



שבת פרשת דברים/שבת חזון
SHABBAT PARSHAT DEVARIM
 6 AV/JULY 29

Haftorah is Isaiah 1:1-27 and is read to the special melody of Eichah. Pirkei Avot Chap. 3.

FRIDAY NIGHT
MINCHA - 7:00 PM
CANDLE LIGHTING - 7:58 PM
TZAIT - 9:01 PM

SATURDAY
HASHKAMA/YOUTH - 8:20 AM
SHACHARIT MAIN - 9:00 AM
LAST KRIAT SHEMA - 9:26 AM
GEMARA SHIUR - 6:45 PM
MINCHA - 7:45 PM
SHKIA - 8:15 PM
MAARIV/HAVDALAH - 9:00 PM

תשעה באב/TISHA B'AV
 9 AV/JULY 31-AUGUST 1

MONDAY NIGHT
MINCHA - 7:50 PM
FAST BEGINS - 8:10 PM
MAARIV/EICHAH- 8:10 PM

TUESDAY
SHACHARIT EARLY - 6:00 AM
SHACHARIT LATE - 8:00 AM
CHATZOT - 1:02 PM
MOVIE: DENIAL - 3:00 PM
KUMZITZ: 7:00 PM
MINCHA- 7:40 PM
MAARIV - 8:12 PM
FAST ENDS - 8:52 PM

BULLETIN INFORMATION
TO REQUEST A BULLETIN
ANNOUNCEMENT (BY 7:00 PM
WEDNESDAY) OR DEDICATE A
BULLETIN FOR \$36 (\$54 W/PHOTO),
EMAIL SEPLOTNICK@GMAIL.COM.

נא לא לדבר בשעת התפילה
 PLEASE NO CONVERSATION DURING SERVICES



	Sunday (7/30)	Monday (7/31)	Tuesday (8/1)	Wednesday (8/2)	Thursday (8/3)	Friday (8/4)
Earliest Talit	4:44 AM	4:46 AM	4:47 AM	4:48 AM	4:419 AM	4:51 AM
Shacharit	8:15 AM	6:25 AM	6:00 AM/ 8:00 AM	6:25 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM
Chatzot			1:02 PM	1:02 PM		
Gedolah	1:39 PM	1:38 PM	1:38 PM	1:38 PM	1:38 PM	1:38 PM
Mincha - Maariv	7:30 PM	7:55 PM	7:40 PM	7:55 PM	7:55 PM	7:00 PM
Shkia	8:14 PM	8:13 PM	8:12 PM	8:11 PM	8:10 PM	
Fast Ends			8:52 PM			
Tzait	8:59 PM	8:58 PM	8:57 PM	8:56 PM	8:55 PM	



RABBI MOSHE TZVI WEINBERG
Sunday, July 30, Between Mincha (7:30 PM) & Maariv
Light Refreshments Will Be Served After Maariv

"Longing for Redemption in 2017: A Positive and Hopeful approach to Tisha B'Av"
In Memory of Cheryl Wigod^{ת"ע}

On Tisha B'Av there will be a screening of "Denial" at the shul at 3:00 PM. Later join us at 7:00 PM for a kumzitz led by Rabbi Shestack with words and melodies of inspiration. You can also register to watch the OU webcast at ou.org/tishabav/ or the YU webcast at yutorah.org/tishabav/ in your homes.



Kiddush Information

- ☆ If you are in attendance when the Rabbi says “על המחיה”, your assistance in clean up would be appreciated.
- ☆ Kiddush setup for this Shabbat: Gorelik, Greenbaum, Wechsler
- ☆ Kiddush setup for next Shabbat: Bernstein, Goldstein, Infield
- ☆ To sponsor a Kiddush (\$1000/\$613/\$318 plus scotch) send an email to gplotnick@aol.com.

Community Events

- ☆ Aug. 6 - **Peak-Of-The-Summer BBQ** hosted at DANCHEI NOAM. [Rain date if necessary is August 13.] For more info, contact Oren Kravetz at okravetz@outlook.com.

Gita Cooperwasser^{ה"ע}

Youth Program



☆ YOUTH GROUPS RESUME IN THE FALL (TOT SHABBAT STILL IN THE PLAYROOM).

- ☆ Parents, ensure that your children are in groups or with you at all times.
- ☆ NO FOOD ALLOWED DURING GROUPS!

