

## Prayer Update From Israel (March 6, 2012)



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

### PURIM

This coming Thursday (beginning sundown Wednesday evening) is *Purim*—the day Jews celebrate their remarkable deliverance in 483 B.C. Persia (present day Iran) from a plot to exterminate them. The Scroll (book) of Esther will be read—there are *Purim* plays and costumes, and special pastries and desserts and wine. In most of the Jewish world, *Purim* is celebrated on the 14<sup>th</sup> of *Adar* (Thursday March 8th this year)—but in Jerusalem, Jaffa and other ‘walled cities’ (like ancient *Shushan*—“Susa”; see Esther 9:18-19), it will be celebrated the following day.

Although these are days for rejoicing and feasting (Esther 9:18-19)—they are preceded by days of soberness of spirit and fasting. Esther 9:31 tells of Mordechai and Queen Esther prescribing times for fasting and lamentation, recalling those which the Queen had called for her Jewish subjects when their entire race was in danger of annihilation and she was preparing herself to seek the favor of the King. *Purim* is a season when we are especially made aware of the *Spirit of Amalek*, with which our Lord continues to war, from generation to generation (Ex. 17:15-16). The Amalekites were a real people, who throughout the Hebrew Scriptures epitomize and symbolize the spirit of anti-Semitism. They were Israel’s first enemies after leaving Egypt. They preyed on her, picking off the weak straggling in the rear (Deut. 25:17-19). God grants “no quarter” to those who threaten His Covenant purposes; their remembrance was to be “blotted out from under heaven.” When King Saul failed to do this (I Sam. 15), his kingdom was torn away from him, and, indeed, it was an Amalekite who in the end claimed to have killed him (II Sam. 1:6-10). Centuries later, it would be *Haman*, a descendant of *Agag* (the Amalekite king whom Saul had spared) who, as recorded in the Book of Esther, would contrive to ignite the first Holocaust. With the hatred Satan has for Israel and her redemptive call, it is indeed a divine miracle flying over her (Exodus 17:15) which has sustained her and brought her, still an entity and with her ancient language restored, back to her native Land.

**This spring, the Spirit of Amalek has again arisen in Persia (Iran), whose leaders, having again prophesied annihilation of the Jews, are working furiously to devise weapons capable of bringing their prophecies to fulfillment.**

**Tuesday evening (March 6<sup>th</sup> at sundown) observant Jews begin a one-day fast. We would encourage you to take this season seriously. Read through the Book of Esther; perhaps the Lord may lead you to join with us in the fast. This week we feel it appropriate to again print the prayer points by Rick Ridings which were presented in last week's Update:**

### **How Should We Pray?**

**1. Let us pray that the Mordecais and Esthers of our time will hear the call of the Holy Spirit concerning the urgency of the hour, and will not be distracted or lulled into slumber by a false sense of security.**

**2. Let us pray for continued success of the covert war against Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon. On Nov. 8, 2011, I received a vision in one of our watches here in Succat Hallel in Jerusalem. I saw something resembling a Tower of Babel being built in Iran, representing a working together of various nations to stand against God. I sensed it represented their nuclear weapons program. As they were bringing final stones to place on top, then lightning from heaven struck it, and the top level of stones fell off (not all), producing a setback to their nuclear efforts. Then waves coming from the worship in houses of prayer in the Middle East washed away sand in Iran, and uncovered and exposed hidden things. I felt this vision was confirmed by news reports on Nov. 11 of a great explosion at an Iranian top-secret, military facility, which "shook windows" 30 km. away in Tehran.**

**Let us believe for much confusion and division upon the demonic powers bent on destroying Israel (2 Chron. 20).**

**3. Let us pray for a clear understanding to come to the decision-makers in Jerusalem and Washington, DC to do the right thing at the right time. (Esther 7:3-6)**

**4. Let us proclaim a reversal of every Satanic decree to destroy Israel, and that "Haman" will be hung upon his own gallows. (Esther 7:9, 10; Ps. 33:10-12)**

