

The Torah of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"I Have a Dream," The March on Washington, August 28, 1963*

We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until "justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream." (Amos 2:24)

...I have a *dream* today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with.

Isaiah 40:1-5

¹ Comfort, oh comfort My people, says your God. ² Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and declare to her that her term of service is over, that her sin is forgiven; For she has received at the hand of the Lord double for all her sins. ³ A voice rings out: "Clear in the desert a road for the Lord! Forge in the wilderness a path for our God!" ⁴ Let every valley be raised, every hill and mountain made low. Let the crooked places become straight, and the rough places made plain. ⁵ The Glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together — For the Lord Himself has spoken."

א נחמו נחמו, עמי--יאמר, אלקיכם. ב דברו על-לב ירושלים, וקראו אליה--פי מלאה צבאה, פי נרצה עונה: פי לקחה מיד ה, כפלים בכל-חטאתיה. ג קול קורא--במדבר, פנו דרך ה; ישרו, בערבה, מסלה, לאלקינו. ד כל-גיא, ינשא, וכל-הר וגבעה, ישפלו; והנה העקב למישור, והרכסים לבקעה. ה ונגלה, כבוד ה; וראו כל-בשר יחדו, פי פי ה דבר.

"I've Been to the Mountaintop," Mason Temple, Memphis, Tennessee, April 3, 1968

Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop.

And I don't mind.

Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!

And so I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man! Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!!

Deuteronomy 3:23-28, Parshat *Ve'etchanan*

²³ I pleaded with the Lord at that time, saying, ²⁴ "O Lord God, You who let Your servant see the first works of Your greatness and Your mighty hand, You whose powerful deeds no god in heaven or on earth can equal!²⁵ Let me, I pray, cross over and see the good land on the other side of the Jordan, that good mountain, and the Lebanon." ²⁶ But the Lord was wrathful with me on your account and would not listen to me. The Lord said to me, "Enough out of you! Never speak to Me of this matter again!"

²⁷ Go up to the summit of Pisgah and gaze about, to the west, the north, the south, and the east. Look at it well, but you shall not go across yonder Jordan. ²⁸ Give Joshua his instructions, and imbue him with strength and courage, for he shall go across at the head of this people, and he shall allot to them the land that you may only see."

כג וְאַתְחַנֵּן, אֶל-ה', בְּעֵת הַהוּא, לֵאמֹר. **כד** אֶ-דְּנִי ה', אַתָּה הַחֲלוֹת לְהִרְאוֹת אֶת-עַבְדְּךָ, אֶת-גְּדֻלָּתְךָ, וְאֶת-יָדְךָ הַחֲזֹקָה--אֲשֶׁר מִי-אֵל בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲשֶׂה כְּמַעֲשֵׂיךָ וְכַגְּבוּרָתְךָ. **כה** אֶעֱבְרָה-נָא, וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה, אֲשֶׁר, בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן: הֲהִיא הַטּוֹבָה הַזֹּה, וְהַלְבָּנוֹ. **כו** וַיִּתְעַבֵּר ה' בִּי לְמַעַנְכֶם, וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִי; וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵלַי, רַב-לֶךְ--אֶל-תּוֹסֵף דַּבֵּר אֵלַי עוֹד, בְּדַבַּר הַזֶּה.

כז עֲלֵה רֹאשׁ הַפְּסִגָה, וְשֵׂא עֵינֶיךָ יְמִינָה וְצַפְנָה וְתִמְנָה וּמִזְרְחָה--וּרְאֵה בְּעֵינֶיךָ: כִּי-לֹא תַעֲבֹר, אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה. **כח** וְצוּ אֶת-יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, וְחִזְקֵהוּ וְאַמְצֵהוּ: כִּי-הוּא יַעֲבֹר, לְפָנַי הַעַם הַזֶּה, וְהוּא יַנְחִיל אוֹתָם, אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה.

*August 28, 1963 - 8th of Elul, 5723, Parshat Ki Teitzei

Seven Haftarot of Comfort: *Ve'etchanan, Eikev, Re'eh, Shoftim, Ki Teitzei, Ki Tavo, Nitzavim-VaYeilech*