

KI TAVOH {כִּי-תָבוֹא} (When you come)

A Messianic Jewish Commentary

By Hannah Neshet www.voiceforisrael.net

Deuteronomy 26:1 – 29:9 (8), Isaiah 60:1-22, Luke 21:1-4

“And it shall be *when you have come* into the land...” (Deuteronomy 26:1)

It must have been such a relief for the children of Israel to hear that their prolonged, forty year journey through the terrible wilderness would finally be coming to an end. They were about to cross over into the Promised Land. Halleluyah!

Crossing Over

The word for a ‘Hebrew’ – ‘Ivri’ עִבְרִי - comes from the root word ‘IVR’ עִבְרִי which means ‘to cross over’. In a spiritual sense, anyone who has crossed over into the Kingdom of God is an ‘ivri’. Paul said that a true Jew is not determined by outward signs such as circumcision in the flesh, but to cross over into the Kingdom requires a change of heart.

“But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.” (Romans 2:29)

The wilderness was so terrible that future rabbinic texts consider any physical or spiritual desert as an enemy to be overcome. Our challenge is to take the barren, wilderness areas of our life and see them transformed into a beautiful Garden of Eden.

The prophet Isaiah spoke about the future glory of Israel when God would transform her deserts and wastelands into blossoming gardens filled with joyful melodious singing. That day has come!

“The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing.” (Isaiah 35:1 &2a)



Flowers in Israel

“The LORD will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; He will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.” (Isaiah 51:3)



Spring flowers at the old city of Caesarea www.goisrael.com

The Warning Chapter

This parashah opens with a promise of rewards if the Jewish people obeyed God. Some of these rewards included: blessings on their families, children, prosperity, and Divine protection. However, if they did not obey God, then the Word of God lists 98 chilling admonitions that take up half of the entire parashah. These included: diseases and plagues, defeat by enemies, poverty, famine and slavery.

For this reason, Ki Tavoh has been called the ‘*warning chapter*’; and the Torah reader, who traditionally chants the Torah portion according to a sing song pattern, instead rushes through the recital of dreaded curses in a hushed, fearful tone.

Some who worship the God of Israel and follow the Messiah, Yeshua, believe that it is our lot in life to suffer along with the rest of the world from these curses; however the Word of God tells us differently. Yeshua has taken the curses upon Himself when he died on the cross.

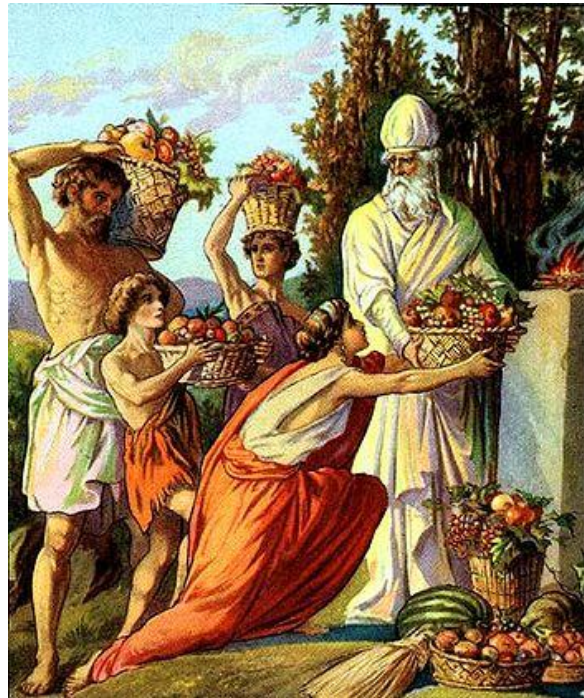
“Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Torah by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” (Galatians 3:13)

This does not mean, however, that we may live in any manner we choose and then expect God’s blessings. As covenant children of God we are to enjoy His blessings upon our lives as we are walking in holiness through obedience to His commandments.

A perfect example of this is in our finances. God asks us for the first-fruits of all our increase. He promises to open the windows of heaven and to pour out a blessing when we give to God our full tithe as well as giving generously to the poor and needy.

