



**“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, <sup>46</sup> and upon finding a single pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.  
Mathew 13:45**

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## Behar - On the Mount

Leviticus 25:1–26:2  
Jeremiah 32:6–27  
Luke 4:16–21

Within this parashah we will examine the *Sh'mita* and the *yovel* we will also look at what took place when the Torah was given during this Divine encounter with YHVH.

Leviticus 25:1-7

***And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. <sup>3</sup> Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; <sup>4</sup> but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. <sup>5</sup> What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land. <sup>6</sup> And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, <sup>7</sup> for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land—all its produce shall be for food.***

This week’s Torah Pearl is called “*Behar*” which means “on the Mount,” referring to Mt. Sinai, the site of the giving of the Torah to the children of Israel. The first verse in the *Parashah* reads, and YHVH spoke to Moses on Mount Sanai, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel and say...” The first thing we notice is that there is an emphasis on Mount Sanai, which we know that the bulk of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers was given to Moses on this Mountain. So, why is it reaffirming this notion here at the beginning of the parashah? What we need to comprehend is what transpired at Mount Sinai when the Torah was given, was arguably the most profound Divine revelation ever to be experienced by any nation or individual in history. That during this period of almost a year Moses met with the Voice of the Word of YHVH and was given the Torah, during this time Israel encamped at the base of Mount and witnessed the Divine presence of Yah.

We read in the Targum of Johnathan Exodus 20

*And the Word of the LORD spake all the excellency of these words saying:*

*The first word, as it came forth from the mouth of the Holy One, whose Name be blessed, was like storms, and lightnings, and flames of fire, with a burning light on His right hand and on His left. It winged its way through the air of the heavens, and was made manifest unto the camp of Israel, and returned, and was engraven on the tables of the covenant that were given by the hand of Mosheh, and were turned in them from side to side: and then called He, and said:*

*Sons of Israel My people, I am the LORD your God, who brought you out free from the land of Mizraim, from the house of the bondage of slaves. The second word which came forth from the mouth of the Holy One, whose name be blessed, was like storms, and lightnings, and flames of fire. A burning light was on His right hand and on His left and was borne through the air of the heavens, returned, and was made manifest unto the camp of Israel; it returned, and was engraven on the tables of the covenant, and was turned in them from side to side.*

We see here that as the Voice of the Word of YHVH spoke the words which came forth were living and was like storms, and lightning, and flames of fire, which went forth into the camp to make known the manifested Torah of YHVH to Israel. Then it returned and was engraved on the tablets by the very hand of God. As the Voice of the Word of YHVH was manifest within the camp of Israel and the Holy Spirit made known the Torah of Yah to the people. It is the same heavenly fire which also came down and consumed the sacrifice on the final day of consecration when the two sons of Aaron died, and the same fire which also came forth and consumed the fire when Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. What a magnificent period in Israel's history, yet, this event is nothing compared to when Messiah Yeshua will return and proclaim the Torah from Mt. Zion and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem. At this time we will also see the Holy Spirit working as the truth of the Torah is revealed and inscribed upon our hearts.

The parashah continues with YHVH commanding the people to observe a Sabbath's rest for the land once they inhabit it. That God forbid the farming of the ground during the 7<sup>th</sup> year so that the land could rest and be replenished. The "Shabbat" for the land is called *Sh'mita*, which after seven *sh'mita* cycles, the fiftieth year is a *yovel* (Jubilee). This is announced with the sounding of a shofar on Yom Kippur, which this was also a year when the land would lie fallow. To ensure the people had provision YHVH promised to provide an abundant crop before the *sh'mita* and *yovel* years so that Israel would not go wanting.

It is during the *yovel*, that all the land is to return to its original division from the time of Joshua, along with all Israelite slaves being set free, regardless of time served.

Scholars argue that it was because Israel did not observe the *Sh'mita* why they went into exile for 70 years to Babylon. We read in Lev. 26:31-35 that God will take them into exile for them turning their back on His Torah. That while they are in exile, the land will become desolate as it enjoys its sabbaths because it has not rested. Thus, it implies that as Israel forsook the Torah, they also disregarded the *sh'mita* and therefore the land could not rest. Consequently, God, who is jealous of His word and His creation, ensured that the land rested for the years it was forsaken. Hence why the people went into exile for 70 years, scholars deduce that they must have negated to keep 70 *sh'mita* years of rest.

***I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. <sup>32</sup> I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. <sup>33</sup> I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. <sup>34</sup> Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest and enjoy its***

**sabbaths. <sup>35</sup> As long as it lies desolate it shall rest— for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it. (Lev. 26:31-35)**

The Mishna regarding this states that if the people will not observe the *sh'mita* and allow the land to rest in their presence, then it will rest in their absence (Shabbat 33a).

