

# Triennial Torah Study – 4<sup>th</sup> Year 10/08/2013

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This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at:

<https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf>

Deut 30		2 Chron 26-29	Rev 13-14
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## Returning to God—A Choice We All Must Make (Deuteronomy 30)

As previously mentioned in the highlights on chapter 28, Israel, when in captivity and distress, would ultimately repent. It is interesting how God describes their future repentance: “And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (30:6). And how would the circumcision of the heart, leading to the love toward God, be manifested? Verse 8 gives the answer: “And you will again [in your future repentance] obey the voice of the Lord and do all His commandments which I command you today.” Read that again! Memorize this verse! Many try to say that God’s law is done away. But this passage shows that Israel, at the time of their repentance—which is still yet future even today—will at that time return to obeying the same commandments that Moses gave them. And so, far from being done away, God’s law still stands (compare Malachi 4:4-6; Matthew 5:17-20). God also points out in Deuteronomy 30:11-14 that there are no good excuses for pleading ignorance. Moses made the point that God’s commandments are completely accessible to Israel. And in the New Testament, the apostle Paul applies this concept of accessibility to the access we have to Christ (Romans 10:5-8).

God reminds Israel (and us today) that He has revealed to us the way of death and the way of life—but we are required to choose. God will not make this decision for us. However, if we choose the wrong way, it will only bring misery, pain and, eventually, death. On the other hand, choosing the right way means being blessed with prosperity, happiness and life—not just for us, but also for our children (Deuteronomy 30:11-20; compare Exodus 20:5-6). If we’ve chosen the wrong path in the past, it’s not too late to turn around—at least, not yet. As the first part of this chapter shows, we can choose to return to God and His way. And, when we do, He will forgive us and lead us to life. May all of us make the right choice.

## **Uzziah's Sin and Leprosy; Israel an Assyrian Vassal State (2 Chronicles 26:16-21; 2 Kings 15:5, 19-24)**

In Judah: The demise of Uzziah's (Azariah's) spiritual life should serve as a warning to us all.

We can't continue living on the basis of our past good works and faithfulness. Our loyalty to God must continue to the very end of our human existence. Uzziah's pride in his power was such that he tried to usurp the role of the priests. "In parallel Near Eastern cultures, semidivine kings also served as priests. Perhaps Uzziah's determination to burn incense reflected an arrogant intent to exalt himself" (Lawrence Richards, *The Bible Reader's Companion*, 1991, note on 2 Chronicles 26:16-23). The king soon learned that God would not tolerate intrusion into service He had reserved for the sons of Aaron, and the Almighty dealt him a severe blow, afflicting him with leprosy. As mentioned in the highlights for Amos 1, Josephus says that the huge earthquake of Uzziah's reign (Amos 1:1; Zechariah 14:4-5) accompanied this punishment. According to Scripture, Uzziah's leprosy lasted the rest of his life, which lasted more than a decade beyond this.

It isn't clear whether Uzziah repented. The Bible does say he knew he couldn't remain in the temple with leprosy (2 Chronicles 26:20), a fact laid down in the law God gave (see Leviticus 22:2-6; Numbers 12:10, 15). Of course, Uzziah's "obedience" at this point may have simply been a knee-jerk reaction to flee further divine wrath rather than a desire to now obey what was right. Yet it is hoped that, on further reflection, his newfound fear of God helped to restore him to a right state of mind. We are not told that he turned to a life of wickedness—only that he sinned in this matter. And God did not bring him to the grave by violent death as He did certain other rebellious rulers of Judah. Rather, Uzziah was allowed to live many more years in his humbled condition. The situation, then, appears similar to that of Moses when he disobeyed God (see Numbers 27:12-14)—and David when He sinned (see 2 Samuel 12:13-14). A degree of punishment had to be meted out to the leader as an example to everyone else, even when he himself repented.

During Uzziah's house quarantine, his son Jotham took over the official duties as coregent. Again, the Bible doesn't give details, but it is possible that Uzziah still remained in control, working through his son. In its note on 2 Kings 15:1-2, *The Nelson Study Bible* states: "The nature of Jotham's duties (v. 5), the assigning of a full 52 years of reign to Azariah, and Isaiah's dating of his call to the year of Azariah's (or Uzziah's) death (Is. 6:1) may indicate that Azariah retained the power of the throne until the end."

