

Bible Readings and Commentaries

Book 6 of 6

**Sixth Half-Year of Triennial Torah Cycle
For Sabbath Service**

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Triennial Torah Cycle from the Ancient Jerusalem Holy Temple

The first Sabbath of the Month Nisan (the month that begins two weeks before Passover), every third year, is the time to start the triennial Torah reading cycle. This is the reading cycle that was used in the Holy Temple, and apparently the one that Yeshua followed. As the readings progress through the three years, the subjects will be seen to correspond to times of festivals and major events.

Each Sabbath's readings are called a seder (order of service). Each seder includes a portion of the *Torah* (meaning Instruction), *Haftara* (meaning Completion of the Torah -- a reading from the Prophets), and a Psalm to be sung. The cycle begins with *Bereshit (In the beginning)* / Genesis 1, and Psalm 1, and a portion of Isaiah on the same subject. A reading of corresponding topic from the Apostolic Writings (NT) is suggested for each Sabbath. The title of a Torah reading is the first significant word(s), which predates today's common system of chapters and verses. The Psalms, used in numerical order, agree in subject with the Torah portions throughout the three years.

These blessings are to accompany the Bible readings:

Before Torah Reading:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who chose us from among all peoples by giving us Your Torah.
Blessed are You, Yahweh, giver of the Torah."*

After Torah Reading:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who in giving us Yeshua, the Living Torah, has planted everlasting life in our midst.
Blessed are You, Yahweh, giver of the Torah."*

Before Prophets and Apostles:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who selected good prophets, delighting in their words which were spoken truthfully.
Blessed are You, Yahweh, Who chose the Torah, Your servant Moses, Your people Israel,
and the prophets of truth and righteousness."*

After Prophets and Apostles:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Rock of Ages, righteous throughout all generations.
You are the faithful God, promising and then performing, speaking and then fulfilling,
for all Your words are true and righteous.
Faithful are You, Yahweh our God, and faithful are Your words,
for no word of Yours shall remain unfulfilled;
You are a faithful and merciful God and King.
Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Who are faithful in fulfilling all Your words."*

Each reader who does not personally say the blessings should say "Amen" to the blessings as indicated in the text.

1 "And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which Yahweh, the God of your fathers, is giving you. 2 "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of Yahweh your God which I command you. 3 "Your eyes have seen what Yahweh has done in the case of Baal-peor, for all the men who followed Baal-peor, Yahweh your God has destroyed them from among you. 4 "But you who held fast to Yahweh your God are alive today, every one of you. 5 "See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as Yahweh my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. 6 "So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 "For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is Yahweh our God whenever we call on Him? 8 "Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? 9 "Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons. 10 "Remember the day you stood before Yahweh your God at Horeb, when Yahweh said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.' 11 "And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the very heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud and thick gloom. 12 "Then Yahweh spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form-- only a voice. 13 "So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. 14 "And Yahweh commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might perform them in the land where you are going over to possess it. 15 "So watch yourselves carefully, since you did not see any form on the day Yahweh spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire, 16 lest you act corruptly and make a graven image for yourselves in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the sky, 18 the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water below the earth. 19 "And beware, lest you lift up your eyes to heaven and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those which Yahweh your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. 20 "But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession, as today. 21 "Now Yahweh was angry with me on your account, and swore that I should not cross the Jordan, and that I should not enter the good land which Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance. 22 "For I shall die in this land, I shall not cross the Jordan, but you shall cross and take possession of this good land. 23 "So watch yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of Yahweh your God, which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything against which Yahweh your God has commanded you. 24 "For Yahweh your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. 25 "When you become the father of children and children's children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God so as to provoke Him to anger, 26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you shall surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but shall be utterly destroyed. 27 "And Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left few in number among the nations, where Yahweh shall drive you. 28 "And there you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. 29 "But from there you will seek Yahweh your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. 30 "When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days, you will return to Yahweh your God and listen to His voice. 31 "For Yahweh your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them. 32 "Indeed, ask now concerning the former days which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and inquire from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything been done like this great thing, or has anything been heard like it? 33 "Has any people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and survived? 34 "Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as Yahweh your God did for you in Egypt before

your eyes? 35 "To you it was shown that you might know that Yahweh, He is God; there is no other besides Him. 36 "Out of the heavens He let you hear His voice to discipline you; and on earth He let you see His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire. 37 "Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power, 38 driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in and to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is today. 39 "Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that Yahweh, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other. 40 "So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may live long on the land which Yahweh your God is giving you for all time." 41 Then Moses set apart three cities across the Jordan to the east, 42 that a manslayer might flee there, who unintentionally slew his neighbor without having enmity toward him in time past; and by fleeing to one of these cities he might live: 43 Bezer in the wilderness on the plateau for the Reubenites, and Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites. 44 Now this is the law which Moses set before the sons of Israel; 45 these are the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances which Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, when they came out from Egypt, 46 across the Jordan, in the valley opposite Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites who lived at Heshbon, whom Moses and the sons of Israel defeated when they came out from Egypt. 47 And they took possession of his land and the land of Og king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who were across the Jordan to the east, 48 from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon, even as far as Mount Sion (that is, Hermon), 49 with all the Arabah across the Jordan to the east, even as far as the sea of the Arabah, at the foot of the slopes of Pisgah.

Isaiah 40:1-25

"Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God. 2 "Speak kindly to Jerusalem; and call out to her, that her warfare has ended, that her iniquity has been removed, that she has received of Yahweh's hand double for all her sins." 3 A voice is calling, "Clear the way for Yahweh in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. 4 "Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; 5 Then the glory of Yahweh will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken." 6 A voice says, "Call out." Then he answered, "What shall I call out?" All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of Yahweh blows upon it; surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever. 9 Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; lift it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" 10 Behold, Yahweh God will come with might, with His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him. 11 Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, in His arm He will gather the lambs, and carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes. 12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and marked off the heavens by the span, and calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, and weighed the mountains in a balance, and the hills in a pair of scales? 13 Who has directed the Spirit of Yahweh, or as His counselor has informed Him? 14 With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge, and informed Him of the way of understanding? 15 Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust. 16 Even Lebanon is not enough to burn, nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering. 17 All the nations are as nothing before Him, they are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless. 18 To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him? 19 As for the idol, a craftsman casts it, a goldsmith plates it with gold, and a silversmith fashions chains of silver. 20 He who is too impoverished for such an offering selects a tree that does not rot; he seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman to prepare an idol that will not totter. 21 Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been declared to you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? 22 It is He who sits above the vault of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. 23 He it is who reduces rulers to nothing, Who makes the judges of the earth meaningless. 24 Scarcely have they been planted, scarcely have they been sown, scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth, but He merely blows on them, and they wither, and the storm carries them away like stubble. 25 "To whom then will you liken Me That I should be his equal?" says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these stars, the One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power not one of them is missing.

Psalm 123 A Song of Ascents

1 To Thee I lift up my eyes, O Thou who art enthroned in the heavens! 2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress; so our eyes look to Yahweh our God, until He shall be gracious to us. 3 Be gracious to us, O Yahweh, be gracious to us; for we have endured great contempt. 4 Our soul is greatly filled with the scoffing of those who are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

Luke 3:1-20

1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, 2 in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make ready the way of Yahweh, Make His paths straight. 5 'Every ravine shall be filled up, And every mountain and hill shall be brought low; And the crooked shall become straight, And the rough roads smooth; 6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'" 7 He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 "Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9 "And also the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." 10 And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, "Then what shall we do?" 11 And he would answer and say to them, "Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise." 12 And some tax-gatherers also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" 13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to." 14 And some soldiers were questioning him, saying, "And what about us, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages." 15 Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Messiah, 16 John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 "And His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." 18 So with many other exhortations also he preached the gospel to the people. 19 But when Herod the tetrarch was reproved by him on account of Herodias, his brother's wife, and on account of all the wicked things which Herod had done, 20 he added this also to them all, that he locked John up in prison.

Commentary:

1 "And now, O Israel, listen (*Sh'ma*) to the statutes (*hukim*) and the judgments (*mishpatim*) which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which Yahweh, the God of your fathers, is giving you. 2 "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of Yahweh your God which I command you. 3 "Your eyes have seen what Yahweh has done in the case of Baal-peor, for all the men who followed Baal-peor, Yahweh your God has destroyed them from among you. 4 "But you who held fast to Yahweh your God are alive today, every one of you. 5 "See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as Yahweh my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. 6 **"So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'** 7 **"For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is Yahweh our God whenever we call on Him?** 8 **"Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today?** 9 "Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons. 10 "Remember the day you stood before Yahweh your God at Horeb, when Yahweh said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.' 11 "And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the very heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud and thick gloom. 12 "Then Yahweh spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form-- only a voice. 13 "So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments (*devarim* -- *words*); and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. 14 "And Yahweh commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might perform them in the land where you are going over to possess it. 15 "So watch yourselves carefully, since you did not see any form on the day Yahweh spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire, 16 lest you act corruptly and make a graven image for yourselves in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the sky, 18 the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water below the earth. 19 "And beware, lest you lift up your eyes to heaven and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those which Yahweh your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. 20 "But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession, as today. 21 "Now Yahweh was angry with me on your account, and swore that I should not cross the Jordan, and that I should not enter the good land which Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance. 22 "For I shall die in this land, I shall not cross the Jordan, but you shall cross and take possession of this good land. 23 "So watch yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of Yahweh your God, which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything against which Yahweh your God has commanded you. 24 "For Yahweh your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. 25 "When you become the father of children and children's children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God so as to provoke Him to anger, 26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you shall surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but shall be utterly destroyed. 27 "And Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left few in number among the nations, where Yahweh shall drive you. 28 "And there you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. 29 "But from there you will seek Yahweh your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. 30 "When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days, you will return to Yahweh your God and listen to His voice. 31 "For Yahweh your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them. 32 "Indeed, ask now concerning the former days which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and inquire from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything been done like this great thing, or has anything been heard like it? 33 "Has any people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and survived? 34 "Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as

Yahweh your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? 35 "To you it was shown that you might know that Yahweh, He is God; there is no other besides Him. 36 "Out of the heavens He let you hear His voice to discipline you; and on earth He let you see His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire. 37 "Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power, 38 driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in and to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is today. 39 "Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that Yahweh, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other. 40 "So you shall keep His statutes (*hukim*) and His commandments (*mitzvot*) which I am giving you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may live long on the land which Yahweh your God is giving you for all time." 41 Then Moses set apart three cities across the Jordan to the east, 42 that a manslayer might flee there, who unintentionally slew his neighbor without having enmity toward him in time past; and by fleeing to one of these cities he might live: 43 Bezer in the wilderness on the plateau for the Reubenites, and Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites. 44 Now this is the law (*torah*) which Moses set before the sons of Israel; 45 these are the testimonies (*edut -- rehearsals*) and the statutes (*hukim*) and the ordinances (*mishpatim*) which Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, when they came out from Egypt, 46 across the Jordan, in the valley opposite Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites who lived at Heshbon, whom Moses and the sons of Israel defeated when they came out from Egypt. 47 And they took possession of his land and the land of Og king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who were across the Jordan to the east, 48 from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon, even as far as Mount Sion (that is, Hermon), 49 with all the Arabah across the Jordan to the east, even as far as the sea of the Arabah, at the foot of the slopes of Pisgah.

The Decalogue

*Reader 1 * Amen* 1 Then Moses summoned all Israel, and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the **statutes** and the **judgments** which I am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully. 2 "Yahweh our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. 3 " Yahweh did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today. 4 " Yahweh spoke to you face to face at the mountain from the midst of the fire, 5 while I was standing between Yahweh and you at that time, to declare to you the word of Yahweh; for you were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain. He said,

*Reader 2 * Amen* ¹6 'I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

²7 'You shall have no other gods before Me. 8 'You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 9 'You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, 10 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

*Reader 3 * Amen* ³11 'You shall not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain, for Yahweh will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

⁴12 'Observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as Yahweh your God commanded you. 13 'Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 14 but the seventh day is a Sabbath of Yahweh your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. 15 'And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore Yahweh your God commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

*Reader 4 * Amen* ⁵16 'Honor your father and your mother, as Yahweh your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you on the land which Yahweh your God gives you.

⁶17 'You shall not murder.

⁷18 'You shall not commit adultery.

⁸19 'You shall not steal.

⁹20 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁰21 'You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.'

*Reader 5 * Amen* 22 "These words Yahweh spoke to all your assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, of the cloud and of the thick gloom, with a great voice, and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. 23 "And it came about, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. 24 "And you said, 'Behold, Yahweh our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives.

*Reader 6 * Amen* 25 'Now then why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of Yahweh our God any longer, then we shall die. 26 'For who is there of all flesh, who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? 27 'Go near and hear all that Yahweh our God says; then speak to us all that Yahweh our God will speak to you, and we will hear and do it.' 28 "And Yahweh heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and Yahweh said to me, 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They have done well in all that they have spoken. 29 'Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!

*Reader 7 * Amen* 30 'Go, say to them, "Return to your tents." 31 'But as for you, stand here by Me, that I may speak to you all the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe them in the land which I give them to possess.' 32 "So you shall observe to do just as

Yahweh your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right or to the left. 33 "You shall walk in all the way which Yahweh your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.

-- No prophet today --

Psalm 124 -- A Song of Ascents, of David

1 "Had it not been Yahweh who was on our side," let Israel now say, 2 "Had it not been Yahweh who was on our side, when men rose up against us; 3 then they would have swallowed us alive, when their anger was kindled against us; 4 then the waters would have engulfed us, the stream would have swept over our soul; 5 then the raging waters would have swept over our soul." 6 Blessed be Yahweh, Who has not given us to be torn by their teeth. 7 Our soul has escaped as a bird out of the snare of the trapper; the snare is broken and we have escaped. 8 Our help is in the name of Yahweh, Who made heaven and earth.

Romans 10:1-17

10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. 3 For not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4 For Messiah is the goal of the law – for righteousness to everyone who believes. 5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteous thus, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Messiah down), 7 or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Messiah up from the dead)." 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart "-- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 9 that if you confess with your mouth Yeshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; 10 for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; 13 for "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" 16 However, they did not all heed the glad tidings; for Isaiah says, "Yahweh, who has believed our report?" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Messiah.

Romans 13:8-14

8 Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. 9 For this, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of the law. 11 And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. 12 The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But put on the Lord Yeshua the Messiah, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Deut 4:1 "And now, O Israel, listen (*Sh'ma*) to the statutes (*hukim*) and the judgments (*mishpatim*) which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which Yahweh, the God of your fathers, is giving you." – *From least to greatest commandments.*

The 613 Mitzvot – referred to by Ten Words

Mishpatim: Judgments – moral and ethical instruction.

Edos: Ordinances – rituals and festivals showing religious truth.

Hukim: Statutes – commandments bonding God to man, having no obvious reason.

Torah and Sin:

The Torah teaches us to love God and hate sin. In it we are given mitzvot (commandments), first to love God, and second to love our neighbor as ourselves. These are further expanded to ten commandments - five showing how to love God and five showing how to love our neighbor, who is created in the image of God. These ten are further expanded to 613 commandments.

All are under sin (Galatians 3:22), and sin desires to rule over man, but man is commanded to rule over sin (Genesis 4:7). Since sin is the transgression of the Torah (I John 3:4), and whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23), it may be concluded that transgressing the Torah is contrary to acting in faith.

By one man, Adam, sin entered the world, and death by sin (Romans 5:12). We inherited a sinful nature. There is no "Adamic sin", that is sin imputed to us from Adam; it is common but unbiblical teaching that (1) Christ died for Adamic sin of all, (2) baptism covers Adamic sin, and (3) that Christ died for all sins of everyone except the sin of unbelief. In our final redemption, when we receive our resurrection bodies, we will leave behind our inherited nature.

For the present, we are to hide the Torah in our hearts, so that we do not sin against God (Psalm 119:11). In the fulfillment of the Renewed Covenant, God will write the Torah on our hearts, and we will sin no more.

Yeshua was so named because He came to save *His people* from their sins (Matthew 1:21). Yeshua came to take away the sin of *the world* - not only Jews (John 1:29).

Sin has no dominion (rule) over the righteous, because they are under grace, not law. That means they cannot be condemned to death by the law because their penalty has been paid. It does not give license to freely transgress the law - sin.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say to you, Till heaven and earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall by no means pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (Matthew 5:17-18)

Whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19)

The New Covenant

Behold, the days come, saith Yahweh, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith Yahweh: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith Yahweh,

- *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;*
- *and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*
- *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know Yahweh: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Yahweh: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-34)*

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Yahweh; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (Hebrews 8:10-11)

- *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. (Revelation 21:3)*
- *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Yahweh of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the (false) prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. (Zechariah 13:1-2)*

The word *new* in New Covenant literally means renewed.

The First Covenant was Torah written on stone, and it was broken by man. We are commanded to write it on our hearts, but we still continually break it.

The New Covenant is Torah written on the heart by God, and it will never be broken, but obeyed whole-heartedly.

When the New Covenant is fulfilled, we will be dwelling with God on a renewed earth (cleansed by fire), where He will be our God and we will be His people. This is according to the terms (above) of this Covenant found in Jeremiah and Hebrews and its fulfillment as seen in Revelation. Also, every man will know God, there will be no false prophets, and there will be no more evangelism.

Matt 23:16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! 17 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? 18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. 19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? 20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. 21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. 22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. 23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

10/4'03

1 John 1:8 *If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

Revelation 21:7 *"He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.*

Though the two atonements have been accomplished for us – that is, Yeshua has taken the punishment for our sins, and His righteousness has been accounted to us – but we still must “grow in grace”, we must “overcome” sin. The imminent Yom haKippurim (Day of the Atonements) is about repentance – acknowledging our sins and turning to God; it is about overcoming, and it applies to each one of us.

Deuteronomy 5

Here are our last instructions prior to entering the Promised Land. Yahweh has brought us out of the Land of Sin (Egypt) with a great display of His power. When we enter the Land, we will have only One God – Yahweh (v.6). We will not have any other gods before Yahweh. We will revere Yahweh's Name. We will observe the Sabbath in the manner Yahweh commanded. We will respect the authorities that Yahweh places over us. (Note that each of the first five commandments contains the name Yahweh.)

*Reader 1 * Amen* 1 "Now this is the commandment -- the statutes and the judgments -- which Yahweh your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it, 2 so that you and your son and your grandson might fear Yahweh your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. 3 "O Israel, you should (*sh'ma*) listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as Yahweh, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. 4 "**Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one!** 5 "**And you shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.** 6 "**And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart;** 7 **and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.** 8 "**And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.** 9 "**And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**

*Reader 2 * Amen* 10 "Then it shall come about when Yahweh your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, 11 and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied, 12 then you shall watch yourself, lest you forget Yahweh who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 13 "You shall fear only Yahweh your God; and you shall worship Him, and swear by His name. 14 "You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, 15 for Yahweh your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of Yahweh your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth. 16 "You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah.

*Reader 3 * Amen* 17 "You should diligently keep the commandments of Yahweh your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you. 18 "And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of Yahweh, that it may be well with you and that you may go in and possess the good land which Yahweh swore to give your fathers, 19 by driving out all your enemies from before you, as Yahweh has spoken. 20 "When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments mean which Yahweh our God commanded you?' 21 then you shall say to your son, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt; and Yahweh brought us from Egypt with a mighty hand. 22 'Moreover, Yahweh showed great and distressing signs and wonders before our eyes against Egypt, Pharaoh and all his household; 23 and He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers.' 24 "So Yahweh commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear Yahweh our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today. 25 "And it will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before Yahweh our God, just as He commanded us.

*Reader 4 * Amen* 7:1 "When Yahweh your God shall bring you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and shall clear away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you, 2 and when Yahweh your God shall deliver them before you, and you shall defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. 3 "Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. 4 "For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you. 5 "But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their sacred pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire.

*Reader 5 * Amen* 6 "For you are a holy people to Yahweh your God; Yahweh your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. 7 " Yahweh did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but because Yahweh loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, Yahweh brought you out by a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9 "Know therefore that Yahweh your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; 10 but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not

delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face. 11 "Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them.

*Reader 6 * Amen* 12 "Then it shall come to pass, (as a consequence) because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that Yahweh your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers. 13 "And He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you. 14 "You shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall be no male or female barren among you or among your cattle. 15 "And Yahweh will remove from you all sickness; and He will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known, but He will lay them on all who hate you. 16 "And you shall consume all the peoples whom Yahweh your God will deliver to you; your eye shall not pity them, neither shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

*Reader 7 * Amen* 17 "If you should say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?' 18 you shall not be afraid of them; you shall well remember what Yahweh your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt: 19 the great trials which your eyes saw and the signs and the wonders and the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which Yahweh your God brought you out. So shall Yahweh your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. 20 "Moreover, Yahweh your God will send the hornet against them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you perish. 21 "You shall not dread them, for Yahweh your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God. 22 "And Yahweh your God will clear away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to put an end to them quickly, lest the wild beasts grow too numerous for you. 23 "But Yahweh your God shall deliver them before you, and will throw them into great confusion until they are destroyed. 24 "And He will deliver their kings into your hand so that you shall make their name perish from under heaven; no man will be able to stand before you until you have destroyed them. 25 "The graven images of their gods you are to burn with fire; you shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, lest you be snared by it, for it is an abomination to Yahweh your God. 26 "And you shall not bring an abomination into your house, and like it come under the ban; you shall utterly detest it and you shall utterly abhor it, for it is something banned.

1 Kings 10:39 (erroneous ref.)

Psalm 125 A Song of Ascents

1 Those who trust in Yahweh are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever. 2 As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so Yahweh surrounds His people from this time forth and forever. 3 For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest upon the land of the righteous; that the righteous may not put forth their hands to do wrong. 4 Do good, O Yahweh, to those who are good, and to those who are upright in their hearts. 5 But as for those who turn aside to their crooked ways, Yahweh will lead them away with the doers of iniquity. Peace be upon Israel.

Matthew 4

1 Then Yeshua was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" 5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.'" 7 Yeshua said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test.'" 8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Yeshua said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship Yahweh your God, and serve Him only.'" 11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him. 12 Now when He heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; 13 and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. 14 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, 15 "The land of Zebulun and the

land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles-- 16 "The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, And to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, Upon them a light dawned." 17 From that time Yeshua began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

18 And walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 And they immediately left the nets, and followed Him. 21 And going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. 22 And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him. 23 And Yeshua was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people. 24 And the news about Him went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. 25 And great multitudes followed Him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

Commentary:

Exodus 17:1 Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of Yahweh, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test Yahweh?" 3 But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" 4 So Moses cried out to Yahweh, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me." 5 Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 6 "Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 And he named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because **they tested Yahweh, saying, "Is Yahweh among us, or not?"**

Deuteronomy 6:16 **"You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah."**

Matthew 4:1 Then Yeshua was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God'" **(Deut 8:3)**. 5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, lest You strike Your foot against a stone'" **(Psalm 91:11-12)**. 7 Yeshua said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, '**You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test**'" **(Deut 6:16)**. 8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Yeshua said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship Yahweh your God, and serve Him only'" **(Deut 6:13)**. 11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him. 12 Now when He heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; 13 and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. 14 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, 15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles-- 16 "The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, And to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned" **(Isaiah 9:1-2)**. 17 From that time Yeshua began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

18 And walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 And they immediately left the nets, and followed Him. 21 And going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. 22 And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him. 23 And Yeshua was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people. 24 And the news about Him went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. 25 And great multitudes followed Him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

Water Drawing Service

Drawing Out Living Waters

On each of the seven days of Sukkot, the High Priest took a golden pitcher and filled it with water drawn from the Pool of Siloam. It was brought into the Temple through the Water Gate (hence the name), and poured into a bowl at the Altar, alongside the pouring of the wine, during the daily burnt-offering (Talmud: Sukkah 4:9). This water libation was performed only during Sukkot.

The Talmud states, “Why is the name of it called the Drawing Out of Water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said: *‘With joy shall ye draw out of the wells of salvation.’*” (Isaiah 12:3)

Hoshannah Rabbah (Seventh Day)

Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Yeshua stood and cried out, saying, “If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.’” But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Yeshua was not yet glorified. (John 7:37-39)

Hosannahs

All: Hosannah! -- Save us -- for Your sake, our God!
 Hosannah! -- Save us -- for Your sake, our Creator!
 Hosannah! -- Save us -- for Your sake, our Redeemer!
 Hosannah! -- Save us -- for Your sake, our Attender!
 Hosannah! --

for the sake of Your Truth, for the sake of Your Covenant, for the sake of Your Greatness and Splendor, for the sake of Your Glory.

*Reader 1 * Amen* 1 "The entire commandment that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which Yahweh swore to give to your forefathers. 2 **"And you shall remember all the way which Yahweh your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.** 3 "And He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh. 4 "Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. 5 **"Thus you are to know in your heart that Yahweh your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.** 6 "Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of Yahweh your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.

*Reader 2 * Amen* 7 "For Yahweh your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; 8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; 9 a land where you shall eat food without scarcity, in which you shall not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. 10 "When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless Yahweh your God for the good land which He has given you. 11 "Beware lest you forget Yahweh your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; 12 lest, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, 13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, 14 then your heart becomes proud, and you forget Yahweh your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

*Reader 3 * Amen* 15 "He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint. 16 "In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end. 17 "Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' 18 "But you shall remember Yahweh your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. 19 "And it shall come about if you ever forget Yahweh your God, and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you shall surely perish. 20 "Like the nations that Yahweh makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of Yahweh your God.

Jeremiah 9:22-24

22 Speak, "Thus declares Yahweh, 'The corpses of men will fall like dung on the open field, and like the sheaf after the reaper, but no one will gather them.'" 23 Thus says Yahweh, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; 24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am Yahweh who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares Yahweh.

Psalm 126 A Song of Ascents.

1 When Yahweh brought back the captive ones of Zion, we were like those who dream. 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with joyful shouting; then they said among the nations, "Yahweh has done great things for them." 3 Yahweh has done great things for us; we are glad. 4 Restore our captivity, O Yahweh, as the streams in the South. 5 Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. 6 He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

Luke 4:1-14

1 And Yeshua, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led about by the Spirit in the wilderness 2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days; and when they had ended, He became hungry. 3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." 4 And Yeshua answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'" 5 And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. 7 "Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours." 8 And Yeshua answered and said to him, "It is written, 'You shall worship Yahweh your God and serve Him only.'" 9 And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; 10 for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge concerning You to guard You,' 11 and, 'On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.'" 12 And Yeshua answered and said to him, "It is said, 'You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test.'" 13 And when the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. 14 And Yeshua returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit; and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.

Commentary:

(V.1) Last week's portion was called "This is the Commandment", and the Sh'ma encompassed all commandments. This week's portion is called "The Entire Commandment", and we see that righteousness is a condition for entering the Promised Land. (This is not proclaiming salvation by one's own works.)

(V.2) The events of the forty years in the wilderness showed that God provides all of the needs of those who follow Him. The people were subjected to uncertainty, with no reserves, in order to instill trust in Yahweh for provision. Difficulties in this life should not lead us to doubt God, or test His existence. Thus Yeshua said (Luke 4:12 – quoting Deuteronomy 6:16), "You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test."

(V.9) "Eating food without scarcity" is seen as referring, not only to physical bread, but to the Word of God. So Yeshua said (Luke 4:4 – quoting Deuteronomy 8:3), "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'" And David writes, "Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:5-6).

(V.10) Here is the commandment to "Bless Yahweh your God for the good land that He gave you" after meals.

(V.11-19) We are hereby warned: in prosperity, we should not forget that everything we receive is from God – by His grace, not by our ability or natural reasons. So we read from Jeremiah, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am Yahweh who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things' declares Yahweh."

We should rejoice in Yahweh's Word: it is our peace, our prosperity, and our promise of a glorious future. Today is the day that we consider the fulfillment of the Torah – the fulfillment of receiving the Promised Land. We look back to the just-completed downfall of the nations, and Messiah's Kingdom is all that is left. We will now take turns marching around with the Torah scroll, as we recite the portions for the seven circuits (see Shimini Atzeret).

Shimini Atzeret

Prelude Deuteronomy 16:13-17 (The full reading is Deuteronomy 14:22 - 16:17)

*Reader A * Amen* “You shall observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that you have gathered in your corn and your wine: and you shall rejoice in your feast, you, and your son, and your daughter, and your manservant, and your maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within your gates. Seven days shall you keep a solemn feast unto Yahweh your God” . . . and they shall not appear before Yahweh empty: Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of Yahweh your God which he has given you.

Note: Yahweh's offerings were always brought/prepared prior to a Sabbath or festival, for use on the Holy Day. Festival offerings were food: money could be brought for buying festive foods prior to the Holy Day. Collections are never to be taken on a Holy Day, and the festival tithe is never for travel or lodging.

1st Circuit Numbers 29:12-16

*Reader 1 * Amen* And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have an holy convocation; you shall do no servile work, and you shall keep a feast unto Yahweh seven days: And you shall offer an elevation offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet aroma unto Yahweh; thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year; they shall be without blemish:

All sing: Psalm 1 v.1

On the first day of creation, God created light and darkness.
On the first millennial day -- Adams day -- man learned good and evil.

2nd Circuit Numbers 29:17-19

*Reader 2 * Amen* And on the second day you shall offer twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

All sing: Psalm 1 v,2

On the second day of creation, God separated the waters above and beneath the earth.
On the second millennial day -- Noah's day -- God brought the waters back together (flood) then separated them again.

3rd Circuit Numbers 29:20-22

*Reader 3 * Amen* And on the third day eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish;

All sing: Psalm 48

On the third day of creation, God created dry land and plants.
On the third millennial day -- Abrahams day -- God promised Canaan with abounding food.

4th Circuit Numbers 29:23-25

*Reader 4 * Amen* And on the fourth day ten bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

All sing: Psalm 82

On the fourth day of creation, God created the sun and moon.
On the fourth millennial day -- Messiah's day -- King David, priests, and Yeshua came.

5th Circuit Numbers 29:26-28

*Reader 5 * Amen* And on the fifth day nine bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

All sing: Psalm 94

On the fifth day of creation, God created fish and birds.
The fifth and sixth millennial days are called “the last days.”

6th Circuit Numbers 29:29-31

*Reader 6 * Amen* And on the sixth day eight bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

All sing: Psalm 81

On the sixth day of creation, God created beasts, and man at the end.
The fifth and sixth millennial days are called “the last days.”
The Beast of Revelation and the Son of Man appear at the end of the sixth millennium.

7th Circuit Numbers 29:32-34

*Reader 7 * Amen* And on the seventh day seven bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

All sing: Psalm 92

The Seventh Day was Sabbath. The Sabbath Millennium approaches, when Yeshua shall reign!

(End of Circuits)

Total: 70 BULLOCKS

Eighth Day Numbers 29:35 - 30:1

*Reader 8 * Amen* “On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly: you shall do no servile work therein: But you shall offer an elevation offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet aroma unto Yahweh: ONE BULLOCK, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish: Their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner: And one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual elevation offering, and his grain offering, and his drink offering. These things you shall do unto Yahweh in your set feasts, beside your vows, and your freewill offerings, for your elevation offerings, and for your grain offerings, and for your drink offerings, and for your peace offerings.” . . . “This is the thing which Yahweh has commanded.”

The Eighth Day represents the New Creation -- Eden (Paradise) restored on a renewed earth. God’s Covenant is fulfilled! The single bullock represents the Kingdom of Messiah that replaces all seventy kingdoms.

Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.”

Revelation 18:1

After all this I saw another angel come down from heaven with great authority, and the earth grew bright with his splendor. 2 He gave a mighty shout, "Babylon is fallen-- that great city is fallen! She has become the hideout of demons and evil spirits, a nest for filthy buzzards, and a den for dreadful beasts. 3 For all the nations have drunk the wine of her passionate immorality. The rulers of the world have committed adultery with her, and merchants throughout the world have grown rich as a result of her luxurious living." 4 Then I heard another voice calling from heaven, "Come away from her, my people. Do not take part in her sins, or you will be punished with her. 5 For her sins are piled as high as heaven, and God is ready to judge her for her evil deeds. 6 Do to her as she has done to your people. Give her a double penalty for all her evil deeds. She brewed a cup of terror for others, so give her twice as much as she gave out. 7 She has lived in luxury and pleasure, so match it now with torments and sorrows. She boasts, 'I am queen on my throne. I am no helpless widow. I will not experience sorrow.' 8 Therefore, the sorrows of death and mourning and famine will overtake her in a single day. She will be utterly consumed by fire, for the Lord God who judges her is mighty." 9 And the rulers of the world who took part in her immoral acts and enjoyed her great luxury will mourn for her as they see the smoke rising from her charred remains. 10 They will stand at a distance, terrified by her great torment. They will cry out, "How terrible, how terrible for Babylon, that great city! In one single moment God's judgment came on her." 11 The merchants of the world will weep and mourn for her, for there is no one left to buy their goods. 12 She bought great quantities of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple dye, silk, scarlet cloth, every kind of perfumed wood, ivory goods, objects made of expensive wood, bronze, iron, and marble. 13 She also bought cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, chariots, and slaves-- yes, she even traded in human lives. 14 "All the fancy things you loved so much are gone," they cry. "The luxuries and splendor that you prized so much will never be yours again. They are gone forever." 15 The merchants who became wealthy by selling her these things will stand at a distance, terrified by her great torment. They will weep and cry.

Reader 1 Amen 1* "Hear, O Israel! You are crossing over the Jordan today to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you, great cities fortified to heaven, 2 a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know and of whom you have heard it said, 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?' 3 "Know therefore today that it is Yahweh your God who is crossing over before you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and He will subdue them before you, so that you may drive them out and destroy them quickly, just as Yahweh has spoken to you.

Reader 2 Amen 4* "Do not say in your heart when Yahweh your God has driven them out before you, 'Because of my righteousness Yahweh has brought me in to possess this land,' but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that Yahweh is dispossessing them before you. 5 "It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart that you are going to possess **their land**, but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that Yahweh your God is driving them out before you, in order to confirm the oath which Yahweh swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. 6 "**Know, then, it is not because of your righteousness that Yahweh your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people.**

Reader 3 Amen 7* "Remember, do not forget how you provoked Yahweh your God to wrath in the wilderness; from the day that you left the land of Egypt until you arrived at this place, you have been rebellious against Yahweh. 8 "Even at Horeb you provoked Yahweh to wrath, and Yahweh was so angry with you that He would have destroyed you. 9 "When I went up to the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which Yahweh had made with you, then I remained on the mountain forty days and nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water. 10 "And Yahweh gave me the two tablets of stone written by the finger of God; and on them were all the words which Yahweh had spoken with you at the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. 11 "And it came about at the end of forty days and nights that Yahweh gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant.

