

ISRAEL PRAYER UPDATE

Glory of Zion International Ministries



PARASHA-MISHPATIM



Almond trees are blossoming in Jerusalem!

They are always the first to blossom, coming awake while other trees are still sleeping. Thus, the letters in the Hebrew word for “almond” are the same as those translated “to watch, to be wakeful, to persevere.”

“The word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘What do you see, Jeremiah?’ And I said, ‘I see a rod of an almond tree.’ Then the LORD said to me, ‘You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it.’”

“Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain.” (Psalm 127:1)

“Blessed is the man who listens to me [i.e. wisdom], watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. For those who find me find life and receive favour from the LORD.” (Proverbs 8:34).

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 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
(Jeremiah 34:8-22; 33:25-26)

NOTE: The Sabbath preceding the 1st of *Adar* (this year February 16th) is traditionally set apart for honoring the giving in ancient times of a “Shekel Tax” for the Tabernacle/Temple. On this Sabbath an additional Torah portion (Exodus 30:11-16) is read in synagogues; and a reading from II Kings mentioning “each man’s census money” often replaces the usual *Haftarah* reading from Jeremiah.

Mishpatim— “Judgments”



Last week's Portion began with the appointments of judges in Israel. The first three chapters of this week's readings provide these judges with guidelines for the working out of righteous judgments (*mishpatim*) in Israel's governance. They include laws and ordinances, with instructions for situations related to various moral issues and offenses. These might be seen as subheadings to the Ten Commandments of Chapter 20 (Instructions for the Priesthood related to its intercession between the people and heaven will come later in Exodus and through the entire Book of Leviticus.). Chapter 23 also contains sections regarding the rest (Sabbaths) God has provided—both for man, his animals, and for the land within which they will be living. There are instructions regarding the three “pilgrim feasts”, which will be observed once the land is conquered. And there are revelations and instructions pertaining to that conquest itself, including the extent of the land's future boundaries. In a remarkable passage in Chapter 24, YHVH calls Moses, Aaron and his two sons, and 70 elders of the people to a special personal meeting with Himself. At the last, His Glory rests on Mount Sinai and Moses goes up into the cloud to be with God for forty days and forty

nights. To the eyes of the Israelites, the glory of the LORD is “*as a consuming fire on the mountain top.*”

***Exodus 21:2.** “*If you buy a Hebrew servant...*” There are passages in this reading dealing with the fair treatment of servants or slaves (the Hebrew word is the same for either). They are instructions specifically for Israel and the circumstances she would encounter as a people set apart and with her God present with her. During this period it appears to have been permitted for a family beset by financial difficulties to sell their services to a fellow Hebrew. But such arrangements were to be administered within certain guidelines, and for a restricted period of time, with release coming on the seventh year (Israel’s failure to follow these guidelines is part of the subject of this week’s normal *Haftarah* in Jeremiah). Other passages in this reading deal with treatment of those brought into servitude after being captured on the battlefield (always excepting the nations within Canaan itself, which were under God’s judgment and not to be given quarter). In the New Covenant, instructions were given to believers regarding servants and their masters (Ephesians 6:5-9; I Peter 2:18-25), with a special reminder to masters that “*your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.*”

***Exodus 21:5-6 (NKJV).** “*But if the servant plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’ then his master shall bring him to the judges...*” The word here translated “judges” is actually Hebrew *Elohim* – “God”. The judgments made by Moses (Exodus 18:19) and by the “judges” set up at the counsel of Jethro 18:17-27 were considered to be those of God Himself (See also Deuteronomy 1:17a: “*You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man’s presence, for the judgment is God’s...*”).

***Exodus 22:21; 23:9.** “*You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him....since you yourselves know the feelings of a stranger, for you also were strangers in the land of Egypt.*” The word “stranger” is Hebrew *ger*, a “sojourner, temporary dweller, new-comer with no inherited rights” (Brown-Driver-Briggs 1616).

Israel is presently in a serious dilemma related to some 38,000 persons who migrated from Africa (mostly Eritrea and Sudan) and crossed into Israel through her border with the Sinai Peninsula between 2006 and 2012. At its height in 2010, the flux of those pouring into the land reached 1,300 a month. In 2014 Israel constructed a 150-mile long fence along that border, one which electrically alerts border security when it is breached; and the entrances have since stopped. Today around 90% of those immigrants live in southern Tel Aviv. They are considered illegal and are without a status and unable to obtain good jobs or societal benefits. These people claim to be seeking asylum from repressive, in some cases genocidal regimes. Israeli officials believe that the majority are actually “economic migrants”—entering Israel illegally in search of better way of life. Recently, the present government has begun enacting plans to deport large numbers of those they don’t believe qualify as refugees back to the African continent. It is a very complicated difficult and distressing situation. Many have already been here for over eight years, have begun to learn Hebrew, have raised children; all wish to become Israeli citizens. There is no doubt that many are legitimate refugees who could face terrible hardships if deported. It is also true that many are not. Israel is in need of showing mercy and humanitarianism. Yet, if Israel opens its borders to everyone who would like to take advantage of our economy and civil opportunities, this tiny and crowded country which feels a strong

responsibility that it maintain a Jewish majority would be flooded. Those in our present government who hold the authority over who may enter are presently ultra-Orthodox, who have a very narrow view of who should be allowed into the country. May the God of Israel guide and clarify clearly *who* are the sojourners He has brought to live in the midst of His land long side His returned chosen people Israel! To err here could bring judgment upon our nation.

