

KITAVO (*when you enter in*)



Offering of First Fruits

(Illustration from a Bible card published by the Providence Lithograph Company)

Moses continues his last speech to the Israelites. He instructs the Israelites regarding the first fruit offering; Moses then lists the blessings for keeping the commandments and the punishments for disobeying them.

Deuteronomy 26:1 After you come into the land which יהוה your Elohim gives you *as an inheritance and have taken possession of it and you live there*; **2** You are to take the first of all the crops the ground yields, which you will harvest from your land that יהוה your Elohim gives you and put *them* in a basket and go to the place which יהוה your Elohim will choose to place His name. C-MATS

Question: What is the offering of first fruits? After the Land was conquered and allocated, farmers were to take the first ripened fruits in a basket to the Temple and present them to the Kohen with gratitude to יהוה. The Kohen places his hand under that of the owner, and together they lift and wave it to יהוה, as is done with many offerings (Succah 47b). The Israelites from the entire Land converged on Jerusalem with their First Fruits in festive processions, accompanied by music and celebrations in city after city. The Israelite's gift of his first fruits, or Bikkurim, to the Kohen symbolizes that he dedicates everything he has to the service of יהוה. For an Israelite to say that his every accomplishment -- no matter how much sweat he invested in it -- is a gift from יהוה is one of the goals of Creation. *Chumash*

Question: How can we give יהוה our choicest fruits? If the day must include both study of the scriptures and worldly studies, the study of the scriptures should be scheduled for the morning hours when the mind is at its freshest and most receptive. If one's talents are to be divided between two occupations, one whose primary function is to pay the bills and a second which benefits his fellow man, he should devote his keenest abilities to the his fellow man. *Chumash*



Deuteronomy 26:3 **וּבָאתָ** *and you [will] come* to the priest *in office* in those days **וְאָמַרְתָּ** *and you say* to Him, I profess this day to יהוה your Elohim that I have come to the country which יהוה swore to our fathers to give us. 4 And the priest will take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of יהוה your Elohim. 5 And you respond **וְאָמַרְתָּ** *and you say* before יהוה your Elohim, my father was a wandering Aramean and he went down into Egypt only a few *in number* and stayed there and became a great, mighty and populous nation. C-MATS

Question: This verse says that Jacob went down into Egypt only a few *in number*. How many people from Jacob's family went to Egypt? 70

Question: Who was the wandering Aramean in this verse? The term is rendered my forefather Jacob was a lost, homeless or penniless Aramean, meaning that Jacob lived in Aram for twenty years of his life (Ibn Ezra). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 26:6 The Egyptians evilly mistreated **אֶתְנוּ** *us* and afflicted us and laid upon us hard bondage: 7 And when we cried to יהוה Elohim of our fathers and יהוה **אֶת־** heard our voice and looked on **אֶת־** our affliction **וְאֶת־** *and our labor* **וְאֶת־** *and our oppression*. C-MATS

Question: Who heard the voices of our ancestors in Egypt crying out for deliverance? Deuteronomy 26:7 is clear that it was both יהוה and **את** (*Yah-head*) who heard the voice of the **את** affliction of the covenant Israelites in bondage in Egypt. C-MATS

Deuteronomy 26:8 יהוה brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with *his* outstretched arm with great terror and signs and wonders: 9 And He has brought us into this place and has given us **הָאָרֶץ** *this אֶרֶץ* land, a land that flows *with* milk and honey. C-MATS



Offerings of Thanksgiving

(Illustration from a Bible card published by the Providence Lithograph Company)

Deuteronomy 26:10 And now I have brought **אֶת־** firstfruits of the land, which you, O יהוה, have given me. And you will set it before יהוה your Elohim and worship before יהוה your Elohim: 11 And you will rejoice in every good *thing* which יהוה your Elohim has given to you and to your house, **אתה** *you* and the Levite and the stranger that *is* among you. C-MATS

Question: How should the Israelites rejoice? The celebration should include activities that make people joyous, such as shared song, for whenever people come together to celebrate a happy event, it is natural for them to sing (HaKsav V'HaKabbalah). When one eats and drinks at the festivals, one must also feed the stranger, the orphan, the widow, and the other unfortunate paupers. But one who locks the doors of his courtyard and feasts and drinks with his children and wife but does not feed the poor and the embittered -- this is not the joy of fulfilling the commandment but the joy of his stomach. *Chumash*



Give one-tenth to יהוה.

Deuteronomy 26:12 When you have finished paying a tenth **את** of all the tithes of your produce in the third year, *which is* the year of tithing and have given *it* to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, that they may eat within your towns and be filled; **13** **ואמרת** *And you say* before יהוה your Elohim, I have removed the consecrated *tithe* out of my house and have given them to the Levite and to the stranger, to the fatherless and to the widow, according to all your commandments which you have commanded me: I have not transgressed your commandments, neither have I forgotten *them*: **14** **אכלתי** *I ate* nothing in my mourning, neither have I taken away *anything* of it for any unclean *use*, nor given *anything* of it for the dead: *but* I have listened to the voice of יהוה my Elohim and have done according to all that you have commanded me. C-MATS

Question: Where were the tithes from the crops taken? Tithes must be taken from crops according to a three-year cycle. The first year's tithe is given to the Levite. The Levites are entitled to their gift, because they gave up a share of the Land to devote themselves to יהוה's service. The second year's tithe is enjoyed by the farmer and his family and must be eaten in Jerusalem. But the third year's tithe is for the poor and has a special status because it symbolizes Israel's generosity and concern for the less fortunate (Haamek Davar). This cycle is repeated every three years, with the exception of the seventh [Shemittah] and fiftieth [Yovel] years, when no tithes are required. By the day before Pesach of the year after each three-year cycle, an owner must make sure that he has delivered all tithes to their proper destination, and on the last day of Pesach of the fourth and seventh years, he recites the confession in this passage (vs. 13-15). It is preferable to recite it at the Temple -- before יהוה (v. 13) -- but it may be recited anywhere. *Chumash*

Question: Is יהוה your partner in all that you do? The idea is that whenever we try to do something, we can only succeed with יהוה's help. Therefore, in a sense He is our partner helping us along to succeed. It also means that יהוה is the ultimate source of our wealth and shares with us money so we can do good deeds with it. By giving to charity, we are partners with יהוה in properly spending the money He gives us.

Question: Do you think a person loses out by tithing his money? At first glance, it might seem he is ending up with less. But in fact, not only does the person gain the spiritual merit of helping others and becoming a better person by doing it, but in the end, יהוה will even see to it that he gets paid back for what he gives, and then some.

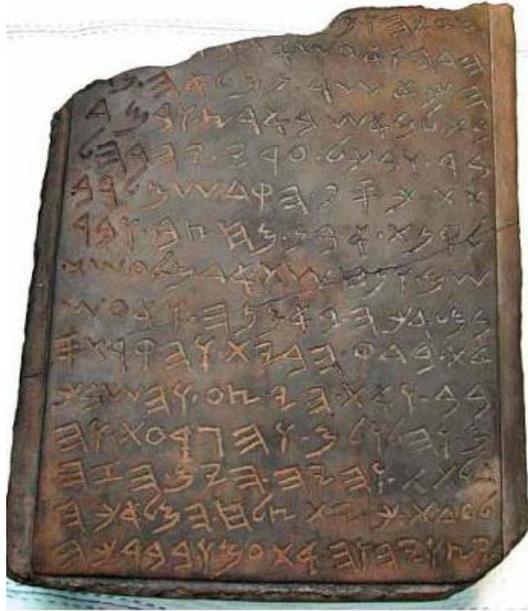
Question: Doesn't יהוה have the means of providing for the needy himself? Why does He ask us to 'do it for Him'? יהוה certainly has the means to supply all of us with everything. By getting us involved with helping others, He is giving us the opportunity to develop a more giving nature, and through that become more righteous people. יהוה rewards us greatly for every spiritual choice we make, so by giving us the chance to give, He gives us the chance to receive.

Question: If a person has no money to tithe, does he then lose out on the opportunity to give? There are many ways to give, and not all of them involve money. One can give of one's time to help the needy, or even in his everyday interactions, with a smile and a kind word he can give someone something more valuable than gold.

