



YAH's Private Property

Parashat v'etchanan (45) - And I begged

Torah: Debarim 3:23 to 7:11

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 40:1 to 26

Apostolic Scriptures: Mattithyahu 4:1-11

Last week we learned that *Mosheh* began teaching the new generation *Torah*, while also giving them a summary of their camping grounds. They now find themselves in the land of *Mo'ab*, east of the *Yardēn* river, where they are about to enter the promised land.

Here *Mosheh* presides over his narrative where he makes representations to YAH:

Debarim 3²³ "And I pleaded with יהוה at that time, saying, ²⁴O Master יהוה, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand, for who is a mighty one in the heavens or on earth who does according to Your works and according to Your might? 3²⁵ I pray, let me pass over and see the good land beyond the *Yardēn*, this good hill country, and *Lebanon*."

Mosheh accuses the people of being responsible for his failure to enter the promised land. According to rabbinic tradition, he pleaded with YAH in some 515 different ways for release from the sin for which he was being punished. This is alluded to from the *gematria* of the word וְאֶתְחַנֵּן (*va'etchanan*), which gives a total of 515. However, this is not recorded in Scripture and we must not take it for granted. *Mosheh* could only see the land from mount *Pisgah* and he had to accept his fate.

Last year, at the conclusion of *Pesach*, we did a short study on prayer. One of the most important conclusions we came to is that YAH only listens to prayers when we do them according to His rules. In this week's *sidrah*, *Mosheh* teaches us how our prayers, our pleas, should be brought before YAH. Instead of making himself the centre of attention, he starts by exalting YAH, thanking Him for all that he has experienced up to that point. The motive for his prayer is that the Most High be honoured and praised in every way. This is the principle for any successful prayer. Therefore, we must respect YAH's interests with the right attitude in order to expect any answer to our prayers. This means that we will also be satisfied, even if the answer is 'no', because He knows better than we do in all circumstances. After *Mosheh* received a negative answer, he resigned himself to it.

Some people do not take 'no' for an answer and persist until YAH gives in. In such cases, it is not necessarily something that may be beneficial to the person, even a type of trap, so that the supplicant experiences certain things in his or her life that can have serious consequences due to selfishness. YAH does not force anyone to love or obey Him; He expects people to honour Him of their own free will and to submit to His decisions.

Since *Mosheh* would not lead the people into the promised land, he made a serious appeal to everyone to keep all the precepts, rules, of *YAH*, to *sh'ma* them. We'll get back to this in a moment. Something that we, as believing followers of *Yeshua* must understand: He, *Yeshua*, is the living *Torah* and we do not need to do anything to make the commands contained therein look better. We may not even place our own boundaries around *Torah*, as the rabbis do. When we add anything, we distort the original intent, which then leads to disobedience. Keeping the rules and instructions of *Torah* will make us partakers of the wisdom (*chokhmah*) and understanding (*binah*) contained in *Torah* and also bring praise and honour to the Creator-*Elohim*.

Torah is often referred to as "Mosaic laws" or "the law of *Mosheh*." However, this is so far from the truth, because *Mosheh* only received instructions from *YAH* to share with the people – he did not write them! This may be one of the problems why christians refuse to obey *Torah*. However, we must remember that *Mosheh* had a very special relationship with *YAH*:

Shemoth 33^{11a} Thus *יהוה* spoke to *Mosheh* face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

Those words, rules, are what he now passes on to this new generation. We are also reminded in this *sidrah* of their obedience, as well as the constant honour and praise when they live in the new land:

Bemidbar 15¹⁷ And *יהוה* spoke to *Mosheh*, saying, ¹⁸"Speak to the children of *Yisra'el*, and say to them, 'When you come into the land to which I bring you, ¹⁹then it shall be, when you eat of the bread of the land, that you present a contribution to *יהוה*. ²⁰Present a cake of the first of your dough as a contribution – as a contribution of the threshing-floor you present it.

This *parashah* makes it clear that *יהוה* not only expects respectful fear from us, but absolute obedience to *Torah*. We can ask the question: "Was 'obedience' abolished after the death of *Yeshua*?" Let us examine what *יהוה* tells us through *Mosheh*:

Debarim 4¹ "And now, O *Yisra'el*, listen to the laws and the right-rulings which I am teaching you to do, so that you live, and shall go in and possess the land which *יהוה Elohim* of your fathers is giving you.

