

Parash'ot HaShavuah **(Weekly Portions)** By Torah Teacher Ariel ben-Lyman

The word Torah is taken from the root Hebrew word “yarah” meaning “to shoot an arrow” or “to hit the mark.” Properly used, the word “torah” refers to, “[the] teachings.” In a broad sense, Torah is the revelation of HaShem to His people. Within this framework, and depending on the context, the term “Torah” can mean: (1) The five books of Moshe; (2) that, plus the Prophets and the Writings; (3) that, plus the Oral Torah, which includes the Talmud and later legal writings; (4) that, plus all religious teaching from the rabbis, including ethical and “aggadic” materials; or (5) all of the above as understood and interpreted in light of what **Yeshua the Messiah** and the rest of the New Covenant Scriptures have said about it. For the most part, we will be using definitions number (1), (2), and (5).

It is crucial for us to understand theologically, that the primary purpose in HaShem's giving of the Torah, as a way of making someone righteous, only achieves its goal when the person, by faith, accepts that Yeshua is the promised Messiah spoken about therein. Until the individual reaches this conclusion, his familiarity of the Torah is only so much intellectual nutrition. Only by believing in Yeshua will the person be able to properly understand HaShem, and consequently, his Word.

Some traditions hinder our individual relationship with our Heavenly Father; other traditions enhance it. Every Saturday morning, during Sabbath service, Jewish synagogues, the world over, engage in the public reading and studying of the Pentateuch (the first five books of Moshe). This practice of public reading dates back as far as the time period of Ezra the Scribe (see Nehemiah 8:1), when the people gathered as a community and listened to the Word of HaShem. Since then, the rabbis have devised a method, whereby the entire Pentateuch could be covered within a yearly time frame. Each week, a portion (called a “parashah,” usually 1-6 chapters long) is read and expounded upon by the rabbi and congregation. The schedule has been standardized, in order to avoid the loss of understanding that sometimes accompanies spontaneity. Today the average attendee is encouraged to read ahead, in preparation for the upcoming Sabbath service.

Fifty-four portions in all, comprise the entire schedule, beginning with Genesis at Rosh HaShanah (Jewish Head of the Year), and concluding with Deuteronomy, around the same time a year later. A special day called “Simchat Torah” (Rejoicing in the Torah) was chosen to commemorate the re-rolling of the scrolls back to Genesis, facilitating another yearly reading cycle; the Torah was literally turned over and over again, every year.

During the time of the Hasmonean Dynasty (late Second Temple period, approx. 200 years B.C.E), the aggressive Hellenistic armies led by Antiochus IV “Epiphanes” forbade the reading of the Torah. According to tradition, it was during this time of fierce,

anti-Jewish persecution that the inclusion of a second, complimentary portion, known as the Haftarah (taken from the word "heef-teer," meaning, "to conclude") came into use. The idea was that since only the Scroll of the Torah was forbidden to read, the people would have to make due with the scrolls of the Prophets (Nevi'im) and the Writings (K'tuvim). Because of the familiarity with the content of the Torah portions themselves, a section from these other sources was chosen to parallel the Torah portion, in thought or instruction. Even after the defeat of the Hellenistic armies, because of their popularity, the haftar'ot remained a part of the public reading schedule. They were even employed during Yeshua's day (see Luke 4:16-30).

We invite and encourage you to join the reading schedule that has so inspired the Jewish Community since before the birth of the Church. At the same time, we challenge you to read the portions on your own, mining God's rich, spiritual garden, gleaning the precious nuggets that lay in store for you there. A Messianic commentary for each portion has been provided to assist you in your journey to become a more mature child of HaShem. May his Spirit richly bless you as you "Study to show thyself approved!" (2 Timothy 2:15)

Below is a complete schedule of the Torah and Haftarah portion addresses, their Hebrew names and corresponding English translations.

