

## PRAYER UPDATE FROM ISRAEL (January 3, 2011)



### 1. *YOM HA'DIN*—DAY OF JUDGEMENT

This was the headline of one Hebrew newspaper this past Thursday morning. That day Moshe Katsav, Israel's eighth President (Shimon Peres is the present ninth) stood before three judges in an Israeli courtroom and received a unanimous verdict of "guilty" on charges of rape, sexual harassment, committing an indecent act while using force, harassing a witness and obstruction of justice. The Court also accused the past President of persistent lying while under investigation. The two counts of took rape place while a cabinet minister, the others during his tenure as President between 2000 and 2007, all committed against unwilling employees in his offices. The 65 year old Katsav now awaits sentencing later this month, having been forced to surrender his passport and forbidden to leave the country.

It is a hard end to what had been seen by many Israelis as an inspiring "rags to riches" story. Katsav was born in Iran of poor Sephardic Jewish parents (Sephardic Jews trace their ancestry through Spain and Islamic-dominated countries of northern Africa, and such Middle Eastern nations as Iraq, Yemen, Iran, and Syria). The family immigrated to Israel in 1951 living for many months in a tent city set up to contain the flood of Jews pouring into Israel from those lands. In a new country, whose government was dominated by "Ashkenazy" (European/East European) Jews, the young Katsav grew up in the town of Kiryat Malachi, becoming mayor there at the age of 24, and continuing to rise in the government until being elected President in 2000, only the second non-Ashkenazi president and the first born in a Muslim country.

Today, things done in secret have been brought into the light and one who had been considered honorable has been judged and brought down. Ironically, the reading from the Prophets (Haftarah) for that week began, *"Thus says the Lord YHVH: 'When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they will dwell safely there..."* (Ezekiel 28:25a, Emphases ours). As we wrote last week, Zion remains a "signpost" to the nations. If her God was not, as should have been the case, hallowed before the nations in this leader's life, He could be hallowed in the execution of justice which brought him down, *"Righteousness and Justice are the foundation of His throne."* Prime Minister Netanyahu called it "a sad day for Israel", but added that the verdict showed that in the nation "all are equal before the law, and that every woman has exclusive rights to her body."

In Israel, the office of President is chiefly a ceremonial position; it is the Prime Minister who heads and leads the government. However, it is through the office of President that leaders and dignitaries from foreign countries are welcomed. It is in the President's house that this leader welcomes them in the name of all Israel with the words "*Baruch haba*"—"Blessed is your coming" (the same greeting which Yeshua said would be extended to Him... "...in the Name of the LORD" before He returns to Jerusalem).

### Nasi

The Hebrew word for "President" is *Nasi*—"one who has been raised up." In the King James Bible, the word is translated variously, captain, chief, governor, prince and ruler. It is the LORD who "raises up" and positions leaders (Exodus 9:16, from last week's Torah Portion; I Kings 14:7; Daniel 2:21). It is also the LORD who raises up *judges* (Judges 2:16)—and who has promised to Israel, "***I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and her penitents with righteousness. The destruction of transgressors and of sinners shall be together, and those who forsake the LORD shall be consumed***" (Isaiah 1:26-28). It is remarkable that of the three judges presiding over this case, the head judge was an Israeli Arab with a Christian background. As Asher Intrater wrote in Sunday's *Revive Israel* Prayer Update, "in light of international propaganda of human rights abuse in Israel, here is an example in which an Arab Christian and two Jewish women sat in judgment over the Israeli President." Also remarkable, on the same day as this former national leader himself came under the judgment of the law, *21 new judges were being sworn-in at a ceremony in the Presidents' House by the current President Peres.*

### **A message from Malachi**

Lastly...we would point out that Moshe Katzav grew up in, was once Mayor of, and still resided in the city of *Kiryat Malachi* (City of Malachi). Katzav purported to be a religious man...wearing a *kippa* head covering. He appeared to quit himself well in office, but something was hidden. *Malachi* means "my Messenger"...and the book by that name prophesies, "***Behold, I will send my messenger...But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire, and like launderers soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; he will purify the sons of Levi... Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him***"... '***For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up.***' Says the LORD of HOSTS...***But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings!*** (Malachi 3:1, 2-3; 3:18; 4:1-2a).