The very first act that God instructed Israel to perform when they finally came into the Land He had given them for an inheritance was to **give back to God an offering**. Once they had possessed the Land and settled there, they were commanded to put the first of all the fruit into a basket and present it to the priest.

“....take some of the first-fruits (בכורים, *bikkurim*) of all that you produce from the soil of the land the LORD your God is giving you and put them in a basket. Then go to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for His Name...” (Deuteronomy 26:2)



Offering of the First Fruits (בכורים, *bikkurim*) (illustration from a Bible card published between 1896 and 1913 by the Providence Lithograph Company)

In giving this ‘**first-fruits offering**’ (בכורים, *bikkurim*), which included wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates, the Israelites were offering their thanksgiving to God for all the amazing things He had done for them.

God had rescued them from bitter oppression in Egypt, from wandering in the wilderness; and had brought them into a good land to become a great nation, dwelling in comfort, safety and security in a rich and fertile land.



Fruit Basket (painting by Balthasar van der Ast)

“The Lord heard our voice, and saw our affliction, and our toil and our oppression, and the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt **with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm...and with signs and with wonders...**” (Deuteronomy 26:7-8)

Their offerings were not given in silence, but with an audible confession of the awesome mercy and goodness of God! When we present our tithes and offerings to the Lord, we may also confess to one another the many ways we have seen the goodness and mercy of God in the land of the living.

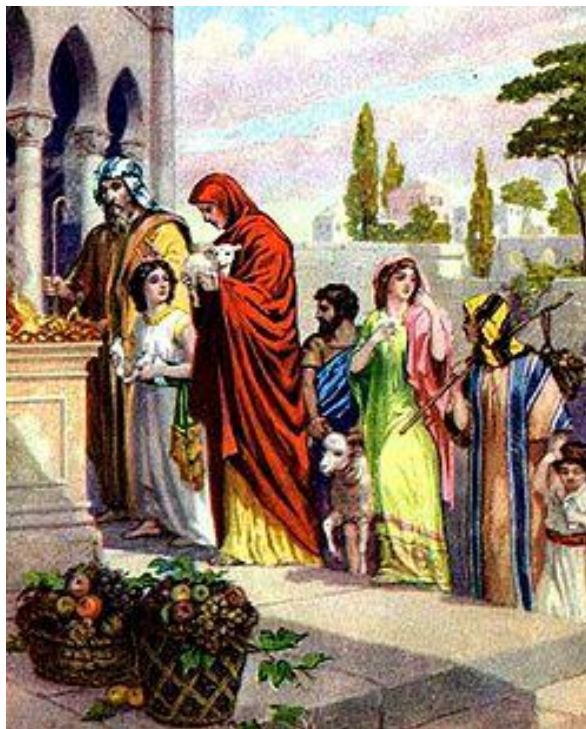
We may not know where we are going, but if the Lord is taking us somewhere, it is going to be a **‘good land’**. Halleluyah! The people of Israel confessed the truth,

“And He has brought us into this place...**a land flowing with milk and honey...**” (Deuteronomy 26:9)

When God brings us out of a difficult place, delivering us from the horrible pit and setting our feet on the solid rock, we need to acknowledge Him, thank Him, and be willing to give back materially from His incredible bounty.

When we do this we demonstrate that we know He is our source of all blessings.

“And now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the land **which You, O Lord, have given me.**” (Deuteronomy 26:10)



Offerings of thanksgiving (illustration from a Bible card published between 1896 and 1913 by the Providence Lithograph Company)

REJOICE IN THE LORD!

As did Israel in ancient times, we can also recall when he has healed our bodies, delivered us from our enemies, and provided our needs in a miraculous way. Once we have given our offering, there is only one thing left to do – **REJOICE!**

“**And you shall rejoice in all the good which the Lord your God has given you...**” (Deuteronomy 26:11)

Too often, however, the enemy seeks to steal, kill and destroy our joy. Why? Because the joy of the Lord is our strength.¹ If we allow satan to steal our joy, we will not have the strength to possess the good land He has given us.

There are times when we just wake up weary and discouraged. It may seem that joy is nowhere to be found. Maybe we have pain in our body, or lack in our finances; our relationships in our family could be going through a rough patch. Pressures in life can push us down and the cares of the world can at times leave little room for enjoying life.

