

# ISRAEL PRAYER UPDATE

Glory of Zion International Ministries



Paper cut-out commemorating the conference. In English it reads,

***“ Sing for joy and be glad, O Daughter of Zion; for Behold, I am coming  
And I will dwell in your midst!’ says the LORD.”***

**Zechariah 2:10 (Hebrew: 2:14)**

***We are so grateful for the prayers of our readers for the Bat Zion—“Daughter of Zion” Conference which took place at Magdala on the Sea of Galilee this past Friday and Saturday. 170 women “from Dan to Beersheva” attended this gathering, far more than we had originally expected!***

***From the time the intercessors arrived on Thursday until the last participant left late Saturday afternoon, there was a strong Presence of the Lord in our midst. There were intimate times of corporate praise and worship, deep and insightful sharing and teaching, as well as rich times of fellowship between women from all over the land. The theme was ‘Hope for the Daughters of Zion’, and although we touched on difficult issues—personal pain and loss, physical and spiritual***

barrenness, the Holocaust and its impact on families, grief and suffering---in all these things, the Spirit was releasing healing and restoration, and we can clearly say that these daughters left with hearts filled with *Hope!*

Three male pastors attended the opening session in order to release their blessing over the women. There was such support from congregations around the land! A Russian-speaking congregation in Sderot actually changed the day of their regular Shabbat meeting to enable all the women who wished to attend the conference. Many of the younger women, who comprised at least half of the group, shared that they had never before participated in a women's meeting. Many, many are already asking when the next one will be! (So we are now praying about next year and looking for a larger venue.)

We so Praise the Lord for His faithfulness! And thank you again for your prayers!! The Holy Spirit really carried this! It is interesting that the leaders, speakers and worship leaders, rather than being in a state of exhaustion, left feeling refreshed and encouraged!

#### **PLEASE PRAY:**

**\* That what the Lord has worked in these Daughters of Zion will be protected, will blossom and grow.**

**\* That the doors which He is opening over women in Israel will remain open and many will pass through into the place He has for them.**

**\* That the army of women (Psalm 68:11) to whom He has released His word will have grace and strength in hearing what He is saying and proclaiming the good tidings!**

**\* That there be divine protection over all who prepared and took part in leading this special gathering—that they be restored and God's blessing and vision rest upon them.**

#### **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 28 January—3 February 2018 are called *Yitro*—"Jethro":

**TORAH: Exodus 18:1—20:26**

**HAFTARAH: Isaiah 6:1—7:6; 9:6-7**

We focus this week upon one of the most powerful Torah Portions of the Year, centered round the descent of the LORD onto Mount Sinai and the release through His Living Word of the Ten Commandments to His people. Israel has just been given judges, but now they are given God's standard by which they can judge what is GOOD. These Ten Commandments (or Ten Words) were not given to Moses alone up on the Mountain, but were heard coming forth from the fire by all of Israel. The release of these Words changed the direction of history for Israel and the world, and continues to instruct of His nature and ways today.

*\*Exodus 18:1— “Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses’ father-in-law, heard of all that God (“Elohim”) had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how the LORD (“YHWH”) had brought Israel out of Egypt.”*

*This chapter is devoted to the counsels of Moses’ father-in-law Jethro, who came with Moses’ wife and two sons to meet him at the Mountain of God (near to the place where Moses had been pasturing Jethro’s flocks when God first appeared to him in the burning bush). Through his counsels, a system of judicial governance will be set up among the people (see below), which would remain in effect for some 400 years, until the people demanded a king. Jethro (which means “His Excellence”) is perhaps an honorary title for *Reu’El* (“Friend of God”; the name used in Ex. 2:18.). Jethro was a priest of God in Midian. Having hosted Moses as a son-in-law for many decades before his return to Egypt, he was probably to some degree familiar with the Hebrew concept of deity—and had heard of His name YHVH (Yehovah, the LORD). However, now the priest realizes and confesses that it is YHVH “*who delivered you [Moses] from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh*” (18:10); that it is YHVH who “*is greater than all the gods*” (18:11)...indeed, he rejoices “*over all the goodness which YHVH had done to Israel.*” (18:9)*

*It is remarkable that, rather than just making use of Jethro’s name, the Hebrew word *ho-ten*—“father-in-law” is mentioned repeatedly (13 times) in this short chapter. Moses honors his father-in-law, listening to his counsels (18:24). Honoring one’s parents, including those of one’s spouse, will be the fifth of the Commandments released on the mountain in chapter 20).*

**Exodus 18:21-22:** *“Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders...let them judge the people at all times...”*

Moses is counseled by his father-in-law to set up a system of “judges” amongst the people. Yet the word for “select” here is not the same as that for “chose” in verse 25. Rather it is Hebrew “*hazeh*”—to watch, envision, *see prophetically*, to foresee. It is of critical importance for the Body of Messiah in Israel that the choosing of leaders of godly fear, truth and honesty be done with supernatural vision and prophetic insight. That this system would include women as well as men is evidenced by the beginning of last week’s *Haftarah*: “*Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time...and the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment.*” (Judges 4:4-5).

