

**NEWS**  
**LAS VEGAS, NV**

**O**n my way to the NAD Jewish Advisory and the ASI convention, I was invited by a group of Jewish Adventist people to visit them and to preach in one of the Adventist congregations in Las Vegas.

It was interesting for me to have a full Shabbat at the Mountain View Seventh-day Adventist community. It was a full day, a first sermon at 8.50, a second sermon at 11.30. a meeting in the afternoon from 3.00 to 6:00 pm and the end of the Shabbat with the havdala service.

I think that all the members were satisfied and enjoyed the presentation. My personal great Joy was to meet in this congregation at least five Jews some of them committed to Yeshua, some others not yet, but all of them willing to go further in order to know the Mashiach better and to make him known to the 100,000 Jews living in that area.

I met particularly a Sabra (Jewish Israeli born in Jerusalem) who is very much interested to know more about the Mashiach. When I read with him the Bible in Hebrew, showing him few text about the Mashiach ben David, he was amazed, because most of the people he met just read the Bible with him in English and these reading had not so much impact on him. We exchanged our emails and we promised one another to keep contact in order to continue these studies.

Some of the Jews who attended this day of worship and studies did not know one another, even though they had the same objective. Then I suggested to them to meet together, to start to meet together as a small group of friends and under the Impulsion of Avi (the Jewish Israeli) to learn more about the Jewish people, their tradition, their songs in order to be ready to form a new Jewish Adventist group, which could become one day a Jewish Adventist congregation in Las Vegas.

**MANAUS, AMAZON, BRAZIL**

**I**t is with great joy I have learned the start of a new Jewish Adventist community in the Amazon area in Brazil, particularly in the capital of Amazon, Manaus. In this city there is a large Moroccan Jewish community

and some members under the impulsion of Dr. Reinaldo Sequeira, professor at the Adventist University of Sao Paulo and leader of the World Jewish Adventist Friendship Center for South America and Central America have started this community in January 2011.

Wilan Cardoso, a student of Dr Sequeira wrote: "I would like to give you a good news from Brazil. We have a new jewish-adventist congregation in Manaus, in the state of Amazonas. There are thousands of moroccan jews (and descendants), who migrated and are living here today. Our new congregation started its meetings in january. Everything began with a group of adventists (some of them are Jews) who wanted to study more about Judaism culture, Hebrew etc. At this time this congregation composed of about 20 people is learning about Hebrew and a new Jewish Adventist liturgy

Pr. Reinaldo Siqueira, and other pastors from the Adventist University in São Paulo, are coming to teach us and to support us very much. We have a plan to buy our own Sepher Torah very soon. Our location is rented for the meetings of Shabbath (Kabbalat Shabbat on Friday evening and Shacharit on Shabbat morning) and we plan to move to our own location very soon."

God's willing I am scheduling to visit this new congregation, in November and then I will give to our readers more information about it. More photos are available at our picasa website.



# OVERVIEW

## DEVARIM

### Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22

**T**his Parsha begins the last of the Five Books of The Torah, Sefer Devarim. This Book is also called Mishneh Torah, “Repetition of the Torah” (hence the Greek/English title Deuteronomy). Sefer Devarim relates what Moshe told Bnei Yisrael during the last five weeks of his life, as they prepared to cross the Jordan into Eretz Yisrael.

Moshe reviews the mitzvot, stressing the change of lifestyle they are about to undergo: from the supernatural existence of the desert under Moshe's guidance to the apparently natural life they will experience under Yehoshua's leadership in the Land.

The central theme this week is the sin of the spies, the meraglim. The Parsha opens with Moshe alluding to the sins of the previous generation who died in the desert. He describes what would have happened if they hadn't sinned by sending spies into Eretz Yisrael. Hashem would have given them without a fight all the land from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, including the lands of Ammon, Moav and Edom. He details the subtle sins that culminate in the sin of the spies, and reviews at length this incident and its results. The entire generation would die in the desert; Moshe would not enter Eretz Yisrael. He reminds them that their immediate reaction to Hashem's decree was to want to “go up and fight” to redress the sin. He recounts how they wouldn't listen when he told them not to go, that they no longer merited vanquishing their enemies miraculously. They ignored him and suffered a massive defeat. They were not allowed to fight with the kingdoms of Esav, Moav or Ammon these lands were not to be part of the map of Eretz Yisrael in the meantime. When the conquest of Canaan will begin with Sichon and Og, it will be via natural warfare.