The writings of the prophets support this understanding of being exiled from the land for neglecting the *sh'mita*, as one just doesn't neglect the *sh'mita*, but one first turns their back on the Torah and subsequently transgress further in their lawless behaviour.

Jeremiah states

**<sup>7</sup> Yet you have not listened to Me," says the LORD, "that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.**

**<sup>8</sup> "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words, <sup>9</sup> behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the LORD, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. <sup>10</sup> Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. <sup>11</sup> And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.**

**<sup>12</sup> 'Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the LORD; 'and I will make it a perpetual desolation. <sup>13</sup> So I will bring on that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied concerning all the nations. (Jeremiah 25:7-13)**

We further see that when the House of Judah returned from captivity, they made reference to observing the *sh'mita*, thus reaffirming the notion that this was a contributing factor in their exile from the land.

**if the peoples of the land brought wares or any grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we would not buy it from them on the Sabbath, or on a holy day; and we would forego the seventh year's produce and the exacting of every debt. Nehemiah 10:31**

observing the *sh'mita* is matter of faith, as it requires a person to trust, and to have complete faith in YHVH to provide for them, which we read <sup>18</sup> **'So you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them; and you will dwell in the land in safety. <sup>19</sup> Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety. <sup>20</sup> 'And if you say, "What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?" <sup>21</sup> Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. <sup>22</sup> And you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest. (Lev. 25:18-22)**

Here we see that YHVH will give them a bountiful harvest in the sixth year which will provide for the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> years, until the harvest of the 9<sup>th</sup>. That is three years of a provision that will be harvested in the 6<sup>th</sup> year. However, what we must note is this abundance would only be given if they have been observing the Torah during the previous year. The question is, have I, have you got that

kind of faith in YHVH? The reality is we will require such faith during the Greater Exodus, when we leave our homes, our belongings, everything, as we leave Babylon during the time of Jacob's Trouble.

I can remember when I was pastoring a congregation, one which I was taking through a transition from a traditional Pentecostal church to a Hebraic assembly. When I was repeatedly asked to teach on tithing by the trustees, which my response, when asked, was, "if I do you will not like it, as what the church teaches concerning this is unbiblical." Anyway, eventually I taught on tithing, which my opening statement went something like this, "I want to teach on "biblical tithing" after which we will be applying this biblical model." To this, the then trustees were excited as they thought people would be encouraged to give more. However, I concluded the teaching with something along the lines of "so, now that we have looked at biblical tithing, this coming year is considered to be a *sh'mita*. Therefore we will not be collecting a tithe for a whole year." To this, I was asked, "what can I do with my tithe?" Which I responded by instructing them that if they desired to give then they could give to someone who was in need or they should seek God and ask Him what they should do. You can image what the then trustees said, when they cornered me after the service, to which I informed them, I believe my God will provide for this fellowship if we seek to stand on His word. The very next week one of the congregations who had asked to see me, met with me. They told me that they had intended to tithe a large amount of money to the fellowship, which I replied by asking, "have you looked after the needy in your family?" Anyway, after further discussion I sent them away and asked them to seek Yah and then come back to see me. The following week they did, and they presented me with a cheque, stating that they were going to tithe a lot more, but I had instructed them to assist the needy within their family, so they did.

The amount they tithed, however, was the amount the fellowship required to meet all its commitments for the coming year and into the next. I can still remember the then trustees faces when I informed them what I had done, yet they were overwhelmed how YHVH had provided when I informed them of the recent tithe we had received.

What a God we have, who meets all our needs! We need to remember that Biblical faith is, hear and do, trust and obey, as it requires action, for it is not passive, but living.

Leviticus 25:8-17 *Yovel* – Jubilee Year

***<sup>8</sup> 'And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. <sup>9</sup> Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. <sup>10</sup> And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. <sup>11</sup> That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine. <sup>12</sup> For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field.***

***<sup>13</sup> 'In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession. <sup>14</sup> And if you sell anything to your neighbour or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another. <sup>15</sup> According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you. <sup>16</sup> According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he***

***sells to you according to the number of the years of the crops. <sup>17</sup> Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God.***

We see in the passage above the commandments for the *yovel*, that pertain to the land. That they are not to harvest it, therefore in the 48<sup>th</sup> year, the year before the *sh'mita* the provision would be enough for four years as it had to provide for an extra year due to the 50<sup>th</sup> being a *yovel*. We also see that during the Jubilee year all possessions must return to the original owner, which this also applied to an Israelite who had gone into servitude to pay a debt.

