



Parasha: VAYERA/AND APPEARED

Torah Portion: GENESIS 18:1-22:24

Tanak: 2 KINGS 4:1-37

Brit Hadasha: LUKE 8:40-56, 17:20-37, GAL. 3:15-29,
MATT. 1:18-25, 27:27-66

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THIS WEEK'S PARASHA IS ABOUT YHVH appearing to us and our appearance before YHVH, both as ourselves and as His ambassadors before others. At each place in our lives we have the opportunity of encountering YHVH. The Master is watching all that we do and is intimately involved in our lives, whether we see Him or not.

Consider Abraham. He was sitting at the doorway of his tent when Torah says Abraham "Lifted up his eyes and looked..." YHVH had chosen Abraham and this probably was archetypal for the two of them to have conversations. Looking up, Abraham sees YHVH. In the twists and turns and in the quiet settings, we must be willing to look for YHVH ourselves. Our lives must be ordered rightly, but our eyes must be ready to see as well. Not just physical eyes, but spiritual eyes to see Providence and acknowledge it with the proper hospitality.

For those around us with spiritual vision, they may well be aware of a visitation by YHVH in our lives that we experientially are unaware. YHVH tells Abraham about the visitation about to take place in Sodom. This was an open invitation for Abraham to begin intercession. Nothing that YHVH does is wasted; it is not trivial in any way, shape or form. When He reveals to us a plan of action, every aspect of that plan should be taken as an opportunity to lose ourselves in His presence and commune with Him. For Abraham, the time was established to ask for Lot's life.

Subsequently, the two men that meet up with Lot at the gate appear to Lot as extraordinary men that do not fit in to the Sodom lifestyle. Lot immediately asks them to turn into his house for food and lodging. Lot was looking for something while at the gate. He would not have been in this place of authority if he did not anticipate seeing something or someone for which he could take action. In this amount of righteousness, Lot and his family are rewarded with the opportunity to live. Yet, instead of using the favor of YHVH for intercession, he pleads to stay within the Salt Valley.

Even as Abraham appears before Abimelech, he has a plan of how he reveals himself and Sarah to Abimelech. In the end, YHVH shows Abimelech what he should do. Abimelech is to solicit intercession by Abraham back to YHVH. The entire cycle of YHVH's appearing to these men and through these men is a way that He uses to draw us closer to Himself and is used to purge us from unrighteousness. What we do with the opportunity is up to us.

It is certain, however, that YHVH does allow Himself to be revealed to us. Whether as a still small voice, or by a word given by a community member, or by the person we are to help in the time of their distress, we have opportunities to meet with the Creator. The question is, do we have the eyes to see and ears to hear what He is revealing? If so, what are we going to do with the opportunity?

Shavu Halacha/Weekly Walking:

Many people are struggling to just make ends meet these days, but YHVH enables us to find provision. However, our promise is abundance and we know that we have abundance in Messiah. The Master told us that we should give as those around us have need. If someone asks for a cloak, give him the one off our backs, if someone asks us to walk with him a mile, go an extra two or three. Also, if we clothe the naked or visit the imprisoned or sick, that we are clothing or visiting Messiah by doing this. The hospitality we show others is not for our benefit or to grandstand for others to see. Offering our homes, food and clothing are just a few ways that we are actually ministering to Yeshua.

As you can, make an attempt to have extra on hand for those around you that are in need or just want to be loved on by a good meal. By buying extra food here and there and inviting others to share a meal, (an erev Shabbat meal is even better) or seeing a coat that is really cheap and could be donated to a person that has no coat, you are giving to Messiah and keeping the commands of Torah. We are to look after the widow, the orphan, the needy and the Levite. All of these may have needs, but as believing communities walk together in our respective groups, families and as individuals, they have the opportunity to help those around them in everyday life; and, in doing so, you are blessing Messiah!

Day 1

PARASHA:
GEN. 18:1-15

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. In the beginning of Genesis 18 we get a glimpse of Abraham sitting at his tent door during the *heat* of the day as YHVH appears to him. In retrospect YHVH used to walk (fellowship) in the garden with Adam and Eve in the *cool* of the day. Why do you think YHVH chose a dissimilar time of the day to manifest Himself to Abraham?

