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NEWS

MEMORIAL DAY & INDEPENDENCE DAY

Israel is the country of the Jewish people, it is very significant to have our ministry in Israel, it is one of the reasons why I am living in Israel. Israel is also very important to each worker of the world Jewish ministry and to each Jewish Adventist in the world. If Israel existed before the IIWW, certainly the shoa would have not been and millions of Jews would have been saved, they would have found a harbor of peace in their own country.

On May 9, Israel remembered the fallen soldiers who died to defend Israel. And on May 10, Israel celebrated its 63rd anniversary. In 63 years they faced many wars, in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1983, plus two Palestinian intifadas, the Gaza Strip wars and the war against Hisbollah in Lebanon. It is difficult to find a country that was more in war than Israel during the last 60 or 70 years. During these wars 22,867 soldiers died. The Prime minister of Israel gave a speech at the ceremonies of the Memorial Day and he quoted the Bible. the news service Arutz Sheva shared this news: "speaking on the eve of Israel's Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers and Terrorism Victims, he quotes the Bible to the effect that working to build Israel is the country's solace for those killed. He spoke at Jerusalem's Ammunition Hill, where a battle raged on the second day of the Six Day War in 1967, which concluded with all of Jerusalem and the rest of Israel being united for the first time in 2,000 years. The Ammunition Hill battle raged 10 hours. "The enemy had been beaten, the hill captured, but the price we paid was heavy — 21 of our best soldiers from the

Parashat Behar, Shabbat 14 May 2011

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Paratroopers Brigade fell in that bloody fight here,' said the Prime Minister. Quoting from the Book of Jeremiah (31:16), the Prime Minister stated, 'Our grief is overwhelming, our hearts ache, where will we find comfort? The prophet said: 'Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded.'"

"We shall find solace in building the land and the people, in striving for days of peace, and in our knowledge that their work shall be rewarded and their heroism shall be remunerated," (Tzvi Ben Gedalyahu). Let's continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

PIANO RECITAL IN BUENOS AIRES

David Barzola informs us that a recital of piano will be given in his congregation on May 14.

David informs us also that they are going to celebrate their 10th anniversary on August.

In his message he said "On Friday 26 and Saturday August 27 we will have a special program in our temple for the tenth anniversary of our community". Since it will be only in August we will have time to speak about it later.

OVERVIEW

BEHAR

Leviticus 25:1 - 26:2

The Torah prohibits normal farming of the Land of Israel every seven years.

This “Shabbat” for the land is called “shemita”. After every seventh shemita, the fiftieth year, yovel (jubilee) is announced with the sound of the shofar on Yom Kippur. This was also a year for the land to lie fallow. G-d promises to provide a bumper crop prior to the shemita and yovel years. During yovel, all land is returned to its original division from the time of Joshua, and all Jewish indentured servants are freed, even if they have not completed their six years of work. A Jewish indentured servant may not be given any demeaning, unnecessary or excessively difficult work, and may not be sold in the public market. The price of his labor must be calculated according to the amount of time remaining until he will automatically become free.

The price of land is similarly calculated. Should anyone sell his ancestral land, he has the right to redeem it after two years. If a house in a walled city is sold, the right of redemption is limited to the first year after the sale. The Levites’ cities belong to them forever. The Jewish People are forbidden to take advantage of one another by lending or borrowing with interest. Family members should redeem any relative who was sold as an indentured servant as a result of impoverishment.

THE TORAH FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE

When one speaks of learning Torah, what does it mean? The word “Torah” has two usages. One is to the Chumash (the Five Books of Moses, the Pentateuch). The second usage refers to the totality of Torah literature -- Mishna and Talmud (Oral teachings), Midrash (allegorical teachings), Halacha (law), Mussar (ethics).

The Chumash is called the Written Law because it was dictated by the Almighty to Moses who wrote it down letter for letter, word for word. It is terse and exact -- each word and letter is significant. It is meant to be read with a focused and questioning mind. The Sages divided it into 54 parashot (sections) with the whole Torah being completed each year from beginning to end. The Torah is read in synagogue on Monday, Thursday, Holidays and Shabbat. In addition, we are instructed in the Code of Jewish law to review the weekly Torah portion twice each week and once to read the translation.

It is amazing. The same book that is studied by first graders is being studied by our greatest and oldest scholars. There is tremendous depth and wisdom in its words. Our Sages tell us that there are 70 levels of understanding to the Chumash.

Along with the Written Law the Almighty gave the Oral Law -- the explanation for the words of the Chumash. It was given orally to ensure the accuracy of transmission. A father or teacher would make sure that his son or student correctly understood the meaning of the verse. This worked well until the Jewish people were almost destroyed 2,000 years ago. Then Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi compiled the Mishnah, the Oral Teachings. He organized 63 tractates in the Six Orders of Mishnah: 1. Zeraim (Seeds) — agricultural laws and prayers 2. Moed (Festival) — Jewish holidays and Sabbath 3. Nashim (Women) — marriage and divorce 4. Nezikin (Damages) — civil and criminal law 5. Kodashim (Holy Things) — sacrificial rites, the Temple, dietary laws 6. Tohorot (Purities) — laws of purity and impurity.