**5. For Iran (Persia), let us pray for the Lord to bring shame upon His enemies in such a way that they will begin to seek the Name of the Lord, to know Who is the True and Living God (See Psalm 83, especially verse 16).**

**6. For Israel, let us pray that the God of Esther will once again bring great deliverance and joy to His ancient people, and that they will give all the glory to Him (Esther 9:20-22).**

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**2. THE RAINS CONTINUE...*"Confirming His Inheritance."***

***"The earth shook; the heavens also dropped rain at the presence of God...You, O God, sent a plentiful rain, whereby You confirmed Your inheritance when it was weary" (Psalm 68:8-9).***

In a recent speech, Iran's Deputy Defense Minister Ahmad Vahidi declared that, *"Any act by the Zionist regime against Iran will bring about its destruction...Iran's warriors are ready and willing to wipe Israel off the map."* Vahidi then resorted to taunts, *"Israel is weaker than it has ever been and its army is tired and humiliated..."*

We believe that the minister would do well to heed what is said in Psalm 68 about God's people when they are tired. In that Psalm David calls on God to *"arise and His enemies be scattered"* (vs. 1). This is the God who *"rides on the clouds"* and whose *"name is YAH"* (vs. 4); who *"went out before Your people when You marched through the wilderness"* (vs. 7). He is the God *"whose chariots are twenty thousand, even thousands of thousands"*, who has *"ascended on high, and led captivity captive"* (vs. 18), who will *"wound the head of His enemies"* (vs. 21), and *"Whose excellence is over Israel, and His strength is in the clouds"...* *"You, O God, sent a plentiful rain, whereby You confirmed Your inheritance when it was weary"* (vss 34, 9).

The rains this past week have been astonishing. The Sea of Galilee rose over 20 cm at the close of the week and five more on Sunday. In the past five days the Negev desert-lands to the south received 100 millimeters of rain—an area where for the past six years the average *annual* rainfall has only been 200-240 mm. There has been abundant snowfall in the north, and on Friday morning for close to an hour there was a blinding snowstorm in Jerusalem.

*At a time when war-clouds appear to be quickly forming round and about Zion, might it be that the LORD, who "is exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion", who "will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem" (Zech. 1:14,17)—that this LORD hears the threats against His people and is, this spring, sending plentiful rains to confirm His inheritance? We are joyous and ask that you join us in thanksgiving for the rain...yet, at the same time, with a certain sobriety as we sense the storm for what our God may be preparing us, and submit our trust to the One "whose strength is in the clouds."*

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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.*

The readings for this week (4-10 March) are called *Ki Tisa*—"When you Raise" (*"When you raise the head (i.e. Take a census) of the children of Israel..."*):

**TORAH:** Exodus 30:11—34:35

**HAFTARAH: I Kings 18:1-39**

**ADDITIONAL READING FOR PURIM, 8 March 2012: *Migilat-Esther* (Scroll/Book of Esther)**

**NOTES**

This week's readings encompass far more than we can but touch on here. The Torah Portion centers on the episode with the Golden Calf, the Haftarah on the confrontation between the prophet of YHVH (Elijah) and those of Baal on Mount Carmel. At issue in all of the readings is the Glory of God and man's relation to it.

**\*Exodus 31:2-5**. *"See, I have called by name Betzalel...and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom in intelligence, in knowledge, and in all craftsmanship, to design artistic works...and I, indeed I, have appointed with him Aholiav...and in the heart of all gifted artisans [Heb: wise-hearts] I have put wisdom to make all I have commanded."*

