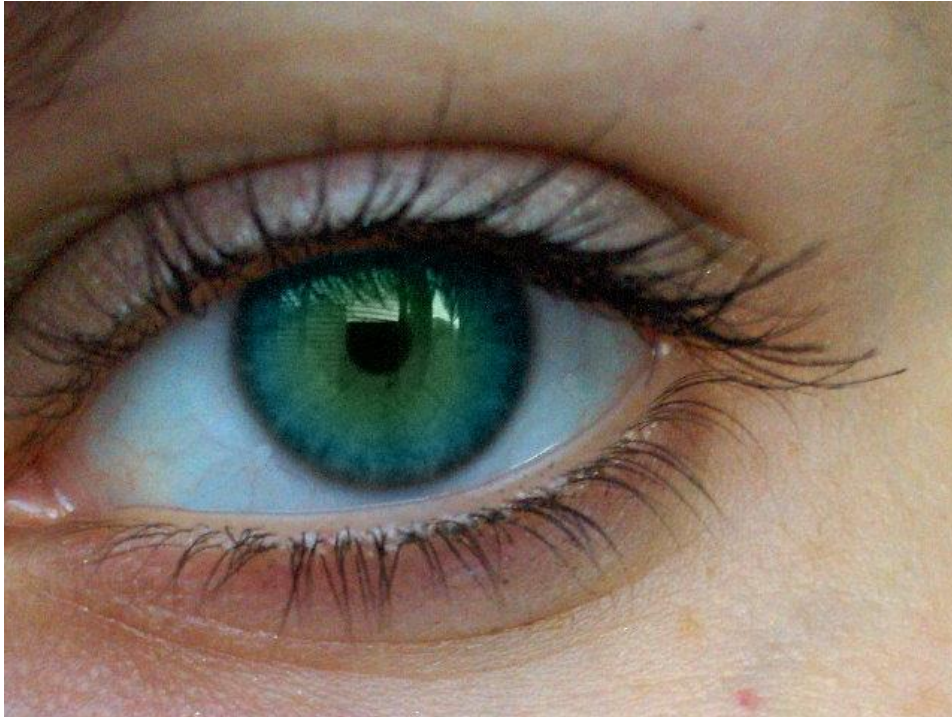


Re'eh (See!)



Moses instructs the Israelites regarding idolatry, false prophets, clean and unclean foods, tithes, freeing slaves, and the pilgrimage festivals

Deuteronomy 11:26 I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; 27 **את־** blessing, if you obey the commandments of יהוה your Elohim, which I command **אתְּכֶם** you this day. C-MATS

Question: Do we have a choice whether we obtain a blessing or a curse? Freedom of choice has been granted to every man: if he desires to turn toward a good path and be righteous, the ability to do so is in his hands; and if he desires to turn toward an evil path and be wicked, the ability to do so is in his hands. Each individual has it in his power to affect the entire world for good or bad. *Chumash*

Question: Who will receive the blessings? The blessings will come to you only on the condition that you hearken to (hear) the commandments (Rashi). *Chumash*

"Hearing" is a metaphor for blessing, because the only way a person can attain יהוה's blessings is if he has the ability to hear or understand what the Torah wants of him. In speaking of the world of the future, the prophet says, Surely, the days come, says Adonai יהוה, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing *and obeying (Shema) את* words of יהוה. (Amos 8:11). Thus, in the future, everyone will understand the message of this verse, which is that "blessing" consists of the ability to hear what is truly essential (Sfas Emes), and to pick that out from the confusion of competing messages in the world with which people are overwhelmed. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 11:28 And a curse, if you will not obey the commandments of יהוה your Elohim, but turn aside from the way which I command **אתְּכֶם** you this day, to go after other gods, which you have not known. C-MATS

Question: How does יהוה view idolatry? One who worships an idol is considered as if he had rejected the entire Torah (Rashi), for idolatry is a rejection of יהוה. One who violates other commandments is surely worthy of punishment, but his tie to יהוה is not broken. *Chumash*

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 את the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the curse upon Mount Ebal. C-MATS

Question: How were the blessing and curses recited? The Levites turned their faces toward the mountain and began with the blessing: “Blessed is the man who does not make any graven or molten image....” Each of the curses in that section [beginning Deuteronomy 27:15] was first stated in the expression of a blessing. Afterwards, they turned their faces towards Mount Ebal and began to recite the corresponding curse. [Sotah 32a] *Chumash*

Question: Where is Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal? Mt. Gerizim is on the left and Mt. Ebal is on the right. The place in the middle is called Shechem. Many things happened at Shechem. Shechem is the place where יהוה talked to Abraham. יהוה promised Abraham that He would give this land to Abraham and his descendants. Shechem is also where Jacob and his family lived for a while. *Bibleplaces.com*



