



“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶ and upon finding a single pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Mathew 13:45

Parshah 51: Nitzavim (Standing) Deuteronomy 29:9(10)–30:20

8th September 2108 – 28th Elul 5778

Shabbat Shalom Talmadim, and welcome to this week’s Parsha Pearl

Key Points

The unity of Israel

The future redemption

The practicality of Torah: it is obtainable

Freedom of choice: life and death.

9 (10) “Today you are standing, all of you, before Adonai your God — your heads, your tribes, your leaders and your officers — all the men of Isra’el, 10 (11) along with your little ones, your wives and your foreigners here with you in your camp, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water. 11 (12) The purpose is that you should enter into the covenant of Adonai your God and into his oath which Adonai your God is making with you today, (LY: ii) 12 (13) so that he can establish you today for himself as a people, and so that for you he will be God — as he said to you and as he swore to your ancestors, to Avraham, Yitz’chak and Ya’akov.

13 (14) “But I am not making this covenant and this oath only with you. 14 (15) Rather, I am making it both with him who is standing here with us today before Adonai our God and also with him who is not here with us today.

As we read this portion, we must realize that Moses is not speaking to the generation that began the exodus with him. He now speaks to a generation once removed. Many of this generation had not experienced the whole of the wilderness journey nor had they experienced the exile of their ancestors in Egypt. Their experience in time will be one where a new covenant is made and the teachings of the Torah, both spoken and written are given to them. To this group, a new heart will be placed in them. However, the LORD establishes an ordinance where they must never forget the trials and the mighty works of the LORD that brought their parents and grandparents out of slavery. They are to recount this 40-year journey through the institution of the feasts. In each one of them, they will remember the goodness and the severity of the LORD. The LORD will teach them that obeying His commandments will bring them His blessings and also the curse that comes by failing to observe them. Though slow to anger and rich in mercy and truth the LORD will nonetheless not suffer their disobedience or lack of respect toward Him or to each other.

As we look upon this new generation, we join with them in this part of their journey as they are about to enter the land because we are still on it. Through the word/Torah given to Moses, the people are commanded to come together in thanksgiving and to remain grateful for what the Lord has done. The keeping of faith with YHVH and maintaining the structure of

the Laws of society, including the judicial and priestly ones, will keep this new nation strong and provide the integrity that will make them stand out from all peoples of the earth. What they will learn is that YHVH will be their eternal covering even when they go astray. For even in these times YHVH will make it possible to restore them. They will learn the way of obedience through hardship, and they will be given a right or way of return through Teshuvah/repentance.

The prelude to this portion begins at ch29. The whole of Israel is summoned before Moses. We can surely argue that the multitude of the people could not all been addressed at the same time. How could this be possible at all? We can conclude that the people would have been aware of the event as they would have witnessed the movement of all the tribal elders toward their meeting with Moses. We can be sure that they all knew something of magnitude was taking place. Vs1-4 tells us that the people have witnessed all that the Lord has done. They have witnessed His mighty feats and marvels, and yet they are still unable to understand what they have seen and heard. It is clear that the ability to understand the work of the Lord can only come through the direct knowledge of Him gained by the relationship required by Him.

Almost two thousand years into the future the Messiah of Israel will show Himself as the word given to them when He manifests in the flesh. Even then many will not see that the kingdom of God has come among them. At that time He will dispense the grace that will allow those closest to Him in the beginning and those that will follow to see and hear the mysteries of the Kingdom.

Let us read: Matthew 13:10-17

10 Then the talmidim came and asked Yeshua, "Why are you speaking to them in parables?" 11 He answered, "Because it has been given to you to know the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but it has not been given to them. 12 For anyone who has something will be given more, so that he will have plenty; but from anyone who has nothing, even what he does have will be taken away. 13 Here is why I speak to them in parables: they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. 14 That is, in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Yesha'yahu which says,

'You will keep on hearing but never understand, and keep on seeing but never perceive,

15

because the heart of this people has become dull —

with their ears they barely hear,

and their eyes they have closed,

so as not to see with their eyes,

hear with their ears,

understand with their heart,

and do t'shuvah,

so that I could heal them.'

