

ISRAEL PRAYER UPDATE

Glory of Zion International Ministries



PARASHA—*VaYakhel—P'kudei*



“Thus says Adonai YHVH: This also I will let the house of Israel ask me to do for them: to increase their people like a flock. Like the flock of holy things, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am YHVH.”

(Ezekiel 36:37-38; See Parasha Below)

** We are in a season of “gates” being opened in the Spirit here in Israel. (The present Hebrew year ends in the Hebrew letter “het”, which often symbolizes a door or gate.) We sensed these gates beginning to open last fall when a remnant of the believing leadership here in Israel “took its place” in hosting a delegation of over 800 from the far islands of the world who desired to gather in Israel, joining with their “elder brothers and sisters” to welcome the King of Glory for his imminent return to Zion. We believe another gate was opened when earlier this year women from around the nation gathered at Magdala on the Sea of Galilee, in a call for the Daughter of Zion to rise in hope and take her place in the Land. This past Wednesday, many Messianic Jewish leaders gathered during the “Fast of Esther” in a solemn assembly in Jerusalem with a desire to “remove the stones...clear the way for the people to go through the gates” (Isaiah 62:10), chief among these “stones” being the reproach of Israel having denied the coming of her Messiah and turned His name into a curse. Even as the prophet Daniel, as the 70th year of Israel’s captivity was approaching, stood before God confessing the sins and reproach of his people, with the 70th anniversary of Israel’s rebirth approaching, these men and women stood united in Jerusalem, confessing the sin of rejecting the*

coming of the Holy One, and crying out for mercy, redemption...that the reproach in mercy be removed, and a way opened for the Words of salvation, redemption and restoration to be activated among our people Israel. We believe this gathering to have been of historical importance...that another gate has opened. And we see each of these gates as necessary and opening the way for the next.

A recent prophetic Word which resonates with us regards another gate beginning to open—a gate of revelation and activation of the prophecies in Ezekiel 36. We expect to return much to this in future Updates. This amazing chapter deals with the “Mountains of Israel”, which is geographically Judea-Jerusalem-Samaria, more commonly known in the nations as the “West Bank”. It is in this area that God has declared He will deal severely with nations which have called for it to become an “inheritance” of peoples other than those to whom He has bequeathed it by covenant. It is here that He has promised to bring back from the nations and to plant the descendants of Israel (Jacob); it is here that they will be convicted of their sin, that they will be sprinkled with clean water and have their hearts softened to know Who is their true Lord and God. Yet, how could this begin to take place if a remnant of this people have not come before God to confess their people’s sin, to call for mercy and for the way to be reopened? And a remnant from the Nations willing to enter with us into travail that this new may come forth?

PLEASE PRAY:

*** That God will continue to open His way of redemption and restoration for His people in Israel...and the way for His Son’s return.**

*** That the Body of Messiah in the Land will in humility and unity hear and follow what the Spirit is saying to the congregations.**

*** Read through Ezekiel 36.** (We find it remarkable that this chapter happens to be the special reading from the Prophets in this week’s Parashah!) **Ask God to open understanding and guidance in how to intercede for God’s Kingdom to come in Israel and the world through activation in the timing of God of the prophesied truths recorded there.**

From Norma

Arise, Shine, for your Light has come!

(Isaiah 60:1)

The name “Isaiah” in Hebrew means, ‘The LORD is salvation.’ Central to the message of the book bearing his name (written over 700 years before the birth of Yeshua), is the declaration to Israel of the coming of her Messiah. (Interestingly, the Hebrew roots forming this name are the same as those in the name *Yeshua*— “Jesus”.) We find it fascinating the way this book and its message have happened to surface and to be highlighted at significant times in the modern history of the nation of

Israel. Here are a few!

In 1947 the complete Scroll of Isaiah was among seven ancient scrolls discovered by three Bedouin shepherds in Qumran Cave #1 near the Dead Sea. A few fragments are missing, but otherwise it is complete. How interesting, that it was discovered just before the modern State of Israel was born! The Book is filled with Scriptures about Israel and her significance—

“ ‘Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children. Shall I bring to the time of birth and not cause delivery?’ says the LORD.” (Is. 66:8-9)

Today, this precious scroll is stored at the Shrine of the Book in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, underground in a highly protected environment so that the parchment does not further deteriorate. A facsimile is mounted under glass at ground level for public viewing.

In 2008, on the 60th anniversary of the Modern State of Israel, the original fragile scroll was brought to the surface and placed on display for the public. Its two sections were laid out in two cases, with special UV- filtered lighting and exceptionally heightened security. The display proved so popular that it was extended, lasting over three months. Visiting this was quite an emotional experience for us. We were actually viewing an over 2000-year-old hand-copied scroll of Isaiah, penned on that piece of parchment many years before the Savior of whom it prophesied would come into the world. It was written with modern Hebrew lettering...we will never forget how as we were looking over it, suddenly the words of Isaiah 60:1 leapt out at us, *Kumi ori ki va orekh*— “*Arise, Shine, for your Light has come!*” Because, except for the guards, we were in the room alone, while viewing it, we were able to pray over this precious Word, for the salvation of our nation...that the veil will be removed and they will see their Light which is come!

