

Prayer Update From Israel (July 22, 2014)



YHVH Tze'vaot
LORD of the Armies of Heaven

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1. OPERATION “PROTECTIVE EDGE”—DAY 14.

Last Thursday night, after days of attempting by other means to stem the tide of rockets roaring from Gaza towards civilian centers within some 2/3 of her territory, Israel felt finally compelled to launch a military ground-inursion into the Gaza Strip. Earlier in the day, just before commencement of a five-hour “humanitarian cease-fire” requested by the UN, Israel discovered a 13-member Hamas terrorist cell en route to carry out a mass-casualty attack on Kibbutz Sufa near the Gaza border. The cell had infiltrated the Jewish state through a tunnel, and were, as later became clear, also planning on capturing Israeli hostages and dragging them back through the tunnels into Gaza. When discovered, the infiltrators dove back into the tunnels, which came under Israeli fire. Later, having abided by the “humanitarian ceasefire” (Hamas had not), Israel was rewarded during the following three and a half hours by a barrage of over 100 rockets fired towards Tel Aviv and other populated centers. The terror attack through the tunnels proved the last straw; Thursday evening Israel deployed into the Strip to destroy the networks of tunnels, neutralize the rocket launchers and bring an end to the constant menace levelled against her citizens by the rogue entity which rules there. That night an additional 18,000 reserves began to be called up, bringing the total, besides active-duty troops, to over 50,000.

The fighting has been fierce, especially in the eastern Gaza City suburb of Shuja'iyya. Both Saturday and Sunday nights Golani Brigade soldiers working to uncover terrorist infrastructures were engaged in furious and multiple battles there. Shuja'iyya is a nerve-center both logistical and operational for Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the two major terrorist organizations operating in the Gaza Strip (“The battle in Saja'iyya is not just against Hamas and Islamic Jihad”, Opinion:

ynetnews.com, 21/07/2014). Scores of terrorists were killed, and Israel also began to receive casualties. On Saturday night alone, 13 Israeli soldiers lost their lives, seven when their aging M113 armored personnel carrier was hit by anti-tank weapons. Many were wounded. During the past 24 hours, at least seven more have died, bringing the total of Israeli deaths to at least 27. And, as Hamas has counted upon, there have been reports of large civilian casualties. Rocket launchers and entrances to tunnels have been purposefully positioned at playgrounds, schools, and hospitals. And when Israel dropped leaflets warning civilians to vacate the area to be attacked, Hamas urged them instead to stay. Palestinian sources (who are responsible for all civilian casualty figures and pictures released to world media from Gaza) are already depicting Israel as carrying out a “massacre” in Shuja’iyya, claiming the majority of those fallen to be children and non-combatants. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reportedly labeled Israel’s actions there as being “atrocious” and is due to arrive in the region today in an attempt to affect a ceasefire; US Sec. of State Kerry is also on his way. Meanwhile, rockets have continued to fall in Israel. There are fewer of the long-range missiles—but Sderot and Ashdod yesterday were caught in a veritable rain of falling warheads, throughout the day and night.

A ceasefire is not going to come easily. Israel, finally forced to enter the strip, will not be anxious to leave until she is convinced that enough has been accomplished to bring the onslaught of rockets to an end, to destroy the underground networks of terrorist tunnels, and to insure Hamas will not be able to rearm. ***Egypt*** has long liked to consider itself the Arab ‘voice’ in this part of the world, as well as being the senior mediator for major Arab-Israeli conflicts. But things are different than 1 ½ years ago when she was able to convince Hamas to a cease-fire before Israel came in on the ground. Then the Muslim Brotherhood (of which Hamas is a militant off-shoot) was in power in Egypt under Mohamed Mursi. After ousting Mursi, the military leader Abdel Fattah al-Sisi was elected president and outlawed the Brotherhood. Seeing Hamas and its ally Qatar as being in league with his banished enemy, al-Sisi, while still wishing to appear as having the influence required in bringing about truces, is nevertheless intent on doing so on his own terms rather than those of Hamas. ***And there is also the covenant-hating religious spirit fueling Hamas’ actions in the first place.*** That organization is fanatically determined to at all costs bring about destruction of the “Zionist entity.” If that cannot be accomplished now, it is prepared to at least set the stage for a “massacre” of its own people—if it might awaken a loathing by the rest of the world for Israel, as a country which callously murders and maims hundreds of defenseless women and children. (For an insightful and enlightening examination of how this is managed by the enemy, and how it can be stood against in Truth, we would direct you to a recent newsletter by Avner Boskey—**Google:** Final Frontier Ministries: David’s Tent, **Click:** “Latest Article”, “The Casualties of War”.)

