

Prayer Update From Israel (November 7, 2016)



**Bedouin tent and camels in the desert near the site of ancient Be'er Sheva.
"So Abram journeyed, going on still towards the Negev."
(Genesis 12:9; See Torah Portion below)**

1. A GLOBAL GATHERING IN JERUSALEM.

"In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to Him, and His resting place will be glorious."

(Isaiah 11:10)

Monday through Friday of this week, thousands of believers from around the world are gathering together with local Jewish and Arab brothers and sisters, coming together for a "Global Gathering" in Jerusalem.

One of the facilitators for the gathering David Demian, of Watchmen for the Nations, described its vision this way:

On November 7-11, 2016, at the Lord's request, we will gather in Jerusalem as a global family from many nations in order to lift up His name, seek His face and prepare a glorious resting place for His presence to dwell.

The Lord has spoken to us that this year (2016) will be the final stages of a season of great transition for His body. This has been a time in which the Lord called His family [body] together in unity, despite diversities that have historically caused separation. We have witnessed the body of Christ uniting as one family to behold the manifestation of the army of the Lord as in Joel 2:11

"The LORD thunders at the head of his army; his forces are beyond number, and mighty is the army that obeys his command."

There is something happening worldwide that is bringing many nations, tribes and generations together in unity. His people are laying down their differences to fulfill Jesus' longing for unity as we read in John 17:20-23:

“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

“The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.”

The family of God is being restored in a sovereign way; even now, the Lord is doing for us what we have not been able to do for ourselves. We are watching Christian Arabs and Messianic leaders from many streams and denominations walking together as one. This is the fulfillment of Isaiah 19:23-25:

“In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together. In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, “Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance.”

The blessing of God's handiwork will release His inheritance Israel.

We felt the Lord spoke to us and said that this gathering will link the east and the west on the highway spoken about in Isaiah 19. The linking of east and west in God's holy city Jerusalem will be critical to the destiny of Israel and all the nations. This will set the stage for the nations to come together as one army as announced in Joel 2:8:

“They do not jostle each other; each marches straight ahead. They plunge through defenses without breaking ranks.”

The Father desires a resting place for His presence to dwell among the families of the nations. We look forward to seeing you in Jerusalem this November!

Zechariah 2:5 tells us that the LORD will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem—and He will be the glory in her midst. This week, believers from all over the world are arriving in Jerusalem to stand with us in preparing a place for Him—His Glory—to rest. The vast majority are from Asia—Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Malaysia. Remarkably, between four and five thousand from mainland China are arriving to attend the gathering (We shall have more to write regarding the ties the Holy Spirit is making between Israel and China in a future Update). The format for meetings each day is as much as possible dependent upon the leading of the Holy Spirit...with an oversight team of leaders seeking the Lord for His direction. At the last such gathering two years ago, there was an overwhelming awareness that God had orchestrated the direction, that through the humility, love and earnest intercession of those attending, spiritual walls of darkness began

crumbling—especially those which have held apart Arab and Jewish believers here in the Land. As thousands gather in Jerusalem this year to humble themselves, to seek and honor the Most High together,

PLEASE PRAY:

*** That the Spirit of God will come down over these meetings. For heavenly worship and praise to be released in spirit and in truth. For a spirit of unity and brotherly love in Messiah. For a release of revelation and prophetic insight.**

*** That the Body of Messiah in Jerusalem and Israel will welcome in humility, love and gratefulness that which the Lord is offering them through His army from the Nations which He is bringing into His land at this time. That all who have come up to Jerusalem at this time will be blessed, strengthened and equipped. That all which He is bringing these armies together for will be realized.**

*** That angel armies will be present in and around the Pais Arena, holding back any powers which would seek to avert the purposes of God during this week. (NOTE: This is the same arena in which the Lord turned back and nullified a demonic assault when the spirit behind “Tomorrowland” sought to enter the city earlier in the year.)**