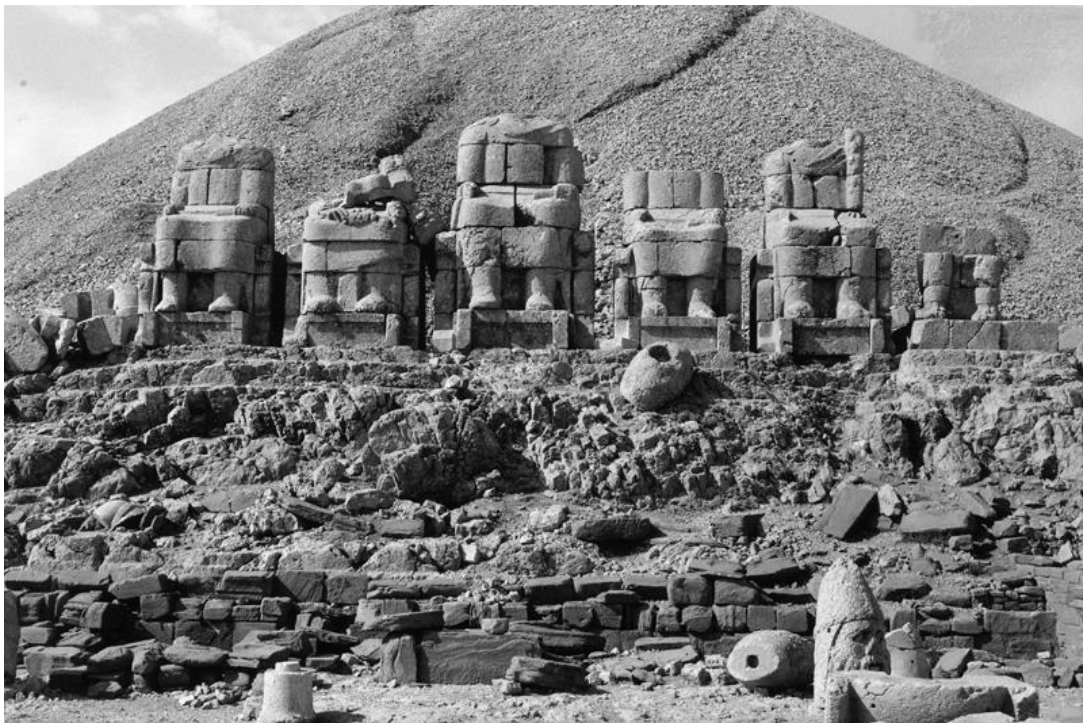
Shechem

Deuteronomy 11:30 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? 31 אתם You will pass over את the Jordan to go in to possess את the land, which יהוה your Elohim gives you and you will possess אתה it (her) and live there. 32 And you will observe and obey את all the statutes and judgments, which I set before you this day. C-MATS

Deuteronomy 12:1 These *are* the statutes and judgments, which you will observe *and obey* in the land, which יהוה Elohim of your fathers gives you to possess all the days that אתם *you* live upon the earth. 2 You will utterly destroy אתם all the places where the nations which אתם *you* shall possess אתם *which* אתם served their gods upon the high mountains and upon the hills and under every green tree: 3 And you will destroy אתם their altars and break אתם their pillars and burn their groves with fire; and you will cut down *the* graven images of their gods and destroy אתם *the* names of them from that place. C-MATS



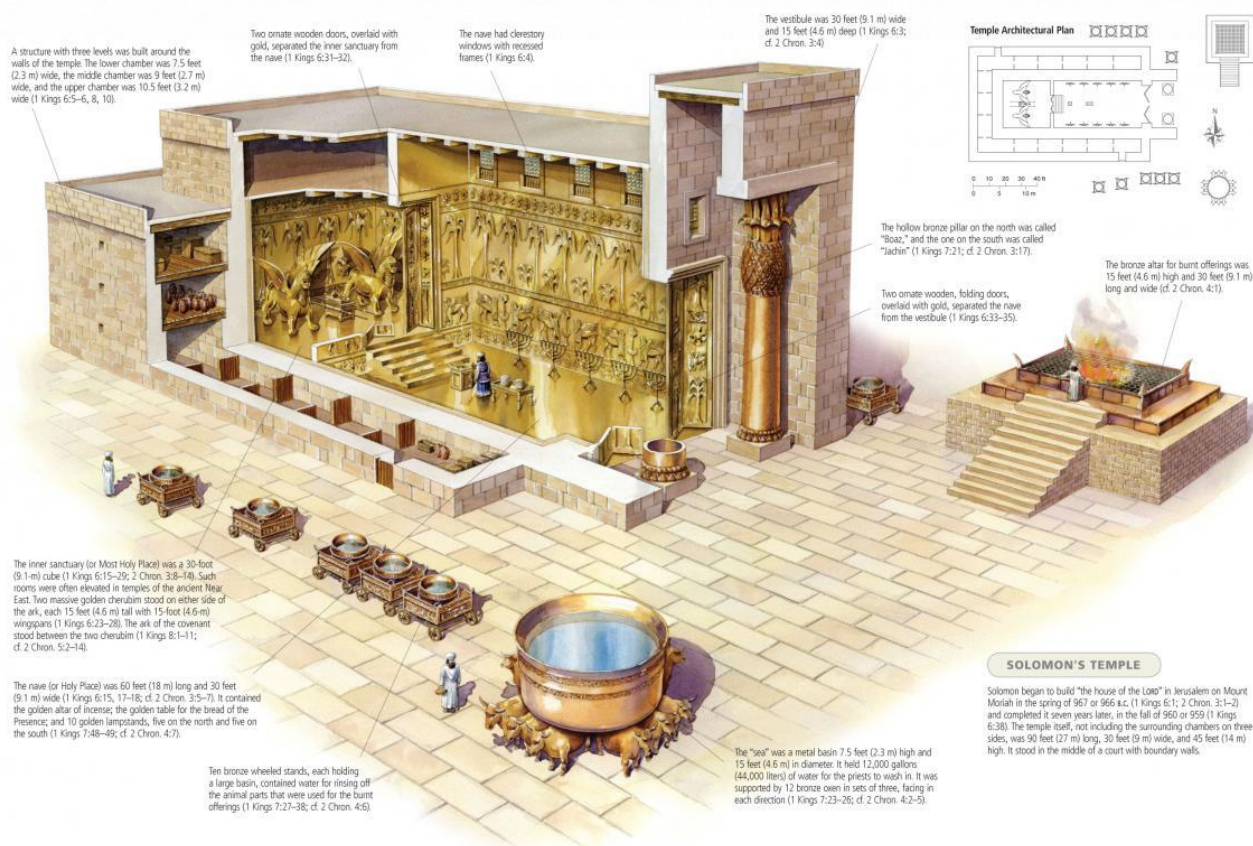
You will destroy אתם their altars and break אתם their pillars



