



MISHPATIM

Parasha: MISHPATIM/JUDGEMENTS

Torah Portion: SHEMOT 21:1-24:18

Tanak: JEREMIAH 34:1-22, 33:25-26,

ISAIAH 49:1-6, 60:17-61:9 1 KINGS 7:40-50

Brit Hadasha: 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11, JAMES 1:26-2:4,

MATTHEW 26:27-28

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AFTER IMPARTING THE Ten Commandments to Moshe, YHVH declared to him the judgments and ordinances which were given to govern Israel. Many of these judgments have to do with the ownership of oxen or dealing with thievery. While most of us do not own oxen (or cattle) personally, however, the spirit of Torah cannot be ignored. Just because we assume something in Torah is not applicable to our own lives does not mean we should immediately dismiss it and diminish its relevance to us and render ourselves unaccountable.

Many aspects of Torah may seem archaic to our minds and, to our quandary may not apparently relate to our current circumstances. Yet, Torah is not given as a mere rule book of do's and don'ts. Torah has been given to us as teachings and instructions and, as seen in this week's parasha, contains many rulings or judgements. Torah contains the substance of how we are to rule our communities, conduct everything from business affairs to personal transactions, how to give in marriage, hire help, buy services and judge situations.

When Yitro came into camp, he saw the daunting amount of judgments and decisions that Moshe had to make on behalf of the people. As Moshe applied Yitro's advice to the sons of Israel, it became apparent that the sons of Israel would have to know, even as Moshe knew, the standards in which to be governed. It is a full circle that took place when the eyes that were enlightened as the first humans ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and now a full measure of what would, and always was good and evil—literally, physically and spiritually—has been presented before the children of Israel as a witness of the throne of YHVH. The giving of the commands and judgments were to show them, and

us, what is acceptable and that which is not acceptable for the people of YHVH, who He calls a nation of priests.

We know that many men, such as Moshe, were given these ordinances, otherwise, they would not have been able to judge rightly or ethically preceding the giving of Torah. The comprehensive revelation of what we know as Torah, YHVH's teaching and instructions, was given to all flesh to know how to approach the jealous YHVH and how to maintain the separated (sanctified, consecrated, holy, set apart, etc.) lifestyle that YHVH asks us to live out as we choose life.¹

Moreover, today even the sacrificial system that seemingly has no temple or tabernacle in which to be practiced due to Messiah's fulfillment, even now, has rich meaning embedded within its structure, which exemplifies Messiah's redemptive plan for us. Furthermore, each aspect of Torah gives revelation and insight to the character of the Father as He reveals Himself to us and shows what He deems as holy and virtuous or evil and immoral which engenders either life or death.

To think that Torah does not apply to our modern day circumstances is simply not true. That is the lie that the world and the adversary would have us believe. YHVH does not change, nor does His Word. It stood prior to His extending the Covenant of Abraham to Moshe and the sons of Israel; and, it stands now, as Truth that is able to set us free from the entangling sin of this dying world. Alas, Torah will stand forever, as we enter into judgment and crossover into eternity with Yeshua, as Torah will be the standard from which all flesh will be judged, once and for all. By obeying Torah, we stand as sanctified in Yeshua, set apart from the nations of the earth, as His Nation, purchased for Himself.

¹Devarim 30:15

²Malachi 3:6, James 1:17

Shavu Halacha/Weekly Walking:

Applying Torah to our lives is about a physical, emotional and spiritual application to our circumstances, lifestyles and attitudes. We are continuously challenged to make adjustments in our journey to Tzion. YHVH never changes,² either subtly or dramatically. However, our character and personal outlook towards Him and the world around us tend to fluctuate from day to day. As we live in a world where most choices are made by asking, "What's in it for me?" we need to answer that question with each and every commandment referenced in Torah. Not only do we obtain life, we receive freedom from the chains of this world and the entrapments that inhibit our approach to Adonai. This question is answered on many levels, as it pertains to financial blessings due to proper giving and tithing, healing from minor and major afflictions and the forgiveness of sins when repentance is realized. Most importantly, for anyone who recognizes Messiah within Torah and enters into the Kingdom of heaven through Him, gains eternal dwelling with Him!

Each and every aspect of Torah is given as historical information about the ancient path of righteousness and discloses to us how to remain spotless and pure, and the evidence and realization of Who YHVH was, is and shall be. Each part is applicable and should be examined by asking how it points to Yeshua and how does it enable you to love YHVH with all of your heart or to love your neighbor as yourself, these are the spirit of the matter. As you walk out Torah, ask these questions. As you study YHVH's Word, contemplate the spiritual application through these diagnostic lenses so that you may know how to please YHVH and respond so that He will reveal Himself to you.

