

## *Prayer Update From Israel (September 2, 2014)*



### **1. A NEW (ISRAELI) SCHOOL YEAR!**

*“All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children”* (Isaiah 54:13).

***Monday 1 September some 2,105,400 children started their new school year in Israel.*** There had been a big question whether all of the schools would be able to open on time, because of the constant rocket attacks endangering much of the south and southwestern parts of the state. That conflict (see below) has, of course, had its (in many cases traumatic) affect upon the nation’s youth. For the first two weeks there will be throughout the school system special classes addressing the war which affected so many children’s summer vacations. The students will be “engaging in special creative activities, holding discussions with their teachers, sharing personal experiences and participating in sessions with guidance counselors.” (“Gaza conflict, budget cuts, overcrowding overshadow start of school year”: *JPOST.com*; 1 Sept 2014 12:36 IST). In fact, for the Southern communities within a 7km radius of the Gaza border, special funds have been released to provide “fun” activities during the first days of school, for these children who spent so many days and nights of their summer vacations dodging into bomb shelters (Ibid.). As Israel’s youth return to the school room,

### **PLEASE PRAY:**

**\*That teachers with moral Biblical values would be courageous in influencing and training their students in the ways of truth.**

**\*There are many streams of evil intent upon capturing the minds of Israel's children through New Age, witchcraft, and teachings on sexuality which do not line up with the Hebrew Bible. Pray for angels to guard and protect the minds of young people from demonic influence in the classrooms. \*Pray for the Holy Spirit of Truth to awaken the consciences of Israel's youth to sense the difference in sin and righteousness.**

**\*For the growing number of believing children in the schools—to connect and network with other believers; to be testimonies of the love and hope of Yeshua to their classmates.**

**\*For Messianic Jews and Christian Arabs to rise up into teaching and administrative positions in the Israeli schools.**

**\*It is still required in most secular schools that students take classes in Biblical Hebrew and the *Tanach* (Hebrew Bible) as an element of their heritage. However, in many cases the teachers do not themselves believe or revere the Bible and are pleased to pass their skepticism on to their students. Pray that the Holy Spirit would cut across the spirit of unbelief and inspire students to search their Scriptures, within which is revealed the Father and the Son!**

## **2. AN OPEN-ENDED CEASEFIRE...**

*Last Tuesday the 50-day Gaza war came to a halt.* As the Egypt-brokered open-ended ceasefire was to go into effect, Hamas launched one last huge fusillade of rockets—since then, no more, and after a week it appears to be holding. The following day Hamas leaders took to the streets to celebrate a “victory”—a celebration in which their citizens were televised duly “celebrating”. ***The truth is that the organization suffered its greatest humiliation since coming into existence.*** Hamas had continually boasted that it would continue its bombardment until Israel lifted the blockade (put into effect after Hamas illegally and forcibly wrenched to itself absolute power over the Strip seven years ago). But in the end it was Hamas which called on Egypt for a ceasefire, accepting almost the exact same conditions at which it had sneered when offered a ceasefire a month earlier. Nor did it receive its demands which had figured so centrally in Mr. Kerry's proposal (rejected by Israel) earlier in the war. This war was not supposed to stop until the operatives released as part of the Gilad Shalit deal, then re-arrested during the month after the three Israeli teens were abducted and murdered, were released. Nor would the rockets stop falling until Hamas was promised an airport and a seaport. In the end, none of these things have happened (there is a proviso that some of them will be “discussed” after a month). Great swaths of the Gaza Strip lie in ruins—around 2,500 of its residents are dead, tens of thousands homeless. Militarily, the deadly network of terror-tunnels along the Israel's borders have been largely destroyed, as have a large number of their rockets and rocket launchers. And, contrary to Palestinian reports to the media, Israel still contends that at least half of those killed were combatants. Perhaps what really broke the will of the terrorists was the surprise infiltration of their intelligence which resulted, during the last week of the conflict, in key figures of the upper-level of their leadership being destroyed—perhaps including the revered chief of their military Muhammad Deif.

***Was Israel wise in accepting the ceasefire?*** Hamas, for all the bravado of its current leaders, has indeed suffered a humiliating defeat, yet they have certainly by no means been rooted out of the fabric of that society over which they have so ruthlessly held rule over the past seven years. Nor were the major command-and-control centers at the heart of their networks breached. ***We had prayed that the supernatural cloaking of evil leaders would be pulled back and that they would be cut off. To some extent that did take place.*** Only the future will reveal to what extent their removal may have, as occurred with the exposure and elimination of Sheik Yassin and his second-in-command in 2004, worked to short-circuit the spiritual network of evil over which they held control. Israel's Cabinet itself was divided, some believing that Israel should have gone in with a ground campaign, howsoever long and at whatever price, again subjugating the Strip to its rule until Hamas was known to be completely disarmed; that acceding to the ceasefire merely assures that the militants will rise up again. Others believe that the timing for beginning such a huge and no doubt long-term incursion after the deployment, redeployment and massive bombardment which have dragged already over the course of six weeks would not be wise. Meanwhile, a part of the dilemma now lies in how the international community can bring in aid for humanitarian relief, for rebuilding and recovery from the devastation for the people—without such aid being again diverted into use for rebuilding the terrorist infrastructures. This week both the US and France are reportedly preparing comprehensive proposals for presentation to the UN which would include measures for “demilitarization” of the Strip. Hamas is of course declaring that it will never lay down its arms. The details of the ceasefire require a return to cooperation with the Palestinian Authority. A question is whether it is still powerful enough to resist international pressure if that is brought to bear.

