

A Gallery of Photos Is Available At
<http://picasaweb.google.com/jewishadventist>

Join Our Forum of Discussion on Internet
<http://groups.google.com/group/jewish-adventists>

Visit our website
<http://www.jewishadventist.org>

Shabbat Ki Tetzei

August 29, 2009

9 Ellul 5769

News

HERGHILIA, ROMANIA'S LIFESTYLE CENTER

Our ministry in Israel will be very successful when we are able to meet the needs of the people who are living there. One of the great needs is to testify about the love of Yeshua by acts of love, kindness and also following the example of Yeshua in healing the people of Israel physically, mentally and spiritually.



That's why we are encouraging people who would like to work in Israel in that way to join us and to open a "Lifestyle Center" to help Israelis learn how to live physically and spiritually in a better way in the 21st century by controlling such diseases of civilization as obesity, diabetes, and stress related conditions.

We started a health ministry training in Israel which was followed by a health-expo and the opening of a health club that meets every week. In order to see how a lifestyle center operates, I was invited by the management of Herghilia health center to visit them and to experience their treatments and programs. I was there this week and it was a great experience to see how people are open to the spiritual message of Yeshua when we start to help them lose weight, control their stress, learn how to cook better food, etc... We are in contact with a non-profit organization in the United States that will try to help us to open such

a center in Israel. Let us pray for this project and see if it is G-d's will to open a lifestyle center in Israel.

REGHIN CONGREGATION IN ROMANIA

This week has also been a great week for the Jewish ministry in Romania. Since many Jews are still living in Romania and many Romanians are living in Israel.



There is a special relationship between Israel and Romania. That's why I was happy to preach in one church in Romania where I met some Romanians who were in Israel a few years ago and who are interested in our ministries to the Jews. This congregation in Reghin has a new and great building for their shabbat worship.

One of the interesting things about this congregation is that they have no cross as a sign as many churches have. I asked one of the leaders why, and he told me that the cross in Romania is too much associated with the big church and we prefer not to be associated with them. I replied that it is also an advantage for the Jewish ministry.



OVERVIEW

KI TETZEI

DEUTERONOMY 21:10-25:19

The Torah describes the only permissible way a woman captured in battle may be married. If a man marries two wives, and the less-favored wife bears a firstborn son, this son's right to inherit a double portion is protected against the father's desire to favor the child of the favored wife.

The penalty for a rebellious son, who will inevitably degenerate into a monstrous criminal, is stoning.

A body must not be left on the gallows overnight, because it had housed a holy soul.

Lost property must be returned.

Men are forbidden from wearing women's clothing and vice versa.

A mother bird may not be taken together with her eggs.

A fence must be built around the roof of a house.

It is forbidden to plant a mixture of seeds, to plow with an ox and a donkey together, or to combine wool and linen in a garment.

A four-cornered garment must have twisted threads tzitzit on its corners.

Laws regarding illicit relationships are detailed.

When Israel goes to war, the camp must be governed by rules of spiritual purity.

An escaped slave must not be returned to his master.

Taking interest for lending to a Jew is forbidden.

Bnei Yisrael are not to make vows.

A worker may eat of the fruit he is harvesting.

Divorce and marriage are legislated.

For the first year of marriage, a husband is exempt from the army and stays home to make rejoice with his wife.

Tools of labor may not be impounded, as this prevents the debtor from earning a living.

The penalty for kidnapping for profit is death.

Removal of the signs of the disease tzara'at is forbidden.

Even for an overdue loan, the creditor must return the collateral daily if the debtor needs it.

Workers' pay must not be delayed.

The guilty may not be subjugated by punishing an innocent relative.

Because of their vulnerability, converts and orphans have special rights of protection.

The poor are to have a portion of the harvest.

A court may impose lashes.

An ox must not be muzzled while threshing.

It is a mitzvah for a man to marry his brother's widow if the deceased left no offspring.

Weights and measures must be accurate and used honestly.

The parasha concludes with the mitzvah to erase the name of Amalek, for, in spite of knowing about the Exodus, they ambushed the People of Israel.

GREAT LEVEL OF UNITY

The name of the Parasha, *Ki Tetzei*—"when you will go to war" is written in the singular as if the Torah speaks to a single person going to battle. Why does the Torah here use the singular when it takes an army of many divisions and soldiers to fight a war?

Our sages in the Talmud tell us that King Achav and the people of that time sinned by worshipping idols, which is a very grave sin. Yet when they went to war, they were victorious because they displayed a great level of unity. "Ki Teitzei" in the singular hints to the secret of victory, which can come only when Jews are "united" as one person.

74 MITZVOT

In this Parasha we find more mitzvot (commandments) than in any other portion of the Torah (74 mitzvot). Mitzvot fall into two categories; "bein adam lachaveiro" (mitzvot between one person and another person), and the mitzvot which are "bein adam lamakom" (between us and G-d). Most of the mitzvot in this Parasha concern behavior between people.