Adult Education



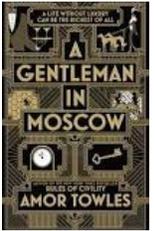
- ☆ CHUMASH CLASS - Shabbat morning before Shacharit.
- ☆ GEMARA SHIUR with Rabbi Josh Abramson - One Hour Before Mincha on Shabbat.
- ☆ RETIREES' SHIUR - Resumes August 7.
- ☆ WEEKNIGHT GEMARA SHIUR - On Summer Hiatus.
- ☆ FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT - After Kiddush, but on hiatus this Shabbat.
- ☆ LEARNING ON THE LAWN, Pirkei Avot Monthly Shiur.

Ahavat Achim Future Events

- ☆ July 30 - Rabbi Moshe Tzvi Weinberg shiur between Mincha & Maariv
- ☆ Aug. 26 - Kiddush sponsored by the Sonnenblick family in honor of Avi's Aufruf and upcoming marriage to Tova Medetsky
- ☆ Sept. 16 - Seudat Shilshit sponsored by the Agress family on Yahrzeit of Amy's father Ha'Rav Yisroel Yehuda Ben Ephraim Michal Ha'Levi Pruzansky^{ב"ר}.
- ☆ Oct. 6 - Kiddush is sponsored by the Winchester family on the Yahrzeit of Steve's mother Helen Winchester, Miriam Hendl bas Shimon^{ה"ע}
- ☆ Nov. 18 - Andrew Wechsler Bar Mitzvah
- ☆ Feb. 10 - Yachad Shabbaton

Book Club

- ☆ Want to read ahead, the next book will be [A Gentleman in Moscow](#) by Amor Towles.



Fair Lawn Mikvah Renovation Project Kickoff Event.

For almost three decades the Fair Lawn Mikvah has helped enhance and elevate the Kedusha and Tahara of our community. The renovation, beautification and upkeep of our Mikvah is the responsibility of all of us. To help raise the much needed funds for the upkeep and future renovations of our community Mikvah, there will be a kickoff event on Sunday, August 13, 7:00 PM, at Shomrei Torah. The evening will include a delicious fleishig buffet dinner catered by Ma'adan and a night out with Soul Farm. The event is free with a sponsorship. The level of sponsors are: \$350 per person, \$500 per couple, or \$1000 per couple who will be recognized with their name on a plaque at the entrance of the Mikvah. Don't delay in making your reservation since we are limited to 75 people. All three sponsorship options also enable you to attend our Mikvah Gala Evening which is being planned for November 5. For more information contact Dossy Brandstatter at 201-401-2386 or mikvahfairlawn@gmail.com. To RSVP and sponsor online, visit www.shomrei-torah.org/event/mikvahkickoffevent.



Points To Ponder

Answers on Page 3

- ☆ 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Aliyah - What is the first event that Moshe recounts in the introduction to the epic speech of Sefer Devarim? Why this event?
- ☆ 5th and 6th Aliyah - What critical factor precedes each of the battles the Jews undertook in getting to the banks of the Jordan?
- ☆ 6th Aliyah - At what point does God tell Moshe not to be afraid? Why would Moshe say this to the people?



The Nine Days

(Adapted from the Ezras Torah Luach)

In addition to the rules for the Three Weeks (below), from Rosh Chodesh Av (starting Sunday night, July 23) until after Tisha B'Av we refrain from washing ourselves with warm or hot water. Only those who are feeble, extremely sensitive, or who must do so for medical reasons may wash with warm or hot water. We do not launder clothing until after Tisha B'Av. We do not wear clothing that was laundered before Rosh Chodesh, except on Shabbat. We do not drink wine or eat meat of any kind, with the exception of the feeble, sickly, or ill, who may eat poultry. We may eat meat and drink wine on Shabbat or while attending a Seudat Mitzvah, such as a Brit or the completion of a Tractate of Talmud.

The Three Weeks

(Adapted From the Ezras Torah Luach)

The period between the Seventeenth of Tamuz until after Tisha B'Av is called "בין המצרים" — "between the straits" (based upon the verse in Lamentations 1:3) because of the multiple tragedies that have occurred to the Jewish people throughout the ages during these three weeks. Among the worst of the tragedies are the destruction of both Holy Temples, the end of Jewish Sovereignty for almost 2,000 years, and the exile from Eretz Yisroel. The custom is for us to manifest some signs of mourning during this period. Therefore, we do not make weddings or take haircuts during these three weeks. We do not make the Bracha שיהיינו (so as to avoid the Bracha שיהיינו we do not eat a new fruit [unless that fruit would be unobtainable afterward] or purchase an expensive article of clothing that would require the Bracha שיהיינו, during these three weeks [the custom is to make the Bracha on Shabbat].

