

Triennial Parasha Reading for VeZot HaBracha Mar 6th 2010

VeZot HaBracha - This is the blessing

Torah - Deu 33	1
Haftorah - Jos 1	2
Brit - Mat 19:25-20:16	3
Gospel - Act 27	4
Prophecy - Rev 21	5
History - Neh 12 & 13	5
Commentary.....	8
Ahavta	8
Waters in the Wilderness	11

Tab	Section	Verses
1	Torah	Deu 33
2	Haftorah	Jos 1
3	Brit	Mat 19:25-20:16
4	Gospel	Act 27
5	Prophecy	Rev 21
6	History	Neh 12 & 13

Torah - Deu 33

Moses Gives Israel and Each Tribe a Patriarchal Blessing

¹ And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of Elohim blessed the children of Israel before his death. ² And he said, YHVH came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. ³ Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. ⁴ Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. ⁵ And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.

⁶ Let **Reuben** live, and not die; and let not his men be few.

⁷ And this is the blessing of **Judah**: and he said, Hear, YHVH, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies.

⁸ And of **Levi** he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah; ⁹ Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant. ¹⁰ They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar. ¹¹ Bless, YHVH, his substance, and accept the work of his hands; smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

¹² And of **Benjamin** he said, The beloved of YHVH shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

- ¹³ And of **Joseph** he said, Blessed of YHVH be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, ¹⁴ And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, ¹⁵ And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, ¹⁶ And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.
- ¹⁷ His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of **Ephraim**, and they are the thousands of **Manasseh**.
- ¹⁸ And of **Zebulun** he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and, Issachar, in thy tents. ¹⁹ They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.
- ²⁰ And of **Gad** he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. ²¹ And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of YHVH, and his judgments with Israel.
- ²² And of **Dan** he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan.
- ²³ And of **Naphtali** he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and full with the blessing of YHVH: possess thou the west and the south.
- ²⁴ And of **Asher** he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. ²⁵ Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

Moses Gives a Final Blessing to All Israel

²⁶ There is none like unto the Elohim of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. ²⁷ The eternal Elohim is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. ²⁸ Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. ²⁹ Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by YHVH, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

Haftorah - Jos 1

¹ Now after the death of Moses the servant of YHVH it came to pass, that YHVH spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, ² Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. ³ Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. ⁵ There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. ⁶ Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. ⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. ⁹ Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for YHVH thy Elohim is with thee whithersoever thou goest. ¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ Pass through the

host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which YHVH your Elohim giveth you to possess it. ¹² And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, ¹³ Remember the word which Moses the servant of YHVH commanded you, saying, YHVH your Elohim hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. ¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valor, and help them; ¹⁵ Until YHVH have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which YHVH your Elohim giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses YHVH's servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising. ¹⁶ And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. ¹⁷ According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only YHVH thy Elohim be with thee, as he was with Moses. ¹⁸ Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.

Brit - Mat 19:25-20:16

²⁵ When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? ²⁶ But Y'shua beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with Elohim all things are possible. ²⁷ Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? ²⁸ And Y'shua said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. ³⁰ But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first. ¹ For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. ² And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. ⁵ Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? ⁷ They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. ⁸ So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. ⁹ And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. ¹⁰ But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. ¹¹ And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, ¹² Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. ¹³ But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? ¹⁴ Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. ¹⁵ Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? ¹⁶ So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Gospel - Act 27

¹ And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band. ² And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. ³ And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself. ⁴ And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. ⁵ And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. ⁶ And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein. ⁷ And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone; ⁸ And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea. ⁹ Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, ¹⁰ And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. ¹¹ Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. ¹² And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west. ¹³ And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete. ¹⁴ But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. ¹⁵ And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive. ¹⁶ And running under a certain island which is called Claudia, we had much work to come by the boat: ¹⁷ Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven. ¹⁸ And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship; ¹⁹ And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. ²⁰ And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. ²¹ But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. ²² And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. ²³ For there stood by me this night the angel of Elohim, whose I am, and whom I serve, ²⁴ Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, Elohim hath given thee all them that sail with thee. ²⁵ Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe Elohim, that it shall be even as it was told me. ²⁶ Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island. ²⁷ But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; ²⁸ And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms. ²⁹ Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. ³⁰ And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, ³¹ Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. ³² Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off. ³³ And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. ³⁴ Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. ³⁵ And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to Elohim in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat. ³⁶ Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat. ³⁷ And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls. ³⁸ And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea. ³⁹ And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship. ⁴⁰ And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore. ⁴¹ And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with

the violence of the waves. ⁴² And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. ⁴³ But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: ⁴⁴ And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