PLEASE PRAY: for wisdom, mingled with compassion and the fear of the Lord amongst Israel's leaders regarding the continuing difficulties of illegal immigration to Israel, especially the crisis of the African refugees in Tel Aviv. Pray that those immigrants God is drawing to abide in His land will be welcomed and cared for here; that those being sent by the evil one to cause division will be kept out. That God's mercy and protection attend those who are sent away. Pray for the life of the Son to come into the peoples of this Land—so that the harmony of the Holy Spirit will rule over the Jews He has appointed to oversee His land—over the Arabs and others peoples the Lord appoints to live out their lives before Him in Israel.

***Exodus 22:22-24.** *“You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry, and My wrath will become hot...”* The plight of these people has always been and continues to be close to God's heart. *“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world”* (James 1:27).

***Exodus 22:28.** *“You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.”* We find it instructive that the Hebrew words for “revile” and “curse” are the same two words used in a warning relevant to the seed of Abraham in Genesis 12:3: *“I will bless those who bless you, and those who revile you, I will curse.”* “Cursing” is a solemn prerogative of the Most High.

PLEASE PRAY: for grace amongst believers in Israel to bless our leaders with intercession on their behalf—that, while not being blind to their faults, we will not curse them by reviling them with our words, either by mouth or on the internet. It is God who raises up authorities...it is to Him that we have recourse if they misbehave.

***Exodus 23:20.** *“Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Be on your guard before him and obey his voice, to not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him.”* Although the Hebrew word for “angel” can also mean “messenger” (some Jewish commentators even equate this angel with Moses himself), it is virtually certain that a supernatural being is referred to here. It is this being who will “bring them in” to the land (something which Moses will, alas, not ultimately be allowed to take part in). In this passage, God also mentions sending His “terror” ahead of Israel, along with “hornets” (vss 27, 28). The battle would be won “little by little” until Israel would “become fruitful and take possession of the Land” (vs. 30); and the LORD would ‘fix’ her boundaries (vs 31).

PLEASE PRAY: that Israel become again aware of the supernatural element which is required in her warfare. Pray for believers to receive revelation as how best to “be on their guard” for the voice of angels whose assignments from God include ministering on their behalf (Hebrews 1:14). Pray for patience regarding the battle, in which at times victory must be

accomplished “little by little” (Vs 30); and for an awareness that “fruitfulness” must precede taking full “possession of the Land” (Vs 30). Pray that Israel’s borders would be “fixed in God’s timing according to His Word (Vs 31).

***Exodus 23:25-26.** *“So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.”*

PLEASE PRAY: That the Body of Messiah in Israel will grasp these promises in faith in our own day.

***Exodus 24:6-8.** *“And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, ‘All that YHVH has said we will do, and be obedient.’ And Moses took the blood sprinkled it on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which YHVH has made with you according to all these words.”* Perhaps in this case the blood was sprinkled upon the seventy elders as representative of the million+ congregation of Israel. Hebrews 9:19-22 appears to quote from this passage to show that *“according to the Torah, almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission”—“But (Hebrews 9:11-15) Messiah came as High Priest of the good things to come...Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption...How much more shall the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? For this reason He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the First Covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”*

PLEASE PRAY: That through this same “Eternal Spirit” revelation would come to Jews that a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31) is come—in the blood of Messiah Yeshua (Luke 22:20) which has been shed for them and for all children of Adam.

***Exodus 24:9-11.** *“Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself, yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel; and they saw God, and they ate and drank.”* Twice in this passage we are told that these leaders of Israel “saw God”. Since “no one has seen God at any time”, but “He who has seen the Son has seen the Father”—we believe that this can only have been an encounter with the pre-incarnate Yeshua. There are two different Hebrew words used here for ‘saw’. The first (root: *ra’ah*) most generally means simply “to see”. The second (root: *ha’zah*) has more to do with “gazing upon”...in fact, it is often used in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew in a prophetic sense. It is this word which is used in Psalm 27:4, where the poet’s greatest longing is to dwell in the LORD’s house so as to “gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple.”

PLEASE PRAY: for leaders of present-day Israel to be granted to “see” the God of their father Israel/Jacob, and to have (and to take) opportunity to “gaze” at the beauty of His Risen Son. Pray for an opening of the eyes of leaders in the Body of Messiah in Israel to “see” prophetically. In ancient Israel, these included worship leaders such as Heman (I Chron. 25:5),

Asaph (II Chron. 29:30) and Jeduthan (II Chron. 35:15) who were referred to as “seers” and whose descendants ‘prophesied’ on their instruments (I Chron. 25:1).

**Exodus 24:17. “The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.”*

PLEASE PRAY: Hebrews 12:28-29 into our lives as believers here in Israel—even as we would pray the same for you: *“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”*

**Jeremiah 33:25-26. “Thus says the LORD: ‘If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed order of heaven and earth, then I will reject the offspring of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them.’”*

PLEASE PRAY: For leaders of God’s choosing to arise into the offices of leadership in the Land—those in whom will awaken the lineage with the anointing, the courage and wisdom, and passion after God that David the king had in His day.



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[The readings for next week (11-17 February 2018) are called *T’rumah*—
“Donation”: TORAH: Exodus 25:1—28:19; HAFTARAH: I Kings 5:12—6:13]

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