While *Mosheh* spoke to the new generation of *Yisra'el* at that time, those words are still valid for us today. As part of *Yisra'el*, our "promised land" is the new earth and to secure our place there we must continue to trust *יהוה* and obey His commands. We are not to live in lust or bring any "strange fire" before Him. We see this clear command:

Debarim 4² "Do not add to the Word which I command you, and do not take away from it, so as to guard the commands of *יהוה* your *Elohim* which I am commanding you. ³"Your eyes have seen what *יהוה* did at *Ba'al Pe'or*, for *יהוה* your *Elohim* has destroyed from your midst all the men who followed *Ba'al Pe'or*. ⁴"But you who are clinging to *יהוה* your *Elohim* are alive today, every one of you.

Unfortunately, there are various groups of people, including some *Torah* believers, who regularly add to or subtract from Scripture. One of the easiest ways to do this is through the polemics surrounding the pronunciation of the tetragrammaton – *Yahuah* or *Yahweh*. While this will in no way secure our place in the afterlife, some people simply will not give up trying to force their views onto others. Similarly, there are those who like to criticise the letters of *Sha'ul* and claim that they are false teachings. However, we are not even talking about the omissions and additions of the christians – they read Scripture like a storybook and skip over all the uncomfortable passages!

It is here that we see how christianity has been deceived into viewing *Yeshua* as part of a 'trinity'; they are also convinced that simply "faith in *jesus*" will grant them eternal life. However, they forget that *Yeshua* came to announce the Kingdom of *יהוה*, the *b'sorah*, good news, which involves full obedience to *יהוה*,

and the only condition to obtain eternal life. This obedience includes the seventh-day *Shabbat* and *Elohim's* festivals:

Luqas 4 ⁴³ And He said to them, "To the other cities I also have to bring the Good News: the reign of *Elohim*, **because for this I have been sent.**" [emphasis added]

Long after *Yeshua's* ascension, the *talmidim* still observed everything that *Yeshua* taught them:

🕯 *Ma'asei* 28 ²³ And having appointed him a day, many came to him where he was staying, to whom he was explaining, earnestly witnessing about the reign of *Elohim*, and persuading them concerning **יהושע** from both the *Torah* of *Mosheh* and the Prophets, from morning until evening.

🕯 *Ma'asei* 24 ¹⁴ "And this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the ***Elohim of my fathers***, believing all that has been written in the *Torah* and in the Prophets, [emphasis original]

During the second *aliyah*, however, we also see how *Mosheh*, through a vision in favour of *YAH*, sees the corruption of his people happening in the future. He warns them against it and also brings them another promise:

Debarim 4 ²⁵ "When you bring forth children and grandchildren, and shall grow old in the land, and shall do corruptly and make a carved image in the form of whatever, and shall do what is evil in the eyes of **יהוה** your *Elohim* to provoke Him, ²⁶ "I shall call the heavens and earth to witness against you on that day, that you soon completely perish from the land which you pass over the *Yardēn* to possess – you do not prolong your days in it but are completely destroyed. ²⁷ "And **יהוה** shall scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left few in number among the nations where **יהוה** drives you. ²⁸ "And there you shall serve mighty ones, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell.

Pagan peoples, especially the Greco-Roman peoples, are known for their idols represented by images of wood and stone. With the establishment of christianity during the fourth century, they adopted this cult and changed names at will. The image they hold supreme is the cross, the origin of which is traced back to *Babel*. In many countries the cross is even worshipped with expressions of awe, while it is decorated with flowers and candles. The words of *the Torah* were fulfilled by wayward believers who bowed down before any of these items. It is absolutely essential that any person who returns to *YAH* from a fallen state will renounce all these images, statues, signs, crosses and other forms of worship, even if they are not worshipped. Not only must they be removed from our homes, but also from our minds! By this we can then give full recognition to *YAH* who is only Spirit, that He does not consist of any matter or have any form whatsoever.

The *Torah* clearly identifies two elements that people use to create their images for false worship: wood and stone. The cult of the cross is an example of worshiping a wooden object. Statues are an example of stone objects. We learn from *the Torah* that the corrupt leaders of the nation of *Yisra'el* rejected the precious cornerstone, that which was placed by *YAH* in heaven (cf. *Yeshayahu* 28:16; *Mizmor* 118:22-23; *Mattithyahu* 21:42-45; *Luqas* 20:17-19; *Ma'asei* 4:11; *Kēpha Aleph* 2:6-8; *Romiyim* 9:33). However, man has transformed that stone into their own cult of worship, almost like a spiritual theology by which *YAH* is replaced.

