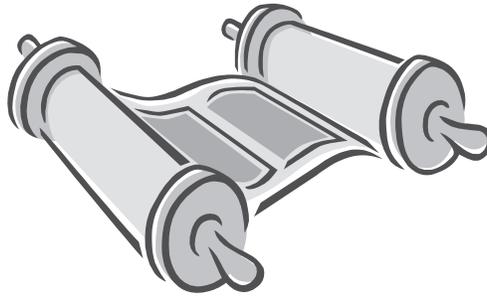




May 2013

Shavuot begins on the
eve of May 14, 2013.



Blessings in The Word of God!

D'var Adonai

As we sought the Lord for the topic of this month's newsletter, we heard the phrase "*D'var Adonai*" in our spirit. These Hebrew words are translated into English as "the word of the LORD." *D'var* (דבר) can also be written "*dabar*," and literally means word, speaking, speech, account or even "thing." In biblical thinking, a word has substance. God's Word certainly does!

D'var, in its noun and verb form, occurs more than 2500 times in the Tanach. **The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament** notes that in any language the words which represent the basic verb for speaking and the noun for "word" are of supreme importance. This is especially true in Hebrew, since the Word was involved in the creation of the world, the salvation of the world, and the eternal order of the universe.

Sometimes the Hebrew "*d'var*" in the phrase "word of the LORD" is replaced by another Hebrew word: "*peh*" (פה). *Peh* means "mouth" in the sense of blowing, sending forth, speech, or spoken word. There is certainly a connection between the "word" of the LORD and the "mouth" of the LORD. We find the deep connection in Deuteronomy 8:3, "...*man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word (d'var) that proceeds from the mouth (peh) of the LORD.*"

An example of a verse where "word" is "*peh*" or mouth is Numbers 22:18, where Balaam said to the servants of Balak (who wanted him to curse Israel), "*Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word (peh) of the LORD my God, to do less or more.*" Good advice. We all need to cleave to the word of God, and not go beyond it.

What about "Adonai"? In all instances that we could find, the Hebrew word which has been translated as LORD is the sacred tetragrammaton יהוה. To quote Alfred J. Kolatch in **This is the Torah**: "Since Jewish tradition considers Yehovah to be the real name of God, it placed a ban on its use to avoid its being pronounced in vain, and whenever that name appears, it is read "Adonai." While we could use "*D'var Yehova*" for "the word of the LORD," we have chosen to use the more familiar "*D'var Adonai*." (Please don't write to rebuke us. With God it's all about the heart. The older we get, the more we realize this. God wants our love, our obedience, our devotion to His Word. How we translate the words is secondary.)

D'var Adonai: Shield and Reward

The first time a word or phrase is used in the Holy Scriptures is significant. In the case of "the word of the LORD," we find a wonderful promise, "*After these things the word of the LORD [d'var Adonai] came to Abram in a vision, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.'*" (Gen. 15:1) This is the *d'var Adonai* for us this month as well. Fear not! God is our shield. He is our exceedingly great reward!

Shields protect. They are crucial in warfare. While the Brit Hadasha tells us in Ephesians 6:16 that the shield we are to take up is "faith," this weapon is a gift from God. He gives us faith. All we have to do is ask for it. "Abba, would you please increase our faith this month. We need more faith to live a life pleasing to You." AMEN!

God's word, His *d'var Adonai*, is also our shield. A promise from 2 Samuel 22:29-31 expresses this beautifully, *"For You are my lamp, O LORD; The LORD shall enlighten my darkness. For by You I can run against a troop; By my God I can leap over a wall. As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him."*

D'var Adonai in the Tanach

Throughout the Old Testament, the word of the LORD, the *d'var Adonai*, "came" to people. It had come to Jacob, when God spoke to him and changed his name. The prophet Elijah reminded God's people of this on Mount Carmel: *"And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD (d'var Adonai) had come, saying, 'Israel shall be your name'."* (1 Kings 18:31).

The word of the LORD came to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the prophets of Israel, who in turn said to God's People, *"Hear the word of the LORD."* Like Isaiah, the other prophets hoped that the people of Israel would respond to the *d'var Adonai* with respect, love, obedience, and fear of the LORD: *"Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word..."* (Is. 66:5). How do we respond to the word of the LORD? We pray that the day does not come when the word of the LORD is "rare," as in the days of the prophet Samuel. *"Now the boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD [d'var Adonai] was rare in those days; [there was] no widespread revelation."* (1 Sam. 3:1)

The Word and the Wilderness

We noticed in our study a fascinating connection between two Hebrew words: *d'var* and *midbar*. Both come from the same Hebrew root. One means "word;" the other means "wilderness." At first glance, they have nothing in common. But if we dig deeper, we find hidden treasure (Jewish Jewels 😊).