Do you believe that one of the three men that appears before Abraham is YHVH, or, whenever it says that YHVH speaks to Abraham, is Abraham hearing YHVH's voice privately, not being one of the three men?

2. The oaks of Mamre are mentioned about once again. Not only is this a specific abode for Abraham, but these particular trees were used as markers and reference points. Why are the oaks of Mamre an important aspect of this passage?

3. Abraham asks the three men to rest under the tree and says he will provide water and a piece of bread. Yet, he goes way beyond a piece of bread and provides the milk, curds and a calf. This shows the most excellent of hospitality. While this reminds us of the passage of scripture commending us to entertaining angels unaware¹, it also shows us the way we should demonstrate gratitude to YHVH. When Adonai came to earth as Messiah, He taught us how to care for others as if we were doing it unto Him. What does this say about exercising the gift of hospitality toward others as unto Adonai?

4. When Abraham selects the choice calf for the meal, his servant prepares it for them. Is this a type of offering unto YHVH? If so, what kind and how does this foreshadow Messiah?

5. There are many places in scripture that a meal is shared. In this meal, however, there are two specific items mentioned that are the product of milk, curds or butter and the milk itself. In Psalm 65: 11 we read that YHVH's paths drip with fatness. There is abundance

¹Hebrews 13:2

being shared with the Creator by Abraham. With this in mind, what specific meals described in scripture does this reveal to us and why?

6. As the three men ate under the tree they asked specifically about Sarah. Sarah has a significant purpose on behalf of these men's visit. As Sarah stands behind the tent's thin walls, she amuses herself when she hears the news about conceiving a child. What kind of laughter does Sarah demonstrate when she hears this news? Was this laughter a type of incredulity, joyful wonder, defiance, approval, scorn, hollow with undertones of sorrow or was it a laughter of rapturous delight? How is Sarah's laughter translated to the name of her promised son who was to be named Isaac?

Sarah is an important part of the equation. YHVH had already changed her name from Sarai to Sarah, a *mother of nations*, and now she is to be an expectant mother of the promised seed in her old age. Discuss her importance and her role as a woman amongst men and YHVH in contrast to where men see women as spiritual vessels in today's contemporary society.

7. When YHVH speaks about returning to Abraham and Sarah the following year, He uses a specific term: appointed time, or in the Hebrew, *mow'ed*. The word *mow'ed* is the same word used in Torah to describe the annual feast days² that were to be celebrated as perpetual ordinances. What time of year, and specifically what feast/*mow'ed*, could this have taken place during? Moreover, why is this significant to the account of the passage?

8. What are your thoughts and insights into why YHVH would wait until Abraham was one hundred and Sarah was ninety to bring forth the promised seed and heir in Isaac?

Midrash Point:

Sarah laughs and is re-proved by YHVH for laughing. However, she was not the first to laugh and should not be thought of as unbelieving for being amused by the idea of bearing a child at her age. Not only is she barren, but her own husband laughed when he was first told about a son. In Genesis 17:17, Abraham falls on his face and laughs at the prospect of having a child at their age.

What does Isaac's name mean and was YHVH upset with Abraham or Sarah for laughing about bearing a son in their old age?

²Vayikra 23

Day 2

PARASHA:
GEN. 18:16-33

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

Midrash Point:

Discuss the fact that the Jews consider themselves to be YHVH's *only* chosen people and some Christians refer to the Jews as God's "chosen people". How does this thinking relate to YHVH and His Word to Abraham, his children and his household who were chosen? Does this exclude everyone except the Jewish people as "chosen"?

This type of elitism is an attitude which is spawned by religious communities of Judaism and Christian faiths alike. Those who enlist themselves as the only "chosen" of YHVH are likely to banish countless individuals who are potentially genuine heirs of the blessings of Abraham. In many instances this way of thinking can hinder an "innocent bystander" whose faith in the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are deceived to believe he is substandard in the Kingdom of YHVH.

If you encountered someone of this ilk, how would you disabuse them of their faulty thinking?

