

# DEBARIM (DEUTERONOMY) 16:18 – 21:9 – SHOPHETIM – RIGHT RULERS

This week's Torah portion is called – שֹׁפְטִים **Shophetim** – which is the plural of the root word שָׁפַט **shaphat** – Strong's H8199 which means, '*judge, to judge, to govern, rule, ruler, execute judgement*'.

Judges and officers, you are to appoint within all your gates!

The Hebrew word for '**officers**' is שׁוֹטְרִים **shoterim**, which is the plural of the root word שָׁטַר **shoter** – Strong's H7860 which means, '*official, officer, foreman*' and is also an active part of a participle root in Semitic languages, which means, '*to write*'; and so, by implication it can also refer to '*a scribe, a magistrate or overseer*'.

The Hebrew root word that is translated here as '**gates**' is שַׁעַר **sha'ar** – Strong's H8179 which means, '*gate, door, entrance*' and comes from the root verb שָׁעַר **sha'ar** – Strong's H8176 which means, '*to think, split open, reason out, calculate, reckon, estimate*'.

Therefore, we can see, and understand, how it is at the '**gates**' of the city, where right-ruling and justice was proclaimed and carried out before all!

There was to be appointed judges in every city, which would ensure that the proper right-ruling of Elohim would be consistently administered in every city, within all the allotments of the tribes of Yisra'el!

As we consider how the commands of Elohim, are to be written on our doorposts, we recognise that, in our ability to come in and go out, we are to be constantly reminded of the clear need to guard His commands!

The Hebrew word that is translated as '**appoint**' is root verb נָתַן **nathan** – Strong's H5414 which means, '*to give, put, set, appointed, delivered, given, placed*'.

It is from this word, that we get the plural term נְתִינִים **Nethinim** which means, '*given ones*'.

Those who were to be appointed as **judges** and **officers**, were those who would be capable of handling the truth without partiality, and would therefore, need to be those who had proven themselves, as being trustworthy and reliable, in exercising proper right-ruling and discernment, in judging matters correctly, according to the Torah.

The Greek word that is used in the LXX (Septuagint) for '**appoint**' is καθίστημι **kathistēmi** – Strong's G2525 which means, '*to set in order, appoint, put ...in charge, appoint one to administer an office*', and the reason for me mentioning this is that we see this word being used in:

**Mattithyahu/Matthew 24:45-47** “Who then is a trustworthy and wise servant, whom his master **set over** his household, to give them food in season? <sup>46</sup> “Blessed is that servant whom his master, having come, shall find so doing. <sup>47</sup> “Truly, I say to you that he shall **set him over** all his possessions.”

יהושע made it very clear to His taught ones, that we are to be trustworthy servants, here and now, as we have been ‘**set over**’ His House/Body, with the duties of diligently guarding His commands and keeping His House/Body clean; which can only be done, when the correct right-rulings and procedures of His Torah are followed and obeyed!

Those who are trustworthy in the guarding of the commands now, our Master will set over all His possessions, when He comes again, as it is the trustworthy servants that shall rule and reign with Him and be appointed to execute proper judgements and right-rulings according to His Torah, which will be the rule of the earth, in His Everlasting Reign!

In Ma’asei/Acts we are told that when the numbers of believers were growing, there arose some grumbling against the believers by the Hellenists (Greek speaking Yehudim), saying that the cares of widows were being overlooked.

**Ma’asei/Acts 6:2-4** “So the twelve summoned the group of the taught ones and said, “It is not pleasing for us to leave the Word of Elohim and serve tables. <sup>3</sup> “Therefore, brothers, seek out from among you seven men who are known to be filled with the Set-apart Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall **appoint** for this duty, <sup>4</sup> but we shall give ourselves continually to prayer and to serving the Word.”

The 12 talmidim (disciples/taught ones) of Messiah, made it clear that trustworthy men were to be sought out, so that they could **appoint** them over the duties of service, that was needed in the body, in order that they could continue doing what they were appointed for, which was, to continue in prayer and the serving of the Word, teaching proper right-ruling and judgement, according to the Torah!

The Greek word that is used here, in **Ma’asei/Acts 6:4**, for ‘serving’ is **διακονία diakonia** – **Strong’s G1248** which means, ‘*service, ministry, mission, support, relief*’, which comes from the word **διάκονος diakonos** – **Strong’s G1249** which means, ‘*a servant, minister, deacon, waiter*’.

The **appointing** of responsible leaders is vital in the Body of Messiah, for the body needs to be properly ruled without partiality or danger of bribery and corruption!

This portion, like all others, points us directly to יהושע who has been appointed judge and ruler over us:

**Timotiyos Bět/ 2 Timothy 4:1** “In the sight of Elohim and the Master יהושע Messiah, who shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His reign, I earnestly charge you”

**Kěpha Aleph/ 1 Peter 4:1-5 “Therefore, since Messiah suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 so that he no longer lives the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but according to the desire of Elohim. 3 For we *have spent* enough of our past lifetime in doing the desire of the gentiles, having walked in indecencies, lusts, drunkenness, orgies, wild parties, and abominable idolatries, 4 in which they are surprised that you do not run with them in the same flood of loose behaviour, blaspheming, 5 who shall give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.”**

The judges, or governors, were the decision makers, and were the ones who would make legal right-rulings, and the officers were the ones who were in charge of the record keeping and would be the ones who would make any search for precedents and regulations that pertained to specific situations etc.

In other words, they were the ones who were well versed in all aspects of the Torah and, together with the judges, would be able to make the correct right-rulings according to what has been written!

The gates of a city were more than just entrance and exit points – it was the place where the judges and officers would sit and rightly rule the people.

By appointing judges and officers at the gates of a city, was also a means to protect the city against the infiltration of any criminal activity, just like a shepherd would guard the entrance to the sheepfold and protect his sheep from any wolves or thieves from coming in.

The judges and officials were to be appointed from within the gates, meaning that they were to be appointed from among the people and were not to be foreigners!

The way that these judges and officers were to judge the people, was with righteous right-ruling, with no distortion or partiality!!!

The manner in which they were to rule, was to be according to the Word of Elohim.

This is exactly how Messiah will rightly rule – according to the written Word and therefore, there is no excuse for any to not know – He will not make up rules as He goes along – He will rightly rule and show no partiality!

**Deħarim/Deuteronomy 1:17 “Do not show partiality in right-ruling, hear the small as well as the great. Do not be afraid of anyone’s face, for the right-ruling belongs to Elohim. And the case which is too hard for you, bring it to me, and I shall hear it.”**

Today, we find that many claim the ‘do not judge’ clause, while they are clearly lacking in their understanding of the Torah, when, from Scripture, we see clearly that we are to ‘judge’ righteously!

**Qolasim/Colossians 2:16-17 “Let no one therefore judge you in eating or in drinking, or in respect of a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths – 17 which are a shadow of what is to come – but the Body of the Messiah.”**

This verse, which is often misinterpreted and misunderstood, by those who do not understand the Torah, is actually telling us, the Body of Messiah, to not let outsiders (those not walking in the Covenant) judge us, however, we are to judge each other in the Body, according to the righteous right-ruling and standards of the Torah and hold each other accountable, to uphold the righteous standards of righteous living!

While we hold each other accountable, we do this by showing each other our sins/lawlessness, so that we can realign our walk to be pure and righteous in Messiah, we certainly do not ‘pass sentence’ on each other, for while there is One Judge – יהושע Messiah – and all right-ruling belongs to Him, we are His Body, who He has called to rightly rule His Body, according to His right-ruling!

We are told to not be afraid of anyone’s face – for it is Elohim’s right-ruling! So many today try to make a person feel guilty for simply ‘**judging righteously**’ and here, we are told clearly to not be afraid to ‘**judge righteously**’: according to His right-ruling – for it is His and not ours and when we simply obey and follow His right-ruling and standards, we need not be afraid of anyone’s reactions to our diligent obedience at rightly ruling all matters.

This is something that needs to be restored within the body today, as far too many are ‘**doing their own thing**’ and when confronted, as a result of compromise, they use the feeble excuse that we have no right to judge, when clearly, we do – as long as it is according to the right-ruling of Elohim and that we show no partiality! It is time for the body to take responsibility and keep each other accountable to walking according to the Truth.

If we are afraid to do so, we may just be dealt severely with by יהוה.

**Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 1:17 “Now, gird up your loins and arise, and speak to them all that I command you. Do not break down before their faces, lest I break you before them.”**

These were the words that יהוה spoke to a young Yirmeyahu and are words that are still alive and applicable to each and every one of us today; to us who are a called out and chosen people who are to be faithful ambassadors of the coming reign of our King! In these darkened days, where depravity is on the increase, we are to gird up our loins and speak the Truth and not be afraid to do so!

The phrase, ‘**gird up your loins and arise**’ is written in the Hebrew as:

תֵּאָזֶר מִתְּנַיִךְ וְקַמְתָּ  
‘te’zor matheneyka veqam’ta’

This comes from the following root words:

- 1) אָזַר azar – Strong’s H247 which means, ‘**to gird, encompass, equip, clothe**’ and is metaphorical of ‘**strength**’!
- 2) מִתְּנַיִן mothen – Strong’s H4975 which means, ‘**loins, back, body, heart, hips, waist**’.
- 3) קָם qum – Strong’s H6965 meaning, ‘**to arise, stand up, stand**’, and in the tense this is written in, it can render the clear meaning, ‘**to rise, to become powerful, to stand firm, to be established, endure**’.

This instruction given to Yirmeyahu to ‘**gird up his loins**’, meant that he was to ‘**brace himself for action**’!

He would not be able to stand up and be ready for action, if he had not been properly equipped in the Word!

יהוה had equipped him with His Word and now, he was to rise up, stand firm and endure, with his loins properly girded with the Truth!

This call to stand up and be girded with the Truth, is one we are all to hear and diligently respond to with great faith and not get discouraged by circumstances that may seem unbearable or unfavourable!

I want to encourage you all to hear these faith equipping words of our Master and Elohim and be bold ambassadors, who obey the instructions of Elohim and are not afraid to speak the Truth, boldly, in His Name!

As I consider this action, of girding up one's loins and standing up for the Truth, I am certainly reminded of the image of the Armour of Elohim that we are to be dressed in, in order for us to properly stand and continue to stand, having girded our waist with Truth! Standing armed, with the belt of Truth, is a militaristic type picture of one being a faithful soldier of Messiah, being dressed in righteousness and guarding His commands spotlessly, and able to judge righteously!

This picture of standing up and being girded about, is also a great lesson of how we are to apply the Word that we hear by faith.

As taught ones of the Messiah, there is a time when that which we have learnt must be applied by faith, according to the clear instructions of the Word, without wavering through compromise!

We come to sit at our Master's feet, to learn and then, we are to stand up, girded about with His Truth that we have learnt, and boldly proclaim His Truth, in all we say and do, doing all in His Name, as faithful ambassadors of our righteous King whom we represent!

Our Master tells us in:

**Luqas/Luke 12:35 "Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning"**

This command, in itself, carries immense insight and instruction, when understood from a true Scriptural perspective, and as we look at the words contained herein, we are able to see why!

The Greek word translated as 'let' is ἔστω *estō* – Strong's G2077 which is the imperative of εἰμί *eimi* – Strong's G1510 which means, '*I exist, I am, stay, remain*'; and so, what we see here in this phrase is the clear command to 'exist in' or 'stay' dressed for action!!!

This instructs us to be in a continual ready state of complete service and obedience, with our 'loins girded' and our 'lamps burning'!

If we are not found to exist in the proper 'clothing' – that of righteousness (which is our guarding to do all He commands us to) – and are not 'dressed for action', then we shall be rejected by Him and told to depart from Him!

The Greek word for 'loins' is ὀσφύς *osphus* – Strong's G3751 which means, '*hip, loin, gird about*', and literally refers to the lower region of the back, the hips, and the reproductive organs; and the term, 'to have loins girded' means to be in readiness for anything!

The expression **“to gird up one’s loins”**, means to belt the garment which is worn ungirded in the house or in times of relaxation, with a view to greater mobility for work, for travel, or for battle etc.

And here, we are able to see that we are not to be ‘relaxed’ in our duties and responsibilities of a set-apart priesthood, but are to be continually watchful and alert, ready to fight the good fight of belief, at all times.

In speaking of Messiah, we are told what His girdle is:

**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 11:5 “And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and trustworthiness the girdle of His waist.”**

Now, if this is His girdle, then it is our girdle, for we are His Body – the ones who stay in Him!

The word used here for ‘girdle’ is **עֶזֶר** *ezor* – **Strong’s H232** meaning, **‘girdle, belt, waistband’** and we see from this that Truth must be a belt for us – strapped around our waist and loins so that we continue to walk in righteousness and not stray, for it is righteousness for us when we guard to do all that **יהוה** our Elohim has commanded us. **(Debarim/Deuteronomy 6:25)**

Standing firm, in the Master, and having our loins girded, is a clear command that is given to us and is for the clear purpose of proclaiming the Truth, no matter the circumstances we may find ourselves in!

We cannot allow circumstances to dictate our ability to stand up and have loins girded with Truth, lest we find that unfavorable circumstances cause us to be incorrectly dressed, with the cloak of compromise that has loosened the grip that the belt of Truth ought to bring. This is a call to be strong and not be discouraged! Despite living amidst much rebellion to the Truth we must not allow the girded belt of Truth to be loosened from our loins!

Listen to the words that **יהוה** our Elohim spoke to Yehezqël:

**Yehezqël/Ezekiel 2:6-8 “And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them, nor be afraid of their words, though thistles and thorns are with you and you dwell among scorpions. Do not be afraid of their words or discouraged by their looks, for they are a rebellious house. 7 “And you shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious. 8 “And you, son of man, hear what I am speaking to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house, open your mouth and eat what I am giving you.”**

Being girded about with Truth and armed in the Word of Elohim, we must not be discouraged by the rebellious, as we must be bold in speaking the Truth, even if they refuse to listen!

What we also take note of, is that with the boldness that we are to speak, we must make sure that our actions line up with what we speak and not be found compromising the Word, by faithless actions of compromise and sin.

We have great examples that are given to us in the Scriptures, of mighty, and bold, servants of our Master and Elohim, as well as examples of many who were not as bold and faithful as they should have been and we need to learn from these, to ensure that we remain faithful and are able to always stand firm in our Master, be bold and not be silent, especially in the midst of much chaos, rebellion and conflict, that we may often find ourselves!  
We must always be ready to give an answer for the hope that we have in Messiah!

We have a responsibility to uphold the righteousness of His Torah and call each to account, when that standard is not being upheld and in doing so, **'judge righteously without partiality'**, not being afraid of any face!

When there are those who claim to be walking in Messiah and are not doing what His Torah calls for, be it, in not adhering to the clear dietary commands, or whether they neglect to gather at the set-apart gatherings as commanded (including the weekly Sabbath), we must call them to account and judge righteously!

Too many today are neglecting to gather for Sabbath fellowship (which is clearly commanded for us to do in **Wayyiqra/Leviticus 23**), and when confronted about their lack of obedience, to gathering as commanded, they raise up the feeble wall, and defensive excuse, of **'do not judge me'**!

It is time that we actually do begin to **judge righteously**, within the body, by that which belongs to Elohim and making sure that we show no partiality!

#### Verse 19:

##### **1 - DO NOT DISTORT RIGHT-RULING!**

The Hebrew word that is translated as **'distort'** comes from the primitive root verb **נָטָה** **natah** – Strong's H5186 which means, **'to stretch out, spread out, extend, incline'**, and can have the meaning of **'bend, turn incline'** and here it is written in the **'hifil'** verb tense and can therefore, carry the understanding of, **'bend away, thrust aside, thrust away, lead astray'**.

In speaking of the whore that distorts right-ruling, and leads fools astray, we see this word **נָטָה** **natah** – Strong's H5186 being translated as **'leads astray'** in:

**Mishlê/Proverbs 7:21** **"With her many words she leads him astray, with her smooth lips she seduces him."**

While we also recognise that this word is used, in Scripture, to describe the **'outstretched'** arm of Elohim, that reaches out and delivers, we see that the whore too, reaches out her arm, in order to lead astray, and for the fool who lacks heart and does not understand what the will of Elohim is, he will be easily deceived by the whores many smooth words.

Many are **'led astray'** because they are listening to the smooth ear tickling words of falsehood and, in the process, they so easily allow proper right-ruling to be distorted, due to a lack of knowledge of the Word and Elohim.

The Hebrew word used for 'right-ruling' is מִשְׁפָּט mishpat – Strong's H4941 – '*judgement, ordinance, regulations*' and comes from the word שָׁפַט shaphat – Strong's H8199 – meaning, '*to judge, govern, rule, pronounce judgement, give law*'.

**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 33:22 “for יהוה is our Judge, יהוה is our Lawgiver, יהוה is our Sovereign, He saves us”**

There is only One who gives us the Law by which we must live and by which we are to be governed and these judgements and right-rulings and regulations given by Him, we must DO!!!

To distort proper right-ruling is to distort the Word of Elohim, which we are clearly warned against!

## **2 – DO NOT SHOW PARTIALITY!**

In Hebrew, the phrase that is translated as '**do not show partiality**' is written as follows:

לֹא תִכְיַר פָּנִים  
lo takkiyr paniym

This phrase comes from the 3 root words:

1) לֹא lo – Strong's H3808 which is a primitive adverb that means, '*not, no, never, neither*'

2) נָכַר nakar – Strong's H5234 which means, '*to regard, recognise, acknowledge, discern, distinguish*'.

