



“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶ and upon finding a single pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Mathew 13:45

11/08/2018

Re’eh - See!

Deuteronomy 11:26–16:17

Isaiah 54:11–55:5

I John 4:1–6

Torah Parshah daily study. The Parashah is split into seven readings, one of the ways to study it is for you to read the reading for the day and then discuss it. This can be done during meal times, when everyone is sat together, you can then read it together in the morning and then contemplate it and discuss it as you sit, as you walk, when you rise and when you lay. Thus, fulfilling the command to do so, but also not doing it all in one day. Remember Shabbat is a time to relax and enjoy one’s family, as you spend time together in worship of YHVH.

Therefore, in studying it a bit each day, you can enjoy the blessing of Shabbat and family throughout the week. As it assists in making YHVH the focus while spending time with each other. It also makes studying the Torah enjoyable.

Traditional	Amended
Deut. 11:26-12:10	Duet. 11:26 - 32
Deut. 12:11 - 28	Deut. 12:1 – 13:1
Deut. 12:29 – 13:19	Deut. 13:2 - 19
Deut. 14:1 – 21	Deut. 14:1 - 21
Deut. 14:22 – 29	Deut. 14:22 - 29
Deut. 15:1 – 18	Deut. 15:1 - 23
Deut. 15:19 – 16:17	Deut. 16:1 – 17

Reading 1 - Deut. 11:26 – 32

This week’s Parashah commences with the statement **“See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse— ²⁷ the blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I am giving you today; ²⁸ the curse if you disobey the commands of the LORD your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known.”**

Here we see that YHVH is seeking to bless His people, the children of Israel. The condition to receive the blessing, however, is that they MUST observe/keep His commandments.

Moses instructs Israel to proclaim the blessings from Mt Gerizim and the curses from Mt Ebal which we read the full account of this event in Deut. 27-30. Moses once again admonishes them to observe all the commandments he set before them. ***When you have taken it over and are living there, ³² be sure that you obey all the decrees and laws I am setting before you today.*** (Deut. 11:31-32).

Have you ever considered why YHVH instructed the children of Israel to declare the blessings from Mt Gerizim and the Curses from Mt Ebal? Maybe, you could look at this.

When people look at the blessings and curses, they often do not comprehend how they function. We receive the blessings from YHVH through observe His instructions as we walk along the path of righteousness. For the Torah is the path of righteousness. It is as we walk this ancient pathway that we are making YHVH our habitation and fortress. For the canopy of YHVH's protection is over the path of righteousness. This is why HaSatan seeks to prevent and discourage believers from walking in accordance with the instructions of YHVH, as when we leave the path we do not receive the blessings of YHVH, but instead come under the various curses YHVH has protected us from.

In short, we come under the curses when we walk off the path of righteousness and lose the protection of YHVH. The curses do not come from YHVH but from our own actions.

An example of this is when a child disregards their parents' advice to do something which could cause them harm. Thus, when they hurt themselves, it is because they have not heeded their parent's warning, which protects them. However, when they reject the warning and do what they warned them not to, then they reap the consequences of there actions.

What people also do not comprehend is that our actions can affect our children and subsequent generations. Ascertain behaviour opens up doorways through which a curse or curses can be passed down along our family line. This doorway/curse can prevent us from receiving blessings or breakthroughs within areas of our lives.

If this is something you have never comprehended, I encourage you to look at it, as you ask YHVH to reveal curses which may be in operation in your life. Remember, it is through teshuva, and the blood of Messiah we receive the release. Then once our release comes, we need to continue to walk along the path of righteousness, as we make YHVH our fortress.