Meanwhile, anti-Israel riots and demonstrations involving thousands continue in London, Paris and other European cities, and most recently Houston, Texas in America. And denunciations from world governments. A short while ago Israel received a demand from the Spanish foreign minister for an “*immediate ceasefire. It’s up to Israel to act proportionally in Gaza.*” “Act proportionally” means that the casualty lists of dead and wounded must be kept similar (as though this were some sort of game in which Israel is bound to hold herself accountable to maintaining certain ratios with her opponent.) ***Yet, on Sunday some 5,000 people (mostly Jewish) turned out in London to rally in support of Israel***, and to protest rocket attacks on Israeli communities. And it has been heartening that several American and European leaders

have continued to condemn the rockets and to grant Israel the right to defend herself. **But, as the death tolls mount** (however accurately or inaccurately portrayed: in both Operations “Defensive Shield” in Jenin, 2002 and “Cast Lead” in Gaza, 2008, casualty figures were later proven to have been enormously inflated), **so are growing the accusations that Israel is “defending herself” with far too heavy a hand.**

PLEASE PRAY:

*** That Operation “Protective Edge” would receive divine direction and counsels from On High (Psalm 33:11).** That it may be completed as soon as possible—but that everything which *“He who watches over Israel”* knows needs to be uncovered will be uncovered; everything destroyed, destroyed; everything dismantled, dismantled. That rocket-launching systems, terror tunnels and under-ground command centers would be discovered and neutralized.

***For protection for Israeli troops going into harm’s way...pray against traps, ambushes, booby-traps. Pray angelic protection and guidance.**

***For accurate and timely intelligence reports... clear-mindedness and integrity in officers and leaders; that they will call upon God for success.**

***For protection of the innocent; for mercy to be shown when possible.**

Zechariah 9:5-7 speaks of this region, how a “king shall perish from Gaza”...how God will “cut off the pride of Philistia. I will take away its blood from its mouth, and its abominations from between its teeth.”** The end-result of deliverance from this violent ruling power is that the people under its dominion shall ***“be a remnant for our God; it shall be like a clan in Judah!”

Pray that the spiritual power binding the Gazan people will be broken—that they may discover the love, mercy, deliverance and life of the God of Israel through His Son Yasuah/Jesus. Pray protection and then favor and miraculous signs and wonders on the Arab believers who live (and have been much persecuted) within the Gaza Strip.

***For comfort from God on those who mourn and are bereaved during this time.**

***For encouragement, protection, and the testimony of Yeshua to be upon the lips, lives and actions of believing Israeli soldiers.**

2. TUNNELS.

“Guard me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; Preserve me from men of violence (Hebrew: hamas), who have purposed to make my steps stumble. The proud have hidden a snare for me...they have set traps for me... YHVH Master, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle” (Psalm 140:4-5, 7).

The tunnels Hamas has built into networks along the border are complex; years have gone into their construction. Their discovery and destruction is a very dangerous and time-consuming

operation. Until now, Israel has attempted to target and destroy them from the air. But many are more than 60 feet deep, reinforced with concrete and steel, extending over a mile in length, and with tributaries going out from them towards the Israeli border. Moreover, they often have been purposely situated to originate in crowded civilian areas, such as beneath apartment buildings, schools, malls. When discovered, they require the use of robots, dogs, and last of all human soldiers being lowered into them. To be completely dismantled, they then require heavy drilling equipment being brought into the tunnel and hundreds of pounds of explosives implanted in its walls—this often places the workers in continual vulnerability to attack (“The treacherous task of tunnel demolition”: *The Times of Israel*, 19/04/2014: 9:41pm).

PLEASE PRAY:

***That all tunnels prepared and intended for acts of terrorism against Israel would be discovered and destroyed.**

***That the One who “gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding”, who “reveals deep and hidden things”, who “knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with Him” (Daniel 2:21-22), would guide the soldiers to the tunnels, and guard them as they are destroyed. Pray for wisdom and revelation as to new and more effective means for their discovery and destruction.**

3. KATZIR SUMMER 2014—WONDERFUL REPORT!

Following hard on the heels of the incredibly timely and blessed Elav conference, in which eight hundred Jewish and Arab believing youth and young adults from Israel, Judea, Samaria and Jordan came together for a powerfully anointed three-day gathering in Haifa, came the annual Katzir (“Harvest”) camp for teens. ***Around 80 youth and 25 staff came together July 14-18th. The theme of the camp was “The Last Days”.*** There was a question of whether to continue with it as planned, war had broken out with Hamas threatening 2/3rds of Israel with barrages of rockets. In the end it was sensed that the Lord desired it to go forward. As one of the senior leaders later wrote, *“This was a key moment to not back down to the threats of the enemy, and our oversight board of congregational leaders with one voice also agreed that we should move forward. What followed was one of the most inspiring and impacting youth camps we have ever been part of...”* Along with the hikes and other activities, there were nights of strong messages and testimonies reaching into the young people’s hearts. Another senior leader wrote of how, *“Monday night an air-raid siren went off in a nearby town along Israel’s north coast. Our youth camp of nearly 80 kids and 25 staff heard the alarm and began running for bomb shelters and sheltering buildings...What amazed me was the response of the young people after the alarm was over and we knew that a rocket had landed in Shlomi, a town just five minutes away. They came back to our outdoor meeting place and entered into praise and worship. With abandonment and total peace, they were dancing in a circle and jumping up and down with the joy of the Lord. This is quite a testimony to the work of God in their lives.”* On the final day of the camp, around 20 youth came up to give their hearts to Yeshua and to submit to His Lordship in their lives. As a leader commented, *“The testimonies on the final day over and over were filled with thanks to God and appreciation to the leaders for going forward with the camp.”*