This root verb conveys the idea of '**inspecting**' or '**looking over**' something, with the intention to recognise what it is. This verb can also be used to mean, '**take notice of**' or '**pay attention**' and the third use of this verb, can be used in the sense of '**recognising something**' that was formerly known.

A person might be recognised by another, by observation, be it in the sound of their voice or by their clothes etc.

This root is also used to give the meaning of '**acknowledge**', as a father would acknowledge the rights of the firstborn son etc.

3) פָּנִים paniym – Strong's H6440 meaning, '*face, faces*'.

In Hebrew, the idea of showing partiality is: '**to have regard for faces**' and therefore, it means '**to give, or make, a decision, or ruling, on the basis of who a person is and what they look like**', rather than on the basis of his or her guilt or innocence.

Do not have regard for the appearance of others, but rather look at the facts, when executing proper right-ruling!

This teaches us a vital lesson, on not getting manipulated by various emotions that can be expressed in one's face, in an attempt at swaying judgement in their favour!

**Yohanan/John 7:24 “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”**

The Greek word that is translated here as '**judge**' is κρίνω krinō – Strong's G2919 which means, '*to judge, decide, conclude, determine*'.

We are not to decide matters on appearances, but according to a righteous judgement and the Greek word that is translated as 'righteous', in **Yohanan/John 7:24** is the adjective **δίκαιος dikaios** – **Strong's G1342** which means, '**righteous, innocent, just, upright, keeping the commands of Elohim**'.

We judge with righteous judgement, through a proper keeping of the commands of Elohim and therefore, to neglect to have the commands of Elohim, as the only clear means of judgement, would be a distortion of the Truth!

Too many show partialities, as they look at various appearances, which can be faked, rather than simply looking at the righteous judgement that the commands of Elohim make abundantly clear!

**Timothy Aleph/1 Timothy 5:20-21** "**Reprove those who are sinning, in the presence of all, so that the rest also might fear. 21 I earnestly witness before Elohim and the Master יהוהשׁע Messiah, and the chosen messengers, that you watch over these matters without prejudice, doing none at all with partiality.**"

To show partiality is NOT a functional thing, for the one who shows partiality is blinded by misrepresented facts and is led by appearances, which can be very deceiving, especially when the accused manipulates the feelings or emotions of the one who is to rightly rule them, by making themselves look like they are the injured one or the one who lacks! Many people can be very creative, in putting on a sad and sorry face, in order to try to escape the proper judgement that is due and when one regards the faces of another, partiality is shown, which is not just!

**Mishlê/Proverbs 18:5** "**It is not good to show partiality to the wrong, or to turn aside the righteous in right-ruling.**"

### **SHOW NO PARTIALITY!!!**

Shelomoh makes it clear to us that we are to not show any partiality to the wrong or turn aside the righteous in right-ruling!

What he is teaching us, is that we are to exercise proper right-ruling to all, whether to the wrong or to the righteous.

We have one Torah for all!

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 1:16-17** "**And I commanded your judges at that time, saying, 'When hearing between your brothers, judge righteously between a man and his brother or the stranger who is with him. 17 Do not show partiality in right-ruling, hear the small as well as the great. Do not be afraid of anyone's face, for the right-ruling belongs to Elohim. And the case which is too hard for you, bring it to me, and I shall hear it.'**"

So many today try to make a person feel guilty for simply 'judging righteously' and here, we are told clearly to not be afraid to 'judge righteously' according to His right-ruling – for it is His and not ours and when we simply obey and follow His right-ruling and standards we need not be afraid at anyone's reactions to our diligent obedience at rightly ruling on all matters.

This is something that needs to be restored within the body today as far too many are 'doing their own thing' and when confronted as a result of compromise use the feeble excuse that we have no right to judge, when clearly, we do – as long as it is according to the right-ruling of Elohim and that we show no partiality!

We have a responsibility to uphold the righteousness of His Torah and call each to account, when that standard is not being upheld and 'judge righteously without partiality', not being afraid of any face, as mentioned already!

When there are those who claim to be walking in Messiah and are not doing what His Torah calls for, be it in not adhering to the clear dietary commands or whether they neglect to gather at the set-apart gatherings commanded (including the weekly Sabbath), we must call them to account and judge righteously!

It is time that we actually begin to judge righteously, by that which belongs to Elohim, not allowing partiality, based on looks or status, to become a stumbling block in being proper handlers of His Truth!

Here are a few more verses that make it clear that we are to show no partiality in right-ruling!

**Romiyim/Romans 2:11** "For there is no partiality with Elohim."

**Ma'asei/Acts 10:34-35** "And opening his mouth, Kěpha said, "Truly I see that Elohim shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation, he who fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him."

**Eph'siyim/Ephesians 6:9** "And, masters, do the same to them, refrain from threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in the heavens, and there is no partiality with Him."

**Qolasim/Colossians 3:25** "But he who does wrong shall be repaid for the wrong which he has done, and there is no partiality."

**Ya'aqob/James 2:1-9** "My brothers, do not hold the belief of our Master יהושע Messiah, the Master of esteem, with partiality. 2 For if there should come into your meeting a man with gold rings, in a splendid robe, and there should also come in a poor one dressed in rags, 3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the splendid robe and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor one, "You stand there," or, "Sit here by my feet," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves, and become judges with wicked thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers: Has Elohim not chosen the poor of this world, rich in belief and heirs of the reign which He promised to those who love Him? 6 But you have shown disrespect towards the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? 7 Do they not blaspheme that good Name by which you are called? 8 If you truly accomplish the sovereign law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself," you do well, 9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, being found guilty by the Torah as transgressors."

**Kěpha Aleph/ 1Peter 1:17** "And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear"

When one distorts right-ruling, then the ability to not show partiality is tainted as distorted right-ruling is no longer right-ruling and lends itself to be used to show partiality towards another!

### **3 - DO NOT TAKE A BRIBE!**

The Hebrew word that is translated as 'bribe' comes from the noun שֹׁחָד *shohad* – Strong's H7810 which means, '*a present, bribe, corrupt, reward*', which comes from the primitive root verb שָׁחַד *shahad* – Strong's H7809 which means, '*to present a bribe, offer a bribe*'.

We are clearly instructed the following, in:

**Shemoth/Exodus 23:8** "And do not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the seeing one and twists the words of the righteous."

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 10:17** "For יהוה *Yehovah* your Elohim is Elohim of mighty ones and Master of masters, the great Ĕl, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe."

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 27:25** "Cursed is he who takes a bribe to slay an innocent being. And all the people shall say, 'Aměn!'"

These verses are very clear in telling us to not take a bribe, and the sons of Shemu'el were wicked and took bribes, which caused Yisra'el to come to him and ask him to give them a sovereign:

**Shemu'el Aleph/1 Samuel 8:1-7** "And it came to be, when Shemu'el was old, that he made his sons rulers over Yisra'el. 2 And the name of his first-born was Yo'el, and the name of his second, Abiyah, rulers in Be'ersheba. 3 But his sons did not walk in his ways, and turned aside after own gain, and took bribes, and twisted right-ruling. 4 And all the elders of Yisra'el gathered together and came to Shemu'el at Ramah, 5 and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a sovereign to rule us like all the nations." 6 But the word was evil in the eyes of Shemu'el when they said, "Give us a sovereign to rule us." So Shemu'el prayed to יהוה. 7 And יהוה said to Shemu'el, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from reigning over them."

Sadly, we see that this great prophet's sons took bribes and had turned aside from walking in their father's ways, leading to the elders coming and asking for a king.

**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 33:15-16** "He who walks righteously and speaks what is straight, he who rejects the gain of oppressions, who keeps his hands from accepting bribes, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil – 16 he shall inhabit the heights; strongholds of rocks be his refuge. His bread shall be given him, his water be steadfast."

**Mishlê/Proverbs 17:8** "A bribe is a stone of favour in the eyes of its owner; wherever he turns, he prospers."

The subtle power of a bribe, is being warned against here, as we take note that a bribe in the hands of the one who has it in his hand, is like a stone of favour and he can use it to be prosperous.

We do not have to look too far today, to see that bribery and corruption is used in many transactions, by very wealthy and influential people, who get what they want through bribes.

Many countries rely on bribery, to get supply of essential needs, as they will use bribery as a means for any foreigners to commute and do business in their land.

A bribe is something that serves to influence or induce and is often money or favour that is promised, in order to influence judgement or decisions that the one offering the bribe is seeking to gain.

The Word of Elohim is very clear – we are not to accept any form of bribes, no matter how flavoursome the outcome may be presented.

We are to exercise proper right-ruling and do that which is fair and just!

Bribery inevitably goes against what is legally stipulated or required and is therefore an abominable act.

People will often resort to bribery, when they want to cut corners and circumvent the system, in order to get their way, and anyone who does this will not be able to sojourn in the Tent of יהוה nor dwell in His set-apart mountain:

**Tehillah/Psalm 15:1-5 “יהוה, who does sojourn in Your Tent? Who does dwell in Your set-apart mountain? 2 He who walks blamelessly, and does righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart. 3 He has not slandered with his tongue, he has not done evil to his neighbour, nor lifted up a reproach against his friend; 4 in whose eyes a reprobate one is despised, but he esteems those who fear יהוה; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change; 5 he has not put out his silver at interest, and has not taken a bribe against the innocent. He who does these is never moved.”**

A ‘bribe’ blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous!

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘blinds’, in **Shemoth/Exodus 23:8**, comes from the root word עָוַר *avar* – **Strong’s H5786** which means, **‘to make blind, put out the eyes of another’**, and here it is written in the ‘pi’el’ verb form, which expresses an **intensive or intentional** action!

In other words, we are able to see, very clearly, how a bribe is intentionally used to blind the eyes of another, from seeing according to proper right-ruling!

This word can have the understanding of physically making someone blind and causing a person to not be able to see, by destroying the eyeball as well as having the meaning of causing one to be unjust, by giving a false testimony or **‘turning a blind eye to the truth’**.

We can also take note, of how many may give false testimony ‘by omission’, as a figurative extension of not being able to see and remember an event, which a bribe can so easily do!

A bribe can get another to say they do not remember what they saw!

And here, we are clearly warned against **‘turning a blind eye’** to the Truth!

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘twists’, in **Shemoth/Exodus 23:8**, comes from the root verb **סָלַף** *salaph* – **Strong’s H5557** which means, ‘*to twist, pervert, overthrow*’ and we see this word being translated as ‘perverts’, in:

**Mishlë/Proverbs 19:3** “**The foolishness of a man perverts his way, and his heart is wroth against יְהוָה.**”

Bribes can cause the Word of Righteousness to be twisted and perverted, to suite whatever the wicked want for themselves, showing a total disregard for proper right-ruling.

### **Verse 20 – Follow righteousness**

The Hebrew root word for ‘follow’ is **רָדַף** *radaph* – **Strong’s H7291** and carries the meaning, ‘*to pursue, chase, follow closely after, aim to secure, run after, hunt, persecute*’. And in the context of pursuing and running after, we note that it is after righteousness and not anything else.

If one is truly pursuing something then the focus of the pursuit is so intense on that which is being pursued that there can be no effort spared for anything else, lest the one who is pursuing, loses ground on that which he is closely chasing after; and so, we, that are called to listen, are the ones who are, or should be, hotly pursuing righteousness with our all – are you?

**Mishlë/Proverbs 12:28** “**In the way of righteousness is life, and in its pathway there is no death.**”

This makes it very clear – when you are pursuing righteousness your path of pursuit is a sure path of life and therefore to pursue righteousness is to walk in Messiah and walk according to His commands diligently and with great delight.

He is the Living Torah – The word made flesh – so our path is guided by the Torah, which lights our way! Any other path is dark and is destined to death!

We ‘**pursue/follow**’ righteousness alone so that we may ‘**enter**’ the land!!!

In other words, this is a call to ‘**go the distance**’ and not stop short of the goal for any reason!!!

While we recognise that we have been redeemed and ransomed from bondage and enslavement, we also recognise that now we have been redeemed we have a responsibility to pursue or follow closely after righteousness – which is to guard to do all the commands of Elohim!

And we do this – not to be redeemed, for that we cannot do for ourselves, but rather we do it to enter into the Promised Land as we ‘work out’ our deliverance with fear and trembling!

We do not ‘keep the Torah’ to get saved, but we do it because we have received favour/grace from our Master, which has been extended to us, because of His loving-commitment to His Covenants of Promise and we therefore, diligently work out our deliverance/salvation with fear and trembling, guarding to do all Elohim has commanded us, in order to have our salvation made complete when He comes.

We are still sojourners here and we have a home to look forward to, which we cannot enter into if we do not guard the commands and pursue righteousness!!!

The unbelieving generation, who disregarded the commands in the Wilderness, were redeemed and set free from Mitsrayim, were washed through the Sea of Reeds, yet they never entered the Promised Rest of יהוה, because they did not pursue righteousness and they disregarded the commands!

So many today, are doing the same thing, in that they claim the Blood of Messiah, while they wilfully neglect to walk in His commands and guard to keep His Torah – they may get out of Mitsrayim, but they will never enter the Promised Land!!!

**Romiyim/Romans 10:5 “For Mosheh writes about the righteousness which is of the Torah, “The man who does these shall live by them.”**

We are to follow **righteousness** and **righteousness alone!!!**

The Hebrew word translated as ‘righteousness’ is צְדָקָה tseḏeq – Strong’s H6664 which means, **‘righteous, just, righteousness’**.

We are further equipped in understanding who it is that we are to follow when we understand that it is our Master, Redeemer and King, יהושע Messiah, that we are to follow!

Especially when we recognise and acknowledge that He is our King and High Priest in the order of מֶלֶךְ־צְדָקָה Malkitseḏeq, which means, **‘my king is righteous’** which comes from the two words: מֶלֶךְ Melek - Strong’s H4428 meaning, **‘king’** and צְדָקָה tseḏeq – Strong’s H6664!

We are told in:

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 6:25 “And it is righteousness for us when we guard to do all this command before יהוה our Elohim, as He has commanded us.”**

The Hebrew word used here for ‘righteousness’ is צְדָקָה tseḏeqah – Strong’s H6666 meaning, **‘righteousness, righteous acts, merits, righteous deeds’** and is the feminine form of צְדָקָה tseḏeq – Strong’s H6664.

To follow **righteousness alone** is to follow our Master and Elohim, and King of Righteousness, יהושע Messiah.

When looking at the word of מֶלֶךְ־צְדָקָה Malkitseḏeq, in the ancient pictographic script, we are able to get a better understanding of ‘who’ it is that we are to follow, and follow alone, as we guard His Torah!

The Hebrew word מֶלֶךְ־צְדָקָה Malkitseḏeq – Strong’s H4442 which means, **‘my king is righteous’**, is pictured in the ancient pictographic script, as follows:



### Mem - מ:

The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as **'water'**, and also carries the meaning of **'chaos'** (from the storms of the sea) and can also picture that which is **mighty** or massive as well as the unknown.

We are also able to understand this letter as representing **the nations**, for the nations are often likened to the seas in Scripture. Knowing this letter represents **'water'**, we are also able to see how this can render for us the meaning of **'washing'** or **'cleansing'**.

### Lamed - ל:

The ancient script has this letter as , and is pictured as a **'shepherd's staff'**, can give the meaning of **'to or toward'** and can represent that which pushes or pulls a flock in a direction, and can speak of **authority** or a yoke that is used to lead and guide, as well as the ability to bring back by Authority.

### Kaph – כ:

The ancient pictographic script has this letter pictured as –  – which is a picture of an **open palm of a hand** and can symbolise that to which submission is given – **'under the hand'**. This also can picture for us a palm or palm branch, from the curved palm shape, picturing our praise to the One to whom we submit.

### Yod – י:

In the Ancient Script, this is the letter **'yad or yod'** which is pictured as –  – which is the picture of **an arm and hand** and carries the meaning of **'work, make, throw'** from the primary functions of the arm and hand and also represents worship or giving thanks in the extending of hands as a gesture of this.

This also reveals to us a stretched-out arm and hand.

### Tsadey - צ:

The Ancient picture for this letter is , which is **'a man on his side'**, and it can represent the act of lying on one's side in order to hunt or chase, when crouching I concealment, as well as **'laying one's self down for another'**.

We can also see how this can represent that which comes forth from the side! This can also picture for us a fish hook, giving us the meaning of **'hunt or fish'**.

Dalet – ד:

The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as a 'tent door'. It can also have the meaning of 'a back and forth movement', as one goes back and forth through a tent door, and so speaks of an access point. It can also carry the meaning of 'dangle' or hanging as the tent door would hang from the roof pole of the tent. It speaks a great deal in terms of understanding the door of the tent of appointment as the only means of access.

Quph - ק:

In the ancient script this letter is pictured as , a 'horizon' and depicts the elements of 'time', as it pictures the sun in its rising and setting. It therefore carries the meaning of 'circle' or 'to go around', representing for us both, appointed cycles or times as well as eternity.

This can very well picture for us 'consistency' in guarding the commands without compromise, as we do not neglect to adhere to the commands of the House!