Something we briefly discussed two weeks ago may need repeating here. The Hebrew word **אֶבֶן** (*e-Ven*) translates as rock or stone. The three letters that make it up, **א** (*aleph*), **ב** (*bet*) and **נ** (*ayin*), first of all represents *YAH*, the Eternal Creator who is One (cf. *Debarim* 6:4 et al); the letter **ב** represents Creation (cf.

¹ This is the final form of the letter **ב** and appears differently from the one used elsewhere in words. A total of five Hebrew letters appear different when they are the last letter of a word. Unfortunately, this study does not allow the time or opportunity to discuss this.

Berēshith 1:1 *et al*) and אב represents salvation as we have discussed in the past. The first two letters, אב (*av*), means ‘father’ and the last two letters בן (*ben*) translates as ‘son’. We can therefore see the word אבן as an act of our heavenly Father through which the world’s salvation is brought about through His earthly son.

We know that *YAH* can never actually give birth or reproduce like other biological beings, so we must interpret the word ‘son’ in a very different way. We see ‘son’ here rather as imitator, servant, or representative (*cf. Qorintiyim Aleph* 4:17; *Kēpha Aleph* 5:13; *Hazon* 21:7). Both *Shelomoh* and *Yisra’ēl* are considered sons in Scripture (*cf. Dibrei haYamim Aleph* 22:10; *Shemoth* 4:22). *Yeshua* is the son of *YAH* par excellence, but he is not a heavenly reproduction of the Invisible and Eternal Creator-*Elohim*. He is indeed a confirmation of *YAH* in human form, like the first man, *Adam*, but still exalted. However, this has brought with it an element of idolatry in some people in which he is worshipped as if he were *YAH*. These people therefore create an idol of stone or wood, by claiming that *Yeshua* himself is also *YAH*, while he is actually אב-בן (*Av-Ben*), the son of *YAH*.

Any person who worships the son as if he is *YAH* is practising idolatry, for we must and may worship only One *YAH*. There is a difference between reverence and worship. When we revere *Yeshua*, we show the same reverence to the One who sent him. This is a difficult concept for most people who have escaped the lies of the church, because the trinity is unfortunately the false doctrine that prevails in most churches – *Yeshua* is worshipped and *YAH* is forgotten. As a believer’s relationship with *YAH* deepens, revelations from *the Torah* become much clearer and our awareness of *YAH*’s Character will grow to such an extent that we realise that only He is to be worshipped.

We soon learn of another promise that *YAH* keeps. He said that *Yisra’ēl* would be scattered among the nations and this is the case to this day. However, this scattering resulted in pagan beliefs, traditions and customs overshadowing the rules of *YAH*, to such an extent that even original descendants became apostates. Despite people who may be under the impression that *YAH*’s favour was only brought in by *Yeshua* 2 000 years ago, Father promises:

Debarim 4 ²⁹“But from there you shall seek יהוה your *Elohim*, and shall find, when you search for Him with all your heart and with all your being. ³⁰“In your distress, when all these words shall come upon you in the latter days, then you shall return to יהוה your *Elohim* and shall obey His voice. ³¹“For יהוה your *Elohim* is a compassionate *Ėl*, He does not forsake you, nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.

These verses also kick a hole in the can from which replacement theology emerged! We clearly see that *YAH* has given both *Yisra’ēl* and ‘Gentiles’, unbelievers, time to hear His call. He has given people of all populations the opportunity to lay down their flesh and follow *Torah* as *Yeshua* came to teach us. Father expects us to obey His rules, therefore *Mosheh* repeats to us the ten words that were originally brought at *Sinai*. We see this repetition in 5:6-21, but will not work through it now. However, there is something that may seem like an anomaly:

Debarim 5 ¹¹You do not bring the Name of יהוה your *Elohim* to naught, for יהוה does not leave him unpunished who brings His Name to naught.

There seems to be a problem when we compare this with a text in the following chapter:

Debarim 6 ¹³“Fear יהוה your *Elohim* and serve Him, and swear by His Name.