Prophecy - Rev 21

¹ And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. ² And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from Elohim out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of Elohim is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and Elohim himself shall be with them, and be their Elohim. ⁴ And Elohim shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. ⁵ And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. ⁶ And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. ⁷ He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his Elohim, and he shall be my son. ⁸ But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. ⁹ And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from Elohim, ¹¹ Having the glory of Elohim: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; ¹² And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³ On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. ¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. ¹⁶ And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. ¹⁷ And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. ¹⁸ And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. ¹⁹ And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; ²⁰ The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. ²¹ And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. ²² And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord Elohim Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. ²³ And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of Elohim did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. ²⁴ And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. ²⁵ And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. ²⁶ And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. ²⁷ And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

History - Neh 12 & 13

¹ Now these are the priests and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, ² Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, ³ Shechaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, ⁴ Iddo, Ginnetho, Abijah, ⁵ Miamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, ⁶ Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah, ⁷ Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These

were the chief of the priests and of their brethren in the days of Jeshua. ⁸ Moreover the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, which was over the thanksgiving, he and his brethren. ⁹ Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, were over against them in the watches. ¹⁰ And Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada, ¹¹ And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua. ¹² And in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; ¹³ Of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; ¹⁴ Of Melicu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; ¹⁵ Of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; ¹⁶ Of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; ¹⁷ Of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai: ¹⁸ Of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; ¹⁹ And of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; ²⁰ Of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; ²¹ Of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethaneel. ²² The Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were recorded chief of the fathers: also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian. ²³ The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, were written in the book of the chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib. ²⁴ And the chief of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of Elohim, ward over against ward. ²⁵ Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were porters keeping the ward at the thresholds of the gates. ²⁶ These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe. ²⁷ And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps. ²⁸ And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi; ²⁹ Also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem. ³⁰ And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall. ³¹ Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks, whereof one went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dung gate: ³² And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah, ³³ And Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam, ³⁴ Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah, ³⁵ And certain of the priests' sons with trumpets; namely, Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph: ³⁶ And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of Elohim, and Ezra the scribe before them. ³⁷ And at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward. ³⁸ And the other company of them that gave thanks went over against them, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the tower of the furnaces even unto the broad wall; ³⁹ And from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in the prison gate. ⁴⁰ So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of Elohim, and I, and the half of the rulers with me: ⁴¹ And the priests; Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; ⁴² And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang loud, with Jezrahiah their overseer. ⁴³ Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for Elohim had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off. ⁴⁴ And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited. ⁴⁵ And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their Elohim, and the ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son. ⁴⁶ For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto Elohim. ⁴⁷ And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites; and the Levites sanctified them unto the children of Aaron.

^{13:1} On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of Elohim for ever; ² Because they

met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our Elohim turned the curse into a blessing.³ Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.⁴ And before this, Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our Elohim, was allied unto Tobiah:⁵ And he had prepared for him a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests.⁶ But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king, and after certain days obtained I leave of the king:⁷ And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of Elohim.⁸ And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff to Tobiah out of the chamber.⁹ Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of Elohim, with the meat offering and the frankincense.¹⁰ And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field.¹¹ Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of Elohim forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place.¹² Then brought all Judah the tithes of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries.¹³ And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren.¹⁴ Remember me, O my Elohim, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my Elohim, and for the offices thereof.¹⁵ In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.¹⁶ There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.¹⁷ Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?¹⁸ Did not your fathers thus, and did not our Elohim bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.¹⁹ And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.²⁰ So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.²¹ Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.²² And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my Elohim, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.²³ In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab:²⁴ And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.²⁵ And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by Elohim, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.²⁶ Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his Elohim, and Elohim made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.²⁷ Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our Elohim in marrying strange wives?²⁸ And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son in law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from me.²⁹ Remember them, O my Elohim, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.³⁰ Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;³¹ And for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my Elohim, for good.

Commentary

Ahavta

<http://www.ahavta.org/Commentary%20Y-3/Y3-50.htm>

Commentary - Year 3 Sabbath 50

Deuteronomy 33:1-29 - (no Prophet) - Psalm 147 - Matthew 19:25 - 20:16

Adar 20, 5764 / March 13, 2004, Adar 20, 5767 / March 10, 2007

VeZot haB'rachah / This is the Blessing

Jacob blessed the tribes at the beginning of their existence. Now Moses is blessing them at the beginning of their life in the Promised Land. It is important to note: each tribe is blessed according to its national responsibilities. This theme will be basic throughout this study.

