

## Va'etchanan (I pleaded)



Moses pleads with יהוה

**Deuteronomy 3:23** And I pleaded with יהוה at that time saying, **24** O Adonai יהוה אתה, *You* have begun to show את־ your servant את־ your great וְאֵת־ *and* mighty hand: **What other god is there in heaven or in earth that can do your works and mighty deeds?** C-MATS

**Question:** What does “I pleaded” mean in verse 23? Prayer is called by thirteen names: cry, howl, groan, stricture, song, prostration, encounter, judgment, entreaty, standing, appeal, and beseeching. Moses was beseeching יהוה. It is used when one seeks an undeserved favor, for truly righteous and humble people never feel that they have a claim on יהוה's mercy. Moses never despaired, and continued to pray even though יהוה had told him the Land was closed to him, so we should never give up on יהוה's mercy. The gates of tears are always open. יהוה assured Moses that an enormously abundant reward -- greater even than the Land -- awaited him in the World to Come. Chumash

**Question:** What does Moses declare in verse 24? Deut 3:24 is so POWERFUL, because it proclaims to us, as את servants, that את Yahusha is the GREAT וְאֵת־ *and* MIGHTY HAND of יהוה Father! The TWO working together as ONE to redeem mankind! C-MATS

**Deuteronomy 3:25** Let me cross over, I pray and see את־ the land that *is* good beyond the Jordan, the wonderful mountains and Lebanon. **26** But יהוה was angry with me for your sakes and would not hear me: and יהוה said to me, Speak no more to Me *about* this matter. C-MATS

**Question:** Did Moses really expect to change יהוה's mind? And if we believe that יהוה always does what's best for us, is it even a good idea to try to change His mind? יהוה does always have our best in mind, and gives us what we need. There are times when יהוה could withhold from us certain things at the outset in order to teach us a lesson. Perhaps we need to examine the underlying motivations behind what we want or try harder to achieve worthwhile goals. Therefore when we are convinced, as Moses was, that it would have been good for the Hebrew people for him to enter the land with them, he had the right to assume that perhaps יהוה simply wanted him to try a little harder.

**Question:** There are times when things really do appear hopeless and it seems totally irrational to believe that things will improve. Why then does the Torah tell us to maintain hope even then? For several reasons. First of all, we really can't know when a situation is hopeless. יהוה can do anything, even when it seems impossible. History is full of examples. During the Gulf War, for instance, Saddam Hussein fired 39 deadly missiles at Israel. Many of them exploded in the middle of busy cities, yet amazingly there was only one casualty. Secondly, it's important to maintain hope and do whatever we can. Never give up, even when the sword is at our neck, meaning that even when things look hopeless, we should still try to do what we can. A negative attitude prevents us from doing that, because we don't really believe we can succeed and we lessen our trust in יהוה.

**Spiritual Exercise:** Trust in יהוה always. Do not give up hope in any situation. Wait and see what יהוה will do for you. **Proverbs 3:5** Trust in יהוה with all your heart and lean not upon your own understanding.

**Question:** What does יהוה tell us about putting our hope in Him and not giving up?

**Jeremiah 29:11** For I know את־ the thoughts that I think towards you, says יהוה, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected אֶחְרִית *end*. C-MATS

**2 Corinthians 4:16** For this cause we do not lose heart; though our outward man perishes, the inward man is renewed day by day. **17** For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, helps us achieve an eternal glory that far outweighs them all; **18** While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. C-MATS

**Psalm 31: 24** Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you that hope in יהוה. C-MATS

**Psalm 39: 7** And now, Adonai, what do I wait for? My hope is in You. C-MATS

**Lamentations 3: 24** יהוה is my portion, says my soul; therefore, will I hope in Him. C-MATS

**Psalm 146: 5** Happy is he that has the Elohim of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in יהוה his Elohim. C-MATS

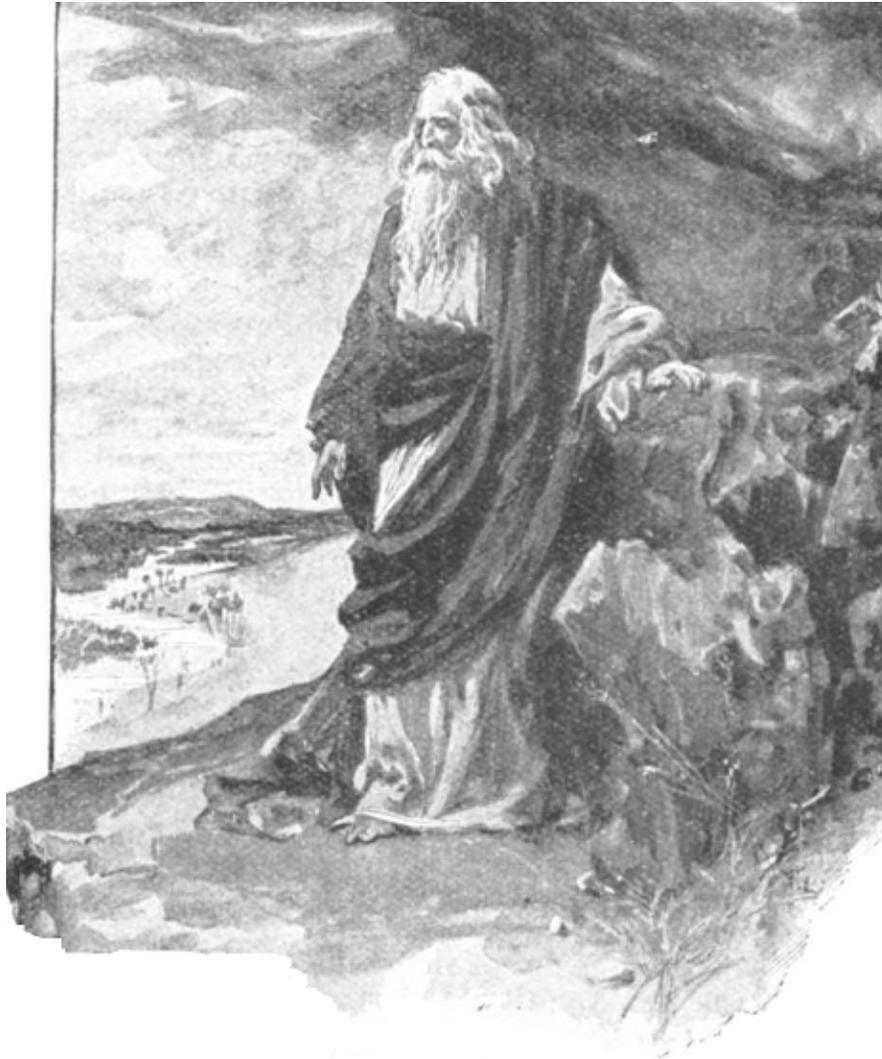
**Hebrews 10: 23** Let us hold fast to the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised. C-MATS

**Psalm 27: 14** Wait for יהוה: be strong and let your heart take courage; yes, wait you for יהוה.

**Isaiah 26: 3** You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on you*; because he trusts in you. C-MATS

**Micah 7:7** But as for me, I will look in בִּיקוּהָ; I will wait for the Elohim of my salvation: my Elohim will hear me. C-MATS

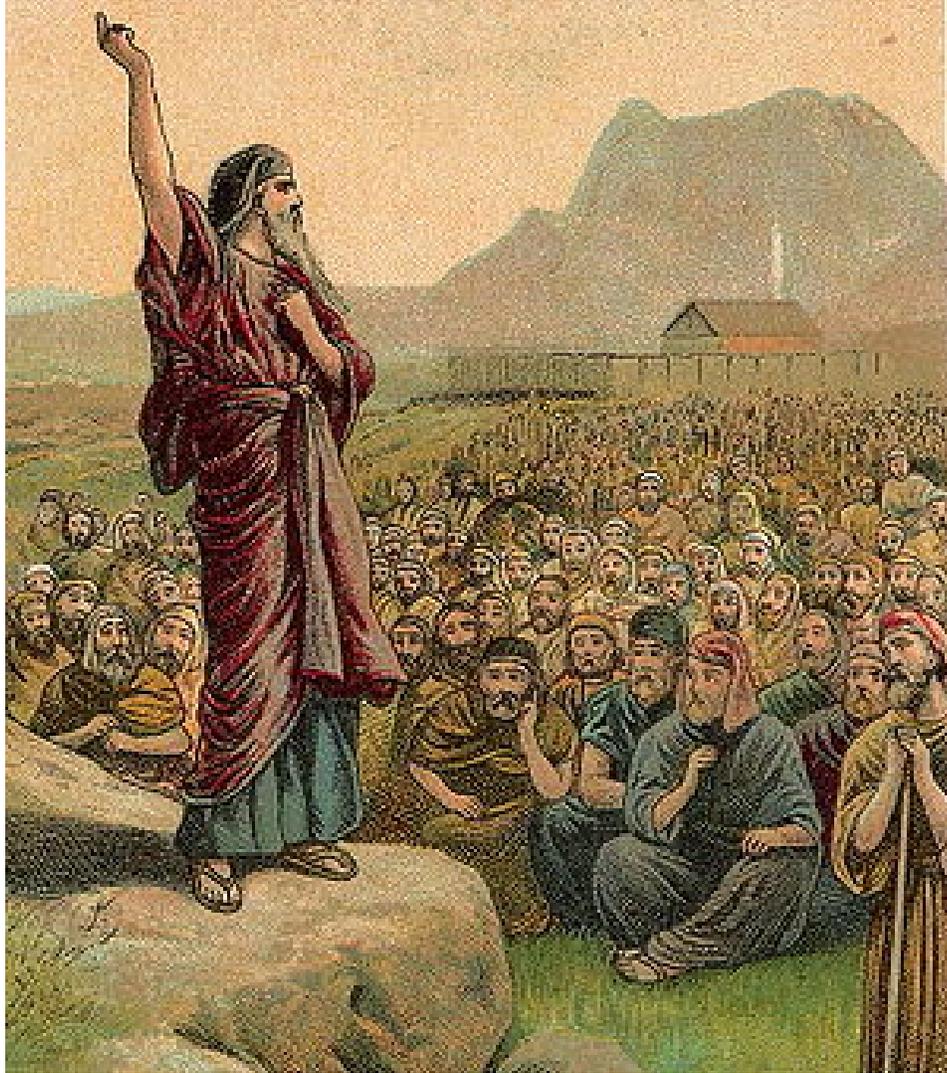
**Romans 15: 13** May the Elohim of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Ruach haKodesh. C-MATS



**Moses views the Promised Land**

**Deuteronomy 3:27** Go up onto the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes westward and northward and southward and eastward and see *it* with your eyes: because you will not cross over אֶת־ the Jordan. 28 But commission אֶת־ Y'hoshua and encourage him and strengthen him: because he will cross over before this people and he will cause אותם *them* to inherit אֶת־ the land which you will see. 29 So we remained in the valley across from Beth-peor. C-MATS

**Question:** What happens in Chapter 4? Moses was about to exhort his people to obey the entire Torah, and he would review some of the commandments, and teach others that had not been set down in the Torah previously. Chumash



Moses Teaches the Israelites

**Deuteronomy 4:1** Now therefore, listen, O Israel, to the statutes and to the judgments which I teach *you* to observe, so that you may live and go in and possess <sup>את</sup> the land which יהוה Elohim of your fathers gives you. **2** You will not add to the word which I command *you*, neither will you take away from it, but you will keep <sup>את</sup> commandments of יהוה your Elohim which I command *you*. C-MATS

**Question:** Why does Moses say, **You will not add to the word which I command *you***? By definition, perfection cannot be improved upon, so that for one to add to or subtract from the commandments of the Torah is an unacceptable implication that יהוה's Torah is lacking. Chumash

**Question:** Why do you think יהוה's instructions in the Torah are so specific and detailed, rather than just general guidelines for living? יהוה wants to give us the greatest gift possible and that is the eternal pleasure of closeness to Him. Each instruction and guideline in the Torah is a specific way to connect to Him spiritually toward achieving this goal.

**Question:** Can a person 'overdo it' spiritually? Real spirituality is striking a harmonious balance between our bodies and souls. If we ignore our basic physical needs in the name of 'spirituality,' we will go out of balance and miss the mark.

**Deuteronomy 4:3** Your eyes have seen **את** what **יהוה** did because of Baal-peor: **יהוה** your Elohim has destroyed all the men that followed Baal-peor from among you. **4** **ואתם** *and you* that held fast in **ביהוה** your Elohim *are* alive, every one of you this day. C-MATS

**Question:** What is the definition of being "alive"? The wicked, even in their lifetimes, are considered dead... The righteous, even in death, are considered alive. **יהוה** is the exclusive source of life; hence life, by definition, is connection with יהוה. A "life" of disconnection from **יהוה** is a pretend-life -- life devoid of all but its most superficial illusory shell.