*** That the facilitating leaders who will each day seek God for His direction for the meetings will be granted a spirit of unity, and a prophetic sensitivity and direction to what the Spirit is saying.**

*** That spiritual connections which God is desiring to secure between nations and Israel will come into place. That permanent ties which in the near future will be necessary between Israel and the Body of Messiah in Asia will be formed and secured.**

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 6-12 November 2016 are called Lekh Lekha— “Go Forth, Yourself”:

TORAH: Genesis 12:1—17:27

HAFTARAH: Isaiah 40:27—41:16

This week's portion begins with a hearkening-back to the call of Abram in Ur, and ends with the promise of Isaac, and with Abram (his name now changed to "Abraham") entering into the Covenant of Circumcision with his household. In the course of these chapters he will travel from Ur and Haran (12:4) to Canaan, passing through the land to Shechem, Bethel, the Negev (dry southland), Egypt, back to the Negev, back to Bethel, walking the land "northward, southward, eastward, and westward (13:14), to Hebron, to war north of Damascus, back to Hebron. We cannot hope here to discuss all that takes place in the course of these travels; but ask the LORD to attend you as you travel through these pages with the Father of our Faith,

"Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain; When he was but one I called him, then I blessed him and multiplied him.' Indeed, the LORD will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places..."

(Isaiah 51:1-3a).

***Genesis 12:1-** *"Now the LORD said to Abram: 'Go you forth out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; BE a Blessing! I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

a. **"Now the LORD said to Abram: 'Go you forth out of your country..."**

Rabbinic Jewish tradition holds that this command came from Haran (in modern-day S/E Turkey) where Genesis 11:31 tells us that Abram's father Terah had taken Abram and his wife Sarai and Terah's grandson Lot. But two places in the New Covenant show that this is not true.

Acts 7:2-4: Stephen is preaching to Jewish leaders in Jerusalem: *"Brothers and sisters, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia [the city of Ur was in this region], before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.' Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living."* There is nothing in the account to suggest that the religious Jewish leaders to whom he was preaching, were in disagreement with this.

Hebrews 11:8-10. *"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations whose designer and builder is God."*

***From these passages we see that God *appeared* to Abraham.** One of the difficulties for many Jews in believing that Yeshua/Jesus is God is their insistence that God could never take on a form and be seen. Yet this shows us that God is capable of taking on just such a form—he “appeared to” Abraham. We will see this “appearing” happening again and again throughout the Torah.

***He appeared while Abraham was still in Ur and commanded him to leave his family and follow Him.** This was a new experience for Abraham. There were many ‘gods’ worshipped in Ur. Now He, like all of us today, would have to learn to know and trust this new God. He would make mistakes, but he would nevertheless exercise faith in trusting with the light he had. We have no way of knowing if he erred in telling his father what God had commanded, rather than just obeying and going. But evidently he did tell his father—who then decided to go along. He in fact took control—and led them as far as Haran. In doing so, Terah probably took along his own household gods. As we shall see, these would reappear many years later, creating big problems for Abraham’s descendants. For now, God allowed Terah to go along, though not to the ultimate destination. And so they waited in Haran until Abraham’s father died—and God moved Abram, his wife and Lot on to Canaan.

***Genesis 12:2a. “I will make you a great nation...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”** Hebrew for “nation” is *goy*; “great nation” is *goy gadol*. In Modern Hebrew slang, *goy* and *goyim* (plural) are often used in reference to individuals or peoples who are non-Jews (Gentiles). Scripture most often uses *goyim* to refer to nations other than Israel. However, here God is speaking to an individual human being drawn from one of the nations, who in his descendants would become a *great nation* in which *families* throughout the earth would be blessed. It may be significant that “earth” here is *adamah*—soil (from which *adam*—human beings were formed). God saw and continues to see this people as an individual nation before him of the seed of Abraham...and his blessing through them is on behalf of all children of Adam.