The anomaly seems to be cleared up when we read these words of *Yeshua*:

Mattithyahu 5 ³³“Again, you heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to יהוה.’ ³⁴“But I say to you, do not swear [vainly] at all, neither by the

heaven, because it is *Elohim's* throne; ³⁵ nor by **the earth**, for it is His **footstool**; nor by *Yerushalayim*, for it is **the city of the great Sovereign**; ³⁶ nor swear by your head, because you are not able to make one hair white or black. ³⁷ “But let your word ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No’ be ‘No.’ And what goes beyond these is from the wicked one. [emphasis original]

Most of us try to be as convincing as possible when relating or promising something, that we would sometimes swear it to be true. This is precisely where *YAH* draws the line and *Yeshua* confirms it. When we read “and swear by His name” it has nothing to do with anything about our humanity, but only with our Creator-*Elohim*. Nothing on earth, in our lives, is so important that we have to call *YAH* as a witness. After all, He knows everything and if other people do not want to believe you, you will bring *YAH's* Name into disfavour to call on it so that credulous people will be convinced. None of us can make any promise to Him and ever hope to fulfill it completely. Hence *Yeshua's* admonition to rather not swear at all, and not to make an oath. You will get yourself into trouble, because *YAH* will demand that promise from you. Keep in mind what happened to *Yiphtah* and his daughter because of a thoughtless promise. Dr. Bob Utey, in his Study Guide Commentary Series, writes the following:

“This verse gives several things that Israel should do towards YHWH when they victoriously enter the Promised Land:

1. “fear *only* the LORD your God”
2. “worship Him”
3. “swear by His name”

All of these involve worship and are used often in Moses' writings.

Part of the cultic worship of Israel was to make statements in the name of YHWH. Jesus seems to quote this verse in Matthew 4:10 in His confrontation with the Evil One. He changes the word “fear” in Deut. 6:13 to the word “worship”, which shows us that these two terms are basically synonymous. The name of God reflected His character and person.”

He then refers to how true believers would live:

Mal'aki 3 ¹⁶ Then shall those who fear יהוה speak to one another, and יהוה listens and hears, and a book of remembrance be written before Him, of those who fear יהוה, and those who think upon His Name.

As *Mosheh* continues with his story, it makes one wonder if he might still be hoping to convince *YAH* with all these words to allow him to enter the promised land. It is only human, especially when we study the following:

Debarim 6 ⁴ “Hear, O *Yisra'el*: יהוה our *Elohim*, יהוה is one! ⁵ “And you shall love יהוה your *Elohim* with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your might. ⁶ “And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be in your heart, ⁷ and you shall impress them upon your children, and shall speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up, ⁸ and shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ “And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

The original Hebrew text starts with the word שְׁמַע (*sh'ma*), which translates as “hear, listen and do”. Hearing means nothing if we do not understand what we hear, and only by doing what we hear, can we fulfil our role on earth. More on this later. The question can also be asked here: Who is *Yisra'el* that we read about in v. 4? That *Yisra'el*, my dear brother and sister, includes every person who confesses *Yeshua* as Salvation and follows *the Torah* as he fulfilled it for us:

Galatijim 3 ⁷ Know, then, that those who are of belief are sons of *Abraham*.

Sha'ul teaches us:

Romiyim 11 ²⁵For I do not wish you to be ignorant of this secret, brothers, lest you should be wise in your own estimation, that hardening in part has come over *Yisra'el*, until the completeness of the nations has come in. ²⁶And so all *Yisra'el* shall be saved, as it has been written, **"The Deliverer shall come out of Tsiyon, and He shall turn away wickedness from Ya'aqob, ²⁷and this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."** [emphasis original]

Will all of *Israel* be saved? When we go back a few verses, we learn how *Sha'ul* gives his people a brief history lesson:

Romiyim 11 ⁷What then? *Yisra'el* has not obtained what it seeks, but the chosen did obtain it, and the rest were hardened. ⁸As it has been written, **"יהוה has given them a spirit of deep sleep, eyes not to see and ears not to hear, unto this day."** [emphasis original]

That stubborn spirit is exactly what inspired Pharaoh and was also the reason why the firstborn were killed. Here we see the reason for their stubborn spirit that arose shortly before *Yeshua* died on the torture stake:

Mattithyahu 27 ²⁴And 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." ²⁵And all the people answering, said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

This is exactly what we were talking about earlier – what you ask for, you will receive if you keep asking, even a stubborn spirit. It is at this point that some of the descendants of *Abraham* lost their place on the bus to heaven – forever. They considered themselves higher than *Yeshua*, who directly told them that he was the son of *Elohim*. It is also because of circumstances like these that the vast majority of christianity believes only they are the new *Yisra'el* – something that is a total lie and should be nipped in the bud immediately. Again we hear *Sha'ul* speaking to his own people:

Romiyim 9 ⁶However, it is not as though the word of *Elohim* has failed. For they are not all *Yisra'el* who are of *Yisra'el*,

This is in line with what *Yeshua* teaches us:

Mattithyahu 7 ²¹"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Master, Master,' shall enter into the reign of the heavens, but he who is doing the desire of My Father in the heavens.

