

RaYBaSH's Torah Thoughts
Parashah # 32: Behar "On Mount"
Vayikra / Leviticus 25:1-26:2
By: Yehudah ben Shomeyr

Summary:

This week's Torah Portion talks about the Sabbatical Years and the Year of Jubilee.

Commentary:

Leviticus 25:1-7 "And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee. And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat."

This passage is referring to Shemita or the Sabbatical Year. Six years work the land and on the seventh year we let the land lie fallow. This is an example of a Torah command that refers only to the agricultural use of the Land of Israel and thus only applies to farmers in Israel. However, I have known example of farmers in the US take up this practice and as a result had bumper crops and bigger and better produce than the competition. This allows the land to rest and restore its vitamins and minerals in the soil. So it is not only spiritual by scientific. Indeed our God is good and wise.

V. 5-7 Whatever happens to come up the 7th year one may have for personal use, but not for profit.

Leviticus 25:19-22 And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety. And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.

If the Shemita years are observed properly, there will be no shortage of food.

Leviticus 25:8-12 And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

Speaks of Yovel, better known as the Year of Jubilee.

7x7=49. So on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) is sort of a giant counting of the Omer so to speak. Instead of days, years are counted, leading up to Yom Kippur. The laws of Yovel teach that the land and freedom are divine gifts and that ownership reverts to those to whom He wills it. All debts are canceled and all “repos” or property sold reverts back to its original owner.

In this post 9-11 society we often hear about “Homeland Security,” well, I believe the following verse is the true definition of Homeland Security:

Leviticus 25:18 “Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.”

Verses 23-34 deals with redemption laws of the land.

Verses 35-43 Talks about preventing poverty by employment or a no interest loan or investment.

One thing I noticed for the first time last year was that the Torah doesn’t make provisions for Jails or Prisons; just Crime and Consequences. It seems in this society the closes thing to prison is forced labor through slavery.

V.44-46 This tells us that Gentile slaves can be inherited.

V. 47-55 Tells us that a Jew sold into slavery to another Jew (most likely to pay off a debt) can be redeemed by a close family member. So the longest a Jew can hold fellow Jew as a slave is 7 years. And we are instructed to treat a Jewish slave like family. And we are to treat gentile slaves a employees, not slaves as Pharaoh did to Israel.

Leviticus 26:1-2 “Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God. Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.”

We are instructed to do as pagans do and build an altar or a place to prostrate oneself for example as Muslims and Catholics to in our day. Altars and Prostration is only reserved for the Temple Courts.

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov!
-- Yehudah ben Shomeyr

RaYBaSH's Haftarah Hashings
Parashah # 32: Behar "On Mount"
Jer. 32:6-27
By: Yehudah ben Shomeyr

After Channukah comes the 10th of Tevet, the Fast of Tevet, the day to commemorate the day when Babylonia began its siege of Jerusalem.

Ezk. 24:1-2 Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.

However, it is also said by some that this is the day when Jeremiah bought a piece of land in Israel and buried the deed in a vessel as a sign that the people would one day be redeemed and they would be able to reclaim their homes.

Jer. 32:9-15 And I bought the field of Hanameel my uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver. And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances. So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open: And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison. And I charged Baruch before them, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.

The Talmud says in Rosh Hashanah 18b that all the fast days will be turned into feast days.

The reason this passage was chosen for the Haftarah is to remind us of the curse that will come when we forsake the Torah and with the exile to Babylon virtually all the curses mentioned fell upon Israel. But there is hope hidden in a jar in this Haftarah portion that gives us a hint that Israel will repent and be returned to the Land and if they stay faithful and obedient they will reap the blessings mentioned in the Torah Portion.

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov!
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RaYBaSH's Brit Chadashah Connections
Parashah # 32: Behar "On Mount"
Matt. 5:1-12
By: Yehudah ben Shomeyr

The Torah and Haftarah Portion both deal with the blessings received for keeping Torah and the curses that you will reap when one forsakes the Torah.

What Yeshua describes here in blessings, and according to the Torah these cannot be received by one who is not Torah Obedient.

Allow me to just cover a few verses and how they speak to me.

5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

In other words, blessed are those who realize that they are spiritually bankrupt and who mourn (v.4) over this situation because they will receive the Kingdom of Heaven and therefore be comforted.

Those who are meek (v.5) those who works in harmony with the Land and the Torah in regards to the Land will inherit the Land and the good that comes from it.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Torah) they will be filled (w/Torah).

V.7 is like Jewish Karma, what goes around comes around. If you are merciful, you will be treated mercifully. Kind of like watch how you judge others because you'll be judged in the same way (Mt. 7:1-2).

Blessed are the pure in heart. How? By studying the Torah, the very heart of God. And in doing this you will see God.

V.9-12: It's not easy being blessed, for others under conviction and Torah disobedient will persecute you, but the silver lining of that gloomy cloud is we inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov!

-- Yehudah ben Shomeyr