In Israel: "Pul" was another Babylonian name for the Assyrian emperor Tiglath-Pileser III (see 1 Chronicles 5:26; Nelson, note on 2 Kings 15:19). "To understand the complex events of the late eighth century bc, a word must be said concerning the Assyrians. After nearly a halfcentury of decline, Assyria reawakened with the usurpation of the throne by Tiglath-Pileser III in 745 bc. Indeed he and his successors in the Neo-Assyrian Empire were to effect a drastic change in the balance of power in the ancient Near East. Having solidified the kingdom in the east, Tiglath-

Pileser turned his attention to the west in 743. Although the exact course of his western campaign is difficult to follow, it seems clear that all of Syro-Palestine submitted to the Assyrian yoke. Among those nations and kings whose tribute is recorded in his annals is the name Menahem of Israel, thus confirming the biblical account" (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, 2 Kings 15:16-22).

### **Revelation 13**

John testifies of standing on the sand of the sea and seeing a beast coming up out of the sea. He describes this beast as having seven heads, ten horns, a crown on each horn, and names of blasphemy on his seven heads. He states the beast is a combination of the likeness of the four beasts we read about in Daniel. This beast was like a leopard (Greece), its feet like the feet of a bear (Medo-Persia), and a mouth like the mouth of a lion (Rome). He had power and that power he received from the dragon who also gave him his throne and authority.

One of the heads of this beast appeared as though it had been slain but the deadly wound was healed and this is marveled at by all the world. Those who marveled after the beast worshipped the dragon and the beast also. This head spoke blasphemies and was given authority for forty-two months. The blasphemies the wounded head spoke were against Elohim, His Tent, and those dwelling in heaven.

This head was given great authority and it made war with the set apart ones and was given authority to overcome them. Then John tells us that all those not having their names written in the Book of Life (of the slain Lamb) will indeed worship this head of the beast.

We are given uplifting words next as we are assured that those who are bring others into captivity will go into captivity and those who kill by the sword will also be killed by the sword.

Another beast is seen coming up out of the earth which had two horns like a lamb but it speaks as a dragon. This beast causes all to worship the first beast (the head whose deadly wound was healed). This beast with horns like a lamb and who speaks like a dragon does great wonders such that it even causes fire to come down from heaven before men.

Many are led astray because of these signs and wonders and he causes his followers to make an image to this blasphemous head of the beast. This image speaks and causes all who will not worship the wounded head of the beast to be killed. He causes all to receive a mark upon their right hand or upon their foreheads. Without this mark, no one will be able to buy or sell.

### **Revelation 14**

In Chapter 14 we read of the Lamb. He is standing on Mt Tsiyon and with Him are the one hundred and forty-four thousand who have His Father's Name written upon their foreheads. Voices and harps are heard and the set apart ones are singing a renewed song. They are characterized by their purity, faithfulness, and loyalty to the Lamb. They are first fruits. No falsehood is found in them and they are blameless before the Throne.

A proclamation goes out of the Good News into all the earth. Also saying, "Fear Elohim and give esteem to Him, because the hour of His judgment has come. And worship Him who made the heaven and the earth, and sea, and fountains of water."

Next we hear of Babel falling and with Babel all those who drank from her cup of whoring. They will drink of the wrath of Elohim and shall be tortured with fire and sulphur before the set apart messengers and before the Lamb.

The endurance of the set apart ones is they are guarding the commands of Elohim and the belief of Yeshua. A blessing goes out to all those who perish in the Master. A vision of the Holy One sitting on a white cloud wearing a golden crown and a sharp sickle in His hand. The Hour of reaping has come! He thrusts His sickle into the earth and the earth was reaped. The messenger who is sent out to reap the harvest, does so with a sickle yet is reaping grapes. A sickle is not used to reap grapes so there is a mystery here. The vines are thrown into the great winepress of the wrath of Elohim.

The winepress was trodden outside the city and the blood was so great that it reaches to the bridles of horses. A great, great amount.