Sha'ul brought several messages, but most of them were ignored, even as many current Messianic believers consider him a false *talmid*. We looked at this earlier, but wish to repeat these:

🕯 **Ma'asei 28** ²³And having appointed him a day, many came to him where he was staying, to whom he was explaining, earnestly witnessing about the reign of *Elohim*, and persuading them concerning יהושע from both the *Torah* of *Mosheh* and the Prophets, from morning until evening.

🕯 **Ma'asei 24** ¹⁴"And this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the *Elohim* of my fathers, believing all that has been written in the *Torah* and in the Prophets, [emphasis original]

We want to briefly return here to *Debarim* 6:4 to see exactly what these words mean. The word שְׁמַע (*sh' Ma*) is translated as "hear, listen and do". It is not just to hear what *YAH* says, but He wants us to understand what He says. One of the most important sayings of christianity is "we are 'saved by grace' and therefore we do not have to do anything more". This is again a lie of the enemy, because he wants us to remain passive. However, think of *Pinehas*, whom we met a few weeks ago:

Bemidbar 25 ¹¹“*Pinehas*, son of *El'azar*, son of *Aharon* the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of *Yisra'el*, because he was ardent with My ardour in their midst, so that I did not consume the children of *Yisra'el* in My ardour.

The word used for jealousy is **קָנָה**, (*qa-Na*), an active word that can also mean to take a specific position. The Greek, whether translated, or as *Sha'ul* uses it, is exactly the same word when he speaks to his fellow countrymen:

Romiyim 10 ¹⁹But I ask, Did *Yisra'el* not know? First *Mosheh* says, “**I shall provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I shall enrage you by an unwise nation.**” [emphasis original]

Romiyim 11 is one of the most important chapters in Scripture for anyone who is becoming aware of *Torah* and the way of life that comes with it. Along with **Hebrews 11** and **Hazon 11** we see various characteristics of *Yisra'el* and how born ‘Jews’ and non-‘Jews’ are all part of the *Yisra'el* of *YAH*. We also realise that *YAH* never rejected His original chosen people. Nor did they ‘stumble’ never to rise again. Just as each of us in our search for truth has sometimes lost our way and had to be pulled back again, so these born ‘Jews’ had the same experience. However, it is necessary for us as non-‘Jews’ not only to teach them the *b'sorah*, the good news of *Yeshua*, but also to make them *qana*, jealous:

Romiyim 11 ¹¹I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Let it not be! But by their fall deliverance has come to the nations, to **provoke them to jealousy.** [emphasis original]

The same word is used in this text as we saw before, although it is rendered here in Greek: παραζηλόω (*parazeloo*), which simply translates as “to incite”, “to stir up rivalry”. This jealousy is therefore something that encourages others to act like you, or perhaps better; to create a rivalry. Imagine how wonderful it would be if there were a rivalry between people to serve *YAH* better than the person next to you! No one will necessarily receive any reward from Him for this, but it may even encourage people outside our circles to serve the only Creator-*Elohim* as He expects of every human being. We also do not necessarily have to physically take up a spear like *Pinehas*, but there are several other methods to act similarly.

As we hear and listen, the only thing still lacking is to do what we have heard and understood. Again it is pitiful how christianity lends its ears to the enemy by believing “grace saved me and I don’t have to do anything more” – that couch religion. If it is only ‘grace’ that brings about our salvation, the narrow path and small gate really mean nothing. In *Yeshua*’s words:

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

Scripture teaches exactly the opposite. *Ya'aqob*, the half-brother of *Yeshua*, took a long time to come to conviction. However, he was just as zealous, just as jealous, in his actions and as a result he addressed several moral points in his writing to believing ‘Jews’ in *Yerushalayim*:

Ya'aqob 2 ¹⁴My brothers, what use is it for anyone to say he has belief but does not have works? This belief is unable to save him. ¹⁵And if a brother or sister is naked and in need of daily food, ¹⁶but one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” but you do not give them the bodily needs, what use is it? ¹⁷So also belief, if it does not have works, is in itself dead. ¹⁸But someone might say, “You have belief, and I have works.” Show me your belief without your works, and I shall show you my belief by my works. ¹⁹You believe that *Elohim* is one. You do well. The demons also believe – and shudder! ²⁰But do you wish to know, O foolish man, that the belief without the works is dead? [emphasis original]

