



**Parsha Debarim / Words**  
**Beit Emet Congregation ~ Vancouver, WA**  
Ben Ehrhardt, Shamash  
7/25/09  
[www.hearoisrael.org](http://www.hearoisrael.org)

As I read the teaching for **Parsha Debarim**, that Rob taught a couple of years ago, I chuckled at his title, **“Play It Again Moshe”**. But, you know, that’s exactly what this Book of Words, Sefer Debarim, is really all about. Moshe knew that he was to die very soon and that B’nei Yisra’el would go into The Land under Yehoshua. The adult generation that came out of Mitzrayim had, by now, all died, except for Yehoshua and Kaleb, who were obedient to Yahweh. The people, whom Moshe was now talking to, had all grown up being Torah observant. They had spent forty years learning and obeying Yahweh, their Elohim regarding His instructions. And now, Moshe was about to sum up all the history of their journey and Yahweh’s commands, judgments and right-rulings as a last exhortation before they went into Eretz Yisra’el to defeat the inhabitants and receive their inheritance. In fact, as was stated in the e-mail I sent out regarding Rosh Chodesh, **Debarim** in English is called **Deuteronomy**, from the Greek meaning **“Second Law,”** (from **“deuteros”** or **“second”** plus **“nomos”** meaning **“law”**).

The themes of Debarim (**words**) are appropriate for this period. The Book of Debarim is the Torah's **“mouth”**, summarizing all that has gone before in the **“main body”** of the Torah. Debarim calls to the inner ear of the soul of Yisra’el to hear the essential message of the Torah. Each of the twelve months of the year is integrally connected with one of the twelve tribes and one of the twelve basic human faculties, according to Hebrew thought. This month, the month of Av, the fifth month, corresponds to the Tribe of Shim’on and the faculty of hearing as noted in **B’reshith 29:33**, speaking of how Shim’on’s name is related to **“sh’ma”**. It is significant that the phrase **“Sh’ma Yisra’el! Hear, O Israel!”** recurs in four key passages in the book of Debarim.

In **Mishle / Proverbs 22:17**, Yahweh tells us through Shelomoh (*Solomon*); ***Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge.*** These **“debarim”** (**words**) that Moshe speaks are very timely for us today, in the diaspora, awaiting our soon return to the Land. And, the phrase **“Sh’ma Yisra’el! (Hear, O Israel!)”** appears in four key passages in the book of **Debarim**. Shelomoh also wrote these wise words in **Qoheleth / Ecclesiastes 12:13**; ***Let us hear the conclusion of the entire matter: Fear Elohim and guard His commands, for this applies to all mankind!*** It’s interesting that what is translated as **“the conclusion of the entire matter”** is, in Hebrew, simply **“Suf Debar”** or **“the Last Word”**. ***“Let us hear the Last Word: Fear Elohim and guard His commands, for this applies to all mankind!”*** In the written Torah Scroll, the word **“Suf”** begins with an enlarged **“samech”** as if to draw emphasis to this **“Last Word”**. Since these are the **“last words”** of Moshe, and since the commands of Yahweh are recapped in these last words and since we’re commanded to **“Sh’ma Yisra’el”**; we need to pay attention to and study what is written in this Book of the Torah.

With that said, let's begin this *parsha* with **Debarim 1:1-8**; *These are the words which Moshe spoke to all Yisra'el beyond the Yarden in the wilderness, in the desert plain opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, and Laban, and Hatseroth, and Di Zahab, eleven days' journey from Horeb by way of Mount Se'ir to Qadesh Barnea. And it came to be in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moshe spoke to the children of Yisra'el according to all that YHVH had commanded him concerning them, after he had smitten Sihon sovereign of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og sovereign of Bashan, who dwelt at Ashteroth in Edre'i. Beyond the Yarden, in the land of Mo'ab, Moshe undertook to declare this Torah, saying, "YHVH our Elohim spoke to us in Horeb, saying, 'You have dwelt long enough at this mountain. Turn and set out on your way, and go into the mountains of the Amorites, and to all the neighboring places in the desert plain, in the mountains and in the low country, and in the Negev and on the seacoast, to the land of the Kena'anites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the River Euphrates. See, I have set the land before you. Go in and possess the land which YHVH swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Yitsaq, and to Ya'aqob, to give to them and their seed after them.'*

