

Prayer Update From Israel (November 6, 2012)



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. “WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE” AND “THE WAY WE SHOULD CHOOSE.”

“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he sets up Kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him” (Daniel 2:20-22 NIV).

“Who is the man who fears the LORD, He will instruct him in the way he should choose...” (Psalm 25:12 NAS).

Many are “choosing” in the United States today. In the presidential election, it is thought that a majority of American Jews will vote for Mr. Obama; while, in Israel, polls show a strong majority here favor Mr. Romney. Our prayers are with you—that a President and other governmental leaders come into office whose hearts can most be influenced by the *fear of the Lord*; ones who will be most open to hearing and following godly counsels; who will be wise to receive God’s wisdom and discerning to acquire His knowledge.

Meanwhile, political realities in Israel are beginning to fold and shift as we gear up for our own governmental elections in late January. A week ago Prime Minister Netanyahu surprised everyone by announcing that his Likud party (*Likud*— “Consolidation”: a large right-of-center party begun by Menachem Began) would be joining together with *Yisrael Beiteinu*—“Israel Our Home” to form a much larger and stronger dual entity under one ticket in the next election. The *Beiteinu* party holds the third-largest number of seats in the present government. It is made up primarily of Russian immigrants, follows a secular nationalist ideology and is led by Israel’s present Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman. This merger was overwhelmingly approved by the Likud party last week. A serious question has to do with what folio would be given to Lieberman were the new party to

win. Although he has acquitted himself reasonably well as Netanyahu's Foreign Secretary, the possibility of his being granted that of Minister of Defense, or of eventually even coming into line for Prime Minister is disturbing to many. Having a politician with no serious military leadership experience as Minister of Defense proved close to disastrous in Israel's last war. At the same time, there is much conferring and parleying on the Left to try and come up with a "hybrid" party of its own so as to mount a challenge to Netanyahu, who at present would almost certainly win by a strong margin. International news sources were today printing rumors that Israel's 89-year-old President Peres might even be persuaded to run on a liberal ticket. Yet it would be folly to take Mr. Netanyahu's re-election for granted. Public leaders may fall from favor quickly in Israel. Much can and probably will happen during the next three months which will demand the most of Netanyahu and the government presently in power.

PLEASE PRAY:

***That the President and congressional leadership voted into power in the U.S. today will be one which will stand strongly with Israel. That from the start it may be influenced towards God's purposes for a harmonious relationship between these two nations.**

***That God would grant grace to Prime Minister Netanyahu in leading the country during these three months before the elections. That the sobriety and fear of the Lord would be on him regarding his responsibilities during this period—that his decisions would be effected by integrity, righteousness and truth rather than by political concerns.**

***That Mr. Netanyahu will have wise counselors, and will himself be "wise to receive God's wisdom and discerning to acquire His knowledge" (see quotation from Daniel above).**

***That the Prime Minister be prudent in the promises he should and shouldn't make during this period regarding cabinet positions should he be re-elected.**

THIS WEEK'S TORAH PORTION:

From ancient times there has been a weekly portion (Parasha) 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 4-10 November are called *Chayeh Sarah*— "Sarah Lived":

TORAH: Genesis 23:1—25:18

HAFTARAH : I Kings 1:1-31

**Genesis 23:17. "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." This location is Hebron, a few miles south of Jerusalem. Purchased by the Patriarch in ancient times, it remains one of the most contested and*

contentious places in the Holy Land. As we wrote last week, it is the place where the LORD spoke with Abraham as a friend—in fact, the name *Hebron* itself is associated with a Hebrew word for friendship. It is here that the first Israelite spies would see the giants—and where Caleb would later conquer them! It is here that David was instructed to first set up his kingship. Hebron was the only major city during the Six Day War from which the inhabitants emerged with a white flag, surrendering to Israeli troops without firing a shot. Yet it is also a place where violence repeatedly seeks to rule—where Jews were massacred by Muslims in 1929, where an Orthodox Jew massacred Muslims in 1994. Today Israel claims sovereignty over a small part of the city (total sovereignty was surrendered as part of the Oslo Agreement in 1997). There is a tiny community of Orthodox Jews both within and outside of the city. Neither the Muslims nor the Jews living there (both of whom claim Abraham for Father) yet believe in the true identity of the One who “appeared” to Abraham on this spot, as recorded in Genesis 18. That patriarch “rejoiced to see His day”—that is, the “Son of the Most High” (Luke 1:32) who restores friendship with the Father for all humankind. **PLEASE PRAY: that God’s Kingdom Come in Hebron! That the Son be revealed there.**

**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!’ (Cf: Hebrews 11:15: “And truly if they 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 24:62-64. “Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi (i.e. ‘Well of the Living One who sees me’)...went out to meditate in the field in the 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...”* 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 24:27. “And the man [i.e. Abraham’s servant] bowed down his head and worshiped YHVH. And he said, ‘Blessed be YHVH God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His loving kindness and His truth toward my master”* (Emphases ours). This combination of God’s attributes “loving kindness and truth” (Hebrew: *chesid and emet*) is repeated throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. In John 1:17 of the *New Covenant*, the Hebrew translation reads, “*For the Torah was given through Moses, but chesid and the emet came through Yeshua the Messiah.*”

**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 (anymore than that of the children born to him through Ketura—Ch 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 as true 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 11-17 November are called *Toldot*—“Generations”: TORAH: Genesis 25:19—28:9; HAFTARAH: Malachi 1:1—2:7.]

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