

PRAYER UPDATE FROM ISRAEL (August 29, 2011)



“So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days. And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God! (Nehemiah 6:15)

A recently discovered portion of a wall (lower two rows of stones above) thought to have been built by King Hezekiah. A section of the wall around Jerusalem was later repaired by Nehemiah upon his return from Babylon, and finished during the month of *Elul* (See No 3 below).

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS FOR ISRAEL AFTER THE ATTACKS LAST WEEK. ISRAEL'S RESPONSES HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE AND AT PRESENT THERE HAS COME A LULL IN THE ROCKET ATTACKS. HOWEVER, AS OF MONDAY AFTERNOON, THERE IS AN ALERT FOR ANOTHER POSSIBLE ATTACK FROM THE SINAI DESERT. ISRAEL IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING ALLOWING A LARGER DEPLOYMENT OF EGYPTIAN TROOPS INTO THE SINAI THAN THAT GRANTED UNDER THE TREATY WITH EGYPT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN MORE ORDER THERE. PRAY FOR WISDOM AND STRATEGY FOR OUR LEADERS. *“For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your children within you. He makes peace in your borders . . .”* (Psalm 147:13-14).

1. ELAV

We want to thank you for your prayers and support for the *Elav* (“Unto Him”) Conference in Tel Aviv earlier this month. There was a wonderful outpouring of grace over this event. Hundreds of Israeli teens and young adults were able to come together to worship and praise the Lord, to be taught and challenged in their faith by anointed speakers from around the country and abroad, to fellowship and connect with each other, forming connections which will grow and deepen in the future. There were of course enormous logistical challenges to be overcome...there were emergencies, there was spiritual warfare—but we saw that all was swept aside in the purposes of the Holy Wind of God’s Spirit in accomplishing His purposes. Young people were encouraged, filled with the Spirit; some came for the first time into a knowledge of their Saviour! And

miraculously, the enormous costs for mounting such a conference in the heart of Tel Aviv and doing it well were met!

We would call your attention to a short powerful video produced by Maoz Israel Ministries. It focuses upon a key aspect of this particular annual conference—the coming together and bonding in spirit of Jewish and Arab young people. It may be viewed by at the following link: http://maoz.convio.net/site/PageServer?pagename=maoz_elav_2011_video&autologin=true

PLEASE PRAY:

***That the LORD provide a “rear guard” (see last entry under “Haftarah” section below) to all who participated in the conference—restoring and renewing what poured out of those preparing and mounting it, protecting and illuminating all that was poured into the young people who attended!**

***That those students who attended *Elav* (SCHOOL IN ISRAEL BEGINS THIS WEEK!) will find strength and courage in what they experienced and were equipped with, so as to progress forward in their studies and relationships, maintaining a close relationship with their God! Pray the same for the older ones who are returning to the military...or to their jobs within the workplace.**

***That all connections and alignments made by the Holy Spirit will be enriched and deepened.**

***For *Succat Hallel*...the 24/7 worship-intercession ministry based in Jerusalem which each year organizes and sponsors *Elav* – that it be nourished and guided in God’s direction and vision for this coming year; that provision for all personnel and financial needs will be released down upon *Succat Hallel* from the Father of Lights (James 1:5, 17).**

2. “RESTORING COURAGE”—GLENN BECK IN ISRAEL

Glenn Beck, along with several thousand followers, arrived in Israel last week for the purpose of expressing support and encouragement for Israel and the Jewish people. There were three special “Restoring Courage” events, beginning at the coliseum in Caesarea and culminating in a Wednesday evening rally just below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Although liberal media reports attempted to depict those attending as entirely consisting of evangelical Christians (Beck is himself a practicing Mormon), there were other credible reports of its being “a mix of American Christians and American Jews joined by scores of Israelis”. In addition, the meeting was viewed by a huge crowd at Jerusalem’s municipal square, where it was simulcast onto a large screen.

Beck, of course himself no stranger to controversy, found that it preceded and succeeded his visit to Israel. Some Orthodox rabbis condemned his coming as a ploy for conversion of Jews to

Christianity. And much of the left-wing media went to pains either to dismiss the significance of his visit, or to voice negative criticism. The left-wing online edition of *HaAretz*, betraying the integrity void which, in our opinion, has come to characterize much of its own journalism, ran a moment-by-moment blog of Beck's Jerusalem speech, inserting dismissive, cynical, ridiculing remarks after each point.

