



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

27th August 2022 30 Av 5782

Re'eh (See) - Deuteronomy 11:26 - 16:17

Key Notes

*Love and Obey God and adhere to the Covenant.
YHVH sets before the people, blessings and curses.
Prepare the ground for God's worship.
Present the worship at the place the Lord will choose.
Warning not to follow false signs and prophets.
Destroy towns of the wicked and those men and their families.
Present the plunder as burnt offering.
Prohibition of shaving the front of the head
Prohibition against eating unclean food
The annual tithe of produce
Sh'mitta year of cancelling debts
Overview of feasts of Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot*

Shabbat Shalom Talmadim.
Blessings for a great Shabbat and week ahead.

This is the beginning of the Parsha.

11:26 *“See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse — **27** the blessing, if you listen to the mitzvot of Adonai your God that I am giving you today; **28** and the curse, if you don't listen to the mitzvot of Adonai your God, but turn aside from the way I am ordering you today and follow other gods that you have not known.*

29 *“When Adonai your God brings you into the land you are entering in order to take possession of it, you are to put the blessing on Mount G'rizim and the curse on Mount 'Eival. **30** Both are west of the Yarden, in the direction of the sunset, in the land of the Kena'ani living in the 'Aravah, across from Gilgal, near the pistachio trees of Moreh. **31** For you are to cross the Yarden to enter and take possession of the land Adonai your God is giving you; you are to own it and live in it. **32** And you are to take care to follow all the laws and rulings I am setting before you today.*

Last week in Parsha Ekev, we were introduced to the moment when Israel, about to set foot in the land, comes to the point where they and the covenant stand at a moment in YHVH's time. It is a 'moed', and it is an important time that all of the people must understand. The covenant is about to be ratified.

At this time, the people are given the choice to agree and walk in the laws and stipulations of the Lord. Thus far, Israel has been trying to reconcile these laws among themselves as a nation

throughout the journey in the wilderness. Now, at the end of their forty year journey, and having gotten used to the rules that will govern them under God as a fully fledged nation, they have to decide if this is what they truly want.

Agreement to the covenant now, will place them under the sovereign rule of God. Thus, Moses begins again to reiterate the blessings and the curses which ensue because of obedience to it and to the repercussions of breaching its terms.

In chapter 11, we see the reiteration of the Shema and the promises of God to bless His people. The people are basically being told by God, 'You are about to enter the land of My promises'. 'Do you want them?'

On immediate entry into the land, the Israelites must begin a purge among its inhabitants and go on a demolition spree, destroying all the high places, sacred stones, altars and Asherah poles which have been built.

Then having removed the detestable things, the people must pay heed to where YHVH wants their sacrifices presented.

12:4 "But you are not to treat Adonai your God this way. **5 Rather, you are to come to the place where Adonai your God will put his name.** He will choose it from all your tribes; and you will seek out that place, which is where he will live, and go there. **6** You will bring there your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tenths [that you set aside for Adonai], the offerings that you give, the offerings you have vowed, your voluntary offerings, and the firstborn of your cattle and sheep. **7** There you will eat in the presence of Adonai your God; and you will rejoice over everything you set out to do, you and your households, in which Adonai your God has blessed you. **8** You will not do things the way we do them here today, where everyone does whatever in his own opinion seems right; **9** because you haven't yet arrived at the rest and inheritance which Adonai your God is giving you. **10** But when you cross the Yarden and live in the land Adonai your God is having you inherit, and he gives you rest from all your surrounding enemies, so that you are living in safety; **11** then you will bring all that I am ordering you **to the place Adonai your God chooses to have his name live** — your burnt offerings, sacrifices, tenths, the offering from your hand, and all your best possessions that you dedicate to Adonai; **12** and you will rejoice in the presence of Adonai your God — you, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves and the Levi staying with you, inasmuch as he has no share or inheritance with you. CJB

There is a great deal of emphasis in this chapter regarding the place that YHVH will choose, so we must pay attention to His words. (See verses, 5, 11, 14, 18, 26)

The worship of YHVH is a contentious subject and has caused division in many traditions of the Christian faith. Today, the focus can often be upon the song or the musicianship of those presenting it. We forget that we are all called to present the 'sacrifice' of praise; however, though we can respond in bringing the offering, the offering is not always acceptable. This might come as a shock to some, but it is something we must understand. The condition of our hearts is an important factor because we who present the offering are part of the offering too.

