

❖ PARSHAT DEVARIM

This week's Torah reading, Devarim, is the first portion in the Book of Devarim (Deuteronomy). The entire book was related to the Jewish people in their 40th year in the desert. By that time, the majority of the Jews who had left Egypt were no longer alive; only those who would enter the land of Israel were alive. Thus the Book of Devarim was intended as a preparation to help them make this transition. Devarim begins by noting the location of the Jews' final encampment before entering Israel. "These are the words which Moses spoke...on this side of the Jordan." At the end of Bamidbar (Numbers), however, this same place is referred to as "the plains of Moab, by the Jordan opposite Jericho."

"The plains of Moab" and "this side of the Jordan" are both names that describe the same physical location. And yet, each name has a different connotation: "The plains of Moab" identifies the location by its connection to the land of Moab. "This side of the Jordan," by contrast, associates it with the land of Israel, identifying it as lying on the eastern shore of the Jordan river, with the rest of the land of Israel lying toward the west. What are we to learn from the Torah's usage of two names for the same place? The Book of Devarim is essentially different from the Book of Bamidbar. Bamidbar relates the various encounters and experiences of the Jewish people during their 40 years in the desert. Devarim, however, relates Moses' exhortations to the generation that was about to enter Israel, as preparation for the new lives they would be leading there.

At the end of Bamidbar, the site of the Jews' encampment is referred to as "the plains of Moab," as it expressed their connection to a land whose status was non-Jewish territory. In Devarim, however, it is referred to as "this side of the Jordan," for at that time, the Jewish people were focused on their imminent entry into the land of Israel. We find ourselves now in the last minutes of exile, poised on the brink of the Final Redemption. Thus our present era is analogous to the one we read about this week. "The plains of Moab" is symbolic of the exile and its completion; "this side of the Jordan" is symbolic of our preparation for Moshiach's imminent arrival. Indeed, "this side of the Jordan" is a most appropriate name with which to characterize our present transitional period, for it corresponds to the Jews' heightened state of anticipation in the 40th year of their going out of Egypt. Moshiach's coming is imminent. We must prepare to greet him. May it happen now. (From: L'Chaim 5757, #480, Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, Volume 2)

❖ SHABBAT CHAZON - TISHA B'AV

The Parsha of Devarim is always read on the Shabbat before the 9th of Av, the date on which both Temples fell. These tragedies are reflected in the choice of Haftarah for the surrounding weeks, those before the 9th of Av expressing prophecies of rebuke for the sins that were the spiritual cause of the destruction; those afterwards conveying messages of comfort and solace. This week's Haftarah, the famous "Vision" of Isaiah, gives its name to the day - Shabbat Chazon, the "Shabbat of the Vision."

Traditionally, this is read as a powerful indictment of a rebellious people. But, true to the Chassidic tradition of seeing the Divine blessing even in the apparent curse, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, one of the early Chassidic teachers, saw in it a distant "vision" of the Third Temple of Messianic times.

There is a saying of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev that this Shabbat, Shabbat Chazon (when we read as the Haftarah, the famous Vision (Chazon) of Isaiah), is a day when we are presented with a vision of the future Third Temple, even though we see it from a great distance. And this leads us to understand the connection between the "vision" of the

Haftarah, and the Parsha of Devarim, which are always read together on the Shabbat before the 9th of Av. For, with Devarim begins the "Second Torah" - Moses' recapitulation of the Torah. And the whole book of Devarim differs from the other four books of the Chumash in being addressed to the generation who were about to enter the Holy Land.

They needed counsel and caveat in a way that the previous generations did not. For the people who had traveled in the wilderness possessed an immediate knowledge of the Divine - they had seen G-d on Sinai. But the succeeding generation, already touched by their responsibilities in the physical world, lost that immediacy, they heard G-d but did not see Him. They were addressed in the words "And now, Israel, listen..." And the difference between seeing and hearing is this: someone who witnesses an event is unshakable in his testimony about it - he has seen it with his own eyes. But one who hears about an event may eventually entertain doubts. Hearing does not confer certainty. That is why the generation who were to enter Israel, who heard but did not see G-d, had to be commanded about self-sacrifice and the like, a warning which would have been superfluous to the people of the wilderness.

In one way, then, the later generation lacked the spiritual immediacy of their forebears. But they were, nonetheless, to reach something unattained by their fathers, who were told: "You have not, as yet, come to the rest and the inheritance which the L-rd your G-d has given to you." Shiloh and Jerusalem were reached only by that later generation. For only by the descent into material concerns, the translation of G-d's will into practical action, could the fulfillment be reached of "the rest and the inheritance."