What, then, may we do to recover our joy? There is only one solution - come in (tavoh) to the presence of Adonai: **“You will show me the path of life: in your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand there are pleasures for ever more.”** (Psalm 16:11)

Yeshua came to give us joy in abundance: **“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”** (John 15:11, KJV)

When our joy is full, others should be able to see it on our faces by a ready smile and a radiant glow. When we are full of His supernatural joy it will overflow and bring joy to others! We can be used by God to brighten someone else’s day. We must not allow circumstances to dictate our level of joy. Paul, while in a prison cell, wrote the words, **“Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice!”** (Philippians 4:4)

As Believers in Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah, we have the privilege of rejoicing *continually* in our God, not just when circumstances seem to be going our way. Despite what may be going on around us, we can always rejoice that our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life for eternity! Halleluyah!

The Book of Life

Yeshua told his disciples not to rejoice that demons were subject to them, but to rejoice that their names were written in the Book of Life.² What is this special book?

The Book of Life is an ancient Biblical concept that Jewish people use as a greeting and prayer at the time of the upcoming Fall Feast that is customarily called ‘**Rosh Hashanah.**’ Jewish people traditionally send greeting cards to their friends and family with the words, **“May your names be written in the Book of Life.”**



Sefer Torah at old Glockengasse Synagoge, Cologne

¹ Nehemiah 8:10

² Luke 10:20

Moses knew that his name was written in the Book of Life but he was willing for God to blot out his name if it meant the salvation of the Israelites whom he was sent to deliver from Egypt. When Israel constructed a golden calf and worshipped it, God was about to destroy them completely; but Moses prayed,

“Oh, these people have sinned a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin-but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written’.” (Exodus 32:31-32).

What sacrificial, unfailing love Moses had for the people of Israel! Centuries later, Yeshua demonstrated such love for the lost sheep of the House of Israel that he gave his very life to redeem them from their sins. He said, *“The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep...”*³

The apostle Paul also followed in their footsteps, saying he felt the same way about his fellow countrymen: **“For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Messiah for the sake of my people, those of my own race, the people of Israel.”** (Romans 9:3-4).

Those who shepherd God's people are called to this life of sacrificial love! May each of us be willing to make the sacrifices necessary for precious souls to be saved.

Once the Temple was destroyed, it became impossible to offer up blood sacrifices for atonement of sins. Therefore today, most Jewish people *hope* that their names will be written in the Book of Life through good deeds, prayer, repentance and the giving of charity. But as Believers in Yeshua the Messiah, we can know with a certainty that our names are recorded in God's Book through faith in His perfect and final sacrifice.

“But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.” (Isaiah 53:5 NLT)

Faith without works, however, is dead (useless)⁴, but when we know God through Yeshua, then the Holy Spirit (Ruach Hakodesh) will naturally lead us into a holy life which includes doing good works. Our deeds do count for eternity, which is why we must not grow weary in doing good:

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” (Revelation 20:12)

God's Word clearly states that if our names are not written in the Book of Life then we are doomed to eternal condemnation. Most Jewish people are not aware that the Old Testament prophets speak of an afterlife.

³ John 10:11

⁴ James 2:17

“There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the Book—will be delivered. Many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.” (Daniel 12:1-2)

This parallels the New Testament where it is written:

"Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:14-15)

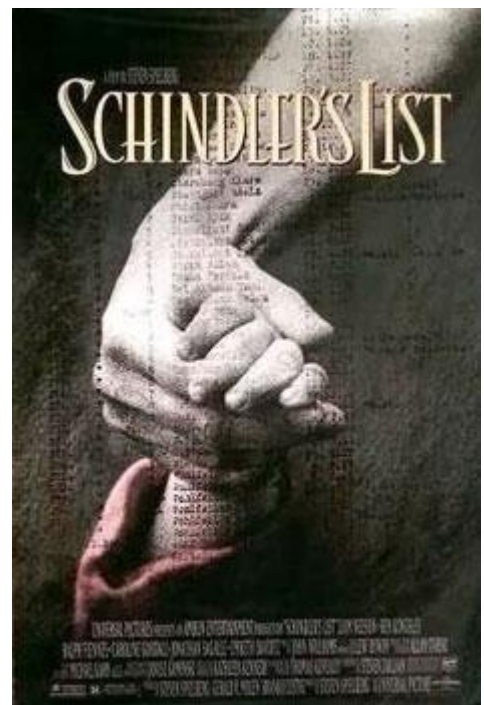
Obviously, whether or not our names are written in the Book of Life is a crucial issue!

Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Jerusalem, displays a simple list of names – 1,100 of them. Obviously typed on an old, manual typewriter, this seems at first glance to be an ordinary piece of paper.

But upon closer examination, one can see that this was no ordinary list – this was **Schindler's list**. During the Nazi occupation of Europe during WW II, for the Jewish laborers of the Plaszow work camp, being on the list meant the difference between life and death.

Being listed in the Book of Life is like this – whether or not someone's name is written on God's list or not means the difference between eternal life and eternal death – between heaven and hell. God gives us the free will to choose blessing or cursing, life or death.

Those whose names are written in this wonderful Book will have life for eternity and also the privilege of being part of the Bride of Messiah, the New Jerusalem.



"Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Revelation 21:2)

“But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.” (Revelation 21:27).

Let us pray fervently and continually for all those whose names are not yet written in the Book of Life that they may also rejoice in the Lord that their names are written in Heaven.

Clearing Out the Tithe

The next thing that the Israelites were commanded to do, was to make sure that they had cleared the whole tithe out of their possession, saying: **“I have put away the hallowed things out of my house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all Thy commandment.”** (Deuteronomy 26:13)

I don't know about you, but I have come to the point in my walk with the Lord where I have a holy 'fear' of holding onto my tithe too long. I just want to clear it out of my possession as soon as possible, because I have seen that if for some reason it stays too long with me, things start to go wrong.

The washing machine may break down, the car needs costly repairs, we get a nasty parking ticket or lose our wallet; perhaps business deals we were hoping for fall through, or a messy legal situation rears its ugly head....the negative possibilities are truly endless. We can lose so much more than what we owed God from our tithe.

But so are the amazing possibilities for God to shower us with blessings when we obey Him – to open the windows of Heaven and pour out such a blessing we can barely keep up! Halleluyah! As it is written,

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.” (Malachi 3:10)

God actually invites us to test Him on His Word. He promises that if we obey Him in giving our whole tithe, then He will rebuke the devourer for our sakes and bless the remainder of our finances.

“Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes,” says the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 3:11)

But the reverse holds true as well: if we fail to give to God the 'hallowed portion' of our income, then we are breaking covenant by 'robbing God'. Then the 'devourer' can be given free rein to work havoc and destruction our finances and we come under a curse.

It is by giving our tithe – removing it from our possession, that we can return to God and He will return to us.

“ ‘Return to Me, and I will return to you,’ says the LORD Almighty. But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’ ‘Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob Me.’ “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing You?’ ‘In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing Me.’ ” (Malachi 3:7b-9)

It is written in the Bible how grievous a sin it is when a child steals from his or her father or mother;⁵ therefore how much more wicked must be the sin of robbing from our Heavenly Father.

Sometimes if the Lord has blessed me, I can't even wait until I get to the kehilla (congregation), but I start to get nervous about keeping the tithe in my possession. I do give my tithe to the Messianic Congregation which we attend in Jerusalem, but there are times when I pray, *"Holy Spirit, show me who to give this tithe to. I just don't want to carry it around much longer. Lead and guide me to someone who needs it."*

God always answers this prayer in such a beautiful way – someone who has a desperate need may approach me or I may hear of someone in need and am able to help them, which fills me with joy! Truly it is even more blessed to give than to receive.

The giving of Tzedakah (charity) is considered such an important mitzvah (commandment) that if someone does not fulfill this law, their lineage actually comes under suspect.

Giving to the poor is an obligation in Judaism, a duty that cannot be forsaken even by those who are themselves in need. Some sages have said that tzedakah is the highest of all commandments, equal to all of them combined, and that a person who does not perform tzedakah is equivalent to an idol worshipper.