Reading two- Deut. 12:1 – 32

We read in this passage how YHVH commands the children of Israel to ²***Destroy completely all the places on the high mountains, on the hills and under every spreading tree, where the nations you are dispossessing worship their gods. ³ Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and burn their Asherah poles in the fire; cut down the idols of their gods and wipe out their names from those places.***

The children of Israel are not permitted to worship YHVH in the way that the pagans worship their gods. They ***...are to seek the place the LORD your God will choose from among all your tribes to put his Name there for his dwelling. To that place you must go; ⁶ there bring your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, what you have vowed to give and your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. ⁷ There, in the presence of the LORD your God, you and***

your families shall eat and shall rejoice in everything you have put your hand to because the Lord your God has blessed you. Deut. 8:5-7

Moses repeats this instructs further in this parashah when he states ***Then to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name—there you are to bring everything I command you: your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, and all the choice possessions you have vowed to the LORD.*** ¹² ***And there rejoice before the LORD your God—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites from your towns who have no allotment or inheritance of their own.*** ¹³ ***Be careful not to sacrifice your burnt offerings anywhere you please.*** ¹⁴ ***Offer them only at the place the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, and there observe everything I command you.*** Deut. 8:11-4

It is clear from these two passages that Israel are only permitted to bring their offerings, sacrifices, and tithes to the place that YHVH has designated for this. They cannot bring their gifts to YHVH in an arbitrary place. Furthermore, we need to remember that the tithing system was based on a farming system and so they brought livestock or produce before YHVH.

Moses also gives a firm admonishment to them stating ⁸ ***You are not to do as we do here today, everyone doing as they see fit,*** ⁹ We need to remember, that we are to worship YHVH as He has instructed and not how we want. That as believers in Messiah, we have to adhere to the word of YHVH, and to what He commands us to do. We are not permitted to do what our hearts desire, but that which YHVH desires for us. For our hearts should beat in unison with that of YHVH's, for this is what is meant by a circumcised heart.

²⁰ ***When the LORD your God has enlarged your territory as he promised you, and you crave meat and say, "I would like some meat," then you may eat as much of it as you want.*** ²¹ ***If the place where the LORD your God chooses to put his Name is too far away from you, you may slaughter animals from the herds and flocks the LORD has given you, as I have commanded you, and in your own towns you may eat as much of them as you want.*** ²² ***Eat them as you would gazelle or deer. Both the ceremonially unclean and the clean may eat.*** ²³ ***But be sure you do not eat the blood, because the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the meat.*** ²⁴ ***You must not eat the blood; pour it out on the ground like water.*** ²⁵ ***Do not eat it, so that it may go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is right in the eyes of the LORD.***

When we read the phrase "ceremonially unclean, and the clean may eat," this is a reference to the state of a person and not too unclean food. Furthermore, we see how the children of Israel are permitted to kill animals to eat. However, YHVH instructs them to abstain from consuming blood. This is what the disciples meant when they instructed the gentiles who had come to faith, as recorded in Acts 15: 19-21. When instructing them also to abstain from blood, they were giving an instruction which was in line with the Torah.

This instruction, permitting them to kill an animal to eat is different to those concerning an offering or a vow. For these one has to bring an animal before YHVH, to the appointed place, set aside for this purpose. Scripture is clear that a person is not permitted to bring a sacrifice other than to the altar of YHVH, at the place He has decreed.

²⁶ ***But take your consecrated things and whatever you have vowed to give, and go to the place the LORD will choose.*** ²⁷ ***Present your burnt offerings on the altar of the Lord your God, both the meat and the blood. The blood of your sacrifices must be poured beside the altar of the Lord your God, but you may eat the meat.*** ²⁸ ***Be careful to obey all these regulations I am giving you, so that it may always go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is good and right in the eyes of the Lord your God.***

We read in the following passage that once YHVH has brought them into the land and dealt with their enemies, that they are not permitted to inquire regarding how they worshipped their gods. Let me pause for a moment and ask, is this an instruction for all of YHVH's people, that being those grafted in? are we permitted to worship God how we want to? can we incorporate into our worship of God customs and practices which pagans have used in worshipping their gods? If we read the passage below, we will find the answer.