## WHO WROTE DEUTERONOMY?

**T**here is a discussion in Judaism to know why the style of Deuteronomy is really different of the other books of the Torah.

Both ancient and modern readers of the Book of Deuteronomy have discerned a change in style from the other four books of the Torah. The book starts with: **These are the words of Moses which he spoke to the Children of Israel on the other side of the Jordan. (Deut. 1:1)** After this introduction the text switches to a monologue delivered by Moses in the first person. This is clearly a different style of the other books of the Torah, where appears the more familiar: **“And God spoke to Moses saying: ‘Speak to the children of Israel...”**

There are several opinions in the Talmud about this question. The Talmud states that if a person denies the Divinity of the Torah, he is guilty of heresy (Sanhedrin 99a). **“He who maintains that the Torah was not divinely revealed, Our Rabbis taught: Because he has despised the word of the L-rd, and has broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off, this refers to him who maintains that the Torah is not from Heaven.”** This opinion has been codified by Maimonides (Mishna Torah, Teshuva 3:8) and reflects normative Jewish belief.

But there is another opinion which say **“These [rebukes] (in Leviticus) were written in the plural, by Moses by the mouth of the Almighty, while those (in Deuteronomy) were written in the singular, by Moses, by himself.” (Megila 31b).** Thus even though the majority and normative belief is that Moses has received all the Torah from God, some other could accept that texts in Deuteronomy could have been written by Moses from himself. Now it is interesting to notice that the Zohar introduces a concept which has become known as **“the Shechina speaking from the throat of Moses.”**

It is interesting because in the Brit Hachadasha Rabbi Shaul who received inspiration from G-d also explains it in this way: **“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2Tim 3:16-17).** The Scriptures or the Bible is “God-breathed” that means inspired by God, inspired by the *Ruach-Elohim*, According to the Jewish tradition, Moses received his inspiration from the *Shekinah*. In

this way we could believe that the *Shekinah* was the manifestation of the *Ruach-Elohim* (Ruach Hakodesh or Holy Spirit). In fact the *Ruach-Elohim* inspired the prophets, who have written, what they received in their own words. that is why in the Megila it is written that the rebukes of Deuteronomy “were written in the singular, by Moses, by himself.” However it is clear that when the Torah says “And God spoke to Moses saying: ‘Speak to the children of Israel...” the following words are the real words G-d has given to Moses for the people of Israel.

## SPEAKING WITH HONOR AND RESPECT

**M**oshe says: “And all of you approached me, and said, ‘Let us send people before us to explore the Land for us.’ (Deut 1:22) Rashi states that this means that the people came to Moshe in a disorderly manner. Children were pushing the elders and the elders were pushing the children. What difference does it make that they came in a disorderly manner? And why is it mentioned in conjunction with the offense of the acceptance of the slander of the spies about the land and the refusal to listen to the Almighty’s command to enter the land?

Rabbi Yitchak of Volozhin elucidates that the people might have tried to mitigate their insistence on sending the spies by saying that the idea was good, but the project went astray. Moshe was telling them that the very fact that they came pushing and shoving, without *derech erez* (proper manners), that there was something wrong with the project right from the start. People who are involved in a project that is truly proper will have appropriate *derech erez* at the beginning of the venture. Since they acted rudely and unruly, they should realize that they were doing something wrong.

Rabbi kalman Packouz from Aish yeshiva says that “We must be aware that if we want people to agree with a project that we wish to engage in, we must speak with proper honor and respect. And if we find that we are not speaking with proper honor and respect, then we should be aware that our motivation is not on the right level!”