Devarim, in short, tells us of the paradox that through descent comes true uplifting: The highest achievements of the spirit are won in earthly and not heavenly realms. And this is also the message of the "vision" - even though this Haftarah is read in the "Nine Days" of mourning for the loss of the Temples, nonetheless through the resultant exile will come the true redemption, the vision of which we glimpse (in the words of the Berditchever) in the very moment of our loss.

The sense of mourning, of being "in the straits" which dominates our consciousness in the Nine Days when we recall the destruction of the Temples, is broken by Shabbat, the day on which joy must prevail. Indeed, on the Shabbat before the 9th of Av we are bidden to rejoice even more than usual, to remove any possibility that the melancholy of the surrounding days should intrude into the Shabbat spirit.

But the injunction has a deeper meaning. Shabbat is a reflection of the World to Come; and that future redemption will be so complete as to efface all traces of the exiled past. So on this day there is no place for the evocations of exile. But we go further on this Shabbat than to eliminate sadness - we increase our joy. For the future redemption will be more spiritually intense than any previous one. If it merely restored the status quo, exile would have been unnecessary. Each exile of the Jews has culminated in new levels of spirituality, for by being scattered, they have been able to redeem and bring into G-d's service environments that would otherwise have been untouched by the hand of Torah. And the end-point of this journey - the Time to Come - will be a redemption without further exile, a completeness of spirituality that needs no new excursions.

So the Shabbat most connected with exile, the day of the "vision," sees in its foretaste of the future, the consummation of all exile and its transformation into undisturbed rejoicing. The Shulchan Aruch tells us that on this day it is permitted to prepare a feast like that which Solomon made when he was made king: That the anticipation of the future kingdom might give us the strength to turn the sorrows of exile into the joys of redemption. (From: chabadonline.com, Source: Likkutei Sichot, Vol. II, pp. 357-359)

NO MATTER HOW MUCH EFFORT IS EXERTED, NO-ONE CAN EARN ONE CENT MORE THAN G-D HAS ORDAINED THAT HE - THIS PARTICULAR PERSON - SHALL EARN. ONE MUST DO WHAT IS NECESSARY, BUT ONE MUST REMEMBER THAT ALL HIS WORK IS BUT AN ADJUNCT. THE MAIN THING IS G-D'S BLESSING, AND THAT BLESSING IS EARNED BY BEING OBSERVANT OF G-D'S COMMANDS: DAVENING WITH A MINYAN, OBSERVING SHABBAT B'HIDUR (BEYOND THE MINIMUM, WITH "BEAUTY"), METICULOUS OBSERVANCE OF KASHRUT, HAVING CHILDREN INSTRUCTED BY SINCERELY RELIGIOUS TEACHERS.

(1) FOOTNOTE: 1. THE REBBE MEANS SIMPLY AND WITHOUT EQUIVOCATION, TEACHERS WHO ARE PERSONALLY OBSERVANT. HE WAS HORRIFIED AND DEEPLY GRIEVED BY "TEACHERS" OF TORAH WHO DO NOT KEEP TORAH AND THE DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS THEY HAVE ON THEIR PUPILS. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM AV 4)

PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES

Sunday	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Berachot (men)
Monday	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
Tuesday	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Sukkha (men)
Wednesday	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
Thursday	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
Daily	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chasiddus

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM
Sunday: 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv: 7:45 PM

TISHA B'AV SCHEDULE

Wednesday Night, Aug. 9:
 Fast Begins 7:46 PM
 Maariv 8:15 PM *followed by Eicha*

Thursday, Aug. 10:
 First Shacharis 6:00 AM *followed by Kinos*
 Second Shacharis 7:30 AM *followed by Kinos*
WE DO NOT PUT ON TALLIS AND TEFILLIN
 Completion of Shacharis and Mincha 6:55 PM
with Tallis and Tefillin
FAST ENDS 8:25 PM

SHABBAT PARSHAT DEVARIM
Shabbos Chazon
August 4, 2000

Candlelighting: 7:32 PM
Friday Mincha: 7:45 PM
Early Minyan 6:15 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:32 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- Tanya 8:45 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent
- See Below 6:30 PM
- Mincha 7:15 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 8:32 PM

Yartzeits: Joe Mayerhoff - Av 4, Helen Biegel - Av 4

Happy Birthday to Jonathan R. Katzir, Kenneth Staub, Devorah Leah Illulian, Eliana Hill.



SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

The Shul is honored to have Rabbi Simon Jacobson - noted lecturer and author of the best selling book :

Towards a Meaningful Life - the Wisdom of the Rebbe
 as

Scholar in Residence

Everyone is invited to a catered Friday night meal. Rabbi Jacobson will speak before Mussaf and before Mincha at 6:30 PM followed by a big Seuda Shlishit

Sponsored by David and Isabelle Suissa



GOOD SHABBOS!

