

Now The End Is Near

"1Now when you enter the land that Adonai your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it (Deut. 26:1)... "3But to this day Adonai has not given you a heart to know, or eyes to see, or ears to hear... 5bin order that you may know that I am Adonai your Elohim (God)... 8So keep the words of this covenant and do them, so that you may prosper in all that you do" (Deut. 29:3, 5b, 8)

This week's *Torah* reading is *Ki Tavo*, *Deut. 26:1-29:8* which can be translated: *"when you come/enter."* The Hebrew word *Ki* means when, if, because, that, for, also (and others). *Tavo* is the future, 2nd person, masculine, singular form of the verb *bo* which generally means to come or to go. The first Hebrew word in the reading is the word *V'hayah* which means *and it shall be* or *and it will happen* which implies the reality of an event, in this case the end of the wilderness experience and the entering to *Yah's Promised Land*. It shall happen when you enter also reminds me that entering means that an end is near. Notice that since *Tavo* is *2 m s* (2nd person, masculine, singular) it is referring to a person, to you and to me individually.

At the beginning of today's reading we have instructions about what to do when we experience blessing, when we harvest from the inheritance that we know *The Almighty* is giving to us. This speaks of generosity, and it speaks of an attitude of giving back to *The Almighty* as a form of worship. *All giving is worship*, but that which we bring to the *House of Yah Adonai*, that which we offer to Him in the *Tzedakah* box, is precisely what He asked for in *Deut. 26:1-4*. We also note that this week's *Parashah* also includes all the blessings and all the curses of *Deuteronomy 28*. I believe nearly everyone in here is familiar with that list so I will skip commenting on them further. At the conclusion of this week's *Parashah* (the *maftir*) and just before next week's *Parashah* (*Nitzavim, standing*) we have a beautiful and sobering statement: *"3But to this day Adonai has not given you a heart to know..." (Deut. 29:3)*. Why? Scripture answers the question: *5b that you may know (yodea) that I am Adonai your Elohim*. So, what do we do? We are to: *keep (shomer) the words of this covenant and do (Naase) them*. Before we stand next week (*Nitzavim*) we must (1) receive a pure heart (*Lev Tahor*), (2) know Him (*know (yodea) that I am*) and (3) *keep (shomer) His Word and do (Naase) them*. Before we can stand before Him, we have to make a determination (*t'shuvah*) that we are lacking, receive a new heart, get intimate with Him (*I AM*) and commit to keep His Word and do what He has said.

I have often shared that ministerial leaders often understand that their flock needs to go through the washing of repentance. This is why many schedule times of revival and bring in guests to motivate them to do so. Others in the Body of Messiah never seem to go those kinds of services. But we in Messianic Judaism (MJ) have scheduled times where *The Almighty* has already written in His *Torah* that He is attentive to hearing from His people to make things right. Did you realize that we are in the middle of that special time? Today is the 16th Day of *Elul* (the sixth month) and we have less than two weeks before the seventh month arrives. In MJ we are reminded that it is time to obtain repentance and *re-soften our heart* towards *The Almighty*. During this *Season of Repentance* (*T'Shuvah*) we Messianic Jews evaluate (introspectively) our lives and, hopefully, we all come to a realization that we are in desperate need of forgiveness so we can fully return/answer/repent (*T'Shuvah*) to Him.

I believe that we desperately need a *soft heart* instead of a *hard heart*. We need a soft heart that is able to hear with *compassion* and with *humility*. A soft heart that is able to see the *benefits of living* through Him, for Him, and in Him. A softened heart *equips* a person with the resolve *to obey The Almighty* with joy. A *hard heart does not understand* this way of living and results in an *unwise individual* because wisdom is *viewing life from God's perspective*.

Since “*In Him we live and move and have our being*” (*Acts 17:28*) in Him we are able to operate in a *supernatural dimension*. However, just before the *maftir* of this week’s reading Moses reminds the Children of Israel that it is time to ask for a special heart! Yes! Today is the day to ask *The Almighty* to give us, by His Spirit, a heart (and a soul, which is our mind, will, and emotions) that is *ready, willing and able to respond to Him* this way. If as a congregation we want to soar (mount up with wings as eagles) to the next level, we must have that kind of heart. What keeps us from having that type of heart? Sin.

T’S huvah (Repentance) speaks to all people. Messianic believers are called this month to examine their lives and see where they have departed from *The Almighty*. For us it is also a call to carefully examine the Scriptures and weigh the evidence that *Yeshua* is who He said He was. Is *Messiah Yeshua* King of your life and your heart yet? *Yah Adonai* always warns the people before He proclaims judgment. He warned the people before the flood and He warned Nineveh before it was ruined. He does not ever want anyone to receive the wrath of His judgment so He pre-warns us. We need an *awakening* (*kumi ori, Isaiah 60:1-22*, today’s *Haftarah*) from the sleep induced by sin so the power of the Holy Spirit is allowed to work in the heart of a believer who trusts in *Yah Adonai’s* Salvation (*Messiah Yeshua*) and *who asks for forgiveness*. *T’S huvah* is *The Almighty’s* gift. Do you want it? Many people are operating in various degrees of unbelief and it is time to stop! By His *Ruach* we *re-buke unbelief*. Let us pray...*Shabbat Shalom!*