Question: What did Yahusha say about the poor widow giving her money to Him? **Luke 21:1 And He looked up, and saw the rich men throwing their gifts into the treasury. 2 And He saw also a certain poor widow throwing in two mites. 3 And He said, *this poor widow has thrown in more than they all have. 4 For all these people have from their abundance thrown in their offerings for Elohim: but she from her poverty has thrown in all the living that she had.* C-MATS**

Deuteronomy 26:15 Look down from your sacred habitation, from heaven and bless **את** your people **את** Israel **את** and the land which you have given us, as you swore to our fathers, a land that flows *with* milk and honey. 16 This day יהוה your Elohim has commanded you to do **את** the statutes **את** and the judgments: you will therefore, be careful to keep **אתם** *them* with all your heart and with all your soul. 17 יהוה you have declared (*proclaimed*) this day to be your Elohim and to walk in His ways and to keep His statutes and His commandments and His judgments and to listen to His voice: 18 And יהוה has proclaimed this day *for* you to be his peculiar people, as He has promised you and that you should keep all His commandments; 19 And *He will* make you high above all nations which He has made, in praise and in name and in honor; so that you may be a consecrated people to ליהוה your Elohim, as He has spoken. Deuteronomy 27:1 And Moses commanded along with the elders of Israel **את** the people saying, Keep **את** all the commandments which I command **אתכם** *you* this day. 2 And it will be on that day when you pass over **את** the Jordan to the land, which יהוה your Elohim gives you, that you will set up great stones and plaster **אתם** *them* with plaster: 3 And you will write upon them **את** all the words of **הַתּוֹרָה** *this* Torah, after you have passed over *the Jordan*, so that you may go into the land which יהוה your Elohim gives you, a land that flows *with* milk and honey; as יהוה Elohim of your fathers has promised you. 4 When you have gone over **את** the Jordan, you will set up **את** stones, which I command **אתכם** *you* this day, on Mount Ebal and you will plaster **אתם** *them* with plaster. C-MATS





Question: What did Moses command the Israelites to do when they entered the Land? Moses commanded the people that upon entering the Land, which they would do in only a few weeks, they were to commit themselves anew to יהוה and the Torah. They would do this by inscribing the entire Torah on twelve huge stones, by bringing offerings, and by gathering at two mountains to affirm their allegiance. Since Moses himself would not be with them, and since a nation is guided by its respected leaders, he summoned the elders of Israel to join him in this proclamation. Moses wanted the people to know from the moment they entered the Land that their past success and hope for the future depended on their loyalty to the Torah. Their crossing of the Jordan would be miraculous (Joshua 3), and, as soon as they were in the Land, they would inscribe the entire Torah in seventy languages, something that could not be possible without a miracle. Thus it would be clear to them that they had crossed the Jordan because of יהוה, and that only obedience to the Torah could preserve them in their new home (Alshich). *Chumash*



Question: What are three places at which constructions of stones were set up?

- a) Twelve stones were put together in the Jordan
- b) The same number of stones set up at Gilgal [the Israelites' first stop in the land of Israel]
- c) The same number of stones set up at Mount Ebal (Chapter 4 of Joshua)

Question: What stones are in your life? What stones are in your family's life? Think of the times that יהוה has really displayed His might and power over the span of your life. Perhaps it was rescuing you from the life you once lived; maybe it was healing you of an illness, or possibly sparing your marriage at the brink of destruction, etc. If we look back we can point to endless things יהוה has done in our lives, from small things to large things. In the New Testament, Yahusha again commands another to show his "stones" to his family. After Yahusha healed a demon-possessed man He commanded him, **"Return to your own house, and tell what great things יהוה has done for you"** (Luke 8:39). The man that was healed and that experienced יהוה's power, first-hand, was told to go to his own home to tell his family what Yahushua had done for Him. Shouldn't we do the same?

Spiritual Exercise: Ponder today on the pile of stones (times when יהוה intervened for you) that have accumulated in your life or the pile of stones that have accumulated in your family's life. Then, lead your children back to that place constantly to remind them of what a mighty and awesome Elohim we serve, so that their faith may be built up and their reverence of יהוה may increase.

Deuteronomy 27:5 And there you will build an altar of stones to ליהוה your Elohim: you will not use *any iron tool* upon them. **6** You will build **את** altar of יהוה your Elohim of uncut stones: and you will offer burnt offerings on it to ליהוה your Elohim: **7** And you will offer peace offerings and eat there and rejoice before יהוה your Elohim. **8** And you will write upon the stones **את** all the words of **הַתּוֹרָה** *this* Torah very plainly. **9** And Moses and the Levite priests spoke to all Israel saying, Be careful and listen, O Israel; this day you have become the people to ליהוה your Elohim. **10** You will therefore, obey *the* voice of יהוה your Elohim and do **את** His commandments **וְאֵת** and His statutes, which I command you this day. **11** And commanded Moses **את** the people the same day saying, **12** These will stand to bless **את** the people upon mount Gerizim, when you have come over **את** the Jordan Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Joseph and Benjamin: **13** And Reuben, Gad and Asher and Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali will stand upon Mount Ebal to curse. C-MATS



Mount Gerizim on the left, Mount Ebal on the right, and modern Nablus (ancient Shechem) between

Question: What were the Israelites suppose to do as soon as they entered the Land? As soon as the Israelites entered the Land, they were to assemble at two mountains for a new acceptance of the Torah. (Deuteronomy 11:29 **And it will come to pass, when יהוה your Elohim has brought you into the land that אתה you go to possess, that you will put אתה the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the curse upon Mount Ebal. 30 Are they not on the west side of the Jordan in the direction of the sunset in the land of the Canaanites, who live in the wasteland across from Gilgal near the plains of Moreh?**) There, twelve commandments would be named, and the people would acknowledge publicly that blessings await those who observe them and curses will befall those who spurn them. Six tribes would stand on one mountain and six tribes on the other, with the Ark, the Kohanim, and the elders of the Levites in the valley between them. The Levites in the valley would loudly pronounce the blessings and curses, and the tribes on the mountaintops would call out, "Amein!" Thus, the very entry into the Land would include a pledge of allegiance, as it were, to the Torah that constitutes the essence of Israelite nationhood. According to Ramban, the first Admonition of Moses referred to the years leading up to the destruction of the First Temple and the following Babylonian Exile, while this one refers to the waning years of the Second Temple and the current exile. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 27:14 And the Levites will speak and say to all the men of Israel *with* a loud voice, **15 Cursed is the man that makes any graven or molten image, an abomination to יהוה, the work of the hands of the craftsman and sets it up in a secret place. And all the people will answer and say, Amein.**
C-MATS



Notice the hand sign in each of these pictures. This hand sign is known as *Ardha, pataka, mudra*, abode of the gods. Know as "Half Flag" or temple flag in allegiance of the hold shrine of Buddha or Krishna. Be careful to keep grave images out of your home.

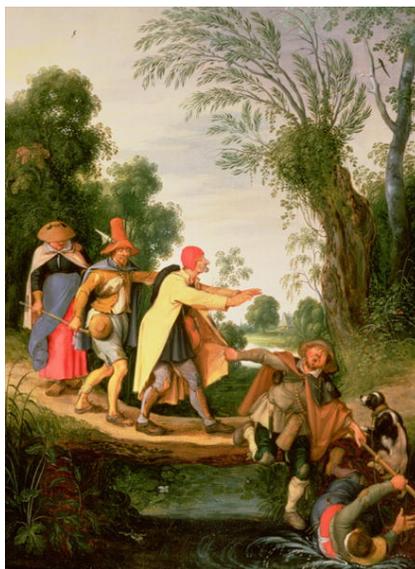


Deuteronomy 27:16 Cursed *is* he who dishonors his father or his mother. And all the people will say, **Amein. C-MATS**

Question: Why do you think it's easy to forget to treat our parents the way we should? Since our parents love us so much and want to do things for us, we can take them and all they do for granted. However, the love and care they give us should be a reason to treat them even better than we treat most other people - and certainly not worse.

Question: Does respecting our parents mean we are obligated to do everything they want us to do? While we should make an extra effort to accommodate our parents' wishes as much as possible, there may be times when, as individuals, we may have to make choices that they don't prefer. However, even then it should be in a spirit of respect and conversation with them.

Question: What can a person do to improve his relationship with his parents? One thing is we can contemplate how much they have done for us over the years and try to repay some of that good through words and acts of kindness toward them. We can also try to hear their side of things and even if we disagree always try to express our feelings with respect. We can pray that יהוה will intervene and change the heart of a rebellious parent and bring healing to the relationship.



Do not mislead the blind.

Deuteronomy 27:17 Cursed is he who removes his neighbor's landmark. And all the people will say, Amein. 18 Cursed is he who causes a blind person to lose his way. And all the people will say, Amein. C-MATS

Question: What does it mean "causes a blind person to lose his way"? This includes misleading anyone who is "blind" to the truth or a proper course of action. *Chumash*

Question: Misleading someone is a form of stealing. How do you think this description applies? What a misleader is doing, in effect, is stealing the trust that others have placed in him. As the word implies, he is *mis*-leading, he's leading, someone who trusts him, astray.

Question: If someone asks us for advice and we feel a conflict because what would be good for him would turn out bad for us, and vice-versa, how should we respond? Certainly it isn't ethical to give someone advice that would be bad for them, even if we feel it would benefit us. But neither are we obligated to harm ourselves through advice we give others. Therefore we could simply refrain from giving advice, or alternatively to creatively come up with a way that both of us could benefit. An even higher, more spiritual approach would be to focus on always helping and advising people according to what would be best for them, and trusting that יהוה will ultimately reward us by making it turn out for our best, as well.



Do not interfere with justice.

Deuteronomy 27:19 Cursed is he who interferes with the justice of the stranger, fatherless and widow. And all the people will say, Amein. 20 Cursed is he who has sexual relations with his father's אשת wife; because he has violated his father's rights. And all the people will say, Amein. 21 Cursed is he who has sexual relations with any kind of beast. And all the people will say, Amein. 22 Cursed is he who has sexual relations with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people will say, Amein. 23 Cursed is he who has sexual relations with his mother-in-law. And all the people will say, Amein. C-MATS

Question: What type of sins will bring curses? Since these verses discuss sins that are done in secret (Rashbam), only cases of incest are listed, since such close relatives love one another and might become tempted to sin, especially since it is natural for them to be together and the sin would go unnoticed. Bestiality is listed with them to show that the Torah considers incest to be as abhorrent as bestiality (Or HaChaim). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 27:24 Cursed is he who attacks his neighbor secretly. And all the people will say, Amein. C-MATS



Question: Backstabbing - talking bad about people behind their backs - is wrong. Do you think it's worse to speak badly of someone in front of him or behind his back? Well, neither is good! We should speak well of others. But at least speaking in front of someone gives him a chance to defend himself, etc. Backstabbing is sneaky and cowardly.