B'resheet (Genesis)

Hebrew name English Translation Torah/Haftarah Address

B'resheet "In the beginning" 1:1-6:8 Isaiah 42:5-43:10
 Noach "Noah" 6:9-11:32 Isaiah 54:1-55:5
 Lekh L'kha "Get yourself out" 12:1-17:27 Isaiah 40:27-41:16
 Vayera "He appeared" 18:1-22:24 2 Kings 4:1-37
 Hayyei-Sarah "Sarah's life" 23:1-25:18 1 Kings 1:1-31
 Tol'dot "History" 25:19-28:9 Malachi 1:1-2:7
 Vayetze "He went out" 28:10-32:3 Hosea 12:13-14:10
 Vayishlach "He sent" 32:4-36:43 Hosea 11:7-12:12
 Vayeshev "He continued living" 37:1-40:23 Amos 2:6-3:8
 Mikketz "At the end" 41:1-44:17 1 Kings 3:15-4:1
 Vayigash "He approached" 44:18-47:27 Ezekiel 37:15-28
 Vayechi "He lived" 47:28-50:26 1 Kings 2:1-12

Sh'mot (Exodus)

Hebrew name English Translation Torah/Haftarah Address

Sh'mot "Names" 1:1-6:1 Isaiah 27:6-28:13
 Va'era "I appeared" 6:2-9:35 Ezekiel 28:25-29:21
 Bo "Go" 10:1-13:16 Jeremiah 46:13-28
 B'shallach "After he had let go" 13:17-17:16 Judges 4:4-5:31
 Yitro "Jethro" 18:1-20:23 Isaiah 6:1-7:6; 9:6-7
 Mishpatim "Rulings" 21:1-24:18 Jeremiah 34:8-22

T'rumah "Contribution" 25:1-27:19 1 Kings 5:26-6:13
 Tetzaveh "You are to order" 27:20-30:10 Ezekiel 43:10-27
 Ki Tissa "When you take" 30:11-34:35 1 Kings 13:1-39
 Vayak'hel "He assembled" 35:1-38:20 1 Kings 7:40-50
 P'kudei "Accounts" 38:21-40:38 1 Kings 7:51-8:21

Vayikra (Leviticus)

Hebrew name English Translation Torah/Haftarah Address

Vayikra "He called" 1:1-5:26 Isaiah 43:21-44:23
 Tzav "Give an order" 6:1-8:36 Jeremiah 7:21-8:3
 Sh'mini "Eighth" 9:1-11:47 2 Samuel 6:1-7:17
 Tazria "She conceives" 12:1-13:59 2 Kings 4:42-5:19
 M'tzora "Person afflicted with [leprosy]" 14:1-15:33 2 Kings 7:3-20
 Acharei Mot "After the death" 16:1-18:30 Ezekiel 22:1-19
 K'doshim "Holy people" 19:1-20:27 Ezekiel 20:2-20
 Emor "Speak" 21:1-24:23 Ezekiel 44:15-31
 B'har "On Mount" 25:1-26:2 Jeremiah 32:6-27
 B'chukkotai "By my regulations" 26:3-27:34 Jeremiah 16:19-17:14

B'midbar (Numbers)

Hebrew name English Translation Torah/Haftarah Address

B'midbar "In the desert" 1:1-4:20 Hosea 2:1-22
 Naso "Take" 4:21-7:89 Judges 13:2-25
 B'ha'alo'tkha "When you set up" 8:1-12:16 Zechariah 2:14-4:7
 Shlach L'kha "Send on your behalf" 13:1-15:41 Joshua 2:1-24
 Korach "Korah" 16:1-18:32 1 Samuel 11:14-12:22
 Hukkat "Regulation" 19:1-22:1 Judges 11:1-33
 Balak "Balak" 22:2-25:9 Micah 5:6-6:8
 Pinchas "Phinehas" 25:10-30:1 1 Kings 18:46-19:21
 Mattot "Tribes" 30:2-32:42 Jeremiah 1:1-2:3
 Masa'ei "Stages" 33:1-36:13 Jeremiah 2:4-28

D'varim (Deuteronomy)

Hebrew name English Translation Torah/Haftarah Address

D'varim "Words" 1:1-3:22 Isaiah 1:1-27
 Va'etchanan "I pleaded" 3:23-7:11 Isaiah 40:1-26
 'Ekev "Because" 7:12-11:25 Isaiah 49:14-51:3
 Re'eh "See" 11:26-16:17 Isaiah 44:11-45:5
 Shoftim "Judges" 16:18-21:9 Isaiah 51:12-52:12
 Ki Tetze "When you go out" 21:10-25:19 Isaiah 54:1-10
 Ki Tavo "When you come" 26:1-29:8 Isaiah 60:1-22
 Nitzavim "Standing" 29:9-30:20 Isaiah 61:10-63:9
 Vayelekh "He went" 31:1-30 Isaiah 55:6-56:8
 Ha'azinu "Hear" 32:1-52 2 Samuel 22:1-51

V'Zot HaBrachah "This is the blessing" 33:1-34:12 Joshua 1:1-18