Reader 4 Amen 12* "Then Yahweh said to me, 'Arise, go down from here quickly, for your people whom you brought out of Egypt have acted corruptly. They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them; they have made a molten image for themselves.' 13 " Yahweh spoke further to me, saying, 'I have seen this people, and indeed, it is a stubborn people. 14 'Let Me alone, that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.'

Reader 5 Amen 15* "So I turned and came down from the mountain while the mountain was burning with fire, and the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands. 16 "And I saw that you had indeed sinned against Yahweh your God. You had made for yourselves a molten calf; you had turned aside quickly from the way which Yahweh had commanded you. 17 "And I took hold of the two tablets and threw them from my hands, and smashed them before your eyes. 18 "And I fell down before Yahweh, as at the first, forty days and nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sin which you had committed in doing what was evil in the sight of Yahweh to provoke Him to anger. 19 "For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which Yahweh was wrathful against you in order to destroy you, but Yahweh listened to me that time also.

Reader 6 Amen 20* "And Yahweh was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him; so I also prayed for Aaron at the same time. 21 "And I took your sinful thing, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it, grinding it very small until it was as fine as dust; and I threw its dust into the brook that came down from the mountain. 22 "Again at Taberah and at Massah and at Kibroth-hattaavah you provoked Yahweh to wrath. 23 "And when Yahweh sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, 'Go up and possess the land which I have given you,' then you rebelled against the command of Yahweh your God; you neither believed Him nor listened to His voice. 24 "You have been rebellious against Yahweh from the day I knew you.

Reader 7 Amen 25* "So I fell down before Yahweh the forty days and nights, which I did because Yahweh had said He would destroy you. 26 "And I prayed to Yahweh, and said, 'O Yahweh Yahweh, do not destroy Your people, even Your inheritance, whom You have redeemed through Your greatness, whom You have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 27 'Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do not look at the stubbornness of this people or at their wickedness or their sin. 28 'Otherwise the land from which You did bring us may say, "Because Yahweh was not able to bring them into the land which He had promised them and because He hated them He has brought them out to slay them in the wilderness." 29 'Yet they are Your people, even Your inheritance, whom You have brought out by Your great power and Your outstretched arm.'

Jeremiah 3:1-2

1 God says, "If a husband divorces his wife, and she goes from him, and belongs to another man, will he still return to her? Will not that land be completely polluted? But you are a harlot with many lovers; yet you turn to Me," declares Yahweh. 2 "Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see; where have you not been violated? By the roads you have sat for them like an Arab in the desert, and you have polluted a land with your harlotry and with your wickedness.

Psalms 127 A Song of Ascents, of Solomon.

1 Unless Yahweh builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless Yahweh guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain. 2 It is vain for you to rise up early, to retire late, to eat the bread of painful labors; for He gives to His beloved even in his sleep. 3 Behold, children are a gift of Yahweh; the fruit of the womb is a reward. 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. 5 How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; they shall not be ashamed, when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

Eph 2:1 – 3:6

2:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Messiah (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Messiah Yeshua, 7 in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Messiah Yeshua. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. 11 Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision " by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- 12 remember that you were at that time separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Messiah Yeshua you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Messiah. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Yeshua Himself being the corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in Yahweh; 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Messiah Yeshua for the sake of you Gentiles-- 2 if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; 3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. 4 And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Messiah, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Messiah Yeshua through the gospel,

Commentary:

(V.1) *“You are crossing over the Jordan today to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you”*. We have come through the redemption of the Passover. We have been given a betrothal covenant at Sinai. We have spent our childhood in the wilderness, learning to trust Yahweh – the Gracious One who provides for His creation to serve Him. Now it is time to take up the Sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17), and drive the enemy from our inheritance of dwelling in righteousness!

There are many groups of people in this world with the strength of desirability, strength of numbers, and the strength of pseudo-science behind their doctrines and deeds. We need to travel a straight course through them, without compromise, without fear.

(V. 6) *“Know, then, it is not because of your righteousness that Yahweh your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people.”* We are easily enticed by the riches of this world, by the lure of immorality, by the pride of hyper-spirituality, by the desire for acceptance from others. Then we are so stubborn: we have our minds made up, and we don't want to be confused by facts; or we are determined to go the way that feels best to us, and rationalize away God's path.

We constantly deal with people who go to a certain church because their friends are there, or because they like the “pastor”. Others leave Bible teaching groups because things aren't done their way.

Many professing believers accept evolution doctrine, because it is taught as fact by self-acclaimed “scientists”. Ballplayers are paid millions of dollars per year by those who get far more excited about a corrupt “sport” than about God. Christians are sucked into “alternative medicine” remedies that contradict all real science – such as homeopathy, by charismatic practitioners (who often gain acceptance by professing Christianity), because they place their faith blindly – by neither Biblical nor scientific understanding.

Sadly, we often will neither seek nor hear verifiable facts. We need to get off the “we've got it” syndrome, and continually seek truth. We need to seek and accept correction, And to learn further truth, we need to practice what we have been shown.

We should be ready to “cross over Jordan”, into the land of truth and righteousness. But we are stubborn. God didn't choose us because of our righteousness. But, like Moses typified, Yeshua made intercession for us. Now, if we are “of the faith”, we will display that faith by our walk – by growing in truth and obedience. We must learn to destroy the enemies of pride, immoral “entertainment”, blind acceptance of false spiritual and pseudo-science teachers, and compromising values for personal acceptance.

Moses fell down before Yahweh for forty days and nights (v.25); Yeshua gave His life. All of this was for our redemption and sanctification. Let us give heed!

Jeremiah reminds us that God judges it immoral for a man to take back a wife whom he has divorced and who has subsequently married another man. Likewise, if we leave God for idols (spiritual adultery), how should we expect God to receive us back?

The Psalmist is telling us: We need God to build our spiritual house; it will not last if we do it our way. We need God to guard our territory; we are unable to do so by our power.

Paul explains for us (Ephesians 2): We were without spiritual life – living in sin. We indulged in the desires of the flesh and the mind – but God, in His grace, granted us salvation: not through any good work of ours, but through a God-given faith that produces fruit / works / evidence. Even we who were uncircumcised gentiles, alien to Israel and God’s covenant, were made part of His people and partakers of His covenant. (V.10) *“For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

God’s covenant (the Abrahamic Covenant), of which we may be partakers, is the reason He allows us to enter the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 9:5), rather than for any righteousness of ours.

If we have been granted this faith, if our desires have been turned toward God (repentance), then we have these great, comforting promises:

Matthew 5

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Matthew 6

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 7

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 8 For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Luke 11

9 And I say to you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 10 For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. 11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? 12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

John 1

1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.
En archai ain ho Logos, kai ho Logos ain pros ton Theos, kai Theos ain ho Logos

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with ‘God’, and the Word was ‘God’.

2 οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

Outos ain en archai pros ton Theon

The same was in the beginning with ‘God’.

3 πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν. ὃ γέγονεν

All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

6 There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John.

7 He came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him.

8 He was not the light, but *came* that he might bear witness of the light.

9 There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,

13 who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς

Kai ho Logos sare egeneto, kai eskainosen en amin,
μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 John bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'"

Genesis 1:1 בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

1. In first place was Torah, and Torah was with Elohim, and Torah was Elohim.

14. And Torah became flesh, and tabernacled among us.

Pesal Lecha / Carve for Yourself

Commentary Y3-31

Deuteronomy 10:1 – 11:25 1 Kings 13:1-32 Psalm 128 Colossians 3:1 – 4:6 Heshvan 6, 5764 / Nov 1, 2003

Reader 1 Amen* 10:1 "At that time Yahweh said to me, 'Carve for yourself two tablets of stone like the former ones, and come up to Me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood for yourself. 2 'And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered, and you shall put them in the ark.' 3 "So I made an ark of acacia wood and cut out two tablets of stone like the former ones, and went up on the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. 4 "And He wrote on the tablets, like the former writing, the Ten Words which Yahweh had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly; and Yahweh gave them to me. 5 "Then I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and there they are, as Yahweh commanded me."

Reader 2 Amen* 6 (Now the sons of Israel set out from Beeroth Bene-Yaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died and there he was buried and Eleazar his son ministered as priest in his place. 7 From there they set out to Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of brooks of water. 8 At that time Yahweh set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, to stand before Yahweh to serve Him and to bless in His name until this day. 9 Therefore, Levi does not have a portion or inheritance with his brothers; Yahweh is his inheritance, just as Yahweh your God spoke to him.) 10 "I, moreover, stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights like the first time, and Yahweh listened to me that time also; Yahweh was not willing to destroy you. 11 "Then Yahweh said to me, 'Arise, proceed on your journey ahead of the people, that they may go in and possess the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.' 12 "And now, Israel, what does Yahweh your God require from you, but to fear Yahweh your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep Yahweh's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?

Reader 3 Amen* 14 "Behold, to Yahweh your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. 15 "Yet on your fathers did Yahweh set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day. 16 "Circumcise then your heart, and stiffen your neck no more. 17 "For Yahweh your God is the God of gods and Lord of Lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality, nor take a bribe. 18 "He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing. 19 "So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. 20 "You shall fear Yahweh your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name. 21 "He is your praise and He is your God, who has done these great and awesome things for you which your eyes have seen. 22 "Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons in all, and now Yahweh your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven.

Reader 4 Amen* 11:1 "You shall therefore love Yahweh your God, and always keep His charge, His statutes, His ordinances, and His commandments. 2 "And know this day that I am not speaking with your sons who have not known and who have not seen the discipline of Yahweh your God -- His greatness, His mighty hand, and His outstretched arm, 3 and His signs and His works which He did in the midst of Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land; 4 and what He did to Egypt's army, to its horses and its chariots, when He made the water of the Red Sea to engulf them while they were pursuing you, and Yahweh completely destroyed them; 5 and what He did to you in the wilderness until you came to this place; 6 and what He did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben, when the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, among all Israel-- 7 but your own eyes have seen all the great work of Yahweh which He did.

Reader 5 Amen* 8 "You shall therefore keep every commandment which I am commanding you today, so that you may be strong and go in and possess the land into which you are about to cross to possess it; 9 so that you may prolong your days on the land which Yahweh swore to your fathers to give to them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. 10 "For the land, into which you are entering to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt from which you came, where you used to sow your seed and water it with your foot like a vegetable garden. 11 "But the land into which you are about to cross to possess it, a land of hills and valleys, drinks water from the rain of heaven, 12 a land for which Yahweh your God cares; the eyes of Yahweh your God are always on it, from the beginning even to the end of the year.

Reader 6 Amen* 13 "And it shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love Yahweh your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, 14 that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil. 15 "And He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you shall eat and be satisfied. 16 "Beware, lest your hearts be deceived and you turn away and serve other gods and worship them. 17 "Or the anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which Yahweh is giving you.

Reader 7 Amen* 18 "You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. 19 "And you shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. 20 "And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which Yahweh swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens remain above the earth. 22 "For if you are careful to keep all this commandment which I am commanding you, to do it, to love Yahweh your God, to walk in all His ways and hold fast to Him; 23 then Yahweh will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. 24 "Every place on which the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours; your border shall be from the wilderness to Lebanon, and from the river, the river Euphrates, as far as the western sea. 25 "There shall no man be able to stand before you; Yahweh your God shall lay the dread of you and the fear of you on all the land on which you set foot, as He has spoken to you.

1 Kings 13:1 Now behold, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of Yahweh, while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. 2 And he cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh, and said, "O altar, altar, thus says Yahweh, 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.'" 3 Then he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which Yahweh has spoken, 'Behold, the altar shall be split apart and the ashes which are on it shall be poured out.'" 4 Now it came about when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Bethel, that Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him." But his hand which he stretched out against him dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself. 5 The altar also was split apart and the ashes were poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of Yahweh. 6 And the king answered and said to the man of God, "Please entreat Yahweh your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated Yahweh, and the king's hand was restored to him, and it became as it was before. 7 Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." 8 But the man of God said to the king, "If you were to give me half your house I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place. 9 "For so it was commanded me by the word of Yahweh, saying, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way which you came.'" 10 So he went another way, and did not return by the way which he came to Bethel. 11 Now an old prophet was living in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the deeds which the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words which he had spoken to the king, these also they related to their father. 12 And their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" Now his sons had seen the way which the man of God who came from Judah had gone. 13 Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him and he rode away on it. 14 So he went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak; and he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" And he said, "I am." 15 Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." 16 And he said, "I cannot return with you, nor go with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water with you in this place. 17 "For a command came to me by the word of Yahweh, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water there; do not return by going the way which you came.'" 18 And he said to him, "I also am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of Yahweh, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" But he lied to him. 19 So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house and drank water. 20 Now it came about, as they were sitting down at the table, that the word of Yahweh came to the prophet who had brought him back; 21 and he cried to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Thus says Yahweh, 'Because you have disobeyed the command of

Yahweh, and have not observed the commandment which Yahweh your God commanded you, 22 but have returned and eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which He said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water"; your body shall not come to the grave of your fathers." 23 And it came about after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, for the prophet whom he had brought back. 24 Now when he had gone, a lion met him on the way and killed him, and his body was thrown on the road, with the donkey standing beside it; the lion also was standing beside the body. 25 And behold, men passed by and saw the body thrown on the road, and the lion standing beside the body; so they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived. 26 Now when the prophet who brought him back from the way heard it, he said, "It is the man of God, who disobeyed the command of Yahweh; therefore Yahweh has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of Yahweh which He spoke to him." 27 Then he spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle the donkey for me." And they saddled it. 28 And he went and found his body thrown on the road with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body; the lion had not eaten the body nor torn the donkey. 29 So the prophet took up the body of the man of God and laid it on the donkey, and brought it back and he came to the city of the old prophet to mourn and to bury him. 30 And he laid his body in his own grave, and they mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!" 31 And it came about after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons, saying, "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. 32 "For the thing shall surely come to pass which he cried by the word of Yahweh against the altar in Bethel and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria."

Psalm 128 *A Song of Ascents.*

1 How blessed is everyone who fears Yahweh, who walks in His ways. 2 When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, you will be happy and it will be well with you. 3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine, within your house, your children like olive plants around your table. 4 Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed who fears Yahweh. 5 Yahweh bless you from Zion, and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 6 Indeed, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!

Colossians 3:1 – 4:6

3:1 If then you have been raised up with Messiah, keep seeking the things above, where Messiah is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Messiah in God. 4 When Messiah, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him 11 -- a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Messiah is all, and in all. 12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. 15 And let the peace of Messiah rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Messiah richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Yeshua, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. 18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them. 20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart. 22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Messiah whom you serve. 25

For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.

4:1 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven. 2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; 3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Messiah, for which I have also been imprisoned; 4 in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. 5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.

Commentary:

“*At that time*” (v.10:1) refers to the seventh ascent by Moses, on Av 29, 2448. It was the third forty-day ascent. [Sequence of Events in the Old Testament, pg.55]

Last week’s portion started with “*Sh’ma*” – (v.9:1) “*listen*” . . . “*to the statutes and the judgments (least and greatest commandments) which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which Yahweh*”. The text concerned preparation for entering the Promised Land – entering the eternal Sabbath, relating to the Fourth Commandment.

In today’s portion, (v.11:1) we see the body of the Sh’ma: “*You shall therefore love Yahweh your God*” . . . “*and always keep His charge – His statutes, His judgments (least and greatest commandments), and His commandments (Mitzvot – all commandments).*” The text concerns obedience to authority under God (v.10:8), relating to the Fifth Commandment:

[Note: The Sh’ma is Deuteronomy 6:4-9.] Deuteronomy 11:13-21 is the second portion of the Sh’ma, which is to be recited every morning and night.

We may clearly see here that to “*love Yahweh your God*” means living by all of His instruction. “*Sh’ma*” means listen, as in “Hear and obey.” And we are promised great reward for such obedience (v.11:13-14).

As this text repeatedly exhorts obedience, and tells of the blessings that will result, so also does the Psalm: (v.1) “*How blessed is everyone who fears Yahweh, who walks in His ways.*”

We see (v.10:1) the Commandments written on new tablets, replacing the old ones – which were broken, compared to (v.6) the priesthood being conferred upon Eleazar, replacing Aaron – who died.

Moses relates making a wooden ark: it would serve until the golden ark was made for the Tabernacle (Exodus 25:10-22). It housed the new tablets, as well as broken pieces of the old ones.

In Colossians (v.3:1-14), we who formerly lived in broken commandments, are now to live in observed commandments. We are to consider ourselves dead to sin, and live anew in Messiah Yeshua. As the commandments – from statutes to judgments – were to show us how to love God and our neighbor, so Paul gives details about how we should fulfill the Sh’ma: giving up “*immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry*”, and “*putting aside all anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth*”, we should “*put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.*”

(V.11:2) “*And know this day that I am not speaking with your sons who have not known and who have not seen the discipline of Yahweh your God . . .*”

Hebrews 12:5-13 “*And you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, ‘My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of Yahweh, nor faint when you are reprovved by Him; for those whom Yahweh loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives.’ It is for discipline that you*

endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.”

Re'e / Behold!

Commentary Y3-32

Deuteronomy 11:26 – 12:19 Isaiah 54:11 – 55:6 Psalm 129 Luke 6:20-49 Heshvan 13, 5764 / Nov 8, 2003

Reader 1 Amen 26* "Behold! I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: 27 the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of Yahweh your God, which I am commanding you today; 28 and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of Yahweh your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known.

Reader 2 Amen 29* "And it shall come about, when Yahweh your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, that you shall place the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. 30 "Are they not across the Jordan, west of the way toward the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh? 31 "For you are about to cross the Jordan to go in to possess the land which Yahweh your God is giving you, and you shall possess it and live in it, 32 and you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the judgments which I am setting before you today.

Reader 3 Amen 12:1* "These are the statutes and the judgments which you shall carefully observe in the land which Yahweh, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess as long as you live on the earth. 2 "You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess serve their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. 3 "And you shall tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and burn their Asherim with fire, and you shall cut down the engraved images of their gods, and you shall obliterate their name from that place. 4 "You shall not act like this toward Yahweh your God.

Reader 4 Amen 5* "But you shall seek Yahweh at the place which Yahweh your God shall choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come. 6 "And there you shall bring your elevation offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, what you raise up with your hands, your votive offerings, your freewill offerings, and the first-born of your herd and of your flock. 7 "There also you and your households shall eat before Yahweh your God, and rejoice in all your undertakings in which Yahweh your God has blessed you.

Reader 5 Amen 8* "You shall not do at all what we are doing here today, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes; 9 for you have not as yet come to the resting place and the inheritance which Yahweh your God is giving you. 10 "When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which Yahweh your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around you so that you live in security, 11 then it shall come about that the place in which Yahweh your God shall choose for His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I command you: your elevation offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to Yahweh.

Reader 6 Amen 12* "And you shall rejoice before Yahweh your God, you and your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, since he has no portion or inheritance with you. 13 "Be careful that you do not offer your elevation offerings in every cultic place you see, 14 but in the place which Yahweh chooses in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your elevation offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you. 15 ["However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your gates, whatever you desire, according to the blessing of Yahweh your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and the deer.

Reader 7 Amen 16* "Only you shall not eat the blood; you are to pour it out on the ground like water.] 17 "You are not allowed to eat within your gates the tithe of your grain, or new wine, or oil, or the first-born of your herd or flock, or any of your votive offerings which you vow, or your freewill offerings, or the contribution of your hand. 18 "But you shall eat them before Yahweh your God in the place which Yahweh your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Yahweh your God in all your undertakings. 19 "Be careful that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land.

Isaiah 54:11 - 55:6

11 "O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted: Behold, I will set your stones in antimony, and your foundations I will lay in sapphires. 12 "Moreover, I will make your battlements of rubies, and your gates of crystal, and your entire wall of precious stones. 13 "And all your sons will be taught of Yahweh; and the well-being of your sons will be great. 14 "In righteousness you will be established; you will be far from oppression, for you will not fear; and from terror, for it will not come near you. 15 "If anyone fiercely assails you it will not be from Me. Whoever assails you will fall because of you. 16 "Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals, and brings out a weapon for its work; and I have created the destroyer to ruin. 17 "No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of Yahweh, and their vindication is from Me," declares Yahweh.

55:1 "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. 2 "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance. 3 "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, according to the faithful mercies shown to David. 4 "Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. 5 "Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, and a nation which knows you not will run to you, because of Yahweh your God, even the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you." 6 Seek Yahweh while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near.

Psalm 129 *A Song of Ascents.*

1 "Many times they have persecuted me from my youth up," let Israel now say, 2 "Many times they have persecuted me from my youth up; yet they have not prevailed against me. 3 "The plowers plowed upon my back; they lengthened their furrows." 4 Yahweh is righteous; He has cut in two the cords of the wicked. 5 May all who hate Zion, be put to shame and turned backward, 6 let them be like grass upon the housetops, which withers before it grows up; 7 with which the reaper does not fill his hand, or the binder of sheaves his bosom; 8 nor do those who pass by say, "The blessing of the Yahweh be upon you; we bless you in the name of Yahweh."

Luke 6:20-49

20 And turning His gaze on His disciples, He began to say, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 "Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. 22 "Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and cast insults at you, and spurn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. 23 "Be glad in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets. 24 "But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full. 25 "Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. 26 "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for in the same way their fathers used to treat the false prophets. 27 "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,

28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 "Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either. 30 "Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back. 31 "And just as you want people to treat you, treat them in the same way. 32 "And if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 "And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 "And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that 35 "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. 36 "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. 37 "And do not judge and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. 38 "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in

return." 39 And He also spoke a parable to them: "A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? 40 "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher. 41 "And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 42 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye. 43 "For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit; nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. 44 "For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. 45 "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart. 46 "And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? 47 "Everyone who comes to Me, and hears My words, and acts upon them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood rose, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. 49 "But the one who has heard, and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house upon the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great."

Commentary:

... 2 weeks ago we looked at 4th commandment – six days to prepare for Sabbath (capital offense);
 ... last week we look at 5th commandment – obedience to authority under God (for long life);
 ... this week it's "Blessing and curse".

(V11:26) רֵאֵה אֲנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרָכָה וּקְלָלָה:
 Re'e! Ani natan l' pa-ni-chim ha-yom b'racha v' k'lala
 Behold! I gift toward-your-faces this-day blessing and curse.

The choice of whether or not to accept the entire Word of Yahweh – the Gracious One – is the choice of blessing or curse! The path to blessing means accepting everything, from the least understood – statutes, to the most obvious – moral judgments (v.32).

Isaiah 55:3 intones, "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen (sh'ma – obey), that you may live".

(V.12:3) Not only should idolatry be completely forsaken, but even the proper names of idols should not be used: derogatory names should be used for them.

(V.4) "You shall not do this to Yahweh." We may not choose any place we wish to offer sacrifice to God, as the pagans do, but only at the place of God's choosing (Shiloh, then Jerusalem). This is variously interpreted to mean that we should never destroy a synagogue (as we are commanded to destroy houses of idol worship), or that we should never erase the Name Yahweh (as we are commanded not to use idols' names).

(V.4) *Elevation offerings* are those that are completely burned upon the altar: their satisfying aroma ascends up to God. *Feast offerings* are animal or bird offerings that are usually shared with family and guests. These two extremes refer to the whole range of animal offerings: they may only be sacrificed at the Temple in Jerusalem (previously at the Tabernacle). The *tithes* are animal offerings (Leviticus 27:32) and crops (Deuteronomy 14:22-27). "What you raise up with your hands" refers to firstfruits (waved at Pentecost).

(V.7) "And you shall rejoice": we should serve God joyfully, in all of His instruction. We can do that, when we understand that it is for blessing, and when we are trusting. "As Yahweh your God has blessed you": the amount of our offerings should be commensurate with the amount God has put in our care; this applies to all areas, from charity to Torah study.

(V.11) "The place in which Yahweh your God shall choose for His name to dwell": this was specifically temporarily Shiloh, then permanently Jerusalem. Interestingly, from an aerial view, the valleys between the

hills of Shiloh form the Hebrew word “Yahweh”; the valleys around the Holy Temple form a letter “shin”, for Shaddai – the Almighty.

(V.17) All offerings, of animals and crops, may be consumed only at Jerusalem: not at other places where one might dwell. However, (v.15) if a consecrated animal becomes blemished, and is replaced by another animal, then the redeemed blemished animal may be eaten elsewhere, and even by an unclean person.

Through Isaiah, God has promised us a beautiful dwelling place. There will be no oppression, and nothing to fear. God can say this for a certainty, because He created the one who fashions weapons, and He made the waster for the purpose of causing destruction (Isaiah 54:16)! Though their intent be against us, God’s intent is otherwise.

Psalms 129 backs up Isaiah, showing that the one intending harm to the righteous will find his intent turned around.

(Isaiah 55:2) God asks, why do you spend your earnings for things that will not satisfy? Obey Him, take what is really good, and you will be delighted forever! (V.6) *“Seek Yahweh while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near.”*

In Luke 6, Yeshua takes up the theme.

(V.20 & 24) *“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.” “But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full.”*

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: ‘I know your tribulation and your poverty, but you are rich.’” (Revelation 2:8-9).

“And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent.’” (Revelation 3:14-19)

(V.21 & 25) *“Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied.” “Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry.”*

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.” (Matthew 5:6)

(V.21 & 25) *“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.” “Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.”*

“Therefore in that day Yahweh God of hosts, called you to weeping, to wailing, to shaving the head, and to wearing sackcloth. Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine: ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die.’” (Isaiah 22:12-13)

“And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.” (Matthew 24:30)

(V.22-23 & 26) *“Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and cast insults at you, and spurn your name as evil, **for the sake of the Son of Man**. Be glad in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets.” “Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for in the same way their fathers used to treat the false prophets.”*

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.” (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

Reader 1 Amen 20* "When Yahweh your God enlarges your border as He has promised you, and you say, 'I will eat meat,' because you desire to eat meat, then you may eat meat, whatever you desire. 21 "If the place which Yahweh your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, then you may slaughter of your herd and flock which Yahweh has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates whatever you desire. 22 "Just as a gazelle or a deer is eaten, so you shall eat it; the unclean and the clean alike may eat of it. 23 "Only be sure not to eat the blood, for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh. 24 "You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out on the ground like water. 25 "You shall not eat it, in order that it may be well with you and your sons after you, for you will be doing what is right in the sight of Yahweh. 26 "Only your holy things which you may have and your votive offerings, you shall take and go to the place which Yahweh chooses. 27 "And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of Yahweh your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of Yahweh your God, and you shall eat the flesh.

Reader 2 Amen 28* "Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, in order that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of Yahweh your God. 29 "When Yahweh your God cuts off before you the nations which you are going in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, 30 beware that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?' 31 "You shall not behave thus toward Yahweh your God, for every abominable act which Yahweh hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. 32 "Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it.

Reader 3 Amen 13:1* "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for Yahweh your God is testing you to find out if you love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 "You shall follow Yahweh your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him. 5 "But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has counseled rebellion against Yahweh your God who brought you from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to seduce you from the way in which Yahweh your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from among you. 6 "If your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or the wife you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods' (whom neither you nor your fathers have known, 7 of the gods of the peoples who are around you, near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other end), 8 you shall not yield to him or listen to him; and your eye shall not pity him, nor shall you spare or conceal him. 9 "But you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. 10 "So you shall stone him to death because he has sought to seduce you from Yahweh your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 11 "Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and will never again do such a wicked thing among you.

Reader 4 Amen 12* "If you hear in one of your cities, which Yahweh your God is giving you to live in, anyone saying that 13 some worthless men have gone out from among you and have seduced the inhabitants of their city, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods' (whom you have not known), 14 then you shall investigate and search out and inquire thoroughly. And if it is true and the matter established that this abomination has been done among you, 15 you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it and all that is in it and its cattle with the edge of the sword. 16 "Then you shall gather all its booty into the middle of its open square and burn the city and all its booty with fire as a whole elevation offering to Yahweh your God; and it shall be a ruin forever. It shall never be rebuilt. 17 "And nothing from that which is put under the ban shall cling to your hand, in order that Yahweh may turn from His burning anger and show mercy to you, and have compassion on you and make you increase, just as He has sworn to your fathers, 18 if you will listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, keeping all His

commandments which I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of Yahweh your God.

Reader 5 Amen 14:1* "You are the sons of Yahweh your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave your forehead for the sake of the dead. 2 "For you are a holy people to Yahweh your God; and Yahweh has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

3 "You shall not eat any detestable thing.

4 "These are the animals which you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, 5 the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope and the mountain sheep. 6 "And any animal that divides the hoof and has the hoof split in two and chews the cud, among the animals, that you may eat. 7 "Nevertheless, you are not to eat of these among those which chew the cud, or among those that divide the hoof in two: the camel and the rabbit and the rock-badger, for though they chew the cud, they do not divide the hoof; they are unclean for you. 8 "And the pig, because it divides the hoof but does not chew the cud, it is unclean for you. You shall not eat any of their flesh nor touch their carcasses.

9 "These you may eat of all that are in water: anything that has fins and scales you may eat, 10 but anything that does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean for you.

11 "You may eat any clean bird. 12 "But these are the ones which you shall not eat: the eagle and the vulture and the buzzard, 13 and the red kite, the falcon, and the kite in their kinds, 14 and every raven in its kind, 15 and the ostrich, the owl, the sea gull, and the hawk in their kinds, 16 the little owl, the great owl, the white owl, 17 the pelican, the carrion vulture, the cormorant, 18 the stork, and the heron in their kinds, and the hoopoe and the bat. 19 "And all the teeming life with wings are unclean to you; they shall not be eaten. 20 "You may eat any clean bird.

21 "You shall not eat anything which dies of itself. You may give it to the alien who is in your town, so that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner, for you are a holy people to Yahweh your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

Reader 6 Amen 22* "You shall surely tithe all the produce from what you sow, which comes out of the field every year. 23 "And you shall eat in the presence of Yahweh your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithe of your grain, your new wine, your oil, and the first-born of your herd and your flock, in order that you may learn to fear Yahweh your God always. 24 "And if the distance is so great for you that you are not able to bring the tithe, since the place where Yahweh your God chooses to set His name is too far away from you when Yahweh your God blesses you, 25 then you shall exchange it for money, and bind the money in your hand and go to the place which Yahweh your God chooses. 26 "And you may spend the money for whatever your heart desires, for oxen, or sheep, or wine, or strong drink, or whatever your heart desires; and there you shall eat in the presence of Yahweh your God and rejoice, you and your household.

27 "Also you shall not neglect the Levite who is in your town, for he has no portion or inheritance among you. 28 "At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall deposit it in your town. 29 "And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that Yahweh your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

Reader 7 Amen 15:1* "At the end of every seven years you shall grant a remission of debts. 2 "And this is the manner of remission: every creditor shall release what he has loaned to his neighbor; he shall not exact it of his neighbor and his brother, because Yahweh's remission has been proclaimed. 3 "From a foreigner you may exact it, but your hand shall release whatever of yours is with your brother. 4 "However, there shall be no poor among you, since Yahweh will surely bless you in the land which Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, 5 if only you listen obediently to the voice of Yahweh your God, to observe carefully all this commandment which I am commanding you today. 6 "For Yahweh your God shall bless you as He has promised you, and you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; and you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

Jeremiah 23:9

As for the prophets: my heart is broken within me, all my bones tremble; I have become like a drunken man, even like a man overcome with wine, because of Yahweh and because of His holy words. 10 For the land is full of adulterers; for the land mourns because of the curse. The pastures of the wilderness have dried up. Their course also is evil, and their might is not right. 11 "For both prophet and priest are polluted; even in My house I have found their wickedness," declares Yahweh. 12 "Therefore their way will be like slippery paths to them, they will be driven away into the gloom and fall down in it; for I shall bring calamity upon them, the year of their punishment," declares Yahweh. 13 "Moreover, among the prophets of Samaria I saw an offensive thing: they prophesied by Baal and led My people Israel astray. 14 "Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: the committing of adultery and walking in falsehood; and they strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one has turned back from his wickedness. All of them have become to Me like Sodom, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah. 15 "Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts concerning the prophets, 'Behold, I am going to feed them wormwood and make them drink poisonous water, for from the prophets of Jerusalem pollution has gone forth into all the land.'" 16 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; they speak a vision of their own imagination, not from the mouth of Yahweh. 17 "They keep saying to those who despise Me, 'Yahweh has said, "You will have peace"; and as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart, they say, 'Calamity will not come upon you.' 18 "But who has stood in the council of Yahweh, that he should see and hear His word? Who has given heed to His word and listened? 19 "Behold, the storm of Yahweh has gone forth in wrath, even a whirling tempest; it will swirl down on the head of the wicked. 20 "The anger of Yahweh will not turn back until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart; in the last days you will clearly understand it. 21 "I did not send these prophets, but they ran. I did not speak to them, but they prophesied. 22 "But if they had stood in My council, then they would have announced My words to My people, and would have turned them back from their evil way and from the evil of their deeds.

Psalm 130 *A Song of Ascents.*

1 Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Yahweh. 2 Yahweh, hear my voice! Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. 3 If Thou, Yahweh, shouldst mark iniquities, O Yahweh, who could stand? 4 But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared. 5 I wait for Yahweh, my soul does wait, and in His word do I hope. 6 My soul waits for Yahweh more than the watchmen for the morning; indeed, more than the watchmen for the morning. 7 O Israel, hope in Yahweh; for with Yahweh there is lovingkindness, and with Him is abundant redemption. 8 And He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Matthew 7:15-27

15 "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? 17 "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. 19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 "So then, you will know them by their fruits. 21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Yahweh, Yahweh,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. 22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.' 24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. 25 "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. 26 "And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. 27 "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall."