Even in these opening verses, I believe Yahweh is telling us something very important, if we look. Some of these places don't appear in the chronology of the wilderness journey. In reading Rabbi Avraham Greenbaum's commentary on our *parsha*, he confirmed this by saying; *"The opening verse of our parsha DEBARIM appears on the surface to give the location in which Moses delivered his discourse. However, since the various locations mentioned in the verse are all somewhat different, they are construed by the Aramaic Targum and biblical commentators as being a series of allusions to the various sins of the past and the lessons that were to be learned from them."*

Rabbi Greenbaum goes on to say; *"Throughout Deuteronomy (Debarim), Moses repeatedly addresses the people by the name of Israel. Not only does the name Israel carry the connotation of victory, "for you have struggled with El and with men, and you have prevailed" (Gen. 32:28). The letters of the name Israel also include the word YASHAR, "straight", "upright". This is even more explicit in the other biblical name for the Hosts of Israel - YESHURUN (Deut. 32:15; 33:26). The names Israel and Yeshurun indicate that when the people are united and purposeful under the sole, unchallenged leadership of Moses, the archetypal Tzaddik, they are the epitome of order and rectification."*

So, with this in mind, let's revisit, for a few minutes, these opening verses; paying attention to the meanings of key words and places. In the first three verses, Yahweh recaps some of the encampments and places B'nei Yisra'el has come through up to that day in Qadesh Barnea, when Moshe began to speak. It reads; *These are the words which Moshe spoke to all Yisra'el beyond the Yarden in the wilderness, in the desert plain opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, and Laban, and Hatseroth, and Di Zahab, eleven days' journey from Horeb by way of Mount Se'ir to Qadesh Barnea. And it came to be in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moshe spoke to the children of Yisra'el according to all that YHVH had commanded concerning them,....*

First, we need to remember that **"Yisra'el"**, "Yud-sin-reish-aleph-lamed" means **"one who overcomes with El"**. Then, the **"Yarden"**, "Yud-reish-dalet-nun", Strong's #3383 which means to **"descend"** or **"come down"** from heaven as a **"revelation"**. It is from the root word **"yasad"**, "yud-reish-dalet" which means **"to cast down"** or **"fall"**. For you Jeff Benner fans, we see that by adding the **"nun"** or **"kingdom"** to **"to cast down"** the meaning of the word changes to **"revelation"**. The casting down, or falling, of Yisra'el has been part of Yah's revelation to us. Next, we have **"in the wilderness"** or **"bemidbar"**, "bet-mem-dalet-bet-reish", which also means **"speaking"** or **"in the mouth"**. Then, there's the **"desert plain"**, which is **"arabah"**, Strong's #6160 and is spelled **"ayin-**

reish-bet-hey". Now, this is interesting; because, without the "hey", "ayin-reish-bet" is "ereb" or "erev" which is "evening", "the setting of the sun" or "the end of the day" and "the beginning of a new day". This "desert plain" is "opposite" or "mem-vav-lamed", "mole" meaning "toward" "Suph", "samech-yud-fey" and means either "reed" as in "seaweed" or "to make an end of a thing" (bring to an end) or, as we saw above with "Suf Debarim" (the last word) it means "the last".

Now this was between "Paran", "Pey-aleph-reish-nun" which means "place of lush foliage or beauty"; from the root "pa'ar", "pey-aleph-reish" meaning to "adorn" or "make beautiful" and "Tophel", "Tav-fey-lamed" meaning "foolish" or "whitewashed" and "Laban", "Lamed-bet-nun" meaning "white" or "to cleanse" or "purify" and "Hatseroth", "Hey-tzadee-reish-vav-tav" which, if you remember from last week, means "village" or, as a conjunction of "ha'tser" and "oth" meaning "blowing the shofar as a sign" and "Di Zahab", "Dalet-yud" and "Zayin-hey-bet", together meaning "the place of gold".

Then, Yahweh adds that it was "eleven", "echad asar" or "aleph-chet-dalet" and "ayin-sin-reish", meaning "eleven or one and ten" or "one tithe ~ a remnant", "days" or "yom", "yud-dalet-mem" (the word "journey" was added) from "Horeb", "Chet-reish-bet" meaning "desolate", "by way" or "derech" or "in the path" of "Mount Se'ir", or "Har Se'ir", "hey-reish" and "Sin-ayin-yud-reish" meaning literally "hairy he-goat" as in the "goat demon" or "satyr" meaning "idolatrous worship", to "Qadesh Barnea", "Kof-dalet-shin" meaning "set-apart" and "Bet-reish-nun-ayin" literally meaning "Bar" meaning "Son" and "Nuah" or "Wandering".

