



Traditional Congregation

Affiliated with the
Union for Traditional Judaism
Rabbi Seth D Gordon
Rabbi Ephraim I Zimand, Emeritus

August 6, 2011

ו אב תשע"א

שבת חזון

Parashat Devarim- Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22 (דברים)
Hertz - p 736 Stone - p 938

Haftarah - Isaiah 1:1-27 (ישעיהו)
Hertz - p 750 Stone - p 1195

Kiddush sponsored by Sisterhood

Minchah - 7:00 PM

Shabbat Ends - 8:49 PM

On This Week's Torah Portion

דברים

Because H" hated us he took us out of Egypt... (1:27)
He loved you, but you hated Him. As the saying goes, whatever is in your heart regarding your fellow, that's what is in his heart regarding you. (Rashi)
[Rashi] explains that since they hated HaKadosh Baruch Hu, they projected what was in their hearts onto Him (Siftei Chachamim)

This statement of the people did not come right after the Exodus, when they were cornered between Pharaoh's army and the Sea; rather it came after the miracles of the plagues of Egypt, the splitting of the Sea, and after a year spent learning Torah from Moshe Rabbeinu at Mt. Sinai. This was a time of miraculous existence, where Gd had given them food and water, and the greatest spiritual uplift any nation has known. Gd's love for the people was manifest and had been manifest for a significant amount of time. Yet the people could complain that Gd hated them. Rashi explains that in fact the people were projecting their own consciousness onto Gd as it were - and this projection was more real to them than the objective reality that they had been experiencing for over a year!

Rashi further defines this "projection" by means of an aphorism - what you have in your heart for your fellow, that's what is in his heart regarding you. We have similar expressions in English - "when you point at someone else with one finger, there are three fingers pointing back at you!" "The pot calling the kettle black." This kind of projection is a common psychological

phenomenon.

I think there are some deeper levels of projection that we can consider. In the case of the Israelites' projection of their own hatred of Gd onto Gd, we have a phenomenon where our own inner state is coloring our perception of reality. The objective reality though hasn't changed at all - Gd still loved Israel, and, despite all our faults, continues to love us to this day, even when a majority of the Jewish people seems to have forgotten about Gd altogether. There are cases on the other hand where we can project our emotional state onto the outside world and create a different objective reality altogether. A simple example is found in everyday life. If we get out of bed in the morning feeling wonderful, and give everyone we meet a smile and a kind word, we will tend to get the same reaction back from them. The opposite is also true of course.

If we consider the nature of our inner reality we can take this conception a bit further. When our mind is clouded or we are upset and our mind is racing, we only experience our thoughts on a superficial level. We know that if we try to make plans in such a state, they often go awry. Our thoughts, when they are only appreciated on a superficial level, are not very powerful and do not support objective activity very well. On the other hand, when we are well-rested and our mind is settled, we are able to pick up thoughts at a much subtler level, where they are more powerful. These thoughts are much more likely to get successfully projected into reality, as our plans are clearer and more comprehensive.

Thought is, in reality, a subtler form of action. Just as action is ultimately the movement of the infinite within itself, so our individual thoughts are a movement of the infinite within itself. If our mind has become completely identified with its infinite basis, then our thoughts can be appreciated at their deepest level, when they are just starting to manifest, or individuate from the formless infinite. If we can think on this profound level, then the distinction between our thoughts and Gd's thoughts begins to blur - we have made His Will our will, and Gd then makes our will His Will. Whatever we think is perfectly in accord with Gd's Will and therefore becomes projected into outer reality, as King Solomon says in Proverbs (19:21) *Many are the thoughts in a person's heart, but Gd's counsel is what ultimately endures.* For "objective" reality is nothing more than a projection of Gd's Will "outward" from Gd.

