

Prayer Update From Israel (April 8, 2013)



13th Day

“And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath. From the day that you brought the omer of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD” (Leviticus 23:15-16).

THE WEEK PRECEDING ISRAEL’S “INDEPENDENCE DAY” (NEXT TUESDAY 16 APRIL) IS A SOMBER AND SOBERING ONE FOR MANY IN ISRAEL. TODAY (APRIL EIGHTH) IS “HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY”, AND ONE WEEK LATER (APRIL 15TH) IS “REMEMBRANCE DAY”—COMMEMORATING THOSE ISRAELIS SLAIN IN WAR DURING THESE 65 YEARS OF ISRAEL’S MODERN EXISTENCE—OR WHO WERE VICTIMS OF TERROR (AN EVER-LURKING BRANCH OF THAT ON-GOING WAR). A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF ISRAELI FAMILIES HAVE SUFFERED LOSS FROM AT LEAST ONE OF THESE EVILS. AND THE FEAR OF ANY OR ALL OF THEM RECURRING IS NEVER FAR AWAY.

“O you afflicted one, tossed with tempest, and not comforted...All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children. In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you. Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me, Whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake...No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me,’ says the LORD” (Isaiah 54:11-17).

PLEASE PRAY: For revelation to Israelis and *through* Israelis of the One who is their Savior, their Comforter, their Righteousness, their Captain and Protection. Pray for grace

to return to the God of “their heritage”, Who is their Shelter from the Storm—the God of their Fathers, and of their futures.

1. YOM HA-SHO'AH.

We ended last week's *Update* with a short note about Holocaust Memorial Day, which we sense to continue this week. Monday is *Yom haSho'ah*—Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel. Ceremonies began at sundown on Sunday, and at 10:00 this morning a siren sounds throughout Israel. Traffic comes to a halt; in city streets and out on the highways Jews emerge from their cars to stand silently. It lasts for two minutes, calling to remembrance the horror which less than 80 years ago arose, seeking, not for the first time, the extermination of the Jewish race. The Hebrew word for “Holocaust” is *Sho'ah* (Capitalized, when transliterated). It means catastrophe, calamity, cataclysm, desolation. The word appears several times in the Scriptures; in Ps 35:8 and 63:9 it is the destruction which the Psalmist's enemies wish to bring upon his soul, but into which, as he trusts in the LORD, they themselves will fall.

The birth of Israel as a “Jewish State” provided a haven for the survivors of the *Sho'ah*— a home and bastion for their descendants, hopefully against such an evil rising ever again. Indeed, the slogan “*Never again!*” has been passed from generation to generation since then. Much has been done with the establishment of museums, with books and films and programs in the belief that “education” and “being informed” is the best defense against its recurrence. Yet, we feel compelled to point out that those nations most at the heart of the ideology which spawned the Holocaust in the 1930's, had for over 400 years been considered the center of Western civilized education, culture, and for much of that time, we might add, the Christian religion. One thing we should have learned from this is that secular Education will never, in and of itself, stem a rising tide of evil.

Might there be another *Sho'ah*? Certainly the evil one would like for there to be. He realizes, with the establishment and growth of this nation, *perhaps especially now that there is an awakened and growing Messianic remnant in the Land*, that God's not-yet fulfilled holy purposes for His ancient people are still on course. He knows his time is short. And so we see again a rising anti-Semitism—although one which now often finds its focus more on the existence of the nation itself, cloaking itself behind a repeated assurance that it is not “anti-Jew”—only “anti-Zionist”.

It is very sobering to find this same word *sho'ah* in Ezekiel 38:9 (here translated, ‘storm’), “*You will ascend [an alliance led by Gog, the Prince of Rosh], coming like a storm, covering the land [of Israel] like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you*” (NKJV). In that ultimate battle, the LORD will intervene in wrath against the aggressors. Yet, before that time, we see armies arraying against Israel, and hear national and religious leaders denying the Holocaust, and calling for her annihilation. Nor are Jews guaranteed safety by staying away from the Promised Land. Yesterday's Israeli newspapers all carried stories of a recent study showing that during this past year recorded acts of violence and vandalism against Jews across the globe increased by 30 percent—“*correlation was observed between the political strengthening of*

extreme right parties and the high level of anti-Semitic manifestations including incidents of violence and vandalism.” (Annual survey of The Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry.)