From these 7 letters, we can see how Messiah has indeed become High Priest forever, in the order of Malkitseq, and the individual pictures of this High Priest and King of Shalēm, can render for us the meaning of:

**THE NATIONS THAT ARE LED BY THE HAND, AND SUBMIT TO, THE ONE WHO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US, FOR HE IS THE DOOR TO ETERNAL LIFE IN HIM!**

Or

**THE MIGHTY RIGHTEOUS KING TO WHOM WE SUBMIT AND GIVE OUR PRAISE, HAS REVEALED HIS OUTSTRETCHED ARM AND HAND, AND IS THE ONE WHO LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US, GIVING US ACCESS TO ETERNAL LIFE WITH HIM!**

True righteousness – that is to guard to do all that our Master, Redeemer and King has commanded us to do, through His Torah and commands – delivers from death!

We, as children of the promise, are equipped to give our lives as a daily living sacrifice unto Elohim, as we faithfully submit to and walk in His commands!

**Galatyiim/Galatians 4:28-31 "And we, brothers, as Yitsḥaq was, are children of promise. 29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him born according to the Spirit, so also now. 30 But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the female servant and her son, for the son of the female servant shall by no means be heir with the son of the free woman." 31 Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the female servant but of the free woman."**

Children of the Promise are children of the free woman – this is a clear lesson, on how we walk according to the Torah of Freedom, for it was the children of the free woman, that went to Mount Sinai to receive the Covenant of Marriage from Elohim! Those who say there is no need for Torah observance, are misled in their understanding, for those without the Torah, are children of the slave woman, and can never serve, as a royal priesthood, in the order of Malkitsēdeq.

### **Verse 21-22 – NO ASHĒRAH – NO PILLARS**

What is very interesting here, is that this verse is very fitting, in light of the call to appoint judges and officers within your gates and pursue righteousness and maintain proper right-ruling without partiality, as the command to not plant an Ashĕrah pole, near the slaughter place of יהוה is clear, in declaring that there should be no practices of paganism, in the places where our worship is to take place, or where right-ruling is to be made, and from where legal rulings are to come from!

יהוה hates these Ashĕrim and pillars – and what He hates, we too should hate!

Ashĕrah was a Kena'anite deity that was represented by a carved wooden image implanted into the ground, usually adjacent to an altar that was dedicated to Ba'al.

While there is no physical description given to us, in Scripture, of what an Ashĕrah looked like, whether it was a tree or a pole or some kind of tree symbol or image, it was an object that was constructed by man, and was made, set up and built for worship purposes.

What we find all over today, is pillars or steeples that are set up in places that claim to have the right-rulings of Elohim, when, in fact, they distort the truth, and this יהוה hates!

What we see happening in many homes today, is a type of an Ashĕrah being placed next to fireplaces in homes, in the form of Christmas trees; and this is a picture of an Ashĕrah being planted near a slaughter place; and so, is an image of how so many have in fact twisted the right-ruling of יהוה, by incorporating pagan practices of worship within their own homes/gates; and by doing, so submit themselves to a corrupt code of man-made theologies, that guide their unrighteous worship practices, which are nothing more than abominable in the eyes of יהוה.

**Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 10:3-5 “For the prescribed customs of these peoples are worthless, for one cuts a tree from the forest, work for the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. 4 “They adorn it with silver and gold, they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it does not topple. 5 “They are like a rounded post, and they do not speak. They have to be carried, because they do not walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they do no evil, nor is it in them to do any good.”**

This above passage is a clear picture of the setting up of “Christmas trees” in the home – which is a modern rendition of an Ashĕrah that is forbidden by יהוה.

Sadly, as we know through records in Scripture, we see that Yisra'el neglected to heed this very clear command.

The more that Yisra'el increased and bettered their land, the more they profaned themselves by making pillars, which were erected as huge monuments, pillars or standing stones and were often built in a prescribed form that had cultic meanings to them along with pagan altars.

This traces back to Nimrod worship, as these were actually phallic symbols of fertility. When Constantine, the father of the church and mixed religion of Christianity, issued a decree and mandated that everyone in the Roman Empire was to become a Christian, many temples were turned into churches and tall pillars were placed on top of the buildings for added visibility – known also as '**steeple**s' – something we know and see very clearly all around us in every city and suburb today!

The Bride has profaned her worship and integrated pagan idolatry, as a means and form that ultimately led to formalised religion, which clearly distorts the right-ruling of יהוה.

There is coming a day when יהוה will destroy all the steeples and pillars and pagan worship places!

The Hebrew root word for '**pillars**' is מַצֵּבָה matstsebah – Strong's H4676 which means, '**a pillar or stump, obelisk**' and also can refer to a pillar represented by a monument or personal memorial statue; as it comes from the word נָצַב natsab - Strong's H5324 meaning, '**stand, to take one's stand, erected**'.

In **Shemoth/Exodus 34:13**, **Debarim/Deuteronomy 7:5** and **Debarim/Deuteronomy 12:3** Yisra'el was clearly instructed to '**smash**' and '**break down**' the pillars; and knowing this makes it clear that no pillars should be erected or made or set up for worship!

To set up pillars, which יהוה hates, is a clear violation of the pure and undefiled worship that is called for.

Setting up a pillar is a clear defiance against the torah of Elohim, and metaphorically speaking, this can also render for us the setting up of man-made theologies and doctrines and teachings of men, as the teachings which the masses must follow, while the True Teachings of the Torah are cast aside and neglected!

The picture of setting up a pillar, is also a great metaphor of pride and stubbornness to submitting to the guarding of the Torah.

The Hebrew word used here for '**hate**' comes the primitive root word שָׂנֵא sane – Strong's H8130 which means, '**to hate, detest, turn against**', and anyone who does what Elohim hates, will find themselves being detestable to Elohim and He will turn Himself against those who continue to do what He hates!

We must hate that which יהוה hates!!!

In the message to the assembly in Ephesos, we are told that יהושע had known their works and labours and endurance, and how they did not bear evil ones and tries those who claimed to be emissaries, but were false.

The thing that יהושע had against this assembly was that they had left their first love! The clear rebuke given to this assembly, was the fact that they had grown cold and was commanded to remember from where they had fallen, repent and repeat their first works! He was calling them back to obedience!

One thing Ephesos had going for them, at this stage, was that they hated the works of the Nikolaites.

The word Νικολαΐτης Nikolaitēs – Strong's G3531 means, '*destruction of the people*', who were a sect of people that were charged with adhering to the teaching of Bil'am and causing the people of Elohim to stumble!

While it is one thing to hate evil, we must never let our love for the Truth grow cold through compromise and sin!

## CHAPTER 17

### Verse 1 – No blemished worship!

This verse speaks loud and clear – do not bring to יהוה anything that is blemished or evil! In other words, '**do not give what is not your best!**' We are to give our best and nothing less!

The Hebrew word that is translated as 'blemish' is מום mum – Strong's H3971 which means, '*blemish, defect, spot, stain*' and can represent both a physical defect as well as a moral stain.

The Greek word used in the LXX (Septuagint) for 'blemish' is μῶμος mōmos – Strong's G3470 which means, '*blemish, blame, disgrace, insult, of mean who are a disgrace to society*', and this word is only used once in the Renewed Writings when speaking of this used in the objective and concrete sense of false teachers, who by reason of their moral libertinism are felt to be "**defacing blemishes**", as they revel in their own deceptions while feasting with set-apart ones!

**Kěpha Bět/2 Peter 2:12-13 "But these, like natural unreasoning beasts, having been born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheme that which they do not know, shall be destroyed in their destruction, 13 being about to receive the wages of unrighteousness, deeming indulgence in the day of pleasure, spots and blemishes, revelling in their own deceptions while they feast with you"**

**Blemished worship is no worship unto יהוה at all!!!**

**Mal'aki/Malachi 1:13-14** “And you said, ‘Oh, what weariness!’ and you sneered at it,” said יהוה of hosts. “And you brought in plunder, and the lame, and the sick – thus you have brought in the offering! Should I accept this from your hand?” said יהוה. 14 “But cursed be the deceiver who has a male in his flock, and makes a vow, but is slaughtering to יהוה what is blemished. For I am a great Sovereign,” said יהוה of hosts, “and My Name is feared among nations.”

Listen to what verse 8 says:

**Mal'aki/Malachi 1:8** “And when you present the blind as a slaughtering, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Bring it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favourably?” said יהוה of hosts.”

Bring it to you governor – would he be pleased with you?

WOW – so many are guilty of what Yisra’el was guilty of back then!

They bring their second best to יהוה, while they would not dare step out of line with their employers lest they get fired!

What I am saying here, is simply that so many today, do not bring their best, in their worship or drawing near to יהוה – it is blemished and their commitment, or lack thereof, is very evident!

A small example is in time-keeping: we see it over and over how so many just simply neglect to keep to proper time schedules in their worship to יהוה, as they will continually show up late for set-apart gatherings or called meetings and find a way of leaving early when they are seemingly bored, while they would never be late or leave work early for in fear of losing their job!

What יהוה is saying here to Yisra’el is loud and clear for us today – and that is this – serve your employers the way you serve Me and see if they would accept your standard of work performance!!!

While we must never neglect to diligently submit to all authority and work with a true spirit of excellence, we must be careful not to allow that spirit of excellence to be found lacking in our worship to Elohim of Hosts!

**Mishlě/Proverbs 15:8** “The slaughtering of the wrong ones is an abomination to יהוה, but the prayer of the straight is His delight.”

If your worship is in anyway blemished, then know that it is an abomination to יהוה.

יהוה does not want that which you are happy to get rid of – and we cannot give Him leftovers!!!

Wrong and blemished worship is an abomination to יהוה!

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘abomination’ is תועבה to’ebah – Strong’s H8441 which means, ‘**abomination, abominable thing, detestable thing, object of loathing**’, from which the verb for ‘utterly hate’ - תעב ta’ab – Strong’s H8581 which means, ‘**to abhor, despise, reject**’ is derived.

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘slaughterings’ comes from the root word זבח zebah - Strong’s H2077 which means, ‘**thank offerings, sacrifice, feasting**’:

**Tehillah/Psalm 4:5 “Offer slaughterings of righteousness, and trust in יהוה.”**

Any form of offering and thanksgiving, done outside of righteousness (which is to guard the commands), is an abomination to Elohim!

**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 15:9 “The way of the wrong one is an abomination to יהוה, but He loves him who pursues righteousness.”**

The Hebrew word for ‘way’ is דרך derek – Strong’s H1870 which means, ‘**way, road, distance, journey**’ and is from the word דרך darak – Strong’s H1869 which means, ‘**to tread or march**’ and so speaks of our walk; our every step that we take.

The way of the wrong one is an abomination, for the wrong one does not walk in or pursue righteousness, but rather walks in the broad path of vain and false traditions that leads to death!

Even our thoughts matter:

**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 15:26 “Evil thoughts are an abomination to יהוה, but pleasant words are clean.”**

What we think matters, and we need to be meditating on the Torah day and night, instead of allowing our thoughts to wander and day dream of dysfunctional matters that do not profit!

We are to take care of our thought life, because if we do not, we might find ourselves saying things we should not! Think before you speak... we all need to heed that advice! Blemished thoughts, words and deeds are an abomination to יהוה.

**Verse 2** – makes sense, in light of **verse 1**, in showing that יהוה is ultimately not talking about animals, but people!

**Tas’loniqim Aleph/1 Thessalonians 5:14 “And we appeal to you, brothers, warn those who are disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.”**

The Greek word used here for ‘disorderly’ is ἄτακτος ataktos – Strong’s G813 which means, ‘**out of ranks, inordinate, deviating from prescribed order or rule**’.

We are to warn those who deviate from the right-ruling of יהוה.

Anyone who does ‘evil’!

The Hebrew word that is used here for ‘evil’ is רע ra – Strong’s H7451 meaning, ‘**bad, evil, wicked, harmful**’.

This word is often expressed in the feminine as רָעָהּ ra'ah – Strong's H7463 which is from the same as רָע roa – Strong's H7455 which means, *'badness, evil'*.

The Hebrew word for 'good', as we have discussed before, is טוֹב tob – Strong's H2896 and carries the meaning, *'pleasant, good, agreeable, beautiful, to be pleasing, done well'*.

In the true understanding of this word טוֹב tob we can see that it may best be translated in most cases as 'functional', for when יְהוָה said in Berēshith/Genesis 1:31 that when He saw all that He had made, that He said it was very good.

What He saw was His creation functioning properly and working the way it should and this is why it was 'good'.

The opposite to טוֹב tob (good) is evil which is Hebrew is רָע ra – Strong's H7451 meaning, *'bad, evil, wicked, harmful'*.

Just as we understand that טוֹב tob represents that which is 'functional', we can then see that רָע ra represents that which is 'dysfunctional', which simply put speaks of that which reveals and abnormal and unhealthy lifestyle that is not functioning as it should.

We may often think something is good, yet if it is not 'functional', according to the plumb line of the Torah of יְהוָה, then we had best be careful to consider our steps!

In other words, we can see today, by the lawlessness of many, that the inclinations of their thoughts of their heart is only dysfunction, as the refusal to submit to the perfect Torah and function according to it through complete obedience is seen by the fruit of lawlessness!

To transgress His Covenant, is to pass over the needed obedience to the Covenants of promise, that the Blood of Messiah grafts us in to!

The Hebrew word translated here are 'transgressing' is עָבַר abar – Strong's H5674 meaning, *'to pass over, through or by, to pass on'*, and is used here in the negative sense in referring to one who 'overlooks' or refuses to submit to the Torah and the walking in obedience to the Covenant!

It is from this word, that we get the word - עִבְרִי Ibri – Strong's H5680 which in English is 'Hebrew' and means, *'the one from beyond, the one who crossed over'*.

Abram was the first person to be called a Hebrew (Berēshith/Genesis 14:13) and we recognise this by his 'crossing over' the Euphrates River, when leaving his father's house and going into the Promised Land at the call and instruction of Elohim!

Our 'passing over' or becoming a 'Hebrew' entails our ability to clearly listen to the commands of Elohim and guard TO DO THEM!!

What we recognise here, in the use of this word expressing the opposite of obedience to the Covenant, we must take note of how so many people claim to be 'saved' and think that they have been redeemed by the Blood of Messiah, yet their transgression of the Covenant, by their passing over the need to be obedient to the Commands of Elohim, they are in fact passing over His Covenants of promise instead of being grafted into them!

And those who have not been grafted into the Covenants of promise by the Blood of Messiah and stay in Him through the continued and steadfast obedience to His commands will be 'passed over' for destruction!

We have 'crossed over' or have 'passed over' by the Blood of the Passover Lamb, יהושע Messiah, and as we 'stay in Him', we are hidden from His wrath and His 'passing over' of His opponents in anger!

**Shemoth/Exodus 12:23** "And יהוה shall pass on to smite the Mitsrites, and shall see the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, and יהוה shall pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you."

In these clear instructions, given to Yisra'el, in regards to the application of the blood being applied to the doorposts, יהוה gave a very severe and clear warning, that the houses which did not have the blood of the Passover Lamb on the doorposts, would face the death in the house, while those who had done as commanded would be 'passed over'!

The Hebrew word that is translated here in this verse as 'pass on', in reference to the smiting of the Mitsrites, is עָבַר *abar* – Strong's H5674, from which the Hebrew word for 'wrath' - עִבְרָה - *ebrāh* – Strong's H5678 comes!

The Hebrew word translated as 'pass' in reference to יהוה passing over the door of the houses that applied the blood of the Passover Lamb is פָּסַח *pasah* – Strong's H6452 which means, 'to pass or spring over', and it is from this verb that we get the Hebrew word פֶּסַח *pesah* - Strong's H6543 which means, 'Passover, Passover offerings, the festival of Passover'.

The warning here was clear back then, and the same warning still applies today.

יהוה would 'pass on' and 'smite' the Mitsrites, but 'pass' over those who had been covered by the blood!!!

Herein lies a great truth – be covered by the Blood or be destroyed!

We know that the Master יהושע Messiah tells us that unless we eat the flesh of the Son of Aḏam and drink His blood, we possess no life in ourselves, and it is through our immersion in His Name that we are given access to the partaking of the Passover Meal and Matzot, by which we are marked in our worship and sealed in Him, as long as we 'stay in Him'.

Having been grafted in, by the Blood of Messiah, through our immersion and the proper partaking of His Feasts, we stay in Him by guarding His word, keeping His Sabbath and Feasts and are able to stand firm, before the Son of Aḏam.

As Abraham ‘crossed over’ the Euphrates and became the first ‘Hebrew’, we too realise that we who have ‘**Come out of Babel**’ (which is located ‘across the river’) have crossed over into the marvellous Light of the Master, and being hidden in Him are appointed deliverance and not wrath!

**Tas’loniqim Aleph/ 1 Thessalonians 5:9 “Because Elohim did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain deliverance through our Master יהושע Messiah”**

As we consider the Day of the wrath of יהוה approaching near, we are able to hear the clear warning:

## **CROSS OVER OR YOU WILL BE CROSSED OVER**

or better put:

## **PASSOVER OR YOU WILL BE PASSED OVER!**

Do not be found to be ‘passing over’ or transgressing the Covenant, but rather, remain in the Covenant, as one who has passed over, from darkness, into the marvellous light of our Master and Elohim!