### **PLEASE PRAY:**

**\*That a winnowing would take place in the Israeli government...that the convicting power of the Holy Spirit would blow through the halls, releasing the Fear of the Lord.**

**\*For godly believing men and women to be "raised up" with favour, excellence and righteousness displacing the powers which are positioned in Israel's government to thwart her fulfilling her call before the Nations.**

**\*For those who fear the LORD to converse together and their conversation to evince that Holy Fear. God has promised to listen (Malachi 3:16-18), and to release grace that they**

*“shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.”*

**\*For Moshe Katsav, to humble himself before the God he purports to serve (He made his way to synagogue the day following his conviction). God is not willing that any should perish. David was King of Israel and involved himself in a deed as despicable—which included violating a woman and murder, and being caught and judged...yet he found a way for confession, repentance and forgiveness (Psalm 51).**

## **2. LEVIATHAN IN THE FIELDS OF ASHER**

This past week a gas field discovered last June off Israel’s north-west coast was confirmed to be at least as enormous as it had been estimated to be at that time. After testing, it is now thought to hold 450 billion cubic meters, almost twice the size of *Tamar*, the last large gas discovery. One partner in the find said that of all gas fields discovered in deep waters in the past ten years, this is the largest. Israel’s Infrastructures Minister Uzi Landau was quoted as saying, “We have received the most important energy-related news since the founding of Israel, that will undoubtedly bring a blessing and have a meaningful influence on many fields [of endeavor] in Israel.” He predicted that if handled properly, Israel will be able to use the gas to become a supplier in the Middle East, adding that the finds “will enable Israeli citizens to enjoy clean, cheap electricity production, and the income the state can expect following these discoveries.” (Gil Ronen, “Another Huge Gas Field Confirmed Off Haifa Shore”: *Arutz Sheva, Israel National News.com (Daily Israel Report)*, 30 Dec 2010.). These two great fields are extremely deep and will be a challenge to get to the surface. It is presently thought that production from the two fields will take between two and six years. And Israel’s right to them is already being challenged by Hezbollah forces in southern Lebanon, who could present a threat of rocket attack. The fields would fall within the ancient territory given to the tribe of Asher, of whom Moses prophesied the blessing, “*More blessed than sons is Asher; May he be favoured by his brothers, and may he dip his foot in oil*” (Deuteronomy 33:24). Geologists suspect that beneath the gas fields may be large deposits of oil. (Originally, the land allotted to Asher extended northward to the Litani River of what is today modern Lebanon.)

It is interesting that the name Israel chose for this oil field is *Leviathan*. This is a great monster of a creature sometimes linked with evil in the Hebrew Scriptures (Isaiah 27:1). Yet in Psalm 104:26, it is a creation which God made to play and frolic in the sea; and in the famous passage of Job 41, it is a picture of a creation of immense power which only God can contain...one which cannot be pierced by the darts or javelins or connivance of enemies. One who is “*king over all the sons of pride.*”

### **PLEASE PRAY:**

**\*That Israel will be given grace and expertise to harvest these two natural resources.**

**\*That the fields and the wells established there would be protected from attack from Israel’s enemies.**

**\*That believers will rise in the areas of government, commerce and media who influence Israel’s oversight over these resources to be one of integrity and humility...realizing that it**

is only the God of their creation who can allow them to be tamed for His purposes of goodness, righteousness and blessing to the children of men.

## **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 *Bo* (“Come—to Pharaoh! For I have made his heart and the heart of his servants heavy-with-stubbornness...” Everett Fox translation).