Are you still with me? I hope so. Let's put the meanings of these places into the verses in place of the names and see how these first two verses read. Remember, I call this the DHV, or Dyslexic Hebrew Version, in that we use the meanings of names and words to get a fuller picture of what Yah is saying to us in Scripture. **These are the words which Moshe spoke to all those who overcame with El, beyond the revelation of the mouth, that which was spoken, at the evening, toward the end of all things, at the last, between their adornment and cleansing, and purification, and the sounding of the Great Shofar, and the City of Gold, one tithe, a remnant from desolation out of the path of idolatrous worship is becoming a set-apart son of wandering.**

But, there's more. Verse 3 says; **And it came to be in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Mosheh spoke to the children of Yisra'el according to all that YHVH had commanded him concerning them,....** If we too are the people that these verses are speaking about, and I definitely see myself in there, then we need to understand these numbers in verse 3. We know forty is the number of testing and trials. But, forty is also the numeric value of the Hebrew phrase "b' levah" or "in his heart". The word used here for "fortieth" is "arba'im" and refers also to "stretching out"; Remember the giant that once ruled Hebron. His name was "Arba". He was named this because of his size; he was "stretched out". That would make the name Arba the Hebrew equivalent to the nickname "Stretch". And, for "eleventh" in this verse, we have a different word than used above, in the previous verses; we have the word "ashtey" which also means "thoughts". And, the numeric value eleven equals "b'vo ah" or "His coming" or "the coming". And of course, "Chodesh" is the "New Moon". Then, we see that it was on the "first" or "echad" in Hebrew, "Chodesh", which is the "first New Moon of the year". Scripture says, that Moshe spoke to the Children of Yisra'el, or "the Children of those who overcame with El", all the words that Yahweh had commanded concerning them. The "him" in our text was added by the translators. The Hebrew word here for "commanded" is "tzavah", "tzadee-vav-hey" which better translates as "appointed" or "commissioned".

Let's use these meanings in the DHV (Dyslexic Hebrew Version); **"And it came to be in their trials, testing and stretching, that in their hearts came thoughts of His Coming, on the "Echad Rosh**

**Chodesh”, the “First New Moon of the Year”. Then, Moshe (Torah) spoke to those who overcame with El, Yeshurun, according to all that YHVH had appointed concerning them.”** In our testing and trials, when our hearts turn to Him and His coming, Torah speaks to us all that Yahweh has appointed concerning us. Isn't that what's happening now?

We see from this exercise that Yahweh has always had the “endgame” in His plan. As I've said before; with Yahweh, there is no “**Plan B**”. He imbedded in the Hebrew, the words He wrote for us today, those who “**Overcome with El**”... Yeshurun ~ His Upright Ones, **Yisra'el United**. However, we haven't “overcome or prevailed with Elohim” just yet. We're not united with our brother. But that, family, is coming very soon now. Baruch HaShem Yahweh!

And, after Moshe finishes **verse 3** with, “**all that YHVH had appointed concerning them**”, he goes on to tell us in **verse 4**; **after he had smitten Sihon sovereign of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og sovereign of Bashan, who dwelt at Ashteroth in Edre'i**. These words, to us, came after Yahweh had defeated “**Sihon**”, which means “**striking down**” the leader of the “**Amorites**”, meaning, as we've read before, the “**Boastful**”, who dwelt in “**Heshbon**”, meaning “**reason**” or “**understanding**”. Yahweh also smote “**Og**”, meaning “**long neck**”, “**great in stature**” or “**giant**” sovereign of “**Bashan**”, meaning “**rich**” or “**fertile**”, who lived in “**Ashteroth**” a symbol of “**idolatry**” and “**false worship**” in “**Edre'i**”, meaning “**strong**” or “**stronghold**”.