Midrash Point:

Today as we look at the condition of our society, we can easily be reminded of Sodom and Gomorrah. Do you believe the outcries of our world have prepared YHVH "to go down and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry"? Remember YHVH "declares the end from the beginning"¹ and parallel Genesis 18: 20 and 19 to Luke 17: 28-31.

1. In verse 17 YHVH dialogues among the three enigmatic men about disclosing His plans to Abraham. However, before revealing His plans, YHVH states that He has chosen Abraham for a purpose. YHVH's next proclamation projects light on YHVH's covenantal purpose for Abraham, which is circular in thought. The covenant is made to Abraham as a chosen vessel. YHVH instructs Abraham to command his children *and* his household after him to be obedient *to the way of the Lord* established by YHVH in Abraham, concluding the blessings upon Abraham and his offspring according to YHVH's spoken Word. Discuss what the character traits are that Abraham's children and his household are commanded to keep. Also, explain who are the children and the household of Abraham?

2. In verse 21, YHVH states that "He will go down and see..." Why would the Creator, the one that Hagar names, "The One Who sees," need to physically go down to Sodom and Gomorrah? Why not look from heaven or just send the other men?

While still speaking to Abraham, the other men turn to go down to Sodom. Why did they separate at this point? How does this reflect our relationship in *intercession* before YHVH in contrast to our *relationship* with YHVH?

3. Previously in verse 19, YHVH says that He chose Abraham. Accordingly, this makes Abraham a chosen one to preserve the righteous seed. In the facet of this relationship between Abraham and YHVH, what roles do each play in contrast to Messiah and *our* encounter with Him?

¹Isaiah 46:10

4. While Abraham intercedes on behalf of the righteous to be found in Sodom, he does not plainly ask to spare Lot and the entire city. However, Abraham's intercession is quite rigorous for YHVH to spare any righteous found there. In what ways should this influence the way in which we intercede for other people, groups or nations?

5. In the negotiation process of finding fifty down to ten righteous souls, humility is shown in Abraham's approach to YHVH and YHVH's patience is shown to Abraham. In Hebrews 8:1-3, Messiah is our High Priest. Compare the roles of our High Priest as Abraham is before YHVH. Moreover, what are the gifts and sacrifices that Abraham offers and does this influence the rapport between him and YHVH?

6. In what ways do you see significance in the conversation and intercession between YHVH and Abraham? Discuss the number of righteous people Abraham asks about in making a decision for destruction, as well as, the different ways that Abraham asks for a new negotiation.

7. Why is it important that Abraham incites YHVH's character as a name (Judge of all the earth) in his first confrontation with YHVH about dealing justly? Abraham is very bold in the salutation of this conversation saying, "Far be it from You to do such a thing..." Discuss this bold manner in talking to YHVH and why Abraham would use this time to remind YHVH of Who He is as Judge.

***Sandals
Worshipping in Spirit:***

Intercession is an aspect of our worship. Yet intercession arises out of an intimate relationship with our High Priest, Yeshua, who is the ever-living Intercessor. An expression of our inheritance is intercession. May YHVH reveal to us the holy ministry of intercession and teach us through His example as His royal priesthood, and that we who He has set apart.

Humbly, like children, we ask Him to teach us to pray. Intercession can begin in the simplest childlike faith unfolding into the highest and holiest work to which man can rise. It is fellowship with the Unseen and Most Holy One. It is the very essence of true belief in YHVH, a channel of all blessings, a secret of power and life. Not only for ourselves, but for others, for the Redeemed of the Adonai, for the world. It is through prayer that YHVH has given the right to take hold of Him and His strength. As the members of His body, as a holy priesthood, we shall take part in His priestly work of pleading and prevailing with YHVH for men.

When we pray for others, whether individuals, families or groups or nations, we put aside our own needs and desires and place the other(s) before ourselves. In this, we are keeping one of the greatest commandments: Love your neighbor as you love yourself. Often, when we lay our lives down for the sake of those around us, we find that YHVH meets us in a way never before experienced.

Day 3

PARASHA:
GEN. 19:1-20

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. When the *two* men entered Sodom, they found Lot sitting at the gate. This is a Torah principle about elders or, more specifically, judges, sitting at the place of authority in the city. This is where decisions are made and judgement is dolled out from the judges of that city. Lot rises immediately to go to the two men and bows down with his face to the ground. What does this say about Lot's position in the city and the authority he has, that he would meet the two visiting men? What does Lot relinquish by greeting the two men in this manner and entreating them to stay in his house?