The Lord inhabits the *acceptable* praises of His people. Listen to these words in Isaiah.

YHVH told the people to purge the land of idolatry and of profane worship. The pagan altars had to be demolished.

This idea of clearing the ground must be at the fore of all our preparation when we are building an altar to the Lord. The building of the altar is our responsibility. In chapter 12, YHVH gets the people to do the clearing and to prepare the ground for where He will place His name. YHVH could have quite simply done this Himself, but what He is doing is getting the people to establish something for Him. It is their reasonable act, indeed their act of love for Him. It is our job to build the altar and to sanctify the ground, not His.

We seriously have to see that not anywhere will do for the presentation of God's praise.

As living stones we come together to build the house of YHVH but as with all major construction, the groundwork comes first. Thus we see in Chapter 12 that YHVH seeks a place to dwell among the worship of His people. Finding pleasure in this, results in Him pouring out the blessings.

Friends, we must realise that if we think we can bring our version of worship and present our own opinions regarding the matter, and expect the Lord to accept it, then we are sadly mistaken and what we have is very much like the strange fire offering of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10:1-2. The act of the men was one of disrespect and pride and on their part was pure presumption.

Moses tells the people that once they enter the land, they must desist from acting like they are and doing what is right in their own eyes.

Deuteronomy 12:8

8 "You shall not do at all what we are doing here [in the camp] today, every man doing whatever is right in his [own] eyes. **9** For you have not yet come to the resting place and to the inheritance which the Lord your God is giving you.

It is crucial that we seek the will of God in how we are to present things to Him. He will judge presumption very seriously. You see, a presumptive act is not based on fact. It assumes something based on a judgement where there is no evidence. Fundamentally, a presumptive act on God's behalf tries to make the perpetrator equal but also ignorant of the knowledge of God. Thus it breaches the command of not using the name of the Lord in vain, and also adds to His word by saying God 'says' when He did not.

Proverbs 15:8

The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight.

Friends, there is a criterion that we as believers should be aware of when we wish to present worship to the Lord: don't be presumptuous, repent, forgive others, and make sure our hearts are ready to present our offering to the Lord.

A true worshipper does not seek anything for themselves. Their desire is to give themselves to God. Unfortunately, contemporary worship attitudes forget all of this and seekers seek only the experience of the moment. Nonetheless, worship given through sacrifice is blessed by YHVH. We forget that the offering must pass through the high priest first.

This is a serious note for leaders. You are responsible for the offering, ultimately.

The aroma of worship is as sweet incense to the Lord, but the offering of the wicked is a stench.

Psalm 141:2

May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.

Chapter 13 begins:

2 (1) “If a prophet or someone who gets messages while dreaming arises among you and he gives you a sign or wonder, **3 (2)** and the sign or wonder comes about as he predicted when he said, ‘Let’s follow other gods, which you have not known; and let us serve them,’ **4 (3)** you are not to listen to what that prophet or dreamer says. For *Adonai* your God is testing you, in order to find out whether you really do love *Adonai* your God with all your heart and being. **5 (4)** You are to follow *Adonai* your God, fear him, obey his *mitzvot*, listen to what he says, serve him and cling to him; **6 (5)** and that prophet or dreamer is to be put to death; because he urged rebellion against *Adonai* your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from a life of slavery; in order to seduce you away from the path *Adonai* your God ordered you to follow. This is how you are to rid your community of this wickedness. CJB

At first, this opening passage seems to contradict Deut 18:22

When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord and the thing does not happen or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

However, what is highlighted is the false sign that appears. This is the carrot on the stick which will cause many witnesses to follow the false prophet.

V 4 (3) you are not to listen to what that prophet or dreamer says. *For Adonai your God is testing you*, in order to find out whether you really do love *Adonai* your God with all your heart and being.

The command of the Lord in v5 tells us to purge the evil from among us.

Verses 6-12 tells us that we are not to show any pity even among our kin, if they agree with the teaching of the false prophet, and try to entice us to follow them.

The sentence of stoning for this crime is brutal but it serves really as a preventative warning.

V10 So you shall stone him to death with stones, because he has tried to draw you away from the Lord your God who brought you from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery. **11** Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and will never again do such a wicked thing among you.

Further more, the purging of all the towns of the wicked, who seek to lead the people astray must be destroyed and left as a ruin with all the plunder from that town presented as a burnt offering to the Lord.