Again, if we go to the Dyslexic Hebrew Version, we see, “**after he had smitten and struck down the Boastful, who lived by reason in their own understanding, and the great in stature and rich, who dwell in the stronghold of idolatry.**”

As we look at the wilderness journey of our forefathers, we get a glimpse of our time in the wilderness of the nations, to which Yahweh has sent us. Moshe continues in **verses 5-7**; **Beyond the Yarden, in the land of Mo'ab, Mosheh undertook to declare this Torah, saying, “YHVH our Elohim spoke to us in Horeb, saying, ‘You have dwelt long enough at this mountain. Turn and set out on your way, and go into the mountains of the Amorites, and to all the neighboring places in the desert plain, in the mountains and in the low country, and in the Negev and on the seacoast, to the land of the Kena'anites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the River Euphrates.’”**

Since we looked at most of these words earlier, I'll take this right to the DHV; **Beyond the (Yarden) revelation, in the land (Mo'ab) of my Father, Moshe declared this (Torah) instruction, saying, “YHVH our Elohim spoke to us in (Horeb) the dry place, saying, ‘You have dwelt long enough at this mountain. Turn and set out on your way, and go into the mountains (Emori) spoken of, and to all the neighboring places in (Arabah) the desert, in the mountains and in the low country, and in the (Negev) south and on the seacoast, to the land of (Kena'anites) humbleness and (Lebanon) purification, as far as the great river of (Parat) sweet, living water.’”**

This is *our* journey. At least it's my journey. I remember in April of 1998, when I prayed in my Christian heart earnestly for truth, Yahweh said to me, “**Ben, you've dwelt at this mountain long enough**”. And so, our journey began. We've been through the “**dry place**” to the “**mountain spoken of**”, through “**humbleness**” and “**purification**”, as far as the “**sweet, living water**” of Torah.

Now, look at your Scriptures and see what happens next. Moshe says in **Debarim 1:8**; **‘See, I have set the land before you. Go in and possess the land which YHVH swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Yitzaq, and to Ya'aqob, to give to them and their seed after them.’**

A few verse later, Moshe continues recounting what they did next, in **verses 18-36**; *“And I commanded you at that time all the words which you should do. Then we set out from Horeb, and went through all that great and awesome wilderness which you saw on the way to the mountains of the Amorites, as YHVH our Elohim had commanded us. And we came to Qadesh Barnea. And I said to you, ‘You have come to the mountains of the Amorites, which YHVH our Elohim is giving us. See, YHVH your Elohim has set the land before you. Go up and possess it, as YHVH Elohim of your fathers has spoken to you. Do not fear, nor be discouraged.’ And all of you came near to me and said, ‘Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we would come.’ And the matter was good in my eyes, so I took twelve of your men, one man from each tribe. And they turned and went up into the mountains, and came to the wadi Eshkol, and spied it out. And they took some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us. And they brought back word to us, saying, ‘The land which YHVH our Elohim is giving us is good.’ But you would not go up and rebelled against the mouth of YHVH your Elohim, and grumbled in your tents, and said, ‘Because YHVH was hating us, He has brought us out of the land of Mitsrayim to give us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. Where are we going to? Our brothers have made our hearts melt, saying, “The people are greater and taller than we, the cities are great and walled up to the heavens, and we saw the sons of the Anaqim (people of Anaq ~ giants) there too.” ’ Then I said to you, ‘Have no dread or fear of them. YHVH your Elohim, who is going before you, He does fight for you, according to all He did for you in Mitsrayim before your eyes, and in the wilderness, where you saw how YHVH your Elohim has borne you, as a man bears his son, in all the way that you went until you came to this place.’ Yet in this matter you are putting no trust in YHVH your Elohim, who is going before you in the way to seek out a place for you to pitch your tents, to show you the way you should go, in fire by night and in a cloud by day. And YHVH heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and took an oath, saying, ‘Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I swore to give to your fathers, except Kaleb son of Yephunneh. He shall see it, and to him and his children I give the land on which he walked, because he followed YHVH completely.’”*

B’nei Yisra’el is commanded to possess the Land promised to Avraham, Yitzaq and Ya’aqob. If you and I are B’nei Yisra’el, that applies to us also. We’re told here, and in **Bemidbar** (*Numbers*) that B’nei Yisra’el refused to enter the Land, **Yahweh’s rest**, due to the evil report of ten of the twelve spies. I need to remind you here that in 4 places in Scripture, Yahweh refers to entering Eretz Israel as **“entering His rest”**. Here again, Moshe states that it was because of the report that there were giants (*Anaqim*) in the Land. Our forefathers refused to enter the Land because there were **“giants”** living there and they were afraid for themselves and for their children. They even said that Yahweh hated them. Well, **Chapter 2** and the beginning of **Chapter 3** address this very thing in a way that I had not seen before.