2. Similarity we see that Lot's hospitality is very similar to Abraham's. Lot uses the same language by greeting the two men as a servant and provides a place for them to wash their feet. Lot also prepares a feast for the visitors after convincing them to stay at his home. Compare Lot's actions to those of Abraham. Are there differences in how the two show hospitality? Moreover, how is it noticeable, in their hospitality, that the third man is not with the visitors?

3. In verse 18:6 Abraham asks Sarah to make three measures of bread. This is a large quantity of bread for three visitors to consume, along with the meal Abraham presents. In addition, Lot presents a feast and baked unleavened bread for them also. What *mow'ed* /appointed time, would this be indicative of being observed¹?

4. Did you notice a big difference in the two accounts of feeding the visitors? Abraham asks Sarah to be involved, where as, Lot's wife is nowhere to be found. What is the significance of this and what does that say about Lot's family and his relationship with them and his relationship with YHVH on there behalf?

5. Lot comes outside and offers his virgin daughters to the Sodomites. This is a dissolute decision, yet Lot is trying to save the two angelic visitors from the wickedness of his city. The wicked men reject their natural function and lust after their own gender for relations. They also reject Lot and call him an alien and accuse him of judging them. Lot is no longer a judge in the gate of Sodom, but has been demoted to an outsider. How could this be a blessing to Lot and a deterrent to want to stay in Sodom? Liken this to how Messiah delivers us out of our situations in life and enables us to choose between life and death.

¹Vayidra 23

Do you believe the Sodomites knew that they were doing wrong? Discuss your answer.

6. When man continually does wrong, his eyes are blinded by YHVH, and he no longer can discern good from evil. Judah is an example of this by rejecting Messiah. Their eyes are veiled and they cannot see Messiah until YHVH removes the veil and reveals Messiah to them. In verse 11, the two men reach outside and take hold of Lot then struck all the men blind. Men of all statures in society (small and great) are left groping for the door. Through their stubborn, rebellious hearts, humanity is apathetic to their blindness. They crave and lust after evil so strongly, it consumes them. Compare those that reject Messiah, along with those that reject Torah, to these men of Sodom.

7. YHVH was not with the two men, but He had compassion on Lot. Was this because of Abraham's intercession or Lot's hospitality or both?

8. Lot and his family are told to, "Escape for *your* life? Do not look behind you..." Why does the visitor say *your life* and not *your lives*? What is the relevance of looking behind you?

Lot is indecisive with the two angelic rescuers when he resists the one's instructions to "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, lest you be swept away." It appears that Lot is still determined to live an easier life than that of a nomad. His faith is limited. He convolutes YHVH's favor with his own personal destruction. Furthermore, Lot knows his own family's dispositions. Does Lot feel that his family cannot make it because the distance would cause them to keep looking back and crying to go back to a place where they would find husbands and have friends? Which would be better, leaving them behind or forcing them to leave as they did and why?

Midrash Point:

Why is it important for Lot to leave the valley? This valley is what Lot chose as a place of provision. This is where he can fulfill the needs of his family and livestock. Yet, the two men tell Lot to leave the valley and escape to the mountains, or Lot will be swept away.

Discuss this more in depth. What is in the mountains for Lot? What end-time events does this foreshadow and what do the mountains have to do with that time yet to come?

Day 4

- PARASHA:
GEN. 19:21-21:4
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

Midrash Point:

YHVH says that Lot was sent out of the midst of the overthrow because He remembered Abraham. Also, in verse 28, Abraham looks toward Sodom and Gomorrah. He sees the smoke ascending like the smoke of a furnace.

Back in Genesis 15, Abram offers sacrifice that a smoking torch passes between the pieces. This looks familiar to the Sodom and Gomorrah incident. Why would there be similarities in the two, seemingly, different accounts of YHVH's interactions with man and the earth?