Day 1

- PARASHA:
EXODUS 21:1-19
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

1. The opening words in this week’s parasha are, “Now these are the judgments...” The Hebrew word for judgment, as you might suspect, is *mishpat* or *mishpatim* meaning judgments or rulings, thus, giving the name of the parasha. *Mishpat* means judgment, justice or ordinance. Moshe had just received the Ten Commandments, or *dabar* meaning *words*, of YHVH. Torah does not say that he had yet given these commandments to the people, as they asked Moshe to speak to them himself, because they were apprehensive about Elohim speaking directly to them. Discuss the differences between the commands and the judgments of YHVH and why there would be a distinction between these two concepts.

2. When a Hebrew slave is purchased, he is to serve for six years, but on the seventh year he is free to go from the master, without payment. What is the significance of a six/seven year system for slaves? Moreover, what does this say about our relationship within Yeshua and the time spent as His servants and disciples? Could this give insight to how long a new believer should be considered new?

3. Looking at the judgment of the Hebrew slave, we know that at the seventh year, the slave is free to go. If he had a wife and children when he became a slave, then the slave’s family is free as well. However, if the master has given the slave a wife and they have children, then the wife and children remain with the master. The slave may come back and become a bondservant permanently through the master who brings him before YHVH; and there at the door or doorpost, his master is to pierce his ear with an awl; and the man will be his slave for life. Discuss how Yeshua is described within this passage.

Furthermore, in what ways are we represented within this passage of a freed slave as we enter into covenant with YHVH through our Messiah, either by ourselves or with our families?

4. In the provision that the slave loves his master and family, we understand there must be kindness in the treatment of slaves from the master. For a slave to be able to declare, “I love my master, my wife and my children;” says quite a bit toward how he had been treated for the previous six years. Even in giving in marriage to slaves the conception of children was not coerced, yet the offspring of a slave belonged to the master. In what ways does this describe a righteous master with his household and how does this describe YHVH?

5. Female slaves are to be treated differently from male slaves, as they are not to be released in the seventh year. Why would female slaves be treated different and is this a double standard?

6. The purchase of female slaves is not to be looked upon just as slavery, but as a purchase of a wife or concubine as described in verses 8-11. If she is designated for the master she can be redeemed by the kinsmen redeemer, or, if given to the master's son, she is to be treated like a daughter. Discuss the reasons why YHVH would give us this judgment concerning female slaves and why He would allow women to be sold as wives like this.

7. Within the issue of someone striking another so that he dies is expounded upon with the idea of a conspiracy or plot to kill another person. If the person did not plot to kill the other, then he will be able to flee to a city of refuge.¹ If a man killed another willingly after deliberate planning, he is to be taken, even from YHVH's altar, and put to death. We know that Yeshua was delivered up to the Romans by the plans devised by the priesthood and Judas Iscariot. Yet, those of us for whom Yeshua died for are granted eternal life. Compare these thoughts and how this passage relates to Yeshua.

8. As one curses his father or mother, he is to be put to death. This is the same punishment for plotting to kill someone and is placed within the Torah context of killing others. First, what does this mean to curse one's father or mother? Second, why would the punishment be so severe to deserve death for cursing one's parents?

9. If men quarrel and one prevails by striking the other so as to cause them not to die, but to be bed ridden, then nobody is punished. However, the man who injured the other man is to pay for the loss of his time and the care of the injured until he is completely healed. On one hand, this gives a degree of consent to exchange blows knowing what the consequences will be. Discuss this aspect of this judgment.

Also, discuss the fact that Yeshua was in the earth for three days and three nights then rose from the dead. How are we responsible for His time in the grave as sinners who caused the harm to come to Yeshua?

Midrash Point:

Torah approaches the matter of slaves as very matter of fact. We, on the other hand, see slavery as something that has been abolished or as an archaic system which is taboo today.

We also know that YHVH teaches Israel to treat slaves respectfully, remembering that they were once slaves in Egypt.

Is slavery something that we should be concerned about while reading Torah and discuss why or why not? What do these passages have to do with us in this day and age and is there a point in the future in which these judgments would have more relevance?

¹Shemot 21:13, & Bamidbar 35:25-32

Day 2

PARASHA:
EXODUS 21:20-22:4

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. In many commentaries about eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, the observer is led to believe that the message is about unilateral punishment and whatever the trespass should be dealt right back to the enemy or foe. This is clearly not the case when looking at the derivative of this passage in context as shown in verses 22-25. Discuss the intent of eye for eye and so forth as YHVH presents it in Torah. In what case would this type of punishment be implemented? Is this a mandate or a limitation of punishment for the guilty party?

2. What is the difference in verses 20-21 contrasted to verses 26-27? If the slave is property, why would it matter if they were injured in contrast to dying after a couple of days? Additionally, in what circumstances should both of these situations be used for judgment?

