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Shabbat Haazinu

September 26, 2009

8 Tishri 5770

News

FOLLOW THE BIBLE

This last Sabbath was a very special for the Israel Field. I hope that every one has heard about the program "Follow the Bible" On October 2008, the General Conference published a special Bible written in the most important language of the world. This big Bible started its travel all over the world to be read by people of all the nations. The travel of this Bible will end at the end of June 2010 in Atlanta for the General Conference Session which will gather thousands of delegates and visitors for the election of Seventh-day Adventists' new leadership.

On Friday 18th of September this Bible travelled from Athens to Tel Aviv, to be in Israel for three days. We prepared a very busy program for this event. Meeting in Ashdod on Friday evening where about 60 people met to witness the reading of the Bible. The Bible is composed of 66 books and each book of this special Bible was written in a different language. The book of Esther was written in Hebrew.

The next day, the Bible continues its travel, Jerusalem on Shabbat morning, then Tel Aviv at noon for a special program organized by the Bible Correspondence Course, where people were graduated and congratulated.

Right after this program another special travel was reserved for the Bible. It took the Bible in Yardenit (Jordan River). More than 200 people gathered together on the bank of the Jordan River, to pray, to sing and read the Bible and to witness six people who were prepared for there immersion (tevilah) in the natural mikveh of the Jordan.

The travel continues on Sunday, taking the Bible to the Kotel, Gethsemane Jericho and the most symbolic place, Qumran where the Dead Sea manuscripts have been discovered more than sixty years ago and gave a new light on the authenticity of the Scriptures we have in our own Bible.

ROSH HASHANA

IN FLORIDA

Jeff sent us a news about Rosh Hashana in his congregations. We are happy to publish it in this newsletter.



We had over 120 people at the two Beth-El Shalom locations (St. Petersburg & New Port Richey FL) for Rosh Hashanah this week. We had some good contacts, including some Jewish pre-believers in Messiah and a Jewish man who recently accepted the Messiah.



The shofars were sounded close to 100 times announcing that the time of God's judgment has come. We are now in the 10 days of Awe, 10 days of repentance before Yom Kippur, the final day of atonement and judgment. We dressed in white, including the Torah, representing our desire that our records in heaven will be white and cleansed of all sin.

OVERVIEW

HAAZINU

DEUTERONOMY 32:1-32:52

Almost all of Ha'azinu is a song, written in the Torah in two parallel columns. Moshe summons the heavens and the earth to stand as eternal witnesses to what will happen if the Jewish People sin and do not obey the Torah.

He reminds the people to examine the history of the world, and note how the Jewish People are rescued from obliteration in each generation—that G-d “pulls the strings” of world events so that Bnei Yisrael can fulfill their destiny as His messengers in the world. G-d’s kindness is such that Israel should be eternally grateful, not just for sustaining them in the wilderness, but for bringing them to a land of amazing abundance, and for defeating their enemies. But, this physical bounty leads the people to become self-satisfied and over-indulged.

Physical pleasures corrupt the morals of the people. They worship empty idols and powerless gods, and indulge in all kinds of depravity. G-d will then let nations with no moral worth subjugate Israel and scatter them across the world. However, their only purpose is as a rod to chastise the Jewish People. When these nations think that it is through their own power that they have dominated Israel, G-d will remind them that they are no more than a tool to do His will.

The purpose of the Jewish People is fundamental—that man should know his Creator. Neither exile nor suffering can sever the bond between G-d and His people, and eventually in the final redemption this closeness will be restored. G-d will then turn His anger against the enemies of Israel, as though they were His enemies, showing no mercy to the tormentors of His people. G-d then gives His last commandment to Moshe: That he should ascend Mount Nevo and be gathered there to his people.

YOM KIPPUR

What your congregation is doing for Yom Kippur? It is the most important day for Israel, a day of fast and prayer, and also a day of repentance for the Jewish people. We all are motivated to help Israel to come back to a deep relationship with G-d. How can we help Israel to discover Yeshua as the Mashiach?

The Torah states: **“This shall be an eternal decree: In the seventh month [counting from the month of Nissan] on the tenth of the month you shall afflict yourselves and all manner of work you shall not do, neither the native born nor the convert amongst you. For this day, he [the Kohen Gadol, the High Priest] shall atone for you to purify you from all of your transgressions - before the Almighty you shall be purified.” (Leviticus 16:29-30)**

For Israel Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is the anniversary of the day Moshe brought down from Mount Sinai the second set of Ten Commandments. This signified that the Almighty forgave the Jewish people for the transgression of the Golden Calf. For This day was decreed to be a day of forgiveness for their mistakes. However, Israel believes that this refers to transgressions against the Almighty. Transgressions against our fellow man require from them to correct their mistakes and seek forgiveness. If one took from another person, it is not enough to regret and ask the Almighty for forgiveness; first, one must return what was taken and ask for forgiveness from the person and then ask for forgiveness from the Almighty.