Commentary:

(V.12:20) Kashrut: here we have God's decree of kosher animals for meat, and the prohibition of eating blood. The mention of animals disallowed for offerings shows that personal use of animals for meat is the subject. Also, there is an ethical rule derived here, that we should not indulge in luxuries beyond what God has "extended our border" to afford.

(V.21) "*You may slaughter . . . as I have commanded you*" is taken to show that God gave Moses oral command concerning kosher slaughter. We occasionally see reference to instruction from God that is not explicitly written in Torah; such instruction is often promoted by Yeshua and His apostles: the "Cup of the Covenant" at the Passover seder (Matthew 26:27-28), and the "lamps" for havdallah (Acts 20:8), are examples.

(V.25) Our primary consideration for obeying God's commands should be, not what seems good for us, but "*doing what is right in the eyes of Yahweh.*"

Sh'mar and Sh'ma.

(V.28) "*(Sh'mar) Safeguard and (sh'ma) obey all these words which I command you, in order that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of Yahweh your God.*" We are to learn and review Torah, so that it becomes part of us, to keep us from stumbling. The previous reasons (v.25) are repeated: then "*it will be well with us and our children forever, when we do what is good and right in the eyes of Yahweh.*"

(V.32) "*Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it.*" The Psalmist says, (v.3-4) "*If You, Yahweh, should mark iniquities, O Yahweh, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.*"

Yeshua said (Matthew 7:23-27), "*And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.' Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.*"

You shall not Sh'ma.

(V.13:1-11) If a "prophet" or "dreamer" arises, though his words be accompanied by signs or miracles, if he says to follow another god or different commandments (v.5!) – you shall not (*sh'ma*) listen to him. You shall not pity him (even though he be a mate or offspring), but he is to be stoned to death. This means that a witness must testify before the judges, and subsequent to a guilty verdict, must cast stones upon the condemned. The death penalty is to cause all to fear following false gods: God teaches that capital punishment is a deterrent. Note how corrupt judges of the Sanhedrin justified condemning Yeshua (Matthew 26:65-66): "*Then the high priest tore his robes, saying, 'He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; what do you think?' They answered and said, 'He is deserving of death!'*"

Yeshua neither abolished Torah (Matthew 5:17) nor changed the commandments (Acts 6:14 – a false accusation, Hebrews 10:28).

Jeremiah says (v.23:16-18), "*Thus says Yahweh of hosts, 'Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; they speak a vision of their own imagination, not from the mouth of Yahweh. They keep saying to those who despise Me, 'Yahweh has said, 'You will have peace''; and as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart, they say, 'Calamity will not come upon you.' But who has stood in the council of Yahweh, that he should see and hear His word? Who has given heed to His word and listened?'*"

Yeshua says (Matthew 17:15-17), "*Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn*

bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? 17 "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit."

Why are there false teachers?

The reason that false prophets are sent among us is that (v.3) “*Yahweh your God is testing you to find out if you love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul*”!

Sanctification

Chapter fourteen concerns how we are to be set aside for God: this is called (*kodesh*) holiness or sanctification.

(V.14:1) We are not to mourn in the way the heathen do, by injuring or marking ourselves: they do so because they are without hope – death being final in their eyes. Paul emphasizes this in 1 Thessalonians 4:13.

(V.4) These are the animals that God has given us for food.

(V.9) These are the fish that God has given us for food.

(V.11) These are the birds that God has given us for food.

(V.14:22 – 15:6) The seven-year tithing cycle:

The first tithe (*terumah* / priest’s portion – not mentioned in this chapter: see Numbers 18:21-31) is taken every year.

The second tithe is taken the first, second, fourth, and fifth years: it is to be eaten at Jerusalem.

The third tithe is taken the third and sixth years: it is for the poor. The portion lists those who are more likely to be poor: the Levite, the proselyte, the orphan, and the widow.

Remission of loans is required in the seventh year (Sabbatical Year).

The total of tithes may be seen as approximately 20 percent. Much of that is consumed by the tither. All tithes and offerings should not exceed thirty percent (rabbinic ruling) unless the giver is wealthy enough that such would not be neglecting his family.

We are promised a blessing, similar to that found in Malachi 3:10.

Ev'yon / A Poor Man

Deuteronomy 15:7 – 16:17 Isaiah 61:1-3 Psalm 131 Luke 4:14-30

Commentary Y3-34

Heshvan 27, 5764 / Nov 22, 2003

Reader 1 Amen* 7 "If there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers, in any of your towns in your land which Yahweh your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother; 8 but you shall freely open your hand to him, and shall generously lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks. 9 "Beware, lest there is a base thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of remission, is near,' and your eye is hostile toward your poor brother, and you give him nothing; then he may cry to Yahweh against you, and it will be a sin in you. 10 "You shall generously give to him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing Yahweh your God will bless you in all your work and in all your undertakings. 11 "For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land.'

Reader 2 Amen* 12 "If your kinsman, a Hebrew man or woman, is sold to you, then he shall serve you six years, but in the seventh year you shall set him free. 13 "And when you set him free, you shall not send him away empty-handed. 14 "You shall furnish him liberally from your flock and from your threshing floor and from your wine vat; you shall give to him as Yahweh your God has blessed you. 15 "And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today. 16 "And it shall come about if he says to you, 'I will not go out from you,' because he loves you and your household, since he fares well with you; 17 then you shall take an awl and pierce it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your servant forever. And also you shall do likewise to your maidservant. 18 "It shall not seem hard to you when you set him free, for he has given you six years with double the service of a hired man; so Yahweh your God will bless you in whatever you do.

Reader 3 Amen* 19 "You shall consecrate to Yahweh your God all the first-born males that are born of your herd and of your flock; you shall not work with the first-born of your herd, nor shear the first-born of your flock. 20 "You and your household shall eat it every year before Yahweh your God in the place which Yahweh chooses. 21 "But if it has any defect, such as lameness or blindness, or any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to Yahweh your God. 22 "You shall eat it within your gates; the unclean and the clean alike may eat it, as a gazelle or a deer. 23 "Only you shall not eat its blood; you are to pour it out on the ground like water.

Reader 4 Amen* 16:1 "Observe the month of Aviv (*Nisan*) and prepare the Passover (*Lamb*) to Yahweh your God, for in the month of Aviv Yahweh your God brought you out of Egypt by night. 2 "And you shall slaughter the Passover (*Lamb*) to Yahweh your God from the flock and the herd, in the place where Yahweh chooses to establish His name. 3 "You shall not eat leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat with it unleavened bread, the bread of affliction (for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste), in order that you may remember all the days of your life the day when you came out of the land of Egypt. 4 "For seven days no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory, and none of the flesh which you sacrifice on the evening of the first day shall remain overnight until morning. 5 "You are not allowed to slaughter the Passover in any of your towns which Yahweh your God is giving you; 6 but at the place where Yahweh your God chooses to establish His name, you shall slaughter the Passover in the evening at sunset, at the time that you came out of Egypt. 7 "And you shall cook and eat it in the place which Yahweh your God chooses. And in the morning you are to return to your tents. 8 "Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to Yahweh your God; you shall do no work on it.

Reader 5 Amen* 9 "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; you shall begin to count seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. 10 "Then you shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks to Yahweh your God with a tribute of a freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give just as Yahweh your God blesses you; 11 and you shall rejoice before Yahweh your God, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite who is in your town, and the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your midst, in the place where Yahweh your God chooses to establish His name. 12 "And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

Reader 6 Amen 13* "You shall celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles seven days after you have gathered in from your threshing floor and your wine vat; 14 and you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite and the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your towns. 15 "Seven days you shall celebrate a feast to Yahweh your God in the place which Yahweh chooses, because Yahweh your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you shall be altogether joyful.

Reader 7 Amen 16* "Three times in a year all your males shall appear before Yahweh your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Tabernacles, and they shall not appear before Yahweh empty-handed. 17 "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of Yahweh your God which He has given you.

Isaiah 61:1-2

1 The Spirit of Yahweh God is upon me, because Yahweh has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners; 2 to proclaim the favorable year of Yahweh, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, 3 to grant those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh, that He may be glorified.

Psalm 131 – A Song of Ascents, of David.

1 O Yahweh, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes haughty; nor do I involve myself in great matters, or in things too difficult for me. 2 Surely I have composed and quieted my soul; like a weaned child rests against his mother, my soul is like a weaned child within me. 3 O Israel, hope in Yahweh from this time forth and forever.

Luke 4:14-30

14 And Yeshua returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit; and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. 15 And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all. 16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. 17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, 18 "The Spirit of Yahweh is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, 19 to proclaim the favorable year of Yahweh." 20 And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." 22 And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?" 23 And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your home town as well.'" 24 And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his home town. 25 "But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; 26 and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. 27 "And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." 28 And all in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; 29 and they rose up and cast Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff. 30 But passing through their midst, He went His way.

Commentary:

We are still on the subject of holiness / sanctification: being set apart for God's service.

First we look at alms and servitude.

(V.7-11) If a “brother” is in need, we are to freely lend to him. A loan is less embarrassing to the recipient than charity, but we are not to base our lending on the expectation of receiving it back. Therefore, if the Sabbatical year (of which we learned last week) were near, that was not to influence one’s lending to the poor.

If we recognize that we were created to serve God, and that He provides all of our needs to serve Him, then we can understand that it is in His plan that there are poor for us to help and this is not detrimental to us. God has ordered this as the way of blessing for us (v.10).

An order is derived here: first the destitute person, next a relative – closer ones first, then in your cities – one’s own city first, and finally in the land – one’s own land first. The Hebrew wording (v.8) means again and again.

(V.12-18) If a poor person is sold as a servant, the servant must be freed on the seventh year, and sent away with liberal sustenance – enough to raise his self-esteem and reputation. Six years of labor is twice what a hired hand could obligate himself to do (Isaiah 16:14). The master is to remember his own prior slavery, and be compassionate.

Next we look at consecration of the firstborn.

The firstborn of all the herds and flocks are to be set aside, not worked or sheared. They are to be eaten at Jerusalem by the priests. But, if they have any defect, they are to be eaten at home, the same as a non-sacrificial animal.

Lastly, we have an outline of Yahweh’s Feasts (see FEASTS).

We are commanded to observe the Biblical calendar: “*Observe the month Nisan*” (Aviv – v.1).

(*Hag haMatzot*) The Feast of Unleavened Breads:

(V.16:1-7) In the month Nisan, each family must choose a lamb on the tenth day and slay it on the fourteenth day between noon and sunset – at Jerusalem, the place where Yahweh placed His Name. It must be cooked and completely eaten by midnight (that being the fifteenth). Then in the morning, upon returning to our dwellings, we continue to eat unleavened bread for the remainder of the seven days of the feast (a positive command – v.3) and no leaven may be present. The first and seventh days are Holy Days.

The Passover Lamb represents Yeshua, previously prophetically, now as a memorial. Yeshua was crucified according to all of the rites and times for the slaying of the Passover Lamb.

Counting the Omer and Feast of Weeks:

From the day after the Passover Seder, we count the weeks and the days: seven weeks and one day, fifty days. *Hag Shavuot* means Feast of Weeks; *Pentecost* means fiftieth. It is also called *Yom haBikkurim* – the Day of Firstfruits. We are to celebrate at Jerusalem, waving two leavened loaves each made from an *omer* of the first of the wheat crop.

Note that servants and sojourners are included (v.11): we are made part of the commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:12-13). We are to remember (v.12) that we were slaves to sin, but we were delivered, and now should take care to observe these memorials.

This symbolizes our betrothal to Messiah, with the (*Shitre Erusin*) betrothal contract being the Torah (given at Pentecost 3300 years ago) and confirmed by the earnest of the Spirit (given at Pentecost 2000 years ago).

We are taught to celebrate (*Hag Sukkot*) the Feast of Tabernacles. It follows (*Yom Teruah*) the Day of Trumpeting on Tishrei 1, and (*Yom haKippurim*) the Day of the Atonements on Tishrei 10. This feast lasts seven days, from Tishrei 15 through 21. We are to rejoice, bringing in the final firstfruits – including tree

fruits and nuts. This feast is immediately followed by the Eighth Day assembly. The first day and the “Eighth Day” are Holy Days (like Sabbaths).

The Day of Trumpeting is a rehearsal of blowing the shofar (ram’s horn trumpet): at the last trump, which follows the shout of the archangel, “Tekia Gedolah!” (the Return of the Great One), Yeshua will return and the righteous dead will be raised.

The Day of the Atonements (always plural in Scripture) rehearses our sins being transferred to Yeshua (the “scapegoat”), and Yeshua’s righteousness being imputed to us – like the goat burned on the altar, ascending as a sweet aroma to God. As two goats are the symbols, so we must have two atonements.

The seven-day Feast of Tabernacles represents the seven-day wedding feast of Messiah. It is the time of the downfall of the nations. The “Eighth Day” represents the time following the seventh millennium / the thousand-year reign of Messiah on this earth: it represents the final fulfillment of Torah, when righteousness reigns forever.

The last two verses (v.16-17) reiterate that the three Feasts of Yahweh are to be celebrated where Yahweh places His Name – temporarily that was at Shiloh, then permanently at Jerusalem. There are seven Holy Days associated with the three feasts. (Scripture refers to the Feast of Hanukkah, but that is not called one of the Feasts of Yahweh.)

Referring back to last week’s lesson on tithing, no one was to come to the feasts empty-handed. The offerings had to be brought and prepared *before* the Holy Day. We should not deal with money (or the slaying of sacrificial animals) on Holy Days – including weekly Sabbaths.

All of this is part of our holiness / sanctification – being set apart for God.

(Luke 4:14-30) The haftarah portion, Isaiah 61:1-3, was read by Yeshua as He attended a synagogue in Nazareth (v.15-20). We may assume from this that it was fall – late during the third year of the Temple Triennial Cycle – and He was reading the haftarah portion.

The reading concerned freeing captives and preaching good news to the poor – relating to the subject of the Torah portion. He concluded with, “*Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing*” (v.21). All were marveling at His gracious words, but apparently they had little real heart for His teaching.

Yeshua then said (v.23), “*No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your home town as well.’*” What followed seems to say that He would not be performing healings in Nazareth, because He was not honored in this His home town (paraphrased): “*There were many widows in Israel during the three-and-a-half year famine of Elijah’s time, but he only provided for a gentile widow in Sidon! There were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet, but only a gentile in Syria was cleansed!*”

They were so filled with rage that they cast Him out of the city and would have killed Him, though He only spoke what their prophets had said!

So, as we saw in last week’s lesson, we are to *Sh’mar* and *Sh’ma* – we are to learn and review Torah, so that it becomes part of us, to keep us from stumbling. Then “*it will be well with us and our children forever, when we do what is good and right in the eyes of Yahweh.*”

May we securely “*hope in Yahweh from this time forth and forever*” Psalm 131:3.

Deuteronomy 15:7 – 16:17

Reader 1 Amen* 7 "But if there are any poor people in your towns when you arrive in the land Yahweh your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tightfisted toward them. 8 Instead, be generous and lend them whatever they need. 9 Do not be mean-spirited and refuse someone a loan because the year of release is close at hand. If you refuse to make the loan and the needy person cries out to Yahweh, you will be considered guilty of sin. 10 Give freely without begrudging it, and Yahweh your God will bless you in everything you do. 11 There will always be some among you who are poor. That is why I am commanding you to share your resources freely with the poor and with other Israelites in need.

Reader 2 Amen* 12 "If an Israelite man or woman voluntarily becomes your servant and serves you for six years, in the seventh year you must set that servant free. 13 "When you release a male servant, do not send him away empty-handed. 14 Give him a generous farewell gift from your flock, your threshing floor, and your winepress. Share with him some of the bounty with which Yahweh your God has blessed you. 15 Remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt and Yahweh your God redeemed you! That is why I am giving you this command. 16 But suppose your servant says, 'I will not leave you,' because he loves you and your family, and he is well off with you. 17 In that case, take an awl and push it through his earlobe into the door. After that, he will be your servant for life. "You must do the same for your female servants. 18 "Do not consider it a hardship when you release your servants. Remember that for six years they have given you the services worth double the wages of hired workers, and Yahweh your God will bless you in all you do.

Reader 3 Amen* 19 "You must set aside for Yahweh your God all the firstborn males from your flocks and herds. Do not use the firstborn of your herds to work your fields, and do not shear the firstborn of your flocks. 20 Instead, you and your family must eat these animals in the presence of Yahweh your God each year at the place he chooses. 21 But if this firstborn animal has any defect, such as being lame or blind, or if anything else is wrong with it, you must not sacrifice it to Yahweh your God. 22 Instead, use it for food for your family at home. Anyone may eat it, whether ceremonially clean or unclean, just as anyone may eat a gazelle or deer. 23 But do not eat the blood. You must pour it out on the ground like water.

Reader 4 Amen* 16:1 "In honor of Yahweh your God, always celebrate the Passover at the proper time in early spring, for that was when Yahweh your God brought you out of Egypt by night. 2 Your Passover sacrifice may be from either the flock or the herd, and it must be sacrificed to Yahweh your God at the place he chooses for his name to be honored. 3 Eat it with bread made without yeast. For seven days eat only bread made without yeast, as you did when you escaped from Egypt in such a hurry. Eat this bread--the bread of suffering-- so that you will remember the day you departed from Egypt as long as you live. 4 Let no yeast be found in any house throughout your land for seven days. And do not let any of the meat of the Passover lamb remain until the next morning. 5 "The Passover must not be eaten in the towns that Yahweh your God is giving you. 6 It must be offered at the place Yahweh your God will choose for his name to be honored. Sacrifice it there as the sun goes down on the anniversary of your exodus from Egypt. 7 Roast the lamb and eat it in the place Yahweh your God chooses. Then go back to your tents the next morning. 8 For the next six days you may not eat bread made with yeast. On the seventh day the people must assemble before Yahweh your God, and no work may be done on that day.

Reader 5 Amen* 9 "Count off seven weeks from the beginning of your grain harvest. 10 Then you must celebrate the Festival of Harvest to honor Yahweh your God. Bring him a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings you have received from him. 11 It is a time to celebrate before Yahweh your God at the place he chooses for his name to be honored. Celebrate with your whole family, all your servants, the Levites from your towns, and the foreigners, orphans, and widows who live among you. 12 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, so be careful to obey all these laws.

Reader 6 Amen* 13 "Another celebration, the Festival of Shelters, must be observed for seven days at the end of the harvest season, after the grain has been threshed and the grapes have been pressed. 14 This festival will be a happy time of rejoicing with your family, your servants, and with the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows from your towns. 15 For seven days celebrate this festival to honor Yahweh your God

at the place he chooses, for it is Yahweh your God who gives you bountiful harvests and blesses all your work. This festival will be a time of great joy for all.

Reader 7 Amen* 16 "Each year every man in Israel must celebrate these three festivals: the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Harvest, and the Festival of Shelters. They must appear before Yahweh your God at the place he chooses on each of these occasions, and they must bring a gift to Yahweh. 17 All must give as they are able, according to the blessings given to them by Yahweh your God.

Isaiah 61:1-3

Reader 8 Amen* 1 The Spirit of the Sovereign Yahweh is upon me, because Yahweh has appointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to announce that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. 2 He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of Yahweh's favor has come, and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies. 3 To all who mourn in Israel, he will give beauty for ashes, joy instead of mourning, praise instead of despair. For Yahweh has planted them like strong and graceful oaks for his own glory.

Luke 4:14-30

Reader 9 Amen* 14 Then Yeshua returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit's power. Soon he became well known throughout the surrounding country. 15 He taught in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. 16 When he came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. 17 The scroll containing the messages of Isaiah the prophet was handed to him, and he unrolled the scroll to the place where it says: 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the downtrodden will be freed from their oppressors, 19 and that the time of the Lord's favor has come. " 20 He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. Everyone in the synagogue stared at him intently. 21 Then he said, "This Scripture has come true today before your very eyes!" 22 All who were there spoke well of him and were amazed by the gracious words that fell from his lips. "How can this be?" they asked. "Isn't this Joseph's son?"

Reader 10 Amen* 23 Then he said, "Probably you will quote me that proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself'-- meaning, 'Why don't you do miracles here in your hometown like those you did in Capernaum?' 24 But the truth is, no prophet is accepted in his own hometown. 25 "Certainly there were many widows in Israel who needed help in Elijah's time, when there was no rain for three and a half years and hunger stalked the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them. He was sent instead to a widow of Zarephath-- a foreigner in the land of Sidon. 27 Or think of the prophet Elisha, who healed Naaman, a Syrian, rather than the many lepers in Israel who needed help." 28 When they heard this, the people in the synagogue were furious. 29 Jumping up, they mobbed him and took him to the edge of the hill on which the city was built. They intended to push him over the cliff, 30 but he slipped away through the crowd and left them.

Shofetim / Judges

Deuteronomy 16:18 – 17:13 1 Samuel 18:1 Psalm 132 John 5:1-47

Commentary Y3-35

Kislev 4, 5764 / Nov 29, 2003

Reader 1 Amen* 18 "You shall appoint for yourself judges and officers in all your towns which Yahweh your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. 19 "You shall not distort justice; you shall not be partial, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous. 20 "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, that you may live and possess the land which Yahweh your God is giving you.

Reader 2 Amen* 21 "You shall not plant for yourself an Asherah of any kind of tree beside the altar of Yahweh your God, which you shall make for yourself. 22 "Neither shall you set up for yourself a sacred pillar which Yahweh your God hates. 17:1 "You shall not sacrifice to Yahweh your God an ox or a sheep which has a blemish or any defect, for that is a detestable thing to Yahweh your God.

Reader 3 Amen* 2 "If there is found in your midst, in any of your towns, which Yahweh your God is giving you, a man or a woman who does what is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God, by transgressing His covenant, 3 and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the heavenly host, which I have not commanded, 4 and if it is told you and you have heard of it, then you shall inquire thoroughly. And behold, if it is true and the thing certain that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, 5 then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil deed, to your gates, that is, the man or the woman, and you shall stone them to death. 6 "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. 7 "The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

Reader 4 Amen* 8 "If any case is too difficult for you to decide, between one kind of homicide or another, between one kind of lawsuit or another, and between one kind of assault or another, being cases of dispute in your courts, then you shall arise and go up to the place which Yahweh your God chooses. 9 "So you shall come to the Levitical priest or the judge who is in office in those days, and you shall inquire of them, and they will declare to you the verdict in the case. 10 "And you shall do according to the terms of the verdict which they declare to you from that place which Yahweh chooses; and you shall be careful to observe according to all that they teach you.

Reader 5 Amen* 11 "According to the terms of the law which they teach you, and according to the verdict which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, to the right or the left. 12 "And the man who acts presumptuously by not listening to the priest who stands there to serve Yahweh your God, nor to the judge, that man shall die; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel. 13 "Then all the people will hear and be afraid, and will not act presumptuously again.

1 Samuel 8:1

And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel.

Psalm 132 *A Song of Ascents.*

1 Remember, O Yahweh, on David's behalf, all his affliction; 2 how he swore to Yahweh, and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob, 3 "Surely I will not enter my house, nor lie on my bed; 4 I will not give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids; 5 until I find a place for Yahweh, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob." 6 Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the field of Jaar. 7 Let us go into His dwelling place; let us worship at His footstool. 8 Arise, O Yahweh, to Thy resting place; Thou and the ark of Thy strength. 9 Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let Thy godly ones sing for joy. 10 For the sake of David Thy servant, do not turn away the face of Thine anointed. 11 Yahweh has sworn to David, a truth from which He will not turn back; "Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne. 12 "If your sons will keep My covenant, and My testimony which I will teach them, their sons also shall sit upon your throne forever." 13 For Yahweh has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation. 14 "This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it. 15 "I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her needy with bread. 16 "Her priests also I will clothe with salvation; and her godly ones will sing

aloud for joy. 17 "There I will cause the horn of David to spring forth; I have prepared a lamp for Mine anointed. 18 "His enemies I will clothe with shame; but upon himself his crown shall shine."

John 5

1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Yeshua went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes. 3 In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, waiting for the moving of the waters; 4 for an angel of Yahweh went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted. 5 And a certain man was there, who had been thirty-eight years in his sickness. 6 When Yeshua saw him lying there, and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, "Do you wish to get well?" 7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me." 8 Yeshua said to him, "Arise, take up your pallet, and walk." 9 And immediately the man became well, and took up his pallet and began to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on that day. 10 Therefore the Jews were saying to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet." 11 But he answered them, "He who made me well was the one who said to me, 'Take up your pallet and walk.'" 12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your pallet, and walk?'" 13 But he who was healed did not know who it was; for Yeshua had slipped away while there was a crowd in that place. 14 Afterward Yeshua found him in the temple, and said to him, "Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse may befall you." 15 The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Yeshua who had made him well. 16 And for this reason the Jews were persecuting Yeshua, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. 17 But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." 18 For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. 19 Yeshua therefore answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. 20 "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and greater works than these will He show Him, that you may marvel. 21 "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. 22 "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. 25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. 26 "For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; 27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. 28 "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, 29 and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment. 30 "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 31 "If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. 32 "There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears of Me is true. 33 "You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. 34 "But the witness which I receive is not from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. 35 "He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. 36 "But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. 37 "And the Father who sent Me, He has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. 38 "And you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. 39 "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; 40 and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life. 41 "I do not receive glory from men; 42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. 43 "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him. 44 "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God? 45 "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your

hope. 46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. 47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Commentary:

We regularly pray, "Restore our judges, as in earliest times" (eleventh blessing of the Shemoneh Esrei). We may expect Biblical judgment to be restored during the millennial reign of Yeshua.

(V.16:18) Today's portion begins with the command to appoint judges: "*You shall appoint for yourself judges*".

Appointing an unjust judge is likened to planting a tree for idolatry (v.21). "If the community has a hand in appointing unqualified judges, God holds them all responsible for the resultant perversions of justice" (*Or HaChaim*). Here is a basis for moral democracy (under God), and for believers to take part in voting.

Judges must not pervert judgment: they are not to be a respecter of persons, and are not to take bribes.

John 5:44 "*How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?*"

Here are Talmudic disqualifications for a judge or witness:

One who gambles to make money, one who loans at interest, one who bets on races, one who violates Sabbath for profit; a near kin, a friend, an enemy (one who had not spoken due to enmity for 3 days).

[Note: Completion of Jerusalem Talmud – 351 CE

End of Sanhedrin – 425 CE

Babylonian Talmud – 200 - 499 CE]

John 12:42-43 "*Nevertheless many even of the rulers (judges) believed in Him (Yeshua), but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.*"

1 Samuel 8:1 "*And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel.*"

After these sons perverted judgment, Israel wrongly asked for a king, and was given Saul.

In Exodus 21, we are told that penalty judgments are to be proportionate to the seriousness of the crime: "*an eye for an eye*", which means the fair price of an eye for the loss of an eye; we are also told that the defendant must be held to the court's judgment: "*he shall pay as the judges decide*". In Exodus 22, a defendant that is unable to pay a judgment shall be sold for payment.

Titus 3:1 "*Remind them to be subject to rulers (judges)*".

(V.17:1) Next we are forbade worship using "*a detestable thing*".

The order is thus:

- (a) Proper justice is of tantamount importance.
- (b) Perversion of justice will lead to idolatrous degrading of places of worship, in the guise of external beautification (*trees*).
- (c) Blemished animals and unjustly gained money will be used for offerings.

(V.2-7) For example: if the judges are told that someone has worshipped an idol, the matter is to be thoroughly examined. Two or three witnesses are required that give exactly comparable testimony concerning time and place and details of the deed. The guilty one must be stoned to death, and the witnesses must cast the first boulders upon the prostrate person, followed by all the people.

Here are Talmudic rules for testimony:

*Witnesses questioned separately, beginning with eldest;
Must be eye/ear-witness, must be in agreement in details of time and place and circumstances.*

The reason given for capital punishment is to cleanse evil from the land. It is a warning to others. It is not revenge. Compassion for the person is not only misplaced, but wrong.

(V.17:8) Any dispute that cannot be resolved by a lower court, is to be taken the high court – the Sanhedrin. A decision there is absolutely binding.

Here are the levels of courts:

Sanhedrin = Court of Justice

- A) Reference to Great Beit Din = Court of 71 (Num 11:16) ordained scholars in Jerusalem (*from Moses' time to 425 CE*); *=halachic ruling, **=culpatory ruling
Beit Din haGadol shebeLishkat haGazit (Great House of Judgment in the Circular Chamber of Hewn Stone)
Met every day (except Sabbaths and Festivals and their eves), only during the daytime – between the morning and evening sacrifices (approx. 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM); the place where “the Law went forth to all Israel”.
Three semi-circular rows of twenty-three disciples, needed additional judges selected from first row, replaced from second row, which were replaced from third row, which were replaced from congregation.
**Wrote Mishnah/Talmud*
**Establish lower courts, determination of Rosh Hodesh, set up King or High Priest, determination of Temple structure, need for Red heifer, Priestly genealogy, waging non-defensive battle*
***exceptional cases – trying a high priest, false prophet, or a whole city*
- B) Also reference to Small Beit Din = subordinate District Court of 23 (see Sanhedrin 1:6);
***criminal cases which may involve death penalty: defamer, owner of animal that killed; judging animals involved in bestiality or killing a person*
- C) Synagogue Bench of 3 usually only called Beit Din.
**Sabbath preparation and starting times, evaluation of fourth year tree fruit, assessment of second tithe redemption, assessment of consecrated property redemption,*
***monetary matters (inheritances, loans, sales), theft, bodily injury, seduction, crimes punishable by flogging*

Synagogues had a bench of three judges, called “Rulers of the Synagogue” (Matthew 9:18) because they made halachic rulings and culpability rulings.

1 Corinthians 6:1-6 “Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, matters of this life? If then you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren, but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?”

Psalm 132

The Holy Temple was the center for instruction in righteousness, and judgment – the place of the Sanhedrin. It is called the resting place of Yahweh forever (v.13), and the place from whence the power of David will spring forth (v.17).

John 5

“22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. 25 Truly, truly, I

say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. 26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; 27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, 29 and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment. 30 I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and **My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.** 31 If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. 32 There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears of Me is true. 33 You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. 34 But the witness which I receive is not from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. 35 He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. 36 But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.”

Reader 1 Amen* 14 "When you enter the land which Yahweh your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' 15 you shall surely set a king over you whom Yahweh your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. 16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since Yahweh has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17 "Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.

Reader 2 Amen* 18 "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this Torah on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. 19 "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear Yahweh his God, by carefully observing all the words of this Torah and these statutes, 20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left; in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.

Reader 3 Amen* 18:1 "The Levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel; they shall eat Yahweh's offerings by fire and His portion. 2 "And they shall have no inheritance among their countrymen; Yahweh is their inheritance, as He promised them. 3 "Now this shall be the priests' due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, either an ox or a sheep, of which they shall give to the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the stomach. 4 "You shall give him the first fruits of your grain, your new wine, and your oil, and the first shearing of your sheep.

Reader 4 Amen* 5 "For Yahweh your God has chosen him and his sons from all your tribes, to stand and serve in the Name of Yahweh forever. 6 "Now if a Levite comes from any of your towns throughout Israel where he resides, and comes whenever he desires to the place which Yahweh chooses, 7 then he shall serve in the name of Yahweh his God, like all his fellow Levites who stand there before Yahweh. 8 "They shall eat equal portions, except what they receive from the sale of their fathers' estates.

Reader 5 Amen* 9 "When you enter the land which Yahweh your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. 10 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, 11 or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. 12 "For whoever does these things is detestable to Yahweh; and because of these detestable things Yahweh your God will drive them out before you. 13 "You shall be blameless before Yahweh your God.

1 Samuel 10:17-25

17 Thereafter Samuel called the people together to Yahweh at Mizpah; 18 and he said to the sons of Israel, "Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, 'I brought Israel up from Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the power of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.' 19 "But you today rejected your God, who delivers you from all your calamities and your distresses; yet you have said, 'No, but set a king over us!' Now therefore, present yourselves before Yahweh by your tribes and by your clans." 20 Thus Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot. 21 Then he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its families, and the Matrite family was taken. And Saul the son of Kish was taken; but when they looked for him, he could not be found. 22 Therefore they inquired further of Yahweh, "Has the man come here yet?" So Yahweh said, "Behold, he is hiding himself by the baggage." 23 So they ran and took him from there, and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. 24 And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom Yahweh has chosen? Surely there is no one like him among all the people." So all the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!" 25 Then Samuel told the people the ordinances of the kingdom, and wrote them in the book and placed it before Yahweh. And Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his house.

Psalm 133 *A Song of Ascents, of David.*

1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, coming down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, coming down upon the edge of his robes. 3 It is like the dew of Hermon, coming down upon the mountains of Zion; for there Yahweh commanded the blessing-- life forever.

Acts 13:13-44

13 Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John left them and returned to Jerusalem. 14 But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. 15 And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets the synagogue officials sent to them, saying, "Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it." 16 And Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand, he said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: 17 "The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it. 18 "And for a period of about forty years He put up with them in the wilderness. 19 "And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land as an inheritance-- all of which took about four hundred and fifty years. 20 "And after these things He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. 21 "And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. 22 "And after He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.' 23 "From the offspring of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Yeshua, 24 after John had proclaimed before His coming a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 "And while John was completing his course, he kept saying, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not He. But behold, one is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.' 26 "Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the word of this salvation is sent out. 27 "For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him. 28 "And though they found no ground for putting Him to death, they asked Pilate that He be executed. 29 "And when they had carried out all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb. 30 "But God raised Him from the dead; 31 and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people. 32 "And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, 33 that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Yeshua, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'Thou art My Son; today I have begotten Thee.' 34 "And as for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.' 35 "Therefore He also says in another Psalm, 'Thou wilt not allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.' 36 "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers, and underwent decay; 37 but He whom God raised did not undergo decay. 38 "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, 39 and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses. 40 "Take heed therefore, so that the thing spoken of in the Prophets may not come upon you: 41 'Behold, you scoffers, and marvel, and perish; For I am accomplishing a work in your days, A work which you will never believe, though someone should describe it to you.'" 42 And as Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath. 43 Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God. 44 And the next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of God.

Commentary:

There were three basic commandments for Israel to observe as a nation when it was established in the land (*Talmud: Sanhedrin 20b*):

- (1) Appoint a specific kind of king (v.17:15);
- (2) Cut off the seed of Amalek (v.25:19); and
- (3) Build the Temple (v.12:10).