Finally, as we draw this study to a close, I want us to look at the remaining aspects toward its end.

Chapter 14 highlights again the prohibitions of shaving the head and the cutting of the body. It reiterates the passage in Leviticus:

Leviticus 19:28 “Do not cut your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves. I am the Lord.

These were the cultic practices of the pagans who indulged in these acts in the process of mourning the dead or for the shedding of the blood as fertility rights.

Previously, we have seen that the way of living in the land was totally up to the people. They were to obey the covenant laws and as long as they did, all would go well. The Lord God of Israel, shall bless them, but God also knew their weaknesses. The temptation to follow the practices of the people around them would be strong. It seems on one hand that YHVH could have eradicated the problem by simply removing the pagans from the land, but He did not.

How would the people and the covenant hold up?

However, the prohibitions and the stipulations within the covenant identify Israel as a separate people, a treasured possession of the Lord. This has already been established and thus places upon Israel their peculiar identification mark. The prohibitions and the stipulations mark them out from among the other people and thus Israel must be aware that both inwardly and outwardly they will represent the family of YHVH, and as keepers of His laws, will become the people of the book.

As a further identifier YHVH will place further stipulations upon them by giving them the feasts. Chapter 15 highlights the main feasts of Pesach/Passover, Shavuot/ the Feast of weeks and Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles.

Before we finish I want to look at a pattern that is established around them.

We begin the chapter by reading about the remission or wiping out of debt. Among the Israelites the Sh'mitta year must be observed. In this year the cancellation of debts among the Israelites must be practiced. This practice must not be transferred to any debt accrued by a non Israelite.

The Sh'mitta is observed at the end of every seven years. In order to understand the principle of the seventh year, or sabbatical year, we must look into the pattern or length of days established by YHVH at creation. Man was created on the 6th day. The 7th day is the day of the Lord's rest and thus man dwelt with God on the 7th day in His rest.

Seven is a reoccurring pattern within the feasts. If we apply the idea that YHVH seeks to dwell with man in His rest, then we see that the number seven is reflected over the periods of the feasts. The feasts are times therefore, when YHVH wishes to meet with His people and thus they — the times, are designated as Moedim, YHVH's appointed times.

Let's break this down

The Sabbath day is the 7th day and the only day of the week given a name — 'The Sabbath'.

Every other day is numbered 1-6

The Sh'mitta is the 7th year of a sabbatical year.

7 Sabbatical years is one Jubilee

The sabbatical year is a period of 7 years.

Six days shall be the feast of Passover, the 7th day shall be a sacred assembly to God, were no work shall be done. Each man should therefore rest.

7 weeks after Passover, shall be the feast of Shavuot

7 months after the feast of Passover shall be the Feast of Sukkot which is celebrated for 7 days and held within the 7th month of Tishrei. This feast has an additional 8th day called 'Shemini (eighth) Atzeret (Assembly)

The number 7 is mentioned throughout the book of revelation.

7 churches, 7 spirits, 7 lamp stands, 7 stars, 7 angels, 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 hills, 7 heads of the beast.

7 is the number of completion and is considered a perfect number. The Millennial reign of Messiah Yeshua with His saints represents the 7th day prior to the completion of events which usher in the New Heaven and the New Earth — the time of the new beginning, the 8th day.

The Parsha concludes with the stipulation that all men shall attend the three feasts, Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot, every year with their offerings at the place the Lord will choose.

6 "Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) and at the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost/ Shavuot) and at the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles), and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. **17** Every man shall give as he is able, in accordance with the blessing which the Lord your God has given you.

As we conclude this study, we must settle in our hearts that the feasts are not called the feasts of Israel, or the feasts of the Jews. They are called the Feasts of God. They are sacred moments or moedim within the divine clock of the redemption of all of creation. We are given them as prophetic signs that will usher in the return of our messiah, the final judgement upon the wicked, the wedding of the lamb of God and His bride, and the beginning of the new day, for those who belong to YHVH.

All who believe and receive our blessed saviour Messiah Yeshua, are grafted or brought into the House or community of Israel. They become Israelite and thus people of the covenant through Messiah's atoning sacrifice.