It is true that we must ask our neighbor to forgive us, it is a teaching of Yeshua, **“So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matt. 5:23-24)**

However, this understanding means that they have not completely assimilated the true meaning of Yom Kippur which is not only the day anniversary of the giving of the second set of the Ten Commandments but much more the day of Atonement, the day which symbolizes Yeshua’s forgiveness of our sins through his sacrifice and intercession.

There is a great opportunity on that day which will be this year on Monday 28th of September. It could be

a special day of prayer and fast in our congregations for the people of Israel. It is a day we can ask G-d to open their eyes about Yeshua hamashiach.

In the Yom Kippur service Jews recite two prayers among many others, they are the *Viduy*, a confession, and the *Al Chet*, a list of transgressions between man and God and between man and man. It is interesting to note two things. First, the transgressions are listed in alphabetical order (in Hebrew). This not only makes a comprehensive list, but gives a framework to include whatever transgression you wish to include under the proper letter. And secondly, the *Viduy* and *Al Chet* are stated in the plural. This teaches us that we are one People and that we are responsible for each other. Even if we did not commit a particular offense, we carry a certain measure of responsibility for those who transgressed—especially if we could have prevented the transgression.

In each feast one of the book of the Bible is read, the book read during the Yom Kippur is the Book of Jonah. The essence of the story is first that salvation is for everyone and not only for Jews or Israelites (Ninivites were not Jews) and secondly G-d readily accepts the repentance of anyone who sincerely desires to do Teshuva, to return to the Almighty and to the path of the Bible.

ACTIVES FORCES IN THE HAND OF THE ALMIGHTY

In the song of Ha'azinu it says: "Remember the days of yore, understand the years of every generation." (Deut. 32:7) What does understanding the "days of yore" have to do with understanding "every generation"?

Rabbi Pakouz reminds us that Rabbi Mordechai Gifter, the former Rosh Hayeshiva of Telse, elucidated: "The Torah gives us guidelines for the viewing and understanding of history from a true perspective. If one wishes to comprehend an event in history, one cannot look at it in the limited scope of the finite here and now; rather, one must understand the event as having a place in the historical continuum.

"A historical occurrence extends itself beyond the isolation of time and space and reaches towards

the past and future to acquire true significance. However, one must invariably begin with Creation and the Creator. As the Vilna Gaon explained, to understand 'the years of every generation' one must first 'remember the Six Days of Creation'. For in those days lies the complete plan of the development of the universe and humankind in it. This, the Gaon taught, is the only way to understand history.

"Secular sources view history in their own perspective, on economic, social, and political principles. By contrast, the Torah directs us to view history as the unfolding of the Divine Plan.

"History is the metamorphosis of man through the stages of destruction and redemption, continuing towards his final redemption in the days of Mashiach (messiah). All such events, the redemptions and the destructions, are perceived as fundamental testimony to the presence of the Almighty in this world, and are understood as experiential units in divine supervision, the active force of the Hand of the Almighty."

SHANA TOVA
HAPPY NEW YEAR
CHAG SAMEACH

HILLEL TAUGHT

*"Do not believe in yourself
until the day you die."*

*Do not think that you are
strong enough spiritually
to function on your own
without your supportive
community. Do not rely on your
apparent spiritual security,
for it is never guaranteed.."*

(Pirkey Avot 2:5)

WHAT A GREAT COUNTRY!

The elderly Mrs. Finkelstein came to the United States from the little shtetl (village) in the old country. All her life she heard what a great country the United States was and the wonderful things one could find only in America. Now she was in New York and enjoying every bit of it.

One day she decided to visit her son who lived in Washington. Her son gave her the exact directions. He explained to her that from Grand Central Station she has to take the train to Philadelphia where she must transfer to the train which goes to Washington.

But in Philadelphia, Mrs. Finkelstein became confused and, instead of getting on the train going to Washington, she mistakenly boarded the wrong train - the one going back to N.Y.

After half an hour of traveling Mrs. Finkelstein asked the woman sitting opposite her, "Tell me, what are you going to do in Washington?"

"Washington?" I just came from Washington. I'm going to N.Y. to visit my daughter and grandchildren."

Mrs. Finkelstein bolted up in her seat and exclaimed, "Wow! What a great country America is! It never ceases to amaze me... Only in America can this happen... Here you sit on one side of the train going to N.Y. while I'm sitting on the same train and I'm going to Washington...!"