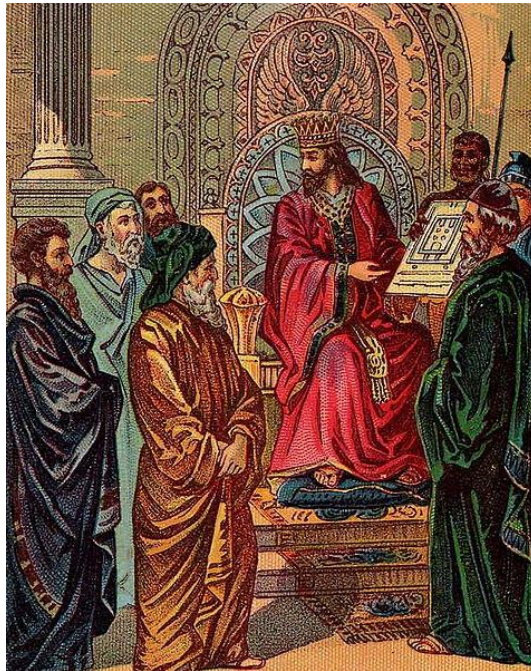
Question: How were the Israelites suppose to treat the idols of the Canaanites? The idols must be destroyed totally (Mizrachi). This is why it is not sufficient merely to chop down an Asherah, or idolatrous tree; even its roots must be removed from the ground (Rashi). (The Canaanites set up their idols on hill tops and under trees wherever the surroundings manifested the powers of nature, powers that they associated with their idols.) Not only should the idols themselves be removed, Israelites were not even to refer to them by their proper names. Instead, they should use derogatory nicknames for them (Rashi). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 12:4 You will not do to יהוה your Elohim *this way*. **5** You will come to the place which יהוה your Elohim will choose to put **את** His Name. *He will choose it from all your tribes. You will seek out this place where He will live ויבאת and you [will] come there.* C-MATS

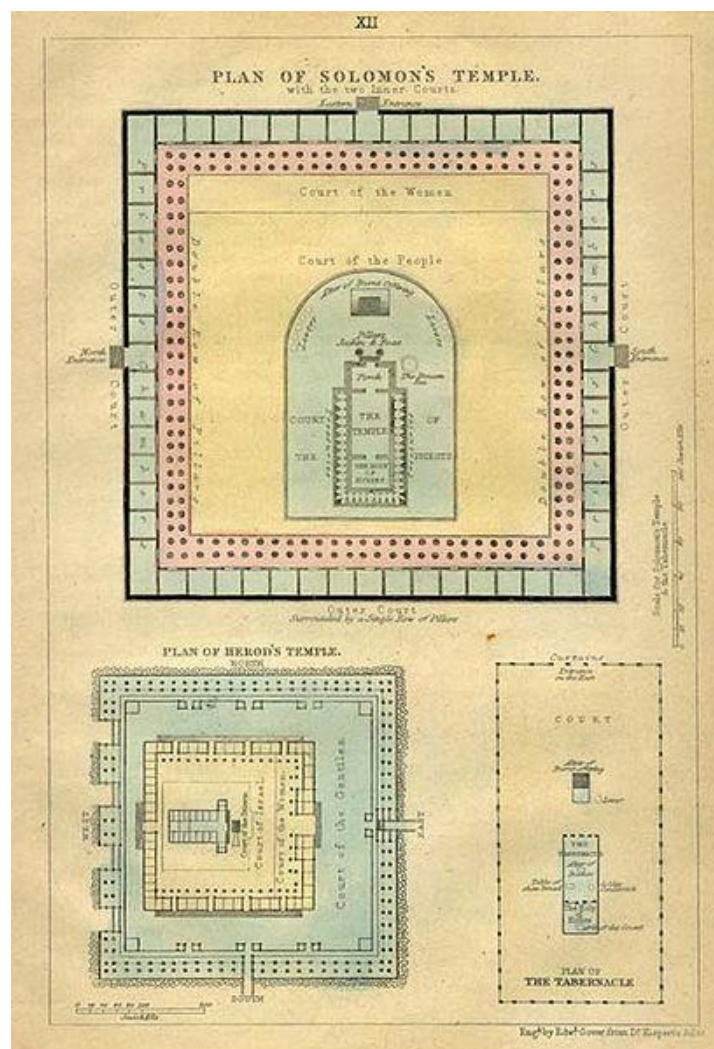
Question: What place did יהוה choose for the Israelites to worship? The location of the Altar in the Holy Temple is very exactly defined... It is a commonly-held tradition that the place where **David** and **Solomon** built the Altar, on the threshing floor of Arona, is the very place where **Abraham** built an altar and bound **Isaac** upon it; this is where **Noah** built an altar when he came out from the Ark; this is where **Cain** and **Abel** brought their offerings; this is where **Adam** the First Man offered a gift when he was created -- and it is from the earth of this place that he was created.



A reconstruction of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, the site that יהוה would choose as His habitation



King Solomon and the Plan for the Temple
 (Illustration from a Bible card published 1896 By the Providence Lithograph Company)



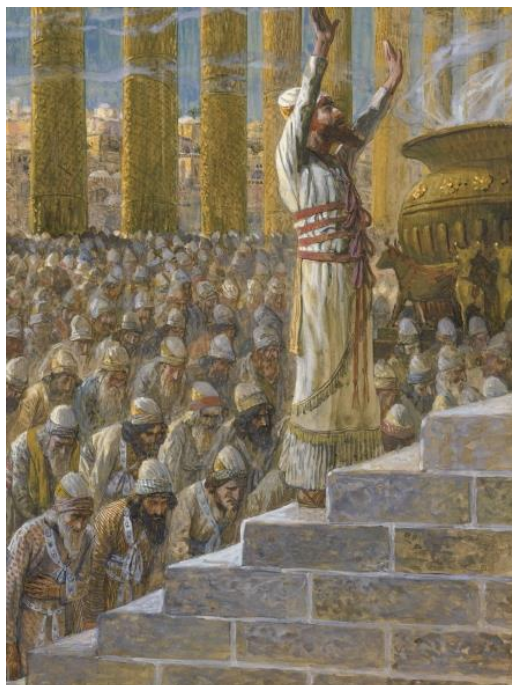
Plan of Solomon's Temple, Herod's Temple, and The Tabernacle