Moses taught the Israelites

**Deuteronomy 4:5** I have taught **אתכם** *you* statutes and judgments, just as **יהוה** my Elohim commanded me that you should do in the land that **אתם** *you* go to possess. **6** Keep and do *them*; for this *is* your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the nations, which will hear **את** all these statutes and say, this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people. **7** For what nation *is there* so great, who has Elohim *so* near to them, as **כיהוה** our Elohim *is* in all *things* when we call upon him? **8** And what nation *is there* so great that has statutes and judgments *as* righteous as **הזאת** *this* Torah, which I set before you this day? C-MATS

**Question:** Why must we study all *הַזֹּאת* *this Torah*? The key word is **all**, because the Torah's infinite wisdom is recognized only when it is seen, studied, and understood in its entirety. Taking one commandment out of the Torah to examine its meaning will not allow you to see with the wisdom that knowing all the Torah will give you. You will be shortsighted and lacking in your studies. All the Torah must be examined and studied to obtain the proper perspective. The Torah is not a grab bag from which one may pick and choose. It is like the blueprint of a complex structure; unless every part is followed, the building may collapse. Chumash

**Deuteronomy 4:9** Only take caution and keep your soul diligently, *so* you won't forget *את* the things which your eyes have seen and they won't depart from your heart all the days of your life: but teach them *to* your sons and your son's sons; **10** The day that you stood before *יהוה* your Elohim in Horeb, when *יהוה* said to me, Gather *to Me את* the people together and I will make them hear *את* My words, that they may learn to fear *אתי Me* all the days that they live upon the earth *ואת* and their children *that* they may teach. **11** And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain; and the mountain burned *with* fire to the heart of heavens with darkness, clouds and thick darkness. **12** And *יהוה* spoke to you out of the midst of the fire: *אתם* you heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude (*form*); you only heard a voice. C-MATS



*יהוה* spoke to you out of the midst of the fire

**Deuteronomy 4:13** And He declared to you *את* His covenant, which He commanded *אתכם* you to obey *the* Ten Commandments and He wrote them upon two tablets of stone. **14** *ואתי* And *יהוה* me commanded me at that time to teach *אתכם* you statutes and judgments that you might do *אתם* them in the land *that* *אתם* you are going to possess. C-MATS

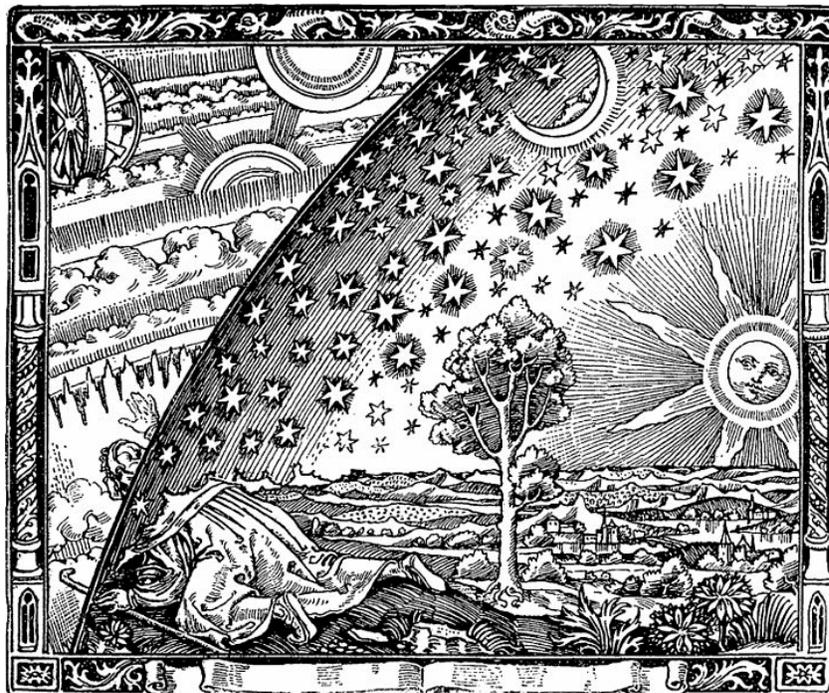


Moses Receiving the Tablets of the Law (painting by João Zeferino da Costa)

**Deuteronomy 4:15** Watch out for yourselves! ראיִתֶּם *You saw* no manner of similitude (*form*) on the day *that* יהוה spoke to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: **16** Do not corrupt yourselves and make a graven image, the similitude (*form*) of any figure, the likeness of male or female, **17** The likeness of any beast that *is* on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flies in the air, **18** The likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that *is* in the waters below the earth: **19** And when you lift up your eyes to *the* heavens and when you see אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ *and* אֶת־הַיָּרֵחַ *and* אֶת־הַכּוֹכָבִים *and* all the host of heavens, do not be driven to worship them and serve them. Which has divided יהוה your Elohim אֹתָם *them*, all the nations under the whole heavens.  
C-MATS



**Question:** Why are the celestial hosts given to man to admire and meditate on? Abraham came to realize that there is a Creator by means of such meditation. At first he thought that the sun must be a god, then he thought the moon, which replaced the sun, must be a god, and finally, he realized that there must be One Elohim Who created and controls both. But lesser human beings could easily err and think that the celestial hosts have independent powers. Chumash



Do not investigate what was before  
(illustration from Camille Flammarion's 1888 *L'atmosphère: météorologie populaire*)

**Deuteronomy 4:20 But יהוה has taken you and brought אתכם you out of the iron furnace of Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to Him, as you are this day. C-MATS**

**Question:** Why was Israel subjected to harsh and cruel years in Egyptian exile? The reason יהוה subjected Israel to the harsh and cruel years of the Egyptian exile were to purge them of their baser characteristics and even of their unworthy people. Had יהוה permitted Israel to multiply and grow into a large nation without the rigors of the exile, they would not have been willing to accept a Torah that would place many limitations on their natural and habitual desires.

**Question:** Do you think that hardships tend to make a person feel closer to יהוה? Although we always have free choice whether to come closer to יהוה or the opposite, in general hardships are a great chance to come closer. Firstly they tend to make us more humble and aware of the truth that we depend on יהוה for everything. Additionally, difficulties tend to bring us to prayer, which is one of life's great paths to יהוה awareness.

**Question:** Is it possible to have an easy life and still be great? Possible but highly unlikely. Spiritual and character strength, just like physical strength is built up through exercise. That spiritual exercise is life's challenges and difficulties. A life without challenges tends to turn us into spiritual couch-potatoes. יהוה will send us whatever lessons we need to learn. The key is to remember that if and when hardships come, we should accept them and know they haven't come to knock us down, but rather to build us up.

**Deuteronomy 4:21 And ויהוה was angry with me for your sakes and swore that I would not cross over את the Jordan and that I should not go into that good land, which יהוה your Elohim gives you for an inheritance: 22 But I must die in הַאֲרֶץ this land. I must not cross over את the Jordan: וְאַתֶּם and you will cross over and possess הַאֲרֶץ this את the land that is good. 23 Be cautious not to forget את the covenant of יהוה your Elohim, which He made with you and make a graven image, or the likeness of anything, which יהוה your Elohim has forbidden. 24 For יהוה your Elohim is a consuming fire, a jealous Elohim. 25 When you give birth to children and children's children and you have remained a long time in the land and corrupt yourselves and make a graven image, or the likeness of anything and do evil in the sight of יהוה your Elohim to provoke him to anger. C-MATS**

**Question:** Why was Moses warning the people about a future generation? There was no danger that the generation entering the Land would be enticed by the Canaanite idols; they had seen too much of יהוה's greatness to be so misled. But the children and grandchildren, for whom the miracles would be history rather than experience, would be susceptible (Chizkuni). Moses warned that this could easily happen when they had been a long time in the Land and lost their freshness and sense of spiritual adventure -- and then they would tend to find new stimuli in the life-styles of their neighbors. In ancient times, this meant idolatry; in more recent centuries it meant the various philosophies that have had such dangerous attractions for believers in many countries. The chapter ends with the reassurance that eventually the Hebrews will come back to their origins. Chumash

**Question:** How long did the Israelites keep the commandments and stay in the Land? The First Temple was built 440 years after they entered the Land, and it stood for 410 years until it was destroyed. The Israelites remained in the Land 850 years until they went into the Babylonian Exile.



I call to witness the heavens and earth

**Deuteronomy 4:26** I call to witness against you this day **את** the heavens **ואת** and the earth that you will quickly perish from off the land which **אתם** you cross over **את** the Jordan to possess; you will not prolong *your* days there, but you will be destroyed. 27 And **יהוה** will scatter **אתכם** you among the nations and you will be few in number among the heathen, where **יהוה** will send **אתכם** you. 28 And there you will serve wood and stone gods, the work of men's hands, which neither see or hear or eat or smell. 29 But if you will **SEEK** **את** **יהוה** your Elohim, you will find *Him*, if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. C-MATS

**Question:** Will **יהוה** hear you while in exile? The Torah stresses that when you seek **יהוה** *from there*, from your place of exile "**among the nations**" you will find Him. Because **יהוה** is to be found everywhere and every corner of His creation can serve as the vehicle to reach Him. If divine providence has dispatched you to a certain place and life, your surest path to Him is from there.

**Question:** Do you think **יהוה** only wants us to talk to Him when we're in trouble? **יהוה** loves us more than we can imagine and wants us to come closer to Him by sharing and talking with Him about all parts of our lives, both the happy and the challenging.

**Question:** יהוה is a 'personal יהוה.' What do you think this means? יהוה is much more than a force that created everything and left it to run on its own. יהוה is also much more than a universal spiritual life force. יהוה is actively involved with every detail of each of our lives. He loves us and has an intimate personal interest in each of us and wants us to realize this and develop this amazing relationship to its full potential.

**Question:** If יהוה is already with us and cares about us all the time, why should a person pray? Even though יהוה is always connecting to us and ready to help, we are not always open to Him. Prayer and even just speaking to Him, helps us to stay focused on יהוה and opens us up to receive all the incredible goodness He is waiting to give us.

**Spiritual exercise:** Take time to talk to יהוה about how you're feeling. Spend time with Him in the morning and at night.

**Question:** When should you pray?

**Luke 21:36** Watch and pray always, that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. C-MATS

**Philippians 4:6** Do not be anxious for anything; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to Elohim. C-MATS

**Colossians 4:2** Continue in prayer, and pray with thanksgiving. C-MATS

**Matthew 26:41** Watch and pray, that you do not enter into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. C-MATS

**1 Thessalonians 5:17** Pray without ceasing. C-MATS

**Psalms 55:17** Evening and morning and at noonday, will I utter my complaint and moan; and He will hear my voice. C-MATS

**Luke 18:1** And He (Yahshua) spoke a parable to them to teach them that men ought always to pray, and not to give up. C-MATS

**Question:** Does יהוה hear your prayers?

**Proverbs 15:8** The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to יהוה; but the prayer of the upright is His delight. C-MATS

**Proverbs 15:29** יהוה is far from the wicked; but He hears the prayer of the righteous. C-MATS.

**Psalms 66:19** But certainly Elohim has heard; He has attended to the voice of my prayer. 20 Blessed is Elohim, who has not turned away my prayer, nor His loving-kindness from me.

**Isaiah 65:24** And it shall come to pass that, before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. C-MATS

**Question:** Who should you pray for?

**James 5:14** Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the assembly; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of *our* Adonai: 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and Adonai shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16 I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. C-MATS

**Matthew 5:44** Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. C-MATS

**Ephesians 6:18** Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints (Elohim's consecrated people).

**Psalm 122:6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love you. C-MATS**

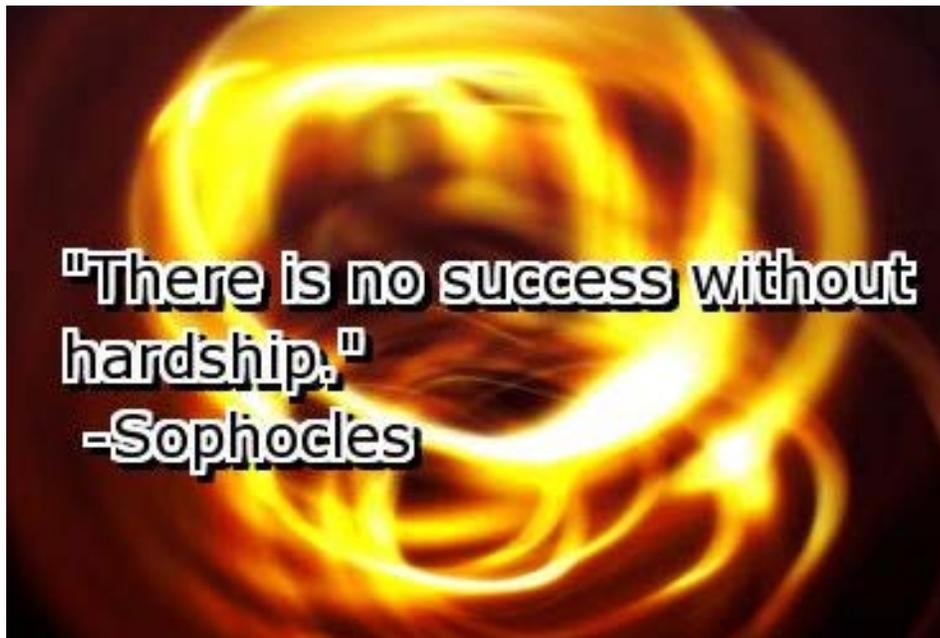
**Question:** What should you do if you do not know how to pray?

**Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we do not know what we should pray for as we ought to: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. C-MATS**

**Matthew 18:19-20 Again if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by My Father which is in heaven. C-MATS**

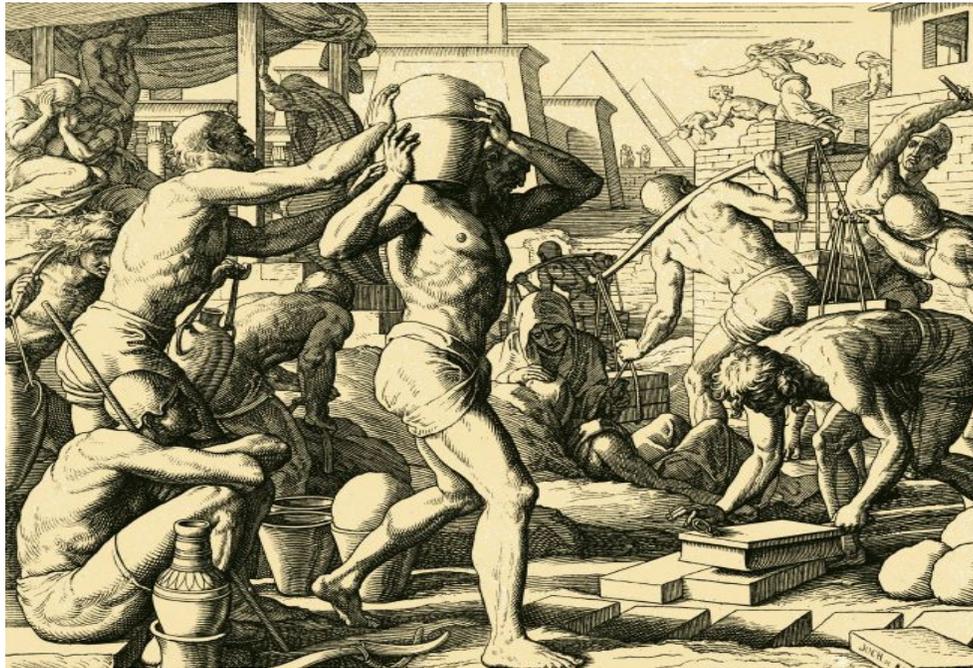
**Deuteronomy 4:30 *When you are in tribulation and all these things have come upon you, even in the latter days, if you turn to יהוה your Elohim and will be obedient to His voice; 31 For יהוה your Elohim is a merciful Elohim He will not forsake you or destroy you, or forget את־ covenant of your fathers, which He swore to them. 32 Ask about the past before you were born, since the day that Elohim created man upon the earth and ask from one side of heaven to the other, whether there has been any such thing as great as this or has anyone heard of anything like this? C-MATS***

**Question:** Why was Israel punished so harshly by יהוה? Moses explained why יהוה would punish Israel so harshly when it abandoned Him. Look to the past, Moses said, and see how generous יהוה has been with you. A nation that enjoyed such unprecedented benevolence deserves to be punished severely for ingratitude. Chumash



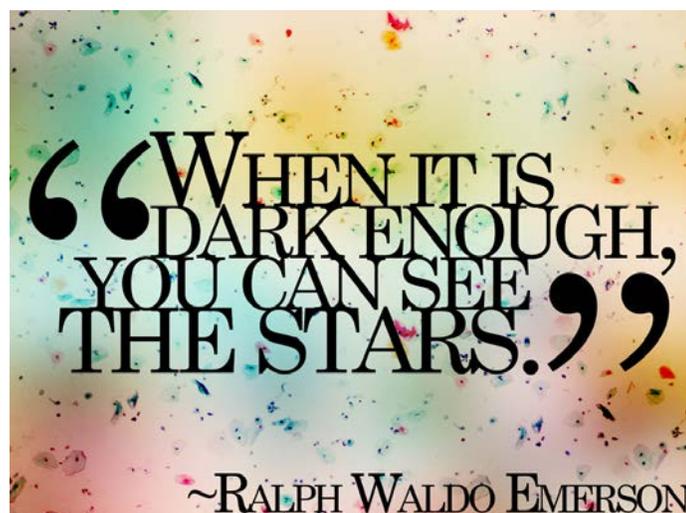
**Deuteronomy 4:33 Did *any other* people hear the voice of Elohim speaking out of the midst of the fire as אתה you heard and *still* lived? 34 Or has Elohim ever gone *and* taken for Himself a nation from *out of* the midst of *another* nation by tests, signs, wonders, war and by a mighty hand and a stretched out arm and great terrors, *like* all that יהוה your Elohim did for you in Egypt before your eyes? C-MATS**

**Question:** What does it mean by "taken for Himself a nation from *out of the midst of another nation*"? These verses refer to the slavery and hardships the Israelite people experienced in Egypt as an iron smelting furnace. Just as a smelting furnace heats up and removes the impurities from precious metals, so too the experience in Egypt purified our people for their mission of teaching righteous values to the world. The challenges we face in life are the lessons we need to make us great. Chumash



Israelites in Egypt

**Question:** Should a person try to give himself hardships so he can grow from them? No. We should try to live as normal and pleasant a life as we can. יהוה will send us whatever lessons we need to learn. The key is to remember that if and when hardships come, we should accept them and know they haven't come to knock us down, but rather to build us up.



**Question:** How did יהוה remove Israel from Egypt? No "god" was ever able to remove one nation from the bowels of another, as יהוה had removed Israel from Egypt (Rashi). This is further proof of יהוה's absolute power and His love for Israel. יהוה did so with challenges, as He defied Pharaoh to test Him (Exodus 8:5); with signs, by means of which Moses proved that יהוה had sent him (Deuteronomy 4:2-3); with wonders, the plagues; and with war, the miracles at the Sea, which the Egyptians characterized as יהוה waging war against Egypt (Rashi). How much more will יהוה be able to take us from the midst of the nations and gather us back to Israel in the Greater Exodus? Chumash

**Deuteronomy 4:35** It was shown to אתה *you*, that you might know that יהוה He is Elohim; *there is no other besides Him.* 36 He made you to hear את His voice out of heaven, that He might instruct you: and upon earth He showed you את His great fire; and you heard His words out of the midst of the fire. C-MATS

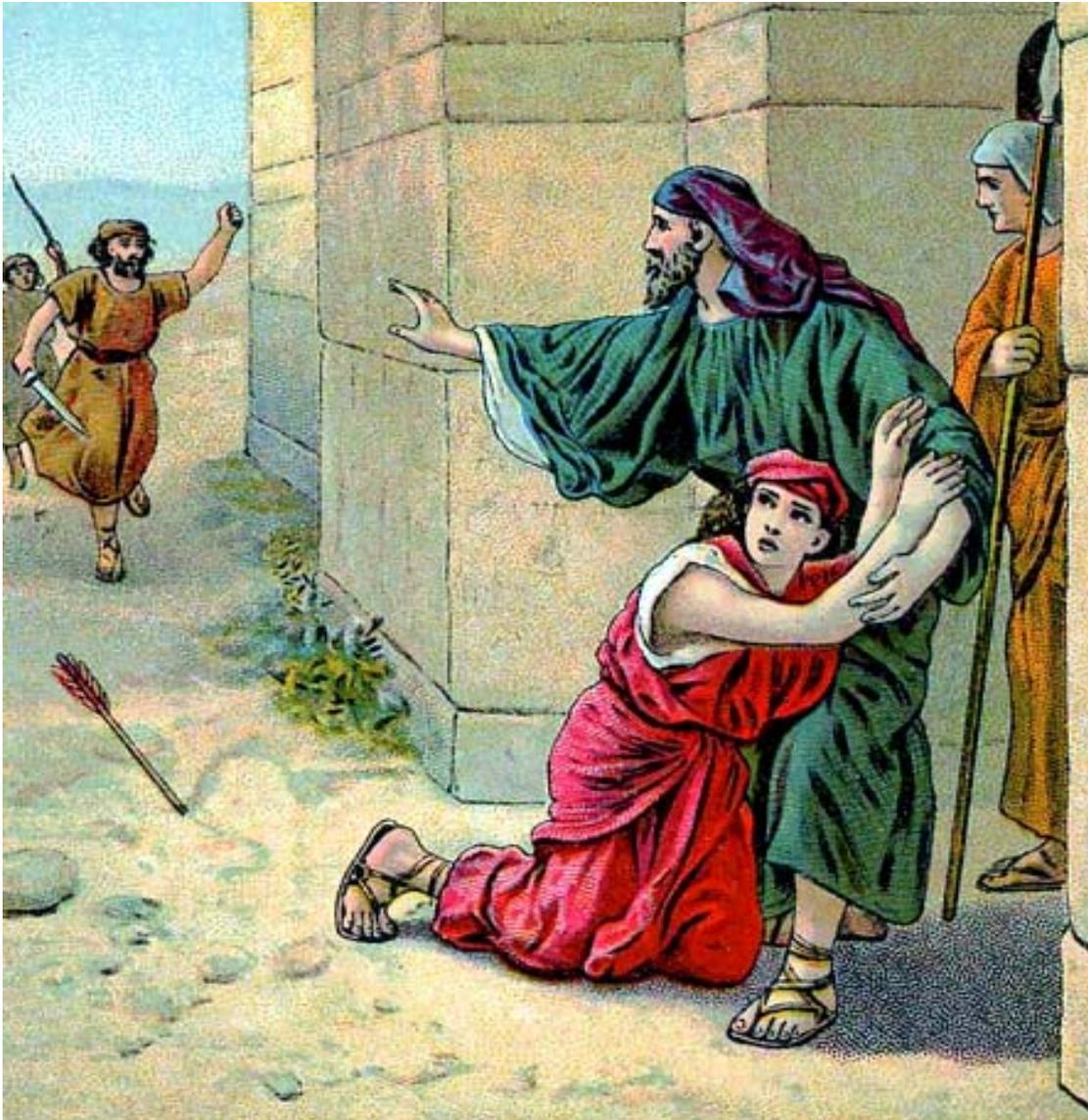
**Question:** What does "He made you to hear את His voice out of heaven, that He might instruct you: and upon earth He showed you את His great fire" imply? This implies that יהוה Father speaks through His את Son Yahusha from Heaven, meaning they speak together as ONE VOICE! C-MATS

**Deuteronomy 4:37** And because He loved את your fathers, He chose their descendants and brought you out in His sight with His mighty power out of Egypt; 38 To drive out nations before you *who are greater and mightier than you are*, to bring you in and give you את their land *for an inheritance, as it is this day.* 39 Know this day and consider *it* in your heart that יהוה He is Elohim in heaven above and on the earth beneath: *there is no other.* C-MATS

**Question:** What does consider *it* in your heart mean? This means meditate intensely upon it (R' Bachya). There are many things that people know intellectually, but do not "take to heart," in the sense that this knowledge controls their behavior. This is perhaps most pronounced in health habits, where people persist in doing things that they enjoy even though they know them to be harmful, such as smoking and drinking. The same holds true for many people of faith who are careless in their performance of some commandments, because they lack sufficient emotional commitment. Thus Moses urged the people that even though they know that there is only one יהוה, they must find ways to take it to heart, uncompromisingly. Chumash

**Deuteronomy 4:40** You will keep therefore, את His statutes, ואת and His commandments, which I command you this day that it may go well with you and with your children after you and that you may prolong *your* days upon the earth, which יהוה your Elohim gives you forever. 41 Then Moses set apart three cities on this side *of* the Jordan toward the sunrise; 42 That a manslayer (*man who kills*) might flee there, who killed את his neighbor unintentionally and *did* not hate him in the past; so by fleeing to אהת *one* of these cities he might live: 43 *Namely* את Bezer in the wilderness, on the plateau country for the Reubenites; ואת and Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites ואת and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites. 44 וזאת *And this is* the Torah which Moses set before *the* Children of Israel: 45 These *are* the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments, which Moses spoke to *the* Children of Israel, after they came out of Egypt, 46 On this side *of* the Jordan, in the valley across from Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon, whom Moses and *the* Children of Israel defeated after they came out of Egypt. C-MATS

Deuteronomy 4:47 And they possessed  $\text{אֶת}$  his land  $\text{אֶת}$  and the land of Og, king of Bashan, two kings of the Amorites, which *were* on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise. 48 From Aroer, which *is* by the bank of the Arnon River, to Mount Zion, which *is* Hermon, 49 And all the plain on this side of the Jordan eastward, to the sea of the plain, under the springs of Pisgah. C-MATS



Cities of Refuge

Deuteronomy 5:1 And Moses called all Israel and said to them, Hear, O Israel,  $\text{אֶת}$  the statutes  $\text{אֶת}$  and judgments that I speak in your ears this day, so that you may learn them and keep *them* and do them. C-MATS