(V.1) Moses is called "*the man of God*": these blessings were prophetic, from God. Moses had just told the people that he was about to die, because of his sin at Meribah. Though his sin had been a result of their provocation, yet Moses now blesses them wholeheartedly.

(V.2) "*Having dawned on them from Seir*" – Abram rescued Lot from Seir; and "*having shone forth from Mount Paran*" – he dwelt in Paran, "*Yahweh came from Sinai . . . and at His right hand there was flashing lightning for them*" – the giving of the Torah with a celestial display.

(V.3-4) Yahweh loved His people: all the holy ones, who are in His Hand, and follow Him – they receive His Words, which were given to the *qahal* / congregation of Israel.

This is one of the places where we see the word *qahal* in the Torah. This word is translated into English as congregation or assembly. It is translated into Greek as *sunagoge* and *ekklesia*; from thence it is translated into English as synagogue or church (among other words).

God's Word was given to His church at Pentecost – 3300 years ago at Mt. Sinai. (In about 2½ months, at *Hag Shavuot* / the Feast of Pentecost, we will study this in detail.) When Yeshua said that He would build-up His church (Matthew 16:18), it had been in existence for more than 1300 years!

The Torah was the heritage of His church – Yahweh's Word for them to preserve for all generations.

(V.6) **Reuben** was the first to receive his portion of the Land, and so was blessed first. (This is the order by which the blessings were given.) Reuben had been chastised for violating the bed of Bilhad (Genesis 35:22), and would be the first tribe to be exiled (Deuteronomy 29:27, Leviticus 26:38). Reuben was told that he would be granted to live (in this world) and not die (in the world to come).

(V.7) **Judah** would produce the Davidic royal line, and lead Israel in wars. He was slated for victory in war, and his prayers to be answered by Yahweh in whom he trusted.

Simeon was omitted, perhaps because their violence in the affair of Shechem (Genesis 49:5), and because of their idolatry committed at Baal of Peor (Numbers 25:3); or perhaps because Simeon did not have a contiguous territory of its own, but was scattered throughout Israel, and would thus share in the blessings of the others.

(V.8-11) **Levi** was praised for loyalty and bravery, and blessed as teachers and servants at the altar.

The Urim and Tummim were placed upon a Levite – Aaron, the “*devout one*”. Though the Levites were aggressive in the violent affair of Shechem, they used that trait in the Wilderness to avoid the pitfalls that befell the other tribes: They did not complain with the others in the Wilderness (Exodus 17:1, Numbers 14:22) Without regard for family ties, they slew those who worshipped the golden calf (Exodus 32:27). Levites were slated for prosperity, in order to be free for ministering.

(V.12) **Benjamin** was the only one of the twelve born in the Holy Land. The Holy Temple was located in Benjamin’s portion of Jerusalem. The Divine Presence rested there.

(V.13-17) **Joseph** received a double blessing, through his sons Ephraim and Manasseh. “Blessed by Yahweh is his land”: Joseph’s territory was the most fertile. “The moon’s yield” may refer to crops that produce month-by-month, or crops that grow by night, such as cucumber and melon. “The horns of the wild ox” could refer unfortunately to the evil kings of the ten northern tribes, which sprang from Joseph.

(V.18-19) **Zebulun** and **Issachar** had a partnership. Zebulun would be engaged in maritime work (their banner is a sail boat), which would support Issachar’s work in Torah study, teaching, and spiritual helps. Among Issachar’s descendants were 200 heads of sanhedrins, whose halachic rulings determined when everyone would assemble at the Temple Mount for Yahweh’s appointed times (referring to Rosh Hodesh sanctification). Zebulun gathered, from the sand of the sea, *chilazon* / sea snails from which a strand of the *tzitzit* / tassel of the prayer shawl must be dyed blue (Numbers 15:38).

(V.20-21) **Gad** received the largest territory: Yahweh was blessed as “*the One Who broadens Gad’s territory.*” Since they had to defend the eastern flank of Israel, they were given strength like a lion. Moses’s burial place, “*the lawgiver’s plot*”, was in their territory.

(V.22) **Dan** was to dwell at the western flank, on the Mediterranean Sea; a lion cub’s strength was needed for defense there. Samson was a Danite.

(V.23) **Naphtali** received a rich territory, including the Sea of Kinneret / Galilee.

(V.24) **Asher** was a large tribe, blessed with children. Asher supplied the other tribes with its abundant oil.