Now, I’m going to skip over some verses, to show you what Yahweh pointed out to us on Tuesday night. If you haven’t read the whole *parsha*, please do so. But for today, let me give you the highlights. In the beginning of **Chapter 2**, Moshe reminds them that they were told to go to Mt. Seir, the land of Esaw. And, they were told not to strive with them. Then, they moved on to Mo’ab; where they were told not to distress the Moabites. Then, we read in **Chapter 2:10-12**; *The Emites had dwelt there formerly, a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anaqim. They were also reckoned as Repha’ites (giants), like the Anaqim, but the Mo’abites call them Emites. And the Horites (cave dwellers of great stature) formerly dwelt in Se’ir, but the descendants of Esaw dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their place, as Yisra’el did to the land of their possession which YHVH gave them.*

Then we read in **verses 19-23**; *‘And when you come near the children of Ammon, do not distress them nor stir yourself up against them, for I do not give you any of the land of the children of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot as a possession.’* (That was also reckoned as a land of Repha’ites. Repha’ites formerly dwelt there. But the Ammonites call them Zamzummim (noisy ones), a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anaqim. But YHVH destroyed them before them, and they dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, as He had done for the descendants of Esaw, who dwelt in Se’ir, when He destroyed the Horites from before them. They dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, even to this day. And the Awwim (Desert Dwellers) who dwelt in villages as far as Azzah (another name for Gaza, meaning fortified), the Kaphtorim (Cretans) who came from Kaphtor (Crete), destroyed them and dwelt in their place).

Do you see a pattern yet? Let’s move on and see as Yahweh directs B’nei Yisra’el to engage and defeat Sihon, king of the Amorites, to end **Chapter 2**. And, **Chapter 3** begins with the destruction of Og the king of Bashan. And, we read in **verses 8-11**; *“And at that time we took the land, from the hand of the two sovereigns of the Amorites, that was beyond the Yarden, from the wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon (Tsidonians call Hermon, Siryon – and the Amorites call it Senir), all the cities of the plain, all Gilead, and all Bashan, as far as Salkah and Edre’i, cities of the reign of Og in Bashan. For only Og sovereign of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Repha’ites. See, his bedstead was an iron bedstead. Is it not in Rabbah of the children of Ammon? Nine cubits (13 ½ feet) is its length and four cubits (6 Feet) its width, according to the cubit of a man.*

Giants are nothing to Yahweh. He defeated them for Esaw, Mo’ab and Ammon. And, 38 years after they refused to enter Eretz Yisra’el because of giants, Yahweh helps them defeat Og, just so they can enter the Land; and, gives the land of the Amorites to Re’uben, Gad and ½ the tribe of Menasheh.

Yahweh finishes our parsha this week, in **Chapter 3:18-22** with this “**command**”; *“And I commanded you at that time, saying, ‘YHVH your Elohim has given you this land to possess. All you sons of might, pass over armed before your brothers, the children of Yisra’el. But let your wives and your little ones, and your livestock – I know that you have much livestock – stay in your cities which I have given you, until YHVH has given rest to your brothers as to you, and they also possess the land which YHVH your Elohim is giving them beyond the Yarden. Then you shall return, each man to his possession which I have given you.’ And I commanded Yehoshua at that time, saying, ‘Your eyes have seen all that YHVH your Elohim has done to these two sovereigns. YHVH does the same to all the reigns which you are passing over. Do not fear them, for YHVH your Elohim Himself fights for you.’*

It doesn’t matter what your “**GIANT**” is Yisra’el. Yahweh fights for His people. While there are many, many instances in Scripture, Ruth reminded me last night about one in particular, that occurred when, in **Yeshayahu 37**, Sanherib, the king of Assyria, had come up to wage war and conquer Jerusalem and Yehudah. He sent messengers to King Hizqiyahu of Yehudah to taunt and scare him and profane the Name of Yahweh. But, when the king went in and fell on his face before Yahweh, with the message in his hand, **verses 33-38** tells us how Yahweh responded; *“Therefore thus said YHVH concerning the sovereign of Ashshur, ‘He does not come into this city, nor does he shoot an arrow there, nor does he come before it with shield, nor does he build a siege mound against it. By the way that he came, by the same he turns back. And into this city he does not come,’ declares YHVH. And I shall defend this city, to save it for My own sake and for the sake of My servant Dawid.’ ” And a messenger of YHVH went out, and killed in the camp of Ashshur one hundred and eighty-five thousand. And they arose early in the morning, and saw all of them, dead bodies. And Sanherib the sovereign of Ashshur broke camp and went away, and turned back, and remained at Nineveh. And it came to be, as he was bowing himself in the house of*