## LOVE AND COMPASSION FOR OTHERS

**T**he torah states: “And you complained in your tents, and you said, because the Almighty hated us He took us out of Egypt to hand us over to Amorites to destroy us.” (Deut 1:27) Is it truly possible that the Israelites thought that the Almighty hated them?

Rashi, the great commentator, elucidates this verse and gives us a profound insight into human nature. It is clear that the Almighty really loved the people of Israel “For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.” (Deut 7:6-7) but because they felt hatred towards Him, they mistakenly felt that He hated them.

Rabbi Pakouz said that there is a strong tendency for people to project their own feelings towards others. If you constantly think that other people should not be trusted, it could show that you feel that others should not really trust you. If you always think that others disapprove of you, it indicates that you don’t approve of others — or perhaps yourself.

To use this positively, if you feel love and compassion for others, you will assume others feel that way towards you. Not only that, but your behavior and feelings will beget the same from the people you interact with. Try smiling at another person. You’ll feel better towards him and he’ll be more positive towards you!

\* \* \* \* \*

**SOURCES:** These comments of the parasha are based on comments published by Rabbi Zalmen Pakouz, Rabbi Zelig Pliskin, Rabbi Ari Kahn, Rabbi Noson Weisz, and Rabbi Avigdor Bonchek, from Aish HaTorah (Aish.com). By Rabbi Naftali Reich, Rabbi Berel Wein and Rabbi Yochanan Zweig, Rabbi Yissocher Frand from Torah.org (Project Genenis). By Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair from Ohr Somayach, by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky. and Rabbi Zalmen Marozov.

## RABBI SAMSON'S GREAT ESCAPE

“A ha! We are waiting for you...” the hangmen answered. They grabbed hold of him and started dragging him towards the furnace. They took little notice of the bishop’s protests and cries. they stopped up his mouth and threw him into the furnace.

Meanwhile, Rabbi Samson woke up and hurried home. It was already after midnight, and he felt disturbed at having to leave the king’s order until the next day. He found the house in an uproar. His family were worrying about him because all his possessions had been sealed by the king’s servants and they felt that they were all in great danger. In the morning, straight after morning prayers, Rabbi Samson hastened to carry out his king’s command.

“Yes! We carried out our orders to the letter,” the hangmen replied. “You should have seen the bishop tremble, but it served him right, I always knew he was a false person...” one of the hangmen remarked with a smile. Rabbi Samson remained standing, unable to understand what had happened. He ran to the king and became even more bewildered when he saw the king looking at him, as if he, Rabbi Samson, were a ghost.

Rabbi Samson excused himself for having been unable to carry out the royal command the same day, due to a most urgent matter, and he was forced to postpone it till the following day. He hastened to reassure the king, however, that his command had been carried out, and the bishop had been burned according to the king’s order. On the other hand, he could not understand why the king had confiscated all his property that he, Rabbi Samson, had so honestly earned. The king suddenly broke out into uncontrollable laughter. He laughed and laughed until he could hardly remain standing. He then embraced Rabbi Samson and pressed him to his heart, and continued to laugh joyfully, tears coming to his eyes.

Rabbi Samson looked at the king in amazement and waited patiently until the king would come to himself. Finally the king told him the whole story about the bishop’s accusation, and what a remarkable escape the rabbi had enjoyed from the certain death that the bishop had prepared for him, but had himself suffered.

“I am now assured that you are a religious, G-dly man, whom your great G-d has saved from a certain and unearned death,” the king said earnestly. “But tell me, why did you deny the truth and not admit the full amount of your riches?”

“G-d forbid!” Rabbi Samson replied. “I would not tell the king a lie. When the king asked me how much I was sure I possessed, I could not state the amount in the books. That was not definitely mine. Only yesterday I had this amount, and today the king confiscated everything. The only certain possessions that I have are those that I have donated to charity . . . they cannot be taken away from me. I am used to giving a tenth of my earnings to charity, and therefore that is the amount that I stated . . .” The king was extremely pleased with Rabbi Samson’s explanation.