Deut 25:19 *"Therefore it shall come about when Yahweh your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which Yahweh your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.*

Deut 12:10-11 *"When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which Yahweh your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around you so that you live in security, then it shall come about that the place in which Yahweh your God shall choose for His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to Yahweh.*

- (1) A king was required first, (2) to lead war with Amalek (Exodus 17:16, 1 Chronicles 29:23);
- (3) when the land was at peace, the Temple was to be built (Deuteronomy 12:10).

Concerning kings (v.17:14-20):

When there was no king in Israel, everyone did what was right in his own eyes (Judges 17:6).

There being no king in Israel (Judges 17-18), an Ephraimite named Micah had a silver graven image made, which Danites stole and worshipped, on their way to making war with Laish.

There being no king in Israel (Judges 19-29), the concubine of a Levite was raped and killed by Benjaminites, who were unrepentant. The Levite cut her into twelve pieces and sent them throughout the territory of Israel. Israel went to war with the Benjaminites, and tens of thousands were killed.

The king had to be God's choice, and had to be an Israelite – a Hebrew. The king was to trust in God's strength, and therefore was not allowed many horses. The king was to keep his heart aligned toward Yahweh, and therefore was not allowed many wives to turn his heart elsewhere. The king was to trust in God's provision, and therefore was not allowed great amounts of silver and gold. The king was required to write for himself a scroll copy of the Torah, to be read every day of his life, so that he would observe God's instruction, and stay mindful of his position under God.

When the people rejected God as their king (1 Samuel 8:7), and requested an earthly king, God's choice for the first king was Saul.

1 Samuel 10:19 *"But you today rejected your God, who delivers you from all your calamities and your distresses; yet you have said, 'No, but set a king over us!'"*

1 Samuel 10:24: *"And Samuel said to all the people, 'Do you see him (Saul) whom Yahweh has chosen? Surely there is no one like him among all the people.' So all the people shouted and said, 'Long live the king!'"*

After Saul, David became king, and was a type of Messiah King Yeshua. Yeshua would be a descendant of David.

Acts 13:21-23 *"And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And after He had removed him, He raised up David to be their*

king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.' From the offspring of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Yeshua".

After David, Solomon became king. Solomon was granted great wisdom. Yet, he tried the things God forbade: many horses, many wives, and much gold.

In the end, Israel's king will be Yeshua. He will follow Torah forever, not trusting in the powerful things of this world, not turned astray by the pleasures of this world, and not depending upon the riches of this world. Fulfilling Deuteronomy 17:20 (see also 1 Samuel 13:13 and Revelation 11:15), His kingdom will be forever!

Concerning priests (v.18:1-8):

The Levites were to receive the firstfruits from the people, and share in them equally.

They were required to serve "*in the Name of Yahweh*". That means that they were God's representatives, His ambassadors.

Yeshua came "*in the Name of Yahweh*" – Matthew 21:9, 23:39. He is Messiah (Anointed) Priest of the Most High God.

Concerning the people (v.18:9-13):

We are not to imitate the detestable things that worldly people do. We are to seek guidance from God, not "readers" or spiritists. God drives people out of their lands because they seek guidance from the wrong places (v.12). We are to be blameless (v.13).

In today's Psalm 133, which is a Psalm of David, we read, "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!*" When we are in unity under the Great King, how pleasant that will be!

Reader 1 Amen* 14 "For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, Yahweh your God has not allowed you to do so. 15 "A prophet you're your midst, from your brethren, like me, will Yahweh your God will raise up for; you shall listen to him. 16 "This is according to all that you asked of Yahweh your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of Yahweh my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' 17 "And Yahweh said to me, 'They have spoken well. 18 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

Reader 2 Amen* 19 'And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him. 20 'But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' 21 "And you may say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which Yahweh has not spoken?' 22 "When a prophet speaks in the name of Yahweh, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which Yahweh has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

Reader 3 Amen* 19:1 "When Yahweh your God cuts off the nations, whose land Yahweh your God gives you, and you dispossess them and settle in their cities and in their houses, 2 you shall set aside three cities for yourself in the midst of your land, which Yahweh your God gives you to possess. 3 "You shall prepare the roads for yourself, and divide into three parts the territory of your land, which Yahweh your God will give you as a possession, so that any manslayer may flee there. 4 "Now this is the case of the manslayer who may flee there and live: when he kills his friend unintentionally, not hating him previously-- 5 as when a man goes into the forest with his friend to cut wood, and his hand swings the axe to cut down the tree, and the iron head slips off the handle and strikes his friend so that he dies-- he may flee to one of these cities and live; 6 lest the avenger of blood pursue the manslayer in the heat of his anger, and overtake him, because the way is long, and take his life, though he was not deserving of death, since he had not hated him previously. 7 "Therefore, I command you, saying, 'You shall set aside three cities for yourself.'

Reader 4 Amen* 8 "And if Yahweh your God enlarges your territory, just as He has sworn to your fathers, and gives you all the land which He promised to give your fathers-- 9 if you carefully observe all this commandment, which I command you today, to love Yahweh your God, and to walk in His ways always-- then you shall add three more cities for yourself, besides these three. 10 "So innocent blood will not be shed in the midst of your land which Yahweh your God gives you as an inheritance, and bloodguiltiness be on you. 11 "But if there is a man who hates his neighbor and lies in wait for him and rises up against him and strikes him so that he dies, and he flees to one of these cities, 12 then the elders of his city shall send and take him from there and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. 13 "You shall not pity him, but you shall purge the blood of the innocent from Israel, that it may go well with you.

Reader 5 Amen* 14 "You shall not move your neighbor's boundary mark, which the ancestors have set, in your inheritance which you shall inherit in the land that Yahweh your God gives you to possess. 15 "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed. 16 "If a malicious witness rises up against a man to accuse him of wrongdoing, 17 then both the men who have the dispute shall stand before Yahweh, before the priests and the judges who will be in office in those days. 18 "And the judges shall investigate thoroughly; and if the witness is a false witness and he has accused his brother falsely, 19 then you shall do to him just as he had intended to do to his brother. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you. 20 "And the rest will hear and be afraid, and will never again do such an evil thing among you. 21 "Thus you shall not show pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Reader 6 Amen* 20:1 "When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for Yahweh your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you. 2 "Now it shall come about that when you are approaching the battle, the

priest shall come near and speak to the people. 3 "And he shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, 4 for Yahweh your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'

Reader 7 Amen* 5 "The officers also shall speak to the people, saying, 'Who is the man that has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him depart and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. 6 'And who is the man that has planted a vineyard and has not begun to use its fruit? Let him depart and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man begin to use its fruit. 7 'And who is the man that is engaged to a woman and has not married her? Let him depart and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man marry her.' 8 "Then the officers shall speak further to the people, and they shall say, 'Who is the man that is afraid and fainthearted? Let him depart and return to his house, so that he might not make his brothers' hearts melt like his heart.' 9 "And it shall come about that when the officers have finished speaking to the people, they shall appoint commanders of armies at the head of the people.

Jeremiah 29:8

8 "For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream.

Psalm 134 - A Song of Ascents

1 Behold, bless Yahweh, all servants of Yahweh, who serve by night in the house of Yahweh! 2 Lift up your hands to the sanctuary, and bless Yahweh. 3 May Yahweh bless you from Zion, He who made heaven and earth.

Galatians 5:1 – 6:10

1 It was for freedom that Messiah set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. 2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Messiah will be of no benefit to you. 3 And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. 4 You have been severed from Messiah, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. 6 For in Messiah Yeshua neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love. 7 You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you. 9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough. 10 I have confidence in you in the Lord, that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is. 11 But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. 12 Would that those who are troubling you would even mutilate themselves. 13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, take care lest you be consumed by one another. 16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Messiah Yeshua have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

6:1 Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Messiah. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. 5 For each one shall bear his own load. 6 And let the one who is taught

the word share all good things with him who teaches. 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Commentary:

Last week's portion concerned kings and priests; this week's concerns prophets, and includes more about kings and priests.

"Messiah" means anointed – to be Prophet of Jerusalem, Priest of the Most High God, and/or King of Israel.

A king rules over a nation, in the place of God: Israel's king was initially to be God! When they requested an earthly king, he was to reign in the Name of Yahweh – in Yahweh's stead, following Torah. "*Because of his exalted position, the king can neither testify (before a court), nor be testified against*" (Yoma 78b): thus Yeshua did not respond to accusations against Him, preceding His crucifixion (Mark 15:5). [In our country, the president has immunity from prosecution.]

As "Yahweh of Hosts" – the Gracious God of Armies – so the king was the commander-in-chief of the army: he was to oversee the nation's protection, and lead in wiping out those most idolatrous nations that Yahweh ordered destroyed. Interestingly, the Torah does not use the term "Elohim of Hosts" – the Judging God of Armies. Note that there was no general instruction for Israel to kill all of the world's idolaters, like the Quran's teaching of killing Christians and Jews. There was no instruction for Israel to take over the world: they could expand only to their allotted boundaries.

Concerning Jihad: "*O you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are near to you, and let them find harshness in you and know that Allah is with those who keep their duty (unto him)*" (TMQ At-Taubah: 123). Rashid, the author, then lists many details of these verses, which are self-evident to the objective reader.

"*Allah says, 'Don't weaken, don't call for peace whilst you have the upper hand. If Muslims are mighty with strength, invincible, and numerous in groups let there be no peace'*" (TMQ Muhammad: 35). Thus peace may be accepted but not if Muslims have the upper hand. In addition to the evidences of the Qur'an, Sunnah and Ijma-as Sahabah present clear evidences of the meaning of Jihad.

The king was to lead the nation to build the Temple of the Holy One, leading the nation toward righteousness. The nation was to be a light to the world – the Temple being the center for spreading God's Word. As Psalm 134:3 reads, "*May Yahweh bless you from Zion*".

Only priests could perform the offerings at the Temple. They composed the orchestra (with harps and flutes) and choir (singing Psalms). They were in the position to make atonements for the people.

"*The High Priest performs the service in eight pieces of garments, and the common priest in four: the tunic, drawers, mitre, and girdle. The High Priest adds thereto the breastplate, the apron, the robe, and the frontlet. In these were the Urim and Tummim inquired of (Numbers 27:21). But they were not inquired of except for the king, for the av beit din (father of the court of three, or head of an important school), or for one of such important position that the whole community needed him (Makkot 11b)*" (Talmud: Yoma 71b).

A prophet is one who teaches. He is the expounder of God's Word; foretelling future events is a small part this job.

Here is an example:

“Solomon said in his wisdom, ‘Let thy garments be always white; and let not thy head lack ointment (Ecclesiastes 9:8).’ R. Johanan b. Zakkai said: ‘This may be compared to a king who summoned his servants to a banquet without appointing a time. The wise ones adorned themselves and sat at the door of the palace. “for,” said they. “is anything lacking in a royal palace?” The fools went about their work, saying, “can there be a banquet without preparations?” Suddenly the king desired the presence of his servants: the wise entered adorned, while the fools entered soiled. The king rejoiced at the wise but was angry with the fools. “Those who adorned themselves for the banquet,” ordered he, “let them sit, eat and drink. But those who did not adorn themselves for the banquet, let them stand and watch.” ’ R. Meir's son-in-law said in R. Meir's name: ‘Then they too would merely look as being in attendance. But both sit, the former eating and the latter hungering, the former drinking and the latter thirsting, for it is said, “Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart” ’ ’ (Talmud: Yoma 71b).

All of this is to explain that we should repent today: we should turn to God, to be clothed in the righteousness of Yeshua. Let the fools go out and work for their salvation banquet: God has prepared ours!

When we are clothed in (white) His righteousness, we will walk in His Spirit (oil on our heads), learning obedience to our Prophet – through His Word, to our Priest to whom we confess and who sanctifies us, and to our Gracious King who leads us and provides for us.

Galatians 5:16-18 *“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the (penalty of the) Law.”*

The nations which God commanded to be destroyed practiced witchcraft and were taught by diviners. But God disallowed such activity in Israel: His prophets were to do the teaching, expounding Torah (v.18:14).

Anyone who speaks presumptuously in the Name of Yahweh is worthy of death (v.18:20). Ezekiel 22:27-28 reads: *“Her princes within her are like wolves tearing the prey, by shedding blood and destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh God,’ when Yahweh has not spoken.”* We have many who say things from their own mind, without studying the whole of Scripture: like, God will heal all our diseases (based on Isaiah), disregarding what Paul said ¹, or what is written in Hebrews ². Today’s haftarah (Jeremiah 29:8) reads, *“For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream’ ”*.

(1) 2 Cor 12:7-10 *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought Yahweh thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

(2) Heb 12:6-11 *For whom Yahweh loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

Personal prophecies: To say that God said something, that He did not say, is blasphemy. It is making a god of one's own thoughts or feelings.

(V.18:15-19) Here is a promise of the ultimate prophet: *"I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you (Moses), and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him."*

Moses preceded the kings, priests, and prophets of Israel. He was a great prophet who also led the nation and made atonements for it. Yeshua would be such a great prophet, fulfilling the ultimate roles of prophet, priest, and king. Thus He is "the Messiah."

John the Baptist was asked if he was "that prophet":

John 1:19-27 *"And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' And he confessed, and did not deny, and he confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' And he said, 'I am not.' 'Are you that Prophet?' And he answered, 'No.' They said then to him, 'Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of Yahweh," as Isaiah the prophet said.' Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said to him, 'Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor that Prophet?' John answered them saying, 'I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know. 'It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.'"*

Yeshua is "that prophet":

John 6:14-15 *"Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Yeshua did, said, 'This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.' When Yeshua therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone."*

Judgment:

(V.19:16-21) *"the judges shall investigate thoroughly . . . life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."* Again, this oft misunderstood Scripture is not about personal retribution; it is about fair justice to be meted out by judges: the value of an eye to compensate for the loss of an eye, the value of a tooth to compensate for the loss of a tooth.

Ki Tigrav el Iyr / When You Approach a City

Deuteronomy 20:10 – 21:9 Joshua 24:1 Psalm 135 John 10:11-31

Commentary Y3-38

Kislev 25, 5764 / Dec 20, 2003

Hanukkah 1st Day

Reader 1 Amen* 10 "When you approach a city to fight against it, you shall offer it terms of peace. 11 "And it shall come about, if it agrees to make peace with you and opens to you, then it shall be that all the people who are found in it shall become your forced labor and shall serve you. 12 "However, if it does not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. 13 "When Yahweh your God gives it into your hand, you shall strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword. 14 "Only the women and the children and the animals and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourself; and you shall use the spoil of your enemies which Yahweh your God has given you. 15 "Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations nearby.

Reader 2 Amen* 16 "Only in the cities of these peoples that Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance, you shall not leave alive anything that breathes. 17 "But you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as Yahweh your God has commanded you, 18 in order that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against Yahweh your God. 19 "When you besiege a city a long time, to make war against it in order to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by swinging an axe against them; for you may eat from them, and you shall not cut them down. For is the tree of the field a man, that it should be besieged by you? 20 "Only the trees which you know are not fruit-bearing trees you shall destroy and cut down, that you may construct siegeworks against the city that is making war with you until it falls.

Reader 3 Amen* 21:1 "If a slain person is found lying in the open country in the land which Yahweh your God gives you to possess, and it is not known who has struck him, 2 then your elders and your judges shall go out and measure the distance to the cities which are around the slain one. 3 "And it shall be that the city which is nearest to the slain man, that is, the elders of that city, shall take a heifer of the herd, which has not been worked and which has not pulled in a yoke; 4 and the elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a valley with running water, which has not been plowed or sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley. 5 "Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for Yahweh your God has chosen them to serve Him and to bless in the name of Yahweh; and every dispute and every assault shall be settled by them. 6 "And all the elders of that city which is nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley; 7 and they shall answer and say, 'Our hands have not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it. 8 'Forgive Thy people Israel whom Thou hast redeemed, O Yahweh, and do not place the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of Thy people Israel.' And the bloodguiltiness shall be forgiven them. 9 "So you shall remove the guilt of innocent blood from your midst, when you do what is right in the eyes of Yahweh.

Joshua 24:1

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel and for their heads and their judges and their officers; and they presented themselves before God.

Psalm 135

1 Praise Yahweh! Praise the name of Yahweh; Praise Him, O servants of Yahweh, 2 you who stand in the house of Yahweh, in the courts of the house of our God! 3 Praise Yahweh, for Yahweh is good; sing praises to His name, for it is lovely. 4 For Yahweh has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His own possession. 5 For I know that Yahweh is great, and that our Yahweh is above all gods. 6 Whatever Yahweh pleases, He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps. 7 He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; Who makes lightnings for the rain; Who brings forth the wind from His treasuries. 8 He smote the first-born of Egypt, both of man and beast. 9 He sent signs and wonders into your midst, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh and all his servants. 10 He smote many nations, and slew mighty kings, 11 Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan; 12 And He gave their land as a heritage, a heritage to Israel His people. 13 Thy name, O Yahweh, is everlasting, Thy remembrance, O Yahweh, throughout all generations. 14 For Yahweh will judge His people, and will have compassion on

His servants. 15 The idols of the nations are but silver and gold, the work of man's hands. 16 They have mouths, but they do not speak; they have eyes, but they do not see; 17 They have ears, but they do not hear; nor is there any breath at all in their mouths. 18 Those who make them will be like them, yes, everyone who trusts in them. 19 O house of Israel, bless Yahweh; O house of Aaron, bless Yahweh; 20 O house of Levi, bless Yahweh; you who revere Yahweh, bless Yahweh. 21 Blessed be Yahweh from Zion, Who dwells in Jerusalem. Praise Yahweh!

John 10:11-31

11 "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. 12 He who is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, beholds the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hireling, and is not concerned about the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and My own know Me, 15 even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father." 19 There arose a division again among the Jews because of these words. 20 And many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?" 21 Others were saying, "These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?" 22 At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; 23 it was winter, and Yeshua was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. 24 The Jews therefore gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Messiah, tell us plainly." 25 Yeshua answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me. 26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep. 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one." 31 The Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

Commentary:

Who lives, and who dies?

Yeshua said, *“Do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him (God) who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (gehenna)”* (Matthew 10:28).

God makes the decisions as to when mortal life begins and when mortal life ends; He also determines who has eternal life – not after some judgment of deeds, but before one is born.

God holds all of the rights: He, who creates life, holds the right to determine when a person should be executed for a crime, and when a group of people should be killed by war because of idolatry. And, He determines who shall live eternally (John 1:12-13).

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He had given the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, ¹³ who were born not of blood (by ancestry), nor of the will of the flesh (one’s own will), nor of the will of man (convinced by another), but of God.

Psalm 135:6 *“Whatever Yahweh pleases, He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps.”*

Deuteronomy 20

(V.10) *“When you approach a city to fight against it, you shall offer it terms of peace.”* Shalom (peace) means spiritual prosperity, material prosperity, safety, health – all that is good.

The word teshuqah / desire is known for its four uses in Scripture. The four desires concern peace:

Woman will desire to rule over man (Gen 3:16), but man is to be the responsible leader of spiritual and material prosperity.

Sin will desire to rule over us (Gen 4:7), but we are to overcome it for spiritual and material prosperity.

The rains desire to flood the earth (Ps 65:10), but God restrains them for shalom.

Yeshua Sar Shalom – the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), desires his bride (Sol 7:10) for spiritual and material prosperity for her. Note that this is the only one that is a right desire: the others are to be overcome.

If the idolatrous city does not accept the terms of peace, then:

- (1) if it is a distant city, only the men are to be killed, as they are supposed to be leading in truth;
- (2) if it is a nearby city, it is to be completely destroyed, so as not to bring idolatry to God’s land.

(V.19-20) When gentiles go to war, they freely cut down trees, being unsure of victory. When Israel goes to war, it should expect to eat of the trees, because of certain victory.

Today we hear about Israel bulldozing olive tree plantations belonging to Arabs; but that is only where terrorists are using the trees for cover to fire at Israelites.

The USA tries to minimize damage to the infrastructure when they attack another country: that helps in their rebuilding efforts after the war. They even have a nuclear bomb – called a neutron bomb – that kills people but does not destroy the buildings.

Yeshua gave a similar instruction to His apostles: *“And into whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it; and abide there until you go away. And as you enter the house, give it your greeting. And if the house is worthy, let your greeting of peace (Gr. eirene = Heb. shalom) come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your greeting of peace return to you. And whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake off the dust of your feet. Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.”* (Matthew 10:11-15).

John 10:11-31

It was Hanukkah – *the Feast of Dedication* (v.22), and Yeshua was walking in the Temple. The week’s Temple and Synagogue services may have been at this third-year point in the Triennial Cycle, concerning life and death: Yeshua was speaking of this topic.

This apparently (see www.messianic.ws/hanukkah.htm) was the season of His conception, when His temple was dedicated through an angel (Luke 1:30-33). He was conceived, and born nine months later at the Feast of Tabernacles (John 1:14 – *The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us*), for this purpose: to lay down His own life for “the sheep”.

Others die from reasons outside of their control – disease, accident, or by death inflicted by others, including execution and war. But, Yeshua willingly laid down His own life, and took it up again! And while others die the common death of sinners, Yeshua, being righteous, gave His life as a ransom for others to be accounted righteous – and thus receive eternal life.

Yeshua said, “*I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand*” (v.28-29). And these sheep, whom Yeshua gave His life to ransom (v.15), who can never perish (because they {present-tense} *have* eternal life), also hear His voice, and He knows them, and they follow Him (v.27). Those, who do not follow Him, are unbelievers because they “*are not of My sheep*” (v.26).

So, if we really believe, then we follow Him, all because we are His sheep!

When we come into difficult circumstances in life, we should “fight” against whatever would lead us into idolatry, without destroying those things that will bring good fruit in your life.

Deuteronomy 21:

When a person was found murdered, and there were no witnesses

(witnesses are required to testify to the judges: “forgive and forget” is not allowed),

then the elders must go to the nearest city, and take a heifer down into a valley

(out of sight, representing the murder being out of sight of witnesses)

and break its neck. Then the priests shall say (v.7-8), “*Our hands have not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it.* (“We have purged the land of every known murderer.” If the court had knowledge of the killer, they would have properly judged him.) *Forgive Thy people Israel whom Thou hast redeemed, O Yahweh, and do not place the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of Thy people Israel.*”

We are required to cleanse our own lives of sin, and to work to help others cleanse their lives of sin. As we saw last week, concerning “*an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*” (Deuteronomy 19:16-21), we may not seek personal retribution, but neither may we ignore injurious acts which we witness: we must seek the sinner’s repentance or judgment, lest he meet the judgment that is worse than Sodom and Gomorrah’s.

Ki-teitzei / When you go forth (to battle)

Commentary Y3-39

Deuteronomy 21:10 – 22:5 Isaiah 54:1-10 Psalm 136 Galatians 3:1 – 5:26

Tevet 2, 5764 / Dec 27, 2003

Reader 1 Amen*¹⁰ "When you go out to battle against your enemies, and Yahweh your God delivers them into your hands, and you take them away captive,¹¹ and see among the captives a beautiful woman, and have a desire for her and would take her as a wife for yourself,¹² then you shall bring her home to your house, and she shall shave her head and trim her nails.¹³ "She shall also remove the clothes of her captivity and shall remain in your house, and mourn her father and mother a full month; and after that you may go in to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife.¹⁴ "And it shall be, if you are not pleased with her, then you shall let her go wherever she wishes; but you shall certainly not sell her for money, you shall not mistreat her, because you have humbled her.¹⁵ "If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him sons, if the first-born son belongs to the unloved,¹⁶ then it shall be in the day he wills what he has to his sons, he cannot make the son of the loved the first-born before the son of the unloved, who is the first-born.¹⁷ "But he shall acknowledge the first-born, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; to him belongs the right of the first-born.

Reader 2 Amen*¹⁸ "If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them,¹⁹ then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his home town.²⁰ "And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.'²¹ "Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.²² "And if a man has committed a sin worthy of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree,²³ his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which Yahweh your God gives you as an inheritance.

Reader 3 Amen*^{22:1} "You shall not see your countryman's ox or his sheep straying away, and pay no attention to them; you shall certainly bring them back to your countryman.² "And if your countryman is not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it home to your house, and it shall remain with you until your countryman looks for it; then you shall restore it to him.³ "And thus you shall do with his donkey, and you shall do the same with his garment, and you shall do likewise with anything lost by your countryman, which he has lost and you have found. You are not allowed to neglect them.⁴ "You shall not see your countryman's donkey or his ox fallen down on the way, and pay no attention to them; you shall certainly help him to raise them up.⁵ "A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to Yahweh your God.

Isaiah 54:1-10

¹ "Shout for joy, O barren one, you who have borne no child; break forth into joyful shouting and cry aloud, you who have not travailed; for the sons of the desolate one will be more numerous than the sons of the married woman," says Yahweh.² "Enlarge the place of your tent; stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not; lengthen your cords, and strengthen your pegs.³ "For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left. And your descendants will possess nations, and they will resettle the desolate cities.⁴ "Fear not, for you will not be put to shame; neither feel humiliated, for you will not be disgraced; but you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more.⁵ "For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is Yahweh of hosts; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth.⁶ "For Yahweh has called you, like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even like a wife of one's youth when she is rejected," says your God.⁷ "For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you.⁸ "In an outburst of anger I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you," says Yahweh your Redeemer.⁹ "For this is like the days of Noah to Me; when I swore that the waters of Noah should not flood the earth again, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, nor will I rebuke you.¹⁰ "For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken," says Yahweh who has compassion on you.

Psalm 136

¹ Give thanks to Yahweh, for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

² Give thanks to the God of gods, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

³ Give thanks to Yahweh of lords, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.
⁴ To Him who alone does great wonders, for His lovingkindness is everlasting;
⁵ To Him who made the heavens with skill, for His lovingkindness is everlasting;
⁶ To Him who spread out the earth above the waters, for His lovingkindness is everlasting;
⁷ To Him who made the great lights, for His lovingkindness is everlasting:
⁸ The sun to rule by day, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
⁹ The moon and stars to rule by night, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.
¹⁰ To Him who smote the Egyptians in their first-born, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
¹¹ And brought Israel out from their midst, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
¹² With a strong hand and an outstretched arm, for His lovingkindness is everlasting;
¹³ To Him who divided the Red Sea asunder, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
¹⁴ And made Israel pass through the midst of it, for His lovingkindness is everlasting;
¹⁵ But He overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.
¹⁶ To Him who led His people through the wilderness, for His lovingkindness is everlasting;
¹⁷ To Him who smote great kings, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
¹⁸ And slew mighty kings, for His lovingkindness is everlasting:
¹⁹ Sihon, king of the Amorites, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
²⁰ And Og, king of Bashan, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
²¹ And gave their land as a heritage, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
²² Even a heritage to Israel His servant, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.
²³ Who remembered us in our low estate, for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
²⁴ And has rescued us from our adversaries, for His lovingkindness is everlasting;
²⁵ Who gives food to all flesh, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.
²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Galatians 3:1 – 5:26

¹ You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Yeshua Messiah was publicly portrayed as crucified? ² This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? ⁴ Did you suffer so many things in vain-- if indeed it was in vain? ⁵ Does He then, who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? ⁶ Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. ⁷ Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. ⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations shall be blessed in you." ⁹ So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. ¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them." ¹¹ Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith." ¹² However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them." ¹³ Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"-- ¹⁴ in order that in Messiah Yeshua the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. ¹⁵ Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it. ¹⁶ Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Messiah. ¹⁷ What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. ¹⁹ Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made. ²⁰ Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one. ²¹ Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. ²² But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Yeshua Messiah might be given to those who believe. ²³ But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Messiah, that we may be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. ²⁶ For you are all sons of

God through faith in Messiah Yeshua. ²⁷ For all of you who were baptized into Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yeshua. ²⁹ And if you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

^{4:1} Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything, ² but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father. ³ So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world. ⁴ But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵ in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God. ⁸ However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. ⁹ But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years. ¹¹ I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. ¹² I beg of you, brethren, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You have done me no wrong; ¹³ but you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time; ¹⁴ and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as Messiah Yeshua Himself. ¹⁵ Where then is that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness, that if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶ Have I therefore become your enemy by telling you the truth? ¹⁷ They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out, in order that you may seek them. ¹⁸ But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you. ¹⁹ My children, with whom I am again in labor until Messiah is formed in you-- ²⁰ but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you. ²¹ Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. ²³ But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. ²⁴ This is allegorically speaking: for these women are two covenants, one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. ²⁵ Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is written, "Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear; Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor; For more are the children of the desolate Than of the one who has a husband." ²⁸ And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹ But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. ³⁰ But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, For the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman." ³¹ So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.

^{5:1} It was for freedom that Messiah set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. ² Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Messiah will be of no benefit to you. ³ And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. ⁴ You have been severed from Messiah, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. ⁵ For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. ⁶ For in Messiah Yeshua neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love. ⁷ You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸ This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you. ⁹ A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough. ¹⁰ I have confidence in you in the Lord, that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is. ¹¹ But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. ¹² Would that those who are troubling you would even mutilate themselves. ¹³ For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, take care lest you be consumed by one another. ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. ¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰

idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.²⁴ Now those who belong to Messiah Yeshua have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.²⁶ Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

Commentary:

Ki-Teitzei is the heading for all that follows: (V.10) *“When you go forth to battle against your enemies”* (outside the land). While the setting is wartime, the applications are more general.

Last week, our portion required, upon defeating a distant enemy, that all of the men be killed, but allowed the taking of women and children.

Firstly, we see rules designed to alleviate results of lust: *“If, among the captives, there is a beautiful woman. . .”*

Men tend to be drawn to outward appearances of women. Therefore, godly women are instructed to dress modestly, not having extreme hairdos and jewelry, or seductive makeup and clothing.

“⁹ Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; ¹⁰ but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness” (1 Timothy 2:9-10).

“³ And let not your adornment be external-- braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; ⁴ but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. ⁵ For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands. ⁶ Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear” (1 Peter 3:3-6).

Therefore, upon desiring a captive-foreign beautiful woman, the man must (v.12) shave her head (remove her glory), trim her long nails, (v.13) and replace her fancy clothing. Then, in this unadorned state, he must give her a month do mourn her slain father. After this, he may take her as a wife; but if he no longer desires to marry her, he may not mistreat her, and must let her go free as she wishes.

Secondly, we see some results of lust fulfilled: *“If a man has two wives. . .”*

Such would be the case of a man taking a foreign-captive as a wife, when he was already married. If he loves one and not the other, but both bear him sons – first the unloved wife, then the loved wife – he is not allowed to prefer the firstborn son of the loved wife over the firstborn son of the unloved wife (v.16-17), but must grant the inheritance rights of the firstborn to the first son.

Abraham had two wives (though not as a result of war). One was named Princess – Sarah – by God, the other was an Egyptian princess – Hagar, a daughter of a pharaoh. These princesses displayed great jealousy when both had sons. The first son (Ishmael) was by Hagar, and the next son (Isaac) by Sarah. However, God overruled the order and proclaimed Isaac to be the recipient of the inheritance (Genesis 17:21), to fulfill His covenant with Abraham.

Today’s text shows that Isaac’s case was an exception, not the rule – not to be used as a basis for favoring another son over the one born first.

Thirdly, we see a natural result of the above situation: *“If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son. . .”* The subject here is a son of responsible age – (v.18) one who will not obey, and is overtaken by sensual pleasure (gluttony and drunkenness). He is to be taken to the judges, and upon conviction, is to be stoned by the men of the city: (v.21) *“so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear”*.

Then we are given some general rules about capital punishment. The corpse of one stoned is hung for all to see. However, (v.23) he must be buried within the same day, because he is “the image of God” being cursed, and thus *“is an abomination to God”*. We will see more on this in Galatians.

(Deuteronomy 22) Fourthly, we are given rules about found livestock. While the setting is during military service, when animals are likely to go astray, the application is general. Ignoring another’s lost property is forbidden: an honest attempt must be made to find the owner. A found animal that is worked has paid its hire, and is to be returned free. An animal that is not useful for work should be sold, and the price – less its feed – paid to the owner.

Galatians 3:

“¹³Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’ – ¹⁴in order that in Messiah Yeshua the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

The Fifth Commandment, to honor father and mother, is under the category of Loving God, because it represents honoring God’s authority. To disobey mother or father, or to disobey directly by putting another god before Yahweh, is a capital offense – requiring death as penalty. One who is convicted and put to death, to *“remove the evil from your midst”*, is then hung for the rest of the day – this one made in the image of God is “cursed” so that *“all Israel shall hear of it and fear”* (v.21).

So Yeshua, Who is the very Image of God (), was cursed – slain and hung on a tree for all to see. But He was righteous, and it was for our disobedience, and He willingly gave His life for us and took it back again!

“Messiah, Who is the Image of God” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

“And He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation” (Colossians 1:15).

(V.18) God promised the inheritance to Abraham, through Isaac. The promised seed of the Covenant was Yeshua. We obtain the promised inheritance through faith in Yeshua, not by being born of certain parentage or birth order.

In other words: in this world, inheritance is according to parentage and birth order; but in spiritual matters – in God’s kingdom – our inheritance is by God’s Covenant. It is by Yeshua’s redemptive death for our disobedience; it is through faith in Him.

So, God says of us (Isaiah 54): *“⁵ ‘Your husband is your Maker, Whose name is Yahweh of hosts; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth. ⁶ For Yahweh has called you, like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even like a wife of one’s youth when she is rejected,’ says your God. ⁷ ‘For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you. ⁸ In an outburst of anger I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you,’ says Yahweh your Redeemer. ⁹ ‘For this is like the days of Noah to Me; when I swore that the waters of Noah should not flood the earth again, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, nor will I rebuke you. ¹⁰ For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken,’ says Yahweh who has compassion on you.”*

And the Psalmist says (Psalm 136, all 26 verses): *“His lovingkindness is everlasting”*.

Galatians 5 concludes, “¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Now those who belong to Messiah Yeshua have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another” – as the sons of two wives might do.

Deuteronomy 22:5 "A woman shall not wear man's clothing (to disguise herself as a man in order to be in the company of men, such as by enwrapping herself in a prayer shawl), nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing (to disguise himself as a woman in order to be in the company of women); for whoever does these things is an abomination to Yahweh your God.