**TORAH: Exodus 10:1—13:16**

**HAFTARAH: Jeremiah 46:13-28**

**\*Exodus 10:3.** *“Thus says YHVH Elohei-ha’Ivrim (YHVH the Hebrews-God): ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Send My people that they may serve Me.’”*

As in Ex. 9:1, the LORD here identifies his Name *YHVH* and godhead *Elohim* with the Hebrews as a race—a people extending back many generations before the fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with whom He had identified Himself to Moses in the Burning Bush. He is thus also the God of the race which Pharaoh’s father had tried to exterminate 80 years previously (Ex 1:16). **PLEASE PRAY for an awakened awareness in Israel that it is this same God who identified Himself by Name with the Hebrew race to Pharaoh...who has miraculously kept it in existence for over 4000 years—and who still chooses to identify Himself with this race for good and not evil.**

**\*Exodus 10:28-29.** *“Then Pharaoh said to him, ‘Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!’” So Moses said, ‘You have spoken well. I will never see your face again.’”*

In Ex 7:1, the LORD says, *“See, I have made you Elohim to Pharaoh...”* The concept of finding light, victory and salvation in the LORD’s face runs throughout the Hebrew Scriptures (See Psalms 44:3, 80:3,7,19). Often, the word “face” is synonymous with the word “presence”. In Psalm 27:8-9, David’s response to the admonition *“Bakshu-Phanai!—Seek My Face!”* is a heartfelt, *“Your face O LORD will I seek...Do not hide your face from me...”* By rejecting Moses’ face, Pharaoh was rejecting the presence and life and hope of Moses’ God...and eventually God allowed him to be granted his request. **PLEASE PRAY: For secular,**

religious, Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox Jews to hear and respond to the call which God places in the hearts of all men, *“Bakshu-Phanai!—Seek my Face!”*

**\*Exodus 10:21-23.** *“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt...and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.’”*

*“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it...That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world”* (John 1:4-5,9). **PLEASE PRAY: that the darkness will be felt and hated—and that the true Light will shine into both Egypt and Israel, bringing illumination, hope and security to the inner dwellings of both of these peoples.**

**\*Exodus 12:2.** *“This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.”*

The “number” of the year in the Hebrew calendar (This year 5771) comes with the Feast of Trumpets in the Fall and is traditionally related to the season associated with the creation of the world. However, this month of “*Aviv*” (Deut. 16:1; also called “*Nisan*”) marks the “Beginning of Months” on the Hebrew religious calendar. This year it will begin on 5 April.

**\*Exodus 12:12-13.** *“For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt...and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am YHVH. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.”*

At the very beginning (see Ex. 4:22-23) YHVH had warned Pharaoh that refusal to release *His* “firstborn” Israel to serve Him, would result in the killing of his own firstborn. It was the LORD, not a mere ‘angel’, Who would pass through (Heb: *avar*) the land executing judgment; however, the word translated “pass over” in verse 13 (*pasach*) means to “skip” or “step over”—thus sparing them the judgment coming on all the other firstborn. **PLEASE PRAY: That this weekend when this passage will be read in synagogues—and at the Seder tables in April when it is read again in homes—that the message of the BLOOD of the Lamb which covers and diverts judgment would be imbued with supernatural revelation to Jews around the world. Pray that the Holy Spirit would move hearts to recognize the “Lamb of God, who carries away the sin of the world”—the Pesach Lamb who was “stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted...He was wounded for our transgressions...and by His stripes we are healed”** (Isaiah 53:4-5).

**\*Jeremiah 47:27.** *“But do not fear, O My servant Jacob, and do not be dismayed, O Israel! For behold, I will save you from afar, and your offspring from the land of their captivity; Jacob shall return, have rest and be at ease; No one shall make him afraid. Do not fear, O Jacob My servant,’ says the LORD, ‘For I am with you...’”*



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**[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 9-15 January *B'Shalach* (“In the sending away”—of the people by Pharaoh) will be, TORAH: Exodus 13:17—17:16; HAFTARAH: Judges 4:4—5:31]**