Moses will give more details regarding the qualifications for these judicial leaders forty years later (Deuteronomy 1:9-18). That this was God's first choice of governance for His people is corroborated by Isaiah 1:26, where the LORD declares a coming day after Israel has been purified: *"Then I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning; after that you will be called the city of righteousness, a Faithful city."*

**\*Exodus 19:1-2.** *"On the third new moon (Rosh Chodesh—"head of the month") of the setting out of the people of Israel from the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the desert of Sinai" ...there Israel encamped before the mountain, while Moses went up to God" (Exodus 19: 1-2).*

The "mountain" is *Horeb*, the Mountain of God, where Moses had first encountered the LORD in the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-2). The Hebrew for "bush" in that passage is *sneh*. Some scholars believe that the name by which this mountain would be most often remembered in Israel's future *Sinai*, was itself taken from *sneh*, which in the Hebrew it very much resembles. In that case, Mount Sinai would be the mountain of the bush out of which the LORD had spoken to Moses, and the mountain out of which He would now speak in the hearing of all Israel. Today, its location is not certain. Although traditionally assumed to lie either in the center or south-central of the Sinai peninsula, in recent years strong reasons have been advanced for suspecting that the "far side of the desert" (Exodus 3:1; Midian straddled both sides of the Gulf of Aqaba) referred in fact to the north-western corner of the Arabian peninsula—in which case the crossing of the Red Sea might have taken place at the southern end of the Gulf.

The arrival of Moses with the Children of Israel at Mt. Sinai where they would remain for a year ministering to YHVH (rather than to the Pharaohs as they had done for the previous 400 years) began the fulfillment of God's promise to Moses in Exodus 3:12, *"I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve Elohim on this mountain."*

**\*Exodus 19:4b.** *"...I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself."* Compare Deuteronomy 32:10-12, *"He found him in a desert land and in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so YHVH (the LORD) alone led him, and there was no foreign god with him."*

**\*Exodus 19:5.** *"And now, if you will truly heed My voice and guard My covenant, you will become for Me a treasure among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine."* Compare Psalm 25:10, *"All the paths of the LORD are grace and truth (Heb: chesed and emet), to such as guard His covenant and His testimonies."*

**PLEASE PRAY:** For Israelis to realize that God still longs to "bring her to Himself", that He has released a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-33) in the blood of His Son Yeshua, in whom "grace and truth are realized" (John 1:17); that as she embraces that Covenant, she will find that He is still speaking, and as she hears and responds to His voice, she will find again the treasured place in His heart.

**\*Exodus 19:6, 10.** *"You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation... 'Go to the people*

*and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes.’”* In Revelation 1:5-6 this call, made first to Israel, is now extended to all those children of Adam who receive the love of Yeshua by being washed from their sins in His blood. In this washing, they enter their destiny, being made into “*a kingdom of priests to His God and Father.*”

**\*Exodus 19:12-13.** *“You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, ‘Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death...When the ram’s horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain.’”*

*This is the first specific mention of the “ram’s horn” in Scripture* (apart from the ram caught “by its horns” in the thicket on Mount Moriah—Genesis 22:13). Here the Hebrew word is yovel. It is the name from which the English word “Jubilee” is derived—a day (Leviticus 25) every fifty years when blasts of a ram’s horn on Yom Kippur would signal liberty, and captives would be set free. The words used hereafter in this chapter (vss. 13, 16) when strong blasts of a ram’s horn would be released as the YHVH descends on Mount Sinai is shofar. Although both words will be used to describe the sounding of the ram’s horn at the battle of Jericho, it is *shofar* which is by far the most used throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. Almost every time the English translates “trumpet”, the word is *shofar* (the exceptions being the silver trumpets mentioned in Numbers 10, which is a different word still).

*“When the ram’s horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain...”* Some Hebrew commentators understand this to mean that the people were forbidden from ascending the mountain while the manifestation of God’s presence (signaled by short, increasingly powerful blasts) was resting upon it. After that had come to an end, there was one last long blast of the *yovel/shofar*—at which time the mountain became as any other mountain and could be approached by the people. The mountain was holy because of the presence of the Holy One upon it.