1. In today's study we see that YHVH grants Lot's request to go to Zoar, the small town located at the southern end of the salt valley. This is even farther away from the wilderness where the angels told Lot to flee, and, this is farther away from Abraham as well. YHVH then rains down brimstone and fire to "overthrow the city, all the valley, the inhabitants of the cities and what grew on the ground." Obviously, this is in keeping with the Noahadic covenant to not destroy all flesh with the flood. YHVH uses something completely opposite. Fire. In what ways does YHVH demonstrate the power of fire shown later in Torah? Furthermore, is this an element that YHVH always uses for destruction? What else does this power from out of heaven represent?

2. Describe how Sodom's and Gomorrah's destruction are comparable to the end of days. How will Yeshua find us here on earth and what is the great wrath that will be poured out on all flesh and the whole earth at the very end?

3. YHVH knows what is best for us, even when we spurn His providence, even when we think our way is right. Lot experiences this first hand. While pleading to stay within the Salt Valley (Zoar), he ultimately escapes to a cave. He is afraid to stay in Zoar. Lot and his two daughters find themselves completely cut off from everyone and everything in the wilderness. They could have been in the appropriate wilderness and found the Comforter there. However, Lot's daughters now complete yet another sequence of events that shadow Ham's actions. They take advantage of Lot after he has had too much wine. Unjustifiably, they both debased Lot because they believed they would never find a future with a husband of the earth to have offspring. In what ways do you see a complete cycle of events with Lot's daughters? Think of Cain and Abel, the time prior to the flood, the uncovering of Noah, the fall of Babel, and the destruction of the Salt Valley, as well as, any future Torah events that depict this cyclical scenario.

4. Other than destroying wickedness, what other attributes of YHVH can be described by these cycles of destruction? Specifically discuss the qualities of redemption found through these cycles of life.

5. In chapter 20, Abraham does not tell the entire truth to Abimelech and is acting in the same manner as when they sojourned in Egypt. Discuss the following from this narrative: Does Abraham lie or just mislead Abimelech? Why is Abraham blessed with the gifts of sheep, oxen and servants for his action?

Is there justification for Abraham's deception or justification for our using this instance as an example for us to practice with those that are not of the faith?

6. In verse 16, Abimelech speaks directly to Sarah. He tells her that he has given Abraham, her *brother*, a thousand pieces of silver. This represents exoneration on behalf of Sarah. In Jewish circles, this would be called a *ghet*. This is what Joseph was willing to give to Mary (in writing if not money) when he desired "To put her away." It is a way of saying that the woman is clear for marrying because she has not been humbled by the man. Why is this an important detail in regards to Sarah? Describe some of the ways YHVH's creation has interchanged this same situation with Him.

7. After the encounter with Abimelech, YHVH takes note of Sarah and allows her to conceive and bear Isaac. Why would YHVH say that He takes note of Sarah and not Abraham? What does this have anything to do with the time she spent in Abimelech's household?

Midrash Point:

It is important to remember Moab and Ben-ammi and that they develop into nations located in the Mideast region.

Even through debasement, Moab and Ammon have an inheritance that YHVH gives them. Is this inheritance for the sake of Abraham alone? Discuss the other factors of why this land is to be an inheritance for these sons.

Day 5

- PARASHA:
GEN. 21:5-34
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

1. There is a constant flow in insights that concern Sarah in this week's parasha. She is really extraordinarily beautiful. She is blessed in the tent to make lots of bread; her beauty beguiles Abraham to the point of deceitfulness. The interaction between Sarah and YHVH and her mail suitors suggest high regards. She is also given the ability to conceive and bear a son at ninety years of age. Sarah is also given a new name by YHVH Himself. She is truly blessed; a woman of YHVH! Why would the Creator choose Sarah, and a woman, to bestow all of this attention? Who does this foreshadow as a bearer of the promised seed? (Miriam is obvious, who else and how?¹)

2. A new mother has a glow about her that radiates in her face, her skin, her hair and all that she does. It is a beauty that can be explained in 1 Timothy 2:15, as well as the vitamins they take in helping their bodies in the whole process. This beauty is apparent in Sarah as well. She is not only talking about those around her, but to us today, as she says that "Everyone who hears will laugh with me." Why would/do you laugh with Sarah about bearing Isaac and YHVH's providence in Sarah's life?