16 But you, how blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they

hear! 17 Yes indeed! I tell you that many a prophet and many a tzaddik longed to see the things you are seeing but did not see them, and to hear the things you are hearing but did not hear them.

We have come to understand that what transpired among the people of this first exodus was not given to them in isolation. This group was only the beginning of the generations to come. Each subsequent generation will have more understanding for it is impossible for one generation to hold the fullness of its power and wisdom. This passage also alludes to a point in time when there will be a complete restoration of Israel following their exilic progress among the nations throughout the ages. So how is it that future generations will have a greater understanding of Torah than this first one when they experienced the mighty acts of

God among them on a daily basis? Messiah will go on to teach that those who seek signs are a wicked generation and that believers must believe through faith. The reason is that faith is the substance or the state of presence we obtain when we are close and intimate with YHVH. Faith and love do not demand a sign. I know my wife for instance; she does not have to do things for me to prove she loves me. She does not have to provide that as her evidence for me. I know she does. I have complete trust and faith in her. Nonetheless, the struggles we all face in marriage prevail. These struggles reflect the relationship Israel has with God. So the reason future generations will obtain wisdom and insight into the mysteries of God is the drawing near to God through the revelation of Messiah. He chose among His follower's, disciples who would understand the mysteries of the kingdom. As we continue to draw back to God through the restorative process, we are in essence regaining our original spiritual form. Remember, the first man and woman YHVH created existed in this form, and the thread of scripture from Genesis to Revelation leads us back to it.

The Passage of 'Nitsavim' speaks to us of a moment before the final few breaths of Moses' life. The elders *stand* before Moses as he concludes his address to them. It is believed that this whole event took about five weeks. The opening address is directed to all the people, of every age and status. But let us look at this; **...all the men of Isra'el, 10 (11) along with your little ones, your wives and your foreigners here with you in your camp, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water.**

Why are these two occupations highlighted? The reference is drawn from Joshua 9: **The whole assembly grumbled against the leaders, 19 but all the leaders answered, "We have given them our oath by the Lord, the God of Israel, and we cannot touch them now. 20 This is what we will do to them: We will let them live, so that God's wrath will not fall on us for breaking the oath we swore to them." 21 They continued, "Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers in the service of the whole assembly." So the leaders' promise to them was kept. 22 Then Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said, "Why did you deceive us by saying, 'We live a long way from you,' while actually you live near us? 23 You are now under a curse: You will never be released from service as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God."**

The event spoken about in Joshua relates to us story of how the Gibeonites not wanting to go to war with the Israelites created a ruse that causes Joshua to make an oath with them. The ruse is one that will deter Joshua from attacking them because they are a distant people. Joshua finds out the subterfuge but is unable to go back on the oath. Consequently, in order to make peace with the tribal elders, he makes all the Gibeonites servants of Israel under an eternal curse. However, despite this, they are drawn under the covenantal laws.

What we learn from the whole aspect of the covenant reiterated by Moses and charged to the people is that everyone is important to the community as a whole, even the foreigner, and the wood cutter, and the drawers of water. Everyone becomes a guarantor for the other. Observance of the rules of law and faith is how the community must exist to survive. Observance of the rules maintains the community's integrity and strength.

Chapter 30 reflects the occurring theme throughout Deuteronomy to walk in obedience to YHVH lest the curse comes among us. It also reminds us that despite our failures there is always a way back to God. That way back is reflected in the physical return to the land and the spiritual way of repentance.

30:1 "When the time arrives that all these things have come upon you, both the blessing and the curse which I have presented to you; and you are there among the nations to

which Adonai your God has driven you; then, at last, you will start thinking about what has happened to you; 2 and you will return to Adonai your God and pay attention to what he has said, which will be exactly what I am ordering you to do today — you and your children, with all your heart and all your being. 3 At that point, Adonai your God will reverse your exile and show you mercy; he will return and gather you from all the peoples to which Adonai your God scattered you. 4 If one of yours was scattered to the far end of the sky, Adonai your God will gather you even from there; he will go there and get you. 5 Adonai your God will bring you back into the land your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you prosper there, and you will become even more numerous than your ancestors. 6 Then Adonai your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your children, so that you will love Adonai your God with all your heart and all your being, and thus you will live.