Question: Do you think people get ahead by 'backstabbing'? While it may look like it, in the long run, such unrighteous behavior not only causes the person to lose out spiritually, but materially as well. We should treat others kindly and trust יהוה to bring us where we need to go.



Do not accept a bribe.

Deuteronomy 27:25 Cursed is he who accepts a bribe to kill an innocent person. And all the people will say, Amein. 26 Cursed is he who does not confirm all **את words of **הזאת** this Torah by doing **אותם** them. And all the people will say, Amein. C-MATS**

Question: What oath were the Israelites taking? The nation accepted a curse upon anyone who does not uphold all of the Torah (Rashi). Every Israelite must accept the Torah's validity in full, and dare not claim that even one of its commandments is not relevant. However, this curse is not imposed on any Israelite who commits a sin, only on one who denies that a part of the Torah is not given by יהוה. *Chumash*

Question: How far does this curse extend? This curse applies to anyone who can influence others to be loyal to the Torah, but does not care to do so, especially people in positions of authority, who have the power to mold the behavior of others. Even someone who studies the Torah and is rigorously observant, but is unconcerned about the shortcomings of others, even though he can help them, is included in this curse. *Chumash*



Question: How do curses come upon you? When you fall into sin, יהוה's judgment will come upon you and יהוה can allow the enemy to come in and oppress you. You must repent and turn away from your sins, but you will have to make restitution for your sins-measure for measure. Some of the curses may be genetic and come from previous generations. Pray and ask יהוה to forgive your ancestors of their sins and have mercy on you, because you have decided to walk in His ways and not the ways of the world as your ancestors have done.

Deuteronomy 28:1 And it will come to pass, if you will listen diligently to the voice of יהוה your Elohim, to observe *and* to do אה" all His commandments which I command you this day, that יהוה your Elohim will set you on high above all nations of the earth: **2** And all these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you will listen to the voice of יהוה your Elohim. C-MATS

Question: Why were the blessings given first before the curses? Before the Torah recounts the dire consequences of sin, it gives the blessings that will accumulate to the nation for fulfilling the commandments. These blessings are wide ranging and involve every area of material life, thus reassuring the people that their spiritual accomplishments will bring them untold benefits in every area of life. יהוה will be so gracious to you that you will be overtaken by blessings even when you make no effort to obtain them (Sforno). Even if you fail to recognize the blessings as such and run away from them, they will pursue you. The blessings will come even when logic and nature would indicate that they cannot happen. If loyalty to the commandments can cause one's business and family life to prosper, surely it can yield infinite spiritual bliss. *Chumash*



City of Jerusalem

Deuteronomy 28:3 Blessed shall **אַתָּה** you be in the city, and blessed shall **אַתָּה** you be in the field.
C-MATS

Question: How can you influence your city? Your goodness should influence your surroundings, in the **city** and the **field**. You have two choices in life- to just help yourself or help others also. There are two ways to get warm on a cold winter day -- build a fire, which warms everyone else in the room as well, or wrap yourself in furs, which conserve your own warmth but does not generate any heat or warm anyone else. *Chumash*



Deuteronomy 28:4 You will be blessed in the fruit of your body and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your herds, the young of your cattle and the flocks of your sheep. C-MATS



Deuteronomy 28:5 You will be blessed *in your grain-basket and your store (kneading-bowl)*. C-MATS

Question: What does this verse mean? The fruits in your basket and the grains in your kneading bowl will be blessed. *Chumash*



Deuteronomy 28:6 Blessed shall אהא you be when you come in, and blessed shall אהא you be when you go out. C-MATS

Question: How can you be blessed coming in and going out? Your departure from the world will be as free of sin as was your entry into the world. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 28:7 יהוה shall cause **את-** your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before your eyes: they will come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. C-MATS

Question: How will the enemy fleeing before you be a blessing to you? It is common for people who flee in panic to disperse and run off in all directions (Rashi), discarding every semblance of military discipline. The union of this verse with the next, which speaks of blessed storehouses, suggests that the fleeing enemy will leave behind a wealth of supplies and provisions for the Israelites to take at will (Baal HaTurim). *Chumash*



Your storehouses will be full.

Deuteronomy 28:8 יהוה shall command **אתך** upon you **את-** the blessing in your storehouses and in all that you set your hand to; and He will bless you in the land, which יהוה your Elohim gives you. 9 יהוה shall establish you to Himself as a sacred (*set apart*) people, as He has sworn to you, if you will keep **את-** commandments of יהוה your Elohim and walk in His ways. 10 And all *the* people of the earth will see that you are called *by* the name of יהוה; and they will be afraid of you. C-MATS

Question: Why will other nations fear Israel? Each nation will have its god or set of beliefs, but all nations will come to realize that only יהוה is the source of all strength and blessing -- even of the powers that they ascribe to their gods. If so, the nation that is intimately associated with יהוה will inspire the awe of all the others (R' Bachya). *Chumash*



You will have rain **in His season** on your land.

Deuteronomy 28:11 And shall give you great abundance יהוה in goods, in the fruit of your body and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground, in the land which יהוה swore to your fathers to give you. to do, until you are destroyed and until 12 יהוה shall open to you **את** His treasure, the goodness **את** of the heavens to give rain to your land in His season and to bless **את** all the work of your hands: and you will lend to many nations **ואתה** and you will not borrow. C-MATS

Question: What does this verse mean by “in His season”? Abundant rain can be a curse if it falls only when it is not needed; conversely, even a small amount of precipitation can be a blessing if it falls when the crops require it. *Chumash*

Spiritual Exercise: What does “you will not borrow” mean? Do you think if you are borrowing money that you are placing yourself under a curse? Work towards releasing yourself from all debts so you can enter into His blessings. Release yourself from the curse of poverty.



Deuteronomy 28:13 And shall make you יהוה the head and not the tail; and you will be only above and never beneath; if you listen to the commandments of יהוה your Elohim, which I command you this day, to observe and to obey them: 14 And you will not turn aside from any of the words which I command **אתכם** you this day, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them. C-MATS

Question: What blessings will you receive if you keep יהוה commandments?

1. no enemy can overtake you
2. enemies will fear you
3. have plenty to eat
4. bless all you undertake to do
5. surplus of livestock, crops, fruits, children
6. rain given at the right time
7. lend and not borrow
8. be at the top not the bottom (rule over and not be slave to)

Question: What blessings did we receive through our salvation in Yahusha?

1. He chose us and adopted us as sons. **Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the Elohim and Father of our Adonai Yahusha haMashiach, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Mashiach: 4 According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: 5 Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Yahusha haMashiach to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved. C-MATS**
2. He redeemed us and forgave us. **Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; 8 Wherein He has abounded toward us in all wisdom and understanding; Ephesians 2:1 And you has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But Elohim, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, has made us alive together with Mashiach, by grace you are saved. C-MATS**
3. יהוה sealed us until His coming. **Ephesians 1:13 In whom you trusted after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom after that you believed, you were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. C-MATS**
4. He gave us His Holy Spirit. **1 Corinthians 6:19 Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Ruach haKodesh which lives inside you, which you received from Elohim, and you are not your own? 20 For you are bought with a price: glorify Elohim in your body, and in your spirit, which are Elohim's. C-MATS**
5. He promises us the blessings of Abraham. **Galatians 3:29 And if you are Mashiach's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. C-MATS**
6. He made us heirs to His Kingdom. **Romans 8:17 And if we are His children, then we are heirs of Elohim and joint-heirs with Mashiach; providing we suffer with Him, so we may also be glorified with Him. C-MATS**
7. He has given us eternal life. **Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of Elohim is eternal life through Yahusha haMashiach our Adonai. C-MATS**

Question: How do you know you are from the seed of Abraham? And if you are in Yahusha - If you belong to the Messiah, and are interested in his work, then you are Abraham's seed - The promise made to Abraham related to the Messiah. It was a promise that in him all should be blessed. Abraham believed in that Messiah, and was distinguished for his faith in him who was to come. If they believed in Yahusha, they showed that they were the spiritual descendants of Abraham.



Question: יהוה repays a person "measure for measure". What does this mean? יהוה loves us and wants to give us good. But He knows that we will enjoy the good much more if we earn it. The way that we earn this good is by behaving in an upright and good way in our relationships with others and with יהוה. To the degree that we succeed in this, יהוה will ultimately send good things our way.

Question: How would you explain the human tendency to blame others for their difficulties rather than accepting the responsibility themselves? Difficulties that we experience are generally יהוה's way of prodding us to reflect upon our own behavior and to look for areas in which we can change for the better. Although this is a precious opportunity for anyone seeking personal and spiritual growth, it can be hard work and not particularly comfortable to do. There is, therefore, a strong temptation to avoid the entire process. Pointing the finger at others is a way of doing that. But to do so is a mistake for the spiritual pleasure and deeply felt joy that we will gain from accepting responsibility and growing through our difficulties far outweighs any effort or unpleasantness involved.



Listen!!!