It is not our place here to comment on Mr. Beck's reputation in the US or the opinions and pronouncements coloring his popular radio show. We are cautious regarding the fervor of some within our acquaintance for whom seemingly he can say no wrong; we do not think it wise automatically and uncritically to accept as truth, fact or wisdom everything which *anyone* says. But judged strictly by his words and actions surrounding this visit, we cannot but be grateful to the man. As Harvard law Professor Alan Dershowitz stated prior to the visit, *"I for one do not question his motives. I believe they are genuine. One need not accept all of Beck's positions on Israel—and I certainly do not—in order to agree with him that support of Israel is one of the great moral issues of the 21st Century...At a time when old friends and allies who should be supporting the Jewish state are abandoning it in droves, Beck's willingness to stand up for Israel must be accepted with gratitude."*

Some quotes from his address:

"Threats are mounting and evil is growing. Darkness is falling...My friends do not lose hope. You must not lose confidence in yourself. You must have courage. You must draw courage from the knowledge that you were led to this land by God...Israel is here because the God of Abraham keeps His covenants."

"In Israel, you can find people who will stand against incredible odds...against the entire tide of global opinion, for what is right and good and true. Israel is not a perfect country. No country is perfect. But it tries...and it is courageous."

"When the Fogel family [five members in Itamar in Samaria slaughtered by Palestinian terrorists last march] was killed in their sleep the world barely took note. The grand councils of earth condemn Israel...Across the border, Syria slaughters its own citizens. The grand councils are silent."

"I stand here to tell you this: Fear is the pathway to surrender. And to overcome fear, we must have courage." In closing, he called on Israel not to "lose hope. You must not lose confidence. You must have courage!"

From Israel Beck headed for South Africa to express his views of the falsity of accusations which equate the circumstances in Israel with those under South African Apartheid, from there to Latin America and on to launch a global movement to support Israel in Dallas.

PLEASE PRAY:

***Blessing on those who sacrificed to come to Israel and "bless Abraham's seed" this past week.**

***Grace over Mr Beck in his present endeavor to raise awareness and support for Israel. Pray that he seek wisdom from above (James 1), that he move in the timing, the discretion and the courage of the Lord.**

***Revelation in this man who has blessed Israel, regarding the God he seeks to serve and His Son.**

3. THE MONTH OF *ELUL*

Wednesday August 31st begins the Hebrew month of *Elul*, the 6th month in the religious calendar and the 12th of the civil year. This is traditionally a month of self-examination and repentance before the Lord in preparation for the High Holy Days of *Yom T'ruah* (The Day of Trumpets/Rosh Hashanah) and *Yom Kippur* (The Day of Atonement). As a call to this, it is customary in some Jewish circles to blow a blast on the shofar each morning (except the Sabbath) of this month. A further ancient practice is to recite *Psalm 27* each day from the First of *Elul* through the “Last Great Day” of the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot). This wonderful psalm reaffirms our trust in the Light and Salvation of our LORD (vs. 1), the importance of seeking His face, dwelling in His presence and gazing on His beauty (vss. 4,8), our place of safety in His *sukka* and tent (vs. 5), and our utter dependence on Him to deliver us from our adversaries—including our own sin (vs. 12). As quoted beneath the picture in the heading, it was during this month of *Elul* that Nehemiah finished rebuilding the Wall around Jerusalem (Nehemiah 6:15). We this to be a time for inspecting our “walls,” securing all breaches, all places of vulnerability along our ‘borders’.

PLEASE PRAY:

***For revelation that it is the Lord’s *kindness* (Romans 2:4b) that leads us to repentance; that many Jewish people will sense the Holy Spirit drawing them and will respond.**

***For an awareness amongst believers that it is a time for examining and securing our spiritual borders.**

***That the LORD release spiritual guidance and leadership upon His returned people in our day as He did for the returned remnant from Babylon (Ezra and Nehemiah). That He define Israel’s physical borders (Psalm 147:14) and the lines of Jerusalem according to His desire, in such a way that Israel’s enemies will “perceive was done by God” (Nehemiah 6:16). That He Himself become a “wall of fire around Jerusalem, and her Glory within” (Zechariah 2:5).**

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 reading for this week 28 August—3 September is called *Shophetim*—"Judges".

