



Parasha Va'etchanan

July 24, 2021

Torah: Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11

Haftarah: Isaiah 40:1-26

Ketuvim Shlichim: Romans 11:25-29

Shabbat shalom mishpocha! Our *parasha* today is *Va'etchanan*. It begins with Moshe pleading with ADONAI to let him enter into the Land. Back in *Parasha Chukat* in the Book of Numbers, ADONAI instructed Moses to speak to the rock to bring forth water. But, because Moses was angry with the people, he struck it instead. In our human minds, this doesn't seem to be enough to keep him out of the Promised Land, but to ADONAI it was a major sin. Maybe that was because He had revealed so much to Moses and worked so many miracles through him, that this to ADONAI, was not only disobedience, but also doubting and rebellion, the very thing that the people had just been judged for. ADONAI was angry with Moses and said: 26 ... "Enough!" Adonai said to me, 'Do not speak to Me anymore about this matter'" (Deuteronomy 3:26b TLV). Moses, who had worked so tirelessly in leading the people would receive the same punishment as the guilty first generation. He would not enter the Promised Land. Also in this *parasha*, Moses told Israel that they will sin when they are in the land and worship other gods, which will cause ADONAI to scatter them among the nations. Other important things in these verses are the cities of refuge, a repetition of the Ten Words and the teaching of the *Shema*.

Tisha B'Av, the 9th of the month of *Av* was last Sunday. It reminded us of the importance of the nation of Israel in our prayers, but it most reminds us to pray for the "salvation of all Israel." Today, the first *Shabbat* after *Tisha B'Av*, is called *Shabbat Nachamu*. *Nachamu* means "comfort" and it is the first and second words in our *Haftarah* portion for today. In Jewish tradition, these words are a message of comfort from ADONAI to Israel after the trials and sorrows of *Tisha B'Av*. If you consider the tradition of the evil report of the 10 spies in the wilderness as being the first *Tisha B'Av*, that is a possibility. But, the First Temple was not destroyed until more than one hundred years after Isaiah wrote these words and they prophesied a much greater comfort. I personally believe that these words are a promise that Israel in the end will return to ADONAI through Yeshua as Messiah. Verse 1 reads: *Nachamu nachamu ami yomar Eloheichem. 1 "Comfort, comfort my people, says Your G-d"* (Isaiah 40:1 TLV). Verse 2 says: *2 "Speak kindly to the heart of Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her warfare has ended, that her iniquity has been removed. For she has received from Adonai's hand double for all her sins"* (Isaiah 40:2 TLV). As Carolyn Hyde sings in her song, "Comfort ye, comfort my people. Tell her that her sins have been paid for." And, that is what this is about. Israel's sins have been paid for. Isaiah prophesied salvation and it is the salvation which was paid for by their brother and kinsman redeemer, Yeshua.

In the first century CE, ADONAI sent His only begotten Son, Yeshua, to live among His people, Israel and to be the prophetic fulfillment of the coming New Covenant. It had been prophesied through the Prophet Jeremiah some 600 years earlier (Jeremiah 31). About twenty-five years after Jeremiah's prophecy, the *malakh Gavri'el*, the angel Gabriel, told Daniel that ADONAI's *Mashiach* would come to his people Israel (Daniel 9) and even gave the date that this would happen, the first part of the 1st century CE. Yeshua acknowledged that

He was that individual that Daniel heard about. He said: 45 *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many”* (Mark 19:45 TLV). Yeshua taught them that He would have to die for the sins of the people. As the Son of Man, an individual who is fully G-d but also fully man, He was the only one who could become the perfect sacrifice needed for the sins of Israel. Daniel also saw a vision of Yeshua: 13 *“I was watching in the night visions. Behold, One like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days, and was brought into His presence. 14 Dominion, glory and sovereignty were given to Him that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will never pass away, and His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed”* (Daniel 7:13-14 TLV). In these verses, the Son of Man is also revealed to be a king; sovereignty was given to Him.