Deuteronomy 28:15 But if you will not listen to the voice of יהוה your Elohim, to observe and to do את־ all His commandments and His statutes, which I command you this day; that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you. C-MATS

Question: What period of time was Moses telling the people about? This period of time was from the destruction of the Second Temple and the following exile, which was brought about by the Roman Empire. The bulk of the frightful curses were meant for the years of spiritual decline leading up to the Destruction, when the Israelite people suffered invasion, defeat, siege, and all the other forms of devastation and suffering mentioned in this chapter. The constant refrain that these sufferings would result in the destruction and loss of the Land show that the main thrust of the Admonition would be loss of the Land and the following exile. Once that happened, however, Israelites would sometimes prosper and enjoy the favor of benevolent governments, but exile would be its own punishment, and Israelites would be scattered and vulnerable in many lands, helpless against the whims and tantrums of the leaders and populations.

Question: What did Yahusha say about listening to יהוה's words? **Matthew 13:1** The same day Yahusha went out of the house, and sat by the sea side. **2** And great multitudes gathered to Him, so He sat in a ship; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. **3** And He spoke to them in parables saying, **A sower went out to sow; 4** And when he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up: **5** Some fell seeds fell upon rocky places, where they did not have much soil: and they sprung up, because they had no depth of soil: **6** And when the sun came up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. **7** And some seeds fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: **8** But other seeds fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. **9** Who has ears to hear, let him hear. **10** And the disciples came, and said to Him, Why do you speak to them in parables? **11** He answered and said to them, **Because it is given only to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 12** For whoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whoever has not been given, from him shall be taken away even that he has. **13** Therefore I speak to them in parables: because they cannot see and hear, neither do they understand. **14** And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which said, You will keep on hearing, but shall not understand; and you will keep on seeing, and shall not perceive: **15** For this people's heart has become dull, and with their ears they scarcely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. **16** But blessed are your eyes, because they see: and your ears, because they hear. **17** For many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them. **18** Hear then the parable of the sower. **19** When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes, and takes away what was sown in his heart. This is the one who received seed by the road side. **20** But he who received the seed in the rocky places, he hears the word, and with joy immediately receives it; **21** But he has no firm root in himself, but endures only temporary: for when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, immediately he falls away. **22** He that received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word; and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he does not bear fruit. **23** But he who received seed into the good ground is he who hears the word, and understands it; and bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. C-MATS

Question: How did Yahusha describe יהוה's people at the time that he walked upon the earth? He called them "**an evil and adulterous generation**" (Matthew 12:39)

Question: How did other historians describe this generation of יהוה's people? Josephus describes the history of the Jewish War with Rome: "Neither did any other city [Jerusalem] ever suffer such miseries, nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness that this was, from the beginning of the world." After Yahusha was crucified, the Jews of Jerusalem then went on to persecute the believers according to Acts 8:1-3. Addressing this persecution, Eusebius writes: *First they [the Jews] stoned Stephen to death; then James the son of Zebedee and the brother of John was beheaded; and finally James, the first after our Savior's Ascension to be raised to the bishop's throne there, lost his life in the way described, while the remaining apostles, in constant danger from murderous plots, were driven out of Judaea.*



Carracci, Annibale, *The Stoning of St. Stephen*, 1603-1604, Musée du Louvre

Question: When did these curses begin to fall on the Israelites? In Deuteronomy 28:15-68, יהוה threatens Israel with a multitude of curses. These curses are not empty threats. יהוה made good on this covenant: once in the sixth century B.C. during the Babylonian exile and later in first century A.D. during Israel's war with Rome. Every one of the curses listed in Deuteronomy 28 afflicted the Israelites during the Jewish War with Rome including the plagues of Egypt, darkness, drought, distress, wasting disease, boils, scorching heat, madness, oppression, rapine, apostasy, confusion, exile, cannibalism, infanticide, anxiety, restlessness, slavery in Egypt, exile and death. And as if that were not enough, they were also subjected to scorn and ridicule in the nations in which they were exiled.

Question: What were the consequences of war predicted in Deuteronomy 28:15-24? The first several curses are general inevitabilities of wartime pillaging. Then in v. 22, Israel is threatened with wasting disease, fever, inflammation, scorching heat, blight, mildew and subsequent death. All such plights are frequent consequences of siege warfare. Not surprisingly, in verse 52 יהוה promises to bring a foreign nation against Israel. In the first century A.D. that nation was Rome. During the Jewish War, the Romans besieged city after city throughout the province of Israel. During a siege, an army surrounds a walled city and devises methods of reducing enemy numbers at minimal cost to themselves. The purpose is often to intimidate and starve a city into surrender.

Like any besieging force, the Romans prevented anything or anyone from entering or leaving the city. Starved of resources, the elderly and infirm would be the first to die from pathogens, poor nutrition and lack of water. To make matters worse, the Jews of Jerusalem did not bury their dead. These decaying bodies accumulated in the streets exposing survivors already weakened from malnutrition and stress to potential disease.



Deuteronomy 28:16 Cursed shall **אתה you be in the city and cursed shall **אתה** you be in the field. 17 You will be cursed in your *grain-basket* and your store (*kneading-bowl*). C-MATS**



Deuteronomy 28:18 You will be cursed *in* the fruit of your body and the fruit of your land, the young of your cattle and the flocks of your sheep. 19 Cursed shall **אתה you be when you come in, and cursed shall **אתה** you be when you go out. 20 **יהוה** shall send upon you **את** curses, **את** vexation (*trouble*) **ואת** and rebuke, in all that you set your hand you perish quickly; because of the wickedness of your actions by forsaking Me. C-MATS**

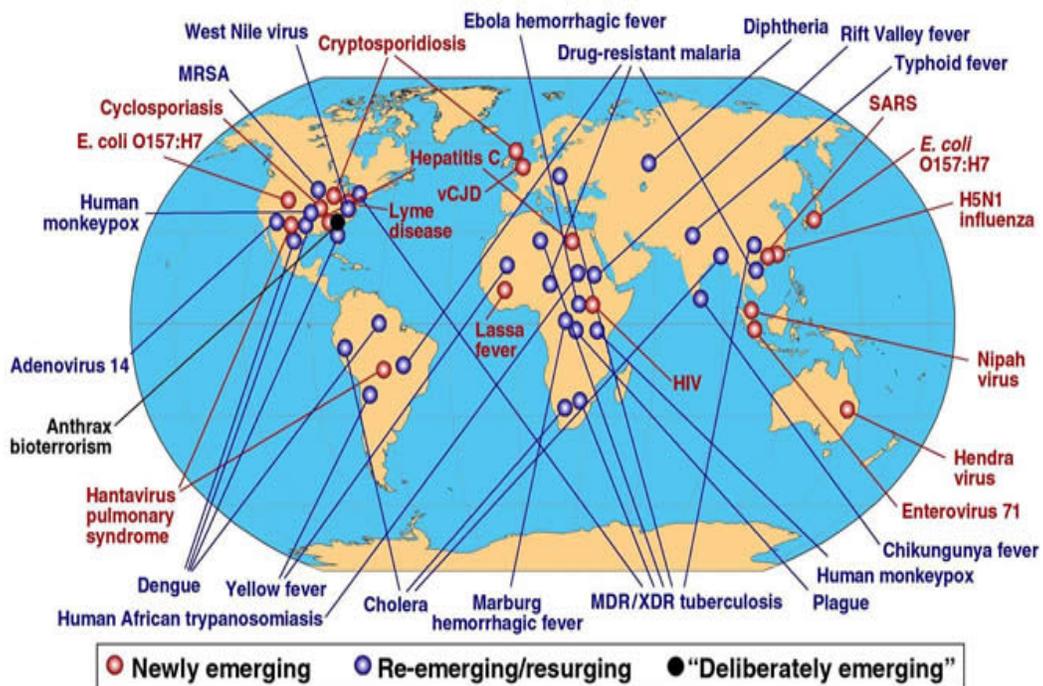


Abortion is a curse.



Deuteronomy 28:21 יהוה shall make cling to you אתך the pestilence until He has consumed אתך you from off the land, which אתה you go to possess. C-MATS

New diseases and pestilence occur daily. Only יהוה can protect you from these curses.





Fever, inflammation

Deuteronomy 28:22 יהוה shall strike you with consumption (*wasting*), fever, inflammation, extreme burning *heat*, the sword, scorching *winds* and mildew; and they will pursue you until you perish. C-MATS

Question: How will the Israelites be destroyed? The Israelites will decline and be destroyed as a result of the long accumulation of attack, hunger, and disease (Rashi). They will not be destroyed at once, but slowly so they can repent. *Chumash*

Question: How was verse 22 fulfilled? There was a severe drought in Jerusalem before the arrival of the Romans. When the Roman army arrived and seized the cisterns outside of Jerusalem the water suddenly flowed abundantly.