Points To Ponder Answers:

A1 - The story of the spies. Perhaps he begins with this event because it underscores the whole reason for the speech, which is to ensure that the people don't repeat the same mistakes they made when Moshe was their leader and the mistake that Moshe is most worried about them repeating is the sin of the spies.

A2 - God commanding Moshe to fight.

A3 - God tells Moshe not to be afraid of Og, this is interesting in light of the fact that Hashem doesn't say this before the battle with Sihon, which presumably means that Moshe was particularly fearful of Og for whatever reason (the midrash has several reasons). Perhaps Moshe is telling this to the people to tell them that it is ok to have those feelings of fear, but to try to overcome them with the knowledge and faith that God will make you victorious.

SUPPORT YOUR SHUL

Donate a Sefer, etc.

The shul has Siddurim & Machzorim (\$36) and Chumashim (\$54) available to be donated. Please contact Jeff Safier at robynsafier@gmail.com for details.

Yahrzeit Plaques

Memorialize a loved one with a plaque for \$300 for members and \$450 for non-members. We will also endeavor to send you written notice of an upcoming yahrzeit, mention your loved one's name during the public Yizkor and list the yahrzeit in the Bulletin once a year. For more information, contact Sophie Infield at 791-5518.

Scrip

Scrip is available from Men's Club. Email David at dmgarfunkel@gmail.com. Pay using Paypal (treasurer@ahavatachim.org) or use Discover, MasterCard or Visa - email treasurer@ahavatachim.org for details.

Mishebayrach

If you've made a Mishebayrach you've pledged to give Tzedakah on behalf of those for whom you asked Hashem's blessing. Contributions to the shul are appropriate and can be made via Paypal to treasurer@ahavatachim.org, or via MasterCard, Visa or Discover by sending info to Steve Winchester (contact him at treasurer@ahavatachim.org). If by check indicate on its face "Aliyah Donation."

David Schwitzer^{ר"ב} Social Hall

Please contact Ben Lang at bmmnpl@aol.com to book the David Schwitzer^{ר"ב} Social Hall for an event or special occasion. \$250 per simcha (members) / \$500 paid in advance for non-members, plus the cost of any additional clean up (plus a \$150 security deposit refunded when the social hall is returned in the condition it started in). Private caterers must be approved in advance by the Rabbi.

Sisterhood & Men's Club

Please contact Elliot Greene at egreene@acm.org to join the Men's Club. To join Sisterhood, please contact Shelly at sewinchester58@gmail.com or Renee at reneeafreund@yahoo.com.

Honoraria

Contributions to acquire honoraria in memory or honor of a loved one are welcome. The available Honoraria list will be provided upon request by contacting Steven Plotnick at seplotnick@gmail.com.

Mitzvah Cards

Want mitzvah cards, contact Eita Latkin at 791-8940 or parentsof3@aol.com. Cost is \$3 per card. Also can be ordered in bulk - ten cards for \$25, which you send out yourself privately.

SUPPORT YOUR SHUL

EREV TISHA B'AV (Monday, July 31)

At the סעודה המפסקת, the concluding meal before the fast, aside from bread we do not eat two different types of cooked foods. Three people should not eat together in order to avoid making a Zimun. Sit upon the floor and eat the customary egg dipped into ashes to symbolize mourning. Don't eat another cooked food with the egg, as the egg itself constitutes a cooked food. Stop eating and drinking, and all the other categories of activities forbidden on Tisha B'Av, before Shkia (8:13 PM).

TISHA B'AV (Monday, July 31/Tuesday, August 1)

We are prohibited to eat and drink, to wash ourselves (even in cold water), to apply oils to ourselves for pleasurable purposes, to have marital relations, and to wear leather shoes. All who mourn for Jerusalem will earn the right to take part in the rejoicing over the rebuilt Jerusalem. Even women who are pregnant or nursing, or people of weak constitution, for whom fasting is very difficult must fast on Tisha B'Av (this does not apply to someone who is seriously ill), for the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash is worth suffering for at least one day a year.