**Question:** Why does Moses review the commandments with **all Israel**? Most of the people standing before him had not been at Mount Sinai forty years before, and Moses wanted every member of the nation, including the new generation, to hear the Ten Commandments (R' Bachya). Chumash



Deuteronomy 5:2 יהוה our Elohim made a Covenant with us at Horeb. 3 Not with our fathers made יהוה *this* את־ His covenant, but אתנו *with us* who *are* here alive this day. 4 Face to face talked יהוה with you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire, 5 I stood between יהוה and you at that time to show you את־ *the* work of יהוה: because you were afraid of the fire and would not go up onto the mount saying. C-MATS



**1<sup>st</sup> commandment: Deuteronomy 5:6 I am יהוה your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage (*believe in Me*). C-MATS**

**Question:** What are verses 6-21 repeating? Moses repeats the Ten Commandments as in Exodus 20:1-14. Although the general content of this version is identical to that in Exodus, there are some differences. The reason for these differences flows from the nature of Deuteronomy being spoken in Moses words not יהוה's. The text of the Ten Commandments given here should be understood as the way Moses perceived and understood the covenant and framed it in his own words, according to the people's capacity to best comprehend it. Chumash



**2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment: Deuteronomy 5:7 You will have no other gods before Me.**

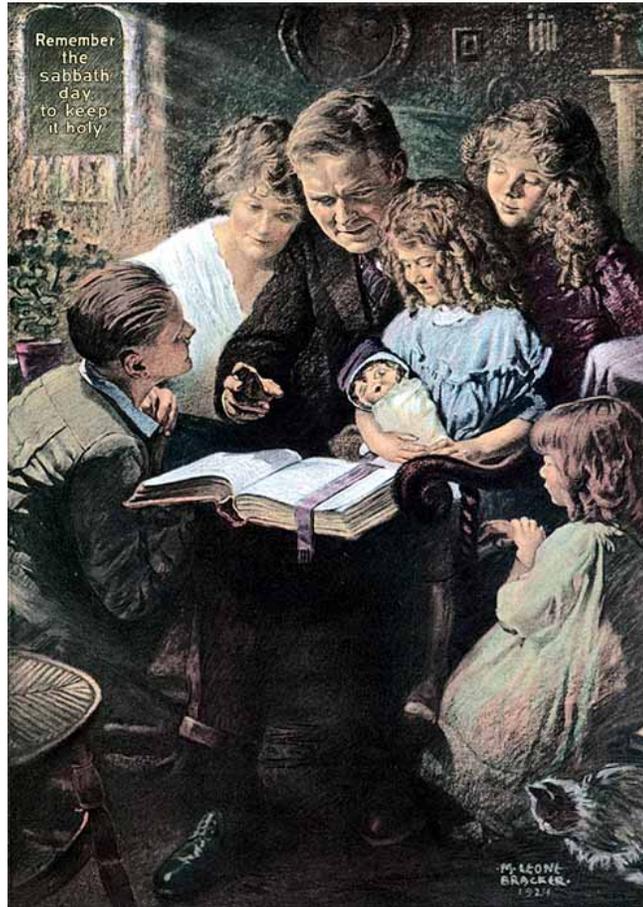


**Gods of the World: Man, Money, Power, Fame, Possessions, Marriage, Job**

**Deuteronomy 5:8 You will not make *any* graven image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters beneath the earth: 9 You will not bow down to them or serve them: because I יהוה your Elohim *am* a jealous Elohim, punishing the iniquities of *the* אבות *fathers* upon the children to *the* third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, 10 And showing mercy to thousands of those that love Me and keep My commandments. 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment: 11 You will not misuse את יהוה your Elohim in vain: neither will hold him guiltless את יהוה that takes את Name in vain (*vain is shav' to commit evil, idol worship, lie, falsehood, deceptive*). C-MATS**



**4<sup>th</sup> Commandment: Deuteronomy 5:12 KEEP את Day, the Sabbath to sanctify it as יהוה your Elohim has commanded you. C-MATS**



**Question:** What does “KEEP את Day, the Sabbath” mean? In this verse it means safeguard the Sabbath. In the first version of the Ten Commandments, Israel was commanded to remember the Sabbath. יהוה said to both safeguard and remember in a single utterance, meaning that both are equal parts of the Sabbath commandment. The word “remember” was inscribed on both the First and Second Tablets, and that here Moses explained that the negative commandment safeguard was included in יהוה's utterance. At the highest spiritual level -- the one occupied by Moses -- the awesome holiness of the Sabbath is such a totally positive phenomenon that one who understands its significance could not desecrate it. Thus, the positive remembrance of the Sabbath contains within itself the impossibility of violating it, just as one who loves another person need not be warned not to harm that person. Some people do not grasp this exalted nature of the Sabbath. They have to be told that it is forbidden to desecrate the sacred day; which primarily is the negative commandment safeguard (R' Gedaliah Schorr). Chumash

**Deuteronomy 5:13 Six days you will labor and do all your work. C-MATS**

**Question:** Six days you will labor. Is this also a commandment? This, too, is a divine decree. Just as the people of Israel were commanded to rest on Shabbat, so, too, were they commanded to work on the other days of the week. Chumash

**Question:** Is it then possible for a person to "do all your work" in six days? But rest on Shabbat as if all your work is done. Do not think about the work you have to do until the Sabbath is over. Your body and mind needs to rest from your labors. Chumash

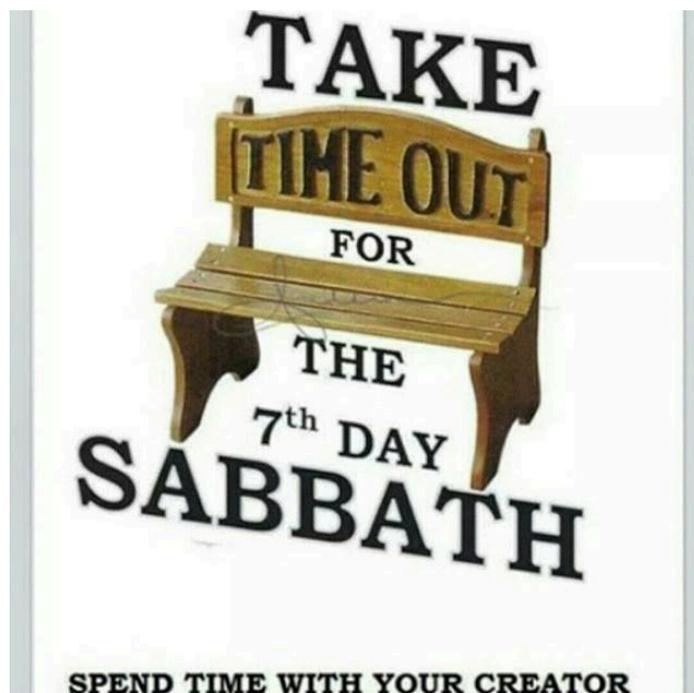


**Question:** If you are not willing to work and you waste your time in idleness, are you in sin?  
2 Thessalonians 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Adonai Yahusha haMashiach, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks in idleness and not after the tradition which he received from us. 7 For you know how you ought to follow us: for we were not idle when among you; 8 Neither did we eat any man's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you: 9 Not because we did not have the right, but to make ourselves an example to you to follow us. 10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if anyone would not work, he should not eat. 11 For we hear that there are some among you who are not working at all, but are idle and busybodies. 12 We urge you by our Adonai Yahusha haMashiach that such people should do their work quietly and earn their own bread. C-MATS

**Discuss:** Would יהוה be pleased with you if you were living on welfare and food stamps, if you were healthy and capable of working?

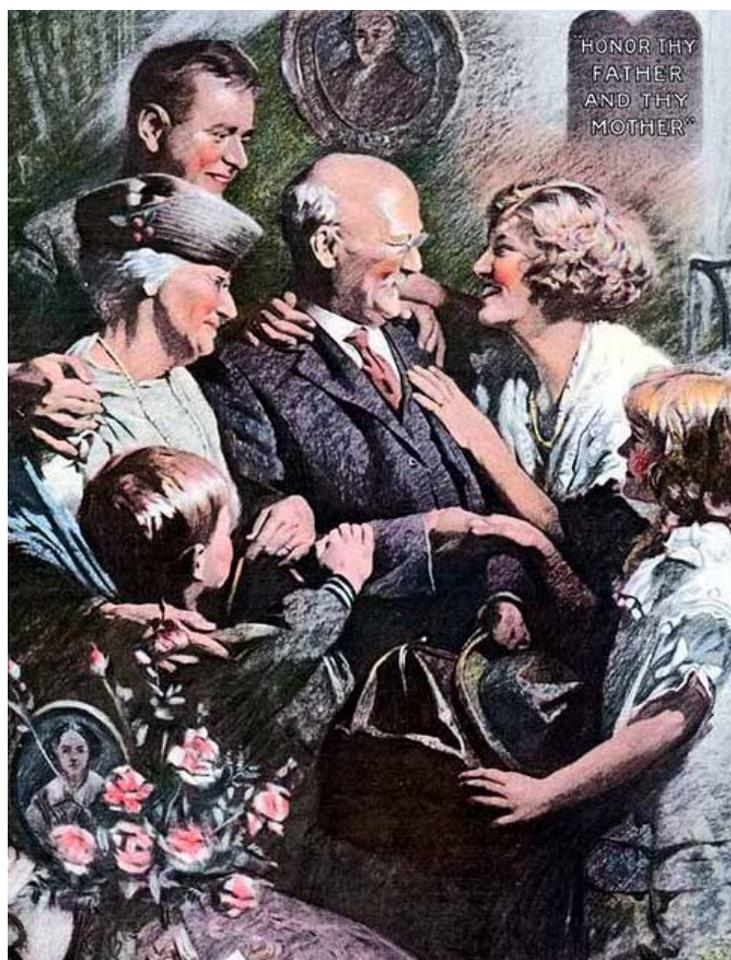
**Question:** What is the best way then for the people of יהוה to protect themselves from being content? How can we as believers avoid forgetting יהוה when times are good? The Sabbath is יהוה's answer – Set aside time to remember what you once were and how יהוה has saved you. That's why יהוה commanded us to keep the Sabbath. So that when life gets hectic, or we become comfortable in what we have and we start to feel independent from יהוה, or we have no problems we need יהוה to fix, then we take time out to remember that once we were dead in our sins, but now we have been made alive with Yahushua through His death and resurrection. We still need to take time out to remember that we have not made ourselves, we have not saved ourselves, we are not the center of the world. We are יהוה's people. All we have is given to us by him. When we stop working on Sabbath, we are exercising our faith in יהוה and we are trusting him to look after us.

**Spiritual Exercise:** When was the last time that you took some time out and were thankful for what יהוה has done for you and spent some time with Him?



**Deuteronomy 5:14** But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath to ליהוה your Elohim: *in it* you will not do any work, אתה *you*, your son, your daughter, your male or female servant, your ox or donkey or any of your cattle, or your stranger that *is* within your gates; that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. **15** And remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt and *that* יהוה your Elohim brought you out *of* there through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore, commanded you יהוה your Elohim to KEEP את- Day, the Sabbath. C-MATS

**Question:** Why does יהוה want us to remember that our ancestors were once slaves? When the Israelites were slaves, they had no freedom to make choices. Therefore, if we keep Sabbath properly, we can remain free. If properly used, the Sabbath compels us to remember the past as well as to look forward to where our lives are headed. Sin is the transgression of the law (**Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the Torah: for sin is the transgression of the Torah. I John 3:4**), but the Ten Commandments are the law of liberty (**But whoso looks into the perfect Torah of liberty, and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. James 1:25**). By keeping them, we remain free of enslavement by Satan, this world, and death. On the Sabbath, יהוה instructs His people through His Word on how to keep His commandments and thus remain free. The first commandment יהוה specifically revealed after He freed Israel from slavery was the one intended to keep them free, the Sabbath. יהוה gave them this witness of a double portion of manna on the sixth day and none on the seventh for forty years! Contrary to those who assert the Sabbath has been done away or replaced, the Sabbath is a wonderful gift of יהוה.



**5<sup>th</sup> Commandment: Deuteronomy 5:16 Honor** את־אִתְּךָ **and** your mother, as יהוה your Elohim has commanded you; so that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you in the land which יהוה your Elohim gives you. C-MATS

**Question:** Who are the three partners who help us in our journey on this earth? There are three partners in man: יהוה, his father, and his mother. When a man honors his father and his mother, יהוה says: "I consider it though I had dwelt among them and they had honored Me." Chumash

The Midrash points out that the Ten Commandments were engraved on two tablets -- five on the first and five on the second. The first tablet contains commandments that are "between man and יהוה," while the commandments on the second tablet govern the relationship "between man and man." This means that as the fifth commandment, "Honor your father and your mother," belongs to the category of "between יהוה and man"! Chumash

**Every man will fear (revere) his mother and his father. Leviticus 19:3** For it is revealed and known to יהוה that a person adores his mother more than his father, and that he fears his father more than his mother. יהוה therefore set the honor of one's father first, and the fear of one's mother first, to emphasize that one must honor and fear them both equally. Chumash

**Question:** What are some ways that you can show your appreciation to your parents for their love and caring? The simplest thing is to just tell them. It makes your parents feel so good to hear that we appreciate them. Besides this, we can try to treat them with respect by speaking politely to them, and trying to do what they ask of us or giving extra help around the house. Any little way we can think of to let them know that they are special to us -- for example with little notes or gifts.