SABBATICAL YEAR

The Torah says: “And if you shall say, what will we eat in the seventh year, for we have not planted or gathered in our grain [due to the restrictions of Shmitah], I will appoint My blessing to you in the sixth year, and it will yield enough grain for the three-year period [the year before Shmitah, the Shmitah year, and the following year, until you can plant and reap the harvest].” (Leviticus 25:20-21). In this Parsha we see how the Land of Israel is indeed a Holy

and special Land uniquely different than any other land. Normally, the soil produces better and more abundant crop the first year after a yearly rest and less in the sixth year. Yet, G-d promises here that in the sixth year the land will produce crop in abundance that it will be enough for three years!

Israel is a unique and special land. This land was G-d's promise to our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and is an everlasting inheritance to the Jewish people of all generations. The Torah proclaims this loud and clear. Anyone who believes in the Bible knows and believes this.

SHOFAR

The Torah states, "And you shall blow the shofar on the tenth day of the seventh month, on the Day of Atonement shall you sound the shofar throughout all your land. And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you, and you shall return every man to his possession, and you shall return every man to his family" (Leviticus 25:9,10). It is interesting to notice that the Bible make connection between the blowing of the shofar in Yom Kippur and the Jubilee. The Sefer HaChinuch teaches a lesson regarding coping with suffering from the commandment to blow the shofar in the fiftieth year, the Jubilee year (Yovel in Hebrew). The reason for this is that on the yovel the servants were set free. When a master had a servant for a long period of time, it was difficult for him to lose the helping hand. The shofar was blown for the master to realize that he was not the only one to free his servant. Rather, the same was happening to everyone else who had servants. The knowledge that others are also suffering in the same way makes it much easier to accept hardships.

Rabbi Packouz says that "there are many difficulties in life that people subjectively make worse for themselves because they feel that they are the only ones who are suffering. The more you realize that each person has his own life-problems, the easier you will find it to cope in a positive way with your own. While not everyone

will have the same problems as you do, everyone does have hardships and tests. Gain greater awareness of the suffering of other people and you will be able to put your own suffering in a perspective that will decrease the pain."

HELPING YOUR POOR BROTHER

One of the mitzvot in the Parasha is to help someone in need, which is one of the greatest mitzvot. The Torah says, "And if your brother becomes poor and his strength fails him, you shall support him, whether he is a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you..." (Lev 25:25) In Pirkei Avot our sages state about the mitzvah of Tzedakah (charity); "There are four types among those who give charity - one who wishes to give but doesn't want others should give - he begrudges others; He who encourages others to give but doesn't give himself - he begrudges himself; He who gives and wants others should give too, is a Chasid (generous person); One who himself doesn't give and doesn't want others to give, is a wicked person." The proper way to perform the mitzvah of Tzedakah is to give and to see that others give too. Rabbi Zalmen Marozov says that "An important condition in performing the mitzvah of Tzedakah is to make sure that the person receiving the help should not feel embarrassed and inferior. Many people give Tzedakah anonymously. That way, the poor would not know the source of the money and wouldn't be embarrassed when they met the donor."

Rashi explains, "Do not wait and let him go down until he falls completely for then it will be difficult to raise him. You must uphold him at the time when he begins to fail." He explains also that this concept with the following parable: "This is similar to a burden which has shifted upon a donkey and is weighing the animal down. While the donkey is still standing even one person can shift the load back into place and keep the donkey up. But once the donkey collapses, even five people may not be able to raise it back up again." Thus, the Torah commands us not to wait until the other person is completely destitute. We must help them at the earliest possible opportunity.

HONEST BUSINESS

The Talmudic sage Reb Chanina earned his livelihood from selling honey. Once instead of giving bee's honey, he filled the customer's jar with fruit honey by mistake. Next time he saw the customer, he told the customer that he mistakenly gave him fruit honey. The customer replied that he was happy with the honey he got. Yet, Rabbi Chanina felt that he transgressed on the mitzvah of honest business practice, for he didn't give him what he wanted. So, not wanting to have any gain from money earned in a misleading way, he donated the profit of the sale to charity.

HONEST BUSINESS 2

The Kav Hayashar writes about an unusual request made by a poor tailor which left a strong impression on him. Before his death the tailor asked the burial society that his coffin be made from the wood of the table he worked on. Also, that the tools he used for work should be placed in his coffin.

When asked for the reason for this unusual request, he replied, "The table and my tools will be my witnesses in the heavenly court that I didn't cheat anyone, that I didn't take any material which didn't belong to me and that I conducted my work with great honesty."