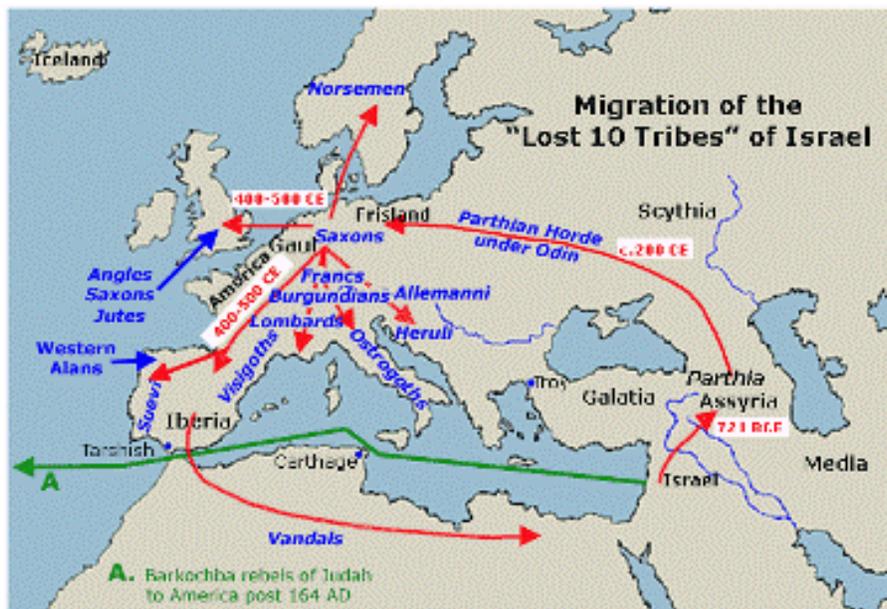


The earth will be as iron.

Deuteronomy 28:23 And the heavens that *are* over your head will *be as* brass and the earth that *is* under you *will be as* iron. 24 יהוה shall make **אֵת** rain *that you need* for your land *like* powder and dust: from heavens it will come down upon you until you are destroyed. C-MATS

Question: What law of Moses did the Israelites not obey to fulfill Deuteronomy 28:25-27? The Law of Moses mandates the burying of the dead. The Jews did not obey this command. The consequences of failing to do so are stipulated in v. 27—plague. Prior to the arrival of Titus’ army, Jerusalem was engulfed in a three-way civil war. During this conflict, the Jewish rebels did not bury the dead. Therefore, dead bodies littered the streets. Eventually, the people of Jerusalem hoisted many of these corpses over the city walls leaving them to rot or be eaten by carrion birds and wild beasts in fulfillment of v. 26.

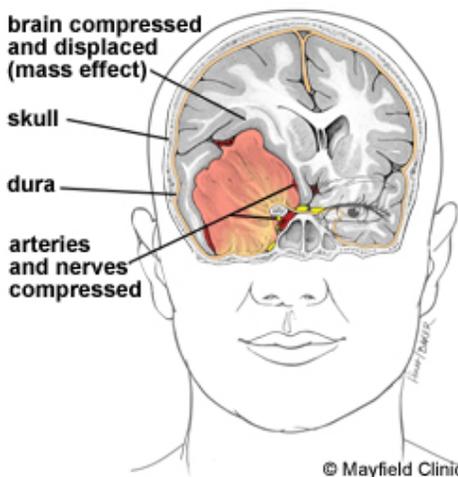
Deuteronomy 28:25 יהיה shall cause you to be defeated by your enemies: you will go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them: and will be scattered into all the kingdoms of the earth. C-MATS



Deuteronomy 28:26 And your carcasses will be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth and no man will frighten them away. **27** יהיה shall strike you with the boils of Egypt, tumors, scabs (*lesions*) and itching, from which you cannot be healed. C-MATS



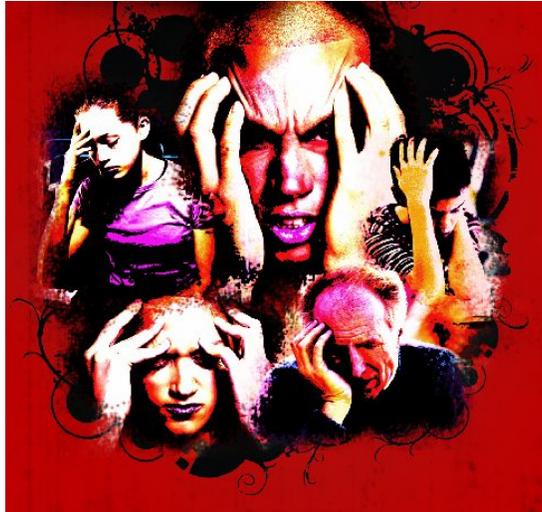
Boil



Tumor



Skin lesions (skin cancer)



Mental illness

Question: Is having a mental illness a curse? What are the most common mental illnesses? Anxiety disorders are the most common mental health disorders, with 1/3 of the American population suffering from some sort of anxiety disorder (generalized anxiety, social anxiety, panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, or PTSD) at some point in their lives. Depression is the second most common disorder, with approximately 1/4 of women and 1/8 of men suffering at least one depressive episode during their lives. Substance abuse is also very common, with about 3% of the adult population having a serious illicit drug problem (cocaine, heroin, meth, etc.) and about 8% suffering from alcoholism. Eating disorders are also unfortunately common, especially among women, with 5% of women (1 in 20) and 1% of men having an eating disorder, either anorexia, bulimia, or binge eating disorder. Personality disorders (axis II mental health disorders) are also fairly common in the American population, with about 15% of people meeting the criteria for one of many personality disorders including obsessive-compulsive, antisocial, paranoid, schizoid, histrionic, avoidant, and dependent personality disorders. ADHD is also a common mental disorder, affecting between 1-5% of adults. Less common mental health disorders include bipolar disorder (between 1-2% of the population), and schizophrenia (between 0.5-1% of the population).

Deuteronomy 28:28 יהוה shall strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart. C-MATS

Question: How did the Israelites walk in **blindness and confusion**? Josephus states that the leaders of the Jewish rebellion bribed or in some way coerced a number of people to pretend to be prophets. During the war with Rome, these people were instructed to predict that יהוה would deliver the Israelites from their enemies in order to delude the people into fighting the Romans. These prophecies proved false. The Roman army eventually conquered Jerusalem and its temple; and there was not a "place in the city that had no dead bodies in it, but [the city] was entirely covered with those that were killed either by the famine or the rebellion." Josephus then goes on to say: *1,100,000 people were killed during the siege of Jerusalem.*

Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend nor give credit to the signs that were so evident, and did so plainly foretell their future desolation, but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them [emphasis mine].



Deuteronomy 28:29 And you will grope about at noon as the blind grope in darkness and you will not prosper **אֵת** in your ways: and you will be only oppressed and robbed continually and no man will save you. C-MATS

Question: How was “you will grope about at noon as the blind grope in darkness” fulfilled? Describing Yahusha’s crucifixion, Luke writes, “**And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. 45 And the sun was darkened.** (Luke 23:44-45).” The sixth hour is *midday*, approximately noon.

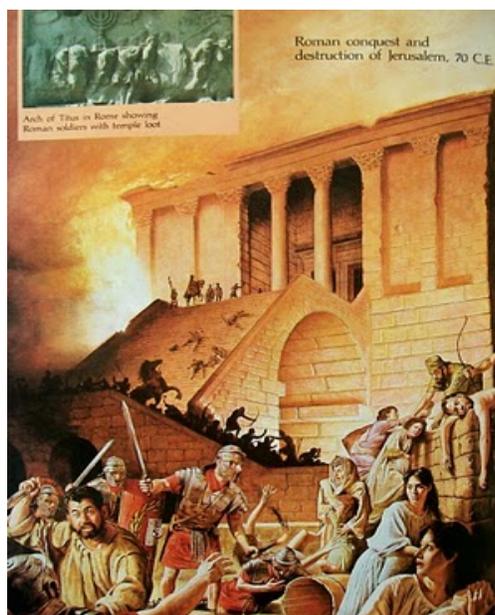
Question: How was you will be only oppressed and robbed continually fulfilled? Describing the madness of the Zealots, Josephus says “The *madness* of the seditious did also increase together with their famine, and both those miseries were every day inflamed more and more.” This madness and lack of food led to the next plague: seizure of someone’s property. In fulfillment this verse, Josephus writes: *For when [the Zealot robbers] saw any house shut up, this was to them a signal that the people within had gotten some food; whereupon they broke open the doors, and ran in and took pieces of what they were eating, almost up out of their very throats, and this by force; the old men, who held their food fast, were beaten; and if the women hid what they had in their hands, their hair was torn for so doing; nor was there any commiseration shown either to the aged or to the infants, but they lifted up children from the ground as they hung upon the morsels they had gotten, and shook them down upon the floor; but still were they more barbarously cruel to those that had prevented their coming in, and had actually swallowed down what they were going to seize upon as if they had been unjustly defrauded of their right. They also invented terrible methods of torment to discover where any food was, and they were these: to stop up the passages of the privy parts of the miserable wretches, and to drive sharp stakes up their fundaments!*



Destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem (painting by Francesco Hayez)

Deuteronomy 28:30 You will become engaged to a wife and another man will have sexual relations with her: you will build a house and you will not live there: you will plant a vineyard and will not gather the grapes from it. **31** Your ox *will be* killed before your eyes and you will not eat it: your donkey *will be* violently taken away from you and will not be restored to you: your sheep will be given to your enemies and you *will have* no one to rescue them. **32** Your sons and your daughters *will be* given to another people and you will watch for them longingly all day long but not see them: and there is nothing you can do about it. **C-MATS**

Question: Your sons and your daughters *will be* given to another people. How was this prophecy fulfilled? The Romans selected the most attractive young Israelites and shipped them to Rome, to be slaves and to gratify the lusts of the conquerors.