***Genesis 12:2. “I will make a great nation of you and will give-you-blessing and will make your name great. Be a blessing!”** (Everett Fox translation; emphases ours). In the Hebrew the last three words are clearly a *command/imperative form*. God isn’t saying here that Abraham and his seed “will be” a blessing. Rather, he is speaking a command into that seed, **“BE!”** Indeed, a blessing to all the children of Adam through that seed would be released in the coming of Messiah. But this holy command has never been annulled. The workings of God for all humankind continue to be mirrored in his workings in this People. For those with eyes to see and ears to hear, she continues to “Be a Blessing”. And as Israel, through recognizing and receiving her Messiah, returns to her fullness, her acceptance will be *“life from the dead”!* (Romans 11:15).

***Genesis 12:7-8. “Then YHVH (The LORD) appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your seed I will give this land.’ And there he built an altar to YHVH, who had appeared to him. And he moved/shifted from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent...where he built an altar to YHVH and called on the name of YHVH.”**

Wonderful things happened in Shechem (modern-day Nablus). The God of Glory had appeared to Abram while still in Ur (Acts 7:2). Now after a long and arduous journey, he *appeared* again! Look at the Scripture again. Shechem certainly appeared to be:

- A legitimate destination of God's leading.
- A place of God's revealed Presence
- A place of the releasing of God's prophetic Word
- A place of *established worship* to "the One who reveals Himself"
- An ideal place to settle down.

Yet one verse later Abraham moves to Bethel. The word translated "moved" also means to "take a shift" (Robert Alter translates it "*pulled up his stakes*"). As we saw during the recent *Sukkot* festival, God "makes everything beautiful *in its time or season* (Ecclesiastes 3:11). But he is under no obligation to beautify if the season for our being in a certain place has passed, yet we insist on staying there. Abram took his "*shift*" and a much greater blessing awaited him at Bethel, a place he would return to time and time again...and to which his grandson Jacob would return to find an open heavens with the angels still ascending and descending.

***Genesis 14:5.** *"In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mountain of seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness...And the king of Sodom went out to meet him [i.e. Abraham] after his striking down Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him..."*

Abraham pursued and struck down this king who himself had struck down the *Rephaim, Zuzim, Emim, and the Horites*. It is fascinating to discover how almost 500 years later, in Deuteronomy 2:10, 12, 20, 22; 3:11, descendants of each of these peoples, whose height and cruel renown had paralyzed with fear ten of the twelve spies 40 years before, are dispatched quickly by the children of that generation before their advancement into Canaan. Perhaps Joshua and Caleb had been taught how the God of their father Abraham had given him easy victory over a king who had himself subdued all of these feared peoples.

***Genesis 14:19.** *"Then Melchizedek king of Shalem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of El Elyon (God Most-High).* Just as English *god* comes from an old Anglo-Saxon expression for deity, the Canaanites word for god was *el*, and they had many *elelim*. Soon after Abram entered Canaan, the One who had appeared to him in Ur and Shechem began to reveal aspects of His nature which made clear how *this "El"* differed from all the other "el's" crowding the land. These attributes are reflected in a number of descriptive *names* which began to be used by Abraham and his descendants...*El Elyon* is the *El* (or God) who is "most High"—*El Roi* (16:13) is *El* who "Sees"—*El Shaddai* (17:1) is *El* who is "Almighty and sustains all life". By verse 22, Abram realizes that the God who had appeared to him as YHVH in Ur and Shechem (12:1; 12:7-8) and this *El Elyon* are One and the same, *"I raise my hand to YHVH El Elyon, the possessor of Heaven and earth..."*

***Genesis 15:6.** *"And he believed in YHVH, and He accounted it to him for righteousness."*

***Genesis 16:4b-5a.** *“And when she [Hagar] saw that she had conceived, her mistress [Sarai] became despised in her eyes. Then Sarai said to Abram, ‘May the wrong done me be upon you!’”*