***Nisrok his mighty one, that his sons Adrammelek and Shar'etser smote him with the sword, and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And his son Esarhaddon reigned in his place.***

It doesn't matter "**what**" or "**who**" your giants are, or how many there are before you. I get several e-mails every week from people who are afraid they won't have the money to go home, when it's time. I tell them just what I've told some of you. Don't be like our forefathers; who thought that Yahweh hated them, that He brought them out of Egypt and bondage to kill them in the wilderness. Yahweh did not bring you to this knowledge of the truth of "**who**" you are and tell you to go home, only to torture you by not making the way for your return. *Selah* folks; think about it. As you can, get or renew your passport. Prepare yourself. Be faithful and ready, and He will deliver you. Don't worry about Palestinians, or the Orthodox Jews and the government, Israel's or the U.S. government. And, please do not be worried about your children and family not going. I know that's a "**biggee**" for most of us. But, that's what prevented B'nei Yisra'el from accepting Yahweh's provision the first time around. We want our families to go with us. But, it's their decision. It's about their choosing Yahweh.

Let Yahweh our Elohim fight for us and defeat the giants. Trust Him and not yourself or your family. When the people cried out for meat in the wilderness and Yahweh answered Moshe; then Moshe asked in **B'midbar 11:21-22**; ***And Moshe said, "The people in whose midst I am are six hundred thousand men on foot, and You, You have said, 'I give them meat to eat for a month of days.' Could flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to be sufficient for them? Or could all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to be sufficient for them?"*** Do you remember Yahweh's answer? **Verse 23**; ***And YHVH said to Moshe, "Is the arm of YHVH too short? Now see whether My word meets you or not!"*** Yahweh piled up the quail 3 feet deep in the camp and all around, about 1 days journey on all sides. And, **Yeshayahu 59:1** reminds us; ***Look, the hand of YHVH has not become too short to save, nor His ear too heavy to hear.***

Yahweh has given us the Land as part of our inheritance. Is the point of all Scripture a lie? Elohim forbid! Then, why are we reluctant to accept His gift? Last night, I was reminded of the prophet Yehezqel, as he was prophesying to Yerushalayim about the wickedness of the leaders of Yehudah. In the midst of his prophesying, Yahweh shows him the end of the matter. And we get a glimpse of what's currently happening in the Land, as we've begun to see truth and hunger for Home. And likewise, we see what **will** happen. In **Yehezqel / Ezekiel 11:13-20** he says; ***And it came to be, while I was prophesying, that Pelatyahu son of Benayah died. And I fell on my face and cried out with a loud voice, and said, "Ah, Master YHVH! Are You making an end of the remnant of Yisra'el?" Then the word of YHVH came to me, saying, "Son of man, your brothers, your relatives, your kinsmen, and all the house of Yisra'el, all of it, are those about whom the inhabitants of Yerushalayim said, 'Keep far from YHVH, this land has been given to us as a possession.' Therefore say, 'Thus said the Master YHVH, "Although I have sent them far off among the nations, and although I have scattered them among the lands, yet I was for them a set-apart place for a little while in the lands to which they came.'" Therefore say, 'Thus said the Master YHVH, "And I shall gather you from the peoples, and I shall assemble you from the lands where you have been scattered, and I shall give you the land of Yisra'el.'" ' And they shall go there, and shall take away all its disgusting matters and all its abominations from there. And I shall give them one heart, and put a new spirit within you. And I shall take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, so that they walk in My laws, and guard My right-rulings, and shall do them. And they shall be My people and I shall be their Elohim."***

And now, Yehudah is beginning to inquire about the House of Yisra'el and reach out; and soon a remnant from both Yehudah and Ephraim will have come back to Yerushalayim and Israel to take away its disgusting matters and remove the abominations from there.

Folks, we've been in the nations long enough. Yahweh was indeed for us, a set-apart place for a little while in the land to which we came. But, as Yahweh told His people in **Debarim 1:5-8**, in the 40<sup>th</sup> year (*the end of their learning and trials*) "**You have dwelt at this mountain long enough**". "**See, I have set the land before you. Go in and possess the land which YHVH swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Yitzaq, and to Ya'aqob, to give to them and their seed after them.**" Can we do any less?