Just over a week ago, as Israel readies for her 70th anniversary, Isaiah again was in the news! Archeologists released the news that a clay seal was found near the Temple Mount which may well have belonged to the prophet Isaiah! The name ‘Isaiah’ is clearly visible on this artifact. A second word appears, but for the last letter which is missing and may have been chipped away, to spell the ancient Hebrew for “prophet.” This seal or *bulla* was discovered ten feet away from the place where a seal of Hezekiah was found in 2015. One archeologist commented, ‘*You are looking at the first archeological reference of the prophet Isaiah outside of the Bible. It is amazing!*’

I find it so interesting that in 1947 as Israel was going through birth-pangs, and 2008 at Israel’s 60th birthday, the *book* of Isaiah was highlighted in a special way in Israel. And now, the prophet himself is in the news!

Let us pray that Israel, as she enters into this significant year will be illumined to know ‘*The LORD is Salvation!*’ Let us pray that many will have a revelation of the suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, who bore away her sin.

‘For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given...’

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 Parashah for this week 4-10 March 2018 is a “Double Reading”:

I. *VaYakhel*— “And He Assembled”:

TORAH: Exodus 35:1—38:20

2. *P’kudei*—“Accountings of”

3. *Shabbat Parah*:

TORAH: Numbers 19:1-22

HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 36:16-38

SHABBAT PARAH. This is one of four special Shabbats preceding Pesach/Passover which contain an additional Torah reading and a replacement for the usually-read *Haftarah* reading. It is called *Parah* (Cow), and recalls the ritual involving the ashes of a red heifer for purification from defilement by death. The special *Haftarah* from Ezekiel 36 recounts God’s judgment upon His people for their uncleanness, but also prophecies His return of them to their own Land, his sprinkling of clean water on them and giving them a new heart and new spirit.

VaYakhel

Exodus 35:1-38:20

*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 (*T’rumah*) and subsequent passages. But here certain details have been clarified. For instance, unlike the earlier passages, this one makes specific mention of *women*. Verses 35:25-26 refer to “*Each woman who is a gifted*

artisan” and “*whose hearts stirred with wisdom.*” Verse 29 is careful to mention both “*men and women*” whose hearts moved them to volunteer materials and to 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* (an obedience to gain favor)—but at the moving of the Holy Spirit within their hearts.

****Exodus 35:1-3. “...These are the words which YHVH has commanded you to do: ‘Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to YHVH. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day.’”***

Attempts to observe the prohibition related to fire in the last verse of this passage continue amongst many observant Jews today, in some cases reaching extremes which, to our understanding, go far beyond the original intent of the prohibition. From the time the Shabbat Lights are lit just before sundown on Friday until candles are again kindled at *Havdalah* at the close of Saturday, no lights are to be kindled by Jews. Electric timers are placed on light switches and stoves so that the owners will not be guilty of lighting a fire (i.e. initiating an electric spark by flipping a switch). This is also the reason religious Jews don’t drive on Shabbat (starting a car involves making the battery produce a spark to ignite the engine). Pressing a button at a streetlight in order to cross the street also initiates a “spark”, as does pressing a button in an elevator (“kosher” hotels and many fancy apartment buildings in Israel are equipped with “Shabbat Elevators,” which are set to unceasingly go up and down automatically throughout the Sabbath). We do not mock the earnestness of those who genuinely feel it to be God’s will, and who are trying to please Him by observing these strictures. But we do believe them to be misguided; that in some instances, such prohibitions slip into a category which Yeshua condemned in Matthew 23:4—that of heavy burdens not intended by God being laid on people’s shoulders by religious leaders, rules which often become mere works for show.

The context for this lone passage about lighting a fire on the Sabbath is God’s releasing of instructions for the construction of a place for His habitation among His people—the Mishkan— Dwelling Place—the Tabernacle. It was a construction of craftsmanship requiring all the creative, “artistic” gifts, energies and skills of which humankind (made in the image of God) is capable. ***Yet the fashioning of this Holy place with all of its Holy furnishings was not to cancel out the pattern set by the Master Artist when He Himself fashioned the universe.*** He worked “creatively” for six days, then ceased work and was refreshed on the seventh (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 31:17). Much of the work being described in these chapters would require building a fire to smelt and fashion the metals—melting, bending, shaping and forming everything, from Cherubim of gold, to tools, to ornaments, to bolts and pins of brass. Making the fire involved a lot of work—finding, gathering and chopping the wood, then kindling the flame with a friction method involving much exertion (The one

record we have of judgment coming on an individual for breaking this law is found in Numbers 15:32, where the offense was specifically for gathering wood on the Sabbath) . **The joyous sacrifice of yielding up one’s gifts and skills to God for “holy work” must also include respect for His “times and seasons” in exercising those gifts, chief amongst them being what He *first* called “holy”—the Seventh Day (Genesis 2:3).**

***Exodus 35:36.** *“And He has put it in his heart the ability to teach, in him and Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan.”* 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 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.

