

ISRAEL PRAYER UPDATE

Glory of Zion International Ministries



PARASHAH – VaYishlach



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 26 November—2 December 2017 are called *VaYishlach*—“And He Sent”:

TORAH: Genesis 32:3—36:43

HAFTARAH: Obadiah 1:1-21

*Genesis 32:3. “Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir,

the country of Edom.” The word translated “messengers” is *mal’akh*, the same as that translated “angels” two verses earlier. “Angels” is an English word used to designate heavenly messengers; these are human messengers of Jacob.

***Genesis 32:9-10.** *“O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD, who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your relatives, and I will prosper you,’ I am not worthy of the least of all the loving kindnesses and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies.”*

As we have often mentioned, “Loving kindness and Truth” (Hebrew: *chesed* and *emet*) form a pairing of divine attributes and blessings which appear many times throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. A Modern Hebrew translation of John 1:17 reads (English paraphrase), “*For the Torah was given through Moshe, chesed and emet [loving kindness and truth] came through Yeshua the Messiah.*” Please pray for discovery, revelation and understanding among the Jewish people of the presence of Yeshua (Jesus) throughout their holy writings (Luke 24:44-45)—a recognition that He was Himself present with the Patriarchs and throughout all of the history of the Hebrews! Nor will He ever leave them nor forsake them (I Corinthians 10:1-4; Hebrews 13:5).

***Genesis 32:24, 28.** *“Then Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until the breaking of day...So he said to him, ‘What is your name?’ He said, ‘Jacob’ And he said, ‘Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with [mortal] men, and have prevailed.”*

There are no upper/lower cases in Hebrew, so “man” and “he” are not capitalized as they appear in many Christian Bibles. This Genesis passage says that Jacob struggled with a “man” (Heb: *ish*). The Hosea passage printed below calls the being an “angel” (*mal’akh*)...but remember, *mal’akh* means “messenger” and need not always refer to a created heavenly being. Since verse 24 can be interpreted to mean that this particular struggle took place with God (*Elohim*), the Church has traditionally held that Jacob was here struggling with a pre-incarnate form of the God-Man *Yeshua* (Jesus)—a Messenger from the Father.

“Israel” here means, “*He struggles with God*”—while “Jacob” is related to struggle with man. The names are used interchangeably throughout the rest of the Hebrew Bible—and Israel and his seed have continued to struggle, both with God and man. Yet when Jacob was allowed to “*prevail with God*” it was not on behalf of his old desires, but for the favor of sanctification which would change what he could not change himself. In using this incident as an aid to prayer for Israel today, we would encourage you to use the following related passage from **Hosea 12:3-6**:

“He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and in his strength he struggled with God. Yes, he struggled with the angel and prevailed; He wept, and sought favor from him. He found him in Bethel, and there He spoke to us—that is, the LORD God of Armies. YHVH is His memorable name. So you, by the help of your God, return; observe mercy and justice, and wait on your God continually.”

A Messianic Hebrew song *Panim el Panim*—“Face to Face” draws from this Genesis passage to

express a prayer—both for one’s self personally and for Israel:

*I will not send you away (let you go) until You bless me
Change my name to Your name
Make my heart like Your heart
Face to Face I want to see You
Face to Face, Adonai
Face to Face with Your Son
Face to Face I want to see You, Lord!*

Translation of-*Panim el Panim* by Dani Sayag, © 2002

***Genesis 33:18-19.** *“And Jacob came safely (Hebrew: shalem—“whole”) to the city of Shechem...and he pitched his tent before the city. And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for one hundred pieces of money.”*

As with Abraham and Isaac, Jacob was not allowed to inherit any of the Land of Canaan, even a “foot of ground” (Acts 7:5; Hebrews 11:8-9). God *gave* the land to them—but it was to the seed which was *in* them—and would multiply into a people who would return to the Land over 400 years later (and 4000 years later!). Not only that, with that Godly *spiritual* inheritance, would come blessing for all families of the earth. *That* was what they trusted in, what had been promised to be given to them by God. Therefore, they could not receive it as gifts from the people in the land (Genesis 23:11-13). They could purchase, but not receive—that must come from God.