I don't believe in coincidences and I don't think many of you do either. We begin the study of Debarim, the last of the Five Books of Moshe, on the Shabbat preceding Tisha B'Av (9th Av), on which Judah commemorates the destruction of the Temple. Tisha B'Av is a day of mourning commemorated with a fast. It is also call to teshuva, to repentance, setting us on course for the season of teshuva during the months of Av and Elul, in preparation for the coming New Year and the Days of Awe, just prior to Yom Kippur.

Now, there's a reason I bring this up. I receive many e-mails throughout the course of the year. A significant number of these are disturbing in that they are about correcting Yehudah (our brother Judah) for the many areas that they wrongly observe Torah. Among other things, they have names for the months of the year. Torah names one month only, and that is Abib. Since my e-mailing about Rosh Chodesh Av and Tisha B'Av, I received another such e-mail.

Now, I'm going to devote a separate teaching to the "**four fasts**" of the Jews (Yehudah) in the near future. But, I want to touch base on these now and frame the context of Tisha B'Av for you; so that you begin to understand that it's not Yehudah that's in error here, but those who are critical of what they do not understand.

First, we can find three additional months that were named in **Melekim Aleph / First Kings**. We read in **Melekim Aleph 6:37-38**; ***In the fourth year the foundation of the House of YHVH was laid, in the month Ziw. And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, the eighth month, the house was completed in all its matters and according to all its plans. Thus he built it for seven years.*** And then, in **Melekim Aleph 8:2**; ***And all the men of Yisra'el assembled to Sovereign Shelomoh at the festival in the month of Eythanim, which is the seventh month.*** So, the months of Ziw, Bul and Eythanim were named sometime prior to the building of the Hekal of Yahweh by Shelomoh.

Next, we have the names of the months that come from the Babylonian captivity. As we've talked about before, these names were given to months that corresponded with certain events and had meaning in Yisra'el and/or Yehudah's history that resulted in punishment or exile. In this way, they would be reminded not to make the same mistakes. But, don't these names have pagan origins? Is this adding to the Word of Elohim? Well, seven of these appear in the Scriptures, even though they came from men. Let's look at **Zekaryah 1:7**; ***On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Dareyawesh, the word of YHVH came to Zekaryah son of Berek-yahu, son of Iddo the prophet, saying,...*** And, **Zekaryah 7:1**; ***And in the fourth year of Sovereign Dareyawesh it came to be that the word of YHVH came to Zekaryah, on the fourth of the ninth month, Kislev.*** Kislev is also mentioned in the Book of Nehemyah. Then, there's **Esther 2:16**; ***And Ester was taken to Sovereign Ahashwerosh, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.*** **Esther 3:7**; ***In the first month, which is the month of Nisan (not Abib here), in the twelfth year of Sovereign Ahashwerosh, someone cast Pur – that is, the lot – before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, until it fell on the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.*** The month of Adar is also mentioned in Ezra and Nisan in Nehemyah. Next, **Esther 8:9**; ***So the sovereign's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-***

*third day. And it was written, according to all that Mordechai commanded to the Yehudim, and to the viceroys, and the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Kush, a hundred and twenty seven provinces, to every province in its own writing, to every people in their own language, and to the Yehudim in their own writing, and in their own language.* Then, **Nehemyah 6:15; And the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of the month of Elul, in fifty two days.** We'll look at all the meanings and events in our upcoming study. But, you need to see that these names are in the Scriptures and not adding to the Word, or Torah, of Yahweh.

As we approach Tisha B'Av, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av and its fast (sundown Wednesday to sundown Thursday), I want us to see where this fits within the "**four fasts**" and why it is important that we observe these. Again, we'll dig deeper in the upcoming, in-depth study; but, let's list them and their Scriptural references now. **Note:** Here, I'm only listing events that occurred during Bible times.

1. **17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz ~ 17<sup>th</sup> day of the Fourth Month**

Counting the days and events from Shavu'ot, including Moshe's 40 days on Horeb, receiving the tablets, etc.; this date corresponds to the sin of the golden calf. According to Yirmeyahu, Chapters 39 & 52, the walls of Jerusalem were breached on the day. According to the historic writings, on the 17<sup>th</sup> day, the leaders of Yehudah were killed and King Tsidqiyahu was blinded and sent to Babel. And on this date in 70 CE, Titus and the Romans breached the walls of Jerusalem.