This principle is affirmed also in the New Testament, where if we don't give when we see a brother in material need, then it comes into doubt whether or not the love of God truly dwells within us.



Homeless man on streets of Jerusalem

"If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" (1 John 3:17)

The Lord promises that when we give to the poor and needy, the widows and orphans, He will pay us back for what we have given.

"Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed." (Proverbs 19:17)

⁵ Proverbs 28:24

A Special Treasure – Segulah

The Lord promises that Israel will be ‘His treasured people’ out of all the nations of the world - a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (mamlechet cohanim v’am kadosh) - if they obey Him and keep His covenant. A treasured possession is called in Hebrew a ‘segulah’.

“Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession (segulah) . Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” (Exodus 19:5,6)

In the New Testament, all followers of Yeshua Hamashiach (the Messiah) are called God’s specially chosen people: **“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”** (1 Peter 2:9) (NASB)

The Color of Royalty

Because of our covenant with the Almighty God through the blood of Yeshua, both Jews and Gentiles can know that we are God’s most treasured possession. In Hebrew, the word used is ‘segulah’ סגולה which means to be ‘a valued treasure’. This comes from the Hebrew word for the color purple which is ‘sagol’ סגול. Purple is the color of royalty!

As the Lord’s ‘segulah’, we are clothed in ‘sagol’ (royal purple) – we are children of the King and He is our Father. He values and treasures us. There is no need to look at externals or superficial qualifications. This is simply our identity in the Messiah!

We may look at ourselves and say, I don’t look much like a treasure; I’m too short or too tall, too fat or too thin, not pretty or smart enough to be a treasure. We might check in with our emotions and say, *“I don’t feel that I qualify to be called a treasure of God; I have so many faults and weaknesses – I lose my temper...I’m not disciplined enough...don’t witness enough...”* (or whatever we consider our weaknesses).

But as the apostle Paul says, we are to put no confidence in our attributes of the flesh.⁶ If anyone could have qualified as a treasure by the certificates on his wall and trophies on his desk it was the apostle Paul:

“Circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.” (Philippians 3:5-6)

Faultness – wow! How many of us could say that about ourselves? And yet Paul said, “But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Messiah. What is more, I consider

⁶ Philippians 3:3

everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Messiah Yeshua Adoni (my Lord), for whose sake I have lost all things.

I consider them garbage, that I may gain Messiah and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Messiah—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.” (Philippians 3:7-9)

Did we catch that? Garbage. Paul called all his external qualifications and faultless performance as garbage compared to the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of ‘faith’. We must accept by faith that if we are doing our best to obey God and walk in His ways by His Spirit, then we are in truth, His special treasure.

We are of value to the Lord, even with our faults, weaknesses and imperfections; therefore we can declare with confidence: *“I am royalty – a child of the King of Kings - the segulah of the Lord – a precious, valued treasure!”*

Why are we treasures? Simply because we are His covenant children and are each created in the image and likeness of the Almighty God. We all contain a spark of His divine shechinah glory within us.

Collecting Butterflies and Other Treasures

How do we treat treasures? Usually we put them in special places and guard them jealously, keeping them in a safe, secure place. When I was a little girl, I collected butterflies. Somehow one butterfly specimen managed to stay with me in my store of ‘treasures’ - even through the many moves I have made in my life. I kept it in cotton so that its wings would not be damaged, and protected it enclosed within a pretty perfume box from my mother. This little ‘treasure’ meant a lot to me, as butterflies became a symbol to me of transformation, beauty, and freedom. Somehow this little dried butterfly stayed in my possession for over forty years! Wow!



But when contemplating my move back to Israel, obviously I couldn’t take everything in my suitcases or carry on, so I gave my most valuable treasures – the pearls from my parents, the rings from my special friend in Japan, a few other things of great value to me – and of course my butterfly – to a person who was to bring these valuables later in his carry on.

Well, to make along story short, the 40 year old butterfly never made it safely to Israel. Later I found out that some children got into my things and ‘played’ with the fragile dried specimen and

it had been destroyed. I felt sad and angry that my ‘treasure’ had been left unprotected and treated so carelessly!