**\*Exodus 19:16-20.** *“Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thundering and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the shofar was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled...Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because YHVH descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the shofar sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and Elohim answered him by voice. Then YHVH came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And YHVH called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.”*

Compare Hebrews 12:18-29, *“For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a shofar and the voice...But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn registered in Heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Yeshua the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. See that you do not refuse Him who speaks...Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.”*

**\*Exodus 19:20; 20:1-** *“Then YHVH came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain...And Elohim spoke all these words, saying...”* The Scriptures testify that just as God Himself was present in the burning bush (Ex. 3:4), so was He present at Mount Sinai—He **“came down”** (19:11, 20) and **“spoke all these words”** (the Ten Commandments). It is difficult for religious Jews to grasp the concept of God taking a literal form, of coming physically into our experience (If they allowed such a possibility, they might then be compelled to consider the claims of His having taken on human form in the person of Yeshua/Jesus!) To explain away the Scriptural implications, they have contrived many complex theories regarding such manifestations, whether to Abraham at Hebron, or to the other Patriarchs, or to His appearance to Moses in the bush and here at Mt. Sinai. John 1 speaks powerfully of the **“Living Word”** which was *with* God and which *was* God, and which was made flesh and came into the world in the form of Yeshua the Messiah.

**PLEASE PRAY:** for revelation that this same WORD/TORAH which came down and was released at Sinai in the hearing of all Israel, is that Word which took on flesh and came to bear away Her sin—and will return to rule and reign over a Kingdom of Peace. It is traditionally held that this giving of the Torah took place on what would later be celebrated as the Feast of Shavuot (Weeks, Pentecost).

**PLEASE PRAY:** that this *Holy Spirit*, which breathed forth the Torah and all of the Scriptures and was released on Pentecost, would awaken revelation within Jewish hearts regarding the Living Word of God which has come down to Earth.

**All of the Ten Commandments are released grammatically in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular. They are God’s Law directed not to humankind in general, but towards each individual son and daughter of Adam.**

**\*Exodus 20:4.** *“You shall not make for yourself a carved image...you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I am YHVH your God, a Jealous god...”* This word for “Jealous” (*kana*) is used in its noun form in the last sentence of this week’s Reading from the Prophets, Isaiah 9:7. However, there it is translated “zeal” (through which the LORD will establish the government of His SON forever). Righteous jealousy or zeal is released on behalf of someone or something which is intensely loved. However, when activated in the flesh for selfish motives, the same word is translated “envy.”

**\*Exodus 20:13.** *“You shall not murder.”* In some older English translations the word “kill” was used. But the words for kill, for slaughter (as, for a sacrifice) and for murder are three different words in the Hebrew.

**\*Exodus 20:21.** *“So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick cloud where God was.”* This “thick cloud” (*araphel*) is translated “deep darkness” in Isaiah 60:2. But that darkness is over the “peoples”, and will be dispelled by the rising of the LORD, when His glory shall be “seen.” Today in Modern Hebrew *araphel* means “fog”—and Israel for the most part is “in a fog” regarding finding her God. **PLEASE PRAY:** For the veil to be removed from the eyes of God’s ancient people—that a light rise in their hearts and God’s glory will be seen—that they will be drawn into the “Cloud of Unknowing” to discover the One who has known them from afar and drawn them

in lovingkindness.

**\*Exodus 20:26.** *“Nor shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.”* It was God who first provided suitable clothing for hiding that which had awakened shame in Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:21). It would only be through the work of the Son that all humankind could again find themselves clothed—in His righteousness, and their shame taken away. *“Clothe yourselves with the Lord Yeshua Messiah, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature”* (Romans 13:14).

### **Haftarah**

**Isaiah 6:1-7:6; 9:6-7**

The readings from the Prophets for this week (Isaiah 6:1-7:6) contain, in parallel to the manifestation of the LORD’s presence in power on Mount Sinai, the awesome revelation of Holiness made to the prophet Isaiah. Before the holy presence of the LORD “high and lifted up”—the seraphim, the Voice, the shaking and smoke, Isaiah sees himself as unclean and his lips as unclean. Yet as he humbles himself and confesses his uncleanness and inadequacy, his lips are touched with the coal, his iniquity taken away, his sin purged. And he is given a message for his people—a message describing a “veil” which would settle upon the House of Israel (and which continues until the present day)...and the promise of a remnant. After a shorter message of instruction related to current events, the reading incredibly leaps two chapters to Isaiah 9:6-7, *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of HOSTS will perform this!”*

**PLEASE PRAY:** For divine revelation of the Holiness of the LORD to accompany this reading—and of His Zeal and Jealousy which has already seen the birth of the “Child”—who will soon be released to return and rule over His kingdom *in judgment and justice forever!*



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*Jerusalem*

[The readings for next week (4-10 February 2018) are called *Mishpatim*—  
“Judgments”: TORAH: Exodus 21:1—24:18 + *Shabbat Sh’kalim*: Exodus 30:11-  
16. HAFTARAH: II Kings 12:1-17]

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