Scripture shows us that ADONAI’s Son came to fill three roles, those of prophet, priest and king. He came as “the Prophet” prophesied by Moses: 15 *“Adonai your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst—from your brothers. To him you must listen”* (Deuteronomy 18:15 TLV). And, Yeshua was a priest, the new and eternal High Priest of Israel: 15 *“And it is even more evident, if another kohen arises like Melechizedek —16 one made not by virtue of a Torah requirement of physical descent, but by virtue of the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is testified, “You are a kohen forever, according to the order of Melechizedek ”* (Hebrews 7:15-17 TLV). And, He came as the King of Israel, the inheritor of His ancestor David’s throne: 1 *The book of the genealogy of Yeshua ha-Mashiach, Ben-David, Ben-Avraham:..* (Matthew 1:1 TLV). Son of David and Son of Abraham! The Son of David is both a Messianic title and a Kingly title. 6 *“And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a ruler who will shepherd My people Israel”* (Matthew 2:6 TLV). Yeshua is *Yeshua HaNavi*, Yeshua the Prophet, *Yeshua HaKohen Gadol*, Yeshua the High Priest and *Yeshua HaMelekh*, Yeshua the King. And over it all, He is *Yeshua HaMashiach*, Yeshua the Anointed One, the Redeemer of Israel. Since Yeshua’s death on the stake in the year 30 CE, many Jews have seen these truths, trusted in Him and became a part of the first fruits of the salvation of Israel. But, we long for and pray for the day when “all Israel” shall say to Yeshua: *“Barukh haba b’ashem ADONAI.”* “Blessed is He who comes in the name of ADONAI.” And, that day is coming soon for the sons and daughters of Abraham.

Yeshua’s Jewishness has been vividly brought to the forefront in recent years through the emergence of the Messianic Jewish Movement. Certainly, Jews have known about Jesus as Savior for hundreds of years, but the Messianic Jewish Movement has revealed this information in a much more Jewish and Hebraic way. It too, is a first fruits movement, the visible evidence of what is to soon be true for all Israel, their salvation.

It is important that we as members of this movement know our history so that we can share it with others. There have been Jewish followers of *Yeshua* throughout all the years since He lived on the earth, but they began to become much more numerous and visible in the 1800s and 1900s. Some began to return to Israel during those years and Messianic Jews began to join together all over the world. In the United States the efforts of pioneer Messianic Jews came to fruition in 1915 when the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, the HCAA, was officially formed. Those Jewish followers of *Yeshua* were members of many different denominational churches who met together regularly through HCAA conferences for fellowship. But, one of their chief goals as an organization was to introduce other Jews to their Messiah. I find it is very interesting that the name of the organization was the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, but in their references to their Messiah, they called Him

Yeshua, by His Hebrew name. ADONAI guided and directed this movement through the years and eventually it would be changed into an even more “Jewish” expression of faith, worship, and practice. It came about through a 1967 revival among young people which began in California and spread across the United States. This movement became known as the “Jesus Movement” and many young Jews were among those who met Jesus as their Messiah. The young Jewish followers of *Yeshua* began to meet together and to be disciplined through house groups. They also joined the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America.

We personally know many who were a part of that early movement. One that you here at *Beit Shalom* also knew was our friend Rose Price, a holocaust survivor. I can’t remember exactly how her family became believers, but this is pretty close. At the time, they lived in Philadelphia. Rose’s son went to a Bible study at a home which was hosting Messianic Bible studies and didn’t return for several days. She sent her husband to check on him and he didn’t return. After several more days, Rose went there herself and found that they had both accepted *Yeshua*. This infuriated her so much that she began to study the Bible to try and disprove it and also became saved. And, you know the rest of the story, she faithfully served *Yeshua* the rest of her life, even having the opportunity to return to Germany as a testimony to the German people for *Yeshua*. While there, she was able to demonstrate *Yeshua*’s forgiveness by forgiving a Nazi concentration camp guard who came onto the stage and begged for her forgiveness. And, there are many, many similar stories from that period in time.