Psalm 136

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. O thank Yahweh, for He is good; Thanks to the God of gods give ye; O praises give the King of kings; For He alone does wondrous things; | His mercy lasts forever. His mercy lasts forever. His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; |
| 2. Who in His wisdom framed the skies; Who made the earth from waters rise; Who placed the great lights on display; The sun to rule the sky by day; | His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; |
| 3. The moon and stars to rule the night; Who Egypt's firstborn all did smite; Who freed all Israel from their charm; With mighty hand and outstretched arm; | His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; |
| 4. Who by His wind the Red Sea clave; Led Israel through the parted wave; O'er Pharaoh He the Red Sea spread; Through desert wastes His people led; | His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; |
| 5. To Him who great kings overthrew; Who famous kings in battle slew; King Sihon of the Amorites; And Og, the king of Bashanites; | His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; |
| 6. Their land He gave to Israel; His servant gave a place to dwell; He thought on us when we were low; And made us free from every foe; | His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever. |
| 7. He food bestows on all that live; Thanks to the God of Heaven give; O praises give the King of kings; For He alone does wondrous things; | His mercy lasts forever. His mercy lasts forever. His mercy lasts forever; His mercy lasts forever. |

כִּי יִקְרָא קֶן-צִפּוֹר < > Ki-yikarei kein (nest) tzipor (bird)

Reader 1 Amen 6* "If you happen to come upon a bird's nest along the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young; 7 you shall certainly let the mother go, but the young you may take for yourself, in order that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days.

8 "When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet (*fence*) for your roof, that you may not bring bloodguilt on your house if anyone falls from it.

Reader 2 Amen 9* "You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest all the produce of the seed which you have sown, and the increase of the vineyard become defiled. 10 "You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together. 11 "You shall not wear a material mixed of wool and linen together.

12 "You shall make yourself tassels on the four corners of your garment with which you cover yourself.

Reader 3 Amen 13* "If any man takes a wife and goes in to her and then turns against her, 14 and charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her, and says, 'I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin,' 15 then the girl's father and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of the girl's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. 16 "And the girl's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man for a wife, but he turned against her; 17 and behold, he has charged her with shameful deeds, saying, "I did not find your daughter a virgin." But this is the evidence of my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city. 18 "So the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him, 19 and they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give it to the girl's father, because he publicly defamed a virgin of Israel. And she shall remain his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.

Reader 4 Amen 20* "But if this charge is true, that the girl was not found a virgin, 21 then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death because she has committed an act of folly in Israel, by playing the harlot in her father's house; thus you shall purge the evil from among you.

Reader 5 Amen 22* "If a man is found lying with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel. 23 "If there is a girl who is a virgin betrothed to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her, 24 then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he has violated his neighbor's wife. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you. 25 "But if in the field the man finds the girl who is betrothed, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lies with her shall die. 26 "But you shall do nothing to the girl; there is no sin in the girl worthy of death, for just as a man rises against his neighbor and murders him, so is this case. 27 "When he found her in the field, the engaged girl cried out, but there was no one to save her. 28 "If a man finds a girl who is a virgin, who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her and they are discovered, 29 then the man who lay with her shall give to the girl's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall become his wife because he has violated her; he cannot divorce her all his days. 30 "A man shall not take his father's wife so that he shall not uncover his father's robe.

Reader 6 Amen 23:1* "No one who is emasculated, or has his male organ cut off, shall enter the assembly of Yahweh. 2 "No one of illegitimate birth shall enter the assembly of Yahweh; none of his descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall enter the assembly of Yahweh. 3 "No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of Yahweh; none of their descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall ever enter the assembly of Yahweh, 4 because they did not meet you with food and water on the way when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. 5 "Nevertheless, Yahweh your God was not willing to listen to Balaam, but Yahweh your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because Yahweh your God loves you. 6 "You shall never seek their peace or their prosperity all your days.

Reader 7 Amen 7* "You shall not detest an Edomite, for he is your brother; you shall not detest an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land. 8 "The sons of the third generation who are born to them may enter the assembly of Yahweh.

9 "When you go out as an army against your enemies, then you shall keep yourself from every evil thing.

Micah 5:

1 "Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; they have laid siege against us; with a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek. 2 " But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity." 3 Therefore, He will give them up until the time when she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren will return to the sons of Israel. 4 And He will arise and shepherd His flock in the strength of Yahweh, in the majesty of the name of Yahweh His God. And they will remain, because at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth. 5 And this One will be our peace. When the Assyrian invades our land, when he tramples on our citadels, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight leaders of men. 6 And they will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod at its entrances; and He will deliver us from the Assyrian when he attacks our land and when he tramples our territory.

Psalms 137:1

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. 2 Upon the willows in the midst of it we hung our harps. 3 For there our captors demanded of us songs, and our tormentors mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." 4 How can we sing Yahweh's song in a foreign land? 5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her skill. 6 May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy. 7 Remember, O Yahweh, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who said, "Raze it, raze it, to its very foundation." 8 O daughter of Babylon, you devastated one, how blessed will be the one who repays you with the recompense with which you have repaid us. 9 How blessed will be the one who seizes and dashes your little ones against the rock.

Matthew 22:

1 And Yeshua answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying, 2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son. 3 "And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. 4 "Again he sent out other slaves saying, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast.'" 5 "But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to his business, 6 and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. 7 "But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire. 8 "Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 'Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there, invite to the wedding feast.' 10 "And those slaves went out into the streets, and gathered together all they found, both evil and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests. 11 "But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw there a man not dressed in wedding clothes, 12 and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?' And he was speechless. 13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

Commentary:

Constructive and safe behavior

(V.6-7) We are permitted to take eggs or young animals, for food or for raising them. However, if we would like a good life and a long life, we should not do things that would deplete a species or family: we should let the mother go free to reproduce more.

(V.8) When we build a house (with a patio rooftop) we must fence the roof for the safety of those who would use it. This would also directly apply to a tall stairway, or an excavation (such as a pool).

By extension, this is where we get building codes. For safety, we must provide railings and clear exits, and use materials with certain strengths. Houses must be attached to their foundations so that they are not easily blown off by tornadoes, shaken of by earthquakes, or knocked off by mudslides or errant vehicles. This is why we have all lived through earthquakes of a magnitude that killed tens of thousands in Iran this past week.

By further extension, this is the basis for traffic laws. It is immoral for us to drive in a manner that endangers others. Endangerment is not based on what we think we can handle, but on laws formed partly through the study of accidents.

Though control of injury and death is in God's domain, He requires us to act in a manner that does not create hazards for others.

(V.9-12) Mixing different kinds of crops can destroy the harvest: some crops choke others out, some produce inedible fruit that mix with the good fruit, or mimic it.

Plowing with an ox and a donkey together represents working any two animals unequally, where the weaker animal would be hurt.

Mixing of linen and wool represents weaving two materials such that one would damage the other, such as by cutting. Nevertheless, we must wear *tzitzit* (tassles) on the four corners of our covering garment; though the garment was linen, the *tzitzit* used to be wool having one strand colored with *techeilet* (a blue dye). Here we see an example of a general rule: a positive commandment (adding *tzitzit*) supersedes a negative commandment on the same subject (mixing materials).

Betrothal, marriage, and divorce

Today we commonly have engagement and marriage. Engagement is often taken lightly – easily broken. In Biblical setting, there is betrothal (*kiddushin* - *kiddush* means to set apart) and marriage (*nesuin*). A betrothal can only be broken by divorce, and only for certain causes. A betrothed woman is called a wife, though cohabitation is not allowed until the marriage. A betrothal is accompanied by a written covenant called a *Shitre Erusin*; a marriage covenant is called a *Ketubah*.

(V.13-19) If a man falsely accuses his betrothed of fornication, in order to void the *ketubah* (which guarantees the wife's support) then he is to be chastised and fined, and he must remain married to his wife as long as they both live. That is, he wanted to falsely void his promise, so he must keep it all his life; may God deliver the wife from his evil ways.

(V.20-21) If, upon the consummation of the marriage, the husband finds his wife to be not a virgin, then he may divorce her. If the man is a priest, he must divorce her, because a priest is required to marry a virgin (Leviticus 21:14); otherwise, he may choose to accept her. Yeshua's statement, "Everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of fornication, makes her commit adultery" (Matthew 5:32), refers to betrothal: it does not make adultery grounds for divorce from a marriage. The penalty for adultery is death (Leviticus 20:10), not divorce. [Fornication here refers to an act before marriage, adultery to an act after marriage.]

If the (betrothed) wife can be convicted of fornication, she must be stoned to death as an example.

Thus we see in the case of Joseph, to whom Mary was betrothed (Luke 1:27, Matthew 1:20): Mary was called his wife, and he was contemplating divorcing her privately, rather than having her publicly stoned for fornication.

(V.22-30) Adultery requires death for both parties. Herein we see the false motivation of the Pharisees in bringing a woman only to Yeshua (John 8:3), claiming to have taken her in the very act of adultery.

There is no penalty against a woman who is raped.

A man who commits fornication with an unbetrothed woman must marry her, and may never divorce her.

A man is forbidden to marry his widowed aunt that his father is required to marry. The word “robe” (of his father) symbolizes a requirement to marry – like the *chupah*, it represents sheltering his bride and bringing her into the home.

War and peace

(V.23:9) *“When you go out as an army against your enemies, then you shall keep yourself from every evil thing.”*

Micah 5: Yeshua, Whose goings forth are from eternity, will come from Bethlehem, and *“shepherd His flock in the strength of Yahweh, in the majesty of the name of Yahweh His God.”* He will bring peace to Israel when they are attacked.

Psalm 137:5

“If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her skill.” Tzitzit are for “remembering”.

Remember Jerusalem. Remember Torah. Remember Edom: *“You shall not detest an Edomite”* (Deut. 23:7).

Matthew 22:7-9 *“But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire. Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there, invite to the wedding feast.’”*

Ki-tetzei Machaneh / When a Camp Goes Out

Commentary Y3-41

Deuteronomy 23:9-20 (*10-21 Heb*) Isaiah 1:10-18 Psalm 138 Matthew 8:1-4 Tevet 16, 5764 / Jan 10, 2004

Reader 1 Amen*⁹ “When a camp goes out against your enemies, then you shall keep yourself from every evil thing.

¹⁰ If there is among you any man who is unclean because of a nocturnal emission, then he must go outside the camp; he may not reenter the camp. ¹¹ But it shall be when evening approaches, he shall bathe himself with water, and at sundown he may reenter the camp.

¹² You shall also have a place outside the camp and go out there, ¹³ and you shall have a spade among your tools, and it shall be when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and shall turn to cover up your excrement.

¹⁴ Since Yahweh your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy; and He must not see anything indecent among you lest He turn away from you.”

Reader 2 Amen*¹⁵ “You shall not hand over to his master a slave who has escaped from his master to you.

¹⁶ He shall live with you in your midst, in the place which he shall choose in one of your towns where it pleases him; you shall not mistreat him.

¹⁷ None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute, nor shall any of the sons of Israel be a cult prostitute.

¹⁸ You shall not bring the hire of a harlot or the wages of a dog into the house of Yahweh your God for any votive offering, for both of these are an abomination to Yahweh your God.

¹⁹ You shall not charge interest to your countrymen: interest on money, food, or anything that may be loaned at interest. ²⁰ You may charge interest to a foreigner, but to your countryman you shall not charge interest, so that Yahweh your God may bless you in all that you undertake in the land which you are about to enter to possess.”

Isaiah 1:16

“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight.”

Psalm 138 *A Psalm of David.*

1 I will give Thee thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to Thee before the gods. 2 I will bow down toward Thy holy temple, and give thanks to Thy name for Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth; for Thou hast magnified Thy word according to all Thy name. 3 On the day I called Thou didst answer me; Thou didst make me bold with strength in my soul. 4 All the kings of the earth will give thanks to Thee, O Yahweh, when they have heard the words of Thy mouth. 5 And they will sing of the ways of Yahweh. For great is the glory of Yahweh. 6 For though Yahweh is exalted, yet He regards the lowly; but the haughty He knows from afar. 7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt revive me; Thou wilt stretch forth Thy hand against the wrath of my enemies, and Thy right hand will save me. 8 Yahweh will accomplish what concerns me; Thy lovingkindness, O Yahweh, is everlasting; do not forsake the works of Thy hands.

Matthew 8:1-4

1 And when He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. 2 And behold, a leper came to Him, and bowed down to Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 3 And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Yeshua said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest, and present the offering that Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."

Commentary:

We know that sin is abomination before God, and righteousness is comely. We should also understand that reminders of sin – our resultant states from the fall – are uncleanness in His sight, and reminders of His righteousness – such as ordinances – are pleasing to Him.

(V.10-14) In today's portion, we see that natural bodily functions representing death (unfulfilled life) and waste, which are results of the fall, should be taken care of "outside the camp". In order for us to see God's ultimate provision for our undertakings for Him, there must be holiness in the camp.

(V.14) *"Since Yahweh your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy; and He must not see anything indecent among you lest He turn away from you."*

"Thus you shall keep the sons of Israel separated (holy) from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by their defiling My tabernacle that is among them" (Leviticus 15: 31).

While "uncleanness" was to be kept out of the camp, representations of God's righteousness were to be performed only within the camp – at the Tabernacle.

"But in the place which Yahweh chooses in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you" (Deuteronomy 12:14).

After the Sabbath Millennium, this earth will have all of the works and results of sin destroyed by fire, and will thus be renewed by fire more completely than by the great flood.

"But the present heavens and earth by His Word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. . . and the earth and its works will be burned."
(2 Peter 3:7, 10).

"Uncleanness" is not sin, but a result of sin – a result of the fall. In uncleanness there may be seen a factor of death or destruction, which was not present in the original creation, and will not be present after the restoration– when Eden / Paradise is restored to a renewed earth. [Note: "Paradise" is a translation of "Eden" – Gr. "Paraditzo" = Heb. "Edan".]

"Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time" (Acts 3:19-21).

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Eden / Paradise of God."
(Revelation 2:7).

"And I saw renewed heavens and a renewed earth; for the first heavens and the first earth passed away. . . And on either side of the river was the tree of life" (Revelation 21:1, 22:2).

In our eternal future, there will be no more "uncleanness" as a remembrance of sin:

"For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (Jeremiah 31:34).

Adam was created in God's likeness (Genesis 1:26), but after the fall, and after he was a hundred years old, he had sons in his own image.

"When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had other sons and daughters"
(Genesis 5:3-4).

In the restored earth, a man will become accountable to observe Torah at the age of one-hundred years, and younger men will not be held in positions of leadership.

"No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his days; for the youth will become of age (accountable) at the age of one hundred, and the one who has not reached the age of one hundred shall be lightly esteemed" (Isaiah 65:20).

Isaiah relates the above matters: God hates ordinances that are performed with wrong motivations.

“Bring your worthless offerings no longer, your incense is an abomination to Me. . . New moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies – I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly” (Isaiah 1:13).

Then God says:

“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil” (Isaiah 1:16).

When we are fighting God’s battles, immoral conduct is turning our backs on God, and He will then turn His back on us.

David sings of whole-hearted worship toward God’s Temple: *“I will give Thee thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to Thee before the gods. I will bow down toward Thy Holy Temple”* (Psalm 138:1-2).

(V.15-16) When going to battle, some of the enemy’s slaves may desert to follow you. You shall not turn him back to his foreign master, but allow him to dwell with you, and treat him kindly.

(V.18) While the money is not of itself evil, we cannot dedicate sin-earnings to God, because it is a reminder of sin.

(V.19-20) We are not to cause another to sin: *“You shall not cause your countryman to take interest”*.

We are to fulfill any agreement to a foreigner, so as not to impugn God’s name: *“You may cause a foreigner to take interest”*.

Matthew 8

We learned from Leviticus 12:1 – 13:59 (commentaries Y2-33 & 34), that the disease *tzaraat* (commonly mistranslated leprosy) was a skin disease put upon a slanderer. The *metzora* (diseased person) was unclean, and forbidden to enter the camp.

Now we see Yeshua stretching out His hand and touching a *metzora*, then proclaiming him clean, and instructing him to fulfill the Torah’s requirement of having a priest’s certification before entering the camp. Touching him would seem to imply that Yeshua had first healed him of the sin of slander, and such healing would be the normal precursor to physical healing of *tzaraat*.

In the following chapter (Matthew 9), Yeshua first states that a certain man’s sins are forgiven, then heals him.

“For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, and walk’? But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins (then He said to the paralytic) ‘Rise, take up your bed, and go home’” (Matthew 9:5-6).

“They trade the wisdom of the Torah for modern fashionable notions.”

Reader 1 Amen*²¹ "When you make a vow to Yahweh your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for it would be sin in you, and Yahweh your God will surely require it of you.²² However, if you refrain from vowing, it would not be sin in you.²³ You shall be careful to perform what goes out from your lips, just as you have voluntarily vowed to Yahweh your God, what you have promised.

Reader 2 Amen*²⁴ When you enter your neighbor's vineyard, then you may eat grapes until you are fully satisfied, but you shall not put any in your basket.²⁵ When you enter your neighbor's standing grain, then you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not wield a sickle in your neighbor's standing grain.

Reader 3 Amen* 24:¹ "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out from his house,² and she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man's wife,³ and if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife,⁴ then her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his wife, since she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before Yahweh, and you shall not bring sin on the land which Yahweh your God gives you as an inheritance.

Reader 4 Amen*⁵ "When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out with the army, nor be charged with any duty; he shall be free at home one year and shall give happiness to his wife whom he has taken.⁶ "No one shall take a handmill or an upper millstone in pledge, for he would be taking a life in pledge.⁷ "If a man is caught kidnapping any of his countrymen of the sons of Israel, and he deals with him violently, or sells him, then that thief shall die; so you shall purge the evil from among you.

Reader 5 Amen*⁸ "Be careful against an infection of leprosy, that you diligently observe and do according to all that the Levitical priests shall teach you; as I have commanded them, so you shall be careful to do.⁹ "Remember what Yahweh your God did to Miriam on the way as you came out of Egypt.

Reader 6 Amen*¹⁰ "When you make your neighbor a loan of any sort, you shall not enter his house to take his pledge.¹¹ "You shall remain outside, and the man to whom you make the loan shall bring the pledge out to you.¹² "And if he is a poor man, you shall not sleep with his pledge.¹³ "When the sun goes down you shall surely return the pledge to him, that he may sleep in his cloak and bless you; and it will be righteousness for you before Yahweh your God.

¹⁴ "You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your countrymen or one of your aliens who is in your land in your towns.¹⁵ "You shall give him his wages on his day before the sun sets, for he is poor and sets his heart on it; so that he may not cry against you to Yahweh and it become sin in you.

Reader 7 Amen*¹⁶ "Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin.¹⁷ "You shall not pervert the justice due an alien or an orphan, nor take a widow's garment in pledge.¹⁸ "But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and that Yahweh your God redeemed you from there; therefore I am commanding you to do this thing.

Isaiah 19

1 The oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, Yahweh is riding on a swift cloud, and is about to come to Egypt; the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them. 2 "So I will incite Egyptians against Egyptians; and they will each fight against his brother, and each against his neighbor, city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. 3 "Then the spirit of the Egyptians will be demoralized within them; and I will confound their strategy, so that they will resort to idols and ghosts of the dead, and to mediums and spiritists. 4 "Moreover, I will deliver the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel master, and a mighty king will rule over them," declares Yahweh God of hosts. 5 And the waters from the sea will dry up, and the river will be parched and dry. 6 And the canals will emit a stench, the streams of Egypt will thin out and dry up; the reeds and rushes will rot away. 7 The bulrushes by the Nile, by the edge of the Nile and all the sown fields by the Nile will become dry, be driven away, and be no more. 8 And the fishermen will lament, and all those who cast a line into the Nile will mourn, and those who spread nets on the waters will pine away. 9 Moreover, the manufacturers of linen made from combed flax and the weavers of white cloth will be utterly dejected. 10 And the pillars of Egypt will be crushed; all the hired laborers will be grieved in soul. 11 The princes of Tzo-an are mere fools; the advice of Pharaoh's wisest advisers has

become stupid. How can you men say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings"? 12 Well then, where are your wise men? Please let them tell you, and let them understand what Yahweh of hosts Has purposed against Egypt. 13 The princes of Tzo-an have acted foolishly, the princes of Memphis are deluded; those who are the cornerstone of her tribes have led Egypt astray. 14 Yahweh has mixed within her a spirit of distortion; they have led Egypt astray in all that it does, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit. 15 And there will be no work for Egypt Which its head or tail, its palm branch or bulrush, may do. 16 In that day the Egyptians will become like women, and they will tremble and be in dread because of the waving of the hand of Yahweh of hosts, which He is going to wave over them. 17 And the land of Judah will become a terror to Egypt; everyone to whom it is mentioned will be in dread of it, because of the purpose of Yahweh of hosts, which He is purposing against them. 18 In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan and swearing allegiance to Yahweh of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction. 19 In that day there will be an altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to Yahweh near its border. 20 And it will become a sign and a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to Yahweh because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them. 21 Thus Yahweh will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know Yahweh in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to Yahweh and perform it. 22 And Yahweh will strike Egypt, striking but healing; so they will return to Yahweh, and He will respond to them and will heal them. 23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt (Hamites) to Assyria (desc. of second son of Shem), and the Assyrians will come into Egypt and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. 24 In that day Israel will be the third party with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, 25 whom Yahweh of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."

Psalm 139 For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

¹O Yahweh, You have searched me and known me. ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. ³You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O Yahweh, You know it all. ⁵You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain to it. ⁷Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? ⁸If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. ⁹If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, ¹⁰even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me. ¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night," ¹²even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You. ¹³For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book they were all written, the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them. ¹⁷How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! ¹⁸If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You. ¹⁹O that You would slay the wicked, O God; depart from me, therefore, men of bloodshed. ²⁰For they speak against You wickedly, and Your enemies take Your name in vain. ²¹Do I not hate those who hate You, O Yahweh? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? ²²I hate them with the utmost hatred; they have become my enemies. ²³Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; ²⁴and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.

Matthew 5:30-37

³⁰ "And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell. ³¹ "And it was said, 'Whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce'; ³² but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³ "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.' ³⁴ "But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵ or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ "Nor

shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷ "But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; and anything beyond these is of evil.

Commentary:

Today's Psalm sets the tone for the Torah portion: (Psalm 139) ¹*O Yahweh, You have searched me and known me.* ²*You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar.* ³*You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways.* ⁴*Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O Yahweh, You know it all.* ⁵*You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me.* ⁶*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain to it.*"

Deuteronomy 23:21-23

Remembering that God knows our words before we say them, (v.21) *"When you make a vow to Yahweh your God, you shall not delay to pay it"*, and (v.23) *"You shall be careful to perform what goes out from your lips"*.

Some first-century rabbis took the Torah to require fulfillment only of oaths to Yahweh, stating His name: vain oaths were inconsequential. Rabbi Aben Ezra and Rabbi David Kimchi said, "He that swears by the heavens and by the earth, and by the sun, and the like, though his intention is nothing less than to Him that created them, this is no oath" [Gill's Commentary: Matthew 5:33].

Yeshua's words, *"But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven . . . etc."* (Matthew 5:33) are not to be taken as contradictory to Torah, Psalms, and Prophets, which require oaths to Yahweh, but should be seen as referring to vain oaths.

Of required vows to Yahweh:

(Numbers 6:21) *"This is the law of the Nazirite, who vows his offering to Yahweh."*

(Psalm 76:11) *"Make vows to Yahweh your God and fulfill them."*

(Jeremiah 12:16) *"Then it will come about that if they will really learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, 'As Yahweh lives,' . . . then they will be built up in the midst of My people."*

(Isaiah 19:20-21) *"And it will become a sign and a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to Yahweh because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them. Thus Yahweh will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know Yahweh in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to Yahweh and perform it."*

(Proverbs 20:25) *"It is a snare for a man to say rashly, 'It is holy!' And after the vows to make inquiry."* In other words, after vowing to dedicate something to God, one should not afterwards reconsider.

(Hebrews 6:16) *"For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute."*

Of vain oaths:

(Matthew 5:36) *"Let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; and anything beyond these is of the evil one."*

(James 5:12) *"But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your yes be yes, and your no, no; so that you may not fall under judgment."*

Deuteronomy 23:24-25

A laborer in the harvest may eat of the harvest:

(1 Timothy 5:18) *"For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,' and 'The laborer is worthy of his wages' "*,

but he may not take anything home or sell any to others.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

Biblically, divorce generally applies to a man divorcing a betrothed wife, only up to the time the marriage is consummated, and only for specific reasons. An exception is when a marriage was between disallowed parties, then divorce was required.

Last week we covered the subject of death being required for fornication and divorce being allowed for lack of virginity: today's text is actually the basis for such divorce. We looked at the case of Joseph and Mary, where Joseph considered divorcing Mary, because she was found with child when they were betrothed.

Today we see the additional rule: a man who divorces his (betrothed) wife, and she subsequently marries another man who then dies – the first man may not take her back to be his wife.

Deuteronomy 24:6, 10-15, 17-18

Today, in this country, we have laws limiting what a creditor can take. A creditor cannot take more than one-half of a person's wages by garnishment. Also, a debtor has to be left with basic housing and transportation, though luxurious houses or vehicles may not be allowed.

(V.10) This passage is about a debtor who is overdue in repaying, such that the creditor may require him to appear before the court. The dignity of the debtor may not be damaged by the creditor or agent of the court entering the debtor's house to seek security. And, any security offered must not be kept so long as to endanger the debtor's living.

For a poor man, three kinds of items must be returned when they are needed: clothing for the day, bedding for the night, and anything needed for the debtor's livelihood; one kind may be exchanged for another by day and night.

Even if the debtor does not show appreciation, God will bless the creditor who acts righteously.

When a servant is poor and needy, his employer must not take advantage of the situation. His wages are to be paid at the end of each work day, because it is needed.

(V.17) This paragraph stresses being kind and fair to the vulnerable – aliens, orphans, and widows. We are to remember that we were delivered by God's grace, and that we are stewards of all that God has given us to control.

Deuteronomy 24:7

We have recently seen other Scriptures where God establishes capital punishment to "*purge evil from among you*". Here it is for kidnapping that incorporates violence or slavery. While every precaution needs to be taken to ensure that a guilty verdict is proper, it is not left to our discretion to determine life or death: God holds all of the rights, and He has decreed capital punishment for certain crimes.

Deuteronomy 24:8-9

Being "*careful against an infection of tzaraat*" represents being careful against slandering others. (*Tzaraat* is commonly mistranslated 'leprosy'; it is a skin disease given to a slanderer – see commentaries Y2-33 and Y2-34.) As we started with warnings about vain oaths, we are coming to a conclusion with warnings about slander.

Deuteronomy 24:16

Tyrants punish by wiping out families of rebels. In a court, we are not to judge a person for the crimes of his father or son, but only for one's own sins. This is not a contradiction of Exodus 20:5 – "*For I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me*"; the latter has to do with learned or copied behavior, not imputing one's sins to another.

We have been purchased with a great price; we are to be overcomers. Salvation is not about being free to do whatever we imagine feels good: it is about overcoming, then we will feel good about doing what God designed for us.

(Psalm 139:23-24) *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; ²⁴ and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.”*

Ki-tik'tzor / When You Reap

Deuteronomy 24:19 – 25:19 Hosea 10:12 Psalm 140 Luke 12:13-34

Commentary Y3-43

Shevat 1, 5764 / Jan 24, 2004

Reader 1 Amen* ¹⁹ "When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow, in order that Yahweh your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. ²⁰ "When you beat your olive tree, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow. ²¹ "When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not go over it again; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow. ²² "And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this thing.

Reader 2 Amen 25:* ¹ "If there is a dispute between men and they go to court, and the judges decide their case, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked, ² then it shall be if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, the judge shall then make him lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of stripes according to his guilt. ³ "He may beat him forty times but no more, lest he beat him with many more stripes than these, and your brother be degraded in your eyes.

Reader 3 Amen* ⁴ "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing. ⁵ "When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. ⁶ "And it shall be that the first-born whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out from Israel.

Reader 4 Amen* ⁷ "But if the man does not desire to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to establish a name for his brother in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.' ⁸ "Then the elders of his city shall summon him and speak to him. And if he persists and says, 'I do not desire to take her,' ⁹ then his brother's wife shall come to him in the sight of the elders, and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face; and she shall declare, 'Thus it is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.' ¹⁰ "And in Israel his name shall be called, 'The house of him whose sandal is removed.'

Reader 5 Amen* ¹¹ "If two men, a man and his countryman, are struggling together, and the wife of one comes near to deliver her husband from the hand of the one who is striking him, and puts out her hand and seizes his genitals, ¹² then you shall cut off her hand; you shall not show pity.

Reader 6 Amen* ¹³ "You shall not have in your bag differing weights, a large and a small. ¹⁴ "You shall not have in your house differing measures, a large and a small. ¹⁵ "You shall have a full and just weight; you shall have a full and just measure, that your days may be prolonged in the land which Yahweh your God gives you. ¹⁶ "For everyone who does these things, everyone who acts unjustly is an abomination to Yahweh your God.

Reader 7 Amen* ¹⁷ "Remember what Amalek did to you along the way when you came out from Egypt, ¹⁸ how he met you along the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were faint and weary; and he did not fear God. ¹⁹ "Therefore it shall come about when Yahweh your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which Yahweh your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

Hosea 10:12

Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek Yahweh until He comes to rain righteousness on you.

Psalm 140 For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

¹ Rescue me, O Yahweh, from evil men; preserve me from violent men, ² who devise evil things in their hearts; they continually stir up wars. ³ They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; poison of a viper is under their lips. Selah. ⁴ Keep me, O Yahweh, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from violent men, who have purposed to trip up my feet. ⁵ The proud have hidden a trap for me, and cords; they have spread a net

by the wayside; they have set snares for me. Selah. ⁶ I said to Yahweh, "You are my God; give ear, O Yahweh, to the voice of my supplications. ⁷ "O God Yahweh, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle. ⁸ "Do not grant, O Yahweh, the desires of the wicked; do not promote his evil device, lest they be exalted. Selah. ⁹ "As for the head of those who surround me, may the mischief of their lips cover them. ¹⁰ "May burning coals fall upon them; may they be cast into the fire, into deep pits from which they cannot rise. ¹¹ "May a slanderer not be established in the earth; may evil hunt the violent man speedily." ¹² I know that Yahweh will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and justice for the poor. ¹³ Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; the upright will dwell in Your presence.

Luke 12:13-48

¹³ And someone in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." ¹⁴ But He said to him, "Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbiter over you?" ¹⁵ And He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."

¹⁶ And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a certain rich man was very productive. ¹⁷ "And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' ¹⁸ "And he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ 'And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" ²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'"

²¹ "So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." ²² And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. ²³ "For life is more than food, and the body than clothing. ²⁴ "Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; and they have no storeroom nor barn; and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! ²⁵ "And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span? ²⁶ "If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why are you anxious about other matters? ²⁷ "Consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. ²⁸ "But if God so arrays the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you, O men of little faith! ²⁹ "And do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and do not keep worrying. ³⁰ "For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. ³¹ "But seek for His kingdom, and these things shall be added to you. ³² "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. ³³ "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys. ³⁴ "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. ³⁵ "Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps alight. ³⁶ "And be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks. ³⁷ "Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. ³⁸ "Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. ³⁹ "And be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰ "You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect." ⁴¹ And Peter said, "Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?" ⁴² And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? ⁴³ "Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴ "Truly I say to you, that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁵ "But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk; ⁴⁶ the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him, and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers. ⁴⁷ "And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, shall receive many lashes, ⁴⁸ but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

Commentary:

(Hosea 10:12) *“Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek Yahweh until He comes to rain righteousness on you.”*

(Psalm 140:12-13) *“I know that Yahweh will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and justice for the poor. Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; the upright will dwell in Your presence.”*

(Deuteronomy 24:19-22) After a season of labor, when the crops are ready to harvest, a farmer must still realize that God brings forth bread from the earth, and creates the fruit of the tree: his prosperity is from God, and it is entrusted to him to share with the poor.

We will be judged according to our use of that with which God has prospered us. It is put in our control as a test of our service.

(V.19) *“When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow, in order that Yahweh your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.”*

Wheat field



Gathering sheaves



Thrashing (to separate grain from pods)



Winnowing (to remove chaff)



From www.paulnoll.com/china

(V.20) “When you beat your olive tree, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow.”

Olive trees



From www.lighthouse123.com/id33.htm

Olive trees on the Mount of Olives in Israel



From www.thefigtree.com/olives.htm

Growth Habits: The olive is an evergreen tree growing to 50 ft. in height with a spread of about 30 ft. Olives are long-lived with a life expectancy of 500 years. The trees are also tenacious, easily sprouting back even when chopped to the ground.

Fruit: The olive fruit is a green drupe, becoming generally blackish-purple when fully ripe. A few varieties are green when ripe and some turn a shade of copper brown. The cultivars vary considerably in size, shape, oil-content and flavor. The shapes range from almost round to oval or elongated with pointed ends. Raw olives contain an alkaloid that makes them bitter and unpalatable. A few varieties are sweet enough to be eaten after sun drying.

Harvest: Olive fruits that are to be processed as green olives are picked while they are still green but have reached full size. They can also be picked for processing at any later stage up through full ripeness.

Curing: There are several classical ways of curing olives. A common method is the lye-cure process in which green or near-ripe olives are soaked in a series of lye solutions for a period of time to remove the bitter principle and then transferred to water and finally a mild saline solution. For California canned commercial olives, black olives are identical to green olives. The black color is obtained by exposure to air after lye extraction and has nothing to do with ripeness.

(From www.crfg.org/pubs/ff/olive.html)

Luke 12

God’s order is: we are to serve Him first, then He will provide all of our needs for serving Him, and we are to work to justify that which is provided for us. This is quite contrary to popular thinking – that we work to create gain, and when we are satisfied from our own provision, we may then give God part of our time and resources.

(V.13) Someone said to Yeshua, “*Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.*” This does not seem like an unreasonable request. But note: He was asking the “teacher” to teach his brother – not himself! Our responsibility is to learn to serve faithfully with that which God entrusts to us.

(V.15) Yeshua said, “*Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.*”

(V.40-44) When Yeshua returns, those who have learned to be faithful in serving Him with all that has been entrusted to their care – they will be blessed, with eternal possessions put in their care!