3. Children mock others all the time. They are not respecters of age, they will mock teachers, parents, other children, animals, you name and they will make fun of it if not corrected. Sarah witnesses Ishmael mocking someone. We do not know for certain whom he was mocking, but he was caught in the act. As a result, Ishmael, along with his mother, Hagar, gets booted from the household. Sarah preempted YHVH's plan when she gave Hagar to Abraham to conceive a child. This offspring is, at this moment, at odds with the true heir of Abraham and YHVH's covenant. How could mocking cause Sarah to realize the enmity in the seed of Abraham? Moreover, how does eliminating one of these from within the immediate household help or hurt the situation both then and now.

4. Knowing that Ishmael's cry is heard by YHVH and that he is Abraham's descendant, Ishmael will be made into a great nation, does Ishmael walk with YHVH² or is he destined to bear a nation that is against the Seed of Promise?

5. YHVH commands us to take care of the orphan and the widow. By Abraham being obedient to YHVH, he gives up his rights to Hagar and Ishmael. Yet, YHVH is sovereign and does not close His eyes or ears from Ishmael. Though he is now fatherless, YHVH is

Midrash Point:

What does Beersheba mean? Discuss how this relates to the conversation Abraham has with Abimelech.

Within the conversation between Abraham and Abimelech, qualify the meaning of Beersheba with the oath made between the two men.

¹Proverbs 31:10-31
²B'reisheet 28:9

with him. In what ways do you see that Abraham is absolved from his responsibilities as a father and husband to Ishmael and Hagar? How does this line up with Torah principles and commandments?

- 6. Having possession of your enemies gate is to be in power over your enemies land. Abraham, while making a covenant with Abimelech and his seed and posterity, does keep his foot in the door for future generations. How doe Abraham accomplish this and what is the implication of both the covenant made and the well at Beersheba?

Our minds and the senses that lead to our minds are like the gates of our bodies and souls. Whatever goes into those gates and resides in them, is reflected in our actions. Those influences have control over us, whether we realize it or not. We either lie in the hand of YHVH and His protection or we are in the possession of haSatan (the adversary) and are eventually devoured by the adversary if we do not repent. In what ways do you allow the enemy of your soul to camp or even take control of the gates of your life? Additionally, what and Who should be in control of those gates? How do you reclaim those gates for His control?

- 7. The oaks of Mamre is where Abraham has dwelt for many years until this point in Torah. Now he sojourns in the land of the Philistines (presumably Abimelech's kingdom) for many days. While there he plants a tree at Beersheba, where he has just purchased a well. Abraham memorializes YHVH's name as being *the Everlasting El*. What does the tree being planted at Beersheba and YHVH's distinct name have to do with each other?

**Sandals
Worshipping in Spirit:**

By taking authority over our thoughts and placing Yeshua as the overseer of our imagination, we are able to combat the flesh and to take back a gate. The only way to successfully do this is by overwriting and subjecting all thoughts to the Word of YHVH. Every thought, imagination and speculation must bow itself to the Torah³.

The Master, Himself, defeated haSatan with Torah when tempted at His gates for food, thirst and power. How much more should we be dependent on allowing the Ruach haKodesh to speak His Word through us in our weakest areas and moments of life?

³2 Corinthians 10:5

5. When the ram is found to be caught in the thicket, YHVH provides the sacrifice for this burnt offering. Compare the ram that Abraham *discovers* with Messiah that is *revealed*.

6. When YHVH tells Abraham that his seed will possess the gate of their enemies, it is after disclosing the multitude of seed that Abraham will have. What does this indicate and how does this affect how Abraham's seed should be acting and perceived in those gates?

7. Do you see any gates that belong to Abraham's seed? If so, discuss where; if not, why and how can that seed possess their enemy's gate?

8. Verse 18 says that "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed..." Describe what this means and how you see nations being blessed based on your description.

9. At the end of chapter 22, Torah shows another genealogical list for us. Why, just after this monumental moment of testing, does this get recorded here? What is the importance of this family tree?

Shabbat

□ PARASHA:

GEN. 18:1-22:24

□ RESTORATORY—
MIDRASH

□ PRAYER LEAVES

The gates that we enter and exit are all around us. Many who sit in the gates of authority should not be there, while others that should be seated within that gate have been kicked out and replaced by the corrupted system judges.