In those early years, the young movement transitioned away from church terminology and tradition and gradually adopted a more Jewish expression of their faith. They chose to worship in synagogues in a traditional Jewish way, with *Torah* scrolls and Jewish liturgy. In 1973 the name of the HCAA was officially voted to be the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America, the MJAA, a name much more descriptive of theirs and our calling.

Another significant event which occurred in 1967 contemporary with “the Jesus Movement” was the recapture of Jerusalem by the IDF, the Israeli Defense Force. When that occurred, Jews were able to look upon the Western Wall for the first time since 1948. It happened on June 7, 1967, the fulfillment of *Yeshua*’s prophecy: 24 ... “*Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*” (Luke 21:24b TLV). These two events, the formation of the MJAA and the fulfillment of *Yeshua*’s prophecy, are but a tiny sampling of the many amazing things which have happened surrounding the modern Messianic Jewish Movement and ADONAI’s restoration of the nation of Israel. It, the Messianic Jewish Movement is a G-d ordained movement which has been brought back in preparation for the return of Messiah *Yeshua* to earth and those of us in the MJAA are but a part of it. ADONAI has ordained other organizations and the congregations within them.

Yeshua’s Messianic Jewish disciples of the 1st Century began His work at first among Jews and then among Gentiles when He showed them it was time to begin. As *Sha’ul* said: 16 “*For I am not ashamed of the Good News, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who trusts—to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* 17 *In it the righteousness of God is revealed, from trust to trust. As it is written, “But the righteous shall live by emunah”* (Romans 1:16-17 TLV). And, *Yeshua*’s modern Messianic Jews have continued this work in the 20th and 21st century in the same way. Also serving in this movement are thousands of Gentile followers of *Yeshua*. These grafted in wild olive branches serving with the re-grafted native Jewish branches make up *Sha’ul*’s olive tree metaphor of Romans 11. Every Christian follower of Jesus is equally grafted into that same tree, the whole body of Messiah.

Because of where we stand in fulfilled Bible prophecy and ADONAI's countdown to Yeshua's return, there is a real need for Gentiles to become a part of Messianic Judaism. Messianic Jews are a small group and they cannot do it alone. To assist them, ADONAI has called some Gentiles to be "Messianic Ruths," ones who have joined themselves to Israel with a very special bond. I wouldn't argue with anyone who says that all followers of Jesus are like Ruth. But, we who have been called into Messianic Judaism are fulfilling Ruth's statement much more completely. This Moabite woman said: 16 .., "*Do not plead with me to abandon you, to turn back from following you. For where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God*" (Ruth 1:16b TLV). That's us! It is a very definite calling to be a real part of physical Israel, the Jews of today. In a figurative sense, Jews who have trusted Yeshua and have been called into the Messianic Jewish Movement are spiritual Boaz's, Jews who have accepted foreigners into their very family. But, in this same sense, not every Gentile follower of Yeshua is called to be a Messianic Ruth and not every Jewish follower of Yeshua is called to be a Messianic Boaz. Most Gentile followers of *Yeshua* have been called to be a part of the Church along with some Jewish followers of *Yeshua*. But, every follower of *Yeshua* is called to be in one place or the other; either the Church or Messianic Judaism and under proper spiritual authority there. And, I believe that it will be through the coming mutual cooperation and love of these two different expressions of Yeshua's body that G-d will eventually bring the whole body to be "without spot or wrinkle."

Jews who don't know Yeshua, but are seeking to know about Him can gain insight by studying the Book of Ruth. Their brother, Yeshua, fulfilled the ancient role of Kinsman Redeemer for the nation of Israel just as Boaz did for Ruth. In Hebrew, the term for redeemer is *goel*, גֹּאֵל. It comes from the verb, *gaal*, which means "to redeem." What does a kinsman redeemer do and how has Yeshua become the *Goel* for the Jews?