### **Verses 3-5**

These verses tell us what should happen to the disorderly or rebellious!

Anyone who has broken the Covenant, by worshipping other mighty ones, or is bowing down and worshipping the sun, moon or stars, must be dealt with in the right manner. Firstly, a proper search must be carried out to see if it is true and if it is, then the transgressor must be brought to the gates of the city and be stoned to death!

The Hebrew root word that is translated here as ‘gates’ is שַׁעַר sha’ar – Strong’s H8179 meaning, ‘**gate, door, entrance**’ and comes from the root verb שָׁעַר sha’ar – Strong’s H8176 which means, ‘**to think, split open, reason out, calculate, reckon, estimate**’; and so, we can see how it is at the ‘gates’ of the city where right-ruling and justice was proclaimed and carried out before all!

The door posts of our homes/gates are where we are to write the commands of Elohim, and anyone who passes through our gates must adhere to His standards! Once again, judgement is done according to the right-ruling of the city or house!

And, in our case, according to the Word of Elohim, which is written upon the doorposts of our hearts and homes, as we are the dwelling place of the Most-High!

Worshipping or bowing down to anything other than Elohim, is idolatry and idolatry is the blemish of blemishes, as the created gets worshipped above the Creator!

**Romiyim/Romans 1:20-25** “For since the creation of the world His invisible *qualities* have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, both His everlasting power and Mightiness, for them to be without excuse, 21 because, although they knew Elohim, they did not esteem Him as Elohim, nor gave thanks, but became vain in their reasonings, and their undiscerning heart was darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the esteem of the incorruptible Elohim into the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds and of four-footed beasts and of reptiles. 24 Therefore Elohim gave them up to uncleanness in the lust of their hearts, to disrespect their bodies among themselves, 25 who changed the truth of Elohim into the falsehood, and worshipped and served what was created rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Aměn.”

Today, we see how so many get caught up in astrology and will read their horoscopes daily in order to be guided by what is being foretold to them through the signs in the heavens – this is witchcraft and idolatry – no matter how pretty one tries to make it is a glossy coloured magazine with nice pictures!!!

These practices must be confronted with the Truth and ‘**put to death**’ with the pure witness of the Word.

#### **Verse 6**

There must be at least two witnesses for any matter to be established as a valid accusation against another and no one can be put to death at the mouth of one witness!

This provides the provision for the ability for the judge to consider the case carefully and see if in fact the two witnesses line up.

These witnesses would need to carry the necessary evidence to support their accusation against and accused.

**Ib’rim/Hebrews 10:28-29** “**Anyone who has disregarded the Torah of Mosheh dies without compassion on the witness of two or three witnesses. 29 How much worse punishment do you think shall he deserve who has trampled the Son of Elohim underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was set apart as common, and insulted the Spirit of favour?**”

This is a very sobering verse, in the Renewed Writings (N.T.), as it makes it very clear that those who disregard the work of Messiah and neglect the very Covenant that He renewed in His own blood

This passage is also referred to by Messiah in regards to a brother who sins against you:

**Mattithyahu/Matthew 18:15-17** “**And if your brother sins against you, go and reprove him, between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 “But if he does not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be established.’ 17 “And if he refuses to hear them, say it to the assembly. And if he refuses even to hear the assembly, let him be to you like a gentile and a tax collector.”**

Sha'ul tells Timotiyos not to receive an accusation against an elder except by the witness of two or three (**Timotiyos Aleph/1 Timothy 5:19**), and what we must recognise is that an accusation without proof will not stand!

**Witness:**

The Hebrew word translated as 'witness' is עֵד **ed** – Strong's H5707 meaning, '**a witness, evidence**' and comes from the root word עָוַד **ud/ood** – Strong's H5749, which means, '**to return, go about, repeat, do again, encircle, supports**'.

When we consider these two root words in the ancient pictographic script, we can glean further insight regarding a true witness!

The Hebrew root word עֵד **ed** – Strong's H5707 meaning, '**a witness, evidence**', in the ancient pictographic script looks like this:



**Ayin - ע:**



The original pictograph for this letter is  and represents the idea of '**seeing and watching**', as well as '**knowledge**'. as the eye is the 'window of knowledge'.

**Dalet – ד:**



The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as a '**tent door**'. It can also have the meaning of '**a back and forth movement**', as one goes back and forth through a tent door, and so speaks of an access point. It can also carry the meaning of '**dangle**' or hanging as the tent door would hang from the roof pole of the tent.

It speaks a great deal in terms of understanding the door of the tent of appointment as the only means of access.

Combined these two letters mean:

## SEE THE DOOR

When we consider that יהושע Messiah is **The Door**, then we further see our need to continually be looking at Him and praising Him as we diligently are serving in spirit and truth, guarding **to do** all His commands – as we look continually into the perfect Torah of Freedom and not forget what we look like!

This word comes from the root word עֹדֵד *ud/ood* – Strong’s H5749, which means, ‘**to return, go about, repeat, do again, encircle, supports**’, which is another great practical lesson in understanding how we are to continually be meditating on the Word of Elohim, as we also find ourselves repeating the cycle of studying His Torah each week, doing it again and again!

In the ancient pictographic script this word עֹדֵד *ud/ood* – Strong’s H5749 has an additional letter and is written as follows:



As you will notice, this word has the extra letter in the middle:

**Waw/Vav – ך:**



The ancient script has this letter pictured as , which is a ‘**peg**’ or ‘**tent peg**’, which was used for securing or tying the tent or other items. The possibility of it having a Y-shape is to show that it prevents the rope from slipping off. The root meaning of this letter is ‘**to add, secure or hook**’. It is by the work of Messiah, in His Own Blood, that has secured for us His Covenants of promise, to which we are added to; and His righteousness stands forever secured in Him!

This further strengthens our understanding of our need to be looking to the Princely Leader and Perfecter of our belief, יהושע Messiah, The Word made flesh, who now sits on high! For He is the Perfect Witness of the Word that was made flesh and came to secure for us the Renewed Covenant in His Own Blood, that we may be added to Him and be secured of everlasting life, as we guard His commands and stay in Him and be trustworthy witnesses of who he is as we guard the commands and bear the witness of Messiah!

יהושע Messiah is the Trustworthy witness:

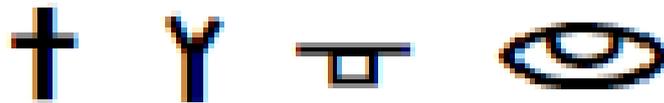
**Ḥazon/Revelation 1:5 “and from יהושע Messiah, the trustworthy witness, the first-born from the dead, and the ruler of the sovereigns of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood”**

We are called to be true and trustworthy witnesses of our Master and Elohim as we guard His commands and possess His witness:

**Ḥazon/Revelation 14:12 “Here is the endurance of the set-apart ones, here are those guarding the commands of Elohim and the belief of יהושע.”**

Those who do not bear the witness of Messiah and guard His commands will stand condemned as the Truth will witness against them!

Another word derived from this root word, is the word that is used to describe the Ark of the 'witness', which is the Hebrew word עֵדוּת **eduth** – Strong's H5715 which means, '**testimony, witness, ordinance, warning**', and once again, as we look at the ancient form of this word we continue to get further 'witness' of the Word of Elohim, as it is pictured as:



As you will see that there is once again another letter used here, which is:

**Taw** – ת



The ancient script has this letter as  which is pictured as **two crossed sticks**, and can represent for us '**seal, covenant, mark or sign**'; as this once again points to the complete work of Messiah in the renewal of the Covenant in His Blood that brings the two Houses of Yisra'el and Yehudah together in Him, as One, for He is not only the '**aleph**', but is also the '**taw**' – the beginning and the end of all creation!

It was on the lid of atonement of the Ark of the Witness that blood was to be sprinkled upon on Yom Kippur, which was a shadow picture of the complete work of Messiah, who by His own Blood entered the Most Set-Apart place in the Heavens to make atonement for sins, and He continually intercedes for us who stay in Him and are waiting for Him as we possess His witness, unto deliverance, when He shall come again apart from sin!

Why I am sharing this with you, is so that you can get a better understanding from a True Hebraic Scriptural perspective the witness that stands against those who are disobedient and are following corrupted man-made practices that are rooted in pagan worship rites, and have despised His Word, versus the true trustworthy witness that guards the commands of our Master!

### **Verse 7**

The witnesses who make the accusation, and report the one who has been caught sinning, must be the first to actually do something about it, and not leave it to someone else to do the work of putting to death the accused who is found guilty!

Having said that, we must recognise that this is not giving the go ahead for the accusers to take the law into their own hands, as they must come before the proper authorities before justice can be carried out!

What this speaks of, is that while it may be very uncomfortable to confront a brother who is sinning, we cannot look the other way, as we have a responsibility toward each other in maintaining purity in the community!

**Lukas/Luke 17:3-4** “Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. 4 “And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day comes back to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

**Mattithyahu/Matthew 18:15-17** “And if your brother sins against you, go and reprove him, between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 “But if he does not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be established.’ 17 “And if he refuses to hear them, say it to the assembly. And if he refuses even to hear the assembly, let him be to you like a gentile and a tax collector.”

Keeping quiet, causes one to become as guilty as the one who has sinned, but this process also has another aspect to it, and that is, that the accuser must look the accused in the eye before the authorities and this alone can be a great deterrent in speaking lies about a brother!

So many make false accusations about others behind their backs and when confronted about an issue face to face with the one they have falsely accused they are often lost for words and are exposed as having lied!

The command to not bear false witness also comes into play here and if the witness is found to be lying and having given a false witness, he himself would be liable to face the death penalty!

That is why we recognise the wisdom from Messiah in telling us to go and sort the matter out first between each other and if the accused does not acknowledge and repent then take further action with the witness of others.

The goal of these commands is always to seek the right way of restoring a brother who has sinned and also makes the community aware that sin must be dealt with and if left alone will have greater ramifications on the whole body!

**Verse 8** describes what must be done if a matter cannot be settled locally; in other words when a matter arises whereby it is hard to render the correct ruling due to lack of insight or knowledge in an area then go to where יהוה chooses.

As far as possible we must do our best at keeping matters within our gates and when they cannot then go to a higher authority as given by Elohim.

It is not necessary to run to the ‘pastor’ every time a matter arises – first try to sort it out within your own gates/home and if you cannot then go to those whom יהוה has appointed over you!

### **Verse 8-12**

When a matter is too hard for you to sort out and deal with then you must go to those who have been appointed over you as leaders and elders who shall give you the right-ruling on the matter.

When you seek the advice and right-ruling from those who have been appointed to teach and lead, then listen to their advice and right-ruling, which must be in accordance with the Word of Elohim.

Many times, people go to their leaders with no intention of actually listening to sound advice and right-ruling but rather just to pour out their complaint in the hope of seeking a word that they want to hear, thinking that what they hear will excuse away their complacency or lack of obedience.

In other words, we find at times that people will go to their appointed leaders and share how hard it is for them to be obedient, and instead of hearing the truth that they are to do what is right, they are simply seeking an approval for their waywardness and, in a way, want someone who they feel is 'over them spiritually' to say, "It's ok" and give approval to their wilful ignorance of their required duties; and here it is clear – listen and do what they tell you to do!!!

Listen to what they tell you to do according to the Torah in which they teach you and do not turn right or left!!!

There are many, who seek advice on a difficult matter and when they hear the truth they go away and continue to do their own thing and this should not be!

**Ih'rim/Hebrews 13:17** “**Obey those leading you, and be subject to them, for they watch for your lives, as having to give account. Let them do so with joy and not groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.**”

The Greek word used here for 'obey' is the primary root verb **πείθω peithō** – Strong's **G3982** which means, '**to persuade, to put confidence in, to follow, have confidence and rely upon**'.

To obey those leading you, involves action, and a confident response to the one who has been appointed by **יְהוָה** Messiah, to equip the body!

The Greek word for 'subject' is **ὑπέικω hupeikō** – Strong's **G5226** which means, '**to resist no longer, submit, give way, yield to authority**', and comes from two Greek words:

1) **ὑπό hupo** – Strong's **G5259** which means '**under, in subjection to**', and

2) **εἴκω eikō** – which means, '**to yield, submit, retire**'. In other words, the instruction here is clear – stop resisting the need to submit to and obey those who have been appointed over you!

To resist the leadership of those appointed over you, would be of no advantage to you!

**Timotiyos Aleph/1 Timothy 5:17** “**Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double respect, especially those who labour in the word and teaching.**”

**Tas'Ioniqim Aleph/1 Thessalonians 5:12-13** “**But brothers, we beg you to know those who labour among you, and are over you in the Master and admonish you, <sup>13</sup> and to hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.**”

This does not give anyone the authority to ‘rule’ over others and dictate their lives to them, but what it is saying here, is that there must be respect shown to those whom יהוה has chosen and appointed over you and that you are to give heed to their instructions and teachings, as long as they are in line with the sound teachings and right-rulings of the Torah! Do not disregard their advice and make it hard for those who are over you in Messiah – for that would be of no advantage to you!!!

The one who does not listen and remains arrogant was put to death.

Wilful rejection of sound the sound teaching and right-ruling of the Torah, will result in a fearsome judgement!

**Ib’rim/Hebrews 10:26-27 “For if we sin purposely after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a slaughter offering for sins, 27 but some fearsome anticipation of judgment, and a fierce fire which is about to consume the opponents.”**

What is also a great lesson in receiving sound advice is that the advice must also be given upon the basis of the Word and 2 or three witnesses at least must be presented as establishing the matter, rather than taking a passage out of context and forming a false right-ruling that does not witness with the rest of Scripture!

**Verse 11** makes it clear that you are to do ‘**according to the Torah in which they teach you**’ and ‘**according to the right-ruling which they show you**’!!!

Do not turn aside from the way that they declare to you!!!

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘**declared**’ comes from the root word נָגַד **nagad** – **Strong’s H5046** and being written in the ‘**hiphil active**’ tense, which is the ‘**causative action of the verb**’, it can be rendered as meaning, ‘**to declare, announce, publish, proclaim**’. This Torah instruction clearly highlights for us that there are to be some who have been appointed over the body, in order to teach and instruct in matters of the Torah and to declare proper right-ruling to those who seek the Truth.

Sadly, we find today so many people who claim to be torah-observant followers of Messiah, yet they refuse to submit to an assembly or fellowship and refuse to obey and be subject to those whom Elohim has appointed over a fellowship or assembly.

Too many tend to think that they do not need to be told what to do and what they fail to realise is that their resistance to submitting to the appointed authority of Elohim will be of no advantage to them!

The one who acts arrogantly will be put to death!

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘**arrogantly**’ in **verse 12** is זָדוֹן **zadon** – **Strong’s H2087** which means, ‘**insolence, presumptuousness, arrogance, pride**’, and comes from the root verb זָדַן **zud** - **Strong’s H2102** which means, ‘**to boil up, seethe, act proudly or rebelliously, ne rebelliously proud**’.

So many ‘boil up’, so to speak, when they are simply told what the Torah teaches and instructs, especially when they do not want to ‘change their ways’ and do what is required!

Those who resist the Truth and reject those who are appointed over them to teach and give proper right-ruling will find themselves at risk of being put to death when the Master comes. Here, we are told that the arrogant and proud shall die, so as to purge the evil out of our midst, and we must take caution to not be found being arrogant or proud in resisting what is being instructed for us to do, according to the Torah!

### **Verse 13 – Hear and Fear!**

The execution of proper right-ruling, must be done for all to see, so that all will hear and fear and no longer be arrogant and proud!

Today, we find that arrogance and pride is not being dealt with, as this Torah teaches, as most are afraid to confront those who are acting in arrogance, for fear of rejection or criticism, and this should not be so.

When an arrogant one is dealt with correctly, others should be clearly warned to not become arrogant, or walk, in stubbornness and pride.

### **1 – Hear**

In Hebrew, this comes from the root word שָׁמַע 'shama' – Strong's H8085, which carries the meaning not just simply to hear, but rather to *'listen with attention, comprehend and discern, give heed to what is being spoken'*.

So, when we hear the words, *'he who has ears let him hear what the Spirit says'*, we are able to clearly see, that it is only those who are truly standing on their feet (that is those who are faithfully obeying and walking in the commands) that will have ears to hear.

Any disobedience to the commands, or any rejection to walking according to the Torah of Elohim, will result in one being deaf to the Spirit, and so, be unable to be led forth in the Truth!

Those who have ears, as they stand firm on their feet, will hear the clear instructions and guard to do them. Certainly, we see that this kind of hearing called for is not very apparent among the masses today who are simply having ears tickled and not listening attentively because they forget what they hear and are doing that which **Ya'aqob/James** warns against – do not be like a man who looks in the mirror and forgets what he sees!

### **2 – FEAR**

In Hebrew this comes from the root word יָרָא yare – Strong's H3372 which means, *'to fear, be afraid, reverence, respect'* and in the tense this is written in (qal active), it actually carries the meaning of, *'to stand in awe of, be awed, to reverence, honour, respect'*.