(Psalm 147:4) Yahweh “*counts the number of the stars; He gives names to all of them.*” [The tribes are the stars of Joseph’s dream (Genesis 37:9).] The remainder of today’s Psalm relates to the blessings of today’s Torah portion, such as praising Yahweh for prosperity and strength against enemies.

(Deut. 33:25-26) **All Israel** is fortunate, because Yahweh delivered them from sin! Here we need to remember that “*they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel*” (Romans 9), but we who believe are grafted into the remnant.

(Matthew 19) After hearing Yeshua’s teaching, the disciples “*were very astonished and said, ‘Then who can be saved?’ And looking upon them Yeshua said to them, ‘With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’ Then Peter answered and said to Him, ‘Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?’ And*

Yeshua said to them, 'Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life.' ”

Blessings:

While our blessings do not rise to the prophetic nature of Jacob's or Moses', there is much commonality.

Some say that the greater always blesses the lesser; therefore, we cannot bless God. However, God created us in order for us to be a blessing to Him. When we are walking with Him, using His provision not for our selfish reasons but for His work, then both we and these provisions are blessing Him.

Tefillah / prayer means connecting with God. Prayer is the communion whereby we walk with God. It is a way we bless our creator, and a way to stay mindful of our position before Him. “My House shall be called a house of prayer for all people” (Isaiah 56:7, Matthew 21:12).

When we begin a meal by blessing God with “*Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine,*” and “. . . *who brings forth bread from the earth,*” we are recognizing our creator who has given us His covenant (the fruit of the vine being the blood of the covenant), and our redeemer who is the bread of life that was brought forth from the earth (resurrected) to guarantee our resurrection. And all of this is given us for His glory – to bless Him.

Consider Adam (man): He was created at the end of day six. (He was the last of God's creation on day six – (Genesis 1:24-31). He was made upright (Job 1:8, Psalm 19:13) to walk with God. He glowed with the Glory of God – in Eden the attire is robes of light. He was given divine license to rule the world (Genesis 1:26). His first full day on earth was the Sabbath Day, the day set aside to worship the creator.

God created vegetation on day three (Genesis 1:11-13), but it remained dormant and undeveloped, not sprouting until the end of day six, when Adam came on the scene.

“Now no tree of the field was yet on the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth and there was no man to work the soil” (Genesis 2:5).

So the sages teach that the world began with prayer. Until God and Adam communicated there was no fulfillment of Adam's needs for survival and glorifying God.

God sanctified the Sabbath (set it apart from the other days, Genesis 2:3), and commanded man to sanctify the Sabbath (set it apart to God, Deuteronomy 5:12). One way that we sanctify the Sabbath is by candle lightings (Erev Shabbat and Havdallah); one way that we are to sanctify all things that we use is by prayer.

When Adam placed another before God, he lost his glow. He covered himself with leaves to hide from God by looking like a tree that naturally did not glow. He was exiled from the Garden of Eden.

We look forward to ruling the world with Messiah Yeshua (1 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 5:10, 20:16, 22:5), when we shall glow with God's glory (Matthew 17:2, Revelation 3:4-5). We are promised Paradise -- the Garden of Eden, on a renewed earth.

[The Hebrew Gan Edan is translated in the Greek Septuagint as Paradiso (Genesis 2:5): in English Gan Edan is translated as Garden of Eden, and Paradiso as Paradise. Paradise in Luke 23:43 & Revelation 2:7 refers to the Septuagint translation of Garden of Eden.]

But we must first be sanctified by God, and everything that we use for survival and glorifying God should be sanctified by the Word of God and by prayer (1 Timothy 4:5). Because “*The earth and its fullness belong to Yahweh*” (Psalm 24:1), one who derives pleasure from this world without the appropriate blessing is as if he derived illegal pleasure from a sacred object (one which belongs to the Temple).

Man can only rule if he acknowledges that he rules only by the grace of God. By being oblivious of God, man becomes a treacherous usurper of the throne; by surrendering and being grateful to God, he legitimizes his license to control.

Yeshua, as our example, ruled by surrender to the Father. Before eating bread, He blessed Yahweh – the bringer-forth of bread from the earth (Matthew 14:19 – He did not “bless the bread”, as some translations say).

Now, if we reconsider the twelve blessings: they were provisions to bless Yahweh; but if they were misused, they would bring upon the people the curses of previous chapters.

Waters in the Wilderness

http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/parshiot.html#parasha_dvarim