RETURNING LOST OBJECTS

One of the mitzvot in this week's Parasha is the mitzvah of "Hashavat Aveidah" (returning a lost object) to its rightful owner (see one of the stories).

The Torah states; **"You shall not see your brother's ox or sheep go astray and hide yourself from them. You shall bring them back to your brother. If your brother is not close to you or you don't know him, then you shall bring it into your own house and it shall be with you until your brother seeks it and you shall give it back to him".**

Sam the thief, as he was called by everyone in town, came to the rabbi one day during the month of Elul. "Rabbi, I found a wallet full of money. I would like you to help me locate the owner so I can return the wallet and perform the mitzvah of returning a lost object to its rightful owner."

The rabbi, a bit surprised, yet impressed to see Sam improve his ways, assured him that he will make an announcement in synagogue so Sam will be able to return the wallet and perform this very important mitzvah.

A little while after Sam left, the rabbi discovered that his watch was missing. He immediately sent for Sam and sure enough, he had it in his pocket.

"I can't figure you out!" said the rabbi. "First you come to return a lost wallet and then you steal my watch! I don't understand you at all!"

"What's there to understand?" answered Sam. "When it comes to returning a lost object that's a mitzvah. But when it comes to stealing, that's business!"

In the Parasha we see a connection between the mitzvot toward each other and toward G-d. Our business dealings with others and our commitment to G-d go hand in hand. One should make Mitzvot their business and their business into a mitzvah! "Hashavat Aveidah"—returning a lost object in its spiritual form refers to "Teshuvah" (repentance). This is especially significant in the month of Elul (the last month of the Jewish year), for Elul is the month of "Teshuvah" in which we must "return" to G-d and ask him to restore us to our original form of holiness and purity. That is the Jewish concept of Justification by faith, G-d has the power to restore us to our original holiness and purity, the one he

gave originally to Adam. It is really like if we had never sinned. Praise the L-rd for his kindness for us. If when one's donkey has gone astray we must help, how much more so must we help when we see a person gone astray spiritually. If a donkey who fell under its heavy load is a mitzvah to help lift, how much more so when a person needs help and a lifting hand physically or spiritually.

One of the sages remarked that the mitzvah of "Ahavat Yisrael"—love your neighbor as yourself—also applies to oneself. One must "love" and consider his personal spiritual needs (yourself) and answer to it. The same applies if we see our neighbor who is spiritually lost, that we must surely help him, in the spirit of "Hashavat Aveidah," (lost object) to return to the correct path."

PLOWING AN OX AND A DONKEY TOGETHER

The Parasha states, **"You shall not plow with an ox and donkey together."** Ibn Ezra explains that this prohibition is out of pity for the donkey which is weaker than the ox and plowing with the ox is beyond its strength.

The Chezkuni gives another reason: The ox chews it's cud while the donkey does not. If they will plow together the donkey, seeing that the ox is constantly chewing, will think that the ox is eating while it is not. Since this will cause it pain, the Torah prohibited it.

The story is told of a rabbi who attended a wedding of one of the wealthy people in his city. It was customary that an area of the hall was designated for the poor, where they benefited of a warm meal.

The rabbi noticed that the waiters first served the wedding guests who were enjoying their meal, while the poor were sitting and waiting. "Why aren't the poor being served?" he inquired of the host.

"When the guests are finished being served we will serve the poor..."

"You are transgressing a prohibition of the Torah!" replied the rabbi. "The Torah prohibits the plowing of an ox and donkey together because the donkey will see the ox chewing its cud and thus feel pain or anguish. Now if the Torah is so concerned with the donkey's pain, how much more should you consider the pain of the poor who see others eating when they are not!"

LOST OBJECTS

The Talmudic sage Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa was extremely careful with the mitzvah of returning lost objects.

A person forgot some chickens near Rabbi Chanina's house. Rabbi Chanina took care of them. Although he was very poor, he didn't allow his family to eat the eggs or the chickens. Rabbi Chanina was waiting for the person to come and claim them.

As time passed the chickens multiplied so greatly that it was impossible for Rabbi Chanina to keep them. He then sold the chickens and bought goats instead.

One day, Rabbi Chanina saw a stranger in front of his house. The stranger mentioned that many years ago, he had left a few chickens near the house.

When Rabbi Chanina was convinced that this person was the true owner of the chickens, he took him into the yard, and to the stranger's surprise, said "All these goats are yours. They came from your chickens!"

DID YOU MAKE A VOW TO THE LORD?

The following Talmudic story is worthwhile remembering at this time of the year (before the new year). It illustrates the meaning of the verse of the Torah, "When you shall make a vow unto the L-rd your G-d, you shall not be slack to pay it; For the L-rd your G-d will surely require it of you." (Deut. 23:22)." For whatever is destined to be given to charity is of no use to try to keep for ourselves.

One Rosh Hashana night, the great Talmudic Sage, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, had a dream. In the dream, he saw that his nephews would have to pay 600 golden dinars to the tax collectors. Rabbi Shimon, wanting to save them this aggravation, sent charity collectors to ask his nephews to contribute more charity than usual throughout the year.