29 The LORD your God will cut off before you the nations you are about to invade and dispossess. But when you have driven them out and settled in their land, ³⁰ and after they have been destroyed before you, be careful not to be ensnared by inquiring about their gods, saying, "How do these nations serve their gods? We will do the same." ³¹ You must not worship the LORD your God in their way, because in worshipping their gods, they do all kinds of detestable things the LORD hates. They even burn their sons and daughters in the fire as sacrifices to their gods.

32 See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it.

We see that YHVH states do not add to or take away from what He has said. That we MUST not worship YHVH the way, pagans have worshipped their gods. Now for those who may think well, God is speaking to Israel, that is true. But, once we become a believer in Messiah, we are grafted/adopted into the commonwealth of Israel and therefore are no longer a Gentiles. For Gentile means out of covenant. What is so often miss understood is that It is impossible to be a Gentile believer in Messiah; this very statement is incorrect and an oxymoron. For to be a Gentile means out of covenant, yet to be a believer and a disciple of Messiah means we are in covenant. Thus, it is impossible to be both in and out of covenant at the same time. Prior to knowing YHVH and being a disciple of Messiah, you were a gentile, but now you are a child of YHVH and a citizen of Israel through adoption.

Repeatedly within the Torah, it states that the same law applies to the native-born and the foreigner residing amongst you. Numbers 15:15-17, 28-30,

If we take the argument that what is written in the Torah does not apply to believers in Messiah, then we can do what we want. However, we negate to comprehend how scripture defines sin. For sin is the transgression of the law. Furthermore, it is this wrong exegetical approach which breeds lawless behaviour within the Body of Messiah.

What we are witnessing within the emerging church today is nothing more than the mixing of the profane with the holy, as everything becomes acceptable, if it is done in love and to worship God. However, the god they worship is not YHVH, but a god they have created in their own image. One which permits lawlessness to continue and increase, by going unchecked. This is a result of people doing what seems right in their own hearts, through disregarding the instructions of YHVH within scripture.

Let us thus seek to examine our lives to ensure that we have not got areas that are not submitted to YHVH, as we ask YHVH to reveal them to us. Then if He does, let us repent and then bring that area into submission to the word of YHVH.

Reading three - Deut. 13:1 – 19

If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a sign or wonder, ² and if the sign or wonder spoken of takes place, and the prophet says, "Let us follow other gods"(gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," ³ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴ It is the LORD your God you must follow, and

him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him. ⁵ That prophet or dreamer must be put to death for inciting rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery. That prophet or dreamer tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

The above passage is considered to be a key Messianic prophecy within the Torah, one which Jewish people use to test a false Messiah. It states if a Messiah comes and seeks to entice you away from the commandments of YHVH, then they are a false Messiah. This is why Jewish people who understand the Torah will not accept Yeshua as the Messiah, because the “church” at large teaches Yeshua (Jesus) did away with the Torah. However, this is a false testimony by Christians who adhere to such theology. Scripture states clearly that Yeshua did not do away with the Torah. It states in Acts 6:12-13 that it was a false witness who stated this, furthermore, Yeshua Himself stated that He had not come to do away with the Torah. That those who teach and do the Torah will be great in the Kingdom of YHVH, but those who do not and teach others not to will be least in the Kingdom of YHVH (Matthew 5:17-20).

Many theologians, Pastors, and teachers further propagate this notion through misappropriating what Paul writes within the NT to substantiate such claims. Yet, what we MUST understand is that if we teach that Yeshua did away with the law, then there is no definition of what sin is, for sin is the transgression of the law. Furthermore, when we espouse such doctrine, we are declaring to Jewish people that Yeshua is the antichrist. For it is the man of sin, the antichrist who does away with the law.

Friends, our Messiah Yeshua is the one who gave the law. He came to reveal the ancient path to His people because they had gone away from the word of YHVH given to the children of Israel through Moses. Thus, Messiah came to be the goal, to show us that we CAN walk a life set apart unto YHVH, by observing the Torah. This is different to salvation; salvation CAN NOT be gained through observing the Torah, for salvation is a free gift, bestowed upon us by the grace of YHVH and through the death and resurrection of Yeshua. No one can earn or purchase it; it is free, Praise YHVH!

