

מִרְדֵּכָה'ס דְּרָשָׁה — בְּחַ' אֲלוֹתְכָהּ



Torah: B'ha'alotkha (When you set up), B'midbar (Numbers) 8.1-12.16
Haftorah: Z'kharyah (Zechariah) 2.14(10)-4.7
Suggested Messianic Writings: Revelation 11.1-19

Shalom,

וַיְהִי בְּנִסּוֹעַ הָאָרוֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה יי
Viy'hee been-so-ah ha-a-ron vi-yo-mer Moshe “Ku-ma Adoni”
And when the ark journeyed, Moshe said, “Arise Adoni
וַיִּפְצוּ אֲיִבָּיִךְ וַיִּגְסוּ מִשְׁנֵיֶיךָ מִפְּנֵי
V'ya-fu-tsu oy-veh-kha v'ya-nu-su m'sa-neh-kha mee-pa-neh-kha.
May your enemies be scattered, and those that hate You flee from Your presence.”

This phrase, from *B'midbar* (Numbers) 10.35, is sung or chanted in synagogues around the world as the Torah scroll is removed from its cabinet and carried around the room. Those in attendance touch the Scroll cover with a Bible, a Siddur (prayer book), or the tzitzit from a prayer shawl, never the fingers, then touch that object to their lips. The scene pictures the original giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai, from *Sh'mot* (Exodus) 24.3 & 7, “Moshe came and told the people everything ADONAI had said, including all the rulings. The people answered with one voice: *‘We will obey every word ADONAI has spoken...’*” Then he [Moshe] took the book of the covenant and read it aloud, so that the people could hear; and they responded, *‘Everything that ADONAI has spoken, we will do and obey’*” (emphasis added). Those who love ADONAI and His Torah are in essence saying the same thing when the Torah is so honored in our day – *we will do and obey*.

To Messianics, the Torah scroll, written on a lamb’s skin, represents the Lamb of G-d, Yeshua, and that is why we honor the scroll. We do not worship the scroll, but we honor it as the written word of ADONAI, which in turn represents the living Word, Yeshua. And as we understand the fact that Yeshua has been around eternally from before the Creation as a member of the mysterious triune G-dhead, we understand better His statement from Matthew 28.20, “...obey everything that I have commanded you.” Simply put, if we love Him we obey Him; if we don’t love Him, we don’t obey Him. If a commandment of His is relevant, it is to be obeyed, end of story. Somehow many followers of Yeshua have come to the conclusion that the commandments can be picked through and sorted according to personal desire; or worse yet, that the majority of anything *to the left of Matthew 1* is irrelevant. Others have trouble with anything *past D'varim* (Deuteronomy). 1 *Yochanan* (John) 2.3-4 says this, “The way we can be sure we know him [Yeshua] is if we are obeying his commands. Anyone who says, ‘I know him,’ but isn’t obeying his commands is a liar — the truth is not in him.” Whether a commandment is from Leviticus or Galatians, our Creator expects us to respond in an affirmative manner. We read in Luke 24.27: “Then, *starting with Moshe* and all the prophets, he explained to them *the things that can be found throughout the Tanakh* concerning himself” (emphasis added).

So if Yeshua is in it all, from Genesis to Revelation, then we should honor it all. The immediate understanding of *Torah* is the five books of Moshe, but the word *Torah* has such definitions as, “Law, teaching, instruction, direction, to point the way one is to walk in life”. David Stern in the *Complete Jewish Bible* makes an astonishing but correct translation of Hebrew 8.6: “But now the work Yeshua has been given to do is far superior to theirs [earthly priests], just as the covenant he mediates is better. For this covenant *has been given as Torah* on the basis of better promises” (emphasis added). According to Stern’s commentary, “If the New Testament is *Torah*, then the *Torah* has not been abrogated. Instead, the New Testament has been given the same status as the *Torah* of Moses; that is, it has come to have the highest authority there is, the authority that accompanies promulgation by God himself. One might say that *Torah* has been expanded – or better, that *Torah* has been made more explicit.” [For further understanding of his translation and usage of this terminology here, I suggest reading David Stern’s *Jewish New Testament Commentary* for a nearly two-page look at this terminology.]

What then is the purpose in us honoring the Word, to obey the Word? Simply this: “For we are His workmanship, created in [Messiah Yeshua] for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (Ephesians 2.10). And from Isaiah 43.21, “The people whom I formed for Myself Will declare My praise.” All that we do is to honor Him; all that we do should be a form of praise unto Him. Ancient Israel did not separate the sacred and the secular. That is a good lesson for us.

The words of Moshe above signaled not only a statement of ADONI's authority as Israel set out from an encampment, but also a prophetic word that will ring true in these last days. "As the ark journeyed..." that is, as the *entire* Word of ADONI, and thus the G-d and Messiah of Israel, is held to a higher standard of love, respect and obedience by His children – Jew and Gentile alike, then the G-d of Israel will arise and scatter His enemies, and those that hate Him will flee from His presence. Those who trouble Israel had better beware. *Z'kharyah* (Zechariah) caps it off perfectly for us, from 2.12(8), a verse just prior to this week's reading: "ADONAI-Tzva'ot says, 'Anyone who injures you injures the very pupil of my eye.'"

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)