(V.48) More will be required of those who have had more entrusted to them. In other words, riches bring greater responsibility. Desiring to be rich brings many temptations and snares (1 Timothy 6:9). Those who are rich are admonished about trusting in their riches, about conceit, and about generosity, “*storing up for*

themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.” (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

We are to be wise, and store up for natural times of “famine”. Those who live by farming, and other trades with seasonal income, need to budget their income for a year.

“Go to the ant, O sluggard, observe her ways and be wise, which, having no chief, officer or ruler, prepares her food in the summer, and gathers her provision in the harvest” (Proverbs 6:6-8).

However, we are not to put “working for increase” first while we are younger, so that we may retire early to enjoy a life of leisure. Even the idea of building a nest-egg to have time to serve God later is contrary to God’s instruction of serving Him first while we are young.

“Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth” (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

To seek increase by cheating in trade is an abomination to Yahweh. This includes overcharging, and exaggerating the condition or value of something being sold. It is focusing on personal increase, rather than serving God, and will ultimately bring personal decrease through God’s judgment.

** commentary incomplete **
(V.25:1-3)

(V.5-10) When a married man dies without offspring, his brother is required to take his wife, and raise up offspring in the name of the deceased.

“Then Judah said to Onan, ‘Go in to your brother's wife, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother’ ” (Gen 38:8).

A priest may not marry his deceased brother’s wife, because he is forbidden to marry a widow (Leviticus 21:14). He must perform the *Halitzah Ritual*, which releases a widow from marrying her deceased husband’s brother (see Mishnah: Sanhedrin 2:1).

(V.11-12) This is about fair judgment in a court, not literally cutting off a hand in retribution. One who causes embarrassment is subject to payment of monetary penalty to victim. In this case, the price is established by God as the value of a hand: if you cause such embarrassment with your hand, you pay the price (value) of a hand.

(V.13-16)

(V.17-20)

Reader 1 Amen 26:*¹ "Then it shall be, when you enter the land which Yahweh your God gives you as an inheritance, and you possess it and live in it,² that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground which you shall bring in from your land that Yahweh your God gives you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place where Yahweh your God chooses to establish His name.³ "And you shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, 'I declare this day to Yahweh my God that I have entered the land which Yahweh swore to our fathers to give us.'⁴ "Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of Yahweh your God.⁵ "And you shall answer and say before Yahweh your God, 'My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down to Egypt and sojourned there, few in number; but there he became a great, mighty and populous nation.⁶ 'And the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, and imposed hard labor on us.⁷ 'Then we cried to Yahweh, the God of our fathers, and Yahweh heard our voice and saw our affliction and our toil and our oppression;⁸ and Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with great terror and with signs and wonders;⁹ and He has brought us to this place, and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Reader 2 Amen*¹⁰ 'And now behold, I have brought the first of the produce of the ground which Thou, O Yahweh hast given me.' And you shall set it down before Yahweh your God, and worship before Yahweh your God;¹¹ and you and the Levite and the alien who is among you shall rejoice in all the good which Yahweh your God has given you and your household.¹² "When you have finished paying all the tithe of your increase in the third year, the year of tithing, then you shall give it to the Levite, to the stranger, to the orphan and to the widow, that they may eat in your towns, and be satisfied.¹³ "And you shall say before Yahweh your God, 'I have removed the sacred portion from my house, and also have given it to the Levite and the alien, the orphan and the widow, according to all Thy commandments which Thou hast commanded me; I have not transgressed or forgotten any of Thy commandments.

Reader 3 Amen*¹⁴ 'I have not eaten of it while mourning, nor have I removed any of it while I was unclean, nor offered any of it to the dead. I have listened to the voice of Yahweh my God; I have done according to all that Thou hast commanded me.¹⁵ 'Look down from Thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Thy people Israel, and the ground which Thou hast given us, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Thou didst swear to our fathers.'¹⁶ "This day Yahweh your God commands you to do these statutes and ordinances. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul.¹⁷ "You have today declared Yahweh to be your God, and that you would walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments and His ordinances, and listen to His voice.¹⁸ "And Yahweh has today declared you to be His people, a treasured possession, as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments;¹⁹ and that He shall set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to Yahweh your God, as He has spoken."

Reader 4 Amen 27:*¹ Then Moses and the elders of Israel charged the people, saying, "Keep all the commandments which I command you today.² "So it shall be on the day when you shall cross the Jordan to the land which Yahweh your God gives you, that you shall set up for yourself large stones, and coat them with lime³ and write on them all the words of this law, when you cross over, in order that you may enter the land which Yahweh your God gives you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Yahweh, the God of your fathers, promised you.⁴ "So it shall be when you cross the Jordan, you shall set up on Mount Ebal, these stones, as I am commanding you today, and you shall coat them with lime.⁵ "Moreover, you shall build there an altar to Yahweh your God, an altar of stones; you shall not wield an iron tool on them.⁶ "You shall build the altar of Yahweh your God of uncut stones; and you shall offer on it burnt offerings to Yahweh your God;⁷ and you shall sacrifice peace offerings and eat there, and you shall rejoice before Yahweh your God.⁸ "And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law very distinctly."

Reader 5 Amen*⁹ Then Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying, "Be silent and listen, O Israel! This day you have become a people for Yahweh your God.¹⁰ "You shall therefore obey Yahweh your God, and do His commandments and His statutes which I command you today."¹¹ Moses also charged the people on that day, saying,¹² "When you cross the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless

the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³ "And for the curse, these shall stand on Mount Ebal: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

Reader 6 Amen* ¹⁴ "The Levites shall then answer and say to all the men of Israel with a loud voice, ¹⁵ 'Cursed is the man who makes an idol or a molten image, an abomination to Yahweh, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen.' ¹⁶ 'Cursed is he who dishonors his father or mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ¹⁷ 'Cursed is he who moves his neighbor's boundary mark.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ¹⁸ 'Cursed is he who misleads a blind person on the road.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ¹⁹ 'Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

Reader 7 Amen* ²⁰ 'Cursed is he who lies with his father's wife, because he has uncovered his father's skirt.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ²¹ 'Cursed is he who lies with any animal.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ²² 'Cursed is he who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ²³ 'Cursed is he who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ²⁴ 'Cursed is he who strikes his neighbor in secret.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ²⁵ 'Cursed is he who accepts a bribe to strike down an innocent person.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' ²⁶ 'Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

Isaiah 60:1-22

¹ "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of Yahweh has risen upon you. ² "For behold, darkness will cover the Earth, and deep darkness the peoples; But Yahweh will rise upon you, and His glory will appear upon you. ³ "And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. ⁴ "Lift up your eyes round about, and see; they all gather together, they come to you. Your sons will come from afar, and your daughters will be carried in the arms. ⁵ "Then you will see and be radiant, and your heart will thrill and rejoice; because the abundance of the sea will be turned to you, the wealth of the nations will come to you. ⁶ "A multitude of camels will cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba will come; they will bring gold and frankincense, and will bear good news of the praises of Yahweh. ⁷ "All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered together to you, the rams of Nebaioth will minister to you; they will go up with acceptance on My altar, and I shall glorify My glorious house. ⁸ "Who are these who fly like a cloud, and like the doves to their lattices? ⁹ "Surely the coastlands will wait for Me; and the ships of Tarshish will come first, to bring your sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, for the name of Yahweh your God, and for the Holy One of Israel because He has glorified you. ¹⁰ "And foreigners will build up your walls, and their kings will minister to you; for in My wrath I struck you, and in My favor I have had compassion on you. ¹¹ "And your gates will be open continually; they will not be closed day or night, so that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. ¹² "For the nation and the kingdom which will not serve you will perish, and the nations will be utterly ruined. ¹³ "The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the juniper, the box tree, and the cypress together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I shall make the place of My feet glorious. ¹⁴ "And the sons of those who afflicted you will come bowing to you, And all those who despised you will bow themselves at the soles of your feet; and they will call you the city of Yahweh, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. ¹⁵ "Whereas you have been forsaken and hated With no one passing through, I will make you an everlasting pride, a joy from generation to generation. ¹⁶ "You will also suck the milk of nations, and will suck the breast of kings; then you will know that I, Yahweh, am your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. ¹⁷ "Instead of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver, and instead of wood, bronze, and instead of stones, iron. And I will make peace your administrators, and righteousness your overseers. ¹⁸ "Violence will not be heard again in your land, nor devastation or destruction within your borders; but you will call your walls salvation, and your gates praise. ¹⁹ "No longer will you have the sun for light by day, nor for brightness will the moon give you light; but you will have Yahweh for an everlasting light, and your God for your glory. ²⁰ "Your sun will set no more, neither will

your moon wane; for you will have Yahweh for an everlasting light, and the days of your mourning will be finished. ²¹ "Then all your people will be righteous; they will possess the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified. ²² "The smallest one will become a clan, and the least one a mighty nation. I, Yahweh, will hasten it in its time."

Psalm 141 *A Psalm of David.*

¹ O Yahweh, I call upon You; hasten to me! Give ear to my voice when I call to You! ² May my prayer be counted as incense before You; the lifting up of my hands as the evening offering. ³ Set a guard, O Yahweh, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips. ⁴ Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice deeds of wickedness with men who do iniquity; and do not let me eat of their delicacies. ⁵ Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me; it is oil upon the head; do not let my head refuse it, for still my prayer is against their wicked deeds. ⁶ Their judges are thrown down by the sides of the rock, and they hear my words, for they are pleasant. ⁷ As when one plows and breaks open the earth, our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol. ⁸ For my eyes are toward You, O Yahweh, the Lord; in You I take refuge; do not leave me defenseless. ⁹ Keep me from the jaws of the trap which they have set for me, and from the snares of those who do iniquity. ¹⁰ Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I pass by safely.

Revelation 21:9 – 22:7

⁹ And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹ having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. ¹² It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. ¹³ There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. ¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ And the one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. ¹⁶ And the city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. ¹⁷ And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. ¹⁸ And the material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹ The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; ²⁰ the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. ²¹ And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. ²² And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. ²³ And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. ²⁵ And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed; ²⁶ and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; ²⁷ and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

22:1 And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him; ⁴ and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. ⁵ And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever. ⁶ And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place. ⁷ "And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."

Commentary:

We have many old hymns that show an understanding that crossing the Jordan (River) represents passing into the next life. Yeshua was baptized in the Jordan, and baptism pictures death to this life, and rising in newness of life.

“Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” – Romans 6:4.

The name Jordan (Hebrew – *Yar-eden*) means Descender from Eden. A river that descended from Eden watered the Earth, and the Jordan River symbolizes the door back to Eden / Paradise.

“Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers” – Genesis 2:10.

Revelation

When Yeshua returns, there will be a thousand-year Sabbath on this Earth. Believers will be raised to enter this millennial Sabbath, to reign with Yeshua.

After that Sabbath ends, the New Jerusalem will descent to an Earth renewed by fire. On that renewed Earth we will see all of the things that were described in Genesis in Eden:

The River: Gen 2:10 & Rev 22:1;

The Tree of Life: Gen 2:8-9 & Rev 2:7;

God present: Gen 3:8 & Rev 22:3

No curse: Gen 3:17, 23 & Rev 21:3.

As we need preparation to be ready for the weekly Sabbath, so also we need preparation for the coming Great Sabbath. This life is our preparation time. We can save up lasting treasures, or have our works destroyed.

“No man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire”

– 1 Corinthians 3:11-15.

This life is a test! We need to learn to overcome!

“To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God” – Revelation 2:7.

Psalm 141

Let us seek God's correction, and learn to accept it.

David prayed, *“Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me; it is oil upon the head” – Psalm 141:5.*

Isaiah

God says to His people, apparently of this time:

“Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of Yahweh has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the Earth, and deep darkness the peoples; But Yahweh will rise upon you, and His glory will appear upon you. And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes round about, and see; they all gather together, they come to you. Your sons will come from afar, and your daughters will be carried in the arms. Then you will see and be radiant, and your heart will thrill and rejoice; because the abundance of the sea will be turned to you, the wealth of the nations will come to you” (Isaiah 60:1-5).

Last week we saw that we are responsible for how we use what God has given to our control, and that he who is entrusted with more has greater responsibility. Here we, in the future, see how the poor will come to the rich – in spiritual matters (“*The nations will come to your light*”).

Deuteronomy

V.3-5 “*And you shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, ‘I declare this day to Yahweh my God that I have entered the land which Yahweh swore to our fathers to give us’* (an expression of gratitude). *Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of Yahweh your God. And you shall answer and say before Yahweh your God, ‘An Aramean (Laban – Gen 10:22, 24:29) tried to destroy my father (Jacob), and he went down to Egypt and sojourned there, few in number; but there he became a great, mighty and populous nation.’* The people were to commit themselves to God by: (1) inscribing the Torah on twelve stones, (2) bringing offerings, and (3) gathering at two mountains to affirm their allegiance.

Now, let us consider a prophetic application of the Torah portion.

We believers are partakers of the Abrahamic Covenant.

“*Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the covenant in Messiah Yeshua through the gospel*” – Ephesians 3:3.

“*‘This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days,’ says Yahweh: ‘I will put My laws upon their heart, and upon their mind I will write them,’ He then says, ‘And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more’*” – Hebrews 10:16-17.

(V.1-2) When we “cross the Jordan”, when we enter the Promised Land, that Land called Eden and Paradise, *then it shall be . . . that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground which you shall bring in from your land that Yahweh your God gives you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place where Yahweh your God chooses to establish His name.* These *bikkurim* (firstfruits) will be to show our recognition that everything is from God, and to attest that it is dedicated to the service of God.

We really need to get away from the idea of just sitting on clouds with harps! God established the Earth for man forever.

“*Like the Earth which He has founded forever*” – Psalm 78:69.

“*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*” – Matthew 5:5.

“*The righteous will inherit the land, and dwell in it forever*” – Psalm 37:29.

(V.6-9) As we celebrate the eternal Passover seder, we will relate the story (*haggadah*) of our deliverance from sin: “*And the worldlings treated us harshly and afflicted us, and imposed hard labor on us. Then we cried to Yahweh, the God of our fathers, and Yahweh heard our voice and saw our affliction and our toil and our oppression; and Yahweh brought us out of the sin world with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with great terror and with signs and wonders; and He has brought us to this place, and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.*”

(V.10) This will be followed by the *omer* offerings of firstfruits: “*‘And now behold, I have brought the first of the produce of the ground which You, O Yahweh have given me.’*” The ancient *omer* offerings were unleavened barley loaves (on the second day of Unleavened Bread) to leavened wheat loaves (fifty days later, at Pentecost) – covering the five bread-grain crops (barley, oats, rye, spelt, and wheat – considered the best).

(V.14) In that day, we will be able to say before Yahweh our God, “*I have listened to the voice of Yahweh my God; I have done according to all that You have commanded me.*” Because, His way will be fully in our hearts, and we will have no desire otherwise.

“*And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book*” – Revelation 22:7.

[We will leave the cursings of Deut 27 to next week to be studied in conjunction with the blessings of chapter 28.]

Reader 1 Amen* ¹ "Now it shall be, if you will diligently obey Yahweh your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, Yahweh your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ² "And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you will obey Yahweh your God. ³ "Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. ⁴ "Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. ⁵ "Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. ⁶ "Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. ⁷ "Yahweh will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way and shall flee before you seven ways. ⁸ "Yahweh will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which Yahweh your God gives you. ⁹ "Yahweh will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you will keep the commandments of Yahweh your God, and walk in His ways. ¹⁰ "So all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of Yahweh; and they shall be afraid of you. ¹¹ "And Yahweh will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground, in the land which Yahweh swore to your fathers to give you. ¹² "Yahweh will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. ¹³ "And Yahweh shall make you the head and not the tail, and you only shall be above, and you shall not be underneath, if you will listen to the commandments of Yahweh your God, which I charge you today, to observe them carefully, ¹⁴ and do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Reader 2 Amen* ¹⁵ "But it shall come about, if you will not obey Yahweh your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. ¹⁶ "Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. ¹⁷ "Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. ¹⁸ "Cursed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. ¹⁹ "Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. ²⁰ "Yahweh will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me. ²¹ "Yahweh will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from the land, where you are entering to possess it. ²² "Yahweh will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they shall pursue you until you perish. ²³ "And the heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. ²⁴ "Yahweh will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

Reader 3 Amen* ²⁵ "Yahweh will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them, but you shall flee seven ways before them, and you shall be an example of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶ "And your carcasses shall be food to all birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away. ²⁷ "Yahweh will smite you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors and with the scab and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. ²⁸ "Yahweh will smite you with madness and with blindness and with bewilderment of heart; ²⁹ and you shall grope at noon, as the blind man gropes in darkness, and you shall not prosper in your ways; but you shall only be oppressed and robbed continually, with none to save you. ³⁰ "You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall violate her; you shall build a house, but you shall not live in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but you shall not use its fruit. ³¹ "Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be torn away from you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have none to save you. ³² "Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes shall look on and yearn for them continually; but there shall be nothing you can do. ³³ "A people whom you do not know shall eat up the produce of your ground and all your labors, and you shall never be anything but oppressed and crushed continually.

Reader 4 Amen* ³⁴ "And you shall be driven mad by the sight of what you see. ³⁵ "Yahweh will strike you on the knees and legs with sore boils, from which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the

crown of your head. ³⁶ "Yahweh will bring you and your king, whom you shall set over you, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone. ³⁷ "And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a taunt among all the people where Yahweh will drive you. ³⁸ "You shall bring out much seed to the field but you shall gather in little, for the locust shall consume it. ³⁹ "You shall plant and cultivate vineyards, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm shall devour them. ⁴⁰ "You shall have olive trees throughout your territory but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off. ⁴¹ "You shall have sons and daughters but they shall not be yours, for they shall go into captivity. ⁴² "The cricket shall possess all your trees and the produce of your ground. ⁴³ "The alien who is among you shall rise above you higher and higher, but you shall go down lower and lower. ⁴⁴ "He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

Reader 5 Amen* ⁴⁵ "So all these curses shall come on you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey Yahweh your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. ⁴⁶ "And they shall become a sign and a wonder on you and your descendants forever. ⁴⁷ "Because you did not serve Yahweh your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things; ⁴⁸ therefore you shall serve your enemies whom Yahweh shall send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you. ⁴⁹ "Yahweh will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand, ⁵⁰ a nation of fierce countenance who shall have no respect for the old, nor show favor to the young. ⁵¹ "Moreover, it shall eat the offspring of your herd and the produce of your ground until you are destroyed, who also leaves you no grain, new wine, or oil, nor the increase of your herd or the young of your flock until they have caused you to perish. ⁵² "And it shall besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls in which you trusted come down throughout your land, and it shall besiege you in all your towns throughout your land which Yahweh your God has given you. ⁵³ "Then you shall eat the offspring of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters whom Yahweh your God has given you, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you.

Reader 6 Amen* ⁵⁴ "The man who is refined and very delicate among you shall be hostile toward his brother and toward the wife he cherishes and toward the rest of his children who remain, ⁵⁵ so that he will not give even one of them any of the flesh of his children which he shall eat, since he has nothing else left, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you in all your towns. ⁵⁶ "The refined and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground for delicateness and refinement, shall be hostile toward the husband she cherishes and toward her son and daughter, ⁵⁷ and toward her afterbirth which issues from between her legs and toward her children whom she bears; for she shall eat them secretly for lack of anything else, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you in your towns. ⁵⁸ "If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, Yahweh your God, ⁵⁹ then Yahweh will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses. ⁶⁰ "And He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. ⁶¹ "Also every sickness and every plague which, not written in the book of this law, Yahweh will bring on you until you are destroyed. ⁶² "Then you shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven for multitude, because you did not obey Yahweh your God. ⁶³ "And it shall come about that as Yahweh delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so Yahweh will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you shall be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it. ⁶⁴ "Moreover, Yahweh will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known. ⁶⁵ "And among those nations you shall find no rest, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there Yahweh will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul. ⁶⁶ "So your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you shall be in dread night and day, and shall have no assurance of your life. ⁶⁷ "In the morning you shall say, 'Would that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Would that it were morning!' because of the dread of your heart which you dread, and for the sight of your eyes which you shall see. ⁶⁸ "And Yahweh will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way about which I spoke to you, 'You will never see it again!' And there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer."

Reader 7 Amen 29:*¹ These are the words of the covenant which Yahweh commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb. ² And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "You have seen all that Yahweh did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land; ³ the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders. ⁴ "Yet to this day Yahweh has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear. ⁵ "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandal has not worn out on your foot. ⁶ "You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or strong drink, in order that you might know that I am Yahweh your God. ⁷ "When you reached this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon and Og the king of Bashan came out to meet us for battle, but we defeated them; ⁸ and we took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites. ⁹ "So keep the words of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.

Isaiah 55:2

"Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance."

Psalm 142 *Maskil of David, when he was in the cave. A Prayer.*

¹ I Cry aloud with my voice to Yahweh; I make supplication with my voice to Yahweh. ² I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare my trouble before Him. ³ When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, You knew my path. In the way where I walk they have hidden a trap for me. ⁴ Look to the right and see; for there is no one who regards me; there is no escape for me; no one cares for my soul. ⁵ I cried out to You, O Yahweh; I said, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. ⁶ "Give heed to my cry, for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me. ⁷ "Bring my soul out of prison, so that I may give thanks to Your Name; the righteous will surround me, for You will deal bountifully with me."

John 14

¹ "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ "And you know the way where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" ⁶ Yeshua said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. ⁷ "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." ⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ Yeshua said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'?" ¹⁰ "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. ¹¹ "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves. ¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father. ¹³ "And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. ¹⁵ "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. ¹⁶ "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷ that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. ¹⁸ "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ "After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. ²⁰ "In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹ "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him." ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world?" ²³ Yeshua answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him. ²⁴ "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. ²⁵ "These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you. ²⁶ "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said

to you. ²⁷ "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful. ²⁸ "You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ "And now I have told you before it comes to pass, that when it comes to pass, you may believe. ³⁰ "I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; ³¹ but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

Commentary:

While this Torah portion had a literal application to the ancient nation of Israel, it also has a prophetic application for God's people. There are ten blessings with ten corresponding curses.

Im-Shamoa / If you hearken

¹ "Now it shall be, if you will diligently obey Yahweh your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, Yahweh your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ² "And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you will obey Yahweh your God.

Amen

³ "Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.

⁴ "Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.

⁵ "Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

⁶ "Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

⁷ "Yahweh will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way and shall flee before you seven ways.

If you will diligently obey Yahweh your God,

⁸ "Yahweh will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which Yahweh your God gives you.

Im-lo Tishma / If you will not hearken

¹⁵ "But it shall come about, if you will not obey Yahweh your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.

Amen

¹⁶ "Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country.

¹⁸ "Cursed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.

¹⁷ "Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

¹⁹ "Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

²⁵ "Yahweh will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them, but you shall flee seven ways before them, and you shall be an example of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth.

If you will not obey Yahweh your God,

²⁰ "Yahweh will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me. ²¹ "Yahweh will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from the land, where you are entering to possess it.

⁹ "Yahweh will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you will keep the commandments of Yahweh your God, and walk in His ways. ¹⁰ "So all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of Yahweh; and they shall be afraid of you.

¹¹ "And Yahweh will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground, in the land which Yahweh swore to your fathers to give you.

¹² "Yahweh will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

¹³ "And Yahweh shall make you the head and not the tail, and you only shall be above, and you shall not be underneath, if you will listen to the commandments of Yahweh your God, which I charge you today, to observe them carefully, ¹⁴ and do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

³⁶ "Yahweh will bring you and your king, whom you shall set over you, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone. ³⁷ "And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a taunt among all the people where Yahweh will drive you.

³¹ "Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be torn away from you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have none to save you. ³² "Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes shall look on and yearn for them continually; but there shall be nothing you can do. ³³ "A people whom you do not know shall eat up the produce of your ground and all your labors, and you shall never be anything but oppressed and crushed continually.

²⁴ "Yahweh will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

⁶² "Then you shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven for multitude, because you did not obey Yahweh your God. ⁶³ "And it shall come about that as Yahweh delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so Yahweh will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you shall be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it. ⁶⁴ "Moreover, Yahweh will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known. ⁶⁵ "And among those nations you shall find no rest, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there Yahweh will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul. ⁶⁶ "So your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you shall be in dread night and day, and shall have no assurance of your life. ⁶⁷ "In the morning you shall say, 'Would that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Would that it were morning!' because of the dread of your heart which you dread, and for the sight of your eyes which you shall see. ⁶⁸ "And Yahweh will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way about which I spoke to you, 'You will never see it again!' And there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer."

The reason given for the curses is: (v.47-48) *“Because you did not serve Yahweh your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore you shall serve your enemies whom Yahweh shall send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things”*.

Haftarah means completion of the Torah portion. Today’s Prophet brings the fitting question to follow Deuteronomy 28.

Isaiah 55:2 – Yahweh says, *“Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance.”*

John 14

(V.2-3) Yeshua said that He was going away to prepare a place for His disciples, a place where there were many dwelling places. He also said that He would return to receive them to Himself. (V.6) And He said that He was the way to get there.

This was hard for the disciples then to understand, and it seems much misunderstood today.

In Revelation 21:2 we read, using the same term, of this “prepared” place, coming down from the heavens, coming to an Earth renewed by fire. It will come down after the Sabbath Millennium – the thousand year reign of Yeshua on this Earth. Then we read (v.7), *“He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son”*.

But, prior to this, there will be a judgment for the righteous, where each one’s position will be determined. Some will have great reward, and some will suffer loss. (This has nothing to do with the judgment of the wicked.)

(1 Corinthians 3:11-15) *For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Yeshua the Messiah. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. If any man’s work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.*

Many of us prepare for many years, such as through college, for a profession to make the short remainder of life more bountiful. How much more should we be diligent in preparing for the life to come?

Then Yeshua said, (v.14-15) *“If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* These two sentences are not unrelated. To ask in Yeshua’s Name is to ask in His stead. It means to ask for that which He would desire in order to fulfill His Father’s work. It means that we are diligently seeking to fulfill God’s commandments! It is the way of blessing! It is the way of fulfilled prayers!

To pray for fulfillment of our selfish desires, then tack on words such as “in Jesus name” (regardless of language), is not a way to answered prayer. It is using His Name in vain. It is the way to receive the curses listed in the Torah portion, (Deut 28:47) *“because you did not serve Yahweh your God with joy and a glad heart”*.

In the spirit of Deuteronomy 28, Yeshua further said, (v.21) *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him.”*

David ended Psalm 142 with *“the righteous will surround me, for You will deal bountifully with me.”*

“Serve Yahweh with gladness!” (Psalm 100:2)

Im-Shamoa / If you hearken

¹ "If you fully obey Yahweh your God by keeping all the commands I am giving you today, Yahweh your God will exalt you above all the nations of the world. ² You will experience all these blessings if you obey Yahweh your God:

Amen

³ You will be blessed in your towns and in the country.

⁴ You will be blessed with many children and productive fields. You will be blessed with fertile herds and flocks.

⁵ You will be blessed with baskets overflowing with fruit, and with kneading bowls filled with bread.

⁶ You will be blessed wherever you go, both in coming and in going.

⁷ "Yahweh will conquer your enemies when they attack you. They will attack you from one direction, but they will scatter from you in seven!

If you will diligently obey Yahweh your God,

⁸ "Yahweh will bless everything you do and will fill your storehouses with grain. Yahweh your God will bless you in the land he is giving you.

⁹ "If you obey the commands of Yahweh your God and walk in his ways, Yahweh will establish you as his holy people as he solemnly promised to do.

¹⁰ Then all the nations of the world will see that you are a people claimed by Yahweh, and they will stand in awe of you.

Im-lo Tishma / If you will not hearken

¹⁵ "But if you refuse to listen to Yahweh your God and do not obey all the commands and laws I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overwhelm you:

Amen

¹⁶ You will be cursed in your towns and in the country.

¹⁸ You will be cursed with few children and barren fields. You will be cursed with infertile herds and flocks.

¹⁷ You will be cursed with baskets empty of fruit, and with kneading bowls empty of bread.

¹⁹ You will be cursed wherever you go, both in coming and in going.

²⁵ "Yahweh will cause you to be defeated by your enemies. You will attack your enemies from one direction, but you will scatter from them in seven! You will be an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth.

If you will not obey Yahweh your God,

²⁰ "Yahweh himself will send against you curses, confusion, and disillusionment in everything you do, until at last you are completely destroyed for doing evil and forsaking me.

³⁶ "Yahweh will exile you and the king you crowned to a nation unknown to you and your ancestors. Then in exile you will worship gods of wood and stone! ³⁷ You will become an object of horror, a proverb and a mockery among all the nations to which Yahweh sends you.

¹¹ "Yahweh will give you an abundance of good things in the land he swore to give your ancestors--many children, numerous livestock, and abundant crops.

¹² Yahweh will send rain at the proper time from his rich treasury in the heavens to bless all the work you do. You will lend to many nations, but you will never need to borrow from them.

¹³ If you listen to these commands of Yahweh your God and carefully obey them, Yahweh will make you the head and not the tail, and you will always have the upper hand. ¹⁴ You must not turn away from any of the commands I am giving you today to follow after other gods and worship them.

³¹ Your ox will be butchered before your eyes, but you won't get a single bite of the meat. Your donkey will be driven away, never to be returned. Your sheep will be given to your enemies, and no one will be there to help you. ³² You will watch as your sons and daughters are taken away as slaves. Your heart will break as you long for them, but nothing you do will help. ³³ A foreign nation you have never heard about will eat the crops you worked so hard to grow. You will suffer under constant oppression and harsh treatment.

²⁴ Yahweh will turn your rain into sand and dust, and it will pour down from the sky until you are destroyed.

⁶² Though you are as numerous as the stars in the sky, few of you will be left because you would not listen to Yahweh your God. ⁶³ "Just as Yahweh has found great pleasure in helping you to prosper and multiply, Yahweh will find pleasure in destroying you, until you disappear from the land you are about to enter and occupy. ⁶⁴ For Yahweh will scatter you among all the nations from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship foreign gods that neither you nor your ancestors have known, gods made of wood and stone! ⁶⁵ There among those nations you will find no place of security and rest. And Yahweh will cause your heart to tremble, your eyesight to fail, and your soul to despair. ⁶⁶ Your lives will hang in doubt. You will live night and day in fear, with no reason to believe that you will see the morning light. ⁶⁷ In the morning you will say, 'If only it were night!' And in the evening you will say, 'If only it were morning!' You will say this because of your terror at the awesome horrors you see around you. ⁶⁸ Then Yahweh will send you back to Egypt in ships, a journey I promised you would never again make. There you will offer to sell yourselves to your enemies as slaves, but no one will want to buy you."

Nitzavim / Standing

Commentary Y3-46

Deuteronomy 29:10 – 30:10 Isaiah 55:6 – 58:8 Psalm 143 Romans 10:1-21 Shevat 21, 5764 / Feb 14, 2004
(Heb: 29:9)

Reader 1 Amen* ¹⁰ "You are standing today, all of you, before Yahweh your God: your chiefs, your tribes, your elders and your officers, even all the men of Israel, ¹¹ your little ones, your wives, and the alien who is within your camps, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, ¹² that you may enter into the covenant with Yahweh your God, and into His oath which Yahweh your God is making with you today, ¹³ in order that He may establish you today as His people and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Reader 2 Amen* ¹⁴ "Now not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath, ¹⁵ but both with those who stand here with us today in the presence of Yahweh our God and with those who are not with us here today ¹⁶ (for you know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which you passed. ¹⁷ "Moreover, you have seen their abominations and their idols of wood, stone, silver, and gold, which they had with them); ¹⁸ lest there shall be among you a man or woman, or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from Yahweh our God, to go and serve the gods of those nations; lest there shall be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood.

Reader 3 Amen* ¹⁹ "And it shall be when he hears the words of this curse, that he will boast, saying, 'I have peace though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart in order to destroy the watered land with the dry.' ²⁰ "Yahweh shall never be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of Yahweh and His jealousy will burn against that man, and every curse which is written in this book will rest on him, and Yahweh will blot out his name from under heaven. ²¹ "Then Yahweh will single him out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant which are written in this book of the law.

Reader 4 Amen* ²² "Now the generation to come, your sons who rise up after you and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, when they see the plagues of the land and the diseases with which Yahweh has afflicted it, will say, ²³ 'All its land is brimstone and salt, a burning waste, unsown and unproductive, and no grass grows in it, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which Yahweh overthrew in His anger and in His wrath.' ²⁴ "And all the nations shall say, 'Why has Yahweh done thus to this land? Why this great outburst of anger?' ²⁵ "Then men shall say, 'Because they forsook the covenant of Yahweh, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt. ²⁶ 'And they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they have not known and whom He had not allotted to them.

Reader 5 Amen* ²⁷ "Therefore, the anger of Yahweh burned against that land, to bring upon it every curse which is written in this book; ²⁸ and Yahweh uprooted them from their land in anger and in fury and in great wrath, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.' ²⁹ "The secret things belong to Yahweh our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

Reader 6 Amen 30:1* "So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where Yahweh your God has banished you, ² and you return to Yahweh your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, ³ then Yahweh your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where Yahweh your God has scattered you. ⁴ "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there Yahweh your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. ⁵ "And Yahweh your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.

Reader 7 Amen* ⁶ "Moreover Yahweh your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live. ⁷ "And Yahweh your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who

persecuted you. ⁸ "And you shall again obey Yahweh, and observe all His commandments which I command you today. ⁹ "Then Yahweh your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for Yahweh will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; ¹⁰ if you obey Yahweh your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to Yahweh your God with all your heart and soul.

Isaiah 55:6 – 58:8

⁶ Seek Yahweh while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to Yahweh, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. ⁸ "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares Yahweh. ⁹ "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. ¹⁰ "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth, and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; ¹¹ so shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. ¹² "For you will go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. ¹³ "Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up; and instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up; and it will be a memorial to Yahweh, for an everlasting sign which will not be cut off."