**Qoheleth/Ecclesiastes 12:13** *"Let us hear the conclusion of the entire matter: Fear Elohim and guard His commands, for this applies to all mankind!"*

This word יָרָא yare – Strong's H3372 is used to describe the reverence and respect we ought to have for Elohim, by being dutiful in our obedience; yet when one is disobedient this 'fear' is not out of reverence, but is rather a fear as a result of being afraid for being disobedient and the consequences of the punishment for disobedience that are due! It is used in:

**Berēshith/Genesis 3:10 “And he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid myself.”**

Here, A<sub>d</sub>am was afraid because he had sinned, however we see this same root word - יָרָא yare – Strong’s H3372 being used in a positive sense in:

**Deḅarim/Deuteronomy 6:13 “Fear יהוה your Elohim and serve Him, and swear by His Name.”**

It is this same positive command of our need to ‘fear our Elohim’ that is being used here in this Torah portion.

**Timotiyos Aleph/1 Timothy 5:20 “Reprove those who are sinning, in the presence of all, so that the rest also might fear.”**

This is something that is not done today, in fact, it is scoffed at!

We are to reprove those who are lawless, in front of all, in order that a clear warning goes out for those who think they can be lawless too.

One of the quickest and best ways people learn to be obedient, is by seeing what happens when one is not obedient, and sadly we find that so much sin/lawlessness is overlooked and excused away and no true reproof is taking place under the erroneous interpretation of not being allowed to ‘judge’ another!

These instructions are for the body and while we certainly do not judge anyone outside the body, we do have a responsibility toward Elohim and each other, and that is to make sure that we are all doing our part and walking as we should and when someone is out of line, we are to certainly reprove them accordingly, in order that the rest of the body can learn to fear Elohim!

Please see sermon notes on a message called, “**THOSE FEARING ELOHIM – LISTEN**” under the ‘sermons 2011/2012’ menu on our site (<https://atfotc.com>) or by clicking on the following link:

<https://atfotc.com/those-fearing-elohim-listen/>

### **Verse 14-20**

#### **The rules of the appointed king**

In these verses we see a clear description and commands given, regarding the requirements of any sovereign that was to be set over Yisra’ēl!

Firstly, the king was to be one whom יהוה chooses!!!

We recognise that the appointment of earthly kings, was only as a result of Yisra’ēl wanting a king like the nations around them.

They had a King – יהוה of Hosts – yet they wanted an earthly king in their midst. יהוה gives Yisra’ēl what they want, yet as we can also see, through historical records of Scripture, we also take careful note of how יהוה also gives us what we deserve!!!

There were many wicked kings, which is simply as a result of the wickedness of Yisra'el at the time and He certainly made us pay for our fleshly choice of wanting other kings over us besides Himself, as each king certainly had some problem in their reign and our eyes should be fixed on our true King from above – who is perfect!

The requirements of a king over Yisra'el were perfectly met by **יהושע** Messiah.

**1** – He was to be from among the brothers and not a foreigner, as a foreigner was not likely to judge according to the Torah – **יהושע** is from the Tribe of Yehudah!

**2** – The king was not to increase horses for himself – nor cause people to go back to Mitsrayim to increase horses!

Increasing horses and going to Mitsrayim is symbolic for relying on the arm of the flesh instead of looking to the True Set-Apart One of Yisra'el.

**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 31:1** “**Woe to those who go down to Mitsrayim for help, and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, but who do not look to the Set-apart One of Yisra'el, nor seek יהוה!**”

When the sovereign Yoshiyahu had heard the Torah, which was found in the eighteenth year of his reign, he did a major clean-up of the idolatrous worship that was going on – he broke down the high places and Ashērim and put down the ‘black-robed’ priests, who had defiled the slaughter places and he destroyed all form of false worship, and in the process of doing this we read in:

**Melakim Bet/2 Kings 23:11** “**And he did away with the horses that the sovereigns of Yehudah had given to the sun, at the entrance to the House of יהוה, by the room of Nathan-Melek the eunuch, that were in the court. And he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.**”

As an ancient practice of pagan sun worship, it was common in the east, for nations to dedicate their horses, due to swiftness, to the sun and Greco-Roman though was that they sun’s chariot was drawn by horses.

Those who worshipped the sun, would go out each morning, on their horses, to meet the rising sun.

Yehudah, at this point, had imitated this practice and even kept the ‘horses of the sun’ at the entrance of the House of Elohim!

Amassing horses and going to Mitsrayim we have been commanded not to do – We have been commanded to not go that way again! This is what the king must not do – he was not to lead the nation ‘back’ to ‘sun-worship’.

**3** – The king was not to increase wives for himself lest his hear be turned away to follow his wives, which is exactly what happened to Shelomoh with his many wives and concubines for which he built and altar to each of their pagan mighty ones!

**יהושע** has one wife – Yisra'el!!!

**4** – The king was not to greatly increase silver and gold for himself. The problem with a king building up his own empire is that he thinks only of himself and the subjects of his kingdom will end up being ruled harshly. **יהושע** came to serve and not to be served – this is the greatest humility that can be shown by a king. He has called us out to rule and reign with Him and so all the earth and all that is in it is His, which He does not take for Himself but rather He shall cause us to inherit with Him!

**5** – The requirement of the king was that he was to write a copy of the Torah, so that he would meditate day and night on it and be prosperous and successful, in all he does, as he would learn to fear **יהוה** and do according to the Torah and laws of Elohim.

**יהושע** is the Living Torah – The Word made flesh and, in His Blood, He has written His Torah upon our hearts and minds – and so, by Him putting His Torah in us, He has, in His own blood, written for Himself a copy of the Torah on us, which He ‘reads’ daily, as we are living letters that He reads!!!

**Qorintiyim Bět/2 Corinthians 3:1-6** “**Are we to begin to recommend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? 2 You are our letter, having been written in our hearts, known and read by all men, 3 making it obvious that you are a letter of Messiah, served by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living Elohim, not on tablets of stone but on fleshly tablets of the heart. 4 And such trust we have toward Elohim, through the Messiah. 5 Not that we are competent in ourselves to reckon any matter as from ourselves, but our competence is from Elohim, 6 who also made us competent as servants of a renewed covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit, for the letter kills but the Spirit gives life.**”

We have no need of another earthly king as we serve with joy our True King and Messiah – **יהושע** – who has written His Covenant and Torah upon our hearts!

## CHAPTER 18

### Verse 1-8

#### The priests and Lěwites

The Lěwites have no part or inheritance with Yisra’ěl, as **יהוה** is their inheritance and they are to eat of the offerings of **יהוה**!

While we note that they do not receive an inheritance, among Yisra’ěl, what we must take notice of here, is that while they do not receive any land, they receive another inheritance.

Whatever was brought to **יהוה** they ate and, in this way, they were ‘joined to’ Yisra’ěl in a unique and permanent way!

Today, the ‘**Lěwites and priests**’ are those who teach the Torah and teach the difference between the set-apart and profane and between the clean and unclean, and who teach the necessity to guard the Sabbaths and Feasts of **יהוה**.

In one sense, we can also see that, in Messiah, our High Priest, we have all been chosen to serve Him and know that our inheritance is with Him and He chose His people, as His inheritance and therefore, we recognise how, in Him, we are 'joined' together as One. And while we all have the responsibility of serving as a royal priesthood, we certainly recognise how He has appointed some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and in His body, there are those who are to 'eat' of the offerings given to יהוה by the rest, and as I have said, it is those who are called and appointed to teach and build up the body according to the Torah!

When we see the priests 'right from the people', in **verse 3**, we can learn a great deal from the three parts that are mentioned:

### 1 – Shoulder

The Hebrew root word for 'shoulder' is זרוע zeroa – Strong's H2220 which means, '**arm, shoulder, power, strength**', and comes from the word זרע zara – Strong's H2232 which means, '**to sow, scatter seed, give birth, conceive, plant**', and from this part, as a right of the priest, it pictures for us the part that gets the job done!

The arm, or shoulder, is symbolic of strength and power and that which does the work.

It was by the זרוע zeroa (ARM) of יהוה that Yisra'el were delivered and it is His ARM that works for us our deliverance in Messiah!

We can also see that this also shows us our responsibility, to be strong and of good courage and be active in 'sowing' the seed of the Besorah of Messiah and planting His Good Word into the hearts and minds of others!

The inheritance of those who are 'joined' to יהוה and His service is strength and deliverance!

### 2 – Two cheeks

The Hebrew word that is translated as 'cheeks' is the plural of the word להי lehi – Strong's H3895 which means, '**jaw, cheek**' and comes from an unused root meaning, **to be soft**, which we can understand, from the fleshliness of the cheeks!

This also speaks of that which comes forth from our mouth and how we are to ensure that our words are pure and clean. It also pictures for us the ability to receive correction and be submissive to discipline and not 'bite' back with our mouths when instructed in the Truth! So, a twofold picture of speaking what is right and being teachable!

### 3 – Stomach

The Hebrew word that is translated as 'stomach' comes from the root word קבה qebah – Strong's H6896 which means, '**stomach, maw, belly, body**'.

This word is also translated as 'maw', which is the 'crop' or the receptacle into which food is taken, when swallowing and so, this term can give reference to the first 'stomach' of an animal that chews the cud--where food is digested and returned for further digestion, in order that the greatest nourishment can be given to its offspring.

This is a picture of our need to be meditating on יהוה's word over and over, so that we can feed newer believers, great nourishment from the Truth and be able to feed them what is valuable and able to cause them to grow.

The Torah is not to depart from our mouths as we are to meditate on it day and night!

**Verse 4** speaks of giving your best and what is interesting to note, is that all of the things mentioned here – grain, new wine, oil, fleece of your sheep – all require work before they are given.

The giver does the work so that the priest does not have to and therefore, he can be busy with the duties and responsibilities that יהוה has put upon him.

**Nehemiah/Nehemiah 13:10 “And I learned that the portions for the Lěwites had not been given them, for each of the Lěwites and the singers who did the work had gone back to his field.”**

This verse speaks of how the Lěwites had to go and find work to survive, because the proper support structure given by Elohim was neglected and as a result the proper duties of the Lěwites and priests were neglected!

It is the responsibility of the community to support those appointed by Messiah, to teach and bring right-ruling of His Torah to the community, and therefore, those who have been appointed by Messiah should not have to seek alternative means of income and support for them and their families, if the rest of the community is actually adhering to these instructions of the giving of their tithes, offerings and gifts to יהוה.

#### **Verse 9-12**

**Do not learn to do according to the abominations of those nations!**

The priests and Lěwites were to set the standard, by teaching what was right, so that the community does not go and learn from other nations!

It is when proper sound teaching and instruction in the Torah is neglected, that a community, or society, will seek out other means of instruction and this we must not do. We have the clear instructions of Elohim and therefore have no need of following the practices and traditions of the world!

Do not be ensnared to follow the ways of the nations and inquire about their mighty ones!!!

Don't even ask how they worship, lest you follow their evil and wicked ways!!!

In the context of this passage, we can see that this is a clear pointing toward the way the nations worship and eat before their mighty ones – ways that we should not follow for they are abominable before our Elohim!

Molek was the deity of the Ammonites and Phoenicians who would sacrifice their infants in ritual fertility worship to by passing their infants through fire in the hope of stimulating the favour of their mighty one to return upon them fruitfulness in their lands and on their homes and their wombs.

Before the Yisra'ēlites entered the land, Meḡiddo served as a prominent high place where Kena'anites worshiped fertility deities. Archaeologists have uncovered a large platform where these pagan practices occurred.

The Kena'anites believed that the rains and fertile soil of the coast came from a god named Ba'al.

According to their beliefs, Ba'al lived in the underworld during the dry winter season.

When spring came, Ba'al returned to earth to sleep with his mistress, Asherah (Astarte/Ishtar) – a Kena'anite female deity of fortune and happiness, so that rains would return to the land.

To encourage Ba'al's return, the Kena'anites sacrificed their firstborn sons, burning infants alive.

The priests and priestesses of Ba'al publicly engaged in sexual relations with each other and with the people, hoping to entice Ba'al and Asherah to mate.

The pagans committed these abominable acts for one simple purpose: to gain personal and material prosperity.

Kena'anite worship distorted two of the most beautiful gifts Elohim gave humans: life and the sexual relationship of husband and wife. Elohim placed His people in Kena'an so they could confront the evil practices of pagans with Elohim's truth and love and destroy its practices, while holding fast to and guarding to do all He has commanded his Covenanted People!

Archaeology has turned up urns filled with infants' bones on which "to Molek" is inscribed, and the names of those offering them had names ending in "-yah"; showing that they were Yisra'ēlites.

This was done in the Hinnom Valley outside Yerushalayim, and because this custom was so sickening to יהוה, the righteous king Yoshiyahu changed it to a dumping ground where garbage was burned, since it was no longer fit for any nobler use.

**Melakim Bet/2 Kings 23:10 "And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, so that no man could make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molek."**

Molek simply means, 'the one who rules' and so the text is telling us not to turn over our children to a foreign false deity who rules in the world!

When we understand this ancient practice of 'passing children through the fire to Molek' we get a better picture of some much-needed lessons for us today.

Fire, in Scripture, is also described as that which purifies and when we link this idea to this clear instruction, we need to be on our guard against what we allow our kids to be 'passing through'.

By this, I mean, we are to always recognise that, as parents, our role is to bring up our children in the ways of יהוה; teaching them daily on the matters of His Torah.

What is shaping your child's mind is a question many parents today do not consider as they allow the world to 'shape' their kids into following the ideals and practices of the worldly ways that are at large accepted and even legislated as permissible while some of these permitted practices are abominable before the eyes of Elohim and should be to us too! Passing our kids through the fire to Molek is a subtle danger that many are doing, without even realising it, as the schooling system that is refining and shaping their minds is likened to the fire of Molek, which hoped for a better future and puts its trust in worldly systems of advancement.

Now, while learning is an extremely important part of any child growing up, what I am saying here, is that each parent is still ultimately responsible for their children and what they allow their children to 'pass through'.

While I recognise and know that it is not always possible today for Torah observant families to home-school due to the major pressures of both parents having to work, what we need to realise, is that we all still, as parents, carry the responsibility as to what or how our children's minds are being shaped by and kids cannot be left solely to the world's schooling systems to shape the way they think.

Parents must ultimately be able to train their kids and filter out the junk they may be shown in the world's classroom.

Passing kids through fire is also a picture of abortion, which is in most parts of the world a legalised procedure, and is not something a Torah observant Yisra'elites should even consider!

Giving our offspring to Molek can also be a picture of spoiling our children with materialism or even using our children for personal wealth, which is simply child abuse. By this I mean that many parents push their young kids into performing tasks for money (such as modelling etc.) and make use of gaining wealth and capitalising from their children's talents.

Today, most people find it unthinkable that a culture once burned innocent children alive for the sake of their material prosperity. But when we look closely at our own culture, we see that innocence and purity are still sacrificed today.

The entertainment industry promotes sex with nearly every movie, television program, and CD they create. Pornographers produce magazines, web sites, and films that show blatant disregard for Elohim's sexual values. Why?

Because there are fortunes to be made by selling perversity!

Our culture also cheapens life.

Abortion takes hundreds of lives each day. Cloning and embryonic stem cell researchers destroy tiny innocent lives in the name of scientific progress. And these practices are socially acceptable because our culture values convenience, choice, and prosperity more than the gift of life.

As Followers of Messiah and children of the Most-High EL, we must fight the good fight of faith and not be tainted by such twisted beliefs, but rather teach our children well in the ways of the Torah.

**Mishlê/Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he turns not away from it."**

We have a responsibility as parents – and if we do not take up that responsibility in bringing them up in the ways of the Torah then ‘another that rules’ will. Either we teach them the ‘rule’ of יהוה that they will not turn away from or the Molek of this world that rules the fleshly lusts and desires will refine and shape their values and ethical moral standards according to the abominable ways of the world!

### **No witchcraft!!!**

Sadly, the trend we see, all too often today, is that people would rather listen to a ‘whisperer’ or ‘fortune teller’ than to the One who proclaims the Truth!

Whisperers have a way of sneaking in to people’s lives and causing destruction, and they know full well that if they speak loudly then the mature in the Word will quickly expose them!

Whether or not these wicked ‘whisperers’ who practice divination come true or not is not the point – the point is clearly that divination is to be forbidden as it is a false way of obtaining information in the wrong way.

Seeking one’s ‘fortune’ is strictly forbidden and today many are seeking a “whispering comfort” to ease their stressful lives caused by submitting to worldly system that does not build up but rather only enslaves and breaks down; and so, things like tarot cards, palm reading and crystal balls are totally off limits for the set-apart people of יהוה.

Reading the horoscopes is also a form of divination that is prohibited; but even more subtle that reading one’s horoscope in the weekly magazine is the sad routine of pulling out a ‘verse of the day’ out of a box in the hope of ‘getting a good promise’ for the day, while the need to spend earnest time in the Word is greatly lacking and so many people search for a ‘quick fix’ and run along into their rat race lifestyle thinking that they have received a Word from above!!!

Seek first יהוה and His Kingdom and His righteousness – pulling a verse out of a ‘promise of the day’ box while rushing to work or heading in to your busy schedule is not seeking יהוה – it is a form of divination that is rooted in selfishness!

Playing the lottery is also a form of divination and magic as you are placing your expectations and hopes on that which is not from above but in a game of chance that displaces hope in יהוה’s ability to provide all needs.

When looking at terms such as ‘luck’ or ‘fortune’ or ‘chance’, we see clearly that they are concepts that run totally against the Torah of יהוה.