TORAH: Deuteronomy 16:18—21:9

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 51:12—52:12

***Deuteronomy 16:18-21**. *"You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. You shall follow what is altogether just (Literal Hebrew: "Righteousness! Righteousness you will pursue!"), that you may live and inherit the land which YHVH your God is giving you."*

The same Hebrew words are used for "judges" and "police officers" in Israel today. Their duties on behalf of the people are to be executed (vs. 18) with *mishpat-tzedek*—judgment which is righteous. These two words (*mishpat* and *tzedek*) are referred to in Psalm 89:14 as being the very "foundation" of God's throne. Interestingly, in the Hebrew translation of John 16:8, Yeshua tells us that the "Helper" He will send after His departure will convict the world "concerning sin and righteousness (*tzedek*) and judgment (*mishpat*)". **PLEASE PRAY:** For the powerful conviction of this Helper (*Ruach haKodesh*—the Holy Spirit) to sweep through all the echelons— Administrative, Executive and Judicial—of Israel's Government. Alas, bribery and other forms of corruption mentioned in the passage seem especially to feed in the high places of our nation's government, having resulted in the stepping down of more than one President and a Prime Minister, and spawning seemingly continual accusations and investigations of those in power. Thank God that righteous judgment *does* take place in our government, that there are governmental leaders striving to be *yashar*—straight and upright. Pray that their just actions be recognized—and that leaders whose ways are crooked would be exposed. ***Pray for men and women bearing the righteousness which comes in Messiah to rise with favour into these positions, displacing darkness with His light, diffusing the governmental atmosphere over Israel with the fragrance of His holiness*** (II Corinthians 2:14; 4:6; 5:21).

***Deuteronomy 17:7; 17:12b**. *"So you shall put away the evil from among you." "So you shall put away the evil from Israel."* The word for "put away" means "to root out" or "to burn." **PLEASE PRAY:** for Israeli believers—that we will be merciless to evil we find within

ourselves—rooting it out, destroying it, realizing that evil allowed to work within us individually pollutes not only ourselves but our nation.

***Deuteronomy 18:10-12.** *“There shall not be found among you anyone...who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD...”* It is sobering to read that it is not only these sins but “those who do them” who are an abomination to the LORD. There is much fascination with the occult in Israel. **PLEASE PRAY:** for revelation regarding the fixed law that even as one who brings an idol into his house is ‘doomed to destruction like it’ (Deut 7:26), so anyone who engages in these occult practices places him or herself under the abomination of Almighty God. Pray for many to “come out” from this darkness into the Light! *“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil”* (I John 3:8).

***Deuteronomy 18:18.** *“I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which he speaks in My name, I will require it of him.”* **PLEASE PRAY:** for this generation of Israelis to “Hear His words”, Who spoke in His Father’s name. Pray for Israelis to obtain copies of the New Covenant Scriptures and find these words for themselves.

***Deuteronomy 20:9.** *“And so it shall be, when the officers have finished speaking to the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.”* **PLEASE PRAY:** that God will move regarding our military leadership, that Israel will have a strong, unified military and governmental leadership in place before any major outbreak of hostilities which would involve mobilization of our military forces. Pray for *Elohei Ma’archot Yisrael*—the God of the Arraying of Israel (I Samuel 17:45)—to place the leaders of His choosing in each of these critical positions for this coming season.

***Deuteronomy 20:2-4.** *“So it shall be, when you are on the verge of battle, that the priest shall approach and speak to the people. And he shall say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel: Today you are on the verge of battle with your enemies. Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them; for the LORD your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.’”*

Haftarah

***Isaiah 52:1-2.** *“Awake! Awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city...Shake yourself from the dust, arise; Sit down, O Jerusalem! Loose yourself from the bonds of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion!”*

***Isaiah 52:7.** *“How beautifully the feet of those bringing good news beautify the mountains—those who proclaim shalom, who bring glad tidings of good, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”*

***Isaiah 52:8:** *“Your watchmen shall lift up their voices, with their voices they shall sing together; for they shall see eye to eye when the LORD brings back Zion.”* **PLEASE PRAY:** for clarity and singleness of vision amongst those God is bringing back to Zion—and among those watchmen already there who are praying for them.

***Isaiah 52:11-12.** *“Depart! Depart! Go out from there, touch nothing unclean...go out from the midst of her, be clean...For the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.”* This passage seems to have applied first of all prophetically to those in captivity in Babylon, encouraging them regarding their return to Israel. **PLEASE PRAY:** for believing Jews still in the nations whom God is calling back to their Land—that when He speaks, they will hear His voice and GO...trusting Him to “go before”...and also to be their “rear guard.” The Hebrew word for “**rear guard**” has within it the concept of “gathering” as well as guarding against attack from behind. **Pray that God will gather the loose-ends of those He is calling—pressing them forward through the gates into their heritage and place of inheritance.**



*Martin and Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem*

[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 4-10 September are called *Ki-Tetzeh* (“When you go out...”): TORAH: Deuteronomy 21:10—25:19; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 54:1-10]

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