**Question:** Do you think a person would have to show respect for a parent even if the parent hadn't taken care of him or given him much? Although it would be harder to do, or feel inside, it would still be the right thing. יהוה wants us to be grateful to our parents for the gift of life. Also, by honoring our parents we learn how to properly appreciate, honor and connect to יהוה - our ultimate Parent.

**Question:** Besides parents, do you think there are any other categories of people to whom we should show particular honor or respect? Special respect is due to the elderly (especially our grandparents) as well as to those who have taught us wisdom or are even especially wise themselves. Also we should treat older siblings with greater than average respect.

**Spiritual Exercise:** Do or say at least one thing today to show a parent respect or appreciation.



**6<sup>th</sup> Commandment: Deuteronomy 5:17 You will not murder.**

**Question:** How were the Ten Commandments given? Five on one tablet and five on the second tablet. This means that "Do not murder" (on the second tablet) corresponds to "I am יהוה your Elohim" (on the first tablet). The Torah is telling us that one who sheds blood, it is as if he has reduced the image of the King, as it is written **Whoever sheds man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, because in the image of Elohim made He אדם Adam (man).** Genesis 9:6 Chumash



**7<sup>th</sup> Commandment: Deuteronomy 5:18 Neither will you commit adultery.**

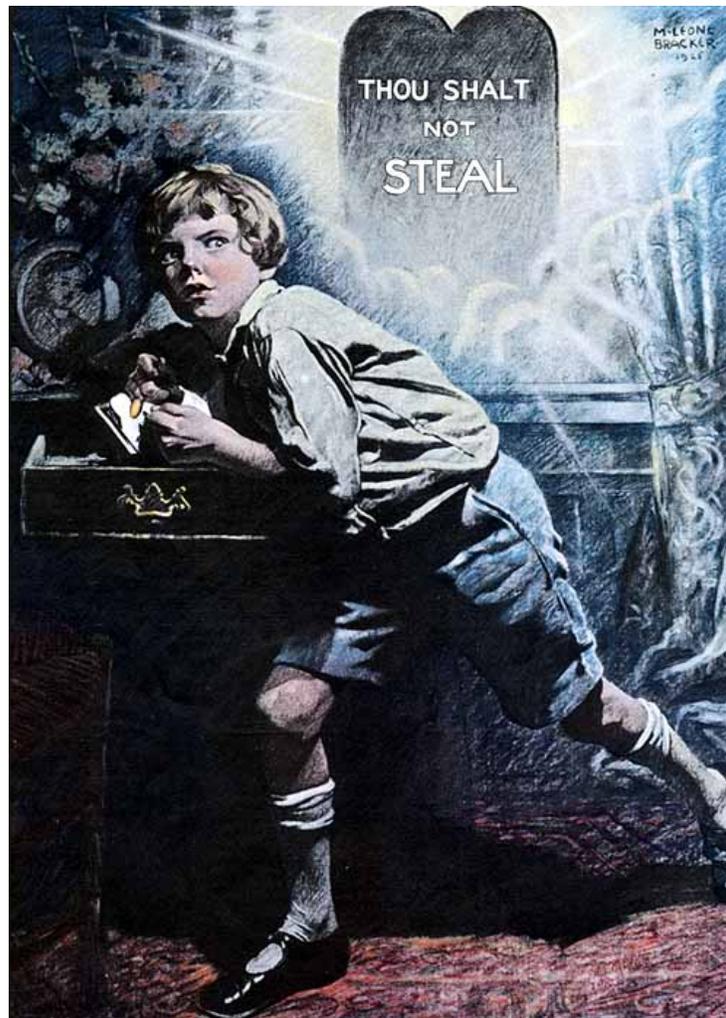
**Matthew 5:27 (Yahshua said) You have heard that it was said by them of old time, You shall not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. C-MATS**

**Question:** How can you stop yourself from falling into adultery? **“Look away now!”** King David was at the height of his powers. The shepherd boy who felled Goliath, the popular war-hero and hymn writer was in full control of his kingdom. But, like some modern rulers, he failed to control his eyes, with disastrous results! One evening, from the roof of his palace, he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, and David sent someone to find out about her. His choice was to keep looking or to look away. His decision led to his affair with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. There followed an unplanned pregnancy, a failed cover-up attempt, an arranged death -in-battle, and the death of a child.

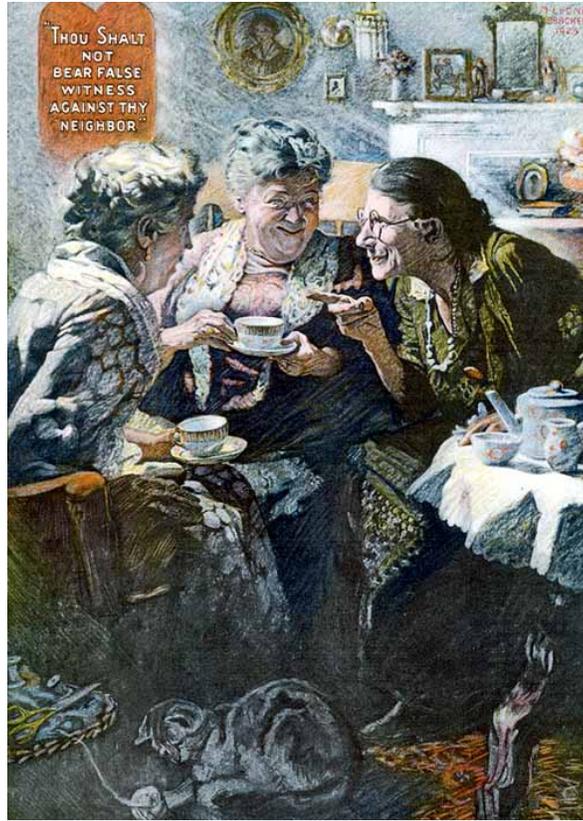
Yahshua says it is not enough to be technically faithful. Infidelity starts in the heart, and is fed by the eyes. The habits of daily life set up the default patterns for the critical turning points of life. We must take drastic action – “whatever it takes” – to control what we watch. In this age of pervasive sexual imagery, and instant access to seductive visual content, Yahshua’s message is more relevant than ever! Today, the story of David is played out over and over again as men in every walk of life make ship-wreck of their personal and public lives, their families and careers, by failing to control their eyes. Job is the model of a good man who suffered tragedy on tragedy, and wrestled with the meaning of suffering. He took an audit of his life. First on his check list was how he looked at women!

**Job 31:1 I made a covenant with my eyes; how then should I look upon a virgin?**

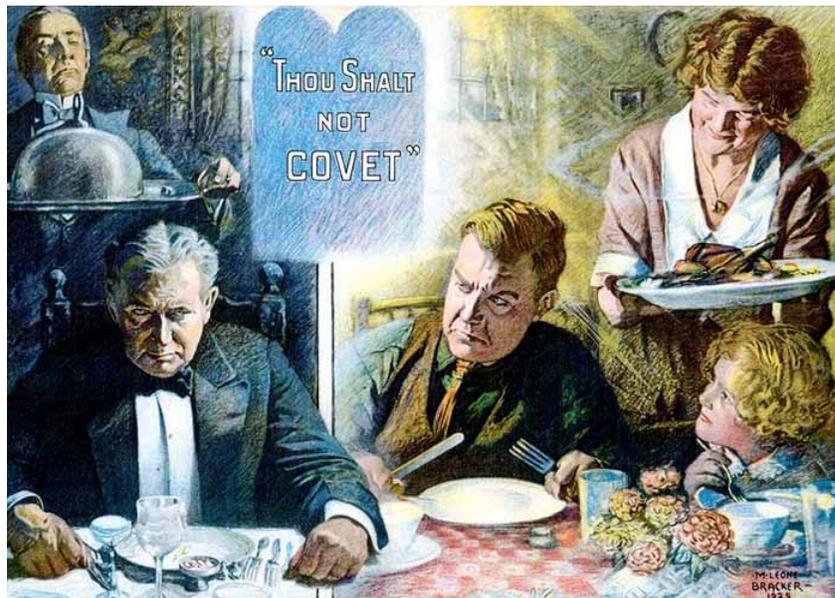
**Spiritual Exercise:** Guard carefully over what you see. Take major steps this week to protect yourself from temptations.



**8<sup>th</sup> Commandment: Deuteronomy 5:19 Neither will you steal.**



**9<sup>th</sup> Commandment: Deuteronomy 5:20 Neither will you bear false witness against your neighbor.**



M. Leone Bracker (1925)

**10<sup>th</sup> Commandment: Deuteronomy 5:21 Neither will you covet (*desire*) your neighbor's *אִשָּׁת* wife; neither will you covet your neighbor's house, his field, his male or female servant, his ox, donkey or anything that is your neighbors. C-MATS**

**Question:** What is the difference between the Exodus version and this verse? **You will not covet your neighbor's house; you will not covet your neighbor's אשת wife or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbors. Exodus20:17.** Property is mentioned first, but here Moses mentioned sensual desire first because average human beings have stronger lusts for sensual gratification than for additional property. The prohibition to covet forbids one to take action, such as seeking to coax or pressure the owner of the house to sell it. By extending the prohibition to desire, the Torah teaches that it is wrong even to fantasize a plot against another person, even though one knows he will not be able to carry out his plan (Ramban). Chumash

**Deuteronomy 5:22** יהוה words spoke את to all your assembly on the mount out of the midst of the fire, cloud and thick darkness (*mist*) in a loud voice: then it ceased. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and delivered them to me. C-MATS

**Question:** Who spoke from Mt Sinai? Deut 5:22 states; יהוה words spoke את to all your assembly on the mount out of the midst of the fire, cloud and thick darkness in a loud voice...Deut 5:23 states; when you heard את the voice out of the midst of the darkness...Deut 5:24 claims that, Behold, has shown us יהוה our Elohim את His glory and His greatness...we have seen this day that Elohim את does speak with man and he lives...Deut 5:25 states; if we hear את the voice of יהוה our Elohim any more, then we will die...Deut 5:27 states; Go near and hear את all that יהוה our Elohim says: and speak to us את all that יהוה our Elohim speaks to you; and we will hear it and do it. Deut 5:28 states; both יהוה and את heard the voice of the people. Gen 1:1 says 'Elohim את', so it could have only been both יהוה Father and את Yahusha His Son who spoke from Mt Sinai TOGETHER as ONE VOICE because both SMOKE and FIRE descended upon the mountain, which are the TWO physical manifestations of the Yah-head. C-MATS



Mount Sinai

**Question:** How did יהוה speak to His people at Mount Sinai? He spoke with an extremely powerful voice that spoke without interruption (unlike a human voice, which must pause for breath) and that it did not cease, in the sense that all subsequent prophets prophesied from that voice, or in the sense that it did not confine itself to the Sacred Hebrew Tongue but reverberated in mankind's seventy languages and it had no echo. Chumash

**Question:** Should we keep all the commandments of Torah? One may feel challenged by something in our lives or in our world that seems to keep us from the mission entrusted to us at Sinai. It may appear that one or another of Torah's commandments do not "fit in" with the common daily situations. So the Torah tells us that the voice which sounded יהוה's message to man had no echo. An echo is created when a sound meets with a substance, which resists it: instead of absorbing its waves, the substance repels them, bouncing them back to the void. But the voice of the Ten Commandments permeated every object in the universe. So any "resistance" we may possibly meet in putting into practice the Torah is false and temporary. Ultimately, the essence of every created being is fully capable of being consistent with the goodness and perfection that its Creator desires of it. Chumash

**Deuteronomy 5:23** And it came to pass, when you heard את־ the voice out of the midst of the darkness, because the mountain burned with fire, that you came near to me *with* all the heads of your tribes and your elders; **24** And you said, Behold, has shown us יהוה our Elohim את־ His glory וְאֵת־ *and* His greatness וְאֵת־ *and* His voice we have heard out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that Elohim את־ does speak *with* man and he lives. **25** Now therefore, why should we die? הֲזֹאת *This* great fire will consume us: if we hear את־ *the* voice of יהוה our Elohim any more, then we will die. **26** Who *is there* of all flesh that has heard the voice of *the* living Elohim speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we *have* and lived? **27** אתָּה *You* go near and hear את־ all that יהוה our Elohim says: וְאֵת־ *you* speak to us את־ all that יהוה our Elohim speaks to you; and we will hear *it* and do *it*. **28** And heard יהוה את־ voice of your words when you spoke to me and יהוה said to me, I have heard את־ *the* voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you: what they spoke is good. **29** O that there was such a heart in them that they would fear את־ *Me* and keep את־ all My commandments always, so that it might go well with them and with their children forever! **30** Go say to them, return to your tents again. **31** וְאֵתָּה *And you*, stand here by Me and I will speak to you את־ all the commandments and the statutes and the judgments, which you will teach them, so that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess. **32** You will be careful to do as יהוה your Elohim has commanded you: וְאֵתְּכֶם *you* will not turn aside to *the* right hand or to the left. **33** You will walk in all the ways which יהוה your Elohim has commanded וְאֵתְּכֶם *you*, so that you may live and that it may go well with you and that you may prolong *your* days in the land which you will possess. C-MATS