***Whatever might or might not have been the correct decisions during the war, we must look to the Lord for His will and guidance from where we are now. He knows what lies in darkness and light dwells with Him. He knows what Israel ought to do; He knows His timings and how to work those into the decisions of the leaders of this nation as His people pray.*** Meanwhile, it is a relief and a blessing to be again experiencing a week of relative peace, for which we are thankful!

#### **PLEASE PRAY:**

(The following prayer points are drawn from the September 2014 “Watchman’s Prayer Letter” of the *Christian Friends of Israel* ([www.cfijerusalem.org](http://www.cfijerusalem.org)))

\* **For Israel’s leaders** to make the right decisions as they contemplate the issues ahead of them and the safety of the Jewish nation. May their help come directly from God in order to receive His Guidance. ***“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth” (Psalm 121:1,2).***

\* **For the wounded soldiers** who are recuperating in Israeli hospitals, and then upon their returning home to their families. They are alive because of the Lord’s protection over them. ***“If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, how may Israel say; If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us” (Psalm 124:1-3).***

\* **For the unity of the Jewish people** to hold tightly. The recent conflict brought most of the country together in one accord. Their strength is in unity. *“They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever” (Psalm 125:1).*

\* **Thank the Lord** for the Divine protection over the City of Jerusalem where He has chosen to put His Name forever. *“As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever” (Psalm 125:2).*

\* **For the hearts of gratitude** which the soldiers in the 51st Elite Golani soldiers unit showed recently when they came to Jerusalem, to the Western Wall, to thank the Lord for returning them home safely. *“Praise ye the Lord, I will praise the Lord with my whole heart...” (Psalm 111:1).*

\* **Pray for the further redemption and salvation** of Israel. *“And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob...” (Romans 11:26).*

**PLEASE PRAY ALSO FOR GOD’S MERCIES ON THE PEOPLE OF GAZA—THAT THERE WILL BE A REBELLION AGAINST AND DELIVERANCE FROM THE DARKNESS WHICH HAS BETRAYED THEM. PRAY FOR THE TINY REMNANT OF BELIEVERS IN THAT LAND, THAT THEY MOVE IN MERCY, WISDOM AND GREAT POWER AMONG THEIR NEIGHBORS. THAT THOSE DWELLING IN DARKNESS “SEE A GREAT LIGHT”—AND BEGIN MOVING TOWARDS IT. THAT GOD’S KINGDOM COME THERE, INCLUDING THE DESTINY PROMISED TO THEM IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES (ZECHARIAH 9:5-7).**

---

#### **THIS WEEK’S PARASHAH:**

*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 readings for this week 31 August—6 September 2014 are called *Ki Tetzeh*—“When you Go Out”:

**TORAH:** Deuteronomy 21:10—25:19

**HAFTARAH:** Isaiah 54:1-10

**\*Deuteronomy 21:21, 22:21, 22:22, 22:24; 24:7; 23:14.** *“Thus you shall purge away the evil from among you”.* As mentioned last week, the word for “purge” may also be translated “to burn, kindle or root out”. There are many situations and circumstances dealt with in these passages (some of necessity not making for the most pleasant reading) pointing to the fact that it is of great importance that God’s people be ‘set apart’ and clean—both morally and physically, personally and as a community, *“since the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy; and He must not see anything indecent among you or He will turn away from you”.*

**\*Deuteronomy 23:5.** *“Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you.”*

**\*Deuteronomy 23:7.** *“You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land.”* **We believe this admonition to be still in effect today. PLEASE PRAY for a love for Egypt among the Body in Israel. Pray for the Body in Egypt to rise up in faith and love and hope...and moving in the miraculous power of the Spirit of God.**

**\*Isaiah 54:2-3.** *“Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not spare; lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes. For you shall expand to the right and to the left, and your descendants will inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities inhabited.”* **PLEASE PRAY: That Israel will come into that place of righteousness in her Messiah which will allow God to extend her borders to encompass the territory which He has ordained for her, a territory from which she will never be plucked up.**

**\*Isaiah 54:5.** *“For your Maker is your husband, YHVH of Hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.”* **PLEASE PRAY: For revelation in Israel that God loves him in an intimate way—and has provided a “Redeemer” for him, who is One with the Father... “All things came into being through Him (i.e. Yeshua/Jesus), and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being” (John 1:3).**

**\*Isaiah 54:7-8.** *“ ‘For a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you. With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you,’ says the LORD, your Redeemer.”*

**\*Isaiah 54:10.** *“ ‘For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,’ says the LORD, who has mercy on you.”*



*Martin and Norma Sarvis  
Jerusalem*

**[The Torah and Haftarah portions for next week 7-13 September 2014 are called *Ki-Tavo* (“When You Come In”): TORAH: Deuteronomy 26:1—29:9; HAFTARAH: Isaiah 60:1-22.]**

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**.