Look at the following verse:

**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 65:11 “But you are those who forsake יהוה, who forget My set-apart mountain, who prepare a table for Gad, and who fill a drink offering for Meni.”**

Forsaking יהוה and forgetting His set-apart mountain speaks of neglecting His Word and His provision of deliverance and redemption and neglect the Pēsah/Passover of יהוה.

But what does prepare a table for Gad and fill a drink offering for Meni mean?

At first glance when having no insight into the original text one can lose the stern warning contained for us today.

‘Gad’ was the name of one of the sons of Ya’aqob, but here in this text this is not who it is referring to and this verse is part of an end time prophecy where יהוה warns of the great apostasy of His people.

It is well known and understood that ‘Gad’ was the name of a pagan deity, and so is Meni.

The Hebrew word גַּד Gad – Strong’s H1408 means *‘fortune, good fortune’* and was a Babylonian deity of fortune often interpreted as the Syrian or Kena’anite deity of *‘Good Luck’* – a sobering reality check for many of us who have often found ourselves saying these words to others, while we should rather be encouraging them in the strength of Messiah!

The Hebrew word מְנִי Meni – Strong’s H4507 means *‘award, fate or fortune’* and was the name of a pagan deity of *‘destiny’* who was sadly also worshipped by many Yehuḏi while exiled in Babelon.

Gad is often referred to by many pagan definitions as the Sun-deity and the name of Gad is applicable in it referring back to Nimrod, who was characterised by Semiramis (also Ishtar, Astarte, Easter), his wife, as being that of a Sun-god; while Gad being referred to as the Sun-god, Meni was and still is regarded by many today as ‘The Lord Moon’. The ancient Egyptian view renders Gad as the Sun-god of fortune and Meni as the lunar goddess of fate.

### Verse 13 – Be perfect!

The root word used here for perfect, in the Hebrew, is תָּמִים tamiym – Strong’s H8549 meaning, *‘complete, whole, sound, perfect, without blemish, blameless’*, and comes from the primitive root word תָּמַם tamam – Strong’s H8552 meaning, *‘to be complete, to be finished, be at an end’*.

The Word calls for us to serve יהוה with a perfect heart!

But, you may ask, is it possible to serve יהוה with a perfect heart, are we not all sinners unable to be perfect?

**Berēshith/Genesis 17:1** “**And it came to be when Abram was ninety-nine years old, that יהוה appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Ėl Shaddai – walk before Me and be perfect.”**”

**Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:48** “**Therefore, be perfect, as your Father in the heavens is perfect.”**”

Be perfect, often a hard expectation if understood in the wrong way, but what is it to be perfect or have a perfect heart?

‘Not a perfect heart’ often speaks of one who began well yet did not endure to the end – one who does not carry on to completion that which they are called to!

It can be a ‘doing right, but...’ kind of scenario.

There are to be no ‘buts’ in our committed life unto יהוה!

What does perfect mean? It can mean, flawless as in a flawless diamond, accurate, faithfully reproducing the original, pure complete, mature etc.

In the Hebrew, there are two words for which we translate as perfect:

**1 – שָׁלֵם shalēm – Strong’s H8003**– which means **‘pure, complete, safe, at peace, perfect, whole, finished, blameless, full’**.

This is used in the Hebrew as an adjective, as in a perfect heart:

**Melakim aleph/1Kings 8:61 “Let your heart therefore be perfect to יהוה our Elohim, to walk in His laws and guard His commands, as at this day.”**

**2 - תָּמִים tamiym – Strong’s H8549** as described above – this is a verb that translates over 90 times as perfect, without blemish, complete or full:

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 18:13 “Be perfect before יהוה your Elohim”**

Understanding these two Hebrew words used interchangeably throughout the Scriptures in referring to perfection in serving יהוה we can understand that the meaning is **to be upright, totally obedient, to finish what was started and have a constant obedience.**

To not have a perfect heart often speaks of one who may have even began well, yet did not endure to the end – it can speak of one who does not carry on to completion that which they are called to! It can be a **‘doing right, but...’** kind of scenario.

There are to be no **‘buts’** in our committed life unto יהוה!

So, when we are told to be תָּמִים tamiym - **‘perfect’**, we are told we are to be complete, and be mature in our thoughts and actions.

We are to move on to maturity, which comes through the perseverance of trials, in order to be complete and not lack anything.

It is those who are immature – those who stay on the milk of the Word, who cannot walk perfect before יהוה.

Although many people ought to be teachers by now, they have not moved on to maturity in the Word and stumble continually through their inability to take responsibility of seeking, learning and growing in the Truth as they would either wait for others to spoon feed them continually, or hold fast to and rely upon the man-made traditions that have held people captive on milk.

What is in our heart, will be revealed in our actions and the corresponding words we speak!

The Truth is to be on our hearts and it is the truth that is in our heart that we are to be speaking, followed up by a committed obedience to walking and serving in the Truth!

Having a perfect heart is having a **responsive heart** – one that answers quickly to יהוה’s call, His whisperings and His warnings.

In Hebrew, the word heart is לֵבָב *lebab* – Strong's H3824 and is not only seen as the seat of emotions, as we would understand it in our culture, but also as the seat of thoughts, whereas we see the brain as the seat of thoughts, the inner man, the mind the will and the heart.

To the ancient Hebrew the heart was the mind including all thoughts and including emotions. In other words, to love יְהוָה with all your heart is not simply speaking of an emotional love, but rather an exerted continual effort in keeping all of our emotions and thoughts working for and unto Him.

**Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:8** tells us that blessed are the pure in heart or those with a clean heart for they will see Elohim. Dawid in **Tehillah/Psalm 24** asks who can ascend the mountain of יְהוָה and stand in His set-apart place – those with innocent hands and a clean heart,

To be pure in heart means to be single minded in our devotion to יְהוָה and in our determination to love Him wholeheartedly.

So, when we are told to be perfect (תְּמִיִּם *tamiym*), we are told we are to be complete, and be mature in our thoughts and actions.

We are to move on to maturity which comes through the perseverance of trials in order to be complete and not lack anything. It is those who are immature – those who stay on the milk of the Word, who cannot walk perfect before יְהוָה.

Although many people ought to be teachers by now, they have not moved on to maturity in the Word and stumble continually in the man-made traditions that have held people captive on milk.

The church today is in large feeding people milk, and not even pure milk at that – but rather a 'formula' – which is man-made as opposed to the pure milk of a mother and never allows people to be weaned off from their constructed milk and think for themselves!

We know that **Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah** tells us in **17:9** that the heart is deceitful above all things – and perhaps that is why we can often so easily say everything is ok, when it is not! Yet **Shemu'el Aleph/1 Samuel 16:7** tells us that יְהוָה looks at the heart.

So, as יְהוָה looks at your heart – what does He see?

So how do we keep a perfect heart before יְהוָה?

It starts with being open before יְהוָה, allowing Him to deal with those imperfections that are in our heart:

**Tehillah/Psalms 139: 23-24** **“Search me, O Ėl, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; 24 and see if an idolatrous way is in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”**

Dawid was willing for יהוה to search him and try his heart: a perfect heart is a searchable heart, which means we allow יהוה to penetrate and examine deeply into our thoughts and emotions.

The false teachings today tell you that as long as your heart doesn't condemn you then you are ok and the Blood of יהושע has cleansed you, yet they fail to neglect what it says prior to this:

**Yohanan Aleph/1 John 1:6-7 "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and are not doing the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of יהושע Messiah His Son cleanses us from all sin."**

His Blood cleanses us yes, but we are to be walking in the light as He is – we are to be walking in His instructions with a perfect heart inclining to walk in the perfect knowledge of His Loving Word!

## **A PERFECT HEART IS A HEART THAT HAS THE TORAH WRITTEN UPON IT AND SUBMITS TO THE CLEAR AUTHORITY OF OUR MASTER AND ELOHIM!**

In Hebrew, the word for heart is also written as לבּ leḅ - Strong's H3820 which means, *'inner man, mind, will thought'*, and what is interesting to take note of here is that these two letters for 'heart' in the ancient Hebrew pictographic Script make it clear that the rule and authority of Elohim is to be upon our hearts!

In the ancient pictographic script, the Hebrew word לבּ leḅ - Strong's H3820 looks like this:



Lamed - ל:



The ancient script has this letter as , and is pictured as a *'shepherd's staff'*, can give the meaning of *'to or toward'* and can represent that which pushes or pulls a flock in a direction, and can speak of *authority* or a yoke that is used to lead and guide, as well as the ability to bring back by Authority.

Bet - ב:

The ancient script has this letter as  , which pictures a tent floor plan and means, 'house' or 'tent'. It represents family and the importance of those who are inside the tent as opposed to the tent structure itself.

In terms of these two pictures representing the 'heart' or **the inner man and the will and thoughts of man**, we are able to see that a pure heart is one that submits to the authority of the Good Shepherd, having been grafted into His Body, that is the Tabernacle of Elohim, which we now are in Messiah. And in recognising this we see that we, as legitimate sons and daughter of the Most-High that have been grafted in by the Blood of Messiah, have upon our hearts His Torah, under which we submit to walking in – for His Torah are the rules of His House!

These two letters clearly render for us

## THE AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE

or better put:

## THE RULES OF THE HOUSE!

This word also represents for us the 'deep desire' that comes from within – that is the inner workings of the heart, mind and thoughts of a man.

The thirst that wells us from within – the thirst for the living water that wells up from within can only be satisfied as one comes to drink at the true source and recognise that there is no other!

**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 55:1 "Oh everyone who thirsts, come to the waters. And you who have no silver, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without silver and without price."**

**יהושע** Messiah, made it clear to the Shomeroni woman at the well, that He was the source of living waters unto whom we must return and enter in through, as He is the Door and access for all who call to mind His loving-commitment and return to obedience to the rules of His House!

### Verse 14-22 The Prophet

How to be perfect, is to follow the perfect Word!

And here Mosheh tells us that **יהוה** would raise up a Prophet that we are to listen to, and this is a clear pointing to **יהושע** Messiah! At the same time, we also see here the warning not to listen to false prophets who claim to be from Elohim and we are to not be afraid of those false prophets!

The sad reality, for most today, is that they have not listened to the True Words of the True Prophet and King, יהושע Messiah, but rather to a falsified rendition that has caused many to stumble:

**Yohanan/John 5:43** “**I have come in My Father’s Name and you do not receive Me, if another comes in his own name, him you would receive.**”

These are very striking words from יהושע as we can clearly see that he is telling us that He came ‘in’ His Father’s name and is not received, while another may come in his ‘own’ name and be received!

The Name of יהושע contains the name of the Father, with the first three letters being the first three letters of the Fathers Name – יהוה - **YHWH** – the four letters of our Creators Name:

Y -י-(yod); – H -ה-(hay); – W -ו-(waw); – H -ה-(hay) and the Name of our Saviour contains the Father’s Name:

יהושע – **YHWSHA** – pronounced as **YAHUSHUA** - Y -י-(yod); – H -ה-(hay); – W -ו-(waw); - SH -ש-(shin); A -ע-(ayin)

The manufactured name of ‘J-e-s-u-s’ does not contain nor does it come in the Name of יהוה and the masses receive this falsified portrayal of our Messiah, which according to man-driven theologies of Christianity has done away with the Torah and by definition of Scripture, if this be the case, then ‘J-e-s-u-s’ is indeed a false prophet of which we should not be afraid, but rather we must listen to יהושע – the Living Word!

## CHAPTER 19

This chapter deals with the provision made for the manslayer who strikes his neighbour unknowingly, having not hated him in time past.

The 3 cities that were to be allocated as cities for the manslayer to flee to were known as cities of refuge as seen in **Bemidbar/Numbers 35**.

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘refuge’ comes from the root word מִקְלָט **miqlat** – **Strong’s H4733** which means, ‘**refuge, asylum**’ and is used in **Bemidbar/Numbers** in referring to these cities.

This noun denotes the place of refuge from the ‘**revenger of blood**’ and is used 20 times in Scriptures, and is always used in connection with the cities that were appointed to provide asylum for those guilty of involuntary manslaughter.

The one who is guilty of murder was to be put to death, while initially those not guilty of homicide could seek asylum at the altar, while those who killed with premeditation should be dragged from the altar and executed:

**Shemoth/Exodus 21:12-14** “He who strikes a man so that he dies shall certainly be put to death. <sup>13</sup> “But if he did not lie in wait, but Elohim delivered him into his hand, then I shall appoint for you a place where he is to flee. <sup>14</sup> “But when a man acts presumptuously against his neighbour, to kill him by treachery, you are to take him *even from My slaughter place to die.*”

Now that Yisra'el would be settled in the Promised Land, and distance to the altar for those who wanted to seek asylum may have been a problem to ensure their safety in being proven not guilty and so provision is made with these 3 cities that were well within reach for all the Tribes; and so here we see how practical יהוה is and how through this provision His mercy is clearly shown.

These cities also picture for us the wonderful work of Messiah.

The one who had fled to one of these cities because he had killed another by mistake or by accident, would be rescued from the hand of the revenger of blood and he would remain in that city until the death of the high priest who had been anointed with oil!

יהושע Messiah is our High Priest and we see a twofold work of Messiah here in that He is our Refuge to whom we run to and by His death we are ‘released’ from being in danger of the revenger of blood taking vengeance upon us for our sin; and at the same time because He was raised and lives forever, we have a High Priest who intercedes constantly for us and we are therefore required to ‘remain’ in Him forever – for He will never die!

**Ib'rim/Hebrews 5:6** “As He also says in another place, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Malkitseq”

יהושע Messiah, our High Priest was “anointed with oil” as we know that ‘oil’ is symbolic of the Spirit – and on the day that Messiah stood up to read in the congregation He read from Yeshayahu:

**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 61:1-3** “The Spirit of the Master יהוה is upon Me, because יהוה has anointed Me to bring good news to the meek. He has sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim release to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound, <sup>2</sup> to proclaim the acceptable year of יהוה, and the day of vengeance of our Elohim, to comfort all who mourn, <sup>3</sup> to appoint unto those who mourn in Tsiyon: to give them embellishment for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And they shall be called trees of righteousness, a planting of יהוה, to be adorned.”

**Ma'asei/Acts 10:37-38** “You know what word came to be throughout all Yehudah, beginning from Galil after the immersion which Yoḥanan proclaimed: <sup>38</sup> how Elohim did anoint יהושע of Natsareth with the Set-apart Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for Elohim was with Him.”

What we must understand from this Torah portion on the cities of Refuge is that we have Messiah our High Priest in whom we can run to and find safety, and because He lives forever, we are ‘bound’ to Him in love forever.

If anyone moves out of the 'boundaries' (that is the Torah) of Him as representing for us our place of refuge, then they risk the danger of being slain by the revenger of blood.

In one sense, we can see that **יהושע** is both the place of refuge to those who call upon His Name and abide in Him, while He is a revenger of blood that will take vengeance on all who are not found in Him on the Day He returns and treads the winepress in His wrath!!! Those who claim that the Torah is no longer valid and say that this Torah command has been done away with are in fact nullifying the True protection that is available in Messiah and are wilfully placing themselves outside of the safety of Messiah from being their refuge and will therefore be executed in His wrath.

When we understand more and more how alive the Torah is for us, we clearly see how the boundaries of the Torah are good for us and keep us safe from the coming wrath of Elohim – we must stay in Him or else!

**Mishlê/Proverbs 18:10** “**The Name of יהוה is a strong tower; the righteous run into it and are safe.**”

Notice it is the 'righteous' that run into it and not the unrighteous/lawless!!!

**Tehillah/Psalm 61:3** “**For You have been my refuge, a strong tower in the face of the enemy.**”

When the man-slayer went outside the limits of the city and was killed by the revenger of blood then the revenger of blood was not guilty because the man-slayer should have remained in the city.

It comes back to the boundaries and limits that we are to live within – which is the Torah and whenever we go outside of the limitations of the Torah we are as the lawless and the punishment for sin is death.

Those who remain in Messiah we know that the second death will have no power over them!!!

As we see, from **verse 9**, the instruction is given to add another 3 cities, which lines up with the 6 cities of refuge spoken of in **Bemidbar/Numbers 35**

The principle of the cities of refuge, teaches us a very clear lesson; and that is that we are to:

## **'STAY IN MESSIAH'!**

A powerful example of one who had neglected to keep the sovereign's and stay where he was told, is seen in **Melakim Aleph/1 Kings 2**.

Shim'i, was a man who had cursed Dawid, and when Dawid met him he swore that he would not put him death; and in his closing words to Shelomoh, he told his son that he would know what to do with Shim'i.

Shelomoh then made it very clear to Shim'i that he was not allowed to leave Yerushalayim, and in the day that he would go out and pass over the wadi Qidron, he would die and his blood would be on his own head!

Shim'i agreed to the words of Shelomoh and said that they were good words.

3 years later, some of the slaves of Shim'i had fled to Gath.

Shim'i was told and he went to Gath and brought back his slaves.

Shelomoh was told about this and ordered that Shim'i be put to death!

This account teaches us a vital lesson in regards to the 'city of refuge' principle, and how we who are in Messiah, must stay in Him and not walk outside of the boundaries of His commands by compromising our walk, for if we are found to have done so then our blood shall be on our own head, as we stepped out of the promised Refuge of our King and High Priest!

**Verse 19 – do to him as he thought to have done to his brother!**

From this we can clearly see the principle of 'what you sow you will reap'!