**Deuteronomy 6:1** וְזֹאת *And these are* the commandments, the statutes and the judgments, which יהוה your Elohim commanded וְאֵתְּכֶם *you*, so that you might do *them* in the land that וְאֵתָּם *you* go to possess: **2** That you might FEAR את־ יהוה your Elohim to KEEP את־ all His statutes and His commandments, which I command וְאֵתָּה *you*, your son and your son's son all the days of your life; so that your days may be lengthened. C-MATS

**Question:** Why were these commandments given to us? In Deuteronomy 6:2,13,24 Moses repeats 3 times in this chapter saying, *That you might FEAR את יהוה your Elohim to keep את all His statutes and His commandments...* Deuteronomy 6:5 *And you will LOVE את יהוה your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might...* Deuteronomy 6:16 *You will NOT TEMPT את יהוה your Elohim.* Keep in mind that the 10 Commandments are the Greatest and most Important Commandments ever given to man and they were proclaimed by the voice of את יהוה our Elohim to His את covenant people. They are everlasting commandments given for our very LIFE! C-MATS

## שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

[ בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלִכּוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד ] (response in an undertone)

וְאַהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ  
 וּבְכָל-מְאֹדֶךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מוֹצִיָּךְ  
 הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבִנְיָךְ וּדְבַרְתָּ בָם בְּשַׁבְתְּךָ  
 בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלַכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ:  
 וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטַפְּסוֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ:  
 וְכָתַבְתָּם עַל-מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

### The Shema

Deuteronomy 6:3 Hear therefore, O Israel and be careful to obey, so that it may go well with you and that you may increase mightily, as יהוה Elohim of your fathers has promised you in the land that flows with milk and honey. 4 Hear, O Israel: יהוה our Elohim is one יהוה: 5 And you will LOVE את יהוה your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. C-MATS

**Question:** What is the most important commandment? Mark 12:28 One of the scribes came, and having heard their discussion, and noticing that He had answered them well, asked Him, Which is the greatest commandment of all? 29 And Yahusha answered him, The greatest of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; יהוה our Elohim is one יהוה: 30 And you shall love יהוה your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength: this is the greatest commandment. 31 And the second is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandments greater than these. 32 And the scribe said to him, Well, Master, you have said the truth: for there is one Elohim; and there is no other but He: 33 And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. 34 And when Yahusha saw that he answered discreetly, He said to him, You are not far from the kingdom of Elohim. And no man after that dared to ask Him any question. C-MATS

**Question:** יהוה our Elohim is one יהוה. Is He really just one Elohim? We perceive יהוה in many ways -- He is kind, angry, merciful, wise, judgmental -- and these apparently contradictory manifestations convinced some ancient and medieval philosophers that there must be many יהוה's, one of mercy, one of judgment, and so on. But the Torah says that יהוה is the One and Only -- there is an inner harmony for all that He does, though human intelligence cannot comprehend what it is. This, too, will be understood at the End of Days, when יהוה's ways are illuminated. This concept is like a ray of light seen through a prism. Though the viewer sees a myriad of different colors, it is a single ray of light. So, too, יהוה's many manifestations are truly one. Chumash

**Question:** How does someone express love for יהוה? One expresses love for יהוה by performing His commandments lovingly. There is no comparison between one who serves a master out of love and one who does so out of fear. One who is motivated by fear may go his own way if the tasks become too difficult (Rashi), but one who serves out of love is ready to make great sacrifices for the object of his affection. Chumash

**Question:** Since love is an emotion, how can one be commanded to love? The Torah answers this question in the next few verses by saying that believers should think about the Torah, study it, and teach it. When one meditates on יהוה's great and wondrous deeds and creations, and sees in them His incomparable and infinite wisdom, one will immediately come to love and praise Him, and be filled with longing to know Him.

Chumash

**Question:** What does "all your heart" mean? The heart is a metaphor for the seat of craving and aspiration. Love יהוה with both your good and evil inclinations (Rashi). This means that one should love יהוה by following one's good inclination to perform commandments and by rejecting the bad inclination to sin (Talmidei R' Yonah). Alternatively, the "evil inclination" refers to man's earthly cravings, such as the desire for food, drink, and physical gratification, and the like. By channeling even these drives to the service of יהוה, one serves Him with both inclinations (Rambam). Chumash

**Question:** What does "all your soul" mean? Even if your devotion to יהוה costs you your life (Rashi). This refers to the rare situations -- idolatry, adultery, and murder -- in which the situation requires one to die rather than sin. "You must love יהוה even if it takes your life" (Berachos 54a), implying that if a believer must accept martyrdom, he should do so with the attitude that he is not the victim of a human murderer, but that he has scaled the spiritual height of giving up his soul to יהוה (Alshich). Chumash

**Deuteronomy 6:6 And these words, which I command you this day, will be in your heart: 7 And you will teach them diligently to your children and will talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up. C-MATS**

**Question:** Should you teach your children the Torah? A person demonstrates his devotion to the Torah by what priority he gives it in the education of his children. Chumash

**Question:** At what times should you meditate on the Torah? In your home your main topic of conversation should be the Torah and service of יהוה (Rashi). While you sit in your home occupy yourself with Torah study whenever possible, you will reach your goal of loving יהוה (Bechor Shor). At night and in the morning, the times when people normally go to sleep and wake up, one should give time to Torah study and prayer. For those who seek perfection, it is a call to study the Torah unceasingly, at all times and in every possible situation. But those who are not capable of this goal are commanded at the very minimum to pray in the morning and night. Chumash

**Joshua 1:8** This Book of the Torah shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it: for then you shall make prosperous את your way and then you shall have good success. C-MATS

**Ps 119:97** Oh how אהבתי *I love Your Torah!* It is my meditation all the day. **98** Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies; for they are ever with me. C-MATS



**Deuteronomy 6:8** And you will tie them as *לאות sign* on your hand and they will be in front of your eyes. C-MATS

**Question:** What is the deeper significance of this law? The head (**in front of your eyes**) represents the mind; the hand represents action. Both mind and deed are to be enlisted in man's service of his Creator. Doing, however, must come first, as the people of Israel proclaimed at Sinai, "**we will hear *it* (comprehend) and do *it*.** Deuteronomy 5:27. Furthermore, while it is possible to conceive of a temporary state in which doing exists without understanding, understanding without deed is utterly worthless. Chumash



"Thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house."—*Deut. vi. 9.*

**Deuteronomy 6:9** And you will write them on the *door* posts of your house and on your gates. C-MATS



Mezuzah

**Question:** Why is the mezuzah (Torah) affixed to the doorpost in a slanted position? For a home to have the proper atmosphere, harmony and peace must prevail among all those who dwell in it, and this is achieved by promoting a spirit of cooperation. Putting the mezuzah on an angle instead of upright is thus a message that all those who enter the home must be willing to bend in conflicts with other people.

**Deuteronomy 6:10** And it will be when יהוה your Elohim has brought you into the land, which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to give you great and prosperous cities, which you did not build, 11 And houses full of good *things*, which you did not fill and wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees, which you did not plant; so you can eat and be full; 12 *Then* beware that you do not forget את־יהוה, who brought you out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage.

**Question:** The Israelites were about to be given cities, houses, wells, vineyards, and olive trees that they did not labor to obtain. Unearned gifts are the 'bread of shame.' What does this mean? It feels good to get the things we want, and you might think that it will feel even better to get it for nothing. But the opposite is actually true. Getting something we haven't earned or don't really deserve can make us feel uneasy because we are becoming dependent on the giver. יהוה wants us to become independent and actively use our free will to earn the physical and spiritual gifts we attain in life. This way we become like יהוה who is totally independent.

**Question:** How does this 'bread of shame' concept pertain to our relationship with יהוה? יהוה is the ultimate giver of unearned gifts. Everything is His already, and He doesn't need anything. Everything any of us has is ultimately a free gift from יהוה. Yet when we make a gesture to 'pay יהוה back' for everything He's given us by living the kind of life that He asks of us, and being righteous people, our relationship with Him grows stronger. It is almost as if we've earned what we have which is a much better feeling.

**Question:** Moses warns the people not to let all the wealth and good things they are about to get spoil them and make them forget about how יהוה wants them to act. We, too, can fully enjoy the good things in our lives without getting spoiled, by keeping the right attitude. What does it mean to be 'spoiled'? It means having a conceited, demanding attitude and lack of appreciation - in short, it's definitely not the way we want to be.

**Question:** Do you think a 'privileged' person who has a lot can avoid becoming spoiled? One way is to learn to see all we have as a gift, both from those people who have given it to us and, ultimately, from יהוה. This will naturally incline us toward appreciation and humility.

**Question:** Do you think a spoiled person will have a happy life? Very unlikely. The nature of life is that sometimes things go the way we'd like them to and sometimes they don't. A spoiled person lives with the fantasy that he deserves whatever he wants all of the time. When things don't work out that way, he is in for a big letdown.

**Question:** Can a person have a lot of things and not be spoiled? Absolutely. Being spoiled isn't a function of what we do or don't have. It's an attitude that we deserve things ... just because. A person can have a lot, but as long as he appreciates it and those who gave it to him - he isn't spoiled.

**Question:** Should we prefer that our parents never tell us 'no'? While it might sound like fun, it's actually the key to an unhappy life. If our parents never said 'no,' not only would we grow intolerably spoiled, but we'd never develop any tools to cope positively in a world that sooner or later says 'no' to everyone. Next time Mom or Dad says 'no' - say (or at least think) 'thanks!'

**Spiritual Exercise:** Can you think of something you worked hard to get and really appreciate because of the effort you put into it? Do not complain about working hard this week knowing that this is the challenge יהוה has given us this week to help us grow stronger spiritually.

**Deuteronomy 6:13** You will FEAR יהוה אתה your Elohim, ואתו *and Him* you will serve and swear by His name. C-MATS

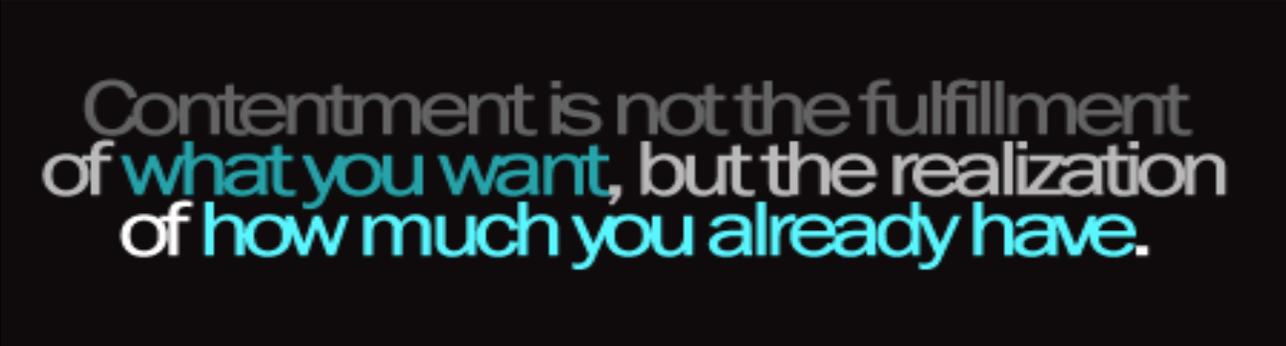
**Question:** What does “You will FEAR יהוה אתה your Elohim” mean? After the commandment to love יהוה, Moses added the complementary commandment to fear Him. Love motivates people to serve; fear prevents them from sinning (Ramban). There are two categories of fear. The lesser of the two is the primal fear of punishment or pain. The higher and more desirable fear, more aptly called reverence or awe, is overpowering respect, which in itself will prevent sin. One does not defy a gun-wielding mobster, and one does not defy a very great person whom one reveres -- but the reasons are far different. Chumash

**Question:** Should you swear by יהוה's name? It is preferable not to take oaths, but in case one must swear, it is forbidden to do so in the name of anything but יהוה's Name (Ramban). Chumash

**Deuteronomy 6:14** You will not go after other gods from the gods of the people around you; **15** Because יהוה your Elohim is a jealous Elohim among you otherwise the anger of יהוה your Elohim will be aroused against you and destroy you from off the face of the earth. **16** You will not TEMPT (test) יהוה אתה your Elohim, as you tempted (tested) Him in Massah. C-MATS

**Question:** What does “You will not TEMPT (test) יהוה אתה your Elohim” mean? And he called the name of the place Massah (testing) and Meribah (quarrel), because of the contention of the Children of Israel and because they tested יהוה אלהיך saying, Is יהוה among us or not? Exodus 17:7. Israel needed water and put יהוה to the test, saying, in effect, "If You give us water, we will follow You; and if not, we are free to leave You." At that time and in the years since, יהוה proved His power and love for Israel over and over again. As a result, Israel has no right to doubt יהוה or to test His ability. By extension, this means that believers may not doubt the promises of the Torah or the prophets, or to serve יהוה only on condition of a reward (Ramban). Chumash

**Discuss:** If you doubt that יהוה will help you or question what He is doing in a certain situation, are you testing יהוה? Are you testing his faithfulness to you? When you complain about your life, are you testing יהוה?