I encourage you if you have not already done so, to examine this thought, that the Torah has not been done away with and what it truly means to be under the law. I know this study will bless you.

⁶ If your very own brother, or your son or daughter, or the wife you love, or your closest friend secretly entices you, saying, “Let us go and worship other gods” (gods that neither you nor your ancestors have known, ⁷ gods of the peoples around you, whether near or far, from one end of the land to the other), ⁸ do not yield to them or listen to them. Show them no pity. Do not spare them or shield them. ⁹ You must certainly put them to death. Your hand must be the first in putting them to death, and then the hands of all the people. ¹⁰ Stone them to death, because they tried to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ¹¹ Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and no one among you will do such an evil thing again.

We see in this passage how severe YHVH treats someone who seeks to beguile a believer to turn away and worship other gods. For this spiritual cancer requires drastic surgery to prevent this malignant tumour from spreading throughout the camp. Now, when we look at this and other instructions, we have to apply the spirit of the law and not the letter. Even in biblical times, it was considered to be a bloody Sanhedrin who stoned a person. Thus, what we see in these instructions is what we find written in the NT when the disciples instruct such people to be put outside of the assembly. However, when a person is put outside, it is always in an endeavour to bring them back in.

Furthermore, if a person did receive the full punishment of the law and was put to death, then prior to this, they would be encouraged to repent. Then if they had, they would state prior to the first stone being thrown, "may my life make atonement for my sin." For their death would atone for what they had done, as they would be reconciled back to YHVH and thus go to Abraham's bosom upon their death.

Reading four - Deut. 14:1 – 21

The fourth reading commences with ***You are the children of the LORD your God. Do not cut yourselves or shave the front of your heads for the dead, ²for you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the LORD has chosen you to be his treasured possession.*** Within many cultures today we still see that they cut themselves and place talisman under their skin to ward off evil spirits. This is especially seen in Filipino Roman Catholic believers. I have seen many such practices, yet when they come to true faith, they are set free from such customs and curses these actions bring upon them and their children.

It is also becoming popular for people to use the ashes of their loved ones to tattoo their bodies. That in their grief they cling to anything to feel close to the loved one that has died, yet they do not comprehend the gravitas of their actions. That what they are doing brings a curse upon them and their children.

We also see in this reading Moses reiterating what YHVH has instructed regarding clean and unclean animals. What most miss to comprehend is that the reason YHVH gave these instructions is that if we eat the unclean animals, then we will over time become ill from toxins. YHVH gave us these instructions along with the Torah to set us apart as Holy unto Himself. It is not about following a set of rules, but instead about submitting to the authority of YHVH, as we take captive our own desires and the desires of our carnal minds and bring them into submission to the instructions of YHVH. In doing so, we take on the characteristics of the Messiah and set ourselves apart unto YHVH, our Elohim.

When we read scripture, we are to do so as a child, meaning we do what our Father in heaven states. Then as we mature in our faith, we ask why? Then YHVH will give us the wisdom to understand. The problem is that today's culture asks why first and only once they find the answer that pleases them do they do something. This is in total opposition to how believers are to behave. Scripture informs us that we are to humble ourselves and submit to YHVH, as we work out our salvation with fear and trepidation.

³Do not eat any detestable thing. ⁴These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, ⁵the deer, the gazelle, the roe deer, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope and the mountain sheep. ⁶You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud. ⁷However, of those that chew the cud or that have a divided hoof you may not eat the camel, the rabbit or the hyrax. Although they chew the cud, they do not have a divided hoof; they are ceremonially unclean for you. ⁸The pig is also unclean; although it has a divided hoof, it does not chew the cud. You are not to eat their meat or touch their carcasses.

⁹Of all the creatures living in the water, you may eat any that has fins and scales. ¹⁰But anything that does not have fins and scales you may not eat; for you it is unclean.