This week, as Israel pauses to ponder a great darkness which singled out her most recent ancestors for destruction, at the same time casting an uneasy eye towards a quickly clouding future:

PLEASE PRAY:

For revelation that the Word of the LORD in Jeremiah 29:11 is still alive and ringing, specifically and first of all for His people Israel— *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

***For a massive awakening of desire in Israel to put her trust in the LORD rather than in her allies, her leaders, or her perceived military strength (Psalm 118:8-9; 33:16-17).**

***For the estimated 192,000 elderly Holocaust survivors living in Israel today (the number was 200,000 last year). Because of what they have experienced and seen, these dear people are often bound by the Accuser in a hardened, cynical world of darkness. Pray that the true Light which pierces the deepest darkness (John 1:5,9) will shine into their hearts—drawing them in Love to a life in which they have long since ceased to believe. Pray for revelation and blessing to come to them *after* Holocaust Memorial Day, the only day of the year in which many of them feel they are remembered at all.**

***For a breaking in Israel of any ‘identity’ related to the extent of our persecution in the past. Pray that, while learning what we can from the past, we will begin to focus more on the future and what God’s Word tells us about it.**

Psalm 25:22: *“Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.”

****For spiritual discernment among the Body of Messiah in Israel and among the nations, an increased ability and alertness to ‘test the winds’: to warn of the coming evil ones, to hear and release the report of the good!***

This week, right on schedule (the same week as last year) the storks arrived, passing northward over Israel, migrating from their habitat in Africa.



“Even the stork in the heavens knows her appointed times...but My people do not know the judgment of the LORD” (Jeremiah 8:7).

PLEASE PRAY: for righteous judgments to be made in Israel’s national, civil and military governments. Pray for righteous judgment to begin in the House of God...the Body of Messiah in Israel.

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 (April 7-13) contains a “double reading”:

Thazria—“Quicken with Seed/Conceive”

TORAH: Leviticus 12:1—13:59

Metsora—“Skin Disease/Leprosy”

TORAH: Leviticus 14:1—15:33

HAFTARAH: II Kings 7:3-20

After last week's focus on the importance of Israel's being 'set apart', of her distinguishing between the holy and unholy, the unclean and clean (Lev. 10:10)—this week's portion continues in instruction of how this was to be worked out in everyday life. There needed to be purification and atonement made for a mother when bringing forth children; there must be measures of isolation and testing taken for outbreaks of surface diseases or blights (both on physical bodies and on dwellings), and for contaminating discharges from the body. And there was the way prescribed for restoration once healing had occurred. When Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus) came to be born in a stable, his mother Miriam (Mary) submitted to these same instructions for purification (Luke 2:22), and when it was time for the sacrifice, she and Joseph could only afford the humble offering mentioned here (Lev 12:8; Luke 2:24). Yeshua's coming was to "undo the works of the devil" manifest in all of these diseases, to bring atonement, redemption healing and cleansing. It is very significant that among his healing miracles, special mention is made of those involving lepers and a woman with an 'issue of blood'. ***PLEASE PRAY: as those in synagogues this coming weekend hear these words which so graphically picture the presence and result of sin in our midst and man's need for healing and being pronounced clean—that the Holy Spirit will convict of sin and righteousness and judgment, and draw Jews to seek cleansing through the One who washes white as snow.***



***Martin and Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem***

[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 14-20 April are also a “double reading”: I. *Acharei Mot* –“After the Death”: TORAH: Leviticus 16:1—18:30; II. *Kedoshim*—“Holy Ones”: TORAH: Leviticus 19:1—20:27; HAFTARAH: Amos 9:7-15 (Ashkenazy Synagogues)/Ezekiel 20:2-20 (Sephardic Synagogues)]

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