3. The majority of us do not have oxen in this society (although, I am quite sure that many of you do raise cattle, so this is important to you as any other part of Torah). However, the application for oxen can be transferred to many modern day equivalents. Some of these could be pets such as dogs around a household or even a car that has a faulty emergency brake. We are responsible for what we own and are to be responsible caretakers of our possessions. Discuss the ways in which these passages about an ox goring others would be applicable to you, even if you do not raise livestock.

4. Many leaders in communities get very tyrannical about controlling their group member's actions. This is terrible on so many levels, yet other people's words and actions need to be scrutinized in light of Torah and be held accountable by the members within each community. People have to make their own decisions as to how to have relationships. The most any of us are able to do is confront flagrant wrongs in love and prayer for others to repent and walk in uprightness. When this is not effective, the next steps to follow are according to Matthew 18:15-17. If this is not received, then we have no recourse but to excuse those in fault from fellowship. Discuss how this passage about an ox goring correlates to this type of situation.

5. Torah gives us many utilitarian applications for everyday life. Not only does the aspect of an opened pit left uncovered have harmful repercussions for innocent people and livestock but, also, places liability on each person's actions. If someone leaves a hole uncovered, an ax in the yard for children to play with or a gallon of gasoline not put away properly, our actions can have serious affects on others. What are we responsible for in relationship to opening/digging a pit and not covering it again?

6. A significant lesson to learn from these judgments is that, while they are being given to YHVH's people, it is not a foregone conclusion that these judgments will be needed in order to properly govern themselves. YHVH, as providential and omnipresent as He is, still allows these terrible things to take place in our lives, whether it is a slave beaten, or inadvertently hurting someone or an ox gores another ox or person. Why does YHVH allow for such melodramas to play out in the lives of the people, specifically, His chosen people, when He has the power of prevention?

7. The norm in our society is to punish a thief with jail time (if they get anything other than community service hours). Yet, Torah tells us that a thief is to restore the property (ox or sheep as shown in context) many fold. That is five oxen (four sheep) for the one stolen and slaughtered. Discuss the attribute of a thief being liable to make restitution to the owner for what he has stolen in contrast to being thrown into jail and becoming a burden for society to maintain through taxes and such.

8. If what a person steals is found alive in the thief's possession, then the restitution is to be double for what was stolen. Why is there a differentiation made between a "possession" being alive or dead?

What aspect of compassion and mercy is shown for a person that still has possession of what he has stolen? In what ways could you understand this compassion being merited in contrast to full punishment for the person that has stolen the property?

Midrash Point:

We make assumptions that, because crime is so prevalent in our day, that everyone that steals or commits a crime is a terrible person and deserves the fullest measure of punishment. This may be true for most cases, and could have been true even back when Torah was given to Moshe. However, many aspects of showing mercy in Torah are based on the need of someone that has been driven to stealing for the sake of survival or just eating their daily bread.

Discuss the need for us to have compassion of those that commit crimes for self preservation or for the basic essentials to live.

Day 3

- PARASHA:
EXODUS 22:5-27
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

**Sandals
Worshipping in Truth**

It would seem that YHVH is speaking to those who would allow their animals to graze in other people's fields/yards in order to foresee a judgment against them. However, another point-of-view could be for those to pay attention who live next to someone who is rather apathetic in allowing their property to run down and not managing their livestock well. Our insight should be to guard against such people as we judge the fruit they bear.¹ In so much, we guard what YHVH has given to us as His good stewards.²

1. Beyond the surface level of what is right and wrong, the judgments that are to be determined upon those who have committed an offense are found in Torah. Torah gives us true insight as how we should govern ourselves prior to others having to govern our lives for us. Looking at how we are responsible for our livestock, children, and possessions says a lot about who we are and what our outlook is. These are considered to be fruit that we bear and it is what others are to look for in order to judge us properly. Discuss the ways that the readings in this parasha give us directives in bearing righteous fruit.

2. Verse nine is the first directive that YHVH uses to tell people to go before judges with breach of trust issues. While it may not be inferred that other matters are not to be taken to the judges, it could equally be stated that other minor matters could be handled mutually by individuals. Often we assume that only criminals break the rules. What are other scenarios that these judgments apply to in our lives to bring about justice or rectify wrongs without involving a judge, jury and courtroom?

3. While the Spirit of YHVH is with each believer, the physical manifestation of Yeshua is not with us in the flesh until He returns for us. That being said, we merely draw on what Yeshua has done for us, it is ours as His gift, but only He is able to give it to others, we share what He has given to us. The same is true of Torah and how we share YHVH's Word with others to find freedom and how to worship the Creator. When we pervert, add, subtract or misinterpret Torah or the life of the Master, we are injuring, or even killing the substance of what He has given us to be stewards over. Discuss how this relates to verses 14-15.

4. In what cases would a father want to keep his daughter and not give her to the man who has seduced her? Remember, this would be considered consensual relations and the man is not to be killed.