As we mentioned a few weeks ago, those places where the Patriarchs and David purchased land tend to be centers of fierce spiritual contention to this day. From the rape of Dinah in the following chapter and the bloody massacre which follows, through the dreadful events of Judges 9, to King Rehoboam’s decision there to discipline his subjects “with scorpions” (I Kings 12:14 NASB), to the days of Hosea (Hosea 6:9: “As bands of robbers lie in wait for a man, so the company of priests murder on the way to Shechem; surely they commit lewdness”), the city of Shechem (modern-day Nablus) has long been associated with violence. During the *Second Intifada* at the beginning of the last decade, it was a hot-bed for terrorism against Israel. Yet it is also the first place where Abraham is recorded as having stopped after arriving in Canaan (Genesis 12:6). The LORD (YHVH) appeared to him there and promised the land to his seed, “and there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.” It would be the location where Joseph’s bones would be brought and buried (Joshua 24:32); and where Yeshua Himself would have a meeting with a woman at the well Jacob had dug there (John 4). Presently, the Palestinian city of Nablus flourishes at the site, and there are several Jewish settlements nearby. In the early days of the *2nd Intifada*, Jews were driven out of the site of Joseph’s Tomb, which was desecrated and burned. Today it may be visited by Jews only with an armed Israeli guard. Almost certainly this Palestinian city and the Jewish settlements near it would be a big issue in any proposed peace settlement in the future.

PLEASE PRAY: **That the power of violence be broken over Shechem/Nablus—and, as with the Samaritans in Jesus’ day (John 4:42), its present Arab inhabitants be brought into the Kingdom of the Prince of Peace. Pray that the altars of Abraham and Jacob to the LORD be**

restored there—that the wells of living water which Yeshua spoke of at Jacob’s well, would spring up to Arab and Jew alike.

Psalm 60:6 and 108:7 prophecy “God has spoken in His holiness; ‘I will exult, I will portion out Shechem . . .!’”

Genesis 33:20.** *“Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohei Yisrael.”* We have found many names of God revealed thus far in Canaan—*El Elyon* (God Most High), *El Shaddai* (God Almighty), *El Roi* (The God who Sees), *Elohei-Avraham* (the Abraham-God). ***But this name...Elohei-Yisrael, the “Israel-God” is the one which will be used most hereafter. God has chosen sovereignly to identify His name with Israel (Jacob) and his descendants; in the Prophets to come He will often identify Himself with this name. Muslims identify their deity with Ishmael (Their religion teaches that it was Ishmael, not Isaac, whom Allah asked Abraham to sacrifice), thus cutting themselves off from the Covenant which the Most High God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel). He is the LORD (YHVH) God of Israel, and it is to Him that all of us, whatever our lineage must come.

PLEASE PRAY: grace for revelation and humility among both Jews and Muslims in Israel to bow to the one true God, who has Himself chosen to be identified with Israel (Jacob) and his seed.



Hilltop near the site of ancient Bethel.

***Genesis 35:1-2, 5.** *“Then God said to Jacob, ‘Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother. And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, ‘Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments...And they journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the cities that were all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.’”*

Jacob came “in wholeness”—a new man with a new name, to Shechem (see Gen. 13:18-19 above)...but his “house” was not whole. Hidden gods, perhaps originally brought by Abram’s father from Ur, had been smuggled from the house of Laban. Obviously, there were various other gods used as jewelry which had been brought along by his children and servants. The presence of these idols had caused a great breach in the spiritual protection of the family, occasioning violation (Dina), cruel and senseless violence and murder (Shimon and Levi) and perhaps even eventually resulting in the death of Rachel herself. For the “family” of Israel to be made “whole”—for the family’s spiritual

armor to be made sound, all of this had to be dealt with—they must bring out into the light and “put away” the foreign gods which were among them. After this was done, Israel and his entire family could move boldly and swiftly through the land, and the darkness parted before them.