The LORD often spoke to His people in the most profound, intimate ways in the *midbar*. (*Midbar* can also mean "mouth," which is an unusual, but enlightening connection.) Consider Moses and the burning bush. He was on the back side of a desert (*midbar*) when the Angel of the LORD spoke to him from the midst of a bush that burned but was not consumed (Ex. 3:1-6). When Israel came out of Egypt, they went into the Wilderness of Shur. It was there that God healed the bitter waters of Marah so that His people could have fresh water to drink. But, more importantly, God spoke in the wilderness, and the *d'var Adonai* was revolutionary: *"I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you"* (Ex. 15:26). This is a great word if you are in a health-challenging type of wilderness. We know. We have embraced this *d'var Adonai*!

God continued to speak to His people in their wilderness wanderings. Communication is intimacy. He promised to rain bread from heaven in the morning, and meat (quail) in the evening. The *d'var Adonai* proved true for the entire forty years in the wilderness. Those who cling to Adonai during their wilderness wanderings are like the one spoken of in Song of Songs 8:5, *"Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?"*

As we mentioned in our March 2013 letter, God often leads His bride into the wilderness to get her attention so that she can hear the *d'var Adonai*. *"...I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her."* (Hosea 2:14) We, as followers of Messiah, are likewise called to speak comfort to Israel in the wilderness of this world—so full of sin, doubt, unbelief and hopelessness: *"'Comfort, yes, comfort My people!' says your God. 'Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned;...' The voice of one crying in the wilderness:*

'Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God' " (Is. 40:1-3).

We, at *Jewish Jewels*, see ourselves as that voice crying in the wilderness. We are the laborers in the harvest field, helping prepare the Way of the LORD. Yeshua is The Way!

The Torah in the Wilderness

The children of Israel were camped in the Wilderness of Sinai, before the mountain, when God gave them His Law, His instructions for living. This month the revelation on Mt. Sinai is celebrated during the Feast of Weeks (*Shavuot*), or Pentecost (May 14-16). Although the Bible does not say that the Torah was given on this feast day, through careful calculation from the time of the Exodus until the day that the Israelites arrived at Mt. Sinai, it appears that the two coincide. Hence, Shavuot (meaning "weeks" in Hebrew) came to be known as the anniversary of the giving of the Torah.

God spoke on Mount Sinai. Although the rabbis have counted 613 commandments, there are ten that God intended to be the spiritual, moral and ethical blueprint undergirding the civilized world. Unfortunately, this is no longer the case. The "Ten Commandments," recorded in Exodus chapter 20, and again in Deuteronomy 5:6-18, are called in Hebrew the Ten Words (*Aseret hadevarim*). *Devarim* is the plural of *d'var*. The LORD said to Moses, *"Write these words (devarim), for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel"* (Ex. 34:27). *"...And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments (Aseret hadevarim)."* (Ex. 34:28) Ten "Commandments" would have been *"Aseret ha-Mitzvot."* Either way, God wanted His children to hear the *d'var Adonai* and obey. Some of the most important words ever spoken to mankind were spoken in the wilderness.

In the B'rit Hadasha, we see John the Immerser hearing the *d'var Adonai* in the wilderness. *"... while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness."* (Luke 3:2) What was the word? Repent. *"Prepare the way of the LORD!"*

What about the Messiah Yeshua and the *d'var Adonai*? First of all, He is the *D'var Adonai* made flesh—the *Memra* (Aramaic for "the Word"). The traditional rabbis say the *Memra* was present at creation. John 1:1-4, 14 tells us that this Word, *d'var, memra*, became flesh and dwelt among us. The divine Word came to earth in the person of Yeshua of Nazareth.

Yeshua was very familiar with the wilderness. He spoke the *d'var Adonai* to hasatan there. *"Then Yeshua, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil."* (Luke 4:1-2) NOTE: The *Ruach HaKodesh* led the Messiah into the wilderness. God often has a plan for us in the *midbar*. He spoke in the wilderness. Yeshua, God in the flesh, spoke the following words to satan after fasting for forty days, and being tempted to turn stones into bread: *"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God'."* (Luke 4:4) Let us live by the *devarim* (words) of God—His kisses—in our wilderness wanderings on the way to our Promised Land (Heaven)!