Contentment is not the fulfillment  
of what you want, but the realization  
of how much you already have.

**Deuteronomy 6:17** You will diligently KEEP את־ the commandments of יהוה your Elohim and His testimonies and His statutes, which He has commanded you. **18** And you will do what is right and good in the sight of יהוה: so that it may be well with you וְנָאֵת and you [will] enter and possess את־ good land, which יהוה swore to your fathers, **19** To cast out את־ all your enemies before you as יהוה has spoken. C-MATS

**Question:** What is “right and good” in יהוה’s eyes? A person who has total faith in יהוה will not hesitate to deal generously with opponents, for he knows that יהוה will see to it that he gets what he is entitled to, in one way or another. In lawsuits, you should agree to mediation and compromise, and be willing to be generous to your opponent by not asserting the full extent of your rights (Rashi). Thus, after encouraging Israel to keep the commandments carefully, he told them that the rest of their actions, specifically their dealings with people, should be guided by a sense of what is fair and good in יהוה’s eyes. How to do so in any given situation depends on the sensitivity and stature of the individual, for it is impossible to spell out all alternatives and situations in the Torah. General guidelines must be gleaned from the Torah’s requirements to show compassion and forbearance to others, such as not taking revenge or cursing, showing respect to the learned and aged, and not being apathetic to the danger or financial losses threatening others (Ramban). Chumash

**Question:** Why does it sometimes appear that wicked people get ahead, and the good people finish last? This question is as old as mankind itself and there are no simple answers. However, one important thing to remember is that we humans view events from a very limited perspective. From a spiritual perspective, a worldly success that comes at the expense of one’s higher values is a net loss. Conversely, we spiritually ‘succeed’ by choosing to act according to proper values whatever situation we find ourselves.

**Question:** Is it ever justified to not ‘play fair’? No, but we must be sure we understand what fair really is, because sometimes it is different than we might imagine. That’s why we have the Torah. It is יהוה’s unbiased definitions of fairness, and instructions how to apply them in every conceivable situation. It is comforting and empowering to know that when we act according to the Torah’s instructions, we are acting in the fairest and most ethical manner possible.

**Deuteronomy 6:20** When your son asks you in days to come saying, What is *the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments, which יהוה our Elohim has commanded אתכם you?* **21** וְאָמַרְתָּ And you say to your son, we were Pharaohs bondmen in Egypt and יהוה brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: **22** And יהוה worked great and terrible signs and wonders upon Egypt and upon Pharaoh and his entire household before our eyes: **23** And He brought us out of there, so that He might bring אתנוּ us in and give us את־ the land, which He swore to our fathers. **24** And commanded us יהוה to do את־ all these statutes, to FEAR את־ יהוה our Elohim always for our own good, so that He might preserve us alive, as *it is* this day. **25** And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to obey את־ all הַזֵּאת these commandments before יהוה our Elohim, as He has commanded us. C-MATS

**Question:** Why does יהוה say that these commandments are “for our own good”? No undesirable consequences can result from the performance of יהוה's commandments. The decrees may be incomprehensible to human intelligence, but they are for our good. And the ordinances that regulate civic and social life give us life, by promoting a tranquil, supportive society (Ramban). Chumash

**Ps 19:7 The Torah of יהוה is perfect, restoring the soul: the testimony of יהוה is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of יהוה are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of יהוה is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of יהוה is clean, enduring forever: the ordinances of יהוה are אמת true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb. 11 Moreover, by them is Your servant warned: in keeping them there is great reward. C-MATS**

**Question:** What will happen if we keep His commandments? Keeping the commandments will be a source of righteousness in the sense that the nations who observe our conduct will regard us as good people (Ibn Ezra). יהוה will reward us amply, and since we are obligated to serve Him regardless of whether or not He chooses to reward us, whatever He does for us will be an act of Divine charity on His part (Ramban). Today -- in this life -- is the time to obey the commandments, but the full extent of their reward can come only in the World to Come (Rashi). Chumash

**Question:** Why do you think יהוה's instructions in Torah are so specific and detailed, rather than just general guidelines for living? יהוה wants to give us the greatest gift possible and that is the eternal pleasure of closeness to Him. Each instruction and guideline in the Torah is a specific way to connect to Him spiritually toward achieving this goal.

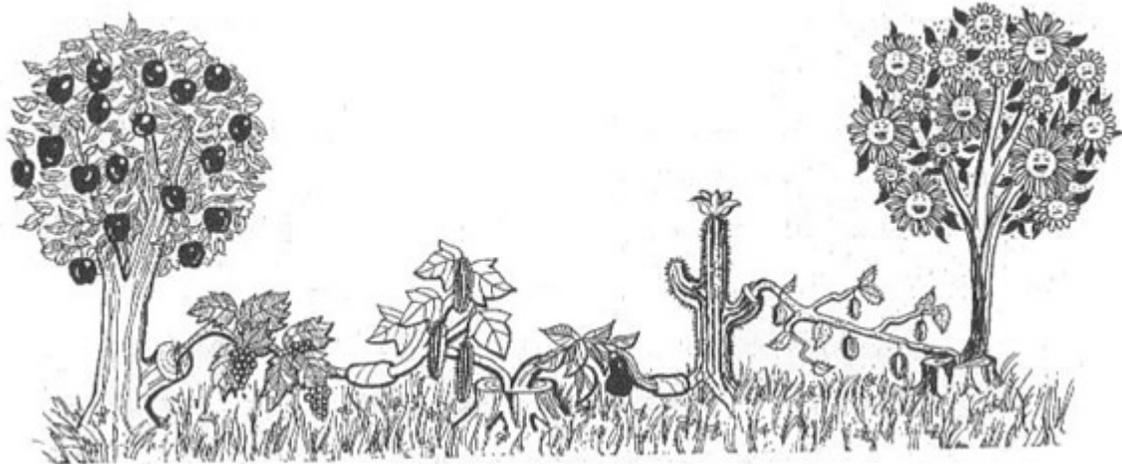
**Deuteronomy 7:1 When יהוה your Elohim brings you into the land that אתה you go to possess and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you; 2 And when יהוה your Elohim delivers them before you; you will fight them and utterly destroy אתם them; you will not make any covenant with them or show mercy to them. C-MATS**

**Question:** Does this law apply to all the Canaanites? If a Canaanite agrees to stop his idolatry and accept the Torah, Israel was permitted to make peace treaties with them and show them favor. Chumash

**Deuteronomy 7:3 Neither will you make marriages with them; you will not give your daughter to his son, or his daughter you will not take for your son. 4 Because they will turn away אתך your sons from Me, so that they may serve other gods: and the anger of יהוה will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. C-MATS**

**Question:** How can this commandment help us today? You should never marry a person who does not believe in keeping all יהוה's commandments. Your mate will raise your child to turn away from יהוה's commandments and cause you much pain. Chumash

*Torah's prohibitions against interbreeding species. . .*



**BAD BREEDING**

The deeper meaning here is that no believer is permitted to marry a gentile (non-believer). It would be bad breeding of the utmost.

**Deuteronomy 7:5** But *this is how you will deal with them; you will destroy their altars and break down their images and cut down their groves and burn their graven images with fire.* **6** Because *אתה* you are a consecrated people to *ליהוה* your Elohim: *יהוה* your Elohim has chosen you to be a special people for Him above all peoples who are upon the face of the earth. **7** *יהוה* did not set His love upon you or choose you, because you were more numerous than any people; but *אתם* you were the fewest of all peoples: **8** But because *יהוה* loved *אתכם* you and because He will KEEP *את* the oath, which He had sworn to your fathers, *יהוה* brought *אתכם* you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of slavery from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. C-MATS

**Question:** Why did *יהוה* choose Israel? Moses gives two reasons for *יהוה's* choice of Israel: (a) He found them worthy of His love; and (b) because of His oath to their Patriarchs. The reason for His love is not given, but it may be because He knew that Israel's faithfulness would be unswerving. It is natural for someone to choose a friend who will remain loyal no matter how great the difficulty (Ramban). Chumash

**Deuteronomy 7:9** Know therefore, that *יהוה* your Elohim, He is Elohim, the faithful Elohim, who keeps His covenant and extends mercy to them that LOVE Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations; **10** And repays them that hate Him and destroys them: He will not be slow to deal with him that hates Him; He will repay him to his face. **11** You will therefore, KEEP *את* the commandments *ואת* and the statutes *ואת* and the judgments, which I command you this day and do them. C-MATS

**Question:** What reward does *יהוה* give to those who serve *יהוה* out of love? He extends mercy to them that LOVE Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations (Deuteronomy 5:10). But for those who serve Him only out of fear, as this verse says, the reward is still enormous, but it extends for only one thousand generations. Chumash

**Question:** Will יהוה reward the good deeds of the wicked? Even the wicked deserve reward for their good deeds, and יהוה does not deprive anyone of what is rightly his. So the wicked are rewarded, but they will not share the bliss of the World to Come; instead, יהוה rewards them quickly, in this world, so that they will not survive to enjoy the great rewards that await the righteous. Chumash



**Question:** What are some rewards we can receive from יהוה?

Proverbs 13:21 Evil pursues sinners; וְאֵת־צַדִּיקִים *and* righteous shall be rewarded with prosperity. 22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children; and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the righteous. C-MATS

Psalms 84: For יהוה Elohim is a sun and a shield: יהוה will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. C-MATS

Psalms 34:10 The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they that seek יהוה shall not want any good thing. C-MATS

Proverbs 10:24 The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him; and the desire of the righteous shall be granted. C-MATS

Matthew 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of Elohim, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. C-MATS

Psalms 5:12 For אתה You will bless the righteous; O יהוה, You will encompass him with favor as with a shield. C-MATS

Isaiah 3:10 Say to the righteous, that *it shall be well with him*; for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds. C-MATS

Psalms 34:17 *The righteous* cried and ויהוה heard and delivered them out of all their troubles

Psalms 37:25 I have been young and now am old; yet רָאִיתִי *I have not seen* the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging *for bread*. C-MATS

Psalms 37:29 The righteous will inherit the land, and dwell in it forever. C-MATS

Psalms 37:39 But the salvation of the righteous is from מִיְהוָה; He is their stronghold in the time of trouble. C-MATS

Psalms 55:22 Cast your burden upon יהוה and He will sustain you: He will never allow the righteous to be moved. C-MATS

Proverbs 10:3 יהוה will not allow the soul of the righteous to famish; but He cast away the desire of the wicked. C-MATS

Proverbs 11:28 He that trust in his riches shall fall; but the righteous shall flourish as the green leaf.

Proverbs 24:16 For a righteous man falls seven times and rises up again; but the wicked are overthrown by calamity. C-MATS

Matthew 25:46 And the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous will go into life eternal. C-MATS

**Question:** What should we do to receive a reward from יהוה?

Prov 19:17 He that has pity upon the poor lends to יהוה and his good deed will he pay him again.