“There can be no question any more of confiscating your properties,” the king remarked, beaming. “I grant you them once more, with pleasure. Please tell me how I can repay you for the unpleasantness I caused you so unnecessarily?” the king asked.

“The king has already sufficiently rewarded me, with his trust and friendship,” Rabbi Samson replied. “Even so, I would like to ask a favor of his majesty: I would like to build a large synagogue in Vienna, where my devoted brethren would be able to come to serve G-d.” Rabbi Samson’s wish was granted and a great synagogue was erected in the capital, known as “Rabbi Samson’s Synagogue.” Rabbi Samson lived out his years in Torah study, charity and good deeds, and he accomplished a lot of good both for the Jews and for the country. Before his death he willed a large part of his possessions to charity: this “Wertheimer Fund” existed till the first World War, and gave much help to charitable causes. (Chabad.org)

## EDITOR

A newsletter published by the  
World Jewish Adventist Friendship Center  
Under the umbrella of the  
General Conference —Office of Adventist Mission

Richard-Amram Elofer  
4, Abraham Lincoln  
94186 Jerusalem  
Israel

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

## HAFTARA

### Isaiah 1:1 - 1:27

**T**uesday August 9 will be the day of Tish'a Be'av (9th of Av), the very date of the destruction of the temples of Jerusalem. Both temples were destroyed on the same day but the second more than 650 years after the first one.

**HAFTARA:** The Haftara continue to give the reasons of the destruction of Jerusalem. "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not understand" (Isaiah 1:3). The L-rd is so upset with Israel that he call her Gomorrah "Listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!" (10) The Almighty said to Israel that he did not like their sacrifices "What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the L-RD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats" (11). If the L-rd does not like anymore Israel' sacrifice, it is not because G-d is against sacrifices but just because Israel's ceremonies have lost their significance for Israel and became just rituals. That's why the Lord does not like not only sacrifice but also Sabbath and feasts "bringing offerings is futile; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation—I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity. Your new moons and your appointed festivals my soul hates;" (13-14). The L-rd never lose hope, his people is still his people, "Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil," (16). It is a call to repentance "Come now" (18). The Lord is a God full of forgiveness and love for his people "though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land" (19-20). Whatever Israel done in the past, G-d is willing to forgive. However, if the people don't want to repent and to ask forgiveness, the L-rd will not be able to bless them and they will fall under the rules of other power as Babylon and many others. The text ends with a positive statement, "I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed by justice, and those in her who repent, by righteousness" (26-27).

## BRIT HACHADASHA

### Romans 15:1-13

**T**he parasha for this week is about G-d's blessings upon the people of Israel during the 40 years in the desert. Moses says "The L-rd your G-d has blessed you in all the work of your hands. . . . These forty years the LORD your God has been with you, and you have not lacked anything." (Deut 2:7) And G-d's request to trust him "Do not be afraid, the LORD your God himself will fight for you." (Deut 3:22).

The Brit Hachadasha request the same trust in G-d. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him" Rom 15:13 this trust in him will help us in our life through the Ruach Elohim, which was represented in the wilderness by the Shechina and inspired Moses when he wrote the Torah. It is the great revelation of the Brit Hachadasha, the Ruach Elohim is available for everyone who trust G-d and wants to build his life with Him.

It is always good to remember that if G-d allowed prophets to write under the inspiration of the Ruach Elohim, it was to help us in our daily life. Because all the events that happened to the people of Israel were written to serve as an example Rabbi Shaul, who was himself inspired by the same Ruach Elohim said "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." (Rom 15:4).

We are not better than the people of Israel of the ancient time, if we were at their time, I am sure that we would have committed the same sins and mistakes but our advantage today is that we have G-d's Word which helps us to understand their mistake and not to renew them.

All the sources of the Jewish tradition agree to say that the temples were destroyed because of the sins of Israel and free hatred, lack of love for one another. It is our privilege to follow G-d today, to trust him and to demonstrate to G-d that the Bible has not been written for nothing. It is our ultimate authority to discover G-d's love for each one of us.