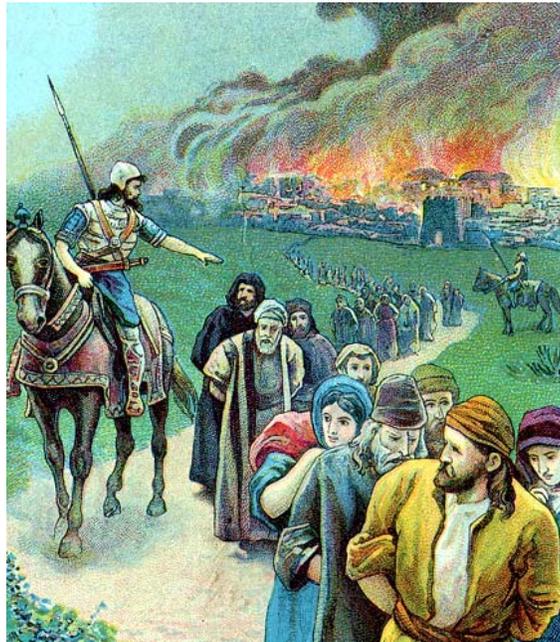




Jerusalem was plundered during the Jewish War

Deuteronomy 28:33 The fruit of your land and all your labors will be eaten up by a nation which you do not know; and you will be only oppressed and crushed always: **34** So that you will go crazy from all which you have seen. **35** יהוה shall strike you in the knees and in the legs with a severe boils that cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the top of your head. C-MATS

Question: What were the natural consequences of the Roman Conquest? Verses 30 to 35 describe the dire consequences of military conquest and exile. According to these verses, all that which is precious is taken away—property, wives and children—as plunder; and the inhabitants of Israel are dispersed into foreign lands.



The Captivity of Judah

(illustration from a Bible card published 1904 by the Providence Lithograph Company)

Deuteronomy 28:36 יהוה shall bring **אתך** you **ואת** and your king, who you have put over yourselves, to a nation which neither **אתה** you nor your fathers have known; and there you will serve other gods of wood and stone. C-MATS

Question: How was this prophecy fulfilled? Agrippa II was the last Israelite king. He was raised in Rome, and his tutors and friends were Romans, with the result that he was more Roman than Israelite. When he was installed as king in Jerusalem, he was instrumental in helping cause the exile. This may have been fulfilled through the first Israelite king who went to Rome, but this time as a captive. It happened when there was a civil war around Jerusalem between two Hasmonean brothers, Hyrcanus and Aristobulos, who were battling for the throne. They both sought help from the Romans, who were happy to oblige. They installed the weaker Hyrcanus as ruler and took Aristobulos captive and dragged him to Rome. That gave them a foothold in Israel that they never relinquished. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 28:37 And you will be so devastated as to become a proverb and a laughingstock among all nations where יהוה will lead you. C-MATS

Question: When was this prophecy fulfilled? After the city of Jerusalem was finally destroyed, 97,000 Jews were exiled throughout Rome. There they were enslaved or executed by sword, wild beasts, or gladiatorial combat. The strongest were reserved for the Triumph in which the humiliated Jews were forced to walk the streets of Rome in a pompous parade exhibiting their defeat. Upon the cessation of this festivity, the Law was placed in the royal palace and coins were minted throughout the Roman Empire depicting crestfallen Jewish captives. Thus Jewish exiles could not buy or sell without handling the graven image of Caesar alongside the likeness of their defeat at the hands of the Romans.



On the back of this Roman coin are crestfallen Jewish slaves. This is a denigrating depiction of the Israelites after the war.

Deuteronomy 28:38 You will carry much seed out *into* the field and will gather little in because the locust will eat it. 39 You will plant vineyards and dress *them* but will neither drink *of* the wine nor gather *the grapes*; because the worms will eat them. 40 You will have olive trees throughout all your territory but you will not anoint *yourself with* the oil because your olives will fall off unripe. 41 You will give birth to sons and daughters but you will not enjoy them because they will go into captivity. C-MATS

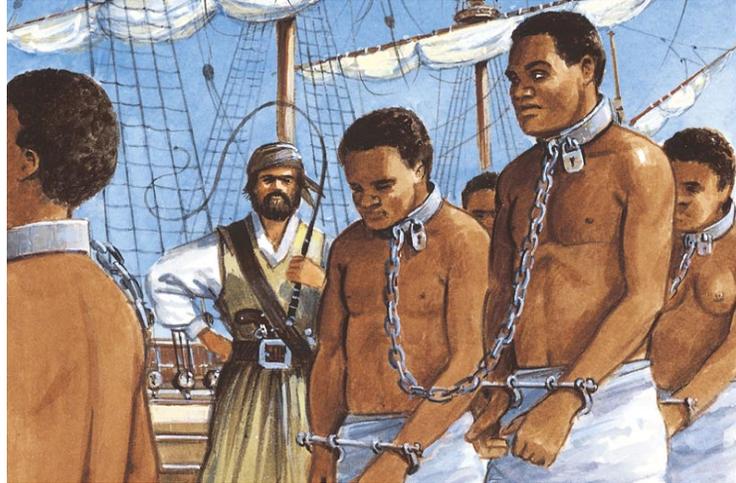


Roman army was like a swarm of locusts

Deuteronomy 28:42 The locust will devour all your trees and the fruit of your land. 43 The stranger *living with* you will rise higher and higher **וְאַתָּה** and you will sink lower and lower. 44 He will lend to you **וְאַתָּה** and you will not lend to him: he will be the head **וְאַתָּה** and you will be the tail. 45 All these curses will come upon you and will pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed because you did not listen and obey the voice of יהוה your Elohim to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. C-MATS

Question: How was the Roman army like a swarm of locusts? *During the Jewish War, the Roman army burned many of the cities of Israel and their surrounding suburbs as part of its scorched earth policy. Timber was also cut down to build siege engines pictured above.* “He [the Roman General Titus] . . . gave his soldiers leave to set the suburbs on fire, and ordered that they should bring timber together, and raise banks against the city So the trees were now cut down immediately, and the suburbs left naked.” In verses 38-42, יהוה threatens to punish his people with a swarm of locusts. The Book of Revelation records the consummation of this threat by describing the Roman militia as a swarm of locusts in Revelation 9

Deuteronomy 28:46 And *these curses* will be upon you as **לְאוֹת** sign and a wonder upon your descendants forever. 47 Because you *did* not serve **אֱתֵי** יהוה your Elohim with joyfulness and with gladness of heart for *giving you* the abundance of all things. 48 Therefore, you will serve **אֱתֵי** your enemies, which יהוה will send against you while you are hungry, thirsty, naked and in want of all *things*: and he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed **אֶתְךָ** you. C-MATS



Deuteronomy 28:49 יהוה will bring a nation against you from far *away*, from the end of the earth, *as swift as the eagle flies*; a nation whose tongue you will not understand; 50 A nation of grim countenance, which will not respect the elderly or show favor to the young. C-MATS

Question: Who was the eagle in verse 49? The symbol of Rome was the eagle.



Deuteronomy 28:51 And he will eat the fruit of your cattle and the fruit of your land until you are destroyed: he will not leave you *any* grain, wine, or oil, *or* the young of your cattle, or flocks of your sheep until he has destroyed אתך you. C-MATS



Armies surround the city

Deuteronomy 28:52 And he will lay siege on you in all your towns until your high and fenced walls come down, in which **אתה** you trusted, throughout all your land, which יהוה your Elohim has given you. 53 In the siege and its difficulties in which your enemies will distress you, you will eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters, which יהוה your Elohim has given you: 54 The *most* tenderhearted and very sensitive man among you will be evil toward his brother **יבאשתו** and toward the wife he loves and toward the remnant of his surviving children, 55 So that he will not give any of the flesh of his children *to them*: because he has nothing left *for him to eat* in the siege and in the difficulties in which your enemies will distress you in all your towns. 56 The most tender and delicate *woman* among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground *because she is so delicate and tender*, will be evil toward the husband she loves and toward her son and toward her daughter, 57 And she will secretly eat the afterbirth that comes out of her and her children who she will give birth to: she will eat them secretly because she is so hungry during the siege and its difficulties, in which your enemy will distress you in your towns. C-MATS

Question: How was verse 53 fulfilled? Sulpitius Severus says that in the heart of the siege, the people of Jerusalem ate their dead: *Moreover, they [the Jews trapped in Jerusalem during the siege of A.D. 70] ventured on eating all things of the most abominable nature, and did not even abstain from human bodies, except those which putrefaction had already laid hold of and thus excluded from use as food.*

Question: When was this prophecy fulfilled? Vespasian and his son Titus came from Rome to conquer the Land and destroy Jerusalem and the Second Temple. The awful conditions described through verse 57 took place during the siege of Jerusalem (Ramban). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 28:58 If you will not observe and do **את** all the words of **הזאת** this Torah that are written in this book, that you may fear **את** the Name, the glorious and fearful **את יהוה** your Elohim; 59 Then will make wonderful יהוה **את** your plagues **ואת** and the plagues of your seed (*descendants*) *even great plagues* of long continuance and sicknesses and sores of long continuance. 60 Also He will bring upon you **את** all the diseases of Egypt, which you were afraid of; and they will cling to you. 61 Every sickness and every plague, which is not written in the book of **הזאת** this Torah, יהוה will bring upon you until you are destroyed. C-MATS

Deuteronomy 28:67 In the morning you will say to Elohim, How I wish *it were* evening and at evening you will say to Elohim, how I wish *it were* morning, because of the fear overwhelming your heart and the sights that your eyes have seen. **68** And יהוה will bring you *back* to Egypt in ships, to the place אמרת *I said* to you, You will see it again no more: and there you will be sold to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no man will purchase *you*. C-MATS

Question: When was this prophecy fulfilled? The Israelite captives longed for Egyptians to buy them as slaves, but instead they were condemned to death (ibid.) This happened in the immediate aftermath of the Roman conquest. *Chumash*

Question: How was verse 68 fulfilled? Josephus says, “And as for the rest of the multitude that were above seventeen years old, he put them into bonds, and sent them to the Egyptian mines.” The fact that the Romans took many captives away on ships is attested in the *Midrash*. Then in fulfillment of the rest of v. 68, the Romans were said to have captured and enslaved so many Jews that there was a shortage of buyers: *For they left only the populace, and sold the rest of the multitude, with their wives and children, and every one of them at a very low price, and that because such as were sold were very many, and the buyers were few.*

Question: Can anything stop the curses coming upon the sinful Israelites? Just as nothing can prevent יהוה's blessings from being fulfilled, no matter how unlikely it may seem, so nothing will stop the curses from being realized. *Chumash*

Question: Why was the Wilderness experience important for the Israelites? Only now, after forty years of miraculous survival and the beginning of a conquest that was clearly accomplished by יהוה, could the people fully appreciate the awesome degree of gratitude and allegiance they owed Him. A student does not fully understand his teacher until after forty years. It was now forty years since Moses had led them out of Egypt, so that he told them that יהוה would now begin to expect more of them. *Chumash*

Question: What curses will you receive if you do not keep יהוה's commandments?