¹¹You may eat any clean bird. ¹²But these you may not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture, ¹³the red kite, the black kite, any kind of falcon, ¹⁴any kind of raven, ¹⁵the horned owl, the

screech owl, the gull, any kind of hawk, ¹⁶ the little owl, the great owl, the white owl, ¹⁷ the desert owl, the osprey, the cormorant, ¹⁸ the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe and the bat.

¹⁹ All flying insects are unclean to you; do not eat them. ²⁰ But any winged creature that is clean you may eat.

²¹ Do not eat anything you find already dead. You may give it to the foreigner residing in any of your towns, and they may eat it, or you may sell it to any other foreigner. But you are a people holy to the LORD your God.

The instruction ***Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk***, is where we get the rabbinical law not to mix dairy with meat. Yet, even though this is a manmade commandment, it has excellent health benefits. Nutritionists and Dr's understand that if you mix dairy with meat, then it makes it difficult to digest the food properly. As our bodies release different enzymes for meat and dairy which helps the food to be broken down. Now, I am not advocating following manmade laws, but what I am saying is we should show wisdom in what we observe. If something is good for our health, then it would be stupid to neglect this because it is a manmade tradition.

Reading five - Deut. 14:22 – 29

Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year.²³ Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and olive oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the LORD your God always. ²⁴ But if that place is too distant and you have been blessed by the LORD your God and cannot carry your tithe (because the place where the LORD will choose to put his Name is so far away), ²⁵ then exchange your tithe for silver, and take the silver with you and go to the place the LORD your God will choose. ²⁶ Use the silver to buy whatever you like: cattle, sheep, wine or other fermented drink, or anything you wish. Then you and your household shall eat there in the presence of the LORD your God and rejoice. ²⁷ And do not neglect the Levites living in your towns, for they have no allotment or inheritance of their own.

²⁸ At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year's produce and store it in your towns, ²⁹ so that the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own) and the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

We read in the above passage specific instructions pertaining to tithing, however, have you ever heard a minister use these passages to teach you regarding tithing within the mainstream church?

Look at what it states, that you are to enjoy your tithe before YHVH, you and your family. That if you live a long way off from where YHVH has instructed you to bring your tithe. Then you are to sell your offering, then bring the money you got and purchase food, alcohol and enjoy it before YHVH, you and your family. But, do not forget the Levites living amongst you, meaning assist them to make this trip and share your tithe with them. Maybe you can examine tithing further if you have never looked at it like this.

Reading six - Deut. 15:1 – 23

At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. ² This is how it is to be done: Every creditor shall cancel any loan they have made to a fellow Israelite. They shall not require payment from anyone among their own people, because the LORD'S time for canceling debts has been

proclaimed. ³ You may require payment from a foreigner, but you must cancel any debt your fellow Israelite owes you. ⁴ However, there need be no poor people among you, for in the land the LORD your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly bless you, ⁵ if only you fully obey the LORD your God and are careful to follow all these commands I am giving you today. ⁶ For the LORD your God will bless you as he has promised, and you will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. You will rule over many nations but none will rule over you.

⁷ If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hard hearted or tightfisted toward them. ⁸ Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they need. ⁹ Be careful not to harbor this wicked thought: “The seventh year, the year for canceling debts, is near,” so that you do not show ill will toward the needy among your fellow Israelites and give them nothing. They may then appeal to the Lord against you, and you will be found guilty of sin. ¹⁰ Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. ¹¹ There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.

Freeing Servants

¹² If any of your people—Hebrew men or women—sell themselves to you and serve you six years, in the seventh year you must let them go free.¹³ And when you release them, do not send them away empty-handed.¹⁴ Supply them liberally from your flock, your threshing floor and your winepress. Give to them as the LORD your God has blessed you.¹⁵ Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you. That is why I give you this command today.

¹⁶ But if your servant says to you, “I do not want to leave you,” because he loves you and your family and is well off with you, ¹⁷ then take an awl and push it through his earlobe into the door, and he will become your servant for life. Do the same for your female servant.