56:1 Thus says Yahweh, "Preserve justice, and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come and My righteousness to be revealed. ² "How blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who takes hold of it; who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil." ³ Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to Yahweh say, "Yahweh will surely separate me from His people." Neither let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree." ⁴ For thus says Yahweh, "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant, ⁵ to them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off. ⁶ "Also the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, to minister to Him, and to love the name of Yahweh, to be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant; ⁷ even those I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples." ⁸ Yahweh God, who gathers the dispersed of Israel, declares, "Yet others I will gather to them, to those already gathered." ⁹ All you beasts of the field, all you beasts in the forest, come to eat. ¹⁰ His watchmen are blind, all of them know nothing. All of them are dumb dogs unable to bark, dreamers lying down, who love to slumber; ¹¹ and the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied. And they are shepherds who have no understanding; they have all turned to their own way, each one to his unjust gain, to the last one. ¹² "Come," they say, "let us get wine, and let us drink heavily of strong drink; and tomorrow will be like today, only more so."

57:1 The righteous man perishes, and no man takes it to heart; and devout men are taken away, while no one understands. For the righteous man is taken away from evil, ² he enters into peace; they rest in their beds, each one who walked in his upright way. ³ "But come here, you sons of a sorceress, offspring of an adulterer and a prostitute. ⁴ "Against whom do you jest? Against whom do you open wide your mouth and stick out your tongue? Are you not children of rebellion, offspring of deceit, ⁵ who inflame yourselves among the oaks, under every luxuriant tree, who slaughter the children in the ravines, under the clefts of the crags? ⁶ "Among the smooth stones of the ravine is your portion, they are your lot; even to them you have poured out a libation, you have made a grain offering. Shall I relent concerning these things? ⁷ "Upon a high and lofty mountain you have made your bed. You also went up there to offer sacrifice. ⁸ "And behind the door and the doorpost you have set up your sign; indeed, far removed from Me, you have uncovered yourself; and have gone up and made your bed wide. And you have made an agreement for yourself with them, you have loved their bed, you have looked on their manhood. ⁹ "And you have journeyed to the king with oil and increased your perfumes; you have sent your envoys a great distance, and made them go down to Sheol. ¹⁰ "You were tired out by the length of your road, yet you did not say, 'It is hopeless.' You found renewed strength, therefore you did not faint. ¹¹ "Of whom were you worried and fearful, when you lied, and did not remember Me, nor give Me a thought? Was I not silent even for a long time so you do not fear Me? ¹² "I will declare your righteousness and your deeds, but they will not profit you. ¹³ "When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you. But the wind will carry all of them up, and a breath will take

them away. But he who takes refuge in Me shall inherit the land, and shall possess My holy mountain." ¹⁴ And it shall be said, "Build up, build up, prepare the way, remove every obstacle out of the way of My people." ¹⁵ For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. ¹⁶ "For I will not contend forever, neither will I always be angry; for the spirit would grow faint before Me, and the breath of those whom I have made. ¹⁷ "Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry and struck him; I hid My face and was angry, and he went on turning away, in the way of his heart. ¹⁸ "I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners, ¹⁹ creating the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near," Says Yahweh, "and I will heal him." ²⁰ But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud. ²¹ "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

58:1 "Cry loudly, do not hold back; raise your voice like a trumpet, and declare to My people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob their sins. ² "Yet they seek Me day by day, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that has done righteousness, and has not forsaken the ordinance of their God. They ask Me for just decisions, they delight in the nearness of God. ³ "Why have we fasted and Thou dost not see? Why have we humbled ourselves and Thou dost not notice? Behold, on the day of your fast you find your desire, and drive hard all your workers. ⁴ "Behold, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist. You do not fast like you do today to make your voice heard on high. ⁵ "Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself? Is it for bowing one's head like a reed, and for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed? Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to Yahweh? ⁶ "Is this not the fast which I choose, to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke? ⁷ "Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into the house; when you see the naked, to cover him; and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? ⁸ "Then your light will break out like the dawn, and your recovery will speedily spring forth; and your righteousness will go before you; the glory of Yahweh will be your rear guard.

Psalm 143 *A Psalm of David.*

¹ Hear my prayer, O Yahweh, give ear to my supplications! Answer me in Your faithfulness, in Your righteousness! ² And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight no man living is righteous. ³ For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me dwell in dark places, like those who have long been dead. ⁴ Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me; my heart is appalled within me. ⁵ I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your doings; I muse on the work of Your hands. ⁶ I stretch out my hands to You; my soul longs for You, as a parched land. Selah. ⁷ Answer me quickly, O Yahweh, my spirit fails; do not hide Your face from me, lest I become like those who go down to the pit. ⁸ Let me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning; for I trust in You; teach me the way in which I should walk; for to You I lift up my soul. ⁹ Deliver me, O Yahweh, from my enemies; I take refuge in You. ¹⁰ Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground. ¹¹ For the sake of Your Name, O Yahweh, revive me. In Your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble. ¹² And in Your lovingkindness cut off my enemies, and destroy all those who afflict my soul; for I am Your servant.

Romans 10:1-21

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. ² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. ³ For not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Messiah is the goal of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. ⁵ For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. ⁶ But the righteousness based on faith speaks thus, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Messiah down), ⁷ or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Messiah up from the dead)." ⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"-- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth Yeshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; ¹⁰ for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed." ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; ¹³ for "Whoever will call

upon the name of Yahweh will be saved." ¹⁴ How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" ¹⁶ However, they did not all heed the glad tidings; for Isaiah says, "Yahweh, who has believed our report?" ¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Messiah. ¹⁸ But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; "Their voice has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." ¹⁹ But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? At the first Moses says, "I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, by a nation without understanding will I anger you." ²⁰ And Isaiah is very bold and says, "I was found by those who sought Me not, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me." ²¹ But as for Israel He says, "All the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people."

Commentary:

"You are standing". This was the last day of Moses' life. All of the people, all ages and classes, were standing before him.

The people had just heard ninety-eight frightening curses pronounced, and had said "Amen" to each of them. They knew that they had no basis in themselves to stand before an holy God. But Moses said, "You are standing". Despite their sins, they were still standing!

Do we see ourselves here?

Moses divided the people into categories: fathers, mothers, and children; teachers, laborers, and proselytes – according to each ones' level of effect on others' actions.

God gave them a perspective here: they were responsible for one another. Each one was responsible for helping others observe Torah and to restrain them from violating it. This is partly why we teach and discuss Torah. This is why "forgive" does not mean simply forget whatever others do wrong: we are responsible to help individuals overcome – and that sometimes requires legal action (taking a matter before the judges); we are responsible to help keep society free of sin – and that is a reason to vote (the people selected leaders in the Biblical setting). We are not to be vindictive – vengeance belongs to God – but we are to be responsible in dealing with sins of others; we are commanded to "*preserve justice*" (Isaiah 56:1). We are not to seek personal retribution, but we are to seek sanctification for God's people.

(V.18) "*Yahweh made this covenant with you so that no man, woman, family, or tribe among you would turn away from Yahweh our God to worship these gods of other nations, and so that no root among you would bear bitter and poisonous fruit.*" A root of curiosity can grow to a desire that will bear heresy: we have seen this in the many different directions that people follow charismatic leaders. We are forbidden to learn the ways of the nations (Jeremiah 10:2).

Our country is following other nations – and in some cases leading them – to devalue human life as "a matter of choice", and to make homosexuality acceptable as "a matter of preference". We should warn against these idolatries and seek to lead individuals and country away from them. Other examples could be the use of "recreational" drugs, and dishonest business schemes. We should not even be curious about these things in a way that could lead to desire.

God warned the people through Moses: when they were rebellious, they would experience the curses on every aspect of their lives; but when they were obedient, they would be greatly blessed. Remember, these were the people who had been redeemed by the Passover Lamb: we are not speaking of redemption by one's own works. Interestingly, God did not say "if", but "when": the remainder of His warning speaks of "when" God would return them from captivity, and change their hearts.

So Isaiah instructs us (v.55:6-7): "*Seek Yahweh while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to Yahweh, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*" If you are hearing His

Word today, call upon Him while He is near. Seek His way – he who seeks shall find (Matthew 7:7)! Have your thoughts changed through learning His Word. He will abundantly pardon! This is not just for “the lost”: God’s people need to continually repent and seek His way.

The Psalmist says (143:1-2), *“Hear my prayer, O Yahweh, give ear to my supplications! Answer me in Your faithfulness, in Your righteousness! And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight no man living is righteous.”*

Isaiah 56:6-7 *“Also the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, to minister to Him, and to love the name of Yahweh, to be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant; even those I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.”*

Paul spoke to the Romans about desiring that others be saved. Salvation is “from sin”! We call Messiah’s name Yeshua, because He will save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). Salvation is not just taking away our guilt and leaving us free to do whatever we please; salvation is being turned around (repentance) to walk in God’s way, growing through faith. It is not working to obtain salvation, but walking with God because we have been saved for that purpose.

Ephesians 2:10 – *“For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

Acts 21:24 *“And all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you (Paul), but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law.”*

Colossians 1:10 *“Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God”.*

1 Thessalonians 2:12 *“So that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”*

KJV Romans 10:4 reads, *“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”*

NLT Romans 10:4 reads, *“For Christ has accomplished the whole purpose of the law. All who believe in him are made right with God.”*

The text actually means that Messiah is the goal of the Torah. KJV isn’t in error, but one must understand that the word translated “end” means “goal”, not annihilation. NLT completely misses the point: the law wasn’t replaced; the purpose of the Torah is to display Messiah!

“Torah” is compared to five things: water (Isaiah 55:1), wine (Proverbs 9:5), honey & milk (Song of Solomon 4:11), and oil (SS 1:3). To the faithful, it is satisfying, it brings joy, it is sweet, it is nourishing, and it is healing.

David said (Psalm 143:8), *“Let me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning; for I trust in You; teach me the way in which I should walk; for to You I lift up my soul.”*

In Deuteronomy 29:4 (last week’s portion), Moses said: *“Yet to this day Yahweh has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.”* Now we see a contrasting prophecy (Deuteronomy 30:6), *“Moreover Yahweh your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live”*

During the past several Sabbath afternoons we have been studying God’s sovereignty. While we are commanded to repent and follow God, after we do so, we see that it was God working in us, and not something originating within ourselves.

Philippians 2:13 – *“It is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”*

Then we have that famous passage:

Philippians 1:6 – *“He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Messiah Yeshua.”*

Today's Prophet has an interesting statement:

Isaiah 57:1-2 – “The righteous man perishes, and no man takes it to heart; and devout men are taken away, while no one understands. For the righteous man is taken away from evil, he enters into peace; they rest in their beds, each one who walked in his upright way.”

Reader 1 Amen* ¹¹ "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. ¹² "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' ¹³ "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' ¹⁴ "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.

Reader 2 Amen* ¹⁵ "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; ¹⁶ in that I command you today to love Yahweh your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that Yahweh your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it. ¹⁷ "But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You shall not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.

Reader 3 Amen* ¹⁹ "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, ²⁰ by loving Yahweh your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which Yahweh swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

Reader 4 Amen 31:* ¹ So Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. ² And he said to them, "I am a hundred and twenty years old today; I am no longer able to come and go, and Yahweh has said to me, 'You shall not cross this Jordan.'³ "It is Yahweh your God who will cross ahead of you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua is the one who will cross ahead of you, just as Yahweh has spoken.

Reader 5 Amen* ⁴ "And Yahweh will do to them just as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them. ⁵ "And Yahweh will deliver them up before you, and you shall do to them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you. ⁶ "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for Yahweh your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."

Reader 6 Amen* ⁷ Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which Yahweh has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. ⁸ "And Yahweh is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear, or be dismayed." ⁹ So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, and to all the elders of Israel.

Reader 7 Amen* ¹⁰ Then Moses commanded them, saying, "At the end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Tabernacles, ¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before Yahweh your God at the place which He will choose, you shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing. ¹² "Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, in order that they may hear and learn and fear Yahweh your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law. ¹³ "And their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear Yahweh your God, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess."

Jeremiah 12:7-17

⁷ "I have forsaken My house, I have abandoned My inheritance; I have given the beloved of My soul into the hand of her enemies. ⁸ "My inheritance has become to Me like a lion in the forest; she has roared against Me; therefore I have come to hate her. ⁹ "Is My inheritance like a speckled bird of prey to Me? Are the birds of prey against her on every side? Go, gather all the beasts of the field, bring them to devour! ¹⁰ "Many shepherds have ruined My vineyard, they have trampled down My field; they have made My pleasant field a desolate wilderness. ¹¹ "It has been made a desolation; desolate, it mourns before Me; the whole land has been made desolate, because no man lays it to heart. ¹² "On all the bare heights in the wilderness destroyers have come, for a sword of Yahweh is devouring from one end of the land even to the other; there is no peace for anyone. ¹³ "They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns, they have strained themselves to no profit. But be ashamed of your harvest because of the fierce anger of Yahweh." ¹⁴ Thus says Yahweh concerning all My wicked neighbors who strike at the inheritance with which I have endowed

My people Israel, "Behold I am about to uproot them from their land and will uproot the house of Judah from among them. ¹⁵ "And it will come about that after I have uprooted them, I will again have compassion on them; and I will bring them back, each one to his inheritance and each one to his land. ¹⁶ "Then it will come about that if they will really learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, 'As Yahweh lives,' even as they taught My people to swear by Baal, then they will be built up in the midst of My people. ¹⁷ "But if they will not listen, then I will uproot that nation, uproot and destroy it," declares Yahweh.

Psalm 144 *A Psalm of David.*

¹ Blessed be Yahweh, my rock, Who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle; ² my lovingkindness and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer; my shield and He in whom I take refuge; Who subdues my people under me. ³ O Yahweh, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You think of him? ⁴ Man is like a mere breath; his days are like a passing shadow. ⁵ Bow Your heavens, O Yahweh, and come down; touch the mountains, that they may smoke. ⁶ Flash forth lightning and scatter them; send out Your arrows and confuse them. ⁷ Stretch forth Your hand from on high; rescue me and deliver me out of great waters, out of the hand of aliens ⁸ whose mouths speak deceit, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood. ⁹ I will sing a new song to You, O God; upon a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to You, ¹⁰ Who gives salvation to kings; Who rescues David His servant from the evil sword. ¹¹ Rescue me, and deliver me out of the hand of aliens, whose mouth speaks deceit, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood. ¹² Let our sons in their youth be as grown-up plants, and our daughters as corner pillars fashioned as for a palace; ¹³ Let our garner be full, furnishing every kind of produce, and our flocks bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our fields; ¹⁴ Let our cattle bear, without mishap and without loss, let there be no outcry in our streets! ¹⁵ How blessed are the people who are so situated; How blessed are the people whose God is Yahweh!

Matthew 11:7-30

⁷ And as these were going away, Yeshua began to speak to the multitudes about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ "But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' palaces. ⁹ "But why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet. ¹⁰ "This is the one about whom it is written, 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' ¹¹ "Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. ¹³ "For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ "And if you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come. ¹⁵ "He who has ears to hear, let him hear. ¹⁶ "But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places, who call out to the other children, ¹⁷ and say, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.' ¹⁸ "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon!' ¹⁹ "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds." ²⁰ Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. ²¹ "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² "Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. ²³ "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. ²⁴ "Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you." ²⁵ At that time Jesus answered and said, "I praise Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent and didst reveal them to babes. ²⁶ "Yes, Father, for thus it was well-pleasing in Thy sight. ²⁷ "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son, except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father, except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. ²⁸ "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. ³⁰ "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light."

Commentary: Torah and Yeshua

Torah is compared to five things: water (Isaiah 55:1) that gives life, wine (Proverbs 9:5) that brings joy, honey & milk (Song of Solomon 4:11) that taste good are nourishing for growth, and oil (SS 1:3) that brings radiant health.

The deeds (*mitzvot*) of the Torah are Biblically divided into three categories: the most intuitive being judgments (*mishpatim*) – moral and ethical instruction, next ordinances (*edot*) – rituals and festivals showing spiritual truths, and the least obvious being statutes (*hukim*) – deeds that bind us closer to God.

We speak of Yeshua as “the Living Torah”, “the Word become flesh” (John 1:14). Moses is speaking on the last day of his life. He is speaking of the Torah, and Paul uses his statements to refer to Yeshua.

Deuteronomy 30:11-14

“For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’ Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’ But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.”

Romans 10:6-10 (from last week)

But the righteousness based on faith speaks thus, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Messiah down), or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Messiah up from the dead).” But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” -- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Yeshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

The commandment (*mitzvah*) – the all-inclusive one, that we should love Yahweh our God with all our heart – Moses said that it was not in heaven, out of reach, that we needed someone to go up and get it for us. Paul said that the Word was near us: we did not need someone to go to heaven to bring Messiah down for us.

Moses said that the commandment was not beyond the sea, that we needed someone to cross over and get it for us, because the Word was very near us – in our mouth and in our heart, that we may observe it. Paul said that we did not need anyone to go to the abyss to bring Messiah up from the dead, because the Word was near us – in our mouth and in our heart, that we should confess with our mouth and believe in our heart.

We, who are of the faith, are not under the law of sin and death, that is – “The soul that sins, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4). Yeshua paid the penalty for all of our transgressions: however, that does not make us free to willfully transgress. Rather, it leads us to fulfill Torah for the love of God. Keeping the judgments, ordinances, and statutes is God’s instruction (Torah) of how to love God and neighbor.

If we seek righteousness, acceptable to God, by trying to keep commandments, then we are under a curse, because of our failures (Galatians 3:10-11).

If we seek righteousness by some kind of supposed faith that does not produce works of righteousness, then we do not have any real faith (James 2:17, 26).

If our sins have been placed upon Yeshua, and His faith has been given to us (Ephesians 2:8), then we – through love – seek to serve and please Him, growing in grace and knowledge of Him (2 Peter 3:18). We have been saved from sin in order to fulfill Torah (Ephesians 2:10).

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; (we are) justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Messiah Yeshua; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, . . . that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Yeshua. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law . . . Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law” (Romans 3:23-31).

Once these things are understood from Scripture, they become obvious throughout, and no one should be able to deceive us into thinking otherwise.

Working to achieve right standing before God is not only hard; it is impossible.

Rabbinic Judaism has created a very difficult way that goes beyond Torah. It is said that one must be rich to be a Jew, and that may be represented by their dietary requirements of rabbinic certification of foods. Yeshua did not only refute rabbinic *kashrut* rules, He forbade even recognizing men by titles such as “Rabbi” (Matthew 23:5-12). He did not deny Torah in any way.

Plucking and eating grain on the Sabbath (Luke 6:1) is not a Torah violation; it would violate Torah to harvest on the Sabbath for sale or storage.

Ritual hand washing before eating (Matthew 15:20) is a rabbinic requirement, not Torah.

Forbidding meats of which *kosher* slaughter is not certified (1 Corinthians 10:25) is a rabbinic rule, not Torah.

Catholicism has created an uncertain way of weighing one’s works. Penance by others might bring deliverance for one suffering in purgatory. Yeshua paid our price: it’s settled!

Walking with God is not hard. “My yoke is easy, my burden is light” (Matthew 11:30). It is the way of blessing and peace. When we fall, we have an advocate (1 John 2:1), and we will be lifted up (Psalm 37:23-24). There is promised provision for everything we need to serve God (John 14:13). Acting “in Yeshua’s Name” means acting in Yeshua’s stead, inferring the doing of God’s work.

“The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him” (1 John 2:4-5).

As David said (Psalm 144:15), “How blessed are the people whose God is Yahweh!”

“For such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off. The steps of a good man are ordered by Yahweh: and he delights in His way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: Yahweh upholds him with His hand” (Psalm 37:22-24).

The Torah portion goes on to tell us (V.31:3) that “*It is Yahweh your God who will cross ahead of you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Yeshua (Joshua) is the one who will cross ahead of you, just as Yahweh has spoken.*” (V.8) “*He will not fail you or forsake you.*” We are responsible to go after righteousness in this life, following Yeshua; God has promised victory! Thus we read “*Blesses are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied*” (Matthew 5:6).

Then (v.10) God speaks about the Feast of Tabernacles. Is this a completely unrelated subject?

The seven-day Feast of Tabernacles represents the downfall of the nations, culminating in Yeshua’s reign on the Earth. On the Eighth Day, the enemies will be entirely destroyed, and we will enter the Promised Land! Today’s portion is all about overcoming our spiritual enemies, and going into the Land of righteousness.

So, David begins the accompanying Psalm 144 with *“Blessed be Yahweh, my rock, Who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle; my lovingkindness and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer”*.

And Yeshua speaks (Matthew 11:10) of John the baptizer, who will lead the way: *“This is the one about whom it is written, (Malachi 3:1) ‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.’”* As this messenger led the way when Yeshua came as the suffering servant of Isaiah 53, so the messenger will be seen again when Yeshua returns to reign as King (Matthew 17:10).

Reader 1 Amen* ¹⁴ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold, your days **(they) are drawing near** to die; call Joshua, and present yourselves at the tent of meeting, that I may commission him." So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the tent of meeting. ¹⁵ And Yahweh appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood at the doorway of the tent. ¹⁶ And Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers; and this people will arise and play the harlot with the strange gods of the land, into the midst of which they are going, and will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them. ¹⁷ "Then My anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide My face from them, and they shall be consumed, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so that they will say in that day, 'Is it not because our God is not among us that these evils have come upon us?' ¹⁸ "But I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they will do, for they will turn to other gods.

Reader 2 Amen* ¹⁹ "Now therefore, write this song for yourselves, and teach it to the sons of Israel; put it on their lips, in order that this song may be a witness for Me against the sons of Israel. ²⁰ "For when I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn Me and break My covenant. ²¹ "Then it shall come about, when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify before them as a witness (for it shall not be forgotten from the lips of their descendants); for I know their intent which they are developing today, before I have brought them into the land which I swore." ²² So Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the sons of Israel.

Reader 3 Amen* ²³ Then He commissioned Joshua the son of Nun, and said, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the sons of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I will be with you." ²⁴ And it came about, when Moses finished writing the words of this law in a book until they were complete, ²⁵ that Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, saying, ²⁶ "Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your God, that it may remain there as a witness against you. ²⁷ "For I know your rebellion and your stubbornness; behold, while I am still alive with you today, you have been rebellious against Yahweh; how much more, then, after my death? ²⁸ "Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call the heavens and the earth to witness against them. ²⁹ "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands." ³⁰ Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete:

Judges 2:1-15

¹ Now the angel of Yahweh came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you, ² and as for you, you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed Me; what is this you have done? ³ "Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'" ⁴ And it came about when the angel of Yahweh spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept. ⁵ So they named that place Bochim; and there they sacrificed to Yahweh. ⁶ When Joshua had dismissed the people, the sons of Israel went each to his inheritance to possess the land. ⁷ And the people served Yahweh all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of Yahweh which He had done for Israel. ⁸ Then Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Yahweh, died at the age of one hundred and ten. ⁹ And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰ And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know Yahweh, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. ¹¹ Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and served the Baals, ¹² and they forsook Yahweh, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked Yahweh to anger. ¹³ So they

forsook Yahweh and served Baal and the Ashtaroth. ¹⁴ And the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. ¹⁵ Wherever they went, the hand of Yahweh was against them for evil, as Yahweh had spoken and as Yahweh had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed.

Daniel 4:28-37

²⁸ “All this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king. ²⁹ Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?' ³¹ While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, ³² and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, and bestows it on whomever He wishes.' ³³ Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. ³⁴ But at the end of that period I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom endures from generation to generation. ³⁵ And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, 'What have You done?' ³⁶ At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me. ³⁷ Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride.”

Psalm 145 *A Psalm of Praise, of David.*

¹ I Will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever. ² Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever. ³ Great is Yahweh, and highly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable. ⁴ One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts. ⁵ On the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wonderful works, I will meditate. ⁶ And men shall speak of the power of Your awesome acts; and I will tell of Your greatness. ⁷ They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your abundant goodness, and shall shout joyfully of Your righteousness. ⁸ Yahweh is gracious and merciful; slow to anger and great in lovingkindness. ⁹ Yahweh is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works. ¹⁰ All Your works shall give thanks to You, O Yahweh, and Your godly ones shall bless You. ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, and talk of Your power; ¹² to make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts, and the glory of the majesty of Your kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations. ¹⁴ Yahweh sustains all who fall, and raises up all who are bowed down. ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due time. ¹⁶ You open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing. ¹⁷ Yahweh is righteous in all His ways, and kind in all His deeds. ¹⁸ Yahweh is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth. ¹⁹ He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them. ²⁰ Yahweh keeps all who love Him; but all the wicked, He will destroy. ²¹ My mouth will speak the praise of Yahweh; and all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever.

John 12:35 – 14:26

³⁵ Yeshua therefore said to them, “For a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light.” These things Yeshua spoke, and He departed and hid Himself from them. ³⁷ But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke (*Isaiah 53:1*), “Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of Yahweh been revealed?” ³⁹ For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again (*Isaiah 6:10*), ⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes, and He hardened their heart; lest they see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and be converted, and I heal them.” ⁴¹ These things Isaiah said, because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him. ⁴²

Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God. ⁴⁴ And Yeshua cried out and said, "He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me. ⁴⁵ And he who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me. ⁴⁶ I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. ⁴⁷ And if anyone hears My sayings, and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. ⁴⁸ He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. ⁴⁹ For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak. ⁵⁰ And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

13:¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, Yeshua knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. ² And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, ³ Yeshua, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God, and was going back to God, ⁴ rose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself about. ⁵ Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. ⁶ And so He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?" ⁷ Yeshua answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you shall understand hereafter." ⁸ Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Yeshua answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." ¹⁰ Yeshua said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." ¹¹ For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean." ¹² And so when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master; neither is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. ¹⁸ I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.' ¹⁹ From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He. ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me." ²¹ When Yeshua had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me." ²² The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking. ²³ There was reclining on Yeshua's breast one of His disciples, whom Yeshua loved. ²⁴ Simon Peter therefore gestured to him, and said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking." ²⁵ He, leaning back thus on Yeshua's breast, said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" ²⁶ Yeshua therefore answered, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷ And after the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Yeshua therefore said to him, "What you do, do quickly." ²⁸ Now no one of those reclining at the table knew for what purpose He had said this to him. ²⁹ For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Yeshua was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast"; or else, that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ And so after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night. ³¹ When therefore he had gone out, Yeshua said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; ³² if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately. ³³ Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You shall seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, I now say to you also, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." ³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Yeshua answered, "Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow later." ³⁷ Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You." ³⁸ Yeshua answered, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a cock shall not crow, until you deny Me three times."

14:¹ Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may

be also. ⁴ And you know the way where I am going.” ⁵ Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” ⁶ Yeshua said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. ⁷ If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.” ⁸ Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹ Yeshua said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves. ¹² Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father. ¹³ And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. ¹⁵ If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷ that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. ²⁰ In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him.” ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³ Yeshua answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him. ²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. ²⁵ These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

Commentary:

Note: In today's news, many Jewish leaders are condemning the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, even asking the Pope to proclaim that the Jews did not kill Jesus.

Now, we believe that Yeshua gave up His life willingly, because of our sins.

However, Stephen said that the Jews killed Yeshua (Acts 7:52), and Paul said so (1 Thessalonians 7:52). And, another ancient Jewish writing, the Talmud which these Jews of today claim to accept, says so!
“Yeshua the Nazarean . . . was hanged on the eve of Passover” (Sanhedrin 43a).

We are nearing the end of the Torah cycle, Moses is about to die (though he is not weak or sick) and this is the last of the 613 commandments: (v.19) *“Write this song for yourselves, and teach it to the sons of Israel; put it on their lips”*. This song is to be *“a witness”* for Yahweh. [Next week's portion will be the song.]

Though the Pharaoh of Egypt had ordered all of the sons of Israel to be killed at birth (Exodus 3:10), Moses was secreted away and grew up in Egypt: he lived to fulfill God's plan of delivering Israel.

Though King Herod had ordered all of the male children around Bethlehem to be killed (Matthew 2:16-18), Yeshua was secreted away to Egypt: He lived to fulfill God's plan of redemption.

As God called Moses out of Egypt, so He also called Yeshua out of Egypt: *“Out of Egypt have I called My Son”* (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15).

Through Moses, God sent plagues upon the Egyptians (hail, water turning to blood, darkness), warning of the imminent judgment, unless they were under the blood of a Passover lamb.

Through Yeshua, God will send plagues upon the world (hail, water turning to blood, darkness), warning of imminent judgment, unless they are covered by the blood of Yeshua – the Passover Lamb of God.

Moses

In today's portion, we see that Moses is about to leave the earth. He is foretelling that, after his death, Israel will be disobedient, and will face the curses of the past few chapters. Israel actually was obedient until the death of Joshua, who had been directly instructed by Moses to lead the people.

(V.16-17) *“Yahweh said to Moses, ‘Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers; and this people will arise and play the harlot with the strange gods of the land, into the midst of which they are going, and will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them. Then My anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide My face from them, and they shall be consumed, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them’.”*

In **Judges** we find that, when Joshua died at one-hundred-ten, the following generation forsook Yahweh and followed the ways of the surrounding people. So Yahweh's anger burned against them.

In a thousand-year period, the Temple of God was destroyed twice. Since then, there have been almost two-thousand years of destruction upon Israel. There have been crusades, holocaust, and pogroms up to the present day.

In **Daniel** we read of King Nebuchadnezzar: he exalted himself as powerful and glorious, until Yahweh suddenly made him mad. He became as an animal in the wild. Then Yahweh gave him a sane mind, and before all the people he exalted the God of Heaven.

Yeshua

When Yeshua was about to leave the earth, He foretold that, after His ascension, the people would be disobedient, and face the curses previously pronounced. The disciples were actually relatively obedient until the death of the Apostles, who had been directly instructed by Yeshua.

John records Yeshua's words: while He was with men, they were admonished to follow Him – the Light. Upon His leaving the earth, the Apostles led until their deaths. The disciples then were misled into idolatry.

Paul said, *“I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them”* (Acts 20:29-30).

So today, we are descended from those who went astray. Churches look to “ancient fathers” for truth – fathers of generations after the Apostles, fathers who were already idolatrous.

But, God has graciously given some of us a desire to return to Him – to repent (*“The goodness of God leads us to repentance”* – Romans 2:4). God left us a song for a witness.

When we are confessing to God and asking forgiveness, do we realize that we need deliverance from doing those things that caused Yeshua's suffering? We are not just “pardoned” without consequence to anyone. Even though His suffering may be seen as past, it was for the sins we commit now! Therefore, to love Yahweh with all of our heart means to learn to forsake sin.

Yeshua washed His disciples' feet, because though they were redeemed, they committed daily sins, for which they required daily cleansing. We have been cleansed by Yeshua, but our daily walk in God's instruction – our *halacha* – needs daily cleansing and correction.

Yeshua said, “Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up!” (John 2:19-21). While He was speaking of the temple of His own body, we see another fulfillment – the resurrection of the stone Temple that represented the heavenly one. Yeshua was raised three days after His burial (Wednesday afternoon to

Sabbath afternoon, not Friday afternoon to Sunday morning); The Temple of the Holy One at Jerusalem will be raised three-thousand years after it was destroyed (We are not trying to predict an exact year, but count roughly full millenniums). There will be a return of Israel to their land, as promised. And there will be a return to God of His people, when He grants our final redemption.

While people tend to believe in happenstance, HaAzinu foretells the history of Israel, thereby testifying to God's providence – the people's fate is always a consequence of their behavior, the consequence being God's reward and punishment.

“Your days are drawing near (you will not be around to lead); write this prophetic song for a witness, and call upon heaven and earth to comply (with reward and punishment - whether heaven will give rains in due time, or earth will produce bountiful harvest).”

(Deuteronomy 31:26) The Torah scroll either lay beside the Stone Tablets within the Ark, or on a board projecting from the side of the Ark.

Yeshua engraved the Ten Words in stone, and He is the Living Torah. He said, *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him. . . .If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him”* (John 14:21-23).

“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:3).

He Who has begun a good work in us (repentance), will continue it until the Day of Messiah Yeshua – the day of our final redemption (Philippians 1:6).

Reader 1 Amen* ¹ "Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. ² Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the droplets on the fresh grass and as the showers on the herb. ³ For I proclaim the name of Yahweh; ascribe greatness to our God! ⁴ The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He. ⁵ They have acted corruptly toward Him, they are not His children, because of their defect; but are a perverse and crooked generation. ⁶ Do you thus repay Yahweh, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you. ⁷ Remember the days of old, consider the years of all generations. Ask your father, and he will inform you, your elders, and they will tell you.

Reader 2 Amen* ⁸ "When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel. ⁹ For Yahweh's portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance. ¹⁰ He found him in a desert land, and in the howling waste of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye. ¹¹ Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. ¹² Yahweh alone guided him, and there was no foreign god with him. ¹³ He made him ride on the high places of the earth, and he ate the produce of the field; and He made him suck honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock, ¹⁴ curds of cows, and milk of the flock, with fat of lambs, and rams, the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the finest of the wheat-- and of the blood of grapes you drank wine.

Reader 3 Amen* ¹⁵ "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked-- you are grown fat, thick, and sleek-- then he forsook God who made him, and scorned the Rock of his salvation. ¹⁶ They made Him jealous with strange gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. ¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons who were not God, to gods whom they have not known, new gods who came lately, whom your fathers did not dread. ¹⁸ You neglected the Rock who begot you, and forgot the God who gave you birth. ¹⁹ And Yahweh saw this, and spurned them Because of the provocation of His sons and daughters. ²⁰ Then He said, 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be; for they are a perverse generation, sons in whom is no faithfulness. ²¹ They have made Me jealous with what is not God; they have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation, ²² for a fire is kindled in My anger, and burns to the lowest part of Sheol, and consumes the earth with its yield, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains.

Reader 4 Amen* ²³ 'I will heap misfortunes on them; I will use My arrows on them. ²⁴ They shall be wasted by famine, and consumed by plague and bitter destruction; and the teeth of beasts I will send upon them, with the venom of crawling things of the dust. ²⁵ Outside the sword shall bereave, and inside terror-- both young man and virgin, the nursling with the man of gray hair. ²⁶ I would have said, "I will cut them to pieces, I will remove the memory of them from men," ²⁷ had I not feared the provocation by the enemy, lest their adversaries should misjudge, lest they should say, "Our hand is triumphant, and Yahweh has not done all this." ²⁸ For they are a nation lacking in counsel, and there is no understanding in them. ²⁹ Would that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would discern their future!