We must realize that the struggle reflected in Hagar’s actions and Sarai’s response is over an issue of far greater magnitude than either of these women could have been aware. Far from being merely a domestic squabble (although, so it may have seemed to them), *a cosmic spiritual battle was raging over God’s covenant on behalf not only of Abraham’s descendants but of the whole Human Race!* When Sarai speaks wildly to Abram of the “wrong” being done her, she uses the word *hamas*—a word used other places in the Hebrew Bible for “cruel violence” (Genesis 49:5; Psalm 25:19; 27:12). A great Enemy was seeking to divert the line of Covenant which God had determined to come through Sarai’s womb (Genesis 17:21); this covenant-hating Power of “cruel violence” was trying to tear her apart. ***This same battle is still raging!*** The Muslim religion teaches that a divine covenant went through Ishmael, not Isaac. The power behind this falsehood hates Life, and the God of Life, and rules those presently under its dominion with *hamas* (a word which coincidentally is spelled and pronounced the same as the acronym for the terrorist Islamic Resistant Movement). **PLEASE PRAY: That Muslims will be freed from a power of cruel violence which has sought to keep them outside the covenant of God Most High. Pray for dreams and visions...for a powerful working of the Holy Spirit of God who sheds abroad in hearts the Love that the Father has for them. Pray that perfect love from the Most High God will be discovered to come through knowledge of Jesus...and that that perfect Love will cast out fear.**

Genesis 17:4-12. *“As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations...I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your seed after you. Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God...This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations....”*

It is significant that the first two locations where God promised to give “this land” to Abraham’s seed ***Shechem*** (modern day Nablus), Genesis 12:7; ***Bethel***, Genesis 13:14-15 (and probably ***Hebron***, Genesis 15:18, 17:1-14) are located in the area of the “Mountains of Israel”, currently known to much of the world as the “West Bank”. It is this same area which Israel is being constantly pressured to surrender for establishment of a permanent Muslim Palestinian state. We also find it significant that in recent years, *circumcision* has come under fire in a number of places in the west—including certain areas of the United States and Europe. It must be remembered that although these efforts to ban circumcision are being made under the guise of protecting the rights of children, the ritual they are seeking to ban was given by God to the Hebrews as sign of a covenant, eternally binding them to the land once called “Canaan”—which includes, of course, the furiously contested areas of Judea and Samaria and all of Jerusalem.

Genesis 17:18-22. *“And Abraham said to God, ‘Oh that Ishmael might live before You!’ Then God said, But Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year.’ Then he finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.”*

After Abraham asks God that Ishmael may “live before Him”, God does not answer “No” (as many English versions translate), nor “Yes” (as the NIV translates). The Hebrew simply says, *“But, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son...”* Ishmael will indeed live before Him, becoming a nation with “twelve princes” (a prophecy which is shown fulfilled in Genesis 25:16). But the important word here is “covenant” (vs. 19, 21). God’s covenants are covenants of *life* for all humankind—and this one must come through Isaac. Here we see a parting of ways between Judaism and Christianity and Islam. As mentioned above, Islam teaches that Ishmael was the chosen vessel, not Isaac—that it was he who yielded himself to sacrifice. Any covenant which is in opposition to God’s covenant *cannot* be a covenant of Life. **Please Pray** for revelation amongst Muslims, that God’s covenant through Isaac led to the birth of Yeshua (Arabic: *Yasua*) who is the *Way*, the *Truth* and the *Life* for all children of Adam!

***Isaiah 41:8-13.** *“But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My beloved... You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called from its remotest parts and said to you, ‘You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you. Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’ Behold, all those who are angered at you will be shamed and dishonored; Those who contend with you will be as nothing and will perish. You will seek those who quarrel with you, but will not find them, those who war with you will be as nothing and non-existent. For I am the YHVH your God, who upholds your right hand, Who says to you, ‘Do not fear, I will help you.’”*



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[The readings for next week (13-19 November 2016) are called *VaYera*— “Was Seen”. TORAH: Genesis 18:1—22:24; HAFTARAH: II Kings 4:1-37]

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