NOT FOOLING OTHERS AND OURSELF TOO

Rabbi Naftoli of Ropshitz would say, "Although the Torah prohibition is against fooling others, one should go beyond the letter of the law and not fool themselves either!" A wise man was once asked, "What is the easiest thing a person can do and what is the most difficult thing for a person to do? He replied, "The easiest is for a person to fool himself! On the other hand, the most difficult thing is to correctly asses oneself. For, while it may be easy to see another person's shortcomings it is most difficult to see one's own.

HONEST

The story is told of a Chassid who was a businessman. Once, after negotiating a big deal, he had to add up some numbers. But, as he was doing so he became so engrossed in thinking about G-d, that instead of writing the correct number for the total, he wrote, "the total is: *"Ain od milvado"* - "There is nothing except for G-d!"

HAFTARA Jeremiah 32:6-27

In this text of Jeremiah we have an illustration of the year of Yovel. **"Jeremiah said, 'The word of the L-rd came to me: Hanamel son of your uncle Shallum is going to come to you and say, 'Buy my field that is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours'"** (Jer. 32:6-7).

However, Jeremiah wanted to be certain that this revelation was truly from G-d. It was a strange order. Jeremiah had received the revelation from G-d that the people of Israel would be deported to Babylon, Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed. There was no sense in buying a property now. It would be better to keep these seventeen shekels of silver and to use them in Babylon where they would be living. It was very strange. The L-rd had to confirm to Jeremiah that this revelation was true. And it was confirmed by his cousin. **"Then my cousin Hanamel came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance with**

EDITOR

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Richard-Amram Elofer
4, Abraham Lincoln
94186 Jerusalem
Israel

Tel. +972 2625 1547
Fax +972 2625 1319
email: richard@elofer.com
web: jewishadventist.org

the word of the L-rd, and said to me, 'Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the L-rd" (Jer. 32:8). He obeyed and bought the land.

"And I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. I signed the deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. (Jer. 32:9-10).

Why did the L-rd want Jeremiah to spend this money in Jerusalem, to buy land that would be taken by the Babylonians? "Thus says the L-rd of hosts, the G-d of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, in order that they may last for a long time. For thus says the L-rd of hosts, the G-d of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land " (Jer. 32:14-15).

The main message of this purchase is that there is hope. G-d is not going to abandon his people or to reject them. He wants to teach them a lesson. He wants to push them to fulfil his mission which is to share the knowledge of G-d. That is why this money was not lost. OUR HOPE IS IN THE L-rd.

BESORAT-YESHUA

Luke 4:14-22

The parasha this week is about the yovel or Jubilee. The Torah said "Count off seven sabbaths of years — seven times seven years — so that the seven sabbaths of years amount to a period of forty-nine years." (Lev 25:8) and Moses added "Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you" (Lev 25:10). It is interesting that in the text of the besorah Yeshua made a connection between the Yovel and his ministry as the Messiah. It is true that the Yovel year is a year of freedom, it is a year when debts are cancelled, year when the land comes back to his first owner, year when the captive and slaves are sent back free in their home. Symbolically this freedom is the freedom the Messiah brings to the world.

Yeshua was a Jew, he was born as a Jew and died as a Jew. That is why it is written that every Shabbat he went to the synagogue "He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him." (Luke 4:15). In this text of Luke, it is written that after a trip to the Jordan River and the

desert of Jericho he came back home, in Nazareth. On Shabbat he went to the synagogue. It was a great honour for this city to receive Yeshua on Shabbat. So after the reading of the parasha, it was the time to read the Haftara. "He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read." (Luke 4:16). Yeshua was asked to read the haftara. "The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written" (Luke 4:17). Everything happens for a purpose. On this Shabbat, just when Yeshua starts his mission and ministry as the Mashiach, the text of the Haftara is the text of Isaiah, which reminds to Israel the Yovel. "The Spirit of the L-rd is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the L-rd's favor." (Luke 4:19) Yeshua has read the text of Isaiah 61 from the verse 1. However when we compare the text of Luke with the text of Isaiah we notice that Yeshua stopped his reading just before these words "and the day of vengeance of our G-d" (Is 61:2). Because Yeshua came to proclaim the deliverance, freedom and G-d's forgiveness. It was not yet the time of the vengeance. He came as the son of Joseph not yet as the son of David. So the text of Luke continues "Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked. (Luke 4:20-22). For Yeshua this prophecy was in the process of being fulfilled. "Today this scripture is fulfilled" and the people were amazed, they recognized him as the son of Joseph. It is clear that his father was named Joseph, but the Jewish people were waiting for the Mashiach Son of Joseph before the Mashiach Son of David. Everyone who is longing for freedom and forgiveness can find them in Yeshua as it is written "Yeshua replied, 'I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. . . . So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.'" (John 8:34-36).