At Maariv we remove the Aron HaKodesh curtain, dim the lights, and sit on the floor or on a low stool. Don't sit on regular chairs or benches until after midday on Tuesday [1:02 PM]. We have a public recitation of Eichah Monday night, followed by several Kinot for the night of Tisha B'Av.

Tuesday, on awakening, we wash our fingers only until the knuckles (as one is drying his fingers while still moist he may rub them across his eyes to remove the sediment). We do not wear our Tallit or Tefillin until midday, but do wear Tallit Koton, but without making a Bracha over it.

At Shacharit three Aliyahs from Parshat Vaeschanan (Deut. 4:25-40) "כי תוליד בנים"; The Haftorah is read in the melody of Eichah from Jeremiah 8:13-9:23: "אסוף אסיפם". We say the lengthy collection of Kinot until their completion (preferably around noon). After midday it is permitted to sit on chairs or benches.

At Mincha we don Tallit and Tefillin, making the appropriate Brachot. From the Sefer Torah we have three Aliyahs in "ויחל"; the third Aliyah is the Maftir. The Haftorah is "דרשו" Isaiah 55:6-56:8 (until "אקבץ עלי" "לנקבציו"). In Shemonah Esrei include "נחם" in "בונה ירושלים" and "עננו" in "שומע תפלה". If one forgot "נחם" in "בונה ירושלים" he may say it before "ותחזינה עינינו" omitting the ending blessing "ברוך מנחם ציון", concluding only with "ותחזינה".

The essence of a Fast Day is Teshuva - Repentance. This is particularly so for sins that were responsible for the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash, and yet, which we remain guilty of today, such as senseless hatred and Lashon Harah.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ahavat Achim Membership/ Hospitality

Please contact Arnie at aspier@verizon.net for details on membership. For Shabbat hospitality contact Melanie at mkwestel@gmail.com.

Bikkur Cholim/Chesed Committee

If someone needs a visit/assistance, contact Sara Levine at saralevine06@gmail.com or Mary Lisa Katter at kenkatter541@gmail.com.

Personal Announcements

Various life cycle events related to members are announced in the bulletin (e.g., births, bar and bat mitzvahs, weddings and deaths, as well as travel to/from Israel to study). We also welcome new members. Other personal announcements are not appropriate for inclusion, except as part of the bulletin's dedication (a \$36 cost - \$54 with photo). Thank you for your cooperation.

Numbers & Info

- ☆ ERUV UPDATE – By Email Only. To subscribe, email fairlawneruv-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or check the status at www.fairlawneruv.com.
- ☆ MIKVAH – 201-796-0350. At Shomrei Torah, weekdays 9:00 PM–10:30 PM, Motzei Shabbat from 1 ¼ hours after Shabbat ends for 1½ hours. Kaylim Mikvah: Sunday 10 AM-3 PM
- ☆ TWITTER: [AhavatAchimFL](https://twitter.com/AhavatAchimFL)
- ☆ FACEBOOK: facebook.com/groups/ahavat.achim/
- ☆ INSTAGRAM: instagram.com/ahavatachimfl/?hl=en
- ☆ FLICKR: flickr.com/photos/ahavatachim/albums

Shul Calendar

- ☆ To add events to the shul calendar email Larry at lardavbern@gmail.com



RABBI MOSHE TZVI WEINBERG

Sunday, July 30, Between Mincha (7:30 PM) & Maariv

Light Refreshments Will Be Served After Maariv

“Longing for Redemption in 2017: A Positive and Hopeful approach to Tisha B’Av”

In Memory of Cheryl Wigod^{ה"ע}

**Ahavat Achim
18-25 Saddle River Rd.
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410**

Rabbi Moshe Weinberg teaches in Yeshiva University’s Irving I. Stone Beit Midrash Program (SBMP), where he also serves as Mashgiach Ruchani. A Yeshiva University graduate, Rabbi Weinberg received semicha from Rabbi Zalman Nechemia Goldberg of Jerusalem and is certified by the Center for Integrated Teacher Education. Rabbi Weinberg has worked as a Jewish educator for 13 years, and previously taught at Torah Academy of Bergen County and the Moriah School of Englewood,

before joining the Yeshiva University faculty five years ago. He has served as a scholar in residence in Jewish communities and college campuses across the country. He was recently appointed to the position of Mashpia at Congregation Beth Abraham in Bergenfield, NJ, where he lives with his family. He also teaches several days a week at Yeshivas Heichal Hatorah and is actively involved in their night seder program. More than 1,100 of his recorded shiurim appear on yutorah.org.