D'var Adonai from Jerusalem

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." (Is. 2:3) As we prepare our hearts for our Oct. 11-22, 2013 Mercy Mission to Israel, we recall how powerfully the word has gone forth from Zion to touch lives around the world. One of the ways this has happened has been through postcards that we have sent to our *Jewish Jewels* family after praying for them in Zion. We received a letter recently from Ed S. who reminded us of the message he received from us when we were in Jerusalem on 3/22/96! We sent him a word from Psalm 20:1-4 which begins: *"May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble; May the name of the God of Jacob defend you; May He send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you out of Zion..."* Ed reminded us that on 3/22/96, as we prayed and sent him this word from the *Kotel* in Jerusalem, he was involved in a motorcycle accident on I-95 in which God's hand of protection was evident. Ed was spared, along with a friend. The *d'var Adonai* went forth from Zion.

Many, many wonderful, deep teachings are also part of our Mercy Mission adventures. For example, a *d'var Adonai* about "separation": It's not about what we as believers are separated from, but what we are separated to. Holiness is more about what I am for, rather than what I am against.

A *d'var Adonai* about "salt": Salt in the Bible is a symbol of loyalty, of relationship. Many desert tribes, even today, put salt on the hands of a couple when they marry. A "covenant of salt" (Num. 18:19) is a forever covenant of loyalty in relationships. In Matthew 5:13-14, believers in Yeshua are called to be salt and light. Light refers to our testimony to pre-believers. Salt refers to our relationship with each other. The inability of believers to get along puts the light out! We must have salt with one another. Yeshua said, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (Jn. 13:35) We can't be light to the unsaved if we aren't salt to one another!

A *d'var Adonai* about "fig trees": At the time of Yeshua, according to rabbinic tradition, sitting under a fig tree was the best place to study Torah. Why? The fig tree has a beautiful fragrance and provides abundant shade. Fig trees were planted next to synagogues, as is still the practice today. When Yeshua said to Nathaniel, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you" (John 1:48-49), He meant that He saw him studying the Torah - probably when he was a child in school. Nathaniel's response, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" indicates that Yeshua's seeing him under the fig tree was something supernatural. Perhaps he had been asking God to reveal the Messiah to him.

Come with us to hear the *d'var Adonai* for eleven amazing days in God's Holy Land. Visit the saltiest sea on the face of the earth. Experience real, salty relationships with like-minded lovers of Zion. Return home saltier than ever! [Call Regina at 1-800-33-MAURO. She'll be glad to answer any questions.]

Love in Yeshua, and *Hag Shavuot Sameach* (Have a joyful Shavuot),

Neil & Jamie

Desert of my Days is a Messianic musical CD by Carlos Perdomo: a fresh new sound with hints of latin undertones that will minister to your spirit. We REALLY enjoy listening to this CD as we drive.

A Way in the Wilderness is a 100 page collection of twenty essays by Messianic Jewish pioneers including Rosen, Einspruch, and Frydland. Excellent for believers and Jewish pre-believers.

Jewish Jewels Television Airtime Schedule - May 2013

LOCAL TV STATIONS

AIRTIME:	STATE:	CITY:	STATIONS:
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MON 10:00 PM	FL	Tampa/St. Pete.	WCLF TV 22
THU 11:30 AM	FL	Miami/Ft. Laud.	WHFT TV 45
SUN 1:30 PM	FL	Tallahassee	WVUP TV 45
SAT 10:30 PM	FL	West Palm Beach	WFGC TV 61
SUN 2:30 PM	GA	Columbus	WYBU TV 16
SUN 1:30 PM	IA	Dubuque	KFXB TV 40
THU 6:30 AM	ID	Twin Falls	KJCY TV 38
SUN 1:30 PM	MO	New Bloomfield	KNLJ TV 25
THU 8:30 AM	NC	Goldsboro	WHFL TV 43
SUN 4:00 PM	NJ/NY	NYC/New Jersey	WMBC TV 63
THU 5:30 AM	OR	The Dalles	KRHP TV 14

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MON 8:30 PM Ch. 376 - CTN (Christian Television Network)
MON 11:30 PM Ch. 371 - Church Channel

Dish Network

MON 8:30 PM Ch. 376 - CTN (Christian Television Network)
MON 11:30 PM Ch. 258 - Church Channel

CABLE NETWORKS (EST)

AT&T U-Verse

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MON 11:30 PM Ch. 565 - Church Channel

Comcast Cable

SAT 2:30 PM Ch. 486 - WORD Network

Time Warner Cable

SAT 2:30 PM Ch. 386 - WORD Network



For other cable networks check local listings....