The one who sows to satisfy his own flesh, be it for revenge, shall find that what he will reap that which he thought to do, back on himself!

**Galatians 6:7-8 “Do not be led astray: Elohim is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he shall also reap. 8 Because he who sows to his own flesh shall reap corruption from the flesh, but he who sows to the Spirit shall reap everlasting life from the Spirit.”**

What we must clearly recognise here from Sha'ul's words to the assembly in Galatia is that Elohim is not mocked! He sees everything, and sees straight into the inner heart and motives of a being!

This should be a clear and sober caution against thinking bad things against another!!!

A great example in Scripture of this principle of having that which you planned against another coming back upon you is seen in the Book of Estër.

Haman was a wicked man and chief minister in the courts of the sovereign Ahashwërosh who reigned over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India to Kush. Haman hated the Yehudim and sought out a plan to kill them at an appointed time that he craftily schemed the Sovereign to authorise.

Estër boldly and courageously approached the king in order to have the order against the Yehudim nullified, as she pleaded for her people.

In the process of her plea, she set the stage for Haman to be exposed for his wickedness and plans.

He had built a 50-foot-high stake to impale Mordekai on, and we see in:

**Estër /Esther 7:9-10 “And Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the sovereign, “Also, see the stake, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordekai, who spoke good on behalf of the sovereign, is standing at the house of Haman.” And the sovereign said, “Impale him on it!” 10 And they impaled Haman on the stake that he had prepared for Mordekai, and the sovereign's wrath abated.”**

We can learn much from this principle as we do our utmost to not be found compromising our calling for set-apartness!

For instance, if we 'sow laziness', we might find that we will struggle to get others to help us when in need!

Having said that, it can be said that if we show an uncompromised commitment in relationship towards others, then we will find that others will be committed in their relationship toward us too!

The one who falsely seeks harm on another will have that come back on him, for the idea originated in his mind and by coming back on him is a way of purging the wickedness out of the body!

### **Verse 21 – eye for an eye**

This principle of eye for eye, and tooth for tooth, does not call for the mutilation of another's limbs as injuries were settled by the payment through money damages and this right-ruling brings the correct limit to that which may be imposed.

One cannot try to get more out of the damages caused than what is rightfully due.

**Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:38-42** **“You heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,’ 39 but I say to you, do not resist the wicked. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 “And he who wishes to sue you and take away your inner garment, let him have your outer garment as well. 41 “And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 “Give to him who asks of you, and from him who wishes to borrow from you, do not turn away.”**

יְהוָה was certainly not nullifying this right-ruling, He rather was bringing about a deeper need for loving commitment toward one another and He raises the mere letter of the Word to the Spirit behind the letter and that is to not take advantage of another, and rather be wronged if need be!!!

**Timotiyos Bět/2 Timothy 2:24** **“And a servant of the Master should not quarrel but be gentle towards all, able to teach, patient when wronged”**

**Qorintiyim Aleph/1 Corinthians 6:6-8** **“But brother against brother goes to be judged and that before unbelievers! 7 Already, then, there is a failure with you, that you have lawsuits among you. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? 8 But you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and that to your brothers!”**

When believers are taking each other to court to settle disputes then there is a failure – rather be wronged and cheated than cheat and do wrong to brothers!!!

The heart behind these verses is simply this – always seek the good of your brother and if you happen to be wronged, don't make it your life's ambition to get even – let it go and realise that יְהוָה has already settled our debt and we leave it to Him to find settlement on our behalf if need be!

## **CHAPTER 20**

When going out to war, we are not to be afraid!

In understanding these instructions here, we can see that we are to be full of courage to stand and fight the good fight of faith and not be afraid of the masses who do not follow the Truth.

We are able to stand and be confident on our faith in Messiah because of who He is and we recognise that He is the One who has delivered us and called us out from darkness into His marvellous light!

Guarding His Word and not denying His Name is what we are called to do!

Trust in יהוה will cause us to stand firm and not be afraid of the enemy!

It is יהוה who fights for us and He calls us to 'stand' and be steadfast in the face of the enemy!

In going out to battle a soldier must be alert and sober, and totally focused on his mission or else he may put himself and others in great danger!

And here, we see the provision given for those whose minds may be otherwise occupied and could be a weakness on the battlefield – they were given exemption!

What can often be the greatest hindrance in being able to stand and be steadfast in the battles of life is 'worry', as worrying causes more defeat in people's lives than an actual physical threat.

Many will worry about what 'might' take place rather than allowing the situation or circumstance allow the power and might of Elohim be displayed in the face of what may seemingly be an impossible situation!

In **verse 1**, we see that this chapter begins with 'when' you go out to battle, and so, it presupposes and assumes that Yisra'el will have battles to fight, and so too do we recognise, that by the repeated instructions in the renewed writings for us that we are to be armed with the Torah as we stand firm and are ready to fight to good fight of faith.

We also recognise that battles are an inevitable part of our walk of faith in Messiah, be it physically against people that come up against us or even against the battles that rage within – such as laziness, ignorance, selfishness, pride, complacency and compromise!

These are very real battles that we face every day and if we do not stand armed in the Torah, we may find that we will lose; for being armed 'in' the Torah and guarding to do all that is commanded is in fact 'living in' Messiah our Captain who does fight for us.

Without His Torah we are left vulnerable and risk great defeat and so our need to constantly be dressed, armed and clothed in Him is critical for our daily walk!

**When you see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you...** the battles we face will often seem like an impossible task and, as I have already mentioned, that horses and chariots is a picture of the world, sun worship and the things of the flesh, we can therefore see, that the very dogmas and traditions of man and fleshly conduct of the world will always be the majority and cause us to feel small and insignificant; and some at this point begin to question the validity of their belief in Elohim.

Yet, יהוה tells us that we must not be afraid of them – He who delivered us from the former lusts of the flesh and enslavement to man-made traditions and dogmas of inherited false sun-worship will fight for us, who stay in Him!

The Hebrew word for 'battle' is מִלְחָמָה milḥamah – Strong's H4421 meaning, '**battle, war, warfare, military**' comes from the word לָחַם laḥam – Strong's H3898 which means, '**to fight, do battle, conquer**' and can also carry the meaning, '**consume, to use as food, eat**', and it is from this root word that we get the word לֶחֶם leḥem – Strong's H3899 which means, '**bread, food, provision**'.

We are not able to properly face life's battles without proper guidance from the wisdom of Elohim!

Understanding that the word for war/battle comes from the same root word, from which bread comes from, which, as we know is Scripture, bread is a symbol or picture of community, then it helps us to further understand that when we stand up and fight against 'self' and the lusts of the flesh that wage war in our lives, then we are, in fact, feeding the community with growth, as we conquer that which does not belong in order to enrich the community or body, we are made a part of!

When we consider that the word for '**bread**' comes from the root word that means to wage war and fight, we are able to understand the power of the words of our Master when He tells us that He is the Bread, as He is truly declaring that He is the One who has gone before us and fights for us, having defeated death at the grave, in order for us to be raised to new life in Him and be equipped to walk in victory.

In the ancient pictographic script, we see the root word לֶחֶם leḥem – Strong's H3899 pictured as follows:



Lamed - לָ:

The ancient script has this letter as , and is pictured as a '**shepherd's staff**', can give the meaning of '**to or toward**' and can represent that which pushes or pulls a flock in a direction, and can speak of **authority** or a yoke that is used to lead and guide, as well as the ability to bring back by Authority.

Het – הָ

The ancient script has this letter as  which is a '**tent wall**', and carries a meaning of '**separation**', as a tent wall separates two halves of the tent; or it can also reflect the outside walls that separate the people inside from that which is outside and so can also symbolise protection and security to those inside, while picturing a cutting off of those who are outside.

Hence this letter can mean '**established, secure**' as well as '**cut off, separated from**'.

As a tent wall we are also able to recognise the picture of stones being built up to make a complete wall, and represents a **'boundary'**, or better understood as our **'boundaries'** in recognising the need to walk within the boundaries of the Torah and not step outside of that which has been prescribed for us!

Mem – 

The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as **'water'**, and also carries the meaning of **'chaos'** (from the storms of the sea) and can also picture that which is **mighty** or massive as well as the unknown. We are also able to understand this letter as representing **the nations**, for the nations are often likened to the seas in Scripture.

As we consider these pictographs that render the meaning of bread, provision, we are able to recognise, in terms of our lawful bread, that our Master has given us all we need for life and reverence, and that as we submit under the authority of His Word, being led by our Good Shepherd, we are separated and built up in Him, though the washing of His Word! His Word is our Food that separates and cleanses us as His Bride!

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD BUILDS US UP AND CLEANSSES

or

## THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD THAT SEPARATES AND CLEANSSES

When we recognise the value and importance of the daily lawful bread that we are to eat, we see how important it is for us to meditate on His Torah, day and night, so that we can live clean and set-apart lives and be properly armed to fight the Good Fight of the belief!!! Neglecting to do so will cause one to not know who He, The Good Shepherd, is and will leave one unarmed to stand in the day of battle!

Battles make us stronger and enable us to encourage others to face what we have already faced and overcome in Messiah!

One of the markers to show that we are on the right side is when we are in fact the minority – nowhere in the history of Scripture has the chosen people of Elohim been the majority, because walking in Him is not something that most choose to do:

**Mattithyahu/Matthew 7:14 "Because the gate is narrow and the way is hard pressed which leads to life, and there are few who find it."**

Acknowledgement that something is bigger than us will help us understand our need to trust in יהוה and not do our own thing, but remain in Him as He leads us in victory!

**Tehillah/Psalm 27:14 “Wait on יְהוָה, be strong, and let Him strengthen your heart! Wait, I say, on יְהוָה!”**

For more on standing firm, please see sermon notes on message called, ‘**STRONG COURAGE AMIDST PERILOUS TIMES**’ (Tehillah/Psalm 27) under the menu ‘**sermons 2012/2013**’ on our site (<https://atfotc.com>) or by clicking on the following link:

<https://atfotc.com/strong-courage-amidst-perilous-times-psalm-27/>

#### **Verse 5**

The man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it, may return to his house and not have to go to battle!

This was usually done at betrothal times and possibly refers to a young man, and not having dedicated it could signify that he has not yet written the commands on his doorposts yet.

And while there is provision for this man to not fight, we can also see that if there is any such man that does go to fight, while his mind is on his own house then he is certainly not focused enough to be fighting and part of the army!

Haggai deals with those who are building their own panelled houses while the House of Elohim is in ruins and in time of war an army needs focused soldiers and anyone who is more concerned with his own house and his own individuality is no use to the defence of the body and such a heart can weaken the rest!

#### **Verse 6**

The man who has planted a vineyard and not begun to use it! We must recognise that this possibly refers to the man who had planted a vineyard and as we know that in the first 3 years no fruit is to be taken from it, and in the 4<sup>th</sup> the yield is given to יְהוָה and only in the 5<sup>th</sup> year may he eat of it.

This may refer to that man who has been waiting 4 years or so to begin to use and eat of its fruit, and if he misses the proper timing of tending the vineyard, he may lose his crop that he has been waiting for, and so his mind would not be focused on the battle at hand but rather on his own vineyard.

The ability to ‘sit under one’s own vine’, is a symbol of true shalom and favour of the Kingdom after Messiah conquers all the nations, and while the provision is made here for such a man; what we can also learn from this is the ability to ‘count the cost’ and follow Messiah and be willing to leave all behind!

**Marqos/Mark 10:29-30 “יְהוֹשֻׁעַ said, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for the sake of Me and the Good News, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come, everlasting life.”**

#### **Verse 7**

The man who is engaged!

Now, while these verses seem like there is a means to 'experience life' before being expected to fight, we must realise that if we hold fast to the promises of **verses 3-4**, then we should not expect to die or be defeated in any battle, as long as we are adhering to the commands of our Elohim!

What each of these 3 men symbolize for us, as having in common, is that they all have unfinished business at home and are unable to give their all on the battlefield! Being preoccupied with self disqualifies one from being fit and able to serve in the army of Elohim!!!

Let us look at the words of Messiah, concerning these that are unfit to serve, as He, in essence, calls these reasons, as excuses:

**Luqas/Luke 14:16-24** **"But He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 17 and he sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all is now ready.' 18 "But one by one they all began making excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I need to go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' 19 "And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out. I ask you to have me excused.' 20 "And another said, 'I have married a wife, and because of this I am unable to come.' 21 "And that servant came and reported this to his master. Then the master of the house, being wroth, said to his servant, 'Hurry out into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor, and crippled, and lame, and blind.' 22 "And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' 23 "And the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the street corners and hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house is filled. 24 'For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"**

Those who do not go to war will not taste the victory, **יהושע** then carries on teaching on various aspects of counting the cost and teaches that those who neglect prioritising the Kingdom for their own desires are like those who put their hand to the plough and look back – they are not fit for the Kingdom and will therefore have not entrance into it!

The principle here is simply this – if your heart is not in it – don't go to fight!

This does not excuse away the need for us to get our hearts in it, but too many people today are trying to face their battles with a half-hearted approach at serving **יהוה**, and this is not a proper reflection true service and worship, and in the process you risk getting severely punished for causing others to stumble due to your compromise.

**Mattithyahu/Matthew 18:6** **"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it is better for him that a millstone be hung around his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea."**

What we must also take careful note of here, is that these 3 options given for men to not go to war, are not necessarily an honourable discharge or an honourable release from what is expected, but rather it is more a 'shaming' of these that leave before the others who count it worthy to be counted.

Remember that only 'soldiers' – those who are fighting fit – are counted in Yisra'el!

### Verse 8

Here there is a 4<sup>th</sup> reason for some to not go out and fight and that is 'fear of the enemy'. Fear of the enemy is extremely contagious, as we can remember how the wicked report of the 10 spies caused an entire generation to stumble in not being able to enter in to the Promised Land.

Gid'on said the same thing to his men in:

**Shophetim/Judges 7:3 "And now, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him turn back, and leave Mount Gil'ad.'" And twenty-two thousand of the people turned back, while ten thousand remained."**

יהוה reduced the army to 1% of the original size through this method and what we recognise here is that it is not about numbers but about courage in the face of fire and persecution!

יהוה wants people with the right heart and mind, and He does not want those who procrastinate and think about the many 'what if this' or 'what if that' reasoning begins, as this reveals fear of the unknown when we should be putting our trust in Him who gives us life and fights for us... if we will but let Him and not be cowards!

Look at who the cowards are grouped with, in Hazon:

**Hazon/Revelation 21:8 "But as for the cowardly, and untrustworthy, and abominable, and murderers, and those who whore, and drug sorcerers, and idolaters, and all the false, their part is in the lake which burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death."**

### Verse 9

Once the timid and fearful have been taken out of the equation then leaders can be appointed.

True leadership can only be appointed and revealed once the faint hearted are removed.

### Verse 10-20 – Taking the land

In verse 10 we must take note that this extending of peace was to the nations round about, and not to the 7 nations that they were to put under the ban and destroy.

To nations far off, they could extend peace and if received then the people therein would become their compulsory labour and they would not be destroyed.

If peace was not received then you were to fight against it and besiege it, striking every male!

**Matthew/Mattithyahu 10:11-15 "And into whatever city or village you enter, ask who is worthy in it, and stay there until you leave. 12 "And as you enter into a house, greet it. 13 "And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 "And whoever does not receive you nor hear your words, when you leave that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. 15 "Truly, I say to you, it shall be more bearable for the land of Sedom and Amorah in the day of judgment than for that city!"**

What Messiah was telling us, as His talmidim (disciples), is that when we go out and extend the peace of His Besorah and the Kingdom Message to those who are far off from the Covenants of Promise and that by the Blood of Messiah they are able to be grafted in, we must do so, as we teach and tell them that they are to become part of Yisra'el again, according to יהוה's commands and adhere to His Feasts.

If the dust (descendants of Abraham) from there, will not adhere to His "feet" (pilgrim festivals--i.e., His Appointed Times and Seasons), then the peace that is offered to that city will be retracted, and the city will fare worse than Sedom and Amorah, and by shaking the dust off from our feet, is a symbol of their rejecting the instructions/Torah of Elohim and will face the consequences of their choice.

What we also learn from this, is that anything that does not serve His Kingdom, cannot be part of it and must be destroyed, and so we must also recognise, in our own lives, that if there are any habits or customs that we may have, that do not adhere or line up with the purity of His commands and the keeping of His Appointed Times, then we must get it out of our lives and dust it off of our daily walk, lest it cause our feet to stumble!

The nations that occupied the Land of inheritance was to be put to death and you can refer to more on this in **Debarim/Deuteronomy 7**

**Verse 17:**

**1 – Hittites – יהתי Hitti - Strong's H2850 - meaning "sons of Heth" or "terror".**

So, the name carries also the meaning of fear, and the effects of fear imposed by the enemy can be terror, being tormented, depression and deceit.

What we must do in conquering the enemy is clear - we must first conquer fear.

The Hittites speak of that which uses deceit into causing us to be afraid and terrorise us into doing what they want or they motivate people to follow through fear tactics!

The church has certainly succeeded in many ways in this regard as it has motivated people to follow the broad path of Christianity by using the prospect of escaping hellfire and judgement if they do not, and so they teach and give a gross picture of many who will be poked forever by a hot fork – this is a lie – read Revelation and see what happens – those who are not written in the Book of Life are thrown into the fire and are consumed – gone forever – this is the second death.