Moreover, how does this relate to the ultimate demise for haSatan's actions or any enemy of YHVH's elect ill willed actions toward those who do or would belong to YHVH and have had their spiritual virginity seduced from them?

¹Matthew 7:16-18
²1 Corinthians 4:2

5. Several judgments and commands are given in regards to people who flagrantly violate Torah. Such offenses are listed, such as: a sorceress, one who commits bestiality or one who sacrifices to any elohim other than YHVH. Yet, our world is full of such people committing these offenses. We are scarcely able to drive down the road and not see a sign for a psychic or hear of terrible sexual assaults or killings announced throughout the media. What would a world be like in which Torah judgments were truly lived out? Is it possible to live according to these directives outside a Torah abiding society? Why?

6. Torah speaks in many different places how we are to take care of the widow and the orphan. Verse 22-24 reminds us not to afflict them and what the consequences will be if we do. Those of us that have found our way back to our Hebraic roots and are finding the ways of our fathers from of old (Abraham, Isaac and Ya'akov), are, in a sense, orphans. We have been abandoned by the church, robbed by the church fathers, lied to by misguided leaders and left for dead by those who do not recognize us as a legitimate part of Israel. As we cry out to YHVH in our affliction of rejection, lies and lack of proper, spiritual abode, the Father hears us and will/does answer. According to scripture, what will YHVH do to those that abandoned us?

7. Torah states for us to return our neighbor's cloak to them, if taken as a pledge. It is to be returned before sunset. Yeshua told us to walk with those who ask us to, and to go with him two miles if he asks us to walk with him one. We are to give him the coat we are wearing, if he only asks for our shirt. In what we give, the Father sees those people who take, even if for ill gotten gain, and we will be recompensed righteously according to our righteous giving. Correlate this aspect of Yeshua's words with this part of Torah.

8. Many things in these passages are as much foretelling as they are judicial. Looking at verse 27, YHVH states that, "And it shall come about that when he cries out to Me, I will hear him, for I am gracious." Not only does this provide us lenses to see YHVH, but it makes a statement about people who will have their provisions taken for pledges and not returned. It speaks of domination of those people and the ways in which they will be taken advantage. What are some reasons that YHVH allows these things to happen? Is YHVH using these circumstances to reach, support or punish those involved and how?

Day 4

- PARASHA:
EXODUS 22:28-23:9
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

1. An interesting dilemma arises in this next portion. YHVH tells us do not curse Him, nor are we to curse a ruler over us. While it would be convenient to say that this means a righteous ruler or judge, we do not get that luxury to be selective in speaking ill of others. Many people say many derogatory things about the President, even by voting against him when he ran or will run for office, could be considered a negative thing if YHVH wants that person in office to be a ruler. Even Yeshua told his followers to render to Caesar what is Caesar's. In what ways should we be more mindful in respect to our government, community and spiritual leaders?

What effect does our respect have and what does YHVH use leaders to do, beyond leading people in official capacities? In other words, why would YHVH want an evil leader to be elected to office or a corrupt elder to lead community members?

2. We are given the command not to delay in offering from our harvest and the vintage (Hebrew word is *dema* meaning juice or liquor). In the same context, we are told not to delay in the giving of our firstborn sons. Whether man or beast, all the firstborn males are to remain with their mothers for the first seven days, and on the eighth day, either be offered or redeemed. Why would the firstborn be within this context of offering from the harvest and vintage?

Moreover, what is the significance of waiting for seven days, and on the eighth day making an offering with or for the firstborn? (Consider the priesthood ordination process, as well as for physical reasons.)

3. Verse 22:31 tells us not to eat any flesh that has been torn to pieces in the field, it is to be thrown to the dogs. We know that Yeshua was broken and pierced for our transgressions and iniquities. He told us to eat of His body that was broken for us. We are all likened to the unclean, but are reconciled back to the Father through the perfect, redeeming blood of Messiah. Compare these passages and concepts to each other and discuss how this part of Torah foreshadows the broken Messiah.

4. The first verse of chapter 23 states clearly not to bear a false report, and is in context of being a witness. The obvious application is within a court setting or when asked to give an account for someone else's actions. First, give an explanation for other ways we would have opportunities to give false accounts or reports.

Second, contrast this passage to the Sanhedrin of Yeshua's day where He was accused and persecuted leading to His execution.

5. When Yeshua was offered to the people by Pontus Pilot, prior to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it was customary for the ruling government to release one condemned prisoner during this time of year. We all know that the crowd insisted on the release of Barrabas instead of Yeshua. Discuss this account of Yeshua's punishment for us in relationship to verses 23:2-3.