1. shortages
2. confusion (panic)
3. turmoil
4. pestilence
5. consumption
6. illnesses with burning fevers
7. a disease which causes unquenchable thirst
8. killed with the sword (hostile armies)
9. crops killed with blast and yellowing (diseases of the grain)
10. skies above you will be [like] copper (will not rain)
11. the earth below you [like] iron (will not produce food)
12. rain of your land become powder and dust
13. broken before your enemy
14. your corpse will be food for all birds and beasts

15. boils of Egypt
16. hemorrhoids
17. oozing sores
18. dry lesions
19. insanity
20. blindness
21. bewilderment (clogging of the heart)
22. unsuccessful in your ways
23. will experience controversy regarding everything you do
24. will plant his vineyard, but will not live to redeem it] in the fourth year to eat its fruits
25. engaged to a woman, but another man will lie with her
26. will build a house, but you will not live in it
27. children go into slavery
28. wronged and crushed all the days of your life
29. terrible skin eruptions
30. whoever sees you will be astonished about what has happened to you
31. locusts eat your crops
32. worms will devour your vineyards
33. enemies overtake you and take your land
34. enemies will eat the crops you have planted
35. enemies will take your livestock
36. enemies will put your city under siege
37. enemies will cause you to die from starvation
38. you will eat your children to keep from starving
39. enemies will rejoice over your downfall
40. scatter you among the nations
41. will serve other gods
42. depression
43. no peace
44. live in fear
45. sold into captivity and become slaves

Deuteronomy 29:1 These *are* the words of the covenant, which commanded **את־יהוה** Moses to make *with* **את־** Children of Israel in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant which He made **את־ם** *with them* in Horeb. 2 And Moses called to all Israel and said to them, **את־ם** *You*, **ראיתם** *you saw* **את** *all that* **יהוה** *did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land;* 3 **The great testings** which your eyes have seen, the signs and those great miracles: 4 Yet to this day **יהוה** has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear. 5 And I have led **את־כם** *you* forty years in the wilderness: your clothes have not worn old and your shoes have not worn old on your feet. 6 You have not eaten bread or drunk wine or strong drink: so that you might know that I *am* **יהוה** your Elohim. 7 And when you came to this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon and Og the king of Bashan came out against us in battle and we defeated them:

Deuteronomy 29:8 And we took **את** their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites and to the half tribe of Manasseh. **9** Keep therefore, **את** words of **הוא** this covenant and do **הם** them so that you may prosper in **את** all that you do. C-MATS

Question: Who did Moses call to come listen to his words? On the last day of his life, Moses gathered together every member of the Israelite people, from the most exalted to the lowliest, old and young, men and women, and initiated them for the last time into the covenant of יהוה. What was new about this covenant was the concept of responsibility for one another under which every Israelite is obligated to help others observe the Torah and to restrain them from violating it. Leaders may be able to affect masses of people; women, their immediate families and neighbors; children, only a few friends and classmates; common laborers, hardly anyone. יהוה does not demand more than is possible, but He is not satisfied with less (Or HaChaim). *Chumash*

Question: Why was Israel cursed? Israel had happy times, prosperity, and everything it could have desired, but it did not serve יהוה. יהוה's anger was aroused when Israel's failure to serve יהוה was done with gladness and goodness of heart. In return, Israel became submissive to its enemies, along with humiliation, hunger, and disease. *Chumash*

Question: What is a generational curse? When someone is living under the bondage that the sins of their forefathers has brought them under, this is a generational curse. **Exodus 34:7** **Showing mercy to thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but by no means clearing the guilty; but placing the iniquity of the אבות fathers upon the children and upon the children's children, to the third and to the fourth generation.** Some symptoms of a generational curse are a continual negative pattern of something being handed down from generation to generation. Some common symptoms of generational curses are family illnesses that seem to just walk from one person down to the next (cancer is a common physical manifestation of a spiritual bondage), continual financial difficulties (they continually hit roadblocks in their finances), mental problems, persistent irrational fears and depression. Anything that seems to be a persistent struggle or problem that was handed down from one generation to another may very well be a generational curse. The good news is that once you accept Yahusha and repent from your sins and the sins of your ancestors, the transference of bondage stops from your ancestors by mean of generational curses.

Question: If you fall into sin, can you reawaken a generational curse? Curses are carried by our DNA. If you have involved yourself in any sin or opened any doors in your own life while “awaking” or triggering the curses, then it’s important that you clear up any legal grounds (or strongholds) that you gave the enemy in your own life relating to the bondage. For example, if you have gone to see a demonic movie and it seemed to have triggered spirits of fear in your life that were handed down to you, then it’s important to repent for going to see such a movie. It’s also possible that you picked up the spirits from such a movie without them even being there in the first place, and/or added to spirits that were already hindering you. It’s always a good idea to clear up any legal grounds or strongholds in your own life before casting spirits out. Unforgiveness is a great way to “trigger” generational spirits, so look out for any bitterness or unforgiveness in your heart as well. When a curse of cancer is running down the family tree, bitterness is a great way to trigger that curse. Unforgiveness is a serious sin that blocks the forgiveness for your own sins, which creates ample legal grounds for the enemy in your life. Unforgiveness in itself puts us into the enemy’s hands; say nothing about awakening any evil curse in us already!

Question: Do you need to forgive someone today? Are you allowing curses to remain on you due to bitterness and unforgiveness? **Matthew 6:14 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. C-MATS**

Matthew 18:23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. 24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his master commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all. 27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. 28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that you owe. 29 And his fellow servants fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay you all. 30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. 31 So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their master all that was done. 32 Then his master, after that he had called him, said unto him, O you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you desired of me: 33 Should not you also have had compassion on your fellow servants, even as I had pity on you? 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. 35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses. C-MATS

Question: Do you want success in your life? Keep therefore, **את** words of **הוא** *this* covenant and do **הוא** *them* so that you may prosper in **את** all that you do. C-MATS

Do You Know?

1. ____ people went down to Egypt. (how many?)
2. Your tithes is ____% of all you earn, grow, gather, or raise.
3. When the Israelites crossed the Jordan they were commanded to write upon ____ all the words of the Torah.
4. Cursed is one who misguides a ____ person
5. Cursed *is* he who accepts a ____ to kill an innocent person.
6. If you keep יהוה's commandments, you will be blessed in the ____ and in the field.
7. And יהוה will make you the head and not the ____.
8. If you will ____ to the voice of יהוה your Elohim and obey all His commandments, יהוה will bless you.
9. You should bring the ____ fruits of all your produce to יהוה in a ____ to the Temple
10. If you want to have success, you must ____ all the words of the covenant.
11. A generational curse is handed down from your ____.
12. ____ has broken all the generational curses of your ancestors, if you repent and believe in Him and obey His Commandments.
13. Arise. Shine. For your ____ has come.
14. Israel described as a land of ____ and ____.
15. The Altar was commanded to be erected on Mount ____ in this week's parshah.
16. ____ sins were enumerated by the Levites while facing Mount Ebal. (How many?)

Answers:

1. 70
2. 10%
3. stones
4. blind
5. bribe
6. city
7. tail
8. listen
9. first, basket
10. obey
11. ancestors
12. Yahusha
13. Light
14. Milk, honey
15. Ebal
16. 12

Haftorah

Isaiah recounts descriptions of what will unfold during the Redemption. Beginning with the resurrection of the dead and the ingathering of the exiles, continuing with the joy and abundance the Israelite people will then experience, as well as the gifts that will be brought to יהוה from all of the nations of the world. Finally, the Israelite nation will no longer be despised and derided, there will no longer be violence or mourning, and יהוה will shine His everlasting light on His people.