Here, the LORD confirms his promise of restoration and regathering which the prophets will reiterate during the years dividing the two kingdoms of Israel. A time will ultimately come when this event will be fulfilled; not only the regathering and unity of the people but the reinstatement of the Torah.

I would ask you to consider this passage in the Mishnah below, in light of what is transpiring now in Israel and among the Jewish people and believers worldwide. It speaks of the messianic era;

The Melech HaMoshiach (“anointed king”) is destined to arise and restore the kingdom of David to its glory of old, to its original sovereignty. He will build the Holy Temple and gather the dispersed of Israel. **In his times, all laws (of the Torah) will be reinstated as before; the sacrifices will be offered, the Sabbatical year and the Jubilee year instituted, as outlined in the Torah.**

Whoever does not believe in him, or does not anticipate his coming, denies not only the other prophets, but also the Torah and Moses. For the Torah testifies about him: “G-d shall return your captivity and have compassion upon you, and He will return and gather you from all the nations amongst whom the L-rd your G-d has scattered you. If your outcasts shall be at the ends of the heavens, from there will the L-rd your G-d gather you, from there He will take you. . . . G-d will bring you . . .” These explicit words of the Torah encapsulate all that has been said [regarding Moshiach] by the prophets.

Judaism, clearly understands the age to come and many rabbi’s today are talking about the Messiah, including Yeshua in the discourse. There seems to be an openness to discussing the attributes of Yeshua even though there is still no recognition of Him. Dialogue, in fact, is being made between the Christian and the Jewish world and foundations are being birthed to push forward this dialogue as we read. On top of all this amidst all the conflict that is gaining energy in the middle east, the push to build the temple continues. This will see a sudden surge of Jews returning to the land. Maybe you can think further about what the building of the temple will mean on a global scale.

Chapter 30 draws us to the point of practicality, choice, and decision. Applying all the laws and observances is attainable. God made a peculiar people and gave them His spirit so that they can live by these laws. It is only by that spirit; because the spirit of YHVH desires to please Him. The proof of the impartation of the law which reflects the spirit of YHVH is among us. It shows itself through its indwelling in our hearts and heard from the utterances of our mouths. To all of Israel, past, and future, the blessings and curses are embedded into the minds and hearts of the people’ the command of the ‘Shema’ is highlighted and the promise of a renewed time is made available through repentance. Repentance is a move of the Ruach directing us to return to the Lord with all our heart and soul, and it is made through choice. However, Exodus 23:21 implores us to pay attention to what the angel that

the Lord sends before us. 'Choose today, life or death, blessing or curses' the Lord says. **This is the pearl from this study.**

The choice for us as human beings is made in several ways. We have everyday choices to make, from what we eat or wear. We can make choices over things that really have no importance. In other words, things that don't really make a difference; one or the other will do. We make choices by following others and what our peer groups force upon us. We can also make choices that come from a deeper place. That type of choice helps us to choose our friends and relationships and what we believe. We choose others who have commonalities. Those choices come from who we are; our culture - matters of right and wrong, truth and lies - fundamental choices that change our moment in time and effect more than ourselves.

These are the choices that make us the people of YHVH: a people living under a separate set of rules, carved in stone, forged in the fires of time, beaten and shaped upon the anvil of the blacksmith and the blood of millions of our family, past, present, and future. These things are what makes us peculiar. We live in a time such as this because the prayers and the desires of God for us have found a way into our very DNA. Of all the different strands in the thread of that chain, we are connected to the line of the first and second Adam. Finally, we are promised the land sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I believe through the eye of faith; they truly did see the land of milk and honey. I believe, Moses saw it too. In reality, the land has still to be realised and we need to step into it. Future generations will see that day. The messianic era will come, and Yeshua our Torah will once again walk with us in the cool of the evening.