6. The judgments, statutes and commands listed in the first nine verses of chapter 23 are given as directives for how we are to treat those that are our enemy or less fortunate. Combining these two ideas, we are given an indirect sum of a heart issue from which we are to apply from Torah. There will always be those around us that are disadvantaged or have character flaws so that they are looked upon as less important or less adequate. Our eyes cannot be blinded to their plight or the fact that they are equally human and loved by YHVH, neither should we pervert justice to have sympathy upon them. They are our equals. In what ways do you understand the application of Torah in this regard?

Moreover, apply this standard based on equal inheritance rights in and as Israel within the kingdom of heaven. Remember, as we crossover from our sin nature, and walk in covenant relationship with YHVH, we enter into the kingdom of heaven here on earth and are fellow members of the same covenant of faith in Messiah.

7. Knowing that the children of Israel were strangers in the land of Egypt, and that they would be strangers dispersed abroad into the nations, as well as, Yeshua Himself briefly becoming a stranger in Egypt during Herod's tirade, as believers, we should completely be aware of lurking oppression and to know who the strangers are about us. Discuss the ways in which we should sympathize with the strangers and why we should feel this sympathy. Furthermore, what does it mean to oppress a stranger?

Sandals Worshipping in Spirit

Today, Torah is applicable as YHVH's people. Torah allows us to recognize who we are within His government which is a very important imperative. If we state that we choose to walk in covenant, and take action based on those choices as an ongoing struggle to stay in covenant relationship, then we miss the essence of what covenant relationship is and constantly question the authority and sovereignty of YHVH based on His directives and rules to govern our lives for us. To choose once, the choice of Life is to enter into a perpetual covenant relationship. Knowing that we will fail (miss the mark or sin), YHVH makes accommodations for us within Torah. It is a heart attitude to belong within His community (called out ones), His nation of priests. Otherwise, the constant choices of right and wrong bears fruit of a stranger or sojourner within the community of believers. Torah is written for covenant members to follow and is to be the gospel lived out before the strangers living within the community (those that have attached themselves as to live with Israel, but have not crossed over yet). As such, the love shown to them (they will know us by our love, for YHVH is love) softens their outlook and brings them to a place of repentance so that they may embrace YHVH for themselves. In this, all the nations of the earth are being blessed, even at this hour. Our call is to love in Messiah, through the lifestyle of Torah; otherwise, we are strangers to Him Who has called us out of darkness and into His marvelous Light!

Day 5

PARASHA:

EXODUS 23:10-23:25

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. Clearly, the Shabbat year for the land is likened to the weekly Shabbat when we are to cease from our labors. The seventh year rest for the land is done so that the needy may eat and the beast may eat after them. This ordinance is for the field, vineyard and olive grove. Immediately following this command, YHVH tells us how to conduct our week, ending with a Shabbat for man, as well as, our ox, donkey and servants. Reconcile these two commands to each other and how they relate to man (native and stranger), beast and the earth.

Upon closer scrutiny, what does this passage says about how the Father sees us and why we are provided a Shabbat weekly and the land yearly?

2. Just as the laws of YHVH given to us in Torah, there are varying categories within which they are summarized. These various categories are expanded upon throughout the remainder of Torah, such as the Feasts of YHVH. Later, in Torah, we will find the appointed times/*ha moedim* of YHVH.¹ A total of eight moedim are appointed for Israel to observe, and they begin with Shabbat. Here, however, they are categorized within the times of year that the feasts take place. List the feasts that occur within the confines of each feast described in verse 15-16.

3. Being mindful that the *moedim*/appointed times listed are exemplified with, “celebrate a feast to Me”, verse 17 and gives more clarification through three specific times which list all of the nation’s males to appear before YHVH, Elohim. Analyze the previous listed feasts and denote which are considered to be pilgrimage feasts for the sons of Israel. How do these three annual events incorporate and envelope the other feast dates, or do they?

4. The Hebrew word for observe is *shamar* meaning to keep, observe, or give heed. Discuss how the idea of observing a Feast is accomplished as obedience to YHVH’s commands for His haMoedim.

Midrash Point:

Why is it important that we do not even mention the name of other elohims, nor let them be heard from our mouths? YHVH made this command for a reason. The other elohims He refers to are, indeed, false gods. Does that make them real or non-existent?

Furthermore, how does not uttering their name(s) keep us pure or from sin?

¹Vayikra 23

5. Verse 18 tells us not to offer the blood of His sacrifice with leavened bread. We know that Yeshua died for us as a perfect Man/Lamb to take the place of us for our sin that separated us from the Father. Leaven represents sin and that is why it cannot be part of the sacrificial system. Discuss the differences in what we are able to do as offerings to YHVH in contrast to the perfect sacrifice that Yeshua was completely devoid of leaven.