Only the God YHVH (Yehovah) had been a shield for Abraham in this spiritually dark and violent land (Genesis 15:1-2)—and only the same God would be protection for his grandson Israel and his seed. The same holds true today. Yet it is interesting that the personal name YHVH is not used in this passage (Genesis 35:1-15), rather the names *El* and *Elohim* (“God”), and *El Shaddai* (Gen. 35:11—“God-Almighty who nourishes all life”). *HE*, as opposed to all the gods in Canaan and those which some of Jacob’s entourage had brought from Haran, was the only *true* God. As the “Almighty” (*Shaddai*), He had made covenant with Jacob’s grandfather Abraham (Gen. 17:1-2). It was as *El Shaddai* that Jacob had been blessed by his father Isaac when he departed for Aram (Genesis 28:3). It was in that name that God would release fruitfulness over Jacob and his family now that they were in the Land. It was as *El Shaddai*—God Almighty—that God would continue to be known until the time of Moses (Exodus 6:3).

PLEASE PRAY: For the conviction of the Holy Spirit in Israel to turn from idols and turn to the Living God for cleansing and clothing in righteousness. Pray especially for holiness in leadership in the Body of Messiah here. Clothed in that, the Terror of God will cause darkness to flee as they advance through the Land!

****Genesis 35:16 (ESV). “Then they journeyed from Bethel. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor...so Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is Bethlehem), and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb.”***

The Hebrew, which plainly has Rachel’s tomb being “some distance from” Bethlehem, has been explained away by religious Jews who insist that a building adjacent to the edge of the town is her resting place. That place has become a place of pilgrimage, and much superstitious and occult tradition amongst ultra-Orthodox Jews. **I Samuel 10:2** strongly implies that some 800 years later in Samuel’s day, Rachel’s tomb was assumed to be “in the territory of Benjamin” a number of miles to the north, while still being “on the way [from Bethel] to Ephrath (that is Bethlehem).

ESAU, EDOM, AMALEK AND THE SPIRIT OF ISLAM

****Genesis 36:12. “Now Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, Esau’s son, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Adah, Esau’s wife.” Chapter 36*** is dedicated to the genealogy of Esau, “*father of the Edomites*” (vs 9). Central in that race would be the descendants of *Amalek* (36:12, 16). As has been mentioned previously, Amalek in Scripture typifies a *covenant-hating spirit which is the root of anti-Semitism*. It would be “Amalek” who would first attack Israel after she came forth out of the Red Sea (Exodus 17:8), and against whom God would swear continual war until the name was blotted out from under heaven (17:14). It would be Amalek who would pick off stragglers in Israel’s rear when they were tired and weary (Deuteronomy 25:17-18). When Saul refused to follow God’s commandment and spared the Amalekite *Agag* (I Samuel 15:9), he would be severely rebuked by Samuel, lose his Kingship, and according to one report, be eventually slain by an Amalekite (II Samuel I:8, 13). And in the book of Esther, we see that the architect of a proposed annihilation of the Jews in the Persian kingdom was none other than Haman—the *Agagite*, a

descendant of Amalek. Down through Jewish history to the present day, Amalek has been seen as a spirit which continues to come against God's covenant—especially His covenant-people Israel... a spirit with which both Israel and YHVH, the God of Israel are at war until it is destroyed (Exodus 17:8-15; Deuteronomy 25:17-19).

The *Haftarah* reading for this week is the *Book of Obadiah*... a grim prophecy of judgment on Edom, “for violence against your brother Jacob.” (Ezekiel 35:5 attributes this violence to “an ancient hatred” of the children of Israel). God is not willing that any should perish. But He stands forever against that which opposes his covenant with Jacob/Israel, because that Covenant is ultimately a covenant of *life for all Humankind*. He cannot grant quarter to Death, because he is *Elohim Haim*—the God of Life! Because Islam claims that its god chose Ishmael (thereby choosing for itself a different covenant than the Life-Covenant which God gave through Isaac), the spirit behind that religion proves itself a Covenant-hating spirit, bringing all in its bondage under the judgment of the God of Life. ***God forever hates the power behind Esau/Edom/Amalek*** (See Malachi 1:3; Obadiah 1:2,18; Ezekiel 35; Deuteronomy 25:19; Exodus 17:14-16)...***but He loves those captured within that system; to those who will come out of that darkness, He offers life, hope and a future!***