***<sup>39</sup> 'And if one of your brethren who dwells by you becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave. <sup>40</sup> As a hired servant and a sojourner he shall be with you, and shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee. <sup>41</sup> And then he shall depart from you—he and his children with him—and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers. <sup>42</sup> For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. <sup>43</sup> You shall not rule over him with rigor, but you shall fear your God. <sup>44</sup> And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have—from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy male and female slaves. <sup>45</sup> Moreover you may buy the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property. <sup>46</sup> And you may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them as a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves. But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over one another with rigor.***

***<sup>47</sup> 'Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and one of your brethren who dwells by him becomes poor, and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger's family, <sup>48</sup> after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him; <sup>49</sup> or his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him; or anyone who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him; or if he is able he may redeem himself. <sup>50</sup> Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him: The price of his release shall be according to the number of years, from the year that he was sold to him until the Year of Jubilee; it shall be according to the time of a hired servant for him. <sup>51</sup> If there are still many years remaining, according to them he shall repay the price of his redemption from the money with which he was bought. <sup>52</sup> And if there remain but a few years until the Year of Jubilee, then he shall reckon with him, and according to his years he shall repay him the price of his redemption. <sup>53</sup> He shall be with him as a yearly hired servant, and he shall not rule with rigor over him in your sight. <sup>54</sup> And if he is not redeemed in these years, then he shall be released in the Year of Jubilee—he and his children with him. <sup>55</sup> For the children of Israel are servants to Me; they are My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. Lev. 25:39-55***

We see an integral part of the *yovel* is that prisoners are set free, and land is restored to the original owner. As the exiles return to the land. This has a prophetic fulfilment when Messiah returns and gathers the exiles of Israel and restores them to the land of their forefathers. You see the Day of YHVH is a Jubilee year for creation when creation is reinstated back to God, how He created it. What a day this will be!

The parsha ends with the following

***'You shall not make idols for yourselves; neither a carved image nor a sacred pillar shall you rear up for yourselves; nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I am the LORD your God. <sup>2</sup> You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD. Leviticus 26:1-2***

Once again, we see YHVH instruct Israel not to make idols, carved images or sacred pillars yet, when we enter many churches we see them littered with iconography, within certain churches they genuflect at the cross, and use icons to pray to the saints. Yet, where in scripture does it say we should do this? In fact, it repeatedly forbids such actions.

We further see the incorporation of obelisks and pillars within churches, which many older churches have them incorporated in the structure of the building, with a steeple. We need to understand that the obelisk and the steeple is nothing more than a representation of the male reproductive organ in an erect state which was worshipped as the goddess of lust, sex and reproduction.

We need to understand that just because it is done in worship to YHVH does not mean it is right. For God has instructed us how we are to worship Him, as He has decreed that we are not to incorporate the pagan rituals into our worship. For we are to worship YHVH in Spirit and in Truth, we are to be Holy as He is Holy. If we believe that God is the Almighty One True God, then surely, we should do as He instructs, as we work out our salvation in fear and trepidation.

We further see this aspect of being holy in that YHVH commands His people to observe/keep His Sabbaths. This is a reference to the Sabbaths, the appointed times of YHVH outlined in Lev. 23, which these are NOT Jewish but are YHVH's Sabbaths and therefore, those who worship Him should observe them. The reality is the "church" has changed the times and seasons it keeps to accommodate pagan practices, which Christians today blindly follow because they have inherited lies. If God says that He does not change, that our Yes should be Yes, and our No be No, then surely God does not want us to change His word and incorporate pagan practices that belong to Hasatan into our worship of YHVH.

Within this parashah, we see how YHVH is concerned about His creation, His people, that He watches over the affairs of them to ensure that His Word is fulfilled. That the Torah which he gave to Israel at Mt. Sinai requires the people to observe it, which if they do not then the curses mentioned within it will come upon the people. However, they have a choice, to choose life or death, blessings or curses. You see, when we choose life and blessings we are actively making YHVH our habitation and thus walking along the path of righteousness and truth. Yet when we reject the Torah of YHVH, then we are choosing death and curses, which because we have rejected the Torah, we have moved off the path of righteousness and truth and therefore we have not made YHVH our habitation. This means that curses and death can come against us, as YHVH is not protecting us because we have walked away from His protective covering. The action of the curses is to bring us back into line so that we will walk in obedience to Torah and once again walk along the path of righteousness and truth.

As we approach Shavuot/Pentecost let us audit our lives and seek YHVH. Let us ask Him to reveal through His Holy Spirit areas in our lives we need to change. Let us seek to be the people God desires and calls us to be. However, let us also not negate the commission given to us and the calling on our lives. For the days we are living in are getting darker and darker and thus we need to ensure that we have and are making Yah our habitation.

May YHVH bless and keep you

Shabbat Shalom

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