Death is death – how can you be dead and still be 'alive' being 'punished through eternal punishment!!!

Terror is used as a tactic.

Deceit is also a major part of what this nation represents and we know just how the Church has turned the favour or 'grace' of Elohim into a licence to sin or be lawless – they have distorted the 'Besorah', which is the "Good News" for a false grace 'gospel' – where gospel actually means to place one under a spell and in so doing they teach people to search the Word to see what they can get out of it as opposed to seeking what Elohim requires of them!

So, we must conquer fear of the enemy by walking in the Truth by faith in Elohim! What 'fears' do you have – fear of failure – fear of lack – fear of others? Be strong and courageous as you put your trust in יהוה!!!

**2 – Amorites – אַמֹרִי Emori – Strong's H567 – means, 'cave dwellers' and comes from the word אָמַר amar – Strong's H559 which means, 'utter, say, speak' and can represent for us as meaning "boasters".**

The Amorites, or Emori, were the biggest and strongest people in Kena'an.

They were the 'mountain people' which speaks of the heights and give a picture of the tall ones or renowned ones – people who love self-exaltation.

They are the prominent speakers or rather the 'big mouths' and 'know it all's'.

They desire knowledge just to be superior to others and we know that 'just' knowledge without true application simply puffs up and pride becomes the result.

Isn't pride the strongest of strongholds within each of us?

Love builds up and love for Elohim is to guard to do all He commands – so love in action that builds is the correct application of knowledge.

Watch out for the 'smooth talkers' and the big talkers! Amorites is a picture also of those who are arrogant and boastful in their speech, which always challenge everyone and want the last say and simply speaks of a form of rebellion.

How is your speech?

Do you always want to be right, because you think you know it all?

Kill any pride that may set in, quickly before it takes root!

**3 – Kena'anites – כְּנַעֲנִי Kena'ani – Strong's H3669 – from its roots, can mean, 'zealous, lowlands people, brought down, defeated or made low'.**

It represents for us a resorting to a low life in respect to addictions and perversions and exaggerations.

Sodom and Amorah are portrayed as Kena'anite cities and we know all the low life stuff that went on there!

This also pictures for us the battle against depression and anxiety and hopelessness.

Are you struggling with anxiety and have little hope? Destroy it with faith in the One who knows what you need and do not worry – throw off anxiety and keep your eyes fixed on the Blessed hope we have in Messiah!

They also represent those who seek to gain something for themselves by means of being people pleasers.

They are people pleasers and will resort to very low and degrading means in order to do that.

Herod's daughter 'danced' here way to receiving what she wanted in getting Yoḥanan the immerser head cut off, by pleasing the fleshly sense of Herod.

She 'prostituted herself to get her way and this is what this spirit will do – cause you to resort to low life actions in order to get what you want as well as to please others as you do not want to feel out!

We are to please Elohim not be man-pleasers!

**4 – Perizzites – פְּרִזִּי Perizzi – Strong’s H6522 – means ‘*belonging to a village*’ or ‘*rustic village*’ and can mean ‘*having a breach in the wall*’.**

In understanding that a village is being a picture of a small place, we get the picture here of having a limited vision, laziness or low self-esteem and no ‘boundaries’.

The effects of this can result in isolation, division, separation, independence and becoming disconnected.

Many who carry this spirit are divisive and do not want any form of confrontation.

They will also struggle to submit to any form of authority and will strive to do their own thing.

This is not the design of Elohim for His body – we are to be knitted together in unity in Him and when there is a breach in the wall – that is when someone has let their guard down and fallen into sin, they should not isolate themselves and run away but should seek refuge with the rest of the body.

We are to be repairers of breaches and restore honesty and justice in our relationships and our boundaries have fallen for us in pleasant places – that is we have His Torah to walk in and we must remain in the pleasant boundaries of His Torah!

**5 – Hivvites – חִיֻּוֹת Hivvi – Strong’s H2340 – means, “*villagers*” and were known as “*the dwellers of the high place*” whose capital was on Mt. Ba’al Hermon (Strong’s H1179, meaning “*lord of destruction*”).**

We must tear down the high places of false worship in our hearts.

**6 - Yebusites – יְבוּסִי Yebusi – Strong’s H2983 – means sons of Yebus – Strong’s H2982, which comes from the root word בּוּס bus – Strong’s H947 which means, ‘*threshing, trample, trodden down, desecrate and utterly reject*’.**

This speaks plainly to rebellion and what it brings about in people.

These are the threshers – those who are supposed to separate the wheat from the chaff – but here, we get the picture of the suppression of spiritual authority in fellow believers – in other words, they refuse to submit to authority that יְהוָה has ordained and reject

instruction, from those whom יְהוָה has called to speak His Word.

They represent those who will always criticise and break down all forms of community advancement and adherence to Torah principles.

How are you at submitting to authority, especially authority of those that יְהוָה has appointed?

We would do well to not rebel – we know what happened in the Wilderness!!!

**Verse 18** warns us that if these are not destroyed then the likelihood of them teaching us to do according to their wicked practices is almost a certainty, which we must avoid at all costs by destroying all forms of falsehood and twisted worship!

# CHAPTER 21

## Atonement for unsolved murders

This section deals with an unsolved murder case, in that a person who has been murdered, is found lying in the field, then the elders of the nearest city was to take a heifer that had never been worked, nor pulled a yoke, and break its neck outside the city, in the wadi and then, they were to wash their hands over the heifer and make atonement and declare that their hands are clean of this blood and purge the guilt of innocent blood from their midst.

A couple of interesting shadow pictures we see here, of Messiah who became our heifer sacrifice and by His sacrifice, we have been declared innocent of His death, for it is our sins that ‘murdered’ Him, although we must also recognize that He gave up His life freely and therefore satisfies this Torah of Atonement!

**Mattityahu/Matthew 27:24** “**And when Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but rather an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this Righteous One. You shall see to it.”**”

Pilate did according to this Torah ruling, as governor (elder) of the land he washed his hands over יהושע’s neck!

יהושע was then taken out of the city and put to death on a stake, and by His giving up His own life as a ransom for many He purged the guilt of His innocent blood from our midst that we can begin to do what is right in the eyes of יהוה.

The red heifer sacrifice and its requirements that this passage certainly points us to is described in **Bemidbar/Numbers 19** and therefore, I will recap on the significance of the red heifer sacrifice that is spoken of in Bemidbar/Numbers 19 as it is certainly relevant for us to understand just what Messiah has done in removing our guilt by his sacrifice for our sins:

The Hebrew word for ‘red’ is אָדָם **adom** – **Strong’s H122** which means, ‘**red, ruddy**’ and in Hebrew, the term suggests an earth-tone, like that of red clay and we know that Aḏam was made from the dust of the earth and the reason for the Heifer being red, although not always understood as to why, may in fact be a clear picture of how Messiah had to come in the flesh and that through Him, the second Aḏam, we are able to be delivered from sin and bring restoration through His offering up of His own life for many who “in Him” shall be made righteous:

**Romiyim/Romans 5:19** “**For as through the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the One many shall be made righteous.**”

The Hebrew word for ‘heifer’ is פָּרָה **parah** – **Strong’s H6510** which simply means, ‘**heifer, cow**’.

When I looked these two words together as being that ‘mysterious’ sacrifice I began to see more and more the wonderful and amazing picture of Messiah and how these two words themselves speak a great deal to us when we look at them in the ancient script!

Red Heifer in the Hebrew is actually written as **פָּרָה אֲדֹמָה** – **parah adumah**.

The reason for the *'hey'* at the end of **'adom'** is that the word **'parah'** is a feminine noun and therefore the adjective takes the form of the noun and so we see the term **'parah adumah'** from the two root words – **parah** and **adom**.

Let us take a closer look at these two words in the ancient pictographic script:

**1 - Parah**      פָּרָה – 'pey' פֶּ – 'resh' רַ – 'hey' הַ.

In the ancient pictographic script, we see the following:



**Pey – פֶּ:**

This is the letter **'pey'**, which is pictured as , which is an **'open mouth'** and carries the meaning of **'speak and blow'**, from the functions of the mouth, and can have the meaning of **'scatter'** by blowing. It can also mean sword or beard as in things with edges, as well as a region in depicting a place with edges or boundaries. It also can represent that which has been spoken forth from the words of one's mouth, as being established!

**Resh - רַ:**

The ancient script has this letter pictured as , which is **'the head of a man'** and carries the meaning of **'top, beginning, first, chief'**, as in being the top of the body or the head of a tribe and the one who rules; and also speaks of possession or inheritance that is decided by the chief. Our true life of praise unto **יְהוָה**, our Head, begins when we fear Him, for He is the beginning of our strength, and true separated praise entails a true fear of the One who is Chief over us!

**Hey – הַ:**

The ancient script has this letter pictured as , which is a **'man standing with his arms raised out'**.

This word can mean **"behold, look, breath, sigh and reveal or revelation"**; from the idea of revealing a great sight by pointing it out. It also carries for us the meaning of surrender, as we lift up our hands and submit to **יְהוָה** as we lift our hands in praise, declaring His authority under which we humbly submit!

2 - Adom     אָדָם – Aleph אָ – Dalet דָ – final Mem מָ.

In the Ancient pictographic script, we see the following:



**Aleph - אָ:**

The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as **'the head of an ox'**, and represents **'strength'**, meaning **'muscle'** as the ox is the strongest of the livestock animals. This also carries the meaning of **'yoke'**, as an ox is placed in a yoke in order to plough or pull a heavy load in the right direction.

This can also picture for us the **'red heifer'** sacrifice, that **יְהוֹשֻׁעַ** Messiah fulfilled!

**Dalet – דָ:**

The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as a **'tent door'**. It can also have the meaning of **'a back and forth movement'**, as one goes back and forth through a tent door, and so speaks of an access point. It can also carry the meaning of **'dangle'** or hanging as the tent door would hang from the roof pole of the tent. It speaks a great deal in terms of understanding the door of the tent of appointment as the only means of access.

**Mem – מָ:**

The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as **'water'**, and also carries the meaning of **'chaos'** (from the storms of the sea) and can also picture that which is **mighty** or massive as well as the unknown. We are also able to understand this letter as representing **the nations**, for the nations are often likened to the seas in Scripture. This also carries for us the picture of washing, as we understand the function of water being that which cleanses us and sustains us, showing us how we are washed and sustained by the Living Waters of the Word! This letter also can represent any liquid, especially **blood!**

When we look at all these pictographic letters of the **'red heifer'**, we can see a wonderful proclamation being given in the collection of these letters that reveal to us the great work of Messiah in being the perfect Red Heifer sacrifice for us, and we can therefore confidently deduce the following summation from these letters/words that make up 'red heifer' in the ancient text as a collective message that says that we meet our Head/Leader/Chief at the Door of Appointment in order to be cleansed by His Word, which was made flesh and is our Head who is to be praised!

**THE MOUTH/WORD OF OUR HEAD, THAT IS – MESSIAH – THE ONE TO WHOM WE LOOK UPON AND GIVE PRAISE - HE IS THE “ALEPH”, THAT IS - THE HEAD OF ALL CREATION - AND HE IS THE BEGINNING OF OUR STRENGTH, AS HE IS THE ONE WHO LEADS/DRAWS US TO HIMSELF, AS WE MEET HIM AT THE DOOR OF APPOINTMENT (HIS APPOINTED TIMES), SO THAT THROUGH HIS OWN SACRIFICE WE HAVE BEEN GRANTED ACCESS TO HIS WATERS OF CLEANSING.**

When we see this beautiful and clear word picture, through the term ‘red heifer’ we have to wonder why so many see this is a mystery!

Let us now take a further look at the requirements of the red heifer:

**A PERFECT ONE!**

The red heifer had to be a perfect one, with no blemish and on which there was never a yoke.

The root word used here for perfect in the Hebrew is תָּמִיִּם **tamiym** – Strong’s H8549 meaning, ‘**complete, whole, sound, perfect, without blemish, blameless**’, and comes from the primitive root word תָּמַם **tamam** – Strong’s H8552 meaning, ‘**to be complete, to be finished, be at an end**’.

Now, when we see the requirements for this red heifer to be ‘**tamiym**’, we see just how יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, our High Priest met the requirements in being a blameless, perfect, complete sacrifice without defect:

**Ih’rim/Hebrews 7:26 “For it was fitting that we should have such a High Priest – kind, innocent, undefiled, having been separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens,”**  
**Kěpha Aleph/1 Peter 1:19 “but with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless”**

יְהוֹשֻׁעַ was without sin or defect and He was utterly unique and on which there had never come a yoke!

A yoke was usually a wooden bar and frame with straps, used on animals for plowing and pulling loads, and so the red heifer was never to have been ‘worked’.

The term ‘**yoke**’, in the Scriptures, is often used metaphorically in speaking of that which men are led by, either by their own choice or by enslavement and so, it speaks of being ‘**driven**’ in a direction of the one who owned the ‘**yoke**’ that was placed upon you.

We were all under the ‘**yoke**’ of sin and bondage and Messiah who had never been under any ‘**yoke**’ came as a perfect sacrifice to break the yoke of bondage over us in order to set us free and be enabled to take His yoke and be led in victory and peace.

Wayyiqra/Leviticus 26:13 “I am יהוה your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim, from being their slaves. And I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk upright.”

Mattithyahu/Matthew 11:29-30 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and humble in heart, and you shall find rest for your beings. 30 For My yoke is gentle and My burden is light.”

Galatiyim/Galatians 5:1 “In the freedom with which Messiah has made us free, stand firm, then, and do not again be held with a yoke of slavery.”

The Hebrew word for ‘yoke’ is עֹל ol (ool) – Strong’s H5923 and comes from the primitive root verb אָלַל alal – Strong’s H5953 which means, ‘to insert, thrust in’, and this word speaks of relationships.

It is used to indicate the exercise of power over another person, generally in a bad sense, hence meaning “to maltreat.”

Many ‘yokes of traditions’ have been thrust upon people as the twisted and vain dogmas of man have exercised power over the masses causing them to submit to their heavy yoke of bondage by thrusting them into customs that are taught as truth! Messiah came to break the yoke of bondage in order to give us as easy yoke – His yoke – that is not heavy and negative, but rather a yoke that leads to life.

This Hebrew word for ‘yoke’ - עֹל ol (ool) – Strong’s H5923 – in the ancient pictographic script, looks like this:



Ayin – ע:

the ancient script has this letter is pictured as , which is ‘an eye’ and represents the idea of ‘seeing and watching’, as well as ‘knowledge’, as the eye is the window of knowledge.

Lamed – ל:

The ancient script has this letter pictured as , which is a ‘shepherd’s staff’, representing ‘authority’ and can give the meaning of ‘to or toward’ and can represent that which pushes or pulls a flock in a direction, and can speak of authority or a yoke that is used to lead and guide, as well as the ability to bring back by Authority.

With the eye representing knowledge and experience and the shepherds rod representing a staff or yoke, we are able to see that these two pictures together render the clear meaning of:

## EXPERIENCE THE STAFF

The yoke is attached to the oxen for performing work, and so too do we recognise that we 'experience the staff' as we submit to the clear leading and guidance of our Good Shepherd, Master and Elohim, as we fix our eyes on the Princely Leader and Perfecter of our faith and submit to His authority!

When we look at the process of this red heifer sacrifice, we notice that the one offering the sacrifice became unclean, while the one who was sprinkled with the blood was cleansed! This is a wonderful shadow picture of the perfect work of Messiah, who being without sin became sin for us and cleansed us by the sprinkling of His Blood!

**Qorintiyim Bět/2 Corinthians 5:21 "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of Elohim."**

This is a perfect illustration and clear evidence of His sacrificial love for us!

His Sprinkling of His Blood makes us clean, while He took our sin upon Himself:

**Kěpha Aleph/1 Peter 1:2 "chosen according to the foreknowledge of Elohim the Father, set apart by the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of יהושע Messiah: Favour and peace be increased to you."**

**Ib'rim/Hebrews 12:24 "and to יהושע the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaks better than the blood of Hebel."**

His 'blood of sprinkling' speaks better than the 'blood of Hebel', because by His Blood He has satisfied the punishment for sin.

Hebel's blood cried out from the earth for his murder and we praise יהוה for hearing that cry and satisfying the punishment of sin, through His Own Blood that cleanses and restores.

**Ḥazon/Revelation 1:5 "and from יהושע Messiah, the trustworthy witness, the first-born from the dead, and the ruler of the sovereigns of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood."**

Hebel's blood crying out could not satisfy, as he too was born under the yoke on sin and his blood could never satisfy the redemption price, while Elohim, by His Own Blood, paid the price that speaks better than that of Hebel! By the Blood of Elohim, He purchased back for Himself a people who had been sold under slavery to sin!!!:

**Ma'asei/Acts 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Set-apart Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the assembly of Elohim which He has purchased with His own blood."**

Praise יהוה for His loving-commitment toward us and we rejoice that we serve a perfect Judge who rules with great righteousness and justice according to His Torah and that we are sure of the victory he is bringing us, as He fights for us and guarantees us a sure promise of a secure inheritance in Him, as long as we stay in Him and count the cost, recognising the great price that He paid, in redeeming us, and strengthening us to put to death the works and deeds of the flesh, so that we will walk according to the Spirit with great joy!

Shalom!