kings 7:13-26 (Sephardic Synagogues)**

### **TORAH**

**Exodus 35:1-38:20**

**\*In this week’s readings, Moses gathers together the congregation of Israel and relates to them what God has instructed regarding the construction of the Tabernacle. In effect, Exodus 35:4—39:43 carefully repeats what was recorded**

earlier in chapters 25-28 (*T'rumah*) and subsequent passages. But here certain details have been clarified. For instance, unlike the earlier passages, this one makes specific mention of **women**. Verses 35:25-26 refer to “*Each woman who is a gifted artisan*” and “*whose hearts stirred with wisdom.*” Verse 29 is careful to mention both “*men and women*” whose hearts moved them to volunteer materials and to labor as a freewill offering for building the tabernacle. In 36:6, this had in fact been done with such generosity and cheerfulness that Moses was forced to issue a command, “*Let no man or woman any longer perform work for the contribution of the sanctuary!*”

**Please pray for hearts of Israeli believers to be moved to offer up their craftsmanship and creative energies as a free-will offering to the Most High. Pray for women and men to be equally valued and recognized in their talents and giftings. Pray for “cheerful” giving from the heart (II Cor. 9:7) on the part of Israeli believers, both of physical resources and of talents and time, not merely as a *mitzva* (an obedience to gain favor)—but at the moving of the Holy Spirit within their hearts.**

**\*Exodus 35:1-3.** “*...These are the words which YHVH has commanded you to do: ‘Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to YHVH. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day.’*”

Attempts to observe the prohibition related to fire in the last verse of this passage continue amongst many observant Jews today, in some cases reaching extremes which, to our understanding, go far beyond the original intent of the prohibition. From the time the Shabbat Lights are lit just before sundown on Friday until candles are again kindled at *Havdalah* following sundown on Saturday, no lights are to be kindled by Jews. Electric timers are placed on light switches and stoves so that the owners will not be guilty of lighting a fire (i.e. initiating an electric spark by flipping a switch). This is also the reason religious Jews don’t drive on Shabbat (starting a car involves making the battery produce a spark to ignite the engine). Pressing a button at a streetlight in order to cross the street also initiates a “spark”, as does pressing a button in an elevator (Kosher hotels and many fancy apartment buildings in Israel are equipped with “Shabbat elevators,” which are set to unceasingly go up and down automatically throughout the Sabbath. We do not mock the earnestness of those who genuinely feel it to be God’s will, and who are trying to please Him by observing these strictures. But we do believe them to be misguided; that in some instances, such prohibitions slip into a category which Yeshua

condemned in Matthew 23:4—that of heavy burdens not intended by God being laid on people’s shoulders by religious leaders, rules which often become mere works for show.

***The context for this lone passage about lighting a fire on the Sabbath is God’s releasing of instructions for the construction of a place for His habitation among His people—the Mishkan, Dwelling Place, the Tabernacle.*** It was a construction of craftsmanship requiring all the creative, “artistic” gifts, energies and skills of which humankind (made in the image of God) is capable. ***Yet the fashioning of this Holy place with all of its Holy furnishings was not to cancel out the pattern set by the Master Artist when He Himself fashioned the universe.*** He worked for six days, then ceased work and was refreshed on the seventh (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 31:17). Much of the work being described in these chapters would require building a fire to smelt and fashion the metals—melting, bending, shaping and forming everything, from Cherubim of gold, to tools, to ornaments, to bolts and pins of brass. Making the fire involved a lot of work—finding, gathering and chopping the wood, then kindling the flame with a friction method involving much exertion (The one record we have of judgment coming on an individual for breaking this law is found in Numbers 15:32, where the offense was specifically for gathering wood on the Sabbath) . **The joyous sacrifice of yielding up one’s gifts and skills to God for “holy work” must also include respect for His “times and seasons” in exercising those gifts, chief amongst them being what He first called “holy”—the Seventh Day (Genesis 2:3).**

**\*Exodus 35:36.** ***“And He has put it in his heart the ability to teach, in him and Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan.”*** Last week we read of *Betzalel* (a descendant of Judah) and *Aholiav* (of the tribe of Dan)—artisans whom God had filled with all wisdom and grace for performing and overseeing the intricate workmanship required in preparation of the Tabernacle. In this later passage it is mentioned that He also put it in their hearts “to teach.” Indeed, 36:1 mentions others whom the LORD had filled with artistic grace to work under them (36:1), subject to their wise instruction.

**PLEASE PRAY:** that those released in the artistic skills in the congregations in Israel will focus not only on the work allotted to them for their own times—but will be stirred in their hearts with a desire and ability to pass on their wisdom and skill to the men and women of the generation rising after them.

**HAFTARAH**

**I Kings 7:40-50 (Ashkenazy Synagogues)**  
**I Kings 7:13-26 (Sephardic Synagogues)**

\*The Haftarah describes the preparation and artistic finishing of the Temple in Jerusalem. In I Kings 7:14, it focuses on the work of another artisan, Hiram, who came from Tyre (not to be confused with Hiram the King of Tyre at that time). He was an Israelite and a "widow's son... a worker in bronze; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill for doing any work in bronze. So he came to King Solomon and performed all his work." It is noteworthy that although II Chr. 2:13 makes clear that this Hiram (also called "Hiram-abi") was a master, skilled in the fine artistic workmanship of gold, silver, precious stones, rich fabrics, etc., the account in I Kings focuses entirely upon his work with the more-humble "bronze".

**PLEASE PRAY: for wisdom and humility in the nurturing in holiness of the creative gifts in the Body in Israel—with no special regard for family, class or 'privilege'. Pray that the church's 'blessing of widows and orphans' would extend to recognition of and education in their special giftings. Pray for realization among artists that in putting one's hand to the humble or to the glamorous, to brass or to gold, it makes no difference, so long as it is done to the glory of the King!**



*Martin & Norma Sarvis  
Jerusalem*

**[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 23 February—1 March 2014 are called *P'kudei*—“Accountings Of”: TORAH: Exodus 38:21—40:38; *Shabbat Sh'kalim*: TORAH: Exodus 30:11-16; HAFTARAH (Ashkenazy Jews): II Kings 12:1-17; (Sephardic Jews): II Kings 11:17—12:17; *Machar Chodesh*—“Tomorrow is the New Moon”: I Samuel 20:18, 42]**

You may give to our work in Israel by donating online (click [HERE](#) and add Sarvis Support in the comment line) or by calling 1-888-965-1099 or 1-940-382-7231.