

Prayer Update From Israel (June 22, 2015)



Waterfall in the Golan Heights, the ancient domain of Og King of Bashan (the “Last of the Rephaim/Giants”). This area was taken by Moses and later granted as part of the inheritance of Menashe (see Torah Portion below).

1. PRAY FOR THE DRUZE.

The Druze (or Druse) are an Arabic-speaking ethnic group some 1.5 million strong dwelling primarily in the Middle East—Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan. They consider themselves descended from the Biblical Jethro, Moses' Midianite father-in-law. Druze embrace a secretive mystical religion thought to be derived from Shi'ite Islam over a thousand years ago in Egypt, yet now containing elements of a number of religious and philosophical systems, among them Platonism, Gnosticism, Judaism, Christianity and Hinduism. They believe in a form of reincarnation, and in a coming Messiah figure who will, in a mystical way, one day spring forth from the vein of a man. There are over 130,000 Druze living in Israel. Because their religion requires that they dwell in submission to whatever ruling power exists in their region of settlement, they serve, often with distinction, in the Israeli army, and have representation in the Knesset. Some years back, a Druze actually served in a temporary capacity as Israel's president! For the most part they dwell in two areas of Israel, in two cities on Mount Carmel in the west, and in several villages on the Golan Heights to the north-east. Those in the Golan were separated from a very large body of their Syrian brethren when Israel wrested the Heights from Syria in the 1967 war.

The Druze are considered heretics by Muslims, and have a long history of being persecuted by Islam. As rebel Sunni Islamist factions such as *al-Nusra* and the Islamic State gain ground in Syria, it is clear that their ultimate aim is to rid the land under their control of anyone not submitting and adhering to their ideology—and that this system of systematized extermination

extends to the Druze. Last week over 20 Druze were massacred by the *al-Nusra* Front in northern Syria. The majority of the Druze population in Syria live in the south in a region called *Jabal al-Druze* or "Mount Druze", an area which is very near to the Israeli border, and in which the Islamic State (ISIS) is closing in. Last week Israeli Druze leaders called on the international community to send help to prevent a holocaust of their co-religionist in Syria. They called also on Israel to be prepared to help defend Mount Druze, should it come under attack. Israel is considering its options. An Islamist attack could perpetrate a mass flood of Druze refugees seeking asylum with their brothers across the border in the Golan Heights, something Israel does not feel capable of allowing to take place. Regarding such a scenario, one Israeli source was quoted as saying, "There is no intention to absorb Druze refugees into Israel, but as a people that experienced the Holocaust, we have no intention of ignoring the possibility of a mass genocide of the Druze minority."

Last week Prime Minister Netanyahu called on General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, to increase American aid to the embattled Druze. Israeli President Reuven Rivlin is reported also to have stressed to the General that there exists an eminent "threat to the very existence of half a million Druze on the Mount of Druze". One possibility which Israel is considering is creation of a "safe zone" on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights to aid Druze refugees; she has contacted a number of countries, the UN and the International Red Cross regarding formation of such a humanitarian zone. (*ref. 1*) Israel is reluctant to get militarily involved in the roiling four year old conflict in Syria, yet on Wednesday PM Netanyahu assured the Knesset that Israel is closely following what is happening on our borders, and that she will "do what is necessary to help the Syrian Druze". Israeli Defense Force Chief Gadi Eisenkot was reported as saying that the Israel Defense Force is prepared to help refugees on the Syrian-Israeli border and will do all that is possible to keep them from being massacred. (*ref. 2*) Meanwhile, the Israeli Druze community continues to call on the nation to become more directly involved, and a Druze member of the Knesset vowed to appeal to the government not only to allow humanitarian aid, but also to also allow Israeli Druze to cross over the border to aid their brethren. (*ref. 3*)

PLEASE PRAY:

***That *Sar Tzeva'ot YHVH*—the "Captain of the Armies of the LORD" will release heavenly forces to come to the aid, protection and salvation of the Druze peoples in Syria.**