In a few days it will be Tisha B'Av, when we mourn the destruction of our Temples and our holy city and our land, may they be speedily rebuilt. From our verse we can take heart, for just as the Israelites long ago were able to project a negative reality, we are capable of projecting a positive reality. To borrow from the Yom Kippur liturgy, repentance, prayer and charity can help us reverse the negativity we find around us and bring us to the dawn of the Messianic Era.

*Shabbat shalom,
Rafi Rabinoff*

Inside the Parashah: D'varim - פרשת דברים

Rabbi Seth D Gordon - Traditional Congregation, Creve Coeur, MO

Aliyah 1

What special features of **Sefer D'varim** (unlike the other Torah books) are established in the very first **aliyah**?

What borders are presented here of the Promised Land? How do they differ from other border definitions and contemporary Israel?

What is the significance of **p'sukim** 1:9-11?

Aliyah 2

What is the main purpose of this **aliyah**? What legal principles are

articulated? Are these principles new or exact statements of previous laws or slight modifications of previous laws?
Compare this section with Shemot 18:13-27. How are they similar and how are they different?

Aliyah 3

What event does Moshe now address? Why is this event given such prominence? How are the details here different from what is recorded in B'midbar 13?

Aliyah 4

How did B'nai Yisrael compound its sin? How does Moshe's report comport with the events in B'midbar?

Aliyah 5

What nations are specified and how is B'nai Yisrael commanded to react to them? What meaning can you derive from these **p'sukim**?

Compare the wording in this **aliyah** and in the next **aliyah** with the narrative in B'midbar 20:14 - 22:1. How are they similar and how are they different?

Aliyot 6 & 7

What is the purpose of the end of this **aliyah** and the next **aliyah**? (3:12-17)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tisha B'Av Schedule of Services:

Monday, August 8:

Minchah/Arvit 7:45 PM including the chanting of *Eichah* (Lamentations)

Tuesday, August 9:

Shacharit 6:30 AM without *Tallit* or *Tefillin*; includes *Kinot* (elegies)

Minchah/Arvit 7:15 PM with *Tallit* and *Tefillin*

Fast Ends 8:03 PM (sunset); 8:43 PM (3 stars)

Monday-Friday, through August 12 **Camp Derech Eretz** at Traditional Congregation

Thursday, August 11 **General Board Meeting**

Wednesday, August 17 **Deadline for receipt of articles, notices, etc. for September Newsletter.** Please submit to Marian at tradcong@sbcglobal.net

Wednesday, August 17 "Facing Arthur," film followed by discussion with Bob Cohn, Jewish Light editor-in-chief emeritus. Award-winning film of the friendship that develops between a Holocaust survivor and a German exchange student. 1:30 PM, Kopolow Building. \$7/person, snacks and drinks will be served. RSVP required by 8/16, 314-442-3720.

Refuah Sh'leimah to...Christy Brick

DAILY SERVICE TIMES

(see special times above for Mon/Tues)

Sunday morning - 9:00 AM

Monday - Friday morning - 7:00 AM
Monday - Friday evening - 6:30 PM

PRAYER

If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
May my right hand forget its cunning.

*May my tongue cleave to my mouth, if I remember you not,
If I set not Jerusalem above my greatest joy.*

God will arise and have compassion upon Zion,
For it is time to be gracious unto her.

*God builds up Jerusalem;
He gathers together the dispersed of Israel.*

He will make her wilderness like Eden,
And her desert like the garden of God.

*Joy and gladness shall be found therein,
Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.*

The ransomed of God shall return,
And come singing unto Zion.

*They shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them;
They shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof.*

They shall abide in peaceful habitations,
In safe dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

*Zion shall be redeemed through justice,
And they that dwell there through integrity.*

Then shall Zion be saved,
And Jerusalem shall dwell in safety.

*For out of Zion shall go forth Torah,
And the word of God from Jerusalem.*

Biblical Verses

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

Every generation thinks its problems are unique and potentially fatal. And yet every generation has survived to the next.

Carl Sagan