If I, as a human being, felt this intensely about a simple dried butterfly, can we even fathom the grief and wrath that God feels when someone ‘messes’ with His segulah? We need to leave these injustices and hurts in the hands of the Lord who says He will vindicate us. Our only choice is to forgive those who have hurt and mistreated us.

Some of us have not always been treated like treasures. Perhaps a parent, teacher, friend (or later even a spouse) has not treated us with honor, value and respect. We may even have been abused or mistreated terribly by people, as if we are someone inconsequential.

But God does not see us this way; He still sees us as His special treasure. Even if we have been sullied or broken; even if our heart has been torn in two or our whole life shattered, we are still a beautiful treasure to the Lord – a crown of beauty and a royal diadem in the hand of our God.⁷

If we have a \$100 bill and it accidentally drops on the ground, getting soiled, stepped on, crumpled and bent – is it worth any less than \$100? No it retains its value.

But if we have been through abuse, neglect or even been defiled through our own sins and failures, we may come to see ourselves as unworthy or ‘not good enough’. If we have been stepped on and put down by others to the point that we no longer see ourselves as valuable and worthy of respect, then we will project this to others and they will often treat us as such – with a lack of honor, value and respect.

When the Israelites saw themselves as grasshoppers, so did the giants! We must change our inner image of ourselves to come into line with the Word of God. When we begin to see ourselves as God’s segulah, then we will begin to value and respect ourselves (in a balanced way).

Once we respect and value ourselves, we will find more and more that the people in our lives also begin to value and appreciate us as well. Part of our healing and recovery is to transform the way we see ourselves – to know our identity in the Messiah – righteous, whole, precious, valuable. We receive these precious attributes only through Divine Covenant, not by striving and straining for approval. We are children of God simply because He loves us as a father.

“ How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” (1 John 3:1-2)

⁷ Isaiah 62:3

From the Mouth of Shame

There was a man in the Bible who definitely did not think of himself as a treasure. He had been dropped by his nurse as a small child and grew up a cripple. His name was Mephiboshet, which means *'from the mouth of shame'*; but he referred to himself a *'dead dog'*. That was his self image which had taken shape over the years through his crippled condition and the self pity that had likely accompanied his handicap.

Mephiboshet had one thing going for him, however; he was the grandson of King Saul, a child of Prince Jonathan – who had been a covenantal friend of King David.

Life had not been fair to Mephiboshet. Yes, it had started out well, after all, the child was royalty; and so he enjoyed all the privileges of royalty. At that time, he even had a different name: **“Mirab Baal”, meaning ‘Opponent of Baal’** (a false god).

But after King Saul and Jonathan had been killed in battle, when Mephiboshet was just a little boy, about five years old, a man from the terrible battlefield came running into the palace shouting,

***“King Saul and his sons are dead!”
“King Saul and his sons are dead!”***

Mephiboshet’s nurse picked him up and they ran for their lives; but in her haste, she dropped the little boy and at that moment, his life was forever changed. He became a useless cripple. Even his name was changed from Mirab Baal, mighty opponent of God, to **‘Mephiboshet’ – ‘From the mouth of Shame’**.

And this is how he lived – in shame – in a place called **Loh Davar**, which means in Hebrew literally **“no thing”**. He was a ‘nothing from nowhere’ – at least that’s how he saw himself.

But none of this changed the fact that he was a covenant child of royalty. When King David went looking for someone in Jonathan’s lineage that he could bless, he discovered Mephiboshet, languishing in Loh Davar. When he heard that King David had summoned him, he said, *“What would the King want with a dead dog like me?”*

But David answered, **“Don’t be afraid, for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table.”** (2 Samuel 9:6-7)



Because of the love of God that was in King David's heart, the curse over Mephiboshet was turned into a blessing. Some of us have had some of these 'life altering moments' that took us from a place of privilege and position to being a '*nobody from nowhere*'. Our lives may have seemed cursed and we have come to think of ourselves as no better than 'dead dogs' - living with a continual sense of shame.

But God promises **that instead of our former shame, we shall have double** in our land! Halleluyah! (Isaiah 61:7)

We can be a 'David' in someone's life to help them see the value in themselves that has always been there lying dormant. We may be crippled in some way – maybe not physically handicapped but perhaps emotionally or sexually crippled through abuse, but please hear me now – there is *Someone* who absolutely loves and values you!