***That Israeli governmental and military leaders will be granted divine strategy as how to best respond to the distress of this people just beyond our borders, a people with whom God has ordained within our own land a peculiar and essential alliance.**

***For revelation and salvation for the souls of the Druze peoples. That, as with Moses' father in law Jethro, whom they revere, the Druze would come to "*know that YHVH is greater than all the gods; indeed, it was proven when they dealt proudly against the people*" (Exodus 18:11). That they will come to embrace the Truth which is in the Jewish Messiah and Savior of the World Yeshua—whose name means "YHVH is Salvation."**

***That believers rise up amongst the Druze people who will lead them into their end-**

time calling for the redemptive purposes of God in the Middle East.

1. "Israel weighs 'safe zone' for Syria's embattled Druze": *The Times of Israel*, 14 June 2015
2. "Netanyahu on plight of Syria's Druse: I've ordered to do what is necessary": *JPOST.com*, 06/17/2015 22:23 IST.
3. "Israel weighs..."

THIS WEEK'S TORAH PORTION:

From ancient times there has been a weekly portion (Parasha) 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, and follow the texts read in Ashkenazy Jewish synagogues..

The Parasha for this week 21-27 June 2015 is called *Chukat*—"Ordinance Of" (i.e. The Red Heifer):

TORAH: Numbers 19:1—22:1

HAFTARAH: Judges 11:1-33

40 YEARS IN THE DESERT

Because of the dead who would be constantly in Israel's midst as an entire generation passed away, Chapter 19 deals with a special 'decontamination' procedure with which to cleanse away the defilement released into the camp by death. Then 38 years pass silently by—there is very little that the Holy Spirit chose to pass on to us regarding that rebellious generation "with whom He was angry for 40 years...whose corpses fell in the desert" (Hebrews 3:17). With the death of Miriam at the beginning of Chapter 20, those years are already drawing near to their close. In this week's reading Moses and Aaron themselves enter into a rebellion which will bar them from entering the Land, and, after the passing of his mantle to his son Eleazar, Aaron dies on Mount Hor. Shortly thereafter a further remnant from the "complaining generation" are slain by serpents—but the younger, second generation begins to move into warfare and to prevail against those giants still barring the pathway towards their inheritance.

***Numbers 19: Ordinance of the Red Heifer.** With the death of those offering incense in Korah's rebellion, the 14,700 who died by plague in the uprising shortly thereafter, and the prospect of hundreds of thousands more passing away in the desert wanderings ahead, the stigma and defilement of *Death* hung over the camp continuously. There was need for an especial cleansing for those who came in contact with one who had died. "*The wages of sin is death.*" In Hebrew the very word for "purification" or "decontamination" (vs. 12) bears the word for sin *chet* within it. A red cow (there is actually nothing in the Hebrew to denote "heifer" or young female), perfect and never yoked, was burned in totality outside the camp, with cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet fed into the burning. Then the ashes were stored, also outside the camp. When needed, these were to be mixed with "living water" (vs17, Hebrew: *mayim haim*) and used as a decontaminant (literally, "water kept apart to expel, serving as a sin offering", vs 9b) for those who had come into contact with death.

PLEASE PRAY: from Hebrews 9:13-14, a letter in the New Covenant written specifically to Messianic Jews of the First century: "For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the Living God?"

***Numbers 20:10, 24: MOSES: "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" YHVH: "...because you both (i.e. Moses and Aaron) rebelled against My word at the water of Meribah."** A great leader of courage, compassion and humility, Moses nevertheless appears to have had a 'blind spot' regarding anger. One sees it quietly mentioned or alluded to in the Scriptures throughout his life (Exodus 2:12, 11:8, 32:19, Lev 10:16, Numbers 11:10, 16:15). Titus 1:7 speaks of the necessity that God's stewards be "not quick-tempered". Although there is a place for anger, if it is released "in the flesh" or outside of God's timing, it will "*not produce the righteousness of God*" (James 1:19). In the end, it betrayed Moses into the very rebellion against God's command which he accused the people of when he shouted at *them* (20:10) rather than speaking to the Rock.

