



Mordekhi's Drash for Shabbat August 9, 2008 / Av 8, 5768

Parashah #44

Torah: D'varim (Words), D'varim (Deuteronomy) 1.1-3.22

Haftorah: Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 1.1-27

Suggested Messianic Writings: Acts 7.51-8.4

Shalom,

We begin the fifth and final book of Torah this week as we near the end of another annual cycle. Each time we go through the cycle, new treasures can be gained found from the Word of HaShem through the understanding given by the *Ruakh HaKodesh*, the Holy Spirit. There is a statement in the Talmud which says that the Torah is to be compared to water, that understanding coming from *Yesha'yahu* (Isaiah) 55.1: "Ho, all you who are thirsty, come to the water!" Rashi explained that *Yesha'yahu* used the term *water* as a metaphor for Torah, which is freely available to everyone. The Hebrew in *D'varim* 1.5 is **מֹשֶׁה בִּאֵר** *Moshe beh-ehr*, "Moses explained". Another definition of **בִּאֵר** *beh-ehr* is "to dig". The word has the same Hebrew consonants as **בְּאֵר** *b'ehr*, a [water] well.

Of course, as *talmidim* (disciples) of *Yeshua*, we are pointed directly to Him through the *Ruakh* by such Scriptures, for we know that, "In the beginning was *the Word*... Whoever believes in Me, as *the Scripture* has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of *living water*...' " (*Yochanan* (John) 1.1; 7.38). As you continue to pray for the Jewish people consider these words from *Yirmeyahu* (Jeremiah) 2.13: "for My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of *living waters*, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no *water*..." The rabbinic traditions contain many truths and valuable information, but at the same time the traditions are, in a sense, broken cisterns, letting the *living water* of *Yeshua* spill out. Here may be a thought for pressing in more in your prayer: When water leaks out of a physical cistern, and even though the people are not refreshed when the water is gone, the water goes into the land and refreshes the land. Picture it this way – as the *Living Water* of *Yeshua* leaks out of the Rabbinic system before it can reach the people, it spills into the Land [of Israel, I believe, in a spiritual sense, as well as the Israeli Diaspora globally], and somehow in the spiritual realm seeds of truth are watered, which then grow, and become a field of grain that has been watered by *Living Water*, which grows to become a spiritual *Bread* that somehow the Jewish people then ingest, whether they realize it or not. This *Bread of Life* (*Yochanan* 6), *Yeshua*, gets into the system, which then becomes thirsty, and needs *water*, and so the broken cisterns are examined for repair so that there will be *water* for refreshment. Thus, there is no way Israel can escape from *Yeshua*. As David wrote in *Tehillim* (Psalms) 139.7, "Where can I flee from Your presence?" The obvious answer – nowhere! Maybe this sounds a little far-fetched, but on the other hand, maybe not.

Shlomo (Solomon) wrote in *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes) 1.7, "All the rivers flow to the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place where the rivers flow, there they keep on flowing." The water that refreshes us physically today has been here since the beginning of creation, there is no new water upon the earth. And so the cycle of the old refreshes us anew. Thus *Yeshua* said, in *Mattityahu* (Matthew) 13.52, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." The *Living Water* that refreshes us today is the *Living Water* that has "existed from the beginning" (1 *Yochanan* 1.1).

D'varim begins with the phrase, "These are the words *Moshe* spoke to all Isra'el...." *D'varim* is the account of *Moshe* retelling the Exodus story to a new generation of Israelites who were about to enter the Promised Land. We are coming to the end of a 40-year wandering in the desert, and it is time for refreshing. *Moshe* gives the *Living Words* of HaShem to the people, refreshing them, invigorating them to enter their destiny. Rabbi Russ Resnik wrote, in his intro to Deuteronomy in *Gateways to Torah*, "Deuteronomy... is an extended sermon in which Moses reminds an entire generation of their divine destiny, and he speaks with an authority that brings his sermon to life for all future generations."

The ultimate goal of the book of *D'varim*, however much it points to our individual spiritual journeys, is about the destiny of the nation of Israel. *Moshe* reminds the people that their destiny will be fulfilled because of HaShem's faithfulness, and not because of theirs.

Tisha B'Av, the 9th of the month of Av, is on August 10th in this year of 2008. *Tisha B'Av* is a historical date of great tragedies heaped upon the Jewish people – both Temples were destroyed on this date, the people were exiled from the Land, and many other sorrowful events are linked to this date in Jewish history. Other examples: in 1095 the first Crusade was declared by Pope Urban II, in which 10,000 Jews were killed in Europe. In 1290, the Jews were expelled from England; in 1492 the Jewish people were expelled from Spain; in 1914 Britain and Russia declared war on Germany, and because WWI issues were never resolved, WWII eventually started from which came the Holocaust. And yet, even through all of this, the words of Moshe in D'varim are a reminder that always, HaShem is with His chosen people. He is working out His purposes in history, most times without the cooperation of mankind – to bring about the restoration of the original blessing given in the Garden.

Sadly, much of the church has come to the conclusion through the centuries that the election of Israel was only a means to an end, a vehicle from which came forth the Messiah. Now that Messiah has come, this type of thinking believes that the vehicle can be done away with, for it has been replaced. If Scripture is accurately and honestly sought out, this thinking not only dishonors Israel, but it dishonors the God of Israel. Even in times of punishment, discipline and exile, HaShem has been there to carry Israel. **רַחֲמֵי** *Kheh-sed*, “loving-kindness, inferring covenant love and fidelity,” is a major theme of D'varim. Further words from Yesha'yahu are brought to mind, (54.10): “‘For the mountains may leave and the hills be removed, but My grace [**רַחֲמֵי** *kheh-sed*] will never leave you, and my covenant of peace will not be removed,’ says Adonai, who has compassion on you.”

The situation for Israel seems almost hopeless today to the natural eye, but there is coming a total and final restoration and salvation. HaShem will arise and defeat the enemies of Israel – who are His enemies also – and we read from our Haftorah portion (Yesha'yahu 1.24-27), “‘Therefore,” says the Lord, ADONAI-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Isra'el, “I will free myself of my adversaries, I will take vengeance on my enemies. But I will also turn my hand against you [Israel]! I will cleanse your impurities as with lye and remove all your alloyed base metal. I will restore your judges as at first and your advisers as at the beginning. After that, you will be called the City of Righteousness, Faithful City. Tziyon will be redeemed by justice; and those in her *who repent*, by righteousness.” Pray for those in Tziyon *TO* repent.

שְׁאַלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם – *Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim* – Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

B'rakhot v'todah rabbah
(Blessings & thank you very much)

Mordekhi

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)