The process of redemption is very clearly shown in the Book of Ruth through Boaz's relations with Ruth. A kinsman-redeemer is someone, usually the nearest relative, who has the responsibility to act for the family on behalf of a family member. The kinsman redeemer had two main responsibilities. One was to redeem family property that had changed ownership, restoring it to the family, and second, to marry a childless widow and raise children in her dead husband's name. Leviticus 25 tells how this was to work: 25 "*If your brother becomes poor and sells some of his property, then his nearest kinsman may come and redeem what his brother has sold*" (Leviticus 25:25 TLV). That is what Boaz did after a closer kinsman decided not to redeem. He bought the property which had belonged to Naomi's son, thereby keeping it in the family. Regarding marriage to Ruth, she, herself, proposed to Boaz. When Boaz woke and found someone at his feet, he was surprised. 9 "*Who are you?*" he asked. "*I am Ruth, your handmaid,*" she answered. "*Spread the corner of your garment over your handmaid, for you are a goel*" (Ruth 3:9 TLV). By saying "spread your garment over me," she was saying, I am your relative's widow and you are a kinsman redeemer who can marry me." This is similar to a levirate marriage in which a brother in law is to marry his brother's widow to raise up children for him. And, Boaz agreed to redeem her. He said: 11 "*Now my daughter, do not be afraid! Everything you propose, I will do for you, for everyone in town knows that you are a woman of valor*" (Ruth 3:11 TLV). That next morning at the city gate, Boaz's statement to his relative made it clear that marriage was expected as a part of the redemption: 5 "*Then Boaz said, 'On the day you buy the field from Naomi's hand, you will also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the deceased, in order to raise up the name of the deceased over his inheritance'*" (Ruth 4:5 TLV). As we know, the closer relative declined and

Boaz bought the property and took Ruth to be his wife. And they became the ancestors of not only King David, but also our *Goel* Himself, Yeshua.

Yeshua's action as the *Goel Yisra'el*, the Redeemer of Israel is the same as it was with Boaz, a redemption of both property and marriage. When Yeshua returns as King Messiah, He will restore all of the land promised by ADONAI to Abraham to the people of Israel. As *Goel*, He will redeem it. The definition of redemption is to "buy back." Yeshua will "redeem" the land which has been "sold to foreigners" and restore it to its rightful owners. Yeshua is also the *Katan*, the Bridegroom of the *ketubah*, the marriage contract made at Sinai and also the *Katan*, the Bridegroom of the New Covenant, the covenant cut by His atoning death. Israel, the Jews, are the *kallah*, the bride of the *ketubah* who are awaiting their *Katan* and are joined in this covenantal relationship by the people of the nations who are also covenant members of the New Covenant and grafted into the Commonwealth of Israel.

When Yeshua made His first public appearance as Teacher and Rabbi at the Jordan River, no one knew who He was, that is, except His cousin *Yochanan Ben Zakaryah*, John, the son of Zechariah. Even though they were related, we don't know if they knew each other personally. But John did know Him through the revelation of the *Ruach*. John said: 26 ... "*Among you stands One you do not know, 27 coming after me, whose sandals I'm not worthy to untie*" (John 1:26b-27 TLV). By this statement, John said to the Pharisees that this coming One was the *Goel*, the Redeemer of Israel. What John really said was "I'm not worthy to cause Him to remove His shoe." The *goel* would remove his shoe and give it to the other to signify the conclusion of the matter. Looking again in Ruth: 7 *Now in the past in Israel, one removed his sandal and gave it to another, in order to finalize the redemption and transfer of a matter. This was a legal transaction in Israel. 8 So the kinsman said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," then took off his shoe* (Ruth 4:7-8 TLV). Boaz's kinsman was the *goel* and by removing his shoe and giving it to Boaz, he officially made him the *goel*, the redeeming kinsman. John said, "I'm not the *goel*, I am not worthy to cause Him to remove His shoe." In effect, he was saying: "Yeshua is the owner of the sandal and He is the one who has the right to redeem Israel; He is the Kinsman Redeemer, the *go'el* who is the Messiah." Boaz's relative's words to him, "*Buy it for yourself*", now give us more meaning about Yeshua's redemption. As the only possible redeemer of all of Israel, Yeshua bought, purchased with His own blood, Israel's salvation. He is their Redeemer. And according to Ruth chapter 4, the act of the *go'el*, the kinsman redeemer is a "legal transaction."

