

MORDEKAI'S DRASH — VA'ETCHANAN



Torah: Va'etchanan (And I pleaded), D'varim (Deuteronomy) 3.23-7.11
Haftorah: Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 40.1-26
Suggested Messianic Writings: Mattityahu (Matthew) 23.31-39

Shalom,

It must have been with mixed emotions that Moshe gave his final declaration to the people and new nation of Israel. This is what the book of *D'varim* (Deuteronomy) is – Moshe's final message. He knew that he did not have much longer to live; he also knew that he was not allowed by HaShem to enter the Promised Land. How disappointing it must have been to have led the nation out of Egypt and through the wilderness wanderings for nearly 40 years, then because of a moment of anger and personal failure, to be prohibited from walking in the Land. And because of the several failures of Israel, Moshe was banned from the Land for those reasons also (see *D'varim* 4.21). So he had to have been upset with himself, upset with Israel, and maybe a little disgruntled at HaShem. But in a lesson for us all, Moshe did not dwell on his own problems. His primary concern was what would happen to Israel after they crossed over into the Promised Land. He knew by the *Ruakh* (Spirit) of HaShem that Israel would stumble greatly, yet he also knew that HaShem would never leave or forsake them completely. Moshe prophesied that after much dispersion and struggling, Israel would once again be gathered back to her Land in the *acharit-hayamim*.

The book of *D'varim* is a message by Moshe to the new generation of Israel who is about to cross over into the Promised Land. The generation that had come out of Egypt – at least all of the men – had all died in the wilderness (with the exception of *Kalev* (Caleb) and *Y'hoshua* (Joshua)). The text is not clear whether this was everybody, or just the men. The English is generally translated “men,” but the term may or may not be generically used. We are told in *B'Midbar* (Numbers) chapters 1 that a census was taken of all the men 20 years old and up who were able to go to war from the first generation; by *B'Midbar* 14 we see that the entire generation of those men was promised a death in the desert. So it's not clear about the women, but at the entry into the Land, the oldest men would have been under 60, since every man 20 years old and up was to die in the wilderness, so a 19-year-old would have been the oldest survivor from the first generation.

This particular parashah is full of the richness of the promises and commandments of HaShem. It contains a recap of the Ten Words, as well as the Sh'ma. Through the passage of time the Word of G-d has stood firm in this declaration – obey G-d and live, disobey and die. This is referring to a lifestyle. Moshe prophesied in the center of *D'varim* 4 that Israel would be disobedient and would be dispersed among the nations. There may be a hint of the timing of the return of Yeshua in 4.30: “In your distress, when all these things have come upon you, in the *acharit-hayamim*, you will return to ADONAI your God and listen to what he says.” The three weeks leading up to Tisha B'Av are known as the “Dire Straits”. Israel has been troubled much in her history on this particular day of the year, but en masse Israel has not returned to her G-d. The word for *distress* in the Hebrew is צר *tsar*, which means “narrow, a tight place, affliction, distress, tribulation, trouble,” and in some versions is translated *tribulation*, and we may be looking here at the end-of-days tribulation. In fact, that is what the *acharit-hayamim* is – translated in other versions as “the latter days; the end of days”. Young's Literal Translation has “the latter end of the days”.

A same form of the word is used in *Yirmeyahu* (Jeremiah) 30.7, which speaks of “the time of Ya'akov's (Jacob's) trouble,” another term for the end-times tribulation, but the word is in the feminine and implies “a female rival, a rival wife,” and we know this was the case in the physical life of Ya'akov, with Le'ah and Rachel. Now a rival wife may not necessarily be an evil one, but may imply that there is a competition for the love of the husband. The “bride” of Yeshua is all of those who follow him, and it is known that these people “vex” Israel (all the non-Messianic Jewish people globally would be inferred here) in her spirit. So when Israel is “in tribulation in the *acharit-hayamim*,” it would seem that this rival is right there, “vexing” her, until finally she recants of her disbelief and turns wholly to her G-d and Messiah. The *acharit-hayamim*, the end of days, the great tribulation, the anti-Messiah, etc, in the final analysis has little really to do with the enemies of Israel, but rather the “purpose” is *the salvation of Israel*, bursting into global salvation, and the defeat of hasatan with the return of Yeshua. Why would you want to watch that from afar if you could still be around to be involved?

Yeshua told *Yerushalayim* in *Mattityahu* 23.39 that until they say “*Barukh haba b'shem Adoni* – Blessed is He who comes in the name of Adoni” they would not see Him again. He went on in chapter 24 to tell His followers that they would be delivered up to “tribulation,” which has been translated back into modern

Hebrew “New Testaments” with the word צר *tsar*. All the trials in the world up to this point will be nothing like the great tribulation, yet just as there were at the time of the Exodus, there will be pockets of safety, and I believe that. I also believe that we are near those days, and none of us knows our roles at this time. There will be martyrs, but there will be survivors. I believe that grace is measured and given out *when it is needed* to those who ask, not before.

Continuing in Mattityahu 24, when believers are placed into tribulation, many will fall away from the faith. I believe those are the many who were expecting an early escape plan, as well as those who believed that Israel had been replaced by the church. But Yeshua said that the one who endures to the end will be saved. When Israel calls Yeshua back, something will break in the spirit realm, and the gospel, the *besorah*, the good news of the Messiah will spread to the rest of the globe quickly. Tribulation will increase, but then the days are cut short and Yeshua will return and gather His bride from the ends of the earth. “But immediately after the tribulation of those days... the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky... And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”

Some may not accept this understanding of the *acharit-hayamim*, the end of days, and that’s okay, as long as your faith will stand strong when trials do come, and no one makes it a matter of salvation and judges the way another believes. If we are serving Yeshua, that is the important thing.

So pray that Israel would come to grips with her inheritance, and as a nation would desire to live by the *Sh'ma* (see D’varim 6.4f), the Ten Words, and the rest of Torah that was given through Moshe. May they heed the words of their ancient prophets. May they quit explaining away the word *echad* and accept *the tri-unity of the one G-d – Av, Ben v’Ruakh*; Father, Son and Spirit. May they come to understand how blessed they truly are: “they were made God’s children, the Sh’khinah has been with them, the covenants are theirs, likewise the giving of the Torah, the Temple service and the promises; the Patriarchs are theirs; and from them, as far as his physical descent is concerned, came the Messiah, who is over all” (Romans 9.4-5). “From this you can know that Adonai your God is indeed God, the faithful God, who keeps his covenant and extends grace to those who love him and observe his mitzvot, to a thousand generations” (D’varim 7.9). If Israel would reach out to her Messiah Yeshua, very quickly would the “fast days of the fourth and fifth months,” the dire straits leading up to Tisha B’Av, become “times of joy, gladness and cheer” (*Z’kharyah*/Zechariah 8.19).

שְׁאַלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם – *Sha’alu shalom Yerushalayim* – Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

B’rakhot v’todah rabbah

(Blessings & thank you very much)

Mordekhi (Marc)

This Yeshua, who has been taken away from you into heaven, will come back to you in just the same way as you saw him go into heaven.

(Acts 1.11 CJB)