Our actions are to live fully what we learn in Scripture: *Shabbat*, festivals, everything that *Yeshua* came to teach us. We may in no way boast about what we do, because we are grafted onto the cultivated olive tree. However, we must never doubt that our actions are in any way inferior compared to the natural branches,

the born 'Jews'. We must also not do as they do, but only do according to Scripture. By acting like them, we can never make them jealous. Most of them know *Torah* much better than we do and therefore we must act strictly according to *Torah* as *Yeshua* fulfilled it. We must act as *Mosheh* teaches us:

Debarim 7 ⁵"But this is what you do to them: Break down their slaughter-places, and smash their pillars, and cut down their *Ashĕrim*, and burn their carved images with fire. ⁶"For you are a set-apart people to יהוה your *Elohim*. יהוה your *Elohim* has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a treasured possession above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

It is therefore important that we first remove every form of idolatry from out of our own lives and then teach others to do the same. Each of us has a duty as a *talmid* of *Yeshua* to do as he did, even if it means you need to make a whip! Now that we have become aware of the truth, we have no excuse:

Marqos 16 ¹⁵And He said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the Good News to every creature. ¹⁶"He who has believed and has been immersed, shall be saved, but he who has not believed shall be condemned.

It is essential to remember that the newfound nation of *Israel* was formerly slaves. A slave has no freedom of choice. Through *Shabbat*, *YAH* has given each of us a choice to experience freedom. Through this, we are reminded of our own spiritual slavery and the prospect we have on the Way of Truth. Sin is the transgression of the law (*cf. Yoĥanan Aleph 3:4*), but the Ten Commandments that were also given to us at *Sinai* are the law of freedom (*cf. Ya'aqob 1:25*). By adhering to this, trying to maintain everything to the best of our ability, we remain free from the slavery of *hasatan*, this world and consequent death. We already learn from the first word that we can always live in freedom from *Torah*. This is confirmed with the *man* which produced a double portion on the sixth day and was not available on *Shabbat* – for 40 years! Contrary to those who claim that *Shabbat* should be abolished as it may be a burden, we realise that it is indeed a wonderful gift from *YAH*.

Our *sidrah* ends with another hidden *menorah*: seven nations that are cast out of the promised land by *YAH*. These seven nations are stronger and more powerful than *Yisra'el* (7:1) and are cast out for one specific reason:

Debarim 7 ³"And do not intermarry with them – you do not give your daughter to his son, and you do not take his daughter for your son, ⁴for he turns your sons away from following Me, to serve other mighty ones. Then the displeasure of יהוה shall burn against you and promptly destroy you.

All these nations practice idolatry and teach us a very important lesson: do not bind yourself in marriage with a person who is not on the Way of Truth. We have learned from history (of christianity) that bad habits are easily adopted, that idolatry is practised even by people who originally lived in complete set-apartness. Bad habits are easily learned, which is why christianity has still not been able to get rid of christmas and easter. *YAH* loves His people so much that a special expression is used here:

Debarim 7 ⁶"For you are a set-apart people to יהוה your *Elohim*. יהוה your *Elohim* has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a treasured possession above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

Where we read "a treasured possession" we see the Hebrew word עַם סְגֻלָּה (*am s'gu-Lah*), special people. The Septuagint uses the Greek λαον περιουσιον (*laon periousios*), which can also be translated as "private property". Imagine that *YAH* loves you so much that you are considered His private property! He does not want to share you with anyone from another nation and hence the rule not to intermarry with other nations – you are too precious to Him! You will be blessed to the thousandth generation, but your spouse, who is not on the Way of Truth, will be "repaid to his/her face" (7:10). The possibility exists that you will go into perdition with your spouse, judging by our knowledge of history and what Scripture teaches us. Therefore, keep yourself pure, set apart and be obedient to *YAH*'s rules:

Debarim 7 ¹¹“And you shall guard the command, and the laws, and the right-rulings which I command you today, to do them.

Shabbat shalom!

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6 Av 5785 / 31 July 2025

Sources:

We prefer to not use the word ‘God’, because of personal conviction. In most cases, unless quoted from another source, it will be replaced by ‘*Elohim*’ or inflections of the same word.

All citing of Scripture is taken from The Scriptures 2009, unless indicated differently.

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