

## *Prayer Update From Israel (March 12, 2012)*



200-year old *Megilat-Esther* Scroll of Esther on Parchment.

Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu presented President Barak Obama with a gift of a miniature Scroll of Esther during their meeting in Washington last week. We are grateful for you prayers. We believe that the Lord's hand was on Mr Netanyahu both in his meeting with Stephen Harper, in his meetings with President Obama and in his powerful speeches before the AIPAC Convention and before Congress. Please pray a protective rear-guard behind him...and clarity in his judgments on the pressing, critical issues facing him right now and in the near future.

### 1. WHOSE REPORT WILL YOU BELIEVE?

*“For You will light my lamp; the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness...He delivers me from my enemies, You also lift me up above those who rise against me; you have delivered me from the violent [Hebrew: hamas] man” (Psalm 18:28, 48).*

*“Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty. And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness” (Psalm 45:3-4).*

The following four titles for news stories were available for clicking, all on the same page at news.yahoo.com yesterday (Sunday) afternoon at 2:00: **“Israeli strikes kill two Palestinians in Gaza”**, **“Israeli airstrikes kill 15 Gaza militants”**, **“Israel kills five more Gaza militants; rockets hit Israel”**, **“Israeli airstrikes killed a 12-year-old boy and a militant in the Gaza Strip early Sunday and Gaza rocket squads fired salvos into southern Israel, officials said, deepening the worst round of violence between the sides in more than a year.”** At one point this morning, the only mention on CNN.com regarding the conflict was headed: **“Israel Airstrikes enter Fourth Day in Gaza.”** (All bold-face emphases ours). **Israeli, Israeli, Israel, Israeli, Israel...** is there any way, whatever the content of the news stories themselves, that an impression would not begin to work its way into the subconscious of many readers, an impression that, whatever is

happening in Gaza, the *Israeli* military must be the initiator, must be the ‘mover and shaker’, must be doing the killing; any response on the part of the besieged Palestinians is to the continued “Israeli strikes”—since those are what are heading all the news reports.

Why do we not see articles beginning, “*Militant Gazans fire mortars and Grad rockets into Israel*”? *As of noon on Monday, over 170 rockets have poured into Israel from the Strip since Friday.* Nor did they only begin in ‘retaliation’ for an Israeli attack on Friday which killed Zuhair Qaisi, secretary general the Popular Resistance Committee in Gaza, an arch-terrorist who was in the final stages of planning and coordinating a huge multi-fronted assault into Israel via the Sinai peninsula. There had been random, unprovoked rocket attacks rockets for weeks; in fact, two mortar shells fell into Israel immediately preceding the offensive to eliminate the terrorist leader. For months (actually years) Israel has repeatedly appealed to the United Nations to condemn the constant attacks, but to no avail.

On Friday eight Israelis were injured in the fusillade, one seriously. On Saturday, by the grace and mercies of God, the Mayor of Beersheba cancelled all classes in his city for Sunday, with other school districts in the region following suit (the angels are “*ministering spirits sent forth to minister on behalf of those who will inherit salvation*”). On Sunday, a work and school day in Israel, as around 200,000 Israeli children stayed home, a Grad rocket slammed into the courtyard of a Beersheba school and exploded! Around the same time, another Grad struck the middle of a residential neighborhood, damaging 15 homes. Although there are increasing numbers of wounded, miraculously, as of this writing, no Israelis have been killed. For this we are thankful. We are also thankful that Israel’s “Iron Dome” rocket defense system has been proving effective, intercepting a large percentage of those missiles it has been aimed at. It was a little heartening yesterday to see a news story, “*US, EU condemn rocket fire in south.*” In an Israeli paper; on the international scene, the usual continues...a glance at the Middle East section of the online *London Telegraph* as I write, reveals the following headline, “*Middle East Quartet to meet as Gaza death toll climbs to 21.*” The implication: the “Quartet” is meeting to try and slow down the slaughter being meted out on Gazans by their enemy. No mention of the 170 rockets, or of the fact that the great majority of the 21 dead were militants caught near their rocket launchers.

**PLEASE PRAY:**

**\*That the LORD strengthen the bars of our gates, bless our children within us, make peace on our borders, and supply the provision that we need (Psalm 147:13-14).**

**\*For Israel’s leaders to receive divine counsel in what to do. There is no doubt that the armament and the galvanizing to action in Gaza is being fueled by Iran. At the same time, there are thousands of much more powerful missiles on the northern border with Lebanon (also under the supervision of Iran), and in Syria under the command of a beleaguered President who might stop at nothing (even an attack on Israel) to restore himself into the graces of the Muslim world. An Israeli incursion into the Gaza Strip will no doubt trigger highly publicized images of civilian casualties, besides resulting in much death and injury on both sides. It could also so draw on Israeli forces as to make us vulnerable on other fronts. Yet this continued breaching of the peace and sovereignty of our nation cannot be allowed to continue.**