Finally, we come to chapter 31 the second portion 'Va-yelekh which means 'He went'. Parashah 52: Vayelekh (He went) 31:1–30

31 Moshe went and spoke the following words to all Isra'el: 2 "I am 120 years old today. I can't get around any longer; moreover, Adonai has said to me, 'You will not cross this Yarden.' 3 Adonai your God — he will cross over ahead of you. He will destroy these nations ahead of you, and you will dispossess them. Y'hoshua — he will cross over ahead of you, as Adonai has said. (LY: ii) 4 Adonai will do to them what he did to Sichon and 'Og, the kings of the Emori, and to their land — he destroyed them. 5 Adonai will defeat them ahead of you, and you are to do to them just as I have ordered you to do. 6 Be strong, be bold, don't be afraid or frightened of them, for Adonai your God is going with you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you."

(RY: v, LY: iii) 7 Next Moshe summoned Y'hoshua and, in the sight of all Isra'el, said to him, "Be strong, be bold, for you are going with this people into the land Adonai swore to their ancestors he would give them. You will be the one causing them to inherit it. 8 But Adonai — it is he who will go ahead of you. He will be with you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you, so don't be afraid or downhearted."

9 Then Moshe wrote down this Torah and gave it to the cohanim, the descendants of Levi who carried the ark with the covenant of Adonai, and to all the leaders of Isra'el. (LY: iv)

10 Moshe gave them these orders: "At the end of every seven years, during the festival of Sukkot in the year of sh'mittah, 11 when all Isra'el have come to appear in the presence of Adonai at the place he will choose, you are to read this Torah before all Isra'el, so that they can hear it. 12 Assemble the people — the men, the women, the little ones and the foreigners you have in your towns — so that they can hear, learn, fear Adonai your God and take care to obey all the words of this Torah; 13 and so that their children, who have not known, can hear and learn to fear Adonai your God, for as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Yarden to possess."

We must realise that the people needed to believe in Joshua and the call and vision upon his life to lead them. They also had to respect that Moses, called by God to lead them thus far

had by God's command chosen Joshua for the task. As long as they and he remained faithful, strong and courageous, the land will be theirs and their enemies shall be overcome. Friends, the time is coming when all that we have learned this year through the Torah studies will have to be put into practice. Look back for a moment and see if you have been changed. Are you stronger, wiser, challenged, Obedient? Or still trying to argue? We have been called to be a people of the 'Way' - strong, courageous, obedient and faithful. We are of the culture of God not of this world.

What the Lord has before us can only be held in our hands if we live this way and are true to our identity. We are marked, our passport stamped, and we have been given authority to move into our rightful place. But still, that choice must be made. And having learned all that we have, we still must put it into practice. We still have to put the axe to wood, the plough to the earth. But lest any doubt at all comes in, let us take it captive to the knowledge of God and let us remind ourselves that each of us is part of His work. He knew us all before we were born and all that transpires in heaven and earth is for His sake. The mystery though not completely understood still shows that in Him all things are possible for those who believe. Simply bearing His name is the qualification to do great things. Just look at this passage:

Romans 9:6....For not everyone from Isra'el is truly part of Isra'el; 7 indeed, not all the descendants are seed of Avraham; rather, "What is to be called your 'seed' will be in Yitz'chak." 8 In other words, it is not the physical children who are children of God, but the children the promise refers to who are considered seed. 9 For this is what the promise said: "At the time set, I will come; and Sarah will have a son."10 And even more to the point is the case of Rivkah; for both her children were conceived in a single act with Yitz'chak, our father; 11 and before they were born, before they had done anything at all, either good or bad (so that God's plan might remain a matter of his sovereign choice, not dependent on what they did, but on God, who does the calling),

How many times must we be reminded of the endless possibilities we have when YHVH is on our side. The work of God cannot fail. It is us who fails it because we have doubt. In that, God will find no pleasure. Friends, dig in now, prepare and keep preparing. Check and double check. To move on we have to plan, prepare and procure every resource for the journey ahead. Walking Torah, prepares us for every eventuality. You will not stumble or fall and through every trial you will bear up. Beloved brother and sister listen to what the Lord is saying to you; 'Make the right choice. Don't be dismayed by what is going on around you. You are stronger than you think. Your strength is of the Lord and not of yourself. I am not only God, I am your Father and you are my child. I will love, and care for you. I will discipline and protect. Have no fear. Have faith in me.