A gate is not just a way in or out of a city or town. It is much more. The gate of an establishment or the gate used as a portal to or from any place, whether spiritual or physical is a place of power. When YHVH tells Abraham that “his seed will possess the gate of their enemies,” we should understand the implication of the possession of legality and fairness. Not only is this to speak of the proper conviction of wicked deeds perpetrated by the inhabitants and the punishment for those deeds, but the equal measure of mercy and humility towards the righteous population as well.

As YHVH reveals this aspect of the covenant, Abraham realizes why he was led to purchase the spring at Beersheba. This is the gate to the land of Gerar and the Philistines. By owning this gate, Abraham knows that he will be allowing or denying access and passage. This has been easily seen in today’s political stature. Israel has controlled the Palestinian land by allowing or denying access and passage into the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

By divine intervention YHVH, as the Provider, provides Abraham with allies, water and passage for all the places that his foot has already tread. Abraham receives a witness to his actions in the words of YHVH. Those left sojourning on the other side of the gate (Beersheba) will be influenced by Abraham’s actions and blessed by Abraham’s decisions. They also will be under his rule by the authority of YHVH. The former residences are now aliens that use the land. They may not be aware of this, but YHVH’s word is true and the land will belong to Abraham’s seed.

Prior to purchasing the spring at Beersheba, Abraham sat at another gate, the door of his own tent. He was master of his household and was vigilant to spy out what was coming his way. Looking up, Abraham spies the three Men approaching his gate. Knowing YHVH and hearing His voice clearly, he understands his duty to rise and show hospitality to the three visitors. Abraham speaks to his wife and mutually prepares a feast for those that have disclosed themselves for this meeting.

In stark contrast, Lot chose the land that looked good to the eye for the provision that it could provide for his family, servants and flocks. In following this, he became subject to a system where the gates were filled with perversity and wickedness. the gates of ease opened up to Lot and his family but ultimately

they could not prevail over the evil and wickedness. Lot sat in the gate of Sodom whereupon the two angels of YHVH entered. He sat where authority was seated and removed himself from that position when he saw righteousness enter into the city gate. Moreover, when events turned to wickedness that night, the inhabitants revealed Lot’s position in their community and demoted him from a place of judgment and placed him in a place of condemnation for not following Sodom’s habitual depravity.

It is the duty of the members of the gate, the judges or elders, to act as outstanding community members, to be examples of the righteousness esteemed by that community and to execute the justice system. The execution of that system may be as jurors to decide verdicts of punishment, lawyers determining the difference between right and wrong, and those that make declarations of repentance and forgiveness as a spokesperson for themselves and/or the community at large. There are also times of testing when a community member must be deemed worthy of a judge’s position or is ready to assume the role of a leader within the communal system.

YHVH is seen as this type of Judge many times in our lives. Abraham sees this archetype as he takes Isaac to the place that YHVH has chosen for sacrifice. Abraham’s Elohim is watching to see the obedience and faith that Abraham acts out in His sight. In Abraham’s obedience to sacrifice what he has waited one hundred years to obtain in Isaac, and in his faith to know that within the command to sacrifice his only son, he knew he would find salvation within the covenant YHVH had already established. This Judge is real and requires genuine sincerity for the tasks He asks His children to accomplish.

As Judge, YHVH is righteous and showed His faithfulness to Abraham by staying his hand against Isaac. He provides atonement, Himself, to usher in a glimpse of the fulfillment yet to come in Messiah. Our Judge sees all and is an Everlasting Judge to be able to provide all that we need, Himself, as the sacrifice for our sakes. Abraham’s faithfulness is the measure for us to see how Judgement is made and portioned out. In due time, YHVH’s judgement will be made manifest in every living creature as to whether that creature sees Messiah as their sacrifice for their eternal redemption or still relies on the fleshly labors of the earth to bring forth salvation and the provision of justice.

