

Prayer Update From Israel (October 21, 2013)

17 Tishrei 5774



Site of the Cave of the Patriarchs today.

“After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah east of Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. The field and the cave that is in it were made over to Abraham as property for a burying place by the Hittites”

(Genesis 23:18-19; See Torah Portion below)

1. SHAKINGS

“The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day. But the idols He shall utterly abolish. They shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, from the terror of the LORD and the glory of His majesty, when He arises to shake the earth mightily” (Isaiah 2:17-19).

“The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble! He dwells between the cherubim; let the earth be moved! The LORD is great in Zion, and He is high above all the peoples. Let them praise Your great and awesome name—He is holy” (Psalm 99:1-3)

“See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.’ Now this, ‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:25-29).

There have been four earth tremors in four days in Israel. They haven't been huge or even caused any damage—but they are making some uneasy. There are many faults in Israel, and tiny earthquakes are common here, though most cannot be felt by the general public. But last Thursday and then again on Saturday small quakes which could be felt rattled northern Israel. Sunday there were two more, centered near *Nof Ginosar* on the Sea of Galilee—3.6 on the Richter scale. A week ago, a much larger 6.4-magnitude quake near Crete was felt all the way into Israel. The four most recent tremors led Home Front Defense Minister Gilad Erdan to call an emergency status meeting of officials from the IDF Home Front Command and emergency services Sunday evening to discuss the readiness of Israel, should she be struck by a really powerful quake. Israel tried to evaluate this in a large Home Front drill a year ago—but since quake-resistant buildings have for the most part been built only since the Gulf War of 1990, it is assumed that such a quake would be disastrous.

PLEASE PRAY:

***That the Lord of Heaven and Earth would protect the land of Israel from devastating earthquakes. That if there is specific physical preparation to be done, that God will lead the authorities in getting it done ahead of time.**

***That citizens here would take the shakings as a serious call to put away idols, and take account of what our trust is in. That Israelis would be led to place our trust in those things “*which cannot be shaken.*” That we would praise His great and awesome name—for He is Holy.**

***For believers in the Land, to have grace to “*serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*”**

***Matthew 14:34-36 and Mark 6:53 tell of Yeshua (Jesus) and His disciples landing at a place on the Sea of Galilee also called *Ginosar*, “and when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well.” Please pray that shakings at Ginosar will extend into the heavenlies—that the powers of hell will be shaken, and life and healing in the name of Yeshua the Messiah will be released again along the banks of the Sea of Galilee!**

2. TUESDAY ARE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ACROSS ISRAEL

Tuesday are nationwide local elections. The two largest races will decide who will be mayor of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Please pray that the God of governance would appoint authorities over the cities of Israel (Romans 13:1), particularly over Jerusalem, who will rule in integrity and righteousness. Please pray for the Body of Messiah here, that we would take up our responsibility before God, that “*supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence*” (I Timothy 2:1-2).

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 readings for this week 20-26 October 2013 are called *Chayeh Sarah*—"Sarah's Life":

TORAH: Genesis 23:1—25:18

HAFTARAH: I Kings 1:1-31

***Genesis 23:5-6 (NKJ).** *"And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, 'Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places.'" The Hebrew words for "mighty prince" are *n'si elohim* which might more literally be translated "Prince of God." Abraham's relationship with this God, whom he had believed and worshipped, had developed into a friendship. The very city of Mamre where God confided in Abraham (Genesis 18) would come to be called *Hevron*, related to the Hebrew word for "friend" or "associate". Centuries later, God would, in Isaiah 41:8, still refer to Abraham as "My beloved" or "My friend." Through this holy association the authority and splendor of God Himself rested in favor upon His servant, and the blessing promised in Abraham to all families of the world (Genesis 12:3) was already shining into the darkness of Canaan.*

***Genesis 23:12-18.** *"Then Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land; and he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, 'If you will give it, please hear me. I will give you money for the field; take it from me and I will bury my dead there.' ...And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out the silver for Ephron which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currency of the merchants. So the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field, which were within all the surrounding borders, were deeded to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city." It is significant that the locations of three carefully recorded transactions involving the purchase of land by two Patriarchs and a great King of Israel today encompass the most hotly contested area (both physically and spiritually) on earth. These transactions were: as recorded here in Genesis 23; A field and cave in Hebron (which Abraham purchased for 400 shekels of silver); A parcel of land in Shechem (modern-day Nablus) where Joseph would be buried (which Jacob purchased for 100 pieces of money—Joshua 24:32); The top of Mount Moriah, what would become the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (which David purchased for 50 shekels of silver—II Samuel*

24:24; II Chronicles 3:1). These three locations today compromise the length of the so-called “West Bank” upon which a permanent Muslim Palestinian state is being demanded: **To the north, Samaria (Shechem/Nablus), In the center, Jerusalem (The Temple Mount), To the south, Judea (Hebron—the Cave of the Patriarchs).** Each of these locations were legally purchased in ancient times, and all fall within an area God would repeatedly promise to give as an inheritance to the physical seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob forever.

***Genesis 24:3:** “*And I will make you swear by YHVH, Elohei-haShamayim (“The Heavens-God”) v’Elohei-haAretz (and “The Land-God”).*” **As often happens in the Torah, new aspects and attributes of this YHVH (Yehovah), who had first appeared to Abraham in Ur, are revealed to us in the new Names given to Him by the Patriarchs.**

Genesis 24:5-6.** “*And the servant said to him, ‘Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?’ But Abraham said to him, ‘**Beware that you do not take my son back there!**’ YHVH God of Heaven, who took me **from** my father’s house and **from** the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, ‘**To your descendants I give this land,**’ He will send His angel before you, , and you shall take a wife for my son from there” (Emphases ours). **“Believing God” meant not looking back—for Hebrews 11:15 makes clear that “truly if they (Abraham and the other Patriarchs) had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.”