COVENANT & Conversation

A STUDY OF THE PARSHA WITH RABBI SACKS



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I am deeply touched that Covenant & Conversation has been generously sponsored by The Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation in memory of Maurice and Vivienne Wohl ז"ל. Maurice was a visionary philanthropist on a vast scale, driven throughout his life by a sense of Jewish responsibility. Vivienne was a woman of the deepest humanity and compassion, who had a kind word for everyone. Together, they were a unique partnership of dedication and grace, for whom living was giving. Through their Charitable Foundation, they continue to bring blessings to Jewish communities around the world.

— RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS



THE MAURICE WOHL
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

The Book of the Covenant

Devarim 2017 / 5777

As we begin reading the fifth and final book of the Torah, I would like to discuss three questions. First, why does the book of Devarim have the structure it does: a mix of history, law, recollection and anticipation?

The sages knew that Devarim had a clear structure. Elsewhere in the Torah some rabbis used the principle of semikhut haparshiyot – that we can learn something from the fact that passage Y occurs immediately after passage X. Others however did not, because there is a rule, Ein Mukdam Umu'achar BaTorah, meaning, the Torah does not always follow a strict chronological sequence. So we cannot always attach significance to the fact that the passages are in the order they are. However, everyone agrees that there is precise order and structure in the book of Devarim (Berakhot 21b). But what is the order?

“What kind of book is Devarim and what is its significance to the Torah as a whole”

Second: the sages originally called Devarim Mishneh Torah, a “second law”. Hence the Latin name Deuteronomy, which means, the second law. But in what sense is Devarim a second law? Some of the laws Moses states in the book have appeared before, others have not. Is it a repetition of the laws Moses received at Sinai and the Tent of Meeting? Is it something new? What exactly is the meaning of Mishneh Torah?

Third: what is the book doing here? It represents the speeches Moses delivered in the last month of his life to the generation who would cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land. Why is it included in the Torah at all? If the Torah is a history book, then we should proceed directly from the end of

Bamidbar, the arrival of the Israelites at the banks of the river Jordan, to the book of Joshua, when they crossed the river and began their conquest of the land. If the Torah is a book of law, then Devarim should just be a collection of laws without all the historical reminiscence and prophecy it contains. What kind of book is Devarim and what is its significance to the Torah as a whole?

A number of relatively recent archeological discoveries have however thrown new light on all these questions. They are the engraved records of ancient treaties between neighbouring powers. Among them are the “Stele of the Vultures” commemorating the victory of Eannatum, ruler of Lagash in southern Mesopotamia, over the people of Umma, and that of Naram-Sin, king of Kish and Akkad, with the ruler of Elam. Both date from the third millennium BCE, that is to say, before the time of Abraham.

The treaties are of two kinds: between parties of roughly equal power (“parity treaties”) and those between a strong one (a precursor of the modern idea of a superpower) and a weak one. These latter are known as “suzerainty treaties”, suzerain meaning the dominant power in a particular region.

Another name for treaty is, of course, brit, or covenant, and we now see their significance for an understanding of Judaism. Covenant was the basic structure in the ancient Middle East of treaties between neighbouring powers. Abraham, for example, makes a brit with Avimelech, king of Gerar, at Beersheva (Gen. 21:27-32). So does Isaac (Gen. 26:28). Jacob does so with Laban (Gen. 31:44-54).

What the newly discovered treaties show is the precise form of ancient covenants. They had six parts. [1] They began with a preamble, establishing the identity of the person or power initiating the covenant. This was followed by [2] a historical prologue, reviewing the history of the relationship between the two parties to the covenant. Then came [3] the provisions of the covenant itself, the stipulations, which were often stated in two forms, [a] general principles, and [b] detailed provisions.

There then followed [4] a provision for the covenant to be deposited in a sacred place, and read on a regular basis. Next came [5] the sanctions associated with the covenant, namely the blessings that would follow if it was adhered to, and the curses that would occur if it is broken. Lastly there is [6] a statement of the witnesses to the agreement – usually the gods of the nations involved. The entire book of Devarim is structured as an extended covenant, on precisely these lines.