Deuteronomy 12:6 And you will bring your burnt offerings, sacrifices, **את** and tithes, **את** and heave offerings, your vows, your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herds and of your flocks: 7 And you will eat before **יהוה** your Elohim and you will rejoice in all that you set out to do, **אתם** you and your households which **יהוה** your Elohim has blessed you. C-MATS

Question: What offerings were the Israelites asked to bring to **יהוה**? Elevation (burnt) offerings are those that are burned completely on the Altar, and feast-offerings (sacrifices) are peace-offerings that are generally shared with the family and guests of the one bringing the offering. Voluntary offerings, either by vows to do so or by doing so without accepting a prior obligation (freewill offerings), were also brought. The tithes are the animal tithes that are brought as offerings (And concerning the tithe from the herd or flock, the tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's staff will be sacred to **ליהוה**. Leviticus 27:32) and the "second tithe" from crops (You will truly tithe (tenth) **את** all the increase of your seed that produces in the field year by year. Deuteronomy 14:22). "Heave offerings that you raise up with your hands" refers to the first fruits (And the priest will take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of **יהוה** your Elohim. Deuteronomy 26:4). *Chumash*

Question: How are you supposed to bring your offerings to **יהוה**? When you serve **יהוה**, you should do so joyously (Sforno). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 12:8 You will not do things the way that we do them here this day, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes. 9 Because you have not come to the rest and inheritance, which **יהוה** your Elohim is giving you. 10 But when you cross over **את** the Jordan and live in the land, which **יהוה** your Elohim gives **אתכם** you to inherit and when He gives you rest from all your enemies around you, so that you live in safety; 11 Then there will be a place which **יהוה** your Elohim will choose for His name to live and there you will bring **את** all that I command **אתכם** you; your burnt offerings, sacrifices, tithes (tenths), the heave offering you have brought and all your best possessions which you vowed to **ליהוה**: 12 And you will rejoice before **יהוה** your Elohim, **אתם** you and your sons, your daughters, your male and female servants and the Levite that is within your gates; since he has no part of the inheritance like you do. C-MATS



Priests worship at the Temple of Jerusalem

Question: What kind of offerings should you give to יהוה? One should bring offerings from the choicest or the best you have. In the Wilderness, one who wished to eat meat had to bring his animal to the Tabernacle as a peace-offering. Once the people arrived in the Land, the Torah permitted ordinary kosher slaughter wherever one wished. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 12:13 Be careful that you *do* not offer your burnt offerings *in* just any place that you see: 14 But *only* in the place which יהוה will choose from one of your tribes. There you will offer your burnt offerings and there you will do all that I command you. 15 However you may kill and eat meat wherever you live and as much as you אֵת *desire*, according to how יהוה your Elohim has blessed you and how much He has given you: *both* the unclean and the clean *person* may eat from the meat, *such as* a roebuck (*gazelle*) and hart (*deer*). 16 Only you cannot eat the blood; you will pour *the blood* upon the earth as water. 17 You may not eat on your own property the tithe (*tenth*) of your grain, *new wine*, olive oil, the firstborn of your herds or flock, any *offering* which you have vowed, your freewill (*voluntary*) offerings, or heave *offering* from your hand. C-MATS

Question: What offerings had to be eaten in Jerusalem? The male firstborn of cows, sheep, and goats are holy from birth and, if unblemished, must be brought as offerings; consequently they must be eaten in Jerusalem. If they become blemished, they are gifts to the Kohen and may be slaughtered and eaten anywhere (15:21-22). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 12:18 But you must eat them before יהוה your Elohim in the place which יהוה your Elohim will choose, אֵת *you* and your son and daughter, your male and female servant and the Levite who *lives with you*: and you will rejoice before יהוה your Elohim in all that you set your hands *to*. 19 Be careful that you don't abandon אֵת the Levite as long as you live upon the earth. C-MATS

Question: Should you support the Levite while in exile? There is no special obligation to support the Levites, except for the general obligation to support any poor person (Rashi). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 12:20 When enlarges יהוה your Elohim אֵת your border as He has promised, וְאָמַרְתָּ *and you say*, I will eat meat, because your soul longs to eat meat; you may eat as much meat as your soul אֵת *desires*. C-MATS

Question: When should we eat meat? You may eat meat, but only if you can afford to do so. Today, one should not indulge in luxuries unless יהוה has broadened his boundaries and enabled him to afford them (Rashi). *Chumash*

Question: How do we know if we are overindulging? When it comes to life's pleasures, like food and wine, a person will feel the happiest not by overindulging in them or by avoiding them - but by enjoying them in moderation. A good indicator of enjoying things (like food and wine) in moderation is that we have enough to feel good about it both while having them and after, but not so much that they make us feel sick or unhealthy afterward. Enjoyment is about using life's pleasures wisely, in the way that's best for our bodies and our souls - and that's what the Torah shows us how to do.

Question: What does "living within your means" mean? Do not spend money that you do not have. Do not use credit cards to purchase items that you do not have the money to buy. יהוה will give you what you need. Use the money that He gives you and if you manage this money wisely, then He will give you more money. He is waiting to see how well you use what He gives you first before He gives you more. A wise servant stretches his money and makes the most of what he has, but never borrows from others.

Spiritual Exercise: Do not overindulge in luxuries. Do not desire what you cannot afford. Live within the boundaries that יהוה has given you and be satisfied with what you have.