¹⁸ Do not consider it a hardship to set your servant free, because their service to you these six years has been worth twice as much as that of a hired hand. And the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do.

The Firstborn Animals

¹⁹ Set apart for the LORD your God every firstborn male of your herds and flocks. Do not put the firstborn of your cows to work, and do not shear the firstborn of your sheep. ²⁰ Each year you and your family are to eat them in the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose. ²¹ If an animal has a defect, is lame or blind, or has any serious flaw, you must not sacrifice it to the LORD your God. ²² You are to eat it in your own towns. Both the ceremonially unclean and the clean may eat it, as if it were gazelle or deer. ²³ But you must not eat the blood; pour it out on the ground like water.

In this reading, we see the instructions pertaining to the cancelling of debts after every seven years, in effect a mini jubilee year. This period is also linked to tithing, which I encourage you to look at as it is a lengthy study but one worth doing.

However, let me pose a question, why after seven years are debts cancelled to a fellow Israelite? Why is it after 7 x 7 years we get the jubilee? What is significant about the number 7 and Bible prophecy? Maybe you can look at this, as it is linked to Bible prophecy and the coming of Messiah.

What most “Christians” fail to comprehend is that the Torah is prophecy. So, if you want to understand the book of Revelation or Daniel then you need to understand the Torah. Otherwise you will miss what YHVH is saying.

Reading seven - Deut. 16:1 – 17

Observe the month of Aviv and celebrate the Passover of the LORD your God, because in the month of Aviv he brought you out of Egypt by night. ² Sacrifice as the Passover to the Lord your God an animal from your flock or herd at the place the LORD will choose as a dwelling for his Name. ³ Do not eat it with bread made with yeast, but for seven days eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, because you left Egypt in haste—so that all the days of your life you may remember the time of your departure from Egypt. ⁴ Let no yeast be found in your possession in all your land for seven days. Do not let any of the meat you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain until morning.

⁵ You must not sacrifice the Passover in any town the Lord your God gives you ⁶ except in the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name. There you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening, when the sun goes down, on the anniversary^[a] of your departure from Egypt. ⁷ Roast it and eat it at the place the Lord your God will choose. Then in the morning return to your tents. ⁸ For six days eat unleavened bread and on the seventh day hold an assembly to the Lord your God and do no work.

The Festival of Weeks

⁹ Count off seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. ¹⁰ Then celebrate the Festival of Weeks to the Lord your God by giving a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings the Lord your God has given you. ¹¹ And rejoice before the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, the Levites in your towns, and the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows living among you. ¹² Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and follow carefully these decrees.

The Festival of Tabernacles

¹³ Celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles for seven days after you have gathered the produce of your threshing floor and your winepress. ¹⁴ Be joyful at your festival—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites, the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns. ¹⁵ For seven days celebrate the festival to the Lord your God at the place the Lord will choose. For the Lord your God will bless you in all your harvest and in all the work of your hands, and your joy will be complete.

¹⁶ Three times a year all your men must appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks and the Festival of Tabernacles. No one should appear before the Lord empty-handed: ¹⁷ Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you.

We see outlined above the three pilgrim festivals of Israel, which it is at these appointed times when Israel would bring their tithes before YHVH. This is why they are discussed together in this Parshah.

Today, there is much debate about whether people should still go up to Jerusalem for these appointed times, in fulfilment of this Torah commandment. To further understand this, we need to examine why YHVH instructs Israel to make these three pilgrimages. Then we will be able to determine if believers are required and are able to still fulfil this commandment.

So, why does YHVH instruct Israel to make this journey?

We read in Exodus 34:18,22-25, Exodus 23:17 that we are to go to the place YHVH instructs primarily so that they can come into YHVH's presence.

We further read in Deut. 12:18 and Exodus 23:15-17 that it is to bring our offering.

