

Prayer Update From Israel (December 18, 2012)



Recent cloud formation over the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem

1. "...AND BRING THEM INTO THEIR OWN LAND...ONE NATION IN THE LAND."

"Thus says YHVH God: 'Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel [Note: The phrase "Mountains of Israel" has historically been taken to refer specifically to the (presently contested) Biblical areas of Judea and Samaria"]; and one king shall be king over them all...I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God...Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them and multiply them, and I will set my Holy Place in their midst forever. My dwelling place also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, YHVH, make Israel holy, when my Holy Place is in their midst forevermore." Ezekiel 37:21-28 Drawn from the close of this week's *Haftarah* (see "Torah" section below).

Last weekend (Dec. 7-8) hundreds of thousands rallied in Gaza City to mark the 25th anniversary of the founding of the *Islamic Resistance Movement* (Hamas). Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal arrived from decades of exile in Syria, and more recently Egypt and Qatar to a hero's welcome. Some 3000 representatives from Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Turkey and Algiers were in attendance, as were high-level representatives from the rival Fatah faction. In fact, for the first time since Hamas forcibly expelled all Fatah representation from its government in 2007, the Palestinian Authority's official Palestine TV broadcast Mashaal's speech live ("Mashaal vows Hamas will not concede

land” JPOST.com 08122012 20:12). Following are quotes from the Hamas leader upon his arrival and during his speech the following day:

* ***“From the sea to the river, from north to south, we will not give up any part of Palestine—it is our country, our right and our homeland.”*** (“Mashaal vows to fight Israel rather than give up ‘any inch’ of Palestine”: *The Times of Israel* : December 8, 2012, 6:00 p.m.)

* ***“Palestine was, still is and will always be Arab and Islamic. Palestine belongs to us and to no one else. We can never recognize the legitimacy of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Palestine belongs to us, and not to the Zionists.”*** (Ibid.).

* ***“Jihad and armed resistance are the right and real way to liberate Palestine and restore our rights. Liberating Palestine, all Palestine, is the duty and right and goal of all Arabs and Muslims.”*** (Ibid.).

* ***“[Hamas] will never recognize the legitimacy of the Israeli occupation and therefore, there is no legitimacy for Israel no matter how long it will take”*** (“Abbas blasts Mashaal: We already recognized Israel”: “news”: *ynetnews.com*, 121312 10:43).

* ***“Today is Gaza. Tomorrow will be Ramallah and after that Jerusalem, then Haifa and Jaffa”*** (Emphases ours. Other news services reported that **Safed** and **Beersheba** also were mentioned) (“Mashaal” First Gaza, then Ramallah, then Jerusalem”: *JPOST.com*, 01/12/2012; 14:05IST).

* ***“[Israel has no right to Jerusalem] our eternal capital, which we will liberate inch by inch, neighborhood by neighborhood and stone by stone.”*** (Ibid.).

These words from the leader of the force presently wielding sovereignty over 1.7 million citizens in a portion of land “officially” granted statehood by the United Nations less than two weeks earlier. Four days later another Hamas rally took place, this time in the West Bank city of Nablus (ancient Shechem, where Abraham first built an altar to YHVH and received the promise of the land for his descendants, Genesis 12:6-7). Sanctioned by the West Bank-controlling Fatah, it drew around 10,000, signaling an evolving attempt at unity between the two sects which would have been unthinkable a few months ago (“First West Bank Hamas rally in years draws thousands”: *The Times of Israel*, December 13, 2012, 5:11pm).

Shortly after the Gaza rally, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, who had endured severe criticism during the past week for plans to expand settlements, spoke out regarding the “deafening silence” when leaders of the new “state” advocated Islamic sovereignty over not only the West Bank and Gaza but all of present-day Israel itself, *“This weekend, the leaders of Hamas openly called for the destruction of Israel. Where was the outrage? Where were the UN resolutions? Where was President Abbas?”* Afterwards, the EU did issue a statement to the affect that it found *“inflammatory statements by Hamas leaders that deny Israel’s right to exist unacceptable”* (“Netanyahu blasts international community for staying

quiet amid Hamas calls for Israel's destruction": *The Times of Israel*, December 10, 2012: 6:26 pm). Several days later, PA President Abbas, who as internationally recognized head of the PA has much more to lose, reportedly stated, "*I don't agree with Khaled Mashaal's statement on the non-recognition of Israel because we, in fact, recognized it in 1993*" ("Abbas blasts Mashaal: We already recognized Israel": "news": *ynetnews.com*, 121312 10:43).

In presenting the above report, it is not our desire to awaken anger, anxiety, discouragement or cynicism. Rather, to show the black-and-white contrast between the stated plans of our Lord (as written in the *Haftarah* portion above it) and those of the violent spirit which is presently rising and gaining alliance here in the Middle East and around the world. A great clash is coming. BUT OUR GOD IS IN CONTROL! And is calling us to a sobriety and humility in seeking His face for grace, light and truth; For instruction as to how to pray '*Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven...*'"

PLEASE PRAY:

Psalm 27: 13-14 for Israeli believers: "*Had I not believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living...Hope in the LORD! Be strong! And He will infuse courage into you hearts. And hope in the LORD!!