2. **9<sup>th</sup> of Av (Tisha B'Av) ~ 9<sup>th</sup> day of the Fifth Month**

This commemorates the destruction of the first Temple, 586 BCE. See 2 Kings 25:8-9, Yirmeyahu 52:12-14. Also commemorated is the destruction of the second Temple, 70 CE, and the destruction of Betar, at the failure of the Bar Kochba Revolt, 132 CE. The complete destruction of Yerushalayim by the Romans, 133 CE. The Book of Lamentations (Eikha) is the main Scripture reading on this day.

3. **3<sup>rd</sup> of Tishrei (Fast of Gedaliah) ~ 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the Seventh Month**

This day commemorates the assassination of Gedaliah ben Achikam, the Governor of Israel during the days of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylonia. As a result of Gedaliah's death the final vestiges of Judean autonomy after the Babylonian conquest were destroyed, many thousands of Jews were slain, and the remaining Jews were driven into exile. See 2 Kings 25:21-25 and Yirmeyahu 40:1-41:3.

4. **10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet ~ 10<sup>th</sup> day of the Tenth Month**

This day commemorates the beginning of the siege of Yerushalayim by Nebuchadnezzar, the beginning of the whole chain of calamities which finally ended with the destruction of the first Temple and the resulting exile. See 2 Kings 25:1-2.

Yehudah also observes the Fast of Esther on the 13<sup>th</sup> of Adar (the 12<sup>th</sup> Month). We'll touch on this fast in our in-depth study to come.

The question now is whether the "**Four Fasts**" we've listed above are Scriptural or not. Well, they are indeed mentioned in Scripture. 70 years after Yerushalayim fell to Nebuchadnezzar and Yehudah went into exile, the prophet Zekaryah speaks to these fast days, as the exiles are beginning to return. In fact, he connects these fasts, that have been observed by Yehudah since their exile in Babylon, to Ephraim's return to Yahweh and Eretz Yisra'el. As Yahweh is exhorting Yehudah and the House of Yisra'el about their return to the Land in the last days, we read **Zekaryah 8:9-23; "Thus said YHVH of hosts, 'Let your hands be strong, you who are listening in these days to these words, from the mouth of the prophets, of the day the foundation was laid for the House of YHVH of hosts,**

*the Hekal that was to be rebuilt. For before these days there was not a wage for a man, nor a hire for beast, and there was no peace for him who went out or came in, because of his enemies, and I set all men one against another. But now I am not as in the former days to the remnant of this people,' declares YHVH of hosts. Because of the sowing of peace the vine does give its fruit, the ground does give her increase, and the heavens do give their dew. And I shall cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these. And it shall be, as you were a curse among the gentiles, O house of Yehudah and house of Yisra'el, so I shall save you, and you shall be a blessing. Do not fear, let your hands be strong.' For thus said YHVH of hosts, 'As I purposed to do evil to you when your fathers provoked Me,' declares YHVH of hosts, 'and I did not relent, so again in these days I have purposed to do good to Yerushalayim and to the house of Yehudah. Do not fear! These are the words you should do: speak the truth to one another, judge with truth and right-ruling for peace in your gates. And do not plot evil in your heart against another, and do not love a false oath. For all these I hate,' declares YHVH." And the word of YHVH of hosts came to me, saying, "Thus said YHVH of hosts, 'The fast of the fourth, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth months, are to be joy and gladness, and pleasant appointed times for the house of Yehudah – and they shall love the truth and the peace.' Thus said YHVH of hosts, 'Peoples shall yet come, inhabitants of many cities, and the inhabitants of the one go to another, saying, "Let us earnestly go and pray before YHVH, and seek YHVH of hosts. I myself am going." And many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek YHVH of hosts in Yerushalayim, and to pray before YHVH.' Thus said YHVH of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all languages of the nations take hold, yea, they shall take hold of the edge of the garment of a man, a Yehudite, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that Elohim is with you . " ' ' "*

Folks, these "**fasts**" are important for both Houses of Israel. If we consider what Scripture has to say on the matter, we can see that to observe these now; will bring blessings to us when the Kingdom is restored. And, keeping these fast days now will help us draw nearer to our brother Yehudah and help bring about the return of Mashiach Yahshua. I would encourage you all to look closely at Tisha B'Av (the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av) before Wednesday evening and consider joining Yehudah in observing this fast, which they have been commemorating for the past 2,594 years.

**Baruch HaShem Yahweh!**