Deuteronomy 12:21 If the place which יהוה your Elohim has chosen to put His name *is* too far from you, then you will slaughter *animals* from your herd and your flock which יהוה has given you and you will eat on your own property as much as you אֵת desire. 22 Even as is eaten אֵת the roebuck (*gazelle*) אֵת and the hart (*deer*) so shall you eat them, *both* the unclean and the clean *person* may eat them. (*this verse does not imply the Israelites may eat unclean foods but that people who are clean or unclean may eat only the clean foods*) 23 Only be sure that you do not eat the blood: because the blood *is* the life; and you may not eat the life within the flesh. C-MATS

Question: Why does the verse say “be sure that you do not eat the blood”? Since it is stated, “be sure,” we learn that they were practicing the eating of blood. Therefore, it is necessary to state, “be sure” not to fall into temptation. You may also not eat meat that was torn from a living animal. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 12:24 You will not eat *the blood*; you will pour it upon the earth as water. 25 You will not eat *the blood*; so that it may go well with you and your children after you, *because* you do *that which is right* in the sight of יהוה. 26 Only the consecrated (*set aside*) things which you have *for Elohim* and your vows, אֵת and you [will] come to the place which יהוה will choose: 27 And you will offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of יהוה your Elohim: and the blood of your sacrifices will be poured out on the altar of יהוה your Elohim and you will eat the flesh (*meat*). C-MATS



Hear אֵת words

Deuteronomy 12:28 Obey and hear (*Shema*) אֵת all these words which I command you, that it may go well with you and your children after you forever, *because* you do *what is good and right* in the sight of יהוה your Elohim. C-MATS

Question: What are the general principles to follow to grow spiritually? Moses taught the people the process for spiritual accomplishment. First one must safeguard what one has learned, meaning that people must review the laws so that the Torah becomes a part of them, and they do not stumble when questions arise. With that done, they can hearken or perform the commandments properly. All the commandments -- whether obviously important or seemingly minor -- should be equally beloved (Rashi), because all are the word of יהוה, and human beings cannot know their order of importance. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 12:29 When you have cut off יהוה your Elohim את the nations where אתה you are going to enter before אותם them and you succeed and displaced אתם them and live in their land; **30** Be careful that you are not trapped by following them, after they have been destroyed by you; and that you do not inquire about their gods saying, How did serve these nations את their gods? I will do the same. **31** You will not do so unto יהוה your Elohim: for every abomination to ליהוה which He hates, have they done unto their gods and even את to their sons ואת and their daughters, who they have burnt with fire to their gods. C-MATS

Question: We have to be careful not to copy people's bad behavior. The Torah instructs the people not to imitate the idol worshiper's cruel and mistaken ways. So too, we have to be careful not to imitate people around us who are doing wrong. Why do you think people tend to imitate those around them? Human beings are social creatures. It is our nature to want to fit in. However, we also have the power - though it's not easy - to remain independent and refuse to 'go with the flow' if we don't like the way it's 'flowing.'

Question: Can a person be influenced by his or her environment for the good? Sure. If we want, we can surf that same human need to be social in the right direction, by hanging around with those whose values we admire.

Spiritual Exercise: Influence the people around you to go in the right direction. Don't allow those around you to hinder your walk with יהוה this week.



Do not add or take away.

Deuteronomy 12:32 Do את whatsoever I command אתכם you אתו Him; be careful to observe and obey it: you will not add to it or take from it. C-MATS

Question: Why shouldn't we add to the Torah? It is impossible to improve upon perfection. For one to add to the Torah implies that יהוה has fallen short, which is as disrespectful as saying that this or that commandment is wrong or irrelevant. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 13:1 If there rises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams and gives you a אות sign or a wonder, 2 אות the sign or the wonder comes to pass, which he spoke to you saying, Let us seek other gods, which you have not known and let us serve them. C-MATS

Question: What is a false prophet? Under extraordinary circumstances, a proven prophet has the right to override a commandment of the Torah temporarily, as Elijah did when he brought an offering at Mount Carmel, away from the Temple in Jerusalem (I Kings 18). This passage gives the exception to this rule: Anyone, even someone who had been acknowledged as a prophet, is automatically shown to be false if he claims to have been sent by יהוה to advocate any form of idolatry (Rambam). The same applies if he claims that any teaching of the Torah should be removed permanently (Sanhedrin 89a). It is a principle of our faith that none of the Torah can be removed; no matter how many miracles a prophet may perform. Our faith is not based on miracles and is not influenced by them. *Chumash*



Beware of a “dreamer of dreams”.

Deuteronomy 13:3 You will not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams: because יהוה your Elohim is testing אתכם *you* to prove whether you love את יהוה your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 After יהוה your Elohim, you will walk אתו *and Him* fear אתו *and His* commandments keep and His voice obey אתו *and Him* you will serve and cling to Him. C-MATS

Question: How do you “cling” to יהוה? The only way a human being can cling to יהוה is by imitating His ways. Just as He performs kind deeds, so should you; just as He buries the dead (His body will not remain all night upon the tree, but you will bury him that same day; so that he does not defile את your land. Deuteronomy 21:23), so should you; and just as He visits the sick, (And יהוה appeared to him in the plains of Mamre (*vigor/lusty*): and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day (*healing from his circumcision*). Genesis 18:1), so should you (Rashi). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 13:5 And that prophet or that dreamer of dreams will be put to death; because he has spoken to you and tried to turn you away from יהוה your Elohim, who brought אתכם *you* out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of bondage to turn you from the way which יהוה your Elohim commanded you to walk in. So you *must* put the evil away from you. 6 If your brother, the son of your mother, your son, your daughter, your אשת *wife* whom you love, or your friend, who means as much to you as yourself, entices you secretly saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which you have not known, neither אתה *you* or your father; 7 *Namely*, the gods of the people which *are* around you, near to you, or far away from you, from one end of the earth to *the other* end of the earth. C-MATS