Isaiah 60:1 Arise shine; for your light is come and the glory of יהוה is risen upon you. 2 For, surely, darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people; but יהוה will arise upon you and His glory shall be seen upon you. 3 And nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising. 4 Lift up your eyes round about and see: they all gather themselves together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far and your daughters shall be carried in the arms. 5 Then you shall see and be radiant and your heart shall thrill and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. 6 The multitude of camels shall cover you, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praises of יהוה. 7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall come up with acceptance on My altar; and I will glorify the house of My glory. 8 Who are these that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows? 9 Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring your sons from far, their silver and their gold **אתם *with them*, for the name of יהוה your Elohim and for the Holy One of Israel, because He has glorified you. 10 And foreigners shall build up your walls and their kings shall minister to you: for in My wrath I defeated you, but in My favor have I had mercy on you. 11 Your gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day or night; that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations and their kings led captive. 12 For that nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. 13 The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, the Fir-tree, the pine and the box-tree together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious. C-MATS**

Isaiah 60:14 And the sons of them that afflicted you shall come bending to you; and all they that despised you shall bow themselves down at the soles of your feet; and they shall call you the city of יהודה, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. 15 Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through you, I will make you an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. 16 You shall also suck the milk of the nations and shall suck the breast of kings; and you shall know that I, יהודה, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. 17 For brass I will bring gold and for iron I will bring silver and for wood brass and for stones iron. I will also make your officers peace and your exactors righteousness. 18 Violence shall no more be heard in your land, desolation nor destruction within your borders; וְקִרְאתִי and you [shall] call your walls Salvation (*Yeshuwah*) and your gates Praise. 19 The sun shall be no more your light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light to you: but יהודה will be to you an everlasting light and your Elohim your glory. 20 Your sun shall no more go down, neither shall your moon withdraw itself; for יהודה will be your everlasting light and the days of your mourning shall be ended. 21 Your people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified. 22 The little one shall become a thousand and the small one a strong nation; I, יהודה, will hasten it in its time.
C-MATS

Brit Chadashah

Question: As a result of the tribe of Judah not keeping His commandments, what blessing did יהודה withhold from them? Acts 28:17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. 18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me? 19 But when the Jews spoke against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I ought to accuse my nation of. 20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. 21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning you, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spoke any harm of you. 22 But we desire to hear of you what you think: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against. 23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of Elohim, persuading them concerning Yahusha, both out of the Torah of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spoke the Ruach haKodesh by Isaiah the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of Elohim is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves. 30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of Elohim, and teaching those things which concern Adonai Yahusha haMashiach, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.
C-MATS

Question: What prophecy given by Isaiah was fulfilled by Yahusha delivering the Gentiles from darkness? **Matthew 4:13** And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: **14** That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, **15** The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; **16** The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. **17** From that time Yahusha began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. **18** And Yahusha, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. **19** And he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. **20** And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. **21** And going on from there, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. **22** And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. **23** And Yahusha went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. **24** And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. C-MATS

Question: Who are the Gentiles in this verse? These are the lost tribes of Israel who are walking in darkness and acting like the pagans.

Question: Will the tribe of Judah be cursed forever? Will they be redeemed in the last days? **Romans 11:1** I say then, Hath Elohim cast away his people? Elohim forbid. I am an Israelite from the seed of Abraham and the tribe of Benjamin. **2** Elohim has not cast away his people which he foreknew. Know you not what the scripture says of Elias? how he makes intercession to Elohim against Israel, saying, **3** יְהוָה, they have killed your prophets, and torn down your altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. **4** But what says the answer of Elohim unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. **5** Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. **6** And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. **7** What then? Israel has not obtained that which he seeks for; but the election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded **8** According as it is written, Elohim has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day. **9** And David said, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them: **10** Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always. **11** I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? Elohim forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. **12** Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? **13** For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: **14** If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. **15** For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? C-MATS

Respect the Elderly

Question: Should the young respect the elderly? It's great being young. A young person is full of energy and bursting with ideas. Yet **יהוה** wants us to respect the elderly who have the wisdom of long years of experience. In our Torah portion, Moses tells the Israelite nation about the types of evil people they may have to encounter in their history, and he describes them as being "a brazen people who will not respect the old". In other places, the Torah specifically instructs us that a believer should always go out of his way to help an elderly person with special kindness and respect. Older people have lived through a lot, and by honoring them and helping them it shows that we appreciate who they are and all they have been through.

"THE HIGH ROAD"

With a zoom the red-and-white intercity bus pulled up to the curb. It was rush hour and Sari knew that the bus would fill up very fast. When the door opened she tried to get on as quickly as possible in order to get a seat.

Sari was tired. It had been a long trip going to visit her grandma in the nursing home. It took a lot out of her, but she knew how much her grandma appreciated the company. Now the day was almost over, and Sari was anxious to plop down into a nice comfortable seat and maybe even catch a few winks on the ride home.

She got on quickly, paid the driver, and made a semi-frantic dash down the aisle to get a seat. Toward the back of the bus she found an empty window seat next to a girl she recognized from the neighborhood. The two exchanged friendly glances and made a bit of small talk.

"Congratulations," said the blonde-haired girl named Judy. "I see you're good at 'beating the crowd' to get a seat."

Sari smiled and sat back as the bus started to move. The girl next to her picked up a novel she had brought, and Sari settled into the freshly upholstered seat. Feeling her eyes growing heavy, she closed them and listened to the steady hum of the motor mixing with the animated chatter of the other passengers both sitting and standing on the crowded bus.

But just as she was about to doze off, Sari heard what sounded like heavy breathing, punctuated by an occasional sigh over her left shoulder. Stirring, she glanced up and saw, amongst the standees, an elderly looking woman in a flowered print dress. She looked uncomfortable as she held onto the handrail and tried to steady herself while the bus careened down the winding road.

"Gee," thought Sari, "Maybe I should give this lady my seat. She looks like she's having a pretty rough time." She glanced around the crowded bus and noticed that nearly everyone sitting down seemed much younger and stronger than the lady in the aisle. They were settled into their ride and didn't seem the least bit concerned about the elderly standee.

"Well, nobody *else* is standing up," Sari thought, "And I'll bet they're not half as tired as I am." She leaned back in her seat and tried to close her eyes, but she felt restless. She kept picturing her dear grandma, and then the lady in the aisle.

"How would I feel if my poor grandma had to stand like that?" she asked herself. Just then she felt a surge of energy and realized what she had to do. She tapped Judy on the shoulder. "Excuse me please," she said. "I have to get up."

The girl gave her a puzzled look, shrugged her shoulders and let Sari pass. Sari smiled at the older lady. "Pardon me, I believe there is an empty seat here," she said, pointing to what had been her own precious seat just a moment ago.

"Why thank you child," cooed the woman with a look of obvious relief. "I thought I would be all right standing, but I guess I'm not as young as I used to be," she added with a sweet smile and moved to sit down.

Sari felt great. She took a deep breath and held onto the hand rail. She was enjoying the scenery when a middle aged lady sitting next to her tugged on her sleeve. "Good for you!" she said. "You're an example for us all."

Sari beamed. This was one bus ride she would remember for a long time.

Question: How did Sari feel when she first found a seat? She was tired and glad that she was quick enough to get one.

Question: How did Sari feel after she let the older lady take her seat? She felt even happier since she was able to honor and help an elderly person. And she didn't even feel so tired anymore either.

Question: Sari got the seat first. Wouldn't she have been justified keeping it for herself? Why or why not? True, she had gotten there first. But "first come first served" is not always right. Because of her age and the special respect due to her, the older lady should get the seat.

Question: What did the lady at the end of the story mean when she told Sari she was an example for others? Why do you think the other people didn't get up? There were many people on the bus who could have stood up for the elderly lady. In fact if they had been asked directly, most of them would have probably given up their seat for her. But it's likely that many of them simply pretended not to see, or rationalized that someone else should do it. Sari resisted this temptation and did the right thing. The Torah recognizes this human tendency and goes out of its way to teach us not to close our eyes in situations like this.

Question: If you were walking up to a check-out line in a supermarket and you noticed an old man also stepping up, would it be right to run ahead of him, or should you let him go first? Why? You should let him go first because he's elderly and it might be hard for him to stand in line. But besides this, it's showing him respect, which is the right thing to do.

Question: What is happiness? You may assume that happiness is something that only comes when you were doing something you want to do, but even when you do not want to do something you can act and be happy and gain positive energy to succeed. When a person's happy, he can do anything. Being happy and joyful is like super-charged energizing fuel that can get you through anything in life. You may not be happy about what you are doing, but you can be happy about life and what יהוה has given you.

Question: What can a person do to feel more joyful? The act of simply smiling has a positive effect, as does thinking positive thoughts. Find the positive things in your life and be thankful for them. Doing what is right and helping others can help you feel joyous.

Question: Is it hypocritical to try to act joyful if we just don't feel that way? Not at all. The natural state of a person's soul is joyful. However, it's easy for that joy to get covered up in the difficulties and worries of life. When we break through that cover-up and push ourselves to feel joy, we are merely re-connecting with our true selves and with the infinite energy of the soul.

Question: Even though unhappiness isn't a sin in itself, it leads to all negative and destructive behaviors. What do you think this means? When a person is down on himself and others, he becomes lethargic and loses the will to fight against his negative impulses. Nor will he have the strength to stand up for the values that mean the most to him. A happy person will find himself full of positive energy that will push him in the direction of his deepest values and most cherished goals.



Spiritual exercise: One time today, smile and thank יהוה for the good things in your life while doing a task you find difficult and see how it makes you feel.

Resources:

The Stone Edition of The Chumash

The Complete Messianic Aleph Tav Scriptures C-MATS www.AlephTavScriptures.com

“Weekly Torah Portion” from www.aish.com (stories)

Antiquities of the Jews by Josephus

Preterist Bible Commentary