Reader 5 Amen* ³⁰ "How could one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and Yahweh had given them up? ³¹ Indeed their rock is not like our Rock, even our enemies themselves judge this. ³² For their vine is from the vine of Sodom, and from the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of poison, their clusters, bitter. ³³ Their wine is the venom of serpents, and the deadly poison of cobras. ³⁴ 'Is it not laid up in store with Me, Sealed up in My treasuries? ³⁵ Vengeance is Mine, and retribution, in due time their foot will slip; for the day of their calamity is near, and the impending things are hastening upon them.' ³⁶ For Yahweh will vindicate His people, and will have compassion on His servants; when He sees that their strength is gone, and there is none remaining, bond or free.

Reader 6 Amen* ³⁷ And He will say, 'Where are their gods, the rock in which they sought refuge? ³⁸ Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their libation? Let them rise up and help you, let them

be your hiding place!³⁹ See now that I, I am He, and there is no god besides Me; it is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded, and it is I who heal; and there is no one who can deliver from My hand.⁴⁰ Indeed, I lift up My hand to heaven, and say, as I live forever,⁴¹ if I sharpen My flashing sword, and My hand takes hold on justice, I will render vengeance on My adversaries, and I will repay those who hate Me.⁴² I will make My arrows drunk with blood, and My sword shall devour flesh, with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the long-haired leaders of the enemy.⁴³ Rejoice, O nations, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance on His adversaries, and will atone for His land and His people."

Reader 7 Amen*⁴⁴ Then Moses came and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people, he, with Joshua the son of Nun.⁴⁵ When Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel,⁴⁶ he said to them, "Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, even all the words of this law.⁴⁷ "For it is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life. And by this word you shall prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess."⁴⁸ And Yahweh spoke to Moses that very same day, saying,⁴⁹ "Go up to this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab opposite Jericho, and look at the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the sons of Israel for a possession.⁵⁰ Then die on the mountain where you ascend, and be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people,⁵¹ because you broke faith with Me in the midst of the sons of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, because you did not treat Me as holy in the midst of the sons of Israel.⁵² For you shall see the land at a distance, but you shall not go there, into the land which I am giving the sons of Israel."

Ezekiel 17:22-24

²² Thus says Yahweh God, "I shall also take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and set it out; I shall pluck from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I shall plant it on a high and lofty mountain.²³ On the high mountain of Israel I shall plant it, that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit, and become a stately cedar. And birds of every kind will nest under it; they will nest in the shade of its branches.²⁴ And all the trees of the field will know that I am Yahweh; I bring down the high tree, exalt the low tree, dry up the green tree, and make the dry tree flourish. I am Yahweh; I have spoken, and I will perform it."

Psalms 146

¹ Praise Yahweh! Praise Yahweh, O my soul!² I will praise Yahweh while I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.³ Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.⁴ His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.⁵ How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in Yahweh his God;⁶ Who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; Who keeps faith forever;⁷ Who executes justice for the oppressed; Who gives food to the hungry. Yahweh sets the prisoners free.⁸ Yahweh opens the eyes of the blind; Yahweh raises up those who are bowed down; Yahweh loves the righteous;⁹ Yahweh protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow; but He thwarts the way of the wicked.¹⁰ Yahweh will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise Yahweh!

John 17:1-26

¹ These things Yeshua spoke; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee,² even as You gave Him authority over all mankind, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.³ "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Yeshua the Messiah whom You have sent.⁴ "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.⁵ "And now, You glorify Me together with Yourself, Father, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

⁶ "I made Your name known to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; Yours they were, and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.⁷ "Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You;⁸ for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them, and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me.⁹ "I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours;¹⁰ and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.

¹¹ "And I am no more in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one, even as We are. ¹² "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³ "But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy made full in themselves. ¹⁴ "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

¹⁷ "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. ¹⁸ "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. ²⁰ "I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² "And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; ²³ I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You loved Me.

²⁴ "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ "O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; ²⁶ and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

Commentary:

We have many ways of "reaching people". In the Scriptures, we see different methods employed for people in different positions.

Yeshua said to a leader and teacher of the Torah, "You must be born again" (John 3:7). Then He proceeded to explain what the teacher should have already understood.

Yeshua said to a Samaritan woman at a well, "If you had asked of Me, I would have given you living water" (John 4:10). Then He proceeded with an explanation where others had left her in confusion.

Paul told a gentile prison-master, "Trust in the Master – Messiah Yeshua, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Now here God is giving us a method in song for future generations. Let us seriously consider the lesson. The song shows that past, present, and future are in total harmony, and clarify one another.

| | |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Ha-A-zi-nu ha-sha-ma-im v'a-da-be-rah</i> | <i>v'tish-ma cha-a-retz im-rey-fi</i> |
| <i>Ya-rof cha-ma-tar liq-chiy</i> | <i>ti-zul cha-tal im-ra-tiy</i> |
| <i>"Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak;</i> | <i>and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.</i> |
| <i>Let my teaching drop as the rain,</i> | <i>my speech distill as the dew."</i> |

As an introduction: this song shall reach the heavens, and distill upon future generations.

We start with recognizing who God is:

(V.3-4) "For I proclaim the name Yahweh; ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He."

God's name is to be proclaimed, with its great significance. His judgment is exact and fair, even if He sometimes waits to execute it. We should never think that we can disobey Him with impunity.

Then we recognize our own position – foolish sinners:

(V.5-6) *“They have acted corruptly toward Him, they are not His children, because of their defect; but are a perverse and crooked generation. Do you thus repay Yahweh, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you.”*

By acting contrary to His instruction, we proclaim to all that we are not His children. If we have no fruit of faith in our lives, then we are not His children.

“Neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: ‘through Isaac your descendants will be named.’ That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants” (Romans 9:7-8).

Next we are reminded of our history:

(V.7-8) *“Remember the days of old, consider the years of all generations. Ask your father, and he will inform you, your elders, and they will tell you. When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel.”* Reflect upon the past; ask of those who know historical truths.

The rest of the song covers historical themes:

God created the world in order for it to glorify Him.

He chose Israel to take His Word to the nations.

He gave Israel a land, from whence they could lead the world, dwelling in peace and prosperity.

Israel rebelled, and was exiled from the land.

Israel will be redeemed.

God's enemies destroyed.

We must understand how this all applies to us: God's covenant to Abraham applies to all believers, including gentiles who through faith obtain the promises. His final judgment applies to all who are faithless, including those who can trace their genealogy to Abraham.

Some of the problem today is misunderstanding that is promoted through popular translations of the Bible. We are not under some “new covenant” that replaces the Torah; we are living under a renewed application of the Abrahamic Covenant – having it applied to hearts by the Holy Spirit. God is granting repentance and faith – repentance means turning from sin to God, and faith gives us the ability to walk with God.

(V.21-24) God has promised His bountiful provision for whatever we do in His name – His work (John 14:13). But, if we use God's provision amiss, He will remove it.

(V.26-30) Yahweh would have said that He would destroy Israel, but then their enemies would have claimed triumph over their God. Rather than seeing God using Israel as an example, their enemies would have ascribed their defeat to the lack of a powerful god. Yahweh showed mercy by scattering them among the nations, so that not all would be under attempted annihilation at one time.

(V.31-34) God's enemies should realize that their rock is not like our Rock – Yahweh. But they are proud of their accomplishments and turn their hearts to pleasure. Their ‘grapes’ are unjust gain and haughty rule that harm society, and they are deserving of punishment.

(V.35) *“Vengeance is Mine, and retribution; in due time their foot will slip, for the day of their calamity is near, and the impending things are hastening upon them.”*

(V.36) In the end, it will be as in Egypt: a remnant will be redeemed and will enter the Promised Land. All will see God's glory, that He accomplishes the work of salvation. There is no merit in us, nothing deserving of the Covenant promises: it is all of grace – unmerited favor.

Moses warned (v.46): *“This is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life.”*

Then God told Moses to ascend a mountain, where he could see the Promised Land at a distance, and that he would then die on that mountain. The reason: Moses failed to treat God as holy before the people, at the waters of Meribah.

Yeshua likewise ascended a mountain – probably the Mount of Olives, where one would have a straight path of vision to the Holy of Holies. He ascended carrying a cross, and died there. Three-plus-forty days later, He ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives.

Psalm 146

The third verse of *HaAzinu* says, “I proclaim the name Yahweh! In ten verses of the Psalm, the name Yahweh is used eleven times.

The Psalm goes on to praise Yahweh as creator of all, the One who executes justice, and the One who reigns forever. It tells how He thwarts the way of the wicked, and raises up His own.

This Psalm is like a condensed version of *HaAzinu*!

John 17

In this chapter, Yeshua speaks extensively of glorifying the Holy Father. All that Yeshua did on earth was to glorify the Father.

Yeshua says that He was sent to make known the Father’s Name to believers – “His own”. He then asks that they may be made holy (sanctified), and that they may dwell with Him in the Promised Land.

Reader 1 Amen* ¹ Now this is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the sons of Israel before his death. ² And he said, "Yahweh came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones; at His right hand there was flashing lightning for them. ³ Indeed, He loves the people; all Your holy ones are in Your hand, and they followed in Your steps; everyone receives of Your words: ⁴ 'The Torah with which Moses charged us is a heritage for the assembly of Jacob.' ⁵ And He was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people were gathered, the tribes of Israel together."

Reader 2 Amen* ⁶ "May Reuben live and not die, nor his men be few." ⁷ And this regarding Judah; so he said, "Hear, O Yahweh, the voice of Judah, and bring him to his people. With his hands he contended for them; and may You be a help against his adversaries." ⁸ And of Levi he said, "Let Your Thummim and Your Urim belong to Your godly man, whom You proved at Massah, with whom You contended at the waters of Meribah; ⁹ who said of his father and his mother, 'I did not consider them'; and he did not acknowledge his brothers, nor did he regard his own sons, for they observed Your word, and kept Your covenant. ¹⁰ "They shall teach Your ordinances to Jacob, and Your law to Israel. They shall put incense before You, and whole burnt offerings on Your altar. ¹¹ "O Yahweh, bless his substance, and accept the work of his hands; shatter the loins of those who rise up against him, and those who hate him, so that they may not rise again."

Reader 3 Amen* ¹² Of Benjamin he said, "May the beloved of Yahweh dwell in security by Him, Who shields him all the day, and he dwells between His shoulders." ¹³ And of Joseph he said, "Blessed of Yahweh be his land, with the choice things of heaven, with the dew, and from the deep lying beneath, ¹⁴ and with the choice yield of the sun, and with the choice produce of the months.

Reader 4 Amen* ¹⁵ "And with the best things of the ancient mountains, and with the choice things of the everlasting hills, ¹⁶ and with the choice things of the earth and its fulness, and the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let it come to the head of Joseph, and to the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers. ¹⁷ "As the first-born of his ox, majesty is his, and his horns are the horns of the wild ox; with them he shall push the peoples, all at once, to the ends of the earth. And those are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and those are the thousands of Manasseh."

Reader 5 Amen* ¹⁸ And of Zebulun he said, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going forth, and, Issachar, in your tents. ¹⁹ "They shall call peoples to the mountain; there they shall offer righteous sacrifices; for they shall draw out the abundance of the seas, and the hidden treasures of the sand." ²⁰ And of Gad he said, "Blessed is the one who enlarges Gad; he lies down as a lion, and tears the arm, also the crown of the head. ²¹ "Then he provided the first part for himself, for there the ruler's portion was reserved; and he came with the leaders of the people; he executed the justice of Yahweh, and His ordinances with Israel." ²² And of Dan he said, "Dan is a lion's whelp, that leaps forth from Bashan."

Reader 6 Amen* ²³ And of Naphtali he said, "O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and full of the blessing of Yahweh, take possession of the sea and the south." ²⁴ And of Asher he said, "More blessed than sons is Asher; may he be favored by his brothers, and may he dip his foot in oil. ²⁵ "Your locks shall be iron and bronze, and according to your days, so shall your leisurely walk be.

Reader 7 Amen* ²⁶ "There is none like the God of Jeshurun, Who rides the heavens to your help, and through the skies in His majesty. ²⁷ "The eternal God is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He drove out the enemy from before you, and said, 'Destroy!' ²⁸ "So Israel dwells in security, the fountain of Jacob secluded, in a land of grain and new wine; His heavens also drop down dew. ²⁹ "Blessed are you, O Israel; who is like you, a people saved by Yahweh, Who is the shield of your help, and the sword of your majesty! So your enemies shall cringe before you, and you shall tread upon their high places."

[No Prophet]

Psalm 147

¹ Praise Yahweh! For it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant and praise is becoming. ² Yahweh builds up Jerusalem; He gathers the outcasts of Israel. ³ He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds. ⁴ He counts the number of the stars; He gives names to all of them. ⁵ Great is our Lord, and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite. ⁶ Yahweh supports the afflicted; He brings down the wicked to the ground. ⁷ Sing to Yahweh with thanksgiving; sing praises to our God on the lyre, ⁸ Who covers the heavens with clouds, Who provides rain for the earth, Who makes grass to grow on the mountains. ⁹ He gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens which cry. ¹⁰ He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He does not take pleasure in the legs of a man. ¹¹ Yahweh favors those who fear Him, those who wait for His lovingkindness. ¹² Praise Yahweh, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! ¹³ For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your sons within you. ¹⁴ He makes peace in your borders; He satisfies you with the finest of the wheat. ¹⁵ He sends forth His command to the earth; His word runs very swiftly. ¹⁶ He gives snow like wool; He scatters the frost like ashes. ¹⁷ He casts forth His ice as fragments; who can stand before His cold? ¹⁸ He sends forth His word and melts them; He causes His wind to blow and the waters to flow. ¹⁹ He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. ²⁰ He has not dealt thus with any nation; and as for His ordinances, they have not known them. Praise Yahweh!

Matthew 19:25 – 20:16

²⁵ And when the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁶ And looking upon them Yeshua said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." ²⁷ Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?" ²⁸ And Yeshua said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life. ³⁰ "But many who are first will be last; and the last, first.

20: ¹ "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² "And when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ "And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place; ⁴ and to those he said, 'You too go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And so they went. ⁵ "Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing. ⁶ "And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing; and he said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day long?' ⁷ "They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into the vineyard.' ⁸ "And when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last group to the first.' ⁹ "And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. ¹⁰ "And when those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; and they also received each one a denarius. ¹¹ "And when they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.' ¹³ "But he answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ "Take what is yours and go your way, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. ¹⁵ 'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ "Thus the last shall be first, and the first last."

Commentary:

Jacob blessed the tribes at the beginning of their existence. Now Moses is blessing them at the beginning of their life in the Promised Land. It is important to note: each tribe is blessed according to its national responsibilities. This theme will be basic throughout this study.

(V.1) Moses is called “*the man of God*”: these blessings were prophetic, from God. Moses had just told the people that he was about to die, because of his sin at Meribah. Though his sin had been a result of their provocation, yet Moses now blesses them wholeheartedly.

(V.2) “*Having dawned on them from Seir*” – Abram rescued Lot from Seir; and “*having shone forth from Mount Paran*” – he dwelt in Paran, “*Yahweh came from Sinai . . . and at His right hand there was flashing lightning for them*” – the giving of the Torah with a celestial display.

(V.3-4) Yahweh loved His people: all the holy ones, who are in His Hand, and follow Him – they receive His Words, which were given to the *qahal* / congregation of Israel.

This is one of the places where we see the word *qahal* in the Torah. This word is translated into English as congregation or assembly. It is translated into Greek as *sunagoge* and *ekklesia*; from thence it is translated into English as synagogue or church (among other words).

God’s Word was given to His church at Pentecost – 3300 years ago at Mt. Sinai. (In about 2½ months, at *Hag Shavuot* / the Feast of Pentecost, we will study this in detail.) When Yeshua said that He would build-up His church (Matthew 16:18), it had been in existence for more than 1300 years!

The Torah was the heritage of His church – Yahweh’s Word for them to preserve for all generations.

(V.6) **Reuben** was the first to receive his portion of the Land, and so was blessed first. (This is the order by which the blessings were given.) Reuben had been chastised for violating the bed of Bilhad (Genesis 35:22), and would be the first tribe to be exiled (Deuteronomy 29:27, Leviticus 26:38). Reuben was told that he would be granted to live (in this world) and not die (in the world to come).

(V.7) **Judah** would produce the Davidic royal line, and lead Israel in wars. He was slated for victory in war, and his prayers to be answered by Yahweh in whom he trusted.

Simeon was omitted, perhaps because their violence in the affair of Shechem (Genesis 49:5), and because of their idolatry committed at Baal of Peor (Numbers 25:3); or perhaps because Simeon did not have a contiguous territory of its own, but was scattered throughout Israel, and would thus share in the blessings of the others.

(V.8-11) **Levi** was praised for loyalty and bravery, and blessed as teachers and servants at the altar. The Urim and Tummim were placed upon a Levite – Aaron, the “*devout one*”. Though the Levites were aggressive in the violent affair of Shechem, they used that trait in the Wilderness to avoid the pitfalls that befell the other tribes: They did not complain with the others in the Wilderness (Exodus 17:1, Numbers 14:22) Without regard for family ties, they slew those who worshipped the golden calf (Exodus 32:27). Levites were slated for prosperity, in order to be free for ministering.

(V.12) **Benjamin** was the only one of the twelve born in the Holy Land. The Holy Temple was located in Benjamin’s portion of Jerusalem. The Divine Presence rested there.

(V.13-17) **Joseph** received a double blessing, through his sons Ephraim and Manasseh. “Blessed by Yahweh is his land”: Joseph’s territory was the most fertile. “The moon’s yield” may refer to crops that produce month-by-month, or crops that grow by night, such as cucumber and melon. “The horns of the wild ox” could refer unfortunately to the evil kings of the ten northern tribes, which sprang from Joseph.

(V.18-19) **Zebulun** and **Issachar** had a partnership. Zebulun would be engaged in maritime work (their banner is a sail boat), which would support Issachar's work in Torah study, teaching, and spiritual helps. Among Issachar's descendants were 200 heads of sanhedrins, whose halachic rulings determined when everyone would assemble at the Temple Mount for Yahweh's appointed times (referring to Rosh Hodesh sanctification). Zebulun gathered, from the sand of the sea, *chilazon* / sea snails from which a strand of the *tzitzit* / tassel of the prayer shawl must be dyed blue (Numbers 15:38).

(V.20-21) **Gad** received the largest territory: Yahweh was blessed as "*the One Who broadens Gad's territory.*" Since they had to defend the eastern flank of Israel, they were given strength like a lion. Moses's burial place, "*the lawgiver's plot*", was in their territory.

(V.22) **Dan** was to dwell at the western flank, on the Mediterranean Sea; a lion cub's strength was needed for defense there. Samson was a Danite.

(V.23) **Naphtali** received a rich territory, including the Sea of Kinneret / Galilee.

(V.24) **Asher** was a large tribe, blessed with children. Asher supplied the other tribes with its abundant oil.

(Psalm 147:4) Yahweh "*counts the number of the stars; He gives names to all of them.*" [The tribes are the stars of Joseph's dream (Genesis 37:9).] The remainder of today's Psalm relates to the blessings of today's Torah portion, such as praising Yahweh for prosperity and strength against enemies.

(Deut. 33:25-26) **All Israel** is fortunate, because Yahweh delivered them from sin! Here we need to remember that "*they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel*" (Romans 9), but we who believe are grafted into the remnant.

(Matthew 19) After hearing Yeshua's teaching, the disciples "*were very astonished and said, 'Then who can be saved?' And looking upon them Yeshua said to them, 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.' Then Peter answered and said to Him, 'Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?' And Yeshua said to them, 'Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life.'*"

Blessings:

While our blessings do not rise to the prophetic nature of Jacob's or Moses', there is much commonality.

Some say that the greater always blesses the lesser; therefore, we cannot bless God. However, God created us in order for us to be a blessing to Him. When we are walking with Him, using His provision not for our selfish reasons but for His work, then both we and these provisions are blessing Him.

Tefillah / prayer means connecting with God. Prayer is the communion whereby we walk with God. It is a way we bless our creator, and a way to stay mindful of our position before Him. "My House shall be called a house of prayer for all people" (Isaiah 56:7, Matthew 21:12).

When we begin a meal by blessing God with "*Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine,*" and "*. . . who brings forth bread from the earth,*" we are recognizing our creator who has given us His covenant (the fruit of the vine being the blood of the covenant), and our redeemer who is the bread of life that was brought forth from the earth (resurrected) to guarantee our resurrection. And all of this is given us for His glory – to bless Him.

Consider Adam (man): He was created at the end of day six. (He was the last of God's creation on day six – Genesis 1:24-31). He was made upright (Job 1:8, Psalm 19:13) to walk with God. He glowed with the

Glory of God – in Eden the attire is robes of light. He was given divine license to rule the world (Genesis 1:26). His first full day on earth was the Sabbath Day, the day set aside to worship the creator.

God created vegetation on day three (Genesis 1:11-13), but it remained dormant and undeveloped, not sprouting until the end of day six, when Adam came on the scene.

“Now no tree of the field was yet on the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth and there was no man to work the soil”

(Genesis 2:5).

So the sages teach that the world began with prayer. Until God and Adam communicated there was no fulfillment of Adam’s needs for survival and glorifying God.

God sanctified the Sabbath (set it apart from the other days, Genesis 2:3), and commanded man to sanctify the Sabbath (set it apart to God, Deuteronomy 5:12). One way that we sanctify the Sabbath is by candle lightings (Erev Shabbat and Havdallah); one way that we are to sanctify all things that we use is by prayer. When Adam placed another before God, he lost his glow. He covered himself with leaves to hide from God by looking like a tree that naturally did not glow. He was exiled from the Garden of Eden.

We look forward to ruling the world with Messiah Yeshua (1 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 5:10, 20:16, 22:5), when we shall glow with God’s glory (Matthew 17:2, Revelation 3:4-5). We are promised Paradise -- the Garden of Eden, on a renewed earth.

[The Hebrew Gan Eden is translated in the Greek Septuagint as Paradiso (Genesis 2:5): in

English Gan Eden is translated as Garden of Eden, and Paradiso as Paradise. Paradise in

Luke 23:43 & Revelation 2:7 refers to the Septuagint translation of Garden of Eden.]

But we must first be sanctified by God, and everything that we use for survival and glorifying God should be sanctified by the Word of God and by prayer (1 Timothy 4:5). Because *“The earth and its fullness belong to Yahweh”* (Psalm 24:1), one who derives pleasure from this world without the appropriate blessing is as if he derived illegal pleasure from a sacred object (one which belongs to the Temple).

Man can only rule if he acknowledges that he rules only by the grace of God. By being oblivious of God, man becomes a treacherous usurper of the throne; by surrendering and being grateful to God, he legitimizes his license to control.

Yeshua, as our example, ruled by surrender to the Father. Before eating bread, He blessed Yahweh – the bringer-forth of bread from the earth (Matthew 14:19 – He did not “bless the bread”, as some translations say).

Now, if we reconsider the twelve blessings: they were provisions to bless Yahweh; but if they were misused, they would bring upon the people the curses of previous chapters.

Vaya'al Moshe / Moses Ascended

Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Joshua 1:1-18 Psalms 148 – 150 Matthew 4:5-11

Commentary Y3-51

Adar 27, 5764 / Mar 20, 2004

Reader 1 Amen* ¹ Now Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And Yahweh showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, ² and all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, ³ and the Negev and the plain in the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.

Reader 2 Amen* ⁴ Then Yahweh said to him, "This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants'; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there." ⁵ So Moses the servant of Yahweh died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Yahweh. ⁶ And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day.

Reader 3 Amen* ⁷ Although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated. ⁸ So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses came to an end. ⁹ Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; and the sons of Israel listened to him and did as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

Reader 4 Amen* ¹⁰ Since then no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom Yahweh knew face to face, ¹¹ for all the signs and wonders which Yahweh sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land, ¹² and for all the mighty power and for all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

Joshua 1

Reader 5 Amen* ¹ Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of Yahweh that Yahweh spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, ² "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel. ³ "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. ⁴ "From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun, will be your territory. ⁵ "No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you.

Reader 6 Amen* ⁶ "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ "Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. ⁸ "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. ⁹ "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go." ¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which Yahweh your God is giving you, to possess it.'"

Reader 7 Amen* ¹² And to the Reubenites and to the Gadites and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, ¹³ "Remember the word which Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded you, saying, 'Yahweh your God gives you rest, and will give you this land.' ¹⁴ "Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle shall remain in the land which Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but you shall cross before your brothers in battle array, all your valiant warriors, and shall help them, ¹⁵ until Yahweh gives your brothers rest, as He gives you, and they also possess the land which Yahweh your God is giving them. Then you shall return to your own land, and possess that which Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise." ¹⁶ And they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷ "Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you; only may Yahweh

your God be with you, as He was with Moses. ¹⁸ "Anyone who rebels against your command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, shall be put to death; only be strong and courageous."

Psalm 148

¹ Praise Yahweh! Praise Yahweh from the heavens; praise Him in the heights! ² Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts! ³ Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all stars of light! ⁴ Praise Him, highest heavens, and the waters that are above the heavens! ⁵ Let them praise the name of Yahweh, for He commanded and they were created. ⁶ He has also established them forever and ever; He has made a decree which will not pass away. ⁷ Praise Yahweh from the earth, sea monsters and all deeps; ⁸ fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind, fulfilling His word; ⁹ mountains and all hills; fruit trees and all cedars; ¹⁰ beasts and all cattle; creeping things and winged fowl; ¹¹ kings of the earth and all peoples; princes and all judges of the earth; ¹² both young men and virgins; old men and children. ¹³ Let them praise the name of Yahweh, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above earth and heaven. ¹⁴ And He has lifted up a horn for His people, praise for all His godly ones; even for the sons of Israel, a people near to Him. Praise Yahweh!

Psalm 149

¹ Praise Yahweh! Sing to Yahweh a new song, and His praise in the congregation of the godly ones. ² Let Israel be glad in his Maker; let the sons of Zion rejoice in their King. ³ Let them praise His name with dancing; let them sing praises to Him with timbrel and lyre. ⁴ For Yahweh takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the afflicted ones with salvation. ⁵ Let the godly ones exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds. ⁶ Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, ⁷ to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishment on the peoples; ⁸ to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; ⁹ to execute on them the judgment written; this is an honor for all His godly ones. Praise Yahweh!

Psalm 150

¹ Praise Yahweh! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty expanse. ² Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness. ³ Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with harp and lyre. ⁴ Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe. ⁵ Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with resounding cymbals. ⁶ Let everything that has breath praise Yahweh. Praise Yahweh!

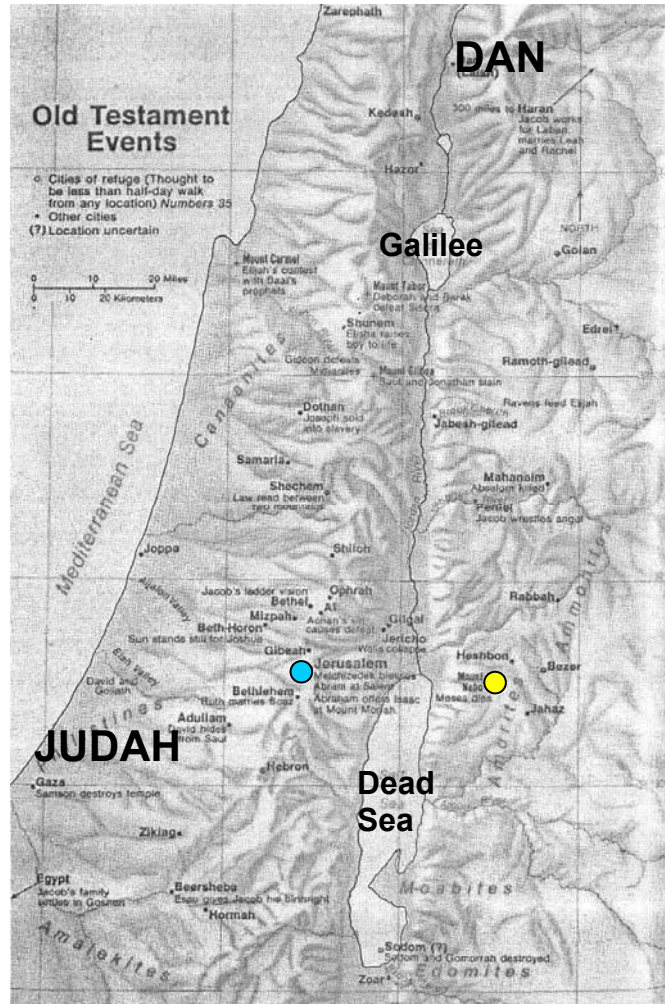
Matthew 4:5-11

⁵ Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Yeshua said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; ⁹ and he said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Yeshua said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

Commentary:

Deuteronomy 34

(V.1-2) From Mt. Nebo, Moses was shown the Promised Land, from Judah which stretched to the “last” (western) sea, to Dan about 100 miles north.



Jerusalem

MT. NEBO

God showed Moses the Land – as far as *ha'acharon hayam* / the last sea, or *ha'acharon hayom* / the last day. As a consecutive valid interpretation, this may be understood as God prophetically showing Moses all that would befall Israel, to the last day – the resurrection of the dead. God showed him all the way to Dan practicing idolatry (Judges 18:30), and Dan's descendant Samson delivering Israel from the Philistines.

Through Moses, God had introduced ordinances of the Tabernacle: God designed the worship services. Now Moses may have been shown Yeshua fulfilling the pictures, which God introduced through him. (Fulfilling them does not mean ending them: they remain valid pictures.) After Moses, God gave worship instruction through David; as we see in one of today's Psalms.

Psalm 149

(V.1) “*Sing to Yahweh a new song, and His praise in the congregation of the godly ones.*”

David was inspired of God to establish part of the Temple public worship services. He is here writing, in the Second Book of Spiritual Songs (Psalms 107-150), a new song; and he says to “*Sing to Yahweh a new song*”. (He does not say to make up a new song.) Then he says to sing this in the *qahal* – the synagogue/church. The Psalms were given for the public

worship services, and they often mention the Levitical choir and orchestra. (They are also to be sung privately, as we are instructed by Paul.)

(V.5) “*So Moses the servant of Yahweh died there*”: Moses was previously called “the man of God” (v.33:1); but here, for the first time, at his death, he is called “*servant of Yahweh*” – meaning one who lives totally for his owner. This may fit with Paul’s statement, “*To die is gain*” (Philippians 1:21).

(V.7, 10) Moses was neither sick nor weak, but he had to die before Israel could enter the Promised Land! There was never a prophet like Moses, with whom God spoke face to face, except the “*prophet like me*” (v.18:15) – Yeshua. And Yeshua had to die before the Israel of God could enter the Promised Land on a future renewed earth.

Acts 3:¹⁸ “*But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Messiah should suffer, He has thus fulfilled.*”¹⁹ *Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of Yahweh;*²⁰ *and that He may send Yeshua, the Messiah appointed for you,*²¹ *whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.*²² *Moses said, 'Yahweh your God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed in everything He says to you.*²³ *'And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'*²⁴ *And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days.”*

Let us consider some ways Moses typified Yeshua:

Moses and Yeshua both were secreted away to Egypt to avoid a part in the slaughter of children – satanic plans to stop the coming of Messiah. Both were “called out of Egypt” by God, to facilitate the redemption of Israel.

The plagues that were brought upon Egypt before Israel’s deliverance, will be brought upon the world in the last days.

Yeshua perfectly fulfilled the details and timing of the Passover Lamb.

Moses led the people from the Treasure City (Rameses), to Temporary Dwellings (Sukkot), then to Mouth of the Cave (Pihahiroth). Yeshua went from God’s treasure city (Jerusalem), to the temporary realm of the dead (Hades), then into the opening of the cave-tomb.

Moses said, at the shore of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:13), “*See Yeshua Yahweh!*”

On the third day, the people came up from the sea bed onto high ground. On the third day, Yeshua came up from the tomb.

As God removed the Egyptian chariot wheels (literally coverings), where Moses had been symbolically buried in the Red Sea and resurrected; so He removed the tomb covering (a stone wheel) where Yeshua had been buried and resurrected.

Both Moses and Yeshua gave Torah (instruction) to God’s people, to lead them to Messiah.

Fifty days after the Egypt Passover, the Torah was given at Mt. Sinai (tradition says in the seventy languages of men). Fifty days after the crucifixion Passover, the Holy Spirit empowered the Apostles at Jerusalem to proclaim the gospel (in the various languages of the people).

Moses said, “*This Passover is to be a memorial to you*”; Yeshua said of the Passover, “*Do this in remembrance of Me.*”

Joshua 1

After Moses led the people to the border, “*Yeshua*” (Joshua) brought the people into the Promised Land. “*The Torah is our tutor, to lead us to Messiah*” (Galatians 3:24); “*Messiah is the goal of the Torah*” (Romans 10:4).

Matthew 4

Yeshua stood at the pinnacle of the Holy Temple. This is the place where a priest stood to blow the shofar to announce, to all Israel, that a certain time had come: Sabbath, New Month, and etc. It was perhaps a couple of hundred feet to the ground below.

Satan said to Yeshua, “*Since you are the Son of God, throw yourself down*” – prove that you are the Son of God by putting your fate in the hands of angels, since they are charged with protecting the Son of God. Here we learn from Yeshua that we are not to so tempt God.

Then, as Moses stood on top of Mt. Nebo, from whence he could see all of the Promised Land, so Yeshua stood atop a high mountain, where Satan “*showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory*”. Satan offered all of these kingdoms, for Yeshua to worship him. But Yeshua came back with Torah: “*Begone, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only’*”

Psalms 148-149-150

Today, we often hear people sing “Halelluyah”, which means “Praise Yahweh.” We hear people singing “Praise the Name of the Lord”. But often, in doing this, they are not praising Yahweh, and often they are denying His Name, not only in faithlessness, but even with the words they are singing. We are to praise Yahweh for his attributes and works; but we aren’t doing that by singing “Halelluyah” while we are denying that Yahweh is the creator and sovereign God!

Psalm 148 tells us to praise the Name Yahweh, because He created, and His creation is forever! Psalm 149 tells us to praise Yahweh because He takes pleasure in His people, beautifies them with salvation, and gives them tools for the honor of executing judgment. There’s something to think about. Psalm 150 tells us to praise Him for His mighty deeds – what mighty deeds do we believe He has done for us?; and for His excellent greatness – do we believe in His greatness, or do we really doubt His power or control in this world?

Praise requires purpose. It takes more than words: it takes faith to please Him!

“Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).