Finally, we read in Deut. 31:10-13 that it is to hear the Torah being read.

Thus, the reasons for going to Jerusalem is to come into the presence of YHVH, to bring our offerings, and to hear the Torah being read by the priest.

The primary reason for making the pilgrimage was to appear before YHVH your Elohim Deut. 16:16, however, the commandment never states Zion, rather it states the place of His dwelling. However, we know that Zion was the appointed place from the time of David until 70AD when the Temple was destroyed, as prophesied by Messiah. Thus, when the temple was destroyed, these commandments could not be fulfilled. However, when Messiah returns they will be, for we will once again go up to Zion for the Feasts. To meet with YHVH face to face, to bring our offerings and to hear the Torah being read.

Furthermore, the temple mount today, if you ascribe to the majority view of the place of the temple mount, has two Muslim mosques on it, thus showing the presence of YHVH has departed.

You may, however, be asking what about when the third temple is built. What we MUST comprehend is that this temple is not consecrated to YHVH, but to all faiths, as it will be a temple of the antichrist. Furthermore, the instructions to make the pilgrimage is only to be undertaken when we live in the land of Israel. Deut. 17:14-15; 26:1-3 therefore while we are in exile this commandment cannot be fulfilled, neither can it without a temple. Remember, one goes into exile due to sin. Thus it is only through Teshuva that we can return to YHVH and the land. Just as YHVH has promised, Deut 30:1-5 Ezekiel 17:17-20

Therefore, can we bring our tithe? At present we cannot present our tithe at the temple nor can we hear the Torah being read from it because there is no temple.

With this in mind, we cannot fulfil the commandment and the reasons for going up to Jerusalem. So, should we still continue to go up to Jerusalem?

The reality is people are free to go up to Jerusalem whenever they want, however, we must understand that we cannot fulfil the requirements of the Torah commandment YHVH gave to go and appear before Him at the appointed place, bring our tithe and hear the Torah read. Therefore, people should not be pressured or coerced into going so they can observe this Mitzvoth. But, if they desire and feel led to go then that is a different matter, but they must not through their actions make others feel inferior or less spiritual for not going up.

It does not make a person more righteous if they make these pilgrimages, neither by going up, are they fulfilling the commandment. For one is able to draw near to YHVH without going up to Zion. What we can do, which many do already, is seek YHVH for the place He desires and is directing them to come before Him at these appointed times while we are in exile and Messiah is not here. Then gather at that place and spend time with YHVH, as you draw near to Him and seek His face.

On a final note let us take the instruction in scripture which admonishes not to get into protracted arguments on doctrine, which leads to arguments, but instead let us hold fast to ensuring the bond of peace, love and fellowship. As collectively we seek to work out our salvation in fear and trepidation of YHVH. That does not mean we cannot discuss such topics, however; we accept other

people's opinions. Things should only bring division when what is being done is heretical and or against the Torah, and the consequences are to break fellowship but, as I have said this is not done lightly and always done to bring them back into fellowship through Teshuva.

Friends, in light of this week's parsha, let us ensure that how we conduct our selves in our daily lives brings honour and glory to YHVH. That, we seek to show love and grace to other believers as we all seek to worship YHVH in Spirit and in Truth as we work out our salvation in fear and trepidation of YHVH.

That it is only through Teshuva (repentance) that we can be reconciled to YHVH and the land. That observing and following the Torah does not bring salvation, for salvation is only through what the Messiah did for us through His death and resurrection. That salvation is a free gift from YHVH which we receive through faith by His grace. However, as we observe the Torah, we are making YHVH our habitation as we walk along the path of righteousness. However, let us remember that we are to adhere to the spirit of the Torah and not the letter. That when Messiah comes, He will instruct us further regarding the word of YHVH and bring the fullness of what it means to walk in Torah.

Therefore, until that day, let us hold fast and remain resolute in our faith as we seek to emulate the light of Messiah in the ever-increasing darkness of this world.

May YHVH bless and keep you

Shabbat Shalom

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