P'kudei

Exodus 38:21—40:38

***THIS TORAH PORTION** carefully describes the concluding stages of constructing the Tabernacle, even down to itemizing the amount of precious metals used. It is noteworthy that neither in this account of finishing the work, nor in last week’s account of beginning it, are the *Urim and Thumim* (Exodus 28:29-30) mentioned. This suggests that they were not “fashioned” by the creative skills of men, but given by God to be placed in the Breastplate of Judgment. The Portion then 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* which usually would be read with this Torah Portion (I Kings 7:51—8:21) ends with the Ark of the Covenant, centuries later, being brought up from the City of David to the new Temple built by Solomon, with its being placed in the Temple’s inner court, and with the *cloud of God’s glory filling the House of the LORD* (I Kings 8:11).

Shekinah

Both of the usual readings for this week have to do with completing preparations of a place—and then the *coming* of God’s Presence to dwell among His people. Although it does not appear in Scripture, a Hebrew word sometimes used for the manifestation of the glory of His Presence on Earth is *Sh'khinah*, or in English: **“Shekinah.”** It is related to the word *shakhan* which we discussed several weeks ago, when we read in Exodus 25:8 of God’s desire to *shokhen*—to *dwell closely* with, to *neighbor* with His people. And of His delight that they should so also desire for *Him* to be among them, that they would willingly sacrifice to prepare a *mishkan* (tabernacle)—a place for Him to dwell. In this week’s Parashah, the Glorious Presence—the *Shekinah* of God—*comes* into the place prepared for it. There would be a tragic time, many years later, when that Presence would depart

from its *mishkan* (Ezekiel 11:23). It has been a longing within the Jewish soul ever since that it return. The *Siddur*, an ancient Hebrew prayer book still used in Synagogues today, contains the following prayer:

Our Eyes shall behold Your return with mercy to Zion. Blessed are you, LORD, that brings back His Shekinah to Zion.

In parts of the Body of Messiah today, one may hear of a longing for the coming of the *Shekinah*—the manifest presence of the Glory of God. This can be of course a blessed longing (Moses cried, “*Show me your glory!*”). In welcoming *Shekinah*—we are not merely calling for some “glorious” experience or manifestation—we are instead responding in our hearts to *His* desire to *shokhen*—to dwell among us!

“I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them. I am YHVH their God” (Exodus 29:45).

“And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of Hosts has sent Me to you.” (Zechariah 2:11).

“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).

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 (Ephesians 2:22)—to commune with them and encourage them, and to lead, even as did the cloud and the fire of His Presence in the wilderness.

SHABBAT PARAH

TORAH: Numbers 19:1-22

HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 36:16-38

The additional Torah reading from Numbers 19 deals with the contamination taking place when one comes into contact with a dead human body. For cleansing, a red cow was burned and its ashes mixed with living (flowing) water which was then sprinkled upon the contaminated one, making him or her clean. Yeshua came as a holy sacrifice, and to in His own body defeat Death, cleansing us with a far holier sprinkling, “For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 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?” (Hebrews 9:13-14).

THIS WEEK’S SPECIAL HAFTARAH, EZEKIEL 36:16-38, DEALS WITH THIS SAME HOLY SPRINKLING!

We find it especially useful in helping us to pray for Israel as regards the contested “territories” of Judea and Samaria, which she is being pressured to release to be converted permanently into a Muslim state in which no Jews would be allowed to dwell.

All of the prophecies in this reading are centered on an area called “The Mountains of Israel” (Ezekiel 36:1), which exactly constitute this contested area.

PLEASE PRAY

FOR THOSE JEWISH SETTLERS CURRENTLY LIVING IN THESE AREAS, THAT THEY BE GRANTED REVELATION OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH COMES IN MESSIAH YESHUA. THIS PASSAGE STRONGLY IMPLIES THAT IT IS ONLY WHEN THEY RECEIVE THE CLEANSING WHICH HE OFFERS THAT THEY WILL BE ENABLED PERMANENTLY TO “DWELL IN THE LAND.”

Ezekiel 36:24. *“For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then 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 36:31. *“Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations... Thus says Adonai YHVH: ‘On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt.’”*

Ezekiel 36:37. *“Thus says Adonai YHVH: ‘I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am YHVH.’”*

PLEASE PRAY: For grace for Israelis to come to a place that they desire and enquire to be a healthy and increasing “flock” of God. That they will long for *“the God of peace, who brought up our Lord Yeshua from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant (Hebrews 13:20).* That they will come to know that Yeshua is the LORD (Yehovah)—that He and His Father are One.



Martin & Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem

[The readings for next week 11-17 March are called *VaYikra*—“And He Called”. TORAH: Leviticus 1:1—6:7 *Shabbat haChodesh*: TORAH: 12:1-20; HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 45:16—46:18.]

You may give to our work in Israel by donating online (click [HERE](#) and add Sarvis Support in the comment line) or by calling *1-888-965-1099* or *1-940-382-7231*.