A Word about “ALLAH”

It might well come as a shock, even dismay, to a western believer visiting an Arab Christian congregation in Jerusalem to hear the name “Allah” repeated often, both in the hymns, the prayers and throughout the message. Yet such is the case in all Arabic-speaking churches, be they Baptist, Charismatic, Evangelical or Eastern Orthodox. This is because the word for deity in Arabic is *Allah* (as in English it is *God*, or in French *Dieu*) There may be other descriptive names, just as the English “God” may be called “Lord”, “Master”, “Mighty One”...but the name *allah* remains in Arabic what *god* is to English.

This can be difficult for American and European believers, because many have been taught that “*Allah*” means one thing, the god worshipped by Muslims—the *Islamic god*. It is the name often cried out by Islamist militants before executing acts of terrorism. The word is therefore probably most often used by Western Christians in a negative, even contemptuous way. This can be unsettling or confusing when heard by Arab Christians who use this name all the time in their worship and prayers.

An often-asked question is, ‘Do you believe that Allah and the God of Christianity (or Judaism) are the same?’ But this is really a confusion of language, using two different words which literally mean the same thing.

If what one *means* is, “*Do you believe that the god of Islam and the god of Christianity are the same?*” --or, “*Do you believe that the Allah of Islam and the Allah of Arab Christianity are the same?*”—in either case, the answer must be “**No.**” The *Allah* (god) worshipped by Islam **1**) is a moon-god (thus the moon atop all Islamic mosques) from the Arabian Peninsula, one of many *allas*/gods worshipped there in ancient times. **2**) It is a god which teaches its followers that Abraham was called to that peninsula with his son Ishmael and told by the Islamic Allah to sacrifice him there—a direct contradiction of the Word of the Hebrew and Christian God, who proclaimed that His covenant must be established through Isaac, not Ishmael (Genesis 17:19), and who later

called Abraham to bring Isaac to Moriah (future Jerusalem) and offer him there as a sacrifice (Genesis 22). Lastly, as is inscribed in Arabic over the arches of the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, **3**) This *allah* “has no Son.” So it cannot be the same as that worshipped by believers in *Elohei-Yisrael*—“The God of Israel” and in His Son, *Yeshua* (Hebrew)/ *Yasua* (Arabic)/ Jesus.

Yet Christian Arabs do not think it follows that they should stop using the name, any more than Christians feel they should stop calling on Jesus because there are cults which claim His name, yet deny His deity. When Abraham came into Canaan, the name for deity here appears to have been *El*. But rather than eschewing that name, the LORD, as mentioned in the Torah Portion above, began introducing him and his descendants to attributes of His character which showed how *this* “El” was different than all the others—*El Elyon*—“The Most High El (God)”; *El Shaddai*—“Almighty God”; *Elohei-Yisrael*—“The God of Israel”, etc.

For these reasons we find it preferable when referring to the Islamic deity to supply the name *Allah*” with a qualifier—“the *Islamic Allah*” or “the *Muslim Allah*” (or even just “*The Islamic Deity*” without using the name). This helps to avert the implication that it is a proper name only applying to a false god; and honors those who use the name in worship of the true One!

Following is an Arabic worship song (transliterated) which has been sung for years in Christian Arab congregations throughout Israel

Anta ‘atheemun, ‘atheemun, ‘a-theemun ya Allah (2x)
‘A-theemun fi maha- batika/’A-theemun fi a-man-atika
“A-theemun fi tahri-rika/’A-theemun aithan fi shifa-i-ka
You are awesome, so awesome; so awesome are You God
Awesome in Your faithfulness/ Awesome in Your mercy for us
Awesome in deliverance/ Awesome in Your powerful healing grace!



Martin & Norma Sarvis
Jerusalem

[The readings for next week (3-9 December 2017) are called *VaYeshev*—“And He

Settled". TORAH: Genesis 37:1—40:23; HAFTARAH: Amos 2:6—3:8.]

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*.