***Psalm 83: 2,5,16-18. "*For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; and those who hate You have lifted up their head...they have consulted together with one consent; they form a confederacy against You...Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek Your name, O LORD. Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; Yes, let them be put to shame and perish, that they may know that You, whose name alone is YHVH, are the Most High over all the earth!*" (Emphases ours).**

2. FRIDAY WAS ROSH CHODESH TEVET.

This past Friday (Dec. 14th) was *Rosh Chodesh*—"Head of the Month"—*Tevet*". The month *Tevet* (or *Tebeth*) is mentioned by name only once in the Hebrew Bible; that is in *Esther 2:16-17*:

"So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti."

It is a month in which God in His precise timing granted grace to

***A chosen Jewish maiden of character (through the agency of her godly uncle Mordechai)—**

***Bringing her into favor and influence with royalty in Persia (modern-day Iran)—**

*** For the eventual purpose of uncovering and defusing a plot to exterminate the Hebrew people.**

This “plot” begins to manifest in chapter 3:10 as the king (Esther 3:10) gives his signet ring to the evil Haman...whose intent is to destroy the Jews. In the end, Haman is himself destroyed and that signet ring of authority transferred to the godly Mordecai (Esther 8:2). In this past week’s Torah Portion (Gen. 41:1-44:17), an Egyptian king hundreds of years earlier, removes his signet ring and places it on the hand of Joseph, who will be used to save the Hebrew people from the famine which is to come.

PLEASE PRAY:

***Thanksgiving to God for His faithful care and blessings over us during the past month of Kislev.**

***For grace over Israel during this month of Tevet; for vision, hope, encouragement and guidance for believers here to walk in the ways God has prepared for them.**

***For protection and nurture of those whom God is raising up “for such a time as this.”**

***Psalm 25:22: That God “redeem Israel out of all his troubles.”**

***Psalm 25:3: “Those who hope in You shall never be put to shame—Those who are involved in ‘under-cover’ plots will be put to shame, left empty-handed”. Pray that the message of those bearing a Living Hope be proclaimed in Israel (Isaiah 52:7). Pray that plots both spiritual and physical set on the destruction of the people of Israel be uncovered and their perpetrators put to shame.**

***That “Josephs” and “Mordecais” and “Esthers” be sustained through whatever tempering trials are necessary, until the day appointed that they rise into positions of governmental authority and influence which will release God’s favor and protection over His people Israel.**

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 16-22 December are called Vayiggash—“And [Judah] Approached”:

TORAH: Genesis 44:18—47:27

HAFTARAH: Ezekiel 37:15-28

***Genesis 44:18; 46:28.** *“Then he [Judah] drew near to him [Joseph]...”* There is no question that the story of Joseph and his brothers provides a prophetic picture of Yeshua/Jesus and His “own” (i.e. the Hebrew people) who rejected Him—but to whom He will one day be revealed as “risen from the dead” to provide salvation. In a special way, He loves them with an everlasting love and draws them with lovingkindness. In His grace, many are already drawing near to Him, confessing their sin as did the brothers...and as they do so, He, like Joseph, miraculously reveals Himself to them! (Zechariah 2:9, 11).

PLEASE PRAY: for more and more in Israel to be led in God’s kindness to repentance and to respond to His call to “draw near.”

***Genesis 46:28.** *“Then he (Jacob) sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out before him the way to Goshen. And they came to the land of Goshen.”* Beginning in Chapter 43 and more strongly emphasized here, the mantle of leadership shifts from Reuben to Judah. From here on, a special precedence will be given to this tribe—**“Judah goes first”!** From Jacob’s blessing regarding a scepter of royalty (Gen. 49:8); to leadership of the armies marching towards Canaan (Numbers 10:14); to the securing of the land in the time of the Judges (Judges 1:2), to the Kingship of David; to the birth of the Messiah in the City of David; to Zechariah’s prophecy of the Last Days when *“The LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem”* but *“will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah”* (2:12; 12:7)—God has chosen that this tribe shall lead. There is much of significance which may be drawn from this...but perhaps the most immediate point would be related to the name itself which Leah gave at his birth—**Yehudah** (Judah). The word means *“Thankful praise expressed by the raising of the hands”*.

PLEASE PRAY: for a fresh awakening of thanksgiving and praise amongst the Body in Israel, an awareness that this must come first (II Chron. 20:21-22). It is thankful praise which will lead Israel into victories and her true place of inheritance in her Messiah. Pray that the Lord will indeed *“take possession of praise”* in the Holy Land (Zechariah 2:12) and that it will be released in Spirit and in Truth.

***Ezekiel 37:21-23.** *“Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will purify them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.”*

PLEASE PRAY: that the Spirit who ‘convicts of sin and righteousness and judgment’ would be poured out on Israel in increasing measure, bringing her to a place where God can reveal the Purification which has been prepared for her—so that she may dwell in their land of covenant forever (vs. 25).



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[The Readings for next week 23-29 December are called *VaYechi*—“And he Lived”: TORAH: Genesis 47:28-50:26; HAFTARAH: I Kings 2:1-12]

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