

ISRAEL PRAYER UPDATE

Glory of Zion International Ministries



PARASHAH – VAYERA



*“Now Abraham journeyed from there toward the land of the Negev, and settled between Kadesh and Shur...”
(Genesis 20:1)*

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 29 October—4 November 2017 are called *VaYera*— “And [The LORD] Appeared”:

TORAH: Genesis 18:1—22:24

HAFTARAH: II Kings 4:1-37

***Genesis 18:1, 3.** *“Then the LORD appeared to him [Abraham] by the terebinth trees of Mamre [Hebron], as he was sitting in the tent door...Three men were standing by him...he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, and said, ‘My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant.’”*

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad...Before Abraham was, I AM.” Yeshua speaking: John 8:56, 58.

There is no clearer example in the Hebrew Scriptures of God taking on human form to meet with His children—He “appeared” to Abraham. When Abraham sees Him and runs to greet Him, it is to Someone he recognizes (Remember, God had already “appeared” to Him at least three times before—Acts 7:2; Gen. 12:7; 17:1). By this time he had also certainly come to recognize the sound of the “*Word of the LORD*” coming to him (Gen. 13:14; 15:1). Abraham approaches the three men, but to One he says, “*My Lord...*” Now, instead of using the normal Hebrew word *Adoni* (Lord/Master/Sir), the vowel points of the text show that he addressed him in the plural Adonai—a usage reserved *for Deity!* And in the ensuing conversation, both with Abraham and with Sarah (verse 1, 17, 22, 33), it is made abundantly clear that it is *Yehovah*—the LORD with whom he speaking. The other two ‘men’ are obviously angels (Genesis 19:1), who will soon release destruction on Sodom and Gomorrah.

PLEASE PRAY *for believers in Israel that, from “inclining our ears to His voice” and “seeking His face”, we become so familiar with our Lord and His messengers that we recognize their presence when they move among us. Pray for us that in our busy-ness we “not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels” (Hebrews 13:2).*

***The LORD appears to him by the terebinth trees at Mamre—which is Hebron.** Hebron is related to the word for “friendship” or “companionship”—implying a close association. *Some see Hebron, not Jerusalem, as being the true place of Hebrew “identity.”* It was here that the LORD in human appearance and Abraham ate and talked together as friends. The city would have holy significance for the Hebrews from this time on. All of the Patriarchs would be buried there. During the 400 years that Israel was in Egypt, the evil one would try and take it over; but Caleb would rip it away from those giants when he and Joshua finally brought their people into the land. It would be here that David, at the instruction of the Lord, set up his kingdom for the first seven years of his reign. Jews continued to dwell in Hebron until modern times, when an uprising and massacre took place there in 1929. In 1967 (exactly 50 years ago this past May 25th), Hebron was taken by Israeli troops without firing a shot. Sometime later, a contingent of brave Jewish women marched in and occupied a place inside of the city; another Jewish settlement was built outside. In 1997, in obeisance to the Oslo “accord,” occupying Israeli troops finally pulled out of the city (some continue to be stationed there to guard the tiny enclave of Jews and to insure access to the Tomb of the Patriarchs). Liberal Israeli governments have pushed for Israel to simply yield up the city and pull out of it altogether; until now, that has not happened.

The Muslim religion looks at Hebron as the burial place of one of its leaders. It has sought to resolve discrepancies between its teachings and those of the Bible by holding that the Hebrew Scriptures alter the ancient accounts, that in fact Ibrahim [Abraham] was the first Muslim, and Allah's covenant came through *Isma'il* [Ishmael], not Isaac. Presently, like the giants of *Arbah* in ancient times, the spirit behind this religion holds Hebron in its grip. And the Jews living in and around Hebron, although showing great courage and devotion, at times manifest their zeal in a violence not far-removed from that of those they perceive as their enemies surrounding them.

PLEASE PRAY: *that the timings and purposes of the LORD will be released in Hebron “on earth as they are in Heaven”.* Pray for a Great Light to illumine both Arab and Jew in their communities in Hebron, the light of the Most High God who desires to have a friendship with all the sons of Adam. Pray against the spiritual strongholds of cruel violence (Hebrew: *hamas*) which seek to hold both Jew and Arab captive in this city. Pray that national Israel will not come to despise her birthright, which includes this city of the burial place of her Fathers.

***Genesis 18:14.** *“Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”*

[cf: Jeremiah 32;17-18. *“Ah, Lord YHVH! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great Power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too wonderful for you...the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is YHVH of Armies.”*].

Many English translations read “too difficult” or “too hard” for “wonderful”. This is partly correct, but Hebrew *peleh* means “that which is so extraordinary or unusual as to awaken wonder”. This is the word used in Exodus 15:11— *“You are awesome in praise, doing wonders O LORD.”* Our God is a God of Wonders—executing extra-ordinary acts beyond our abilities to comprehend. Yet, nothing challenges *His* comprehension!