Please Pray: for immigrants whom God brings back to Israel. It can be frighteningly hard, especially for the older ones who will have difficulty mastering the language (if at all); who likely will not be able to get a job related to what they’ve done all their lives before immigrating. Pray that they will not listen to the temptations to “go back to America” or to “go back to Russia”. Pray for grace and mercy for absorption into the society in the land of their Fathers...but more importantly, into the God of their Fathers. Pray for the Body of Messiah here—that it also will not look back, but rather fare forward into “a better, that is, a heavenly country.”

***Genesis 24:12.** “*Then he [Abraham’s servant] said, ‘O YHVH God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show loving kindness with my master Abraham.’*” The literal Hebrew of the second phrase reads, “**Please make it happen before me today!**”

***Genesis 24:27.** “*And he said, ‘Blessed be the YHVH God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His lovingkindness (Hebrew: *hesed*) and His truth (Hebrew: *emet*) toward my master.’*”

Hesed and Emet

Hesed (the beginning letter pronounced with a slight rasp in the throat) is one of the most precious words in the Hebrew language. It is difficult to translate exactly into English—***lovingkindness, mercy, goodness, steadfast love.*** It is a wonderful attribute of God which He desires to see operating in his children. ***Hesed*** appears over 245 times in the Hebrew Bible. On certain special occasions it is found together with the word ***emet*** which means ***truth*** (*Gen. 24:27, Exodus 34:6, II Sam. 2:6; 15:20, Micah 7:20, and Psalms 25:10; 26:3;*

40:10-11; 57:3; 61:7; 85:1; 86:15; 89:14; 115:1; 117:2; 138:2). The Modern Hebrew translation of John 1:17 says, “*For the Torah (Law) was given through Moses; and the hesed and the emet(i.e. lovingkindness and truth) came through Yeshua the Messiah!*”

***Genesis 24:55-56, 62-64.** “*But her (i.e. Rebekah’s) brother and her mother said, ‘Let the young woman stay with us a few days, at least ten; after that she may go.’ And he (i.e. Abraham’s servant) said to them, ‘Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master.’ ...Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi (i.e. “Well of the Living One who Sees Me”), for he dwelt in the South. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field towards evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming. Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel...”* **Being in the timings of the LORD is essential in entering into destiny—or even assisting those to whom we minister in entering into theirs. Ecclesiastes 3:11 teaches that God makes everything beautiful *in its time* (It doesn’t teach that He does so if something is out of its season). If the servant had waited—even another hour—the perfect *kairos* meeting God had arranged for Rebekah and Isaac would have been compromised—which could have affected the very course of God’s redemptive plan for all humankind. “Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi (i.e. “Well of the Living One who Sees Me”), for he dwelt in the South. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field towards evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming.” Dwelling and meditating in the Presence (before the face) of the “*One who sees us*”, prepares and times us to lift our own eyes for to see and recognize when provision for our destiny is approaching.**

***Genesis 25:12-16.** “*Now this is the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s maidservant, bore to Abraham. And these were the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These were the sons of Ishmael and these were their names, by their towns and their settlements, twelve princes according to their nations.”* **This chronicles the fulfillment of God’s promise regarding Ishmael found in Genesis 17:20. Nowhere is there a promise that this “seed” of Abraham (any more than that of the children born to him through Ketura—25:1-6) would remain a perpetually distinct race, as would the descendants of Isaac and Jacob. An erroneous yet commonly held assumption among many western Believers, that all inhabitants of modern-day Arab nations are physical descendants of Ishmael and therefore “also children of Abraham”, besides lacking any Biblical or historical warrant, completely ignores the billions of physical descendants of the peoples who inhabited these regions long before Ishmael was born. Of course Ishmael’s and Ketura’s descendants exist amongst Arab peoples. But they are no longer a distinct race—and placing all Arabs into a “third category” from Jews and Gentiles, besides being historically unsound, can prepare the way for confusion in evangelization of other Muslim peoples in the Middle-East—such as Turks, Kurds, Armenians, Iranians, none of whom are of Arabic lineage. Arabs, physically speaking, are not “Ishmael” any more than are these other peoples. Again, we are speaking here of *historical physical* connections to the Patriarchs. To affirm this in no way takes away from the true heritage and identity of the great Arab people group which God loves and is bringing to Himself.**

Of course the Holy Spirit may make use of *analogies* regarding Ishmael. Since Islam (meaning “submission”) falsely teaches that the actual covenant of God for Humankind came through Ishmael instead of Isaac, God’s call to Hagar (Genesis 16:9) to go back and submit to Sarah (Including God’s promises of a Blessing through *her* seed) can still resonate as a call of hope and life in the hearts of all Muslim peoples, regardless of their physical ethnicity, to join the rest of the world in worshipping *Elohei Yisrael*—the God of Israel. Indeed, many believe that their return and submission to God’s true Covenant may be used to trigger a last-days awakening in the original people of the Promise, the Jews!



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[The readings for next week (27 October—2 November 2013) is called *Toldot*—“Generations”: TORAH: Genesis 25:19—28:9; HAFTARAH: Malachi 1:1—2:7]

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