The name *Betzalel* means, "In the shadow of God." *Aholiav* means, "Father is my tent." The safe place for all creative beings is under the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1)—within the tent of our Father (Psalm 27:5). It is He who desires to fill artists (there are many artistic skills mentioned here) with His Spirit to "make all that He commands." Tragically, at the very time these instructions were being given to Moses on the mountain, Aaron (most certainly not moving under "the shadow of God"), was being coerced by the desires of those around him to use his creative gifts in fashioning an idol (Ex. 32:4). Rather than being used by the Holy Spirit to aid the people in worshipping the true God, the creative fashioning of his hands would itself be worshipped. **PLEASE PRAY: for godly "Betzalels" and "Aholiavs" to be nurtured and brought forth in Israel today, that they will move in a humble awareness that their creative gifts, wisdom, intelligence, knowledge and craftsmanship are from God, to fulfill a work for His glory—His is their high destiny. Pray that they seek to be filled by His spirit—and resist the spirit of the world which seeks to divert the creativity of man (who was made in the Image of a creative God) away from honoring his Maker. Pray that they realize that He knows them and (as with Betzalel) calls them by name!**

**\*Exodus 32:11-13**. *"Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God [Hebrew: 'yearned after the face of YHVH his God'] and said, 'LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people...Turn from Your fierce wrath and relent from this harm to Your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, "I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your seed, and they shall inherit it forever.'"* In Exodus 32:32 Moses continues to stand in the gap, pleading that they be forgiven for their sin. **PLEASE PRAY: for spiritual leaders to have the zeal, unction, love and grace to seek the face of God on behalf of errant Israel; to prevail in intercession to turn away His just wrath that His eternal will for her will be fulfilled on earth as it is in heaven.**

**\*Exodus 32:19**. *"So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain."*

Pray for the souls (Psalm 25:1, 20) of leaders—that they not be controlled by their emotions—that they allow the Holy Spirit to work His self-control. There is a place for godly zeal, but the *“anger of man does not work the righteousness of God”* (James 1:20). It would be an eruption of this same anger some time later which would in the end bar Moses from entering the Promised Land.

**\*Exodus 33:7-11.** *“Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the ‘tent of meeting’. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the LORD went out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp...And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tent, and talked with Moses...So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.”*

In Exodus 25:22, the LORD had given instructions regarding the disposition of the *Mishkan* (Dwelling Place/Tabernacle) so that He might meet at appointed times with a representative of His people. But here, Moses prepares a place so that he *or anyone else* might choose to make his own appointed meetings with God—and God honored those times with His presence. Although His face would not be seen (vs. 20), He nevertheless met face to face with those who chose to draw near. Alas, besides Moses, only Joshua appears to have taken advantage of this wonderful opportunity. **PLEASE PRAY: For Israeli believers, in all the rush and hurry, to go beyond ‘head knowledge’ of the Law and the Prophets and the Gospel—and avail themselves of the privilege of setting aside a ‘place’ for private, intimate times Face to Face with God!**

**\*Exodus 33:15.** *“Then he said to Him, ‘If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here...”* Here the word “presence” is literally “Face”. Psalm 44:3 says, *“It was not by our sword that we took the land, nor did our arm bring us the victory; it was your right hand, your arm, and the Light of Your Face, for You loved us!”*

**\*Exodus 33:13, 18.** *“Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people....Please, show me Your glory.”* **PLEASE PRAY: for leaders in Israel (both believers and those still secular), to like Moses be moved to call on the LORD for guidance to be shown His way. Pray that we find grace in His sight, that our leadership will be fueled and heartened by longings after his Glory and glimpses of His Beauty (Psalm 27:4).**

**\*Exodus 33:21-22.** *“And the LORD said, ‘Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.”* Centuries later, the prophet Elijah fleeing from the wrath of Jezebel would come to this same mountain, and the Hebrew of I Kings 19:9 says He went into *the* cave to spend the night—and there the Word of the LORD came to him. Jewish teachers have traditionally identified this cave with that same “cleft” in which Moses had been placed by God.



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**[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week (11-17 March) is a “double-reading”:  
*VaYakhel*—gathered (“*Then Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together...*”) and will include TORAH: Exodus 35:1-38:20; HAFTARAH: I Kings 7:13-26,  
40-50; and *P’kudei*—inventory/reckoning, and will include TORAH: 38:21-40:38;  
HAFTARAH: I Kings 7:51-8:21.]**

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