***Genesis 18:19.** *“For I [YHVH] have known him [Abraham], in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of YHVH, to do righteousness and justice, that YHVH may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”* Psalm 71:18 picks up on this crucial responsibility which accompanies the intimacy which God desires to have with us—that of passing it on to those who follow after us, *“Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come.”*

***Genesis 20:6-7.** *“And God said to him [Abimelech] in a dream, ‘Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. Now therefore, restore the man’s wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live....’”*

PLEASE PRAY: that though surrounded by peoples who are often hostile to us, we would make allowance in our hearts for the grace and loving kindness which goes forth from our God on behalf of all men and women of every nation. He is not willing that any should perish. Pray that we will not stereotype and dismiss the peoples and nations around us, but be sensitive and ready to pray

restoration and prosperity upon those whom God may choose through us to rest His grace and mercy.

***Genesis 20:7.** *“Now therefore, restore the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live.”*

This is the first mention of the word “prophet” (Hebrew: *navi*) in Scripture.

Nabi [or *navi*] literally means "to bubble up." It describes one who is stirred up in spirit... When the sense of "bubbling up" is applied to speaking, it becomes "to declare." Hence, a *nabi*, or a prophet, is an announcer—one who pours forth the declarations of God. (John W. Ritenbaugh, *Forerunner Commentary*)

***Genesis 21:9-12.** *“And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. Therefore she said to Abraham, ‘Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my sons, with Isaac.’ And the matter was very displeasing to Abraham’s sight because of his son. But God said to Abraham, ‘Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called. Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed.’”*

We find teachings seeking to attribute the conflict in the Middle East to a “rejection spirit” occasioned by Abraham’s wrongfully sending Ishmael away, to be misguided, because 1) both this passage and Galatians 4:28-31 make clear that Abraham was obeying God in honoring Sarah’s demand to send Ishmael away, and 2) those who teach this usually do so from a viewpoint that all Arab peoples are descended from Ishmael, a stance for which there is no Biblical or historically verifiable support (such a view disregards the presence and descendants of the millions who lived in what are today considered “Arab” countries long before Ishmael or Isaac were even born). The ridiculing of Isaac by Ishmael may imply that Hagar had not fully obeyed the Angel of the LORD in “submitting herself to Sarah and her hand” after she returned the first time from the desert (16:9). In all events, God loved Hagar and Ishmael and watched over them—eventually Ishmael became the “father” of twelve princes (Gen. 12:20; 25:16).

***Genesis 21:33.** *“Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there called on the name of YHVH, the Everlasting God.”* As we have mentioned, as we progress with the Patriarchs through Genesis, we see YHVH who appeared to Abram in Ur, continually revealing new attributes of His nature and character—showing how *this* “El” (God) differs from all the other “el’s” worshipped by the Canaanites in the land. These attributes are reflected in the new names by which He is called. Here Abraham coins just such a new name, *YHVH El Olam*—“**Yehovah, the God who is Eternal.**”

***Genesis 22:2.** *“Then He said, ‘Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go forth, yourself (Hebrew: *Lekh-lekha!*) to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.’”* The last time God used the words *Lekh-lekha!* (literally “Begin walking, yourself!”), was in Ur (Gen. 12:1). It was up to Abraham himself to begin moving—and then God guided him ‘in his going’, bringing him against all hope eventually into the far-away land of Canaan. Now Abraham is much older, and has walked with this

God for many years and communed with him as a Friend. This is even more an obedience against hope—but by now this Man of Faith (who rejoiced to see Yeshua’s day! John 8:56) had come to believe in this God as the very “Resurrection and the Life.” In 22:5, he doggedly assures the young men with him that *“the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and WE will come back to you.”*

“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.’ He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.” (Hebrews 11:17-19).

***Genesis 22:7-8, 14.** *“Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, ‘My father!’ And he said, ‘Here I am, my son.’ And he said, ‘Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?’ Abraham said, ‘God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.’ So the two of them walked on together...And Abraham called the name of the place “YHVH will Provide...In the Mount of YHVH it will be Provided.”*

In ancient Hebrew the word *yireh* could idiomatically carry with it an idea of “provision”. Yet literally it was then, as today, a form of the verb “To See”. **“God will see for Himself the Lamb”** (22:8); **“YHVH will see; as it is said to this day, ‘In the Mount of YHVH it will be seen”** (22:14). God’s “seeing”, and our being “in His sight” is so important! We believe this to be a reason so much emphasis is placed throughout Scripture on the importance of dwelling **“in the light of His face”** (Psalm 44:3; 80:19)—**“seeking His face”** (Psalm 27:8-9)—**“finding grace in the eyes of the LORD”** (Genesis 6:8). If there is nothing coming between us and His face (the place of His “seeing”), all the *provision* for our journey will be there. Lastly, God had indeed “seen/provided the *Lamb*”. Isaiah 53:11 uses the same word— **“He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.”**

***Genesis 22:13.** *“Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horn.”* We believe that here lies an important part of the significance of the *shofar* or rams’ horn. Here, caught by its horn, was the symbol of God’s Provision for all humankind--the *‘Lamb of God which carries away the sin of the world’*. The sound of the *shofar* is a sound of the redemptive work and victory of the Lamb. When it is blown in the timing and authority of the *Ruah haKodesh* (Holy Spirit/Wind)...demons tremble, and the hearts of God’s army are strengthened and renewed with courage and joy!



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[The readings for next week (5-11 November 2017) are called *Chayeh Sarah*— “Sarah’s Life”. TORAH: Genesis 23:1—25:18; HAFTARAH: I Kings 1:1-31.]

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