Finally, be encouraged;

Hebrews 13:5-8 Complete Jewish Bible (CJB)

5 Keep your lives free from the love of money; and be satisfied with what you have; for God himself has said, "I will never fail you or abandon you." [a] 6 Therefore, we say with confidence,

"Adonai is my helper; I will not be afraid — what can a human being do to me?" [b]

7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke God's message to you. Reflect on the results of their way of life, and imitate their trust — 8 Yeshua the Messiah is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Shalom



Numbers 6:22 Adonai said to Moshe, 23 “Speak to Aharon and his sons, and tell them that this is how you are to bless the people of Isra’el: you are to say to them,

24 ‘Y’varekh’kha Adonai v’yishmerekha.

[May Adonai bless you and keep you.]

25 Ya’er Adonai panav eleikha vichunekka.

[May Adonai make his face shine on you and show you his favour.]

26 Yissa Adonai panav eleikha v’yasem l’kha shalom

[May Adonai lift up his face toward you and give you peace.]

Until next time.

Shabbat Shalom

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Haftarah Nitzavim: Yesha’yahu (Isaiah) 61:10–63:9

B’rit Hadashah: Romans 9:30–10:13; Messianic Jews (Hebrews) 12:14 –15

Reference

Midrash: In Judaism, the **Midrash** is the genre of rabbinic literature which contains early interpretations and commentaries on the Written Torah and Oral Torah (spoken law and sermons), as well as non-legalistic rabbinic literature (*Aggadah*) and occasionally the Jewish religious laws (*halakha*), which usually form a running commentary on specific passages in the Hebrew Scripture (*Tanakh*)

Targum: **Targum Onkelos** (or **Onqelos**), is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum (Aramaic translation) to the Torah. However, its early origins may have been western, in Israel. Its authorship is attributed to Onkelos, a famous convert to Judaism in Tannaic times (c. 35–120 CE)

Targum Jonathan: **Targum Jonathan**), otherwise referred to as **Targum Yonasan/Yonatan**, is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum to the Nevi'im/Prophets. Its early origins, however, are western (i.e. from the Land of Israel), and the Talmudic tradition attributes its authorship to Jonathan ben Uzziel of Jerusalem in the time of King Herod

Tannaim: Tannaim were the Rabbinic sages whose views are recorded in the Mishnah, from approximately 10-220 CE. The period of the Tannaim, also referred to as the Mishnaic period, lasted about 210 years.

Talmud: The **Talmud** means "instruction, learning", "teach, study") is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. The term "Talmud" normally refers to the collection of writings named specifically the **Babylonian Talmud** (*Talmud Bavli*), although there is also an earlier collection known as the Jerusalem Talmud (*Talmud Yerushalmi*) or Palestinian

The Talmud has two components:

1. The Mishnah (c. 200 CE), the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law;
2. The Gemara (c. 500 CE), an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible

Jubilees: The Book of Jubilees claims to present "the history of the division of the days of the Law, of the events of the years, the year-weeks, and the jubilees of the world" as revealed to Moses (in addition to the Torah or "Instruction") by angels while he was on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights. The chronology given in Jubilees is based on multiples of seven; the jubilees are periods of 49 years, seven "year-weeks", into which all of time has been divided

Vulgate: This is the Latin Bible. Translated from the Hebrew and Aramaic by Jerome between 382 and 405 CE, this text became known as the 'versio vulgata', which means 'common translation'.