6. While instructing us about the choice first fruits to bring to the house of YHVH, we are also told not to boil a goat/kid in its mother's milk. Orthodox Judaism has interpreted this to mean that we are not to eat meat with dairy. They even give timetables so that the two items will not mix in the digestive system. This is completely out of context within the passage where the command is given. What does it mean not to boil a kid in its mother's milk within the context of a sacrificial system, and immediately following the command to observe YHVH's Feasts?

7. YHVH tells His people that He is going to send an angel before them to guard and bring them into the place which YHVH has prepared. That angel will not pardon the people's transgression (seemingly singular according to the Hebrew word *persha'*), for YHVH's name is in him. Who is YHVH talking about and how does this depict Yeshua in any way?

8. As an extension of the Covenant made to Abraham, how does verse 22 relate to the Abrahamic Covenant and what does YHVH require for people to partake of the Covenant of Abraham?

9. By being obedient to the angel of YHVH, YHVH will destroy the inhabitants of the land as listed in verse 23. Moreover, in obedience to the angel, Israel will not worship those people's gods, serve the people or do according to their deeds. What is the difference in serving the people versus serving their gods as most people might read this passage?

Sandals Worshipping in Truth

Land belongs to YHVH, not to man. Allowing it to rest is His rule and law for His land and for man. Not solely for us to enjoy or question His authority or reasoning. This statute shows YHVH's concern for His land, the people who live within His land and the beasts that dwell there as well. Soon, we will be reminded in Torah that Israel is merely a stranger on YHVH's land and it belongs to Him.

It is YHVH's rules for His land that we are to be aware of and to keep, not our own rules or interpretation of our rules handed down to us from sages or our own personal interpretation of what we think YHVH is trying to say.

If we believe that YHVH is working together for the good all things for all who love Him and are called according to His purpose, then, by following the rules about the yearly Shabbat year and the weekly Shabbat has more to with our own persons or possessions which is covenantal for manifold aspects of the earth and inhabitants.

Day 6

PARASHA:
EXODUS 23:26-24:18

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. Looking at the description of what YHVH will do ahead of Israel as they are obedient to the voice of His angel, we see His “terror” sent ahead of the people, preparing the way for them. According to Vayikra 26 and Devarim 28, similar things happen to the children of Israel when they break covenant and walk in disobedience. Compare these different aspects of YHVH’s blessings for obedience and terror for disobedience. Discuss how they overlap and are related to each other.

2. When the people do come into the land, they ultimately make peace covenants with some of the inhabitants. This can also be traced to Abraham’s and Isaac’s covenant made with Gerar and its king, Abimelech. Do these covenants have anything to do with the covenants made between the children of Israel and the inhabitants of the Promised Land? Explain your answer based on other Torah passages.

3. The coming of Messiah was both a grand occasion for those who believe and a terrible day for those that walk in disobedience. This is comparable to how YHVH is dealing with those that occupy the seat of Moshe, whether synagogue or church, and do not do what he has taught us to do, nor teach us to do it either. How do you see the judgment of YHVH coming down upon those inhabitants of the covenant that are rebellious according to the end of chapter 23? Moreover, how should we treat and deal with those people?

4. We know that everywhere that Abraham set his eyes on; he was to get up and walk upon the future property of his seed. The promise given to Abraham in B’reisheet 15:18 is repeated to his seed in Shemot 23:31. Yet, when the sons of Israel crossed over the Jordan, the ultimate boundaries established for Israel do not match these promises. How do you reconcile the promise to the actuality of the size of YHVH’s allotment of land for Israel?

5. The Law given was YHVH's Word to Moshe. In verses 3-8, Moshe wrote down all the words of YHVH after he has recounted these words to the people as YHVH had told him to do. After writing the words of YHVH down, the next morning he build an altar with twelve pillars. The sons of Israel offered burnt offerings and sacrificed bulls as peace offerings on the altar to YHVH. The blood was taken from these (which could have included a red heifer in the offerings) and sprinkled it upon the altar and the other half he sprinkled on the people after reading the book of the covenant which he had just written the day before. At this point, the people become covenant members; all who say that they will do and obey what YHVH had spoken. First compare this book of the covenant to Torah as we understand it. Discuss if it could have contained the whole of Torah, or if Torah was written as an explanation or expounded upon the book that Moshe wrote as YHVH told him.

Secondly, compare this enactment to what takes place within our hearts when Yeshua calls us and we say "yes" to His will, walk in repentance and die to our flesh.

6. When Moshe, Joshua, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and the remaining seventy elders (Joshua may or may not have been within that count), go to the mountain upon YHVH's request, they see the Elohim of Israel. Under His feet was the appearance of a pavement of sapphire. He did not smite those, but fed them and they saw Elohim, and ate and drank. Discuss what this is picture of and why did YHVH not kill these men since they saw YHVH?

Additionally, with what aspect of Elohim did the men see and eat? How does YHVH make that distinction of Himself?