“What the newly discovered treaties show is the precise form of ancient covenants. They had six parts. The entire book of Devarim is structured as an extended covenant, on precisely these lines.”

This is how it works:

1	Preamble	1:1-1:5	Announces place, time and person initiating the covenant that follows: Moses on behalf of God.
2	Historical prologue	1:6 - 4:49	Moses recapitulates the history that has brought them to where they are, mostly recalling the events described in the book of Bamidbar
3	Stipulations	[a] chs. 5-11	[a] general provisions: Ten Commandments, Shema, etc. Recapitulation of events surrounding the making of the covenant at Sinai.
		[b] chs. 12-26	[b] specific provisions: the details of the law, with special reference to how they are to be carried out by the people as a whole in the land of Israel.
4	Deposition and regular reading	27, 31	The law to be inscribed on stone (stele) at Mount Ebal; the Torah written by Moses and placed in the ark; to be read in public at a national assembly by the king every seven years.
5	Sanctions: the blessings and the curses	28	Ch. 28 states the blessings and curses; 29-30 the actual covenant renewal, together with a statement that even if the people break the covenant and the curses come to pass, return, teshuvah, is still possible.
6	Witnesses	30:19 – 32:1	“Heaven and earth” (4:26, 30:19, 31:28, 32:1), “This song” (31:19)

In other words, apart from Moses’ song and blessing of the tribes, with which the book and Moses’ life come to an end, the entire book of Devarim is a covenant on a monumental scale.

We now see the extraordinary nature of the book. It has taken an ancient political formula and used it for an entirely new purpose.

What is unique about the covenant in Judaism is, first, that one of the parties is God himself. This would have been unintelligible to Israel’s neighbours, and remains extraordinary even today. The idea that God might bind himself to human beings, linking their destiny to His, making them His ambassadors – his “witnesses” – to the world, is still radical and challenging.

Second, the other party to the covenant is not, as it was in the ancient world, the king or ruler of the relevant nation, but the people as a whole. Every Israelite, as we saw in Exodus 19 and 24, and throughout Deuteronomy, is party to the covenant, and co-responsible with the people as a whole for its being kept.

From this flows the idea of Kol Yisrael Arevin Zeh Lazeh, “all Jews are responsible for one another”, as well as the much later American idea of “We, the people.” This transformation meant that every Jew had to know the law and teach it to his or her children. Every Jew had to know the story of his or her people, reciting it on Pesach and when bringing first-fruits to Jerusalem.

This is covenant politics, a unique form of political structure based not on a hierarchy of power but on a shared sense of history and destiny. It is a moral politics, dedicated to creating a just and

gracious society that honours the dignity of all, especially the downtrodden, the poor, the powerless and the marginal: the widow, the orphan and the stranger.

The structure of the book is now clear. It follows precisely the structure of an ancient suzerainty treaty between a strong power, God, and a weak one, the Israelites. Politically, such treaties were well known in the ancient world, but religiously this is unique. For it means that God has taken an entire nation to be His “partners in the work of creation,” by showing all humanity what it is to construct a society that honours each individual as the image of God.

We now understand what Mishneh Torah means. It means that this book is a “copy” of the covenant between God and the people, made at Sinai, renewed on the bank of the Jordan, and renewed again at significant moments of Jewish history. It is the written record of the agreement, just as a ketubah is a written record of the obligations undertaken by a husband toward his wife.

We now also understand the place of Devarim in Tanakh as a whole. It is the axis on which all Jewish history turns. Had the generation who left Egypt the faith and courage to enter the promised land, all Jewish history would turn on the revelation at Sinai. In fact, though, the episode of the spies showed that that generation lacked the spirit to do so. Therefore the critical moment came for the next generation, when Moses at the end of his life renewed the covenant with them as the condition of their inheritance of the land. The four previous books of the Torah lead up to this moment, and all the other books of Tanakh are a commentary to it – an account of how it worked out in the course of time.

Devarim is the book of the covenant, the centre-point of Jewish theology, and the project it defines is unique. For it aims at nothing less than the construction of a society that would moralise its members, inspire others, and serve as a role model of what might be achieved were humanity as a whole to worship the one God who made us all in His image.

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Shabbat Shalom



For more material from Rabbi Sacks, or to join his mailing list, please visit www.rabbisacks.org

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