Like Mrs. Finkelstein, many people think they are going to one destination whereas in reality they may be traveling in the opposite direction. In the tumult of our business dealings we may not have the time to examine in which direction are we and our loved ones truly headed. We may think we are heading forward when in reality we may be regressing.

The month of Tishri with its feasts of Rosh Hasha and Kippur is the month in which we make sure that we are heading in the right direction in order to achieve our family, social and spiritual goals.

THE SOUND OF THE SHOFAR

There was no shofar blowing on the first day of Rosh Hashana this year because of the rabbinical injunction against doing so on Shabbat.

Back in Moscow under oppressive Czarist rule, the community was faced with an entirely different situation preventing it from fulfilling this mitzvah on a weekday Rosh Hashana—there was no kosher shofar to be found.

A disqualifying crack had been discovered in the only shofar it had, and bringing one from outside the city meant risking death at the hands of the anti-Semitic authorities.

The rav of the community, Rabbi Chaim Berlin, was greatly pained by this situation and decided to do something symbolic. He stayed up all night reviewing the laws of shofar and then set out early in the morning to the synagogue for the services that would be marred with the sadness of missing the shofar blowing. On his way he came across a gentile wagon driver who had decorated his wagon with all sorts of horns. Amongst them he was surprised to see a beautiful kosher shofar and he approached the driver to ask him where he had gotten such a shofar. He was even more surprised when the fellow came running towards him with this shofar and begged him to take it.

It turned out that this driver had stolen the shofar from a local synagogue and was afraid that this was its rabbi who would report him to the police.

Never was the sound of the shofar so appreciated in that town as on that Rosh Hashana.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

EDITOR

A newsletter published by the
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HAFTARA

Hosea 14:2-10

Joel 2:15-27

Micah 7:18-20

We are going to celebrate Yom Kippur on Monday (starting on Sunday evening) and we will start Succoth on Friday night. For this special Shabbat Israel is going to read three texts for the Haftara, not only one.

HAFTARA: The text of Hosea is a call to come back to the Lord, we are still in the context of *Teshuva* (repentance and confession). "Take words with you and return to the LORD; say to him, "Take away all guilt; accept that which is good, and we will offer the fruit of our lips." (Hos. 14:2). Israel has understood that sacrifices of animal are not pleasing the L-rd, what he wants from us is much more the fruits of our lips that means praises, *Hallel* and prayers.

The prophet Joel is much more in the context of calling to repentance, with the shofar as it is blown on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. "Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation;" (Joel 2:15-16). Israel has just gathered in a solemn assembly for Yom Kippur, however the prophet says to Israel that one solemn assembly a year is not enough, repentance, confession and coming back to the L-rd should be done every day. If Israel is faithful that way, the L-rd will bless her "In response to his people the LORD said: I am sending you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a mockery among the nations." (Joel 2:19).

The last text from Micah is a recognition from Israel that the L-rd has forgiven her sins. "Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of your possession? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in showing clemency. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and unswerving loyalty to Abraham, as you have sworn to our ancestors from the days of old. " (Mic. 7:18.20). What a wonderful God who repeat His promises to His people and help them to start a new year full of confidence in Him!
I love our God for his mercy upon His people.

BESORAT YESHUA

Mark 9:14-50

This text of the Besorah is important for this period between Yom Kippur and Succoth. Because it is still a period of judgement and Yeshua will refer to it with the metaphor of the salt. However, it is also a period of Joy and Yeshua will help a man to be in Joy by saving his son from the hand of the devil:

BESORAH: "Someone from the crowd answered him, "Rabbi, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your talmidim to cast it out, but they could not do so." He answered them, "You faithless generation, how much longer must I be among you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him to me." (Mark 9:17-19). What was the problem? Why do the disciples could not heal this child? For Yeshua it is because we don't have enough faith and because we don't pray enough. Yeshua affirms "All things can be done for the one who believes." (Mark 9:23)The father understood what Yeshua said and reacted that way **Immediately the father of the child cried out, "I believe; help my unbelief!"** (Mark 9:24). Then the miracle was possible: "Yeshua took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand. " (9:27). The disciples were astonished that they cannot heal his young boy, but Yeshua did it. They did not say anything until they entered the house. There, they came to Yeshua and asked him "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "This kind can come out only through prayer." " (Mark 9:29). Only through prayer. Do we want to see miracles in our life? **Yeshua said only Through prayer.** Do we want to see some members of our family to come to Yeshua? **Yeshua said only Through prayer.** Do we want to see more justice in this world? **Yeshua said only Through prayer.** Do we want to see Jerusalem in peace? **Yeshua said only Through prayer.** Do we want to see Israel coming to G-d? **Yeshua said only Through prayer.** Do we want to see our Jewish friend coming to Yeshua? **Yeshua said only Through prayer.**