"Why do you want us to give more charity this year than usual?" they questioned him. Rabbi Shimon answered, "If one doesn't give willingly to the right things, he ends up having to give forcibly for the wrong things."

At the end of the year, a special military tax was imposed on the people of that city. Rabbi Shimon's nephews, being wealthy people, were assessed 600 golden dinars. When they refused to pay this large amount, they were thrown in jail.

Rabbi Shimon heard what happened and ordered his nephews' records of charitable donations be brought to him. Upon calculating how much charity they gave, he realized that they were 6 dinars short of the sum of 600. "Bring me six dinars," said Rabbi Shimon, "and with G-d's help, everything will be in order."

"But they want 600 dinars! What good will six dinars do?" But Rabbi Shimon urged them to do as he said. With the six dinars in his hand he went to the tax collector and succeeded in persuading him to take the six dinars and free his nephews. Only then did Rabbi Shimon tell his relatives of his Rosh Hashana dream. "Had you given the full 600 dinars for charity, you wouldn't have had to go through all this misery," Rabbi Shimon told them.

"If you knew this all along, why didn't you tell us? We would have gladly given the 600 dinars for charity!" they complained.

"Had I told you about my dream in the beginning of the year, all the charity you gave during the year would have been for selfish reasons. In that case, the mitzvah wouldn't have been performed to its fullest," answered Rabbi Shimon.

EDITOR

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

Richard-Amram Elofer
4, Abraham Lincoln
94186 Jerusalem
Israel

Tel. +972 504 535 121
Fax +972 2625 1319
email: richard@elofers.com
web: jewishadventist.org



HAFTARA

Isaiah 54:1-10

This Shabbat is the fourth Shabbat after *Tisha B'Av*. We are in a period called *Shiva D'nechemta*—"Seven weeks of comfort." The seven *Haftarot* of the weeks between *Tish'a B'av* and *Rosh Hashana* are prophesies of comfort and hope for Israel and God's people at large.

HAFTARA: This text is a very special text of comfort since the first verse is not clear for everyone. In this text God is speaking about two wives; the first one is the "desolated" (divorced) wife and the second one is still married. "Sing, O barren one who did not bear; burst into song and shout, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate woman will be more than the children of her that is married, says the LORD" (Is. 54:1). The Brit Hachadasha has clearly identified these two women as Sarah and Hagar. "Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One woman, in fact, is Hagar, from Mount Sinai, . . . But the other woman corresponds to the Jerusalem above; she is free, and she is our mother" (Gal 4:24, 26). The desolated wife, Hagar, represents Israel and the married wife, Sarah, represents the kehila (church). However, in the text of Isaiah there are more blessings for the desolated (Hagar or Israel) than for the married (Sara, the kehila) "For the children of the desolate woman will be more than the children of her that is married" (Is 54:1). The text then continues to comfort the desolate woman: "Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; do not be discouraged, for you will not suffer disgrace; for you will forget the shame of your youth, . . . For your Maker is your husband, . . . the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer . . . For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great compassion I will gather you. . . . but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says the LORD, your Redeemer" (Is 54:2-8). G-d continues to love His people, as compared with Hagar, who although Abraham divorced her, he continued to love her and she was taken back, according to Jewish tradition, as Ketura. This means that for Israel, God has not cancelled His covenant with His historical people, even though He opened His arms to the Gentiles in the kehila, "My covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you. . . . All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the prosperity of your children. In righteousness you shall be established" (10-13).

BESORAT YESHUA

Mark 7:24-37

In our Parasha we still have a long list of rules and laws that Moshe gives to Israel as a reminder at the border of the Promised Land. In the Haftara we have great comfort for Israel who has been desolated and divorced but taken back by G-d as her husband.

BESORAH: In the text of the besorah we have a complementary text of the Haftara, because the text of the Haftara presents two women, the married and the desolated, but only the desolated (which represents Israel) is comforted; the married one, which represents the kehila full of Gentiles, seems to be ignored. However in the parallel text of the besorah, Yeshua comforts the married woman, who according to Paul in Galatians 4, represents the kehilah (the church). In this text of the besorah a Gentile woman is at the center of the story. ". . . a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin" (Mark 7:25-26). In the text she represents the openness of Yeshua for the Goyim (Gentiles). They were not very well considered in Israel to the extent that this people should not live among G-d's people. But Yeshua wants to teach his talmidim (disciples) about the needs of these people from the nations who are starving for spiritual food.

This lady, as many other Gentiles, for example the Roman centurion, gave a demonstration of great faith. Yeshua said to her that the words of the L-rd are not for her as she is considered as a dog among the Jewish leaders. "He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs"" (Mark 7:27). With great humility, she accepted her condition. "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs" (28). Her faith amazed Yeshua. "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter" (29). She believed, she went back home, and discovered that her daughter was healed. Then Yeshua continued his ministry among the Gentiles. He was the first Rabbi to do so.