Question: Why does the Torah mention gods that are very far away? The Torah mentions this detail to teach that from the character of the nearby idols and their worshipers, one can deduce what the distant ones are like (Rashi). Human nature commonly fantasizes that conditions are better elsewhere than they are locally; so, too, the Torah warns here against the misguided notion that far-off life-styles are more sophisticated than the corruption that one sees around him. *Chumash*

Question: How do you know what spirit to believe? 1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are from Elohim: because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 This is how you can know the Spirit of Elohim: Every spirit that confesses that Yahusha haMashiach is come in the flesh is from Elohim: 3 And every spirit that does not confess that Yahusha haMashiach came in the flesh is not from Elohim: and this is that spirit of anti-Messiah, which you heard that it should come; and even now already is in the world. 4 You are from Elohim, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5 They are from the world: they speak to the world, and the world hears them. 6 We are from Elohim: he that knows Elohim hears us; he that is not from Elohim does not hear us. This is how we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. C-MATS

Deuteronomy 13:8 You will not consent or listen to him; and you will not pity him, neither will you spare him or conceal him: 9 But you will kill him; your hand will be first to put him to death and then the hand of all the people. 10 And you will stone him with stones until he dies; because he has sought to entice you away from יהוה your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage. 11 And all Israel will hear *about it* and be afraid and they will not do such wickedness like *that anymore among themselves*. 12 If you will hear *someone say* in one of your cities, which יהוה your Elohim has given you to live in saying 13 *Certain men, the children of Belial, have sprung up among you and have drawn away אֶת the inhabitants of their city saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which you have not known.* 14 Then you shall inquire and make search וְשָׁאַלְתָּ and you [shall] ask diligently; and see *if the matter is אִמְרָה true and if such abominations as אֵלֵּהֶם these have been committed among you;* 15 You will certainly kill אֶת the inhabitants of that city with the sword destroying אֶתֶּהּ *it (her) completely אֶתֶּךָ and all that is therein אֶתֶּךָ and the cattle thereof with the edge of the sword.* 16 אֶתֶּךָ and all the spoils you will gather from *the city* into the middle of the street and burn with fire אֶתֶּךָ the city אֶתֶּךָ and all the spoils in it to ליהוה your Elohim: and it will be a heap of ruins forever; it will not be built again. 17 None of what has been set for destruction will remain in your hand: so יהוה will turn from the fierceness of his anger and show you mercy and have compassion upon you and multiply you, as He has sworn to your fathers. C-MATS

Question: What should be done to a city that worships idols? If a city is so spiritually corrupt that all or most of its citizens were persuaded to worship idols, the entire city is declared a Wayward City and the inhabitants are executed by the sword. The city and all its property must be destroyed. It is forbidden to derive any benefit from an idol. Finally, the city must remain a desolate heap, never to be rebuilt. But if less than a majority of its people yielded to this perversion, they are treated as individual idolaters and are subject to stoning, which is the regular death penalty for idolatry. This penalty is carried out provided they were properly warned and their sin was witnessed. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 13:18 Provided you listen to the voice of יהוה your Elohim and keep אֶתֶּךָ all His commandments, which I command you this day, to do *that which is right in the eyes of יהוה your Elohim.* 14:1 אֶתֶּם You are the children to ליהוה your Elohim: you will not cut yourselves or shave your head above your forehead *in mourning* for the dead. C-MATS

Question: Should you ever practice self-mutilation? Do not make cuts and incisions in your flesh to mourn for the dead or inflict pain upon your body, in the manner that the Amorites do, because you are the children of the Omnipresent and it is appropriate for you to be handsome and not to be cut or have your hair torn out. (Avoid tattoos even though they are portrayed as an “art form”). *Chumash*



Do not cut yourself or inflict pain upon your body.

Question: Should you ever pull your hair out? No, you should not make a bald spot anywhere (Rashi). Apparently the prevailing Amorite custom was to tear out the hair between the eyes. *Chumash*

Question: What is “hair pulling” called today? Trichotillomania (trik-o-til-o-MAY-nee-uh), also called hair-pulling disorder, is a mental disorder that involves recurrent, irresistible urges to pull out hair from your scalp, eyebrows or other areas of your body, despite trying to stop. People with these impulse control disorders know that they can do damage by acting on the impulses, but they cannot stop themselves. They may pull out their hair when they're stressed as a way to try to soothe themselves. *Mayo Clinic*



Do not pull out your hair.

Deuteronomy 14:2 Because **אתם** *you are* a sacred people to ליהוה your Elohim and יהוה has chosen you to be a peculiar people (*his own unique treasure*) to Himself out of all the nations that *are* upon the earth. C-MATS

Question: What does it mean “**אתם** *You are* the children to ליהוה your Elohim”? The soul... of the child of Elohim is literally "**the portion from Eloah above.**" (Job 31:2) as it is written: "**Israel is My son, My firstborn son,**" (Exodus 4:22) and "**you are children of the Most High**" (Psalm 82:6). Just as the child is derived from the brain of the father, so, too, as it were, the soul of every child of Elohim is derived from the "mind" and "wisdom" of יהוה... *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 14:3 You will not eat any abominable (*unclean*) thing. 4 **אֵת** These are the beasts which you may eat: the ox, sheep, goat, 5 The hart (*deer*), roebuck, fallow deer (*gazelle*), wild goat (*ibex*), antelope, wild ox (*oryx*) and the chamois (*mountain sheep*). 6 And every beast that has a separate hoof that is completely divided and chews the cud, these beasts **אֵת** you may eat. C-MATS

Question: Why is it important for us to eat clean food? Just as someone who is constantly exposed to loud music and harsh noise, slowly and imperceptibly, but surely, suffers a loss of his ability to hear fine sounds and detect subtle modulations, so too, the Torah informs us, a believer's consumption of non-kosher food deadens his spiritual capacities and denies him the full opportunity to become set-apart. And worst of all, it renders him incapable of even perceiving his loss. For example, a doctor came to visit two patients. To one of them he said, "You may eat whatever you like." To the other he gave a precise and restrictive diet. Soon, the first patient died and the second recovered. The doctor explained that there was no hope for the first patient, so there was no reason to deny him what he loved to eat, but the second patient was basically healthy, so it was important to give him a diet that would return him to his full health. So it was with Israel. Because the Israelite people had the capacity for spiritual life, Elohim "prescribed" foods that would be conducive to their spiritual growth.

