

Prayer Update From Israel (December 1, 2014)



*“Exalt the LORD our God, and worship towards His footstool—He is Holy...
Exalt the LORD our God, and worship towards His holy hill; For YHVH our God is holy”
(Psalm 99:5,9)*

1. This week we draw your attention to the Torah and Haftarah readings (see below), which we see to warrant a stronger-than-usual focus as an aid in our intercession for Israel. Within them we find Jacob in God's mercies brought finally to a realization and confession of his true sinful and deceptive nature--and to an awakened longing and wrestling towards a new and holy one--a triumph in God's grace through which he (and present-day Israel!) will come into the true name and destiny for which he was born; we see the effects of curses on our lives and our families, and the necessity of having them renounced in order to move forward under the Lord's protection; we see the revelation of a new name for God under which Israel and all the nations must approach Him; and we examine the nature of a false covenant under which many of Israel's neighbors and indeed much of the entire world is captured and must be set free.

At the same time, please join us in thanking the Lord for His blessings over Israel this week:

***For bountiful rainfall.** Between Tuesday and Thursday Jerusalem received almost five inches of rain; the Sea of Galilee rose by over 1.7 inches (not from run-off, but from clouds positioned directly over the lake); some places in the south received as much rain in a few hours as they normally expect in over six months. We are still within what are called the Former Rains in Israel. Although Israel has developed enough de-salinization fields to provide for its drinking water, this by no means provides for what is required for her agriculture and that of her neighbors. God encourages us to seek Him for the Former and Latter rains. We are grateful that we are already well ahead of the rainfall at this time last year. Please pray that it continue throughout the next five months--and that Israel be grateful and give thanks to the Father from whom it comes.

***We have prayed and continue to pray that plans for a major release of violence which the enemy wishes to unleash at this time would not be allowed to ignite ("NOT**

NOW!"). This week it was revealed that Israel's security agency *Shin Bet* and the military have uncovered a large transnational Hamas terrorist network. They arrested around 30 Hamas members who had been recruited and trained to, among other things, release attacks targeting Jerusalem's Teddy soccer stadium, Jerusalem's light rail system, Israeli traffic and military in Judea and Samaria, as well as carrying out car bombings, kidnappings and setting up terrorist cells in Jordan which would carry out cross-border attacks into Israel. This network was overseen by Hamas operatives in Turkey. Among its ultimate goals was to infiltrate Judea and Samaria so as to weaken and bring down the Palestinian Authority control there and usher in a takeover by Hamas.

Please pray that the government which is necessary for God's purposes in Israel during this coming season will be strengthened and unified with the membership of God's choosing. As we write, Prime Minister Netanyahu is spending the day in meetings with different leaders within his government to see if he finds it worthwhile to continue, or whether to dissolve the government and go to early elections. There has been much dissension between the parties within the government and accusations against the Prime Minister during the past weeks, especially regarding the current budget, and also a controversial bill desired by the Prime Minister which is aimed at enshrining in law Israel's status as the nation-state of the Jewish People. It is rumored that the Prime Minister has been courting the ultra-Orthodox parties which were excluded from the government he was forced to form two years ago--seeking their pledge to stand with him should things he feel required to form a new government. We do not think this would be wise. When granted entrance to the government, these parties historically use their power to gain control of those offices which determine who is considered "Jewish" and who is allowed into the land. They have an intense zeal against anything which they see as threatening their views--chief amongst them, Messianic Jews. Please Pray: That if it is important for the security of the nation that the government continue in its present or a similar form, there will be a way of unity revealed and an encouragement for the leaders to walk in that. Pray that Benjamin Netanyahu will walk out all the days ordained for him as a leader in Israel, that his mind and integrity will be protected, and he be granted favor to carry out his call. Pray that where he makes mis-steps, the Lord will, "draw his feet from the net." (Psalm 25:15) Pray that he will not be allowed to become entangled by an unwise alliance with parties which would be a snare to him and to the oversight of a government beneath which the Good News may continue to be nourished and grow among its citizens.

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 30 November—6 December 2014 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 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 [YHVH]...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 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.”

***Genesis 33:18-19.** *“And Jacob came safely (Hebrew: “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 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. In very recent years it has been 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 a well Jacob had dug there (John 4). Presently it is a Palestinian city (Nablus) with 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. Almost certainly this city and the settlements will 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 its inhabitants brought into the Kingdom of the Prince of Peace. Pray that the altars of Abraham and Jacob to the LORD be restored there—and that the wells of living water that Yeshua spoke of there 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 Himself has chosen sovereignly to identify His name with Israel (Jacob) and his descendants. Muslims identify their deity with Ishmael, 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.**

***Genesis 35:2,5.** *“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...there were hidden gods smuggled from Aram (perhaps brought originally by Abram’s father from Ur?), and obviously various other gods used as jewelry. The presence of these idols had caused a great breach in the protection of the family, occasioning violation (Dina), cruel and senseless violence (Shimon and Levi) and perhaps even eventually resulting in death (Rachel). For the “Family” of Israel to be made “whole”—for the family’s *armor* to be made sound, all of this had to be dealt with. Only the God YHVH (Yehovah) had been a shield for Abraham in this spiritually dark and violent land (Genesis 15:1)—and only the same God would be protection for Israel and his seed. The same holds true today. **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 “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 in Samuel’s day Rachel’s tomb was assumed to be “in the territory of Benjamin” a number of miles to the north, but “on the way [from Bethel] to Ephrath (that is Bethlehem).

ESAU, EDON, 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, 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 he 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 eventually according to one report, be killed by an Amalekite (II Samuel I:8, 13). And in the book of Esther, we see that the architect of a proposed Holocaust of the Jews in the Persian kingdom was Haman, the Agagite, a descendant of Amalek.

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 Life God! 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 (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!**



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[The readings for next week (7-13 December 2014) are called *VaYeshev*—“And He Settled”: TORAH: Genesis 37:1—40:23; HAFTARAH: Amos 2:6—3:8]

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