In today's *parasha*, Moses told Israel that: 27 "*Adonai will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where Adonai will drive you. 28 There you will serve man-made gods of wood and stone, which do not see or hear or eat or smell*" (Deuteronomy 4:27-28 TLV). And that has happened. Israel was scattered among the nations and is now beginning to be regathered. But, there is also some good news in this *parasha*. Moses also said that after they are punished they will have a change of heart: 29 "*But from there you will seek Adonai your God and you will find Him, when you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. 30 When you are in distress and all these things have come on you, in the latter days you will return to Adonai your God and listen to His voice*" (Deuteronomy 4:29-30 TLV). Moses said that Israel will return to ADONAI in the latter days. Could this also be a prophecy of the salvation of all Israel? Could *Sha'ul* have picked up on this when he prophesied: 26 ... "*The Deliverer shall come out of Zion. He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. 27 And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins*" (Romans 11:26b-27 TLV). The Greek word *rhyomenos* (rhy-o-men-os) does mean deliverer, but can also properly be translated "Redeemer" because in this verse *Sha'ul* is quoting Isaiah.

Isaiah said: 20 *“But a Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those in Jacob who turn from transgression.” It is a declaration of Adonai*” (Isaiah 59:20 TLV). What better place than in a prophecy of the salvation of all Israel, to understand that the *Goel*, *Yeshua HaMashiach*, shall come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob! Moses said: 30... *“in the latter days you (Jacob) will return to Adonai your God and listen to His voice”* (Deuteronomy 4:30b TLV). Jews today need to learn about and then personally know their Kinsman Redeemer, their closest relative who has the authority to redeem them from sin and death.

We saw in our *parasha* that ADONAI became angry with Moses. We need to ask the question: how often does He become angry with us? As Messianic followers of Yeshua, we have been redeemed and we have been given the same commands that ADONAI gave to ancient Israel. But, it is much easier for us to follow *Torah* today than it was for them. We don't have to pay for a sacrificial animal at the Tabernacle in order to repent of our sins or lay our hands on its head and watch it die as its life blood runs out. In fact, more than 4/5 of the commands which ADONAI gave to Israel are inactive for us today. They are not inactive because the Romans destroyed the Temple. That was the event which rendered them inactive, but they are inactive today because of ADONAI's mercy. He changed the covenant by installing His Son Yeshua as our *Kohen Gadol*, our High Priest, and under His leadership we have many fewer commands to obey. But, we don't obey them for salvation because salvation is the free gift of ADONAI. *Sha'ul* said: 8 *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not from yourselves—it is the gift of God. 9 It is not based on deeds, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are His workmanship—created in Messiah Yeshua for good deeds, which God prepared beforehand so we might walk in them”* (Ephesians 2:8-10 TLV). *Sha'ul* teaches us that we are created to walk in them, that is, to obey them after we are saved. It's not that we “got to do them,” but that we “get to do them.” Deeds is but one way to look at this verse. The Greek word is *ergon*, meaning work or task. This shows us that we are not only to do good deeds, but also the works and tasks of the *Torah*, the *mitzvot*.

ADONAI was angry with Moses. How many times has ADONAI been angry with us individually because of our disobedience? Hundreds and hundreds of times, I'm certain. I can only speak for myself, and I know how disappointed He has been in me many times. Our goal should be not to disappoint our Father and our Messiah, but to be pleasing to our *Goel*, Yeshua our Redeemer. He paid the sin price for us that we might turn away from our sins and follow after Him in righteousness. We can determine in our hearts today to be pleasing and not disappointing to our Messiah. Also, as members of the Messianic Jewish Movement, we are specifically called to be witnesses to our Jewish brothers and sisters about Yeshua, their *Goel*. Tell them that Isaiah said that “their sins have been paid for.” Pray that you will soon have that opportunity and pray for the salvation of all Israel! *Shabbat shalom!*