Question: What animals can we eat? Land animals, which were created from the soil, are rendered fit to eat by the severing of both vital passages (the windpipe and the gullet). Fish, which were created from the water, do not require that you drain their blood to render them fit to eat. Birds, which were created from a mixture of soil and water, are rendered fit to eat with the severing of either one of the two vital passages. *Chumash*

Question: How do you know that your "clean" food is really clean? Watch out, because foods that are considered "healthy" and labeled as "natural" contain many harmful chemicals used as food preservatives and flavor enhancers – and these chemicals are often disguised under unrecognizable names. There are more than 3,000 food chemicals purposely added to our food supply. Man-made chemicals acidify your body pH which in turn accelerates bone loss. Many staple food have their genetic makeup purposely tampered with and may be dangerous to your health. Genetically modified foods (GMO foods) have been shown to cause harm to humans, animals, and the environment, and despite growing opposition, more and more foods continue to be genetically altered. The most common GMO foods are corn, sugar, soy, aspartame, papayas, dairy, canola, zucchini and yellow squash. Buy these foods only if NON-GMO is on the label.



WATCH OUT FOR THESE CHEMICALS IN FOOD:

BHT (Butylated Hydroxytoluene): It is also used in jet fuels, rubber petroleum products, transformer oil and embalming fluid. It can cause liver damage, and is harmful to aquatic organisms.

High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS): Loaded with “unbound” fructose and glucose molecules, studies have shown that the reactive carbonyl molecules can cause tissue damage that may lead to obesity, diabetes, and also heart disease. HFCS is made from genetically modified corn and processed with genetically modified enzymes.

Yellow #5: Almost all colorants approved for use in food are derived from coal tar and may contain up to 10ppm of lead and arsenic. Most coal tar colors could potentially cause cancer.

Soybean oil: More than half of all soybeans crops grown in the US are genetically-modified (GMO).

Propylene glycol alginate (E405): This food thickener, stabilizer, and emulsifier have many industrial uses including automotive antifreezes and airport runway de-icers.

Polysorbate 60: This emulsifier is made of corn, palm oil, and petroleum; this gooey mix can't spoil, so it often replaces dairy products in baked goods and other liquid products.

Enriched flour: Like most highly processed foods, enriched flour is devoid of nutrients and more often than not it is also bleached. Since the wheat germ and bran are removed from this type of flour, the body treats it as a refined starch. Iron is added back into enriched flour. Unfortunately, food makers use a metallic form of iron that your body can barely absorb and should not be ingested.

Textured soy protein concentrate, carrageenan, maltodextrin, disodium inosinate, disodium guanylate, and modified cornstarch: All of these are basically different names to hide ingredients that either contain Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) or form MSG during processing

Castoreum (found in ice cream) - made from beaver anal glands

Ammonium sulfate- (dough enhancer) found in fertilizer but may also be found in insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and as a flame retardant.

L-cysteine- (also known as **cysteine**) It is made from human hair, duck feathers, pig bristles and hooves, etc. It is a common ingredient in nutritional supplements, but also used as a dough enhancer.

Silicon dioxide- (Sand or Silica) found in cement, space shuttle panels, and your pre- grated cheese. No wonder we weigh more. We have cement in our guts.

Propylene glycol- also in anti-freeze; found in low fat and extra creamy ice creams.

Methylparaben-found in many wines, soft drinks, and fruit juice from concentrate. This additive originates in the vaginas of dogs when they are in heat.

Dimethylpolysiloxane- an anticaking agent used in caulk, shampoo, lubricant, heat resistant tiles, and your McDonald's fries, McNuggets, and powdered diet drinks.

Titanium dioxide- found in skim milk. Why skim milk? Because natural skimmed milk has a weird light blue color (it used to be called blue milk and ONLY fed to pigs back on the farm) and the titanium dioxide makes it an appetizing white. It doesn't have to be listed on the label.

Microcrystalline cellulose also listed as **crystalline cellulose**-wood pulp.

Shellac-Secretions from the female Lac beetle used to finish wood products. Found in Skittles and sprinkles you put on ice cream.

Carmine- (also known as cochineal) A natural red food color derived from crushing thousands of beetles and boiling them. Best of all it is all natural. It is even used in organic food!



Caution: Read the labels! The only way to step around these items is eating foods that are **Kosher**. Look for these signs on your food:



Question: What meats are clean? Antelope, Cow Beef, Buffalo, Deer, Goat, Hart, Lamb Mountain sheep, Ox, Roebuck, Ibex, Gazelle, Oryx.