PLEASE PRAY:

***That what was loosed by the Holy Spirit during this camp would be nurtured in the spirits of the teens (and the young adult leaders); that it germinate and grow into a holy equipping in the call God has on their lives in this Land!**

***That there would be protection—a ‘rear guard’ on all those who attended, including all the adults who prepared, managed and oversaw the camp. Pray that they be restored and refreshed.**

***That there would be encouragement and discipling towards maturity for those who experienced new and deeper touches of God’s Love and of the Holy Spirit in their lives.**

***That the teachings given to the young people will be remembered and strengthen them as they finish the summer and begin a new school year in the fall. That they realize that they are part of an Army of God ordained to move forward and take back territory during these “Last Days!”**

THIS WEEKEND’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 reading for this week 20-26 July is called *Mas’ei*—“Journeys of...”:

TORAH: Numbers 33:1—36:13

HAFTARAH: ("Haftarah of Affliction/Admonition"): Jeremiah 2:4-28; 3:4; 4:1-2

CHAPTER 33.

“Now at the end of the long chain of Wilderness stories that began in Exodus, as the Israelites are poised to cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, we get a grand recapitulation of the whole narrative in the form of an itinerary of all the way stations in the Wilderness march” (Alter, Robert: *The Five Books of Moses*, W.W.Norton & Co: New York, London, 2004 (p. 852, n 1).

***Numbers 33:1.** *“These are the journeys of the children of Israel, who went out of the land of Egypt by their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron.*

As noted when this ‘going forth’ was first recorded (Exodus 12:41, 51; 13:18), the Children of Israel may not have yet been fully aware that they were an “army”—with each member assigned a positioning in its arraying—but *YHVH Tz’vaot, Elohei Ma’arkhot Yisrael* (“Yehovah of Armies, God of the Arraying of Israel”—I Samuel 17:45) was well aware! **This is important to realize regarding the circumstances of Israel today!**

***Numbers 33:2.** *“And Moses wrote down their departure points for their journeying by the word of the LORD, and these are their journeying by their departure points”* (Robert Alter, trans).

“Departure points” (Hebrew: *motz’a*) is also sometimes translated as English “starting points” or “places of origin”. All have validity, albeit resulting in slightly different perspectives. In fact, this word is related to that used of God in the traditional Hebrew blessing over meals, *Ha’motzi lechem min haAretz*—“Who **brings forth** bread from the earth”—so that the passage might even be interpreted to read, *“Moses wrote down those places from which they were brought forth for their journey”*. An old Jewish proverb goes something like this, *“You can’t know where you’re going ‘til you know where you came from.”* It was important that they keep a record of these starting/departure points from which they had been drawn forth back into their journeying (Numbers 9:18).

***Numbers 36:7.** *“And an estate of the Israelites shall not turn round from tribe to tribe, but the Israelites shall cling each man to the estate of the tribe of his fathers”* (Robert Alter, trans.).

“Cling” comes from the same Hebrew word used in Genesis 2:24 regarding a man and his wife. It was this charge as related to inherited land which likely fueled Naboth’s response to Ahab in I Kings 21:3, *“YHVH Forbid! That I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!”*

***Numbers 36:13.** *KhaZAK! KhaZAK! V’Nit’khaZEK!*—“Be Strong! Be Strong! And we Shall Become Stronger!!

It is traditional to chant this admonishment after reaching the end of each of the Five Books of Moses.

***Jeremiah 2:13.** *“For my people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the Source of living water, and they have hewed themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.”*

***Jeremiah 3:4 (NKJV).** *“Will you not from this time cry to Me, ‘My Father, You are the guide of my youth?’”*

***Jeremiah 4:1-2 (NASB).** *“‘If you will return, O Israel,’ declares the LORD, ‘then you should return to me. And if you will put away your detested things from My presence, and will*

not waver, and you will swear ‘As the LORD lives’ in truth, in justice and in righteousness; then the nations will bless themselves in Him, and in Him they will glory.”

It has always been God’s plan that as Israel comes into a right relationship with her God repercussions will be felt throughout the world, and the nations will come into a new revelation of His Glory, and “*bless themselves in Him!*”



***Martin and Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem***

**[The *Parashah* for next week 27 July—2 August 2014 is called *D’varim*—
“Words”: TORAH: Numbers Deuteronomy 1:1—3:22; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 1:1-27
(Shabbat Chazon/Sabbath of Vision)]**

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