Prov 25:21 If your enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; 22 For אַתָּה *you* will heap coals of fire upon his head and וַיהוה will reward you. C-MATS

Matt 5:11 Blessed are you, when men insult you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of lies against you, because you follow Me. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for they persecuted the prophets who were before you. C-MATS

Matt 5:43 You have heard that our fathers said, You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy. 44 Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Don't the publicans do the same? 47 And if you are friendly to only your brothers, what do you do more than others? Don't the publicans do the same? 48 Be perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. C-MATS

Matt 6:1 Be careful that you do not give to charity to be seen by men: otherwise you have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. 2 When you give to charity, do not sound a trumpet as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so they may have glory from men. They have their reward. 3 But when you give to charity, do not let your left hand know what your right hand does: 4 Give to charity in secret: and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly. 5 And when you pray, you shall not do as the hypocrites: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. They have their reward. 6 When you pray, enter into your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly. 7 But when you pray, do not use empty phrases, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them: for your Father knows what things you need before you ask him. 9 Pray like this: Our Father who is in heaven, May your name be kept holy. 10 May your kingdom come. May your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our wrongs, as we forgive those who have wronged us. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. 14 For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive your offenses. 16 When you fast, do not have a sad countenance as the hypocrites do: for they disfigure their faces so men will know they are fasting. They have their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face; 18 So you appear not to be fasting before men, but to your Father which is in secret: and your Father, which sees in secret, shall reward you openly. C-MATS

Matt 10:40 He that receives you receives Me, and he that receives Me receives him that sent Me. 41 He that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And whoever shall give a drink to one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, he shall not lose his reward. C-MATS

**Question:** How does יהוה decide what rewards we should receive?

**Jer 17:10** I, יהוה, search the mind, I try the heart, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings. C-MATS

**Jer 32:17** Ah Adonai יהוה! Surely אתה *You* have made את the heavens ואת *and* the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm; there is nothing too hard for You, **18** Who shows loving-kindness to thousands and recompenses the iniquity of *the* אבות *fathers* into the bosom of their children after them; the great, the mighty Elohim, יהוה of צבאות *Hosts* is His name; **19** Great in counsel and mighty in work; Whose eyes are upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings. C-MATS

**Matt 16:27** For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works. C-MATS

**1 Corinthians 3:10** According to the grace of Elohim which is given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another is building on it. But let every man be careful how he builds. **11** For no man can lay another foundation other than the one that is already laid, which is Yahusha haMashiach. **12** Now if any man builds upon this foundation using gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or stubble; **13** Every man's work shall be shown for what it is: for the Day shall bring it to light. It shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall test the quality of every man's work. **14** If what he has built survives, he shall receive a reward. **15** If what he has built is burned, he shall suffer loss: but he shall be saved as escaping through the fire. C-MATS

**Rev 22:12** I will come quickly; and my reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work. **13** I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. C-MATS



**The fire shall test the quality of every man's work**

## Do You Know?

1. Moses pleaded with יהוה to allow him to go to the \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_.
2. יהוה says that we should not \_\_\_\_ to His commandments.
3. “Hear, O Israel: יהוה our Elohim *is* one יהוה” is called The \_\_\_\_.
4. **And you should love יהוה your Elohim with all your \_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_ , and \_\_\_\_ .**
5. **Honor your father and your mother, as יהוה your Elohim has commanded you; so that your days may be \_\_\_\_ .**
6. **Six days you should \_\_\_\_ .**
7. **On the seventh day you should \_\_\_\_ .**
8. **You should not \_\_\_\_ יהוה your Elohim**
9. **You should not give your sons and daughters in marriage to \_\_\_\_ .**
10. **You should teach יהוה’s commandments to your \_\_\_\_ and talk about them when you sit in your \_\_\_\_ and when you walk *on the* \_\_\_\_ and when you go to sleep and when you get up in the morning.**

Bonus: Recite the Shema

Answers:

1. Promised Land
2. add
3. Shema
4. heart, soul, might
5. prolonged on the earth
6. labor
7. rest
8. test
9. gentiles (unbelievers)
10. children, house, road

**Bonus: Hear, O Israel: יהוה our Elohim *is* one יהוה: And you will love יהוה your Elohim with all your heart, and all your soul and all your might.**

## Haftorah



The prophet Isaiah

**Question:** Who was Isaiah? Eighth century BC Old Testament prophet. Killed at the order of King Manasses of Judah. He was sawed into and buried under an oak tree.

**Isaiah 40:1** Comfort you, comfort you My people, says your Elohim. **2** Speak you comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry to her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received of יהוה hand double for all her sins. **3** The voice of one that cries, Prepare you in the wilderness the way of יהוה; make level in the desert a highway for our Elohim. **4** Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the rough shall be made level and the rough places a plain: *Prophecy Fulfilled-Isa. 40:3, 4 Preceded by forerunner-John 1:23.* **5** And the glory of יהוה shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of יהוה has spoken it. **6** The voice of one saying, Cry. And one said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass and all the goodness there is as the flower of the field. **7** The grass withered, the flower fades, because the breath of יהוה blows upon it; surely the people are grass. **8** The grass withered, the flower fades; but the word of our Elohim shall stand forever. **9** O you that tell good tidings to Zion, get you up on a high mountain; O you that tell good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say to the cities of Judah, surely, your Elohim! *Prophecy Fulfilled-Isa. 40:9 "Behold your Elohim." John 1:36, 19:14.* **10** Surely, Adonai יהוה will come as a mighty one and His arm will rule for Him: Surely, His reward is אתו with Him and His recompense before Him. **11** He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in His arm and carry them in His bosom and will gently lead those that have their young. *Prophecy Fulfilled-Isa. 40:11 A shepherd-compassionate life-giver-John 10:10-18. C-MATS*

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand and meted out heaven with the span and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? 13 Who has directed **רוח אלהים** Spirit of יהוה, or being His counselor has taught Him? 14 *With* **את** whom took He counsel and who instructed Him and taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge and showed to Him the way of understanding? 15 Surely, the nations are as a drop of a bucket and are accounted as the small dust of the balance: Surely, He takes up the coastlands as a very little thing. 16 And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts there sufficient for a burnt-offering. 17 All the nations are as nothing before Him; they are accounted by Him as less than nothing and vanity. 18 To whom then will you liken Elohim? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? 19 The image, a workman has cast *it* and the goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts *for it* silver chains. 20 He that is too impoverished for *such* an oblation chooses a tree that will not rot; he seeks to him a skillful workman to set up a graven image that shall not be moved. 21 Have you not known? Have yet not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? 22 *It is* He that sits above the circle of the earth and the inhabitants are as grasshoppers; that stretched out the heavens as a curtain and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in; 23 that brings princes to nothing; that makes the judges of the earth as vanity. 24 Yes, they have not been planted; yea, they have not been sown; yea, their stock has not taken root in the earth: moreover, he blew upon them and they wither and the whirlwind takes them away as stubble. 25 To whom then will you liken Me, that I should be equal *to him*? Says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these that bring out their host by number; He calls them all by name; by the greatness of his might and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking. C-MATS

## Brit Chadasha

Matt 23:31 Wherefore you are witnesses that you are the children of them who killed the prophets. 32 Fill you up then the measure of the sin of your fathers. 33 You serpents, you generation of snakes, how can you escape the damnation of Gehenna? 34 I will send to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them you shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall you flog in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: 35 Upon you will come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you killed between the temple and the altar. 36 All these things shall come upon this generation. 37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that killed the prophets, and stoned those who are sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you were not willing! 38 Look, your house is left to you desolate. 39 You shall not see Me until you shall say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of יהוה. C-MATS

## Don't Give Up

**Question:** Should we ever give up hope? Sometimes we feel like we want to give up. When things seem to be going against us we can feel sunk. But the Torah teaches us otherwise. In this week's Torah portion, Moses asks יהוה to let him come into the land of Israel with the rest of the Hebrew people. יהוה had already told him that he wouldn't be allowed into the land. But Moses doesn't give up. He just keeps on praying and praying to be able to come in. Moses knows that יהוה is very merciful and might still let him in. We should ask יהוה for help, and we should never give up hope.

## "IT'S NOT OVER 'TIL IT'S OVER"

"Batter up!" called out the umpire impatiently. It was the ninth inning. The Jets were all in the field waiting for the Hawks' first batter to come up. But nobody was coming out.

Meanwhile in the Hawks' dug-out a heated conversation was going on between Donny, the team captain, and Alex, the second baseman. "Alex, you're up," said Donny. "Get out there, you're holding up the game."

Alex looked up from the end of the bench where he had been sitting, flipping a ball up and down to himself. "Why bother?" he said. "The Jets scored eight runs in the last inning. They're up by 10. We don't have a chance. So tell me, why should I bother?"

"Why should you bother?" repeated Donny incredulously. "Because the game's not over yet. OK, they are way ahead. But that doesn't mean we can't catch up," he added. "One thing's for sure, though. If we don't try, then we will definitely lose."

Alex shrugged his shoulders, stood up to grab a bat, and said, "Look, you're the captain. If you tell me to go up to bat I will. But I still think we're wasting our time."

Alex walked out to the batter's box. "Thought you got lost on the way," teased the Jets pitcher.

"Just pitch!" Alex called back to him.

The pitch came in and Alex surprised everyone, especially himself, by getting a hit. After two more hits and a run in, the Hawks started to get excited.

Two hits, two walks, a wild pitch and a home-run later, the score was tied! The game was going to go into extra innings.

As the Hawks ran out to take the field, Donny noticed the second baseman who now was all charged up with energy. "Well do you feel like it was worth going up to bat after all?" he asked, with a wink.

Alex smiled, pounded his fist into his glove and said, "Donny, whether we win or lose this game, I feel like you gave me a big victory in learning how to play the game."

**Question:** How did Alex feel when it was his turn to go to bat? He felt like quitting. He didn't want to go up because he thought his team had no chance to win.

**Question:** Is it right to just give up and quit when things aren't going the way we want? No, we should always keep trying and hope that things will get better.

**Question:** If, in the end, Alex's team lost the game, do you think he should feel that he wasted his time by going up to bat in the ninth inning? Why or why not? Alex had thought that the team's situation was hopeless. After the big effort to catch up which tied the game, he saw that there was hope. Even if the end they lost anyway, Alex would have gained a personal victory. He would be recharged with the belief that there's always hope, and therefore be glad that at least he tried.

**Question:** Sometimes when we ask for something, we're refused. When do you think we should keep trying to "get our way" and when is it better to just take "no" for an answer? A lot depends on what we're asking for. If it's something really important that we honestly feel would be good for ourselves or for others, it's usually worthwhile to keep on trying. But if deep down we know it's just something we "feel like" having but we don't really need, it's probably better to "let it go."

### SPOIL-RESISTANT

"C'mon Mom, hurry up. Didn't you finish packing my suitcase yet? I have to catch my train in 15 minutes," Megan stated, annoyed. "And what about snacks - are you sure you made my sandwiches *exactly* like I told you to?"

Megan was looking forward to her upcoming weeklong visit to her out-of-town cousins. It would be her first time visiting. She just wished her mom would move a little faster.

After driving her to the train platform, Megan's mother lifted the heavy suitcase out of the trunk and gave it to her.

"Okay, Mom - bye." The girl grabbed the suitcase and started rolling it toward the waiting train.

"Megan, didn't you forget something?" her mother asked with a tired smile.

"What do you mean?" The girl turned and shrugged. "I've got the all the stuff you packed me - the food you made me, the money and the train tickets you gave me and I'm wearing the new outfit you bought me. What could I have possibly forgotten?"

"To say thank you?"

"Oh, yeah ... thanks," she mumbled and scrambled toward the train.

*After a long train ride, she got to her cousins' house.*

"I'm so glad you came!" said her cousin, Jenny, with a friendly hug. "Come with me, I'll show you where you're sleeping."

"This is where me and my sisters sleep," Jenny said, stopping in front of a small room, lined with bunk beds and about half the size of Megan's spacious private bedroom at home. "Isn't it cozy?"

"I suppose so," Megan sniffed. "And where's *my* room?"

Jenny laughed as if Megan had made a hilarious joke. "Right here, silly," she said, pointing to a bed in the corner. "We gave you the *best* one - it hardly wobbles at all."

The next morning, Meagan woke up tired. It wasn't a surprise since she'd hardly been able to sleep in a room full of so many people breathing and her 'wobble-free' bed had rocked as if it was a ship at sea. Still, she must have slept some, because when she opened her eyes, Jenny and her other cousins were all already up and dressed.

Meagan looked up at her cousin, Jenny, who was just finishing neatly tucking in the corners of her bed sheets. Megan couldn't remember the last time she'd made her own bed. It was always the house cleaner or her Mom.

"Jenny," she said, "I'm really hungry. Are we going to have breakfast now?"

"Sure!" the girl smiled brightly. "Come with me."

Meagan followed her to the kitchen, sat down at the big, round table and folded her arms to wait for breakfast, vaguely wondering why all her cousins were scurrying about.

"Hey, I thought you said you were hungry?" Jenny asked.

"I am." Megan said. "Do you think it will be long?"

"What will be long?"

"Before we eat," she said.

"Well that depends how long it will be before you stand up and start making yourself something," Jenny smiled "It's, you know, self-serve around here. You want me to show you how to use the toaster-oven?"

Megan spent a week unlike any she'd ever experienced before in her whole life. She not only learned how to make toast, but also scramble eggs, wash dishes by hand and even mop a floor. It wasn't easy and she would never have dreamed of doing any of these things at home, but somehow here, where everyone was doing it, it seemed normal and almost ... fun. She wasn't sure she wanted to be more like that when she got home - but, surprisingly, she wasn't sure she didn't, either.

*Next stop, city station!*" the conductor's voice crackled over the loudspeaker. Megan grabbed her suitcase - which she'd packed herself, and hurried down the platform to meet her waving mother.

"Thank you SO much for coming to get me, Mom!" were her first words.

Her mom looked happily surprised, but Meagan knew that those words, and feelings of appreciation for all her parents did for her, would not be the last ones to leave her lips that day - or from now on.

**Question:** What life-lesson do you think Megan learned from her trip? She'd had an attitude that things were coming to her and if anything she expected more. But spending a week around people who weren't spoiled made her consider that nobody had to do things for her - and if they did, she should appreciate it.

**Question:** How should a person feel if his parents don't do everything for him or give him everything he wants? He should be grateful. That means they aren't spoiling him and are giving him the tools to live a happy, independent life.

**Resources:**

*The Stone Edition of The Chumash*

*The Complete Messianic Aleph Tav Scriptures* **C-MATS** [www.AlephTavScriptures.com](http://www.AlephTavScriptures.com)

"Weekly Torah Portion" from [www.aish.com](http://www.aish.com) (stories)