He sees you as His special treasure and carries you in a place right next to His heart. He will never leave you nor forsake you. His name is Yeshua – God saves. He is the Messiah.



I believe that even now as you read this story of Mephiboshet, that God is doing a deep work of healing in your life. Yeshua came to carry on himself the curse, so that we could receive our covenantal blessings.

"He who knew no sin became sin for us, in order that we could become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

God can turn even the worst, most painful moments in our lives into blessings, and use them to bring us back to Himself, so that we are restored to being sons and daughters of the King again - eating at the table that He has prepared for us.

For me, personally, God took the very worst moment of my life – when the father of my unborn child betrayed and abandoned me – and turned it into my greatest blessing! This crisis pregnancy led to my salvation through a revelation that Jesus (Yeshua) is actually the Jewish Messiah and Savior of all humankind. Halleluiyah!

His promise to us is that all things will work together for the good of those who love him, who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Lord, heal our broken image of ourselves and lead us out of the place of 'loh davar'. Bring us into Your royal palace once again to dine with You at your banqueting table. Help us by the transforming power of Your Holy Spirit, to throw off that 'dead dog' mentality, pull back our shoulders, lift up our heads and be willing to look people in the eye, realizing that we truly are God's segulah - His special treasure!

Blessings and Curses

The final portion of this parashah deals with the blessings and curses of the Mosaic covenant. We don't need to look far to see that the Jewish people have been blessed by the Almighty God as He promised; but they have also done more than their fair share of suffering over the centuries through these 'curses of the covenant.'⁸

As Teviah, the father in the film, Fiddler on the Roof, put so well when talking to God after his horse became lame just before the Sabbath,

“God, I know that we are Your chosen people, but....couldn't You choose someone else for a change?” ☺

Indeed, those who have been given much privilege also carry a greater responsibility.



As I pondered how to approach this section of the parashah, I prayed for wisdom, to write only what the Father would want to be communicated to His people. And what the Holy Spirit really impressed upon my heart is that we need to know that we are children of God through the New Covenant – not like the Old (Mosaic) Covenant – which they broke, says the Lord.

Through the Prophet Jeremiah, God promised His people a covenant which includes the forgiveness of all our sins and wickedness.

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt (the Mosaic Covenant) because they broke My covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people. .. **“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”** (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Not only does God forgive our sins – He doesn't even remember them anymore!

So let us walk in the freedom, the joy, the peace we have been given in the New Covenant, bought at such a high price with the precious blood of the sinless Lamb of God – Yeshua Hamashiach!

⁸ Deuteronomy 28:15-69

Ki Tavoh Study Questions

1. How does the word for a 'Hebrew' apply to all who are in the Kingdom of God?
2. What great miracle did the Hebrew prophets speak of that God would do one day in Israel? Has this come to pass in our very generation? What does this mean to us?
3. Why is Ki Tavoh called a 'warning chapter'? Do you think that these blessings and cursings still apply today to God's people? Share and discuss.
4. What are the 'bikkurim'? How are we to give our offerings today?
5. Why does the enemy try so hard to steal our joy? Have you allowed the pressures and cares of life to rob you of your joy lately? How can you live in continual rejoicing?
6. What is the book of Life? What are some Scriptures (Old and New Testament) that speak about this book? What are the consequences of not having our names recorded within?
7. Do you clear out your whole tithe promptly? Have you experienced the blessing of tithing and/or the negative consequences of failing to give your full tithe? Share.
8. What is the meaning of 'mamlechet cohanim v'goy kadosh'? Segulah?
9. Do you feel like a special treasure of God? Royalty? Why or why not. Discuss.
10. On what basis do we find our value and identity?
11. Have you read the blessings and curses in the 28th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy? How do you reconcile these with the New Covenant? Share and Discuss.

About the Author:

Hannah Nesher grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and received her education in a religious Hebrew school in Canada. During a crisis pregnancy, she came to know Jesus (Yeshua) as her Messiah and Savior. She now lives in Israel with her children and grandchildren, teaching the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.

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