**\*For protection of believers in harm's way in south-west Israel...for courage and unction from the Holy Spirit...that their hearts and minds be guarded by God's unfathomable shalom in Messiah Yeshua (Phil. 4:7).**

**\*For discernment amongst believers in Israel and around the world, that they will not be deceived by false implications of headlines in the secular press. *"Whose report will we believe? We will believe the report of the Lord!"***

**\*Pray against discouragement and cynicism when false reports gain ascendancy. Pray that God would raise up godly and courageous journalists who will be thrust into the media to displace powers of darkness and falsehood.**

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## **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.*

## **THIS WEEK'S IS A LONGER THAN USUAL PARASHA, WITH THREE SEPARATE READINGS TAKING PLACE IN THE SYNAGOGUES.**

The regular readings for this week (11-17 March) are a "double reading: I. *VaYakhel*—"Gathered" II. *P'kudei*—Inventory/Reckoning. III. *Parashat Parah*—Regarding the Red Heifer. This special reading related to *cleansing* is added on the Sabbath preceding next week's *Shabbat HaChodesh* (24 March) heralding the 1<sup>st</sup> of *Nisan* and the beginning of the Hebrew religious new year (Exodus 12:1-2).

### **I. *VaYakhel***

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

**HAFTARAH: I Kings 7:13-26, 40-50**

\*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 and subsequent passages. But here certain details have been added: for instance, unlike the earlier passages, this one makes specific mention of *women* : "*Each woman who is a gifted artisan*" (35:25-26). Verse 29 is careful to mention both "*men and women*" whose hearts moved them to volunteer materials and 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*—but at the moving of the Holy Spirit within their hearts.**

\*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 (35:34) 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.**

\*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 “*Huram-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!**

## **II. *P’kudei***

**TORAH: Exodus 38:21-40:38**

**HAFTARAH: I Kings 7:51-8:21**

**\*THIS TORAH PORTION** ends with the completion of the work of the Tabernacle (39:32), its erection (40:17), and the coming of the manifest Presence of the LORD to fill it with His Glory—that He might dwell among His people in their travel to Canaan. Similarly, the *Haftarah* ends with the Ark of the Covenant being brought up to the new Temple from the City of David, being placed in its inner court—and with the cloud of God’s glory filling the House of the LORD (I Kings 8:11). **PLEASE PRAY for an awakened longing in Israel for the Presence of the LORD to return to His Land. Pray for grace among us as Believers in preparing the way for His Glory. And pray for revelation among Israelis that preceding Messiah’s physical**

return to the Land, it is possible for His glorious Spirit to take up residence within the individual hearts of all of His people—to commune with them and encourage them, and to lead, even as did the cloud and the fire of His presence in the wilderness.

*“Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land” (Psalm 85:9).*

*“ ‘For I,’ says the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her [i.e. Jerusalem], and I will be the glory in her midst’” (Zechariah 2:5).*

**\*IN THE HAFTARAH,** I Kings 8:8 takes care to point out that in Solomon’s Temple, the poles used to transport the Ark of the Covenant were so prominent that they extended out of the Inner Sanctuary of the Temple so as to be visible in the Holy Place. The LORD’s instructions in the Torah for carrying the Ark had evidently been viewed as ‘lesser details’ by David when he sought to bring it up to Jerusalem from *Kiryat Yearim* (II Samuel 6:3), resulting in the death of one of his men when the ox pulling the cart stumbled. **PLEASE PRAY that we be attentive to the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27)—realizing that details are just as critically important as what seem to be the ‘big pictures.’**

### **III. PARASHAT-PARAH**

**TORAH: Numbers 19:1-22**

**HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 36:16-38**

This special reading before the beginning of the Hebrew religious new year (24 March) focuses on the necessity of our being cleansed and purified from the curse of death. The Numbers passage (which will be read again later in the year) relates the ordinance of the “red heifer”. This involved preparation of holy water which would decontaminate someone who had come in contact with a dead body. The companion reading from Ezekiel includes the wonderful promise, *“I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.”* (Ezekiel 36:25-28).

**PLEASE PRAY:** For conviction from the Holy Spirit that we all have been contaminated by death and are in need of cleansing; That God has provided the cleansing necessary, and can also replace our hard sinful hearts with clean, living ones; That He has sent His Spirit to dwell inside of us to guide us. *That when Israel awakens to these truths and allows God to work them within her, THEN she will be able to dwell securely in the land to which she has been returned!*



*Martin & Norma Sarvis  
Jerusalem*

[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week (18-24 March) is called: *VaYikra*—“And He Called (to Moses)”: TORAH: Leviticus 1:1—6:7; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 43:21—44:23: *PARASHAT-HACHODESH* (Special readings for the Head of the first month (Nisan) of the Biblical New Year: TORAH: Exodus 12:1-20; HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 45:18—46:15.]

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