PLEASE PRAY: For leaders in the Body of Messiah in Israel to be trained by the Holy Spirit in self-control. Pray that we will deal with personal issues which the Holy Spirit discloses, which might otherwise cause us, in critical moments of decision under pressure, to operate out of our emotions or woundings rather than in the integrity of the Spirit.

***Numbers 21:9 (Alter): "And Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it on a standard, and so then, if the serpent bit a man, he looked on the serpent of bronze and lived."** The word *ness* here translated "standard" or "flag pole" happens also to have evolved into a modern Hebrew word for "miracle". **John 3:14-15:** "*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*" **II Corinthians 5:21:** "*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*"

***Numbers 21:34-35: "Do not fear him (i.e. Og, King of Bashan), for I have delivered him into your hand, with all his people and his land...So they defeated him, his sons, and all his people, until there was no survivor left him; and they took possession of his land." Deuteronomy**

3:11: *“For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants.”* As Israel arrives 38 years later at the border of Canaan, only one of the fabled “giants” which had terrified their fathers remains. God gives them exactly the same directive he’d given their fathers...and this time they take Him at His word and destroy the giant. The significance of defeating this “Og” was huge—he will be mentioned many times in Deuteronomy, Joshua, I Kings, Nehemiah and the Psalms.

The territory which this text says God Himself “delivered into Israel’s hand” would eventually become part of the territory allotted to the tribe of Manasseh. It is this same area which modern Israel took from Syria in the 1967 War—the Golan Heights. The territory southward to the Arnon River was taken from King Sihon of the Amorites and eventually became territory of the tribes Reuben and Gad. This area is presently occupied by the north-western part of the Kingdom of Jordan. **PLEASE PRAY:** *That the “different spirit” of Caleb and Joshua which motivated this younger generation of Israelites would awaken again in Israel—that we would come to trust God for defeat of the many giants which have arisen again in the land to which we have returned.*

***Judges 11:23-24:** *“And now YHVH Elohei-Yisrael (Yehovah, the Israel God) has dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel; should you then possess it? Will you not possess whatever Chemosh your god gives you to possess? So whatever the YHVH our God takes possession of before us, we will possess!”*

Jephthah (Hebrew pronunciation: *Yiphtakh*) has regrettably come (when thought of at all) to be dismissed by many because of an unfortunate vow he made regarding his daughter. But this has not always been the case. The Bible remembers him as a **heroic warrior** (*gibor-hayil*) who, although born of a harlot, despised and dispossessed by the rest of his family, rose nevertheless to command the respect of both friends and enemies. He was *a leader who trusted in the LORD for victory* (vs 9); *a wise judge who made his agreements and pacts in the Presence of the LORD* (vs 12). As with any skilled military strategist, *he was intimately acquainted with the history of his land* (vss. 14-29), acknowledging the LORD’s hand in that history, and bringing it to bear in reasoning with his enemies so as to avoid conflict if possible. For Jephthah, *judgment rested with the LORD*. So highly respected was this man before both God and man, that he is included in the chapter of Heroes of Faith in Hebrews 11.

PLEASE PRAY: *For warriors like Jephthah to be raised up in Israel in the Last Days. Pray for God’s oversight of those from broken families (there are so many), or no families at all—that seeds of grace and faith will be sown which will catch and germinate in fertile soil!*

Pray for God’s Kingdom to come in Gilead, that section of land (a western part of the present-day Kingdom of Jordan) *where the action in this chapter took place. It was from this land that the Prophet Elijah “who is coming first and will restore all things”* (Malachi 4:5; Matthew 17:11) *came forth—and to which he returned before being taken up into Heaven.* Under the power of the Spirit of God, the prophet Zechariah foretold a day (Zech. 10:10) in which Gilead would be among the areas to which Jews from the houses of Judah and Joseph would be eventually returned. This has yet to be fulfilled.



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**[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 28 June—4 July will be
Balak: TORAH: 22:2—25:9; HAFTARAH: Micah 5:7—6:8]**

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