Ephesians 2:12-14

12 *remember* that at that time you were separated from Christ [excluded from any relationship with Him], alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise [with no share in the sacred Messianic promise and without knowledge of God's agreements], having no hope [in His promise] and [living] in the world without God. **13** But now [at this very moment] in Christ Jesus you who once were [so very] far away [from God] have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **14** For He Himself is our peace *and* our bond of unity. He who made both *groups*—[Jews and Gentiles]—*into* one body and broke down the barrier, the dividing wall [of spiritual antagonism between us] AMP

By the time we reach the end of the closing chapters of Deuteronomy, we will have come full circle and so we will begin the reading of the books again.

Just as Israel are now standing at their land borders, we too stand with them as they are about to enter in, but not before they agree to the covenant rules.

Paul writes in the book of Corinthians that we must pay attention to the failures of Israel during their tumultuous journey.

1 Corinthians 10 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, **2** all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, **3** all ate the same spiritual food, **4** and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. **5** But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* were scattered in the wilderness. **6** Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. **7** And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." **8** Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; **9** nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; **10** nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **11** Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. **12** Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. NKJB

As we finish, let us learn also from the failures and weaknesses of our ancient kin. The lesson we do learn however, is that the hope of our returning remains. Despite, yes despite, even our own weaknesses and failings — if we walk with the Holy Spirit and listen to His teaching, paying attention to, and doing as He says, and not do whatever we feel is right in our own eyes, we will by the grace of God make it.

The message Messiah Yeshua gave to His disciples to take out is for us also. The 'Good News' for us is that if we endure till the end our salvation shall be complete.

Shalom



Numbers 6:

24 'Y'varekh'kha Adonai v'yishmerekha.

[May Adonai bless you and keep you.]

25 Ya'er Adonai panav eleikha vichunekka.

[May Adonai make his face shine on you and show you his favour.]

26 Yissa Adonai panav eleikha v'yasem l'kha shalom

[May Adonai lift up his face toward you and give you peace.]

Glossary

Midrash: In Judaism, the **Midrash** is the genre of rabbinic literature which contains early interpretations and commentaries on the Written Torah and Oral Torah (spoken law and sermons), as well as non-legalistic rabbinic literature (*Aggadah*) and occasionally the Jewish religious laws (*halakha*), which usually form a running commentary on specific passages in the Hebrew Scripture (*Tanakh*)

Targum: **Targum Onkelos** (or **Onqelos**), is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum (Aramaic translation) to the Torah. However, its early origins may have been western, in Israel. Its authorship is attributed to Onkelos, a famous convert to Judaism in Tannaic times (c. 35–120 CE)

Targum Jonathan: **Targum Jonathan**), otherwise referred to as **Targum Yonasan/Yonatan**, is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum to the Nevi'im/Prophets. Its early origins, however, are western (i.e. from the Land of Israel), and the Talmudic tradition attributes its authorship to Jonathan ben Uzziel of Jerusalem in the time of King Herod

Tannaim: Tannaim were the Rabbinic sages whose views are recorded in the Mishnah, from approximately 10-220 CE. The period of the Tannaim, also referred to as the Mishnaic period, lasted about 210 years.

Talmud: The **Talmud** means "instruction, learning", "teach, study") is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. The term "Talmud" normally refers to the collection of writings named specifically the **Babylonian Talmud** (*Talmud Bavli*), although there is also an earlier collection known as the Jerusalem Talmud (*Talmud Yerushalmi*) or Palestinian

The Talmud has two components:

1. The Mishnah (c. 200 CE), the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law;
2. The Gemara (c. 500 CE), an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible

Jubilees: The Book of Jubilees claims to present "the history of the division of the days of the Law, of the events of the years, the year-weeks, and the jubilees of the world" as revealed to Moses (in addition to the Torah or "Instruction") by angels while he was on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights. The chronology given in Jubilees is based on multiples of seven; the jubilees are periods of 49 years, seven "year-weeks", into which all of time has been divided

Vulgate: This is the Latin Bible. Translated from the Hebrew and Aramaic by Jerome between 382 and 405 CE, this text became known as the 'versio vulgata', which means 'common translation'.

Rashi, whose real name is Shlomo Yitzchaki, was born in France in the 11th century. Rashi wrote a comprehensive commentary on the Talmud and commentary on the Hebrew Bible.

Moses ben Maimon, also known as Maimonides, became better known by the acronym Rambam. He was born in 1138 in Cordoba, Spain. He was a Sephardic Jew and influential philosopher. He is considered to be among the greatest of Torah Scholars.

Nachmanides- 13th century French Jewish Philosopher, commonly known by the acronym; Rambam.