Lastly, did these men go up the mountain or just up to the mountain to have this feast and see Elohim? What is the difference and why would it be important to note?

7. Even though Moshe was commanded to tell everyone to remain in their place, YHVH invites the seventy plus Aaron, Nadab and Abihu to sup with Him. Then, even after YHVH tells the people to remain behind the set boundaries, Moshe takes Yahoshua with him to meet with YHVH. How does Yahoshua get away with going up with Moshe when all other men were to remain behind the designated boundaries?

Midrash Point:

Looking at this scenario, with the fire and thunder and the voice of YHVH sounding as a trumpet blast, we are able to look forward to two events. One of which happened on the day of Shavuot when the disciples had the tongues of fire rest upon them and spoke to the mixed multitude in Jerusalem. The next event is seen through the coming of Messiah and the judgment that He sends on the earth for not heeding His words.

Discuss these events and others that you see within the Mt. Sinai interaction between YHVH and the sons of Israel.

Shabbat

- PARASHA:
EXODUS 21:1-24:18
- RESTORAHTORY—
MIDRASH
- PRAYER LEAVES

Presently, our planet earth is spinning on its axis within a vast solar system. It is as if a disillusioned sphere with a broken compass is headed into a collision course with destiny. From the time the first created humans overstepped the boundary of YHVH's command: "but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die"¹ up to our 21st century society, mankind has been searching for what our first counterparts lost in the Garden. They lost direct communication with YHVH and the sustenance of the Tree of Life—they lost Paradise. Humanity's long trek down the road of time has been searching for this Paradise lost ever since.

As we look down the corridor of time we can see the long succession of past civilizations which have left an impression upon history. Their quest was to recover that which has been lost as we look back throughout the records of time. From historical accounts to archaeological digs to hieroglyphics found carved on cave walls, we see different societies, cultures and people seeking to find themselves and make sense of this world in which we live. This vacuum in the human soul was created in the Garden through man's disobedience. As man treaded forward into time he formed his own pathway back to YHVH called religion. Man-made religion is basically a man's expression of his own acknowledgement or need for a god. Unfortunately most religions have made their god into their own image and many have made their own religion into their god. Thus, man has determined his own form of good and evil independent of YHVH.

In the beginning, YHVH created our world within the galaxies of His universe. When He spoke the world into existence and created millions of stars and planets He set them in their place and decreed their position in the heavens and fixed their rule over the earth.² YHVH's Words regulate everything from the immense cosmos to tiniest micro-organism. His Words regulate the galaxies. YHVH's Words regulate everything. He caused the physical creation of earth and the universe to interact in perfect harmony with natural laws, which He also created. Correspondingly, He established spiritual laws and, if obeyed, they insure peace and harmony among mankind.

Through our expedition in Torah we have, thus far, journeyed with mankind from the Garden through the Flood to Abraham, Isaac and Ya'akov and his twelve sons into Egypt to the children of Israel crossing over the Red Sea and reaching the wilderness to find themselves at Mt. Sinai. YHVH had forged a people to be His own possession as stated: "to obey My voice and keep My covenant and

to be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine"³ As we continued with them at the base of the fiery mountain, YHVH made covenant with the children of Israel and gave them His Commandments to live by. Other aspects of the Torah He gave were His statutes, ordinances, precepts and judgments—His complete physical and spiritual Law. He held back nothing. His spiritual Law was/is perfect and complete. YHVH's commandments were given to man not derived by man, as the concept of right and wrong had been revealed to Adam and Eve upon eating the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He had already spoken forth His teachings and instructions even when had He spoke forth the creation of the world.

YHVH's universal Laws have always existed even as He exists. All of the true laws of creation had already been established from the beginning of time by YHVH. His spiritual laws interfaced with man in the Garden. Once man breached YHVH's spiritual laws he was ostracized from the Garden and man began to walk out the effects of ingesting the seed of the knowledge of good and evil. Not until YHVH orchestrated His people to meet Him in the wilderness at the base of the Mountain was their knowledge of good and evil galvanized into absolutes (except for those whom He chose to be covenant bearers and Seed bearers). These people such as Noach, Abraham and Sarah, Issac and Ya'akov, were the lineage for which the Seed of promise traversed through time to the elders of Israel and feast with them at Mt. Sinai. The Ten Commandments are the basis for how we are to love YHVH and how to love our fellow man. Their primary purpose is to teach us how to govern our individual conduct through His perfect moral Laws.

When YHVH created mankind on the sixth day, after He had set everything else into place, He then gave man dominion to rule over His creation. This was the first establishment of the Kingdom of heaven on earth. This concept was re-established just before YHVH spoke His Commandments from the mountain. He told the children of Israel that: "you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."⁴ The relationship that man lost with His Ruach/Spirit disqualified him to rule effectively until YHVH's government was re-established/renewed with man.

YHVH's plan of redemption and restoration to man was to establish the Kingdom of YHVH on earth. First came the Word of His Law and ultimately came the manifestation of His Word through Messiah. Did mankind lose heaven in the garden? No. We did not originate from heaven. We were created from the dust of the earth to rule over the earth.

¹B'reisheet 2:16-17

²Job 38:31-33

³Shemot 19:5

⁴Shemot 19:6

What we lost in the garden was the ability to dwell in the Kingdom of heaven here on earth until the flesh's lusts were overcome so that the hearts of men could be written upon and indwelt by the Ruach once again.

The Kingdom of YHVH speaks of a King. "YHVH has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all."⁵ "Your throne, O YHVH, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of Your Kingdom."⁶ The substance of Scriptures is about this King, His Kingdom and His chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for YHVH's own possession. The constitution of YHVH's kingdom is found within Torah. He rules from His throne with the scepter of His righteous Law. It is the only Law that will forever exist and work total good for every deed, life and society. This constitution of His kingdom declares His will, desires, intents, and purposes of the King, kingdom and citizens of His kingdom.

Yeshua haMashiach—YHVH incarnated in human flesh—was and is the only One that obeyed God's Laws/Torah perfectly. When He dwelt on earth, He perfectly obeyed YHVH's Laws on behalf of His elect, and suffered the eternal penalty of those Laws while sacrificed on the tree of execution. After His death, He was buried and arose after three days and three nights. He bore the penalty of mankind's breach of Torah and satisfied the justice of YHVH. Although Yeshua the Messiah perfectly obeyed YHVH's Laws and suffered the penalty in place of His elect, this did not nullify His Laws or release mankind's responsibility to wholly obey them. YHVH's Torah still remains as the perfect rules of life for His people as well as the rest of humanity.

Regrettably, false teachers and disingenuous "Christians" are among those who say that YHVH's Laws are no longer in effect. Because of such opinions there has been a rapid decline in morals in America and throughout the world today, particularly in the past 30 years. This would not be happening if this nation was governed by true moral principles according to YHVH's Torah. YHVH wants each individual person to obey his Law. He requires the same from every human institution and government. Originally, the laws of America were modeled from the Ten Commandments. Gradually, moral decay has eaten away at the very foundation from which this country was established. YHVH allows each human to be a free moral decision maker of his life. In today's world, instead of the people being governed from the word of YHVH, and the fear created in them as seen in the people at Mt. Sinai, society has allowed the laws of immorality to sweep

across the legislative roundtables of power without questioning the deceptiveness of corruption masquerading as righteousness. After man's desecration of YHVH's spiritual and physical laws throughout the course of the human experience, a day is coming in which man is going to be required to recognize that YHVH's ways are preeminent over man's ways. Man's track record of six thousand years of history is a stark testimony of opposing the Words of YHVH. This is blatantly seen by obscure theories of evolution, humanism, false religions and gods, and the total abandonment of true Spiritual authority and the consequences of disobedience.

Moreover, the Ten Commandments were the onset of the judgments given at Mt. Sinai. They were to encapsulate the essence of Torah, but not the end of how Torah was to be walked out or interpreted. The Ten Commandments were the foundation of the covenant for which the children of Israel who feared the thunder and lightening, thus saying to Moshe, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen."

Yeshua spoke of the Kingdom of YHVH many times when He walked among men. He was preceded by His designated witness, Yochanan the Immerser, to accomplish His mission. The Scriptures speaks of Yochanan as follows: "The Torah and the prophets were until Yochanan; since then the Kingdom of Elohim is proclaimed and all men treat it with violence."⁷ YHVH manifested Himself in a fiery cloud upon Mount Sinai and then He manifested Himself in the form of a man on the mountainsides of the Galilee. He called Himself the Shepherd of men. He came to break down the sheep pen created by both sin and the institutions of religion and free His people to enter into the Kingdom of YHVH. He was the embodiment of Torah in human flesh. Yeshua came to gather together the dispersed of Israel (to gather the lost sheep of the house of Israel) and reinforce/renew His commandments back to them. He revealed to us the inner dimensions of Torah and disclosed the issues of the heart.

"Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand" declared Yeshua, and "therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance."⁸ In other words turn away from your own way and turn to His way, back to the Tree of Life, the perfect way of righteousness. In doing this you will produce the fruit of the Seed of the Tree of Life... righteousness, peace and joy in the Ruach Ha Kodesh. This is the sum of the beginning when YHVH commanded the earth to bring forth fruit after its kind and for man to be fruitful and multiply. The Seed of Righteousness is to be that fruit that is after His kind within us as we walk in repentance and are washed by the Word of YHVH.

⁵Psalm 103:19

⁶Psalm 45:6

⁷Luke 16:16

⁸Matthew 3:8