Abraham found the truest form of justice in a gate where only YHVH stood as the Judge. Abraham did not take any other judge to help make the decision to sacrifice Isaac. That decision was clear and present in Abraham’s resolve to do *just*

as YHVH had commanded. In this obedience, Abraham is justified to be the rightful *father to a multitude* that would bless all the forthcoming nations of the earth. Our father, Abraham, stood in the gate as a faithful gatekeeper and shows us the way through the gate we all should enter. That gate is the gate of faith to know Who YHVH is and what He will be for us in the future.

At each step, we enter a gate and give permission or deny access to alternate gates in our lives. Each gate harbors something on the other side. Often, as a believer, YHVH does not allow a person to enter into a particular gate, and for good reason. YHVH knows the beginning and the end of a person's journeying. He knows if the wayfarer is ready for what lies behind the gate or if he can withstand the persecution that waits within the walls. He also knows when to reveal and unlock the gates so that His elect can walk through the gates. These times may not be for the righteous, but for those waiting in bondage on the other side.

The lifetime we have spent on our journeys has prepared us for what is within and on the other side of our enemy's gate¹. When we get ahead of YHVH and work on our or His behalf out of our flesh, either the gate is barred or the entry is met with hardship and pain. We must know and hear what the Ruach says to us about entering in others' gates. Our lives will be made known by our actions within their gates. Others will judge us in that gate; and it will be decided how we will be treated when leaving the gate or if we can go any farther².

Similarly, we are both gates and judges within our gates all at the same time. This may sound at odds with itself, but it is not. Our bodies are made to take in and give out in many ways. Our minds absorb so much at any given time that we must consciously choose what to let in and what gets barred constantly. Many times, thoughts slip into our minds without our permission and we must sit as judge over what stays and what must leave. If we choose not to be that judge, our minds are consumed by a battleground of information that we could easily lose control over. If insalubrious thoughts go unbridled and run out of control, a person's mind, body and soul will enter a realm of unclean. That person then has to wait for someone to teach repentance or seek forgiveness from YHVH through His beckoning.

The gates that we constantly maintain are the eye gate, the ear gate, the speech gate, not to mention the spiritual gate that doctrine and discipleship go through. Each one of these gates works in conjunction with each other. If one gate is out of balance or has allowed an unclean influence in then

the other gates fall prey to the wiles of the enemy that lurks in the unclean realm. Likewise, if a gate allows harsh words or actions out, then the other gates suffer the punishment of wrongfully leading others into the realm of unclean.

Why is this an aspect of clean and unclean? Because we either live with our lives separated from the world and its perversions, such as the life of Abraham; or, we live in the realm of unclean where the bombardment of the world constantly pounds outside our gate to demand entrance. By allowing the unclean entry to our lives, we give our flesh a foothold on our lives and forfeit our holiness before YHVH through Messiah. In essence, we usurp Yeshua's role as High Priest and try to approach a Holy Elohim on our own merit and our own standards. We place ourselves in the seat of judgement and deem ourselves worthy to justify our own actions. It is impossible to do this without the atonement that the one true Judge offers to us. His way is the only way to YHVH.

Furthermore, Yeshua has made the way for us to enter into the gates of Tzion by way of judgement. When the Master was on the earth, He told the disciples that they would judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Not the nations, not the sojourners, the twelve tribes. There were twelve disciples that followed Yeshua, and when the one betrayed Him, the others replaced Judas with Matthias. Before those that die for Messiah enter Tzion when the first resurrection takes place, there will be twelve gates that they must enter. The twelve that are to judge the tribes will be judging who may pass through those gates. We must be righteous judges now so that when we are judged, we will be found having faith. That faith was in our father Abraham and it has passed down to us through the Seed of Promise.

By doing righteously within our gates and the gates of others, by loving YHVH will all that we have and treating others the way we want to be treated, we are affirming that we desire the Judge of all the earth to come and sit as Judge and King in our gates. In all of our efforts to walk out Torah and to love Messiah, there is no greater hope than to know our Judge is also our advocate; and as such, He makes great intercession for our sake so that we will endure to the end and enter through His gates of praise. You should seek to be known by the Judge so that you will be found with faith and without blame. "For it is time for the judgement to begin with the household of YHVH; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of YHVH?"³

¹Matthew 16:18

²Matthew 10:14

³1 Peter 4:17