Gazelle was hunted by the Israelites for food



Lamb



Hart



Roebuck



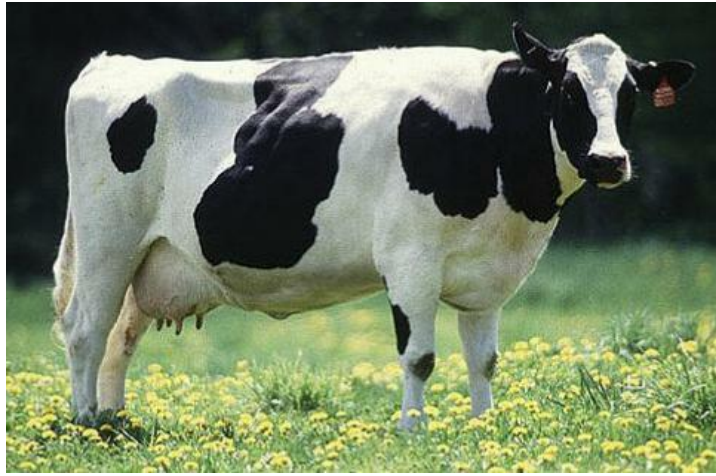
Goat-an animal used as offerings in the Temple



Ox



Antelope



Cow



Buffalo



Mountain Sheep



Deer



Ibex

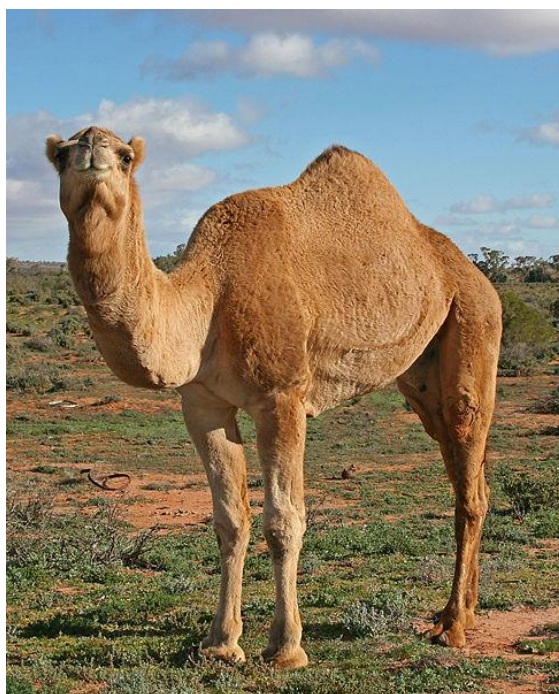


Oryx

Deuteronomy 14:7 However **את** these you may not eat if they only chew the cud or only have the divided hoof; *such as את the camel, את and the hare את and the rock badger: because they chew the cud, but do not have a divided hoof; therefore, they are unclean to you.* C-MATS

Question: What does this mean to “**chew the cud**”? The animal brings up and regurgitates the [ingested] food from its stomach, returning the food to its mouth, in order to thoroughly crush it and grind it thoroughly. The Torah states clearly that the hare and rock badger chew their cud, but none of them do so in the same way that kosher animals do. These animals excrete moist pellets from their stomachs to their mouths, which they eat again, and then excrete dry pellets. Thus, they appear to chew their cud, but what they do is in no way similar to cows and sheep. Perhaps the term "bringing up its cud" simply refers to any animal that brings food back to its mouth from its stomach, whether or not it is like a cow.

Question: Why does the Torah only list four animals that are unclean? The Torah does not list the animals that have both kosher signs (and are thus kosher), nor does it list those which lack both (and are thus forbidden); but it does name the four animals--the camel, rock badger, rabbit (coney), and the pig--that have one but not the other (making them, too, unfit for consumption). It is noteworthy that in the 33 centuries since יהוה communicated these laws to Moses, entire continents, replete with many "new" and unimagined species have been discovered. A number of these hitherto unknown species possess both of the kosher signs, and many lack them both; but not a single one has been found with only one sign. The only such animals on earth are the four species listed by the Torah!



Camel



Hare/Rabbit/Coney-unclean



Rock Badger-unclean



Snake-unclean



Squirrel-unclean



Alligator-unclean

Question: What are other **unclean** meats? Pork bacon and ham, Dogs, Horses, Hyenas, Lizards, Mice, Pork (including lard), Pig feet, Pork-sausage, Possums, Rabbit, Rats, Skunks, Snakes, Spiders, Squirrel, Alligator (“gator”), “Frog legs”.

Deuteronomy 14:8 אֲרָתָהּ *and the swine has a divided hoof, but does not chew the cud, so it is unclean to you: you will not eat their flesh or touch their dead carcass. C-MATS*

Question: Why is pig unclean? Pig as we all know is an animal that lives in the filth and dirt. Pigs are omnivores and hence they tend to eat anything on the earth. Scientifically speaking, pigs can carry many harmful organisms on them which can transmit to humans, diseases like trichinosis, Taenia solium, cysticercosis, and brucellosis. Pigs are found to have many parasitic worms in their digestive tract which can be transferred to the humans either by air or by pork. **Beware!**



Pig-unclean

Question: What food has hidden pork in it? Many foods have hidden pork in them, including gelatin, chips, cookies, cereal, frosting and dairy products such as whipped cream, sour cream, cheese, yogurt and ice cream. Consumers should look for the words "lard," "animal fats," "monoglycerides," "diglycerides," "enzymes" and "rennet" on food labels as a clue that pork is an ingredient. Gelatin is made from pork skin and is a widely used ingredient in many products, including the coating of gel caps. A Kosher marking on a label is an indication that the product is pork-free.

In addition to foods, other products such as medications, cosmetics, detergents, cleansers, soaps and toothpastes often contain hidden pork. Look out for the words "collagen," "keratin" and "tallow" in these products, as they are all pork-based. Just because a product states that it is "natural" or "organic" does not mean that it is pork-free. Pigs are considered natural and can be raised organically. Also, if the product states that it is "vegetarian" it may still contain pork or other animal-derived products. The FDA uses the term "vegetarian" to refer to obviously meatless products. However, if the product states that it is "vegan" then you can be fairly certain that it is free of all animal-derived ingredients. I strongly encourage you to read all product labels and, when in doubt, contact the manufacturer.

Warning: Watch out for hidden pork!!



Watch out for red dye! Food products that are red and pink are often dyed with cochineal extract, also known as tiny insect bodies or crushed carcasses of the female *Dactylopius coccus*. Cochineal extract sometimes appears as carminic acid or carmine. Carmine is not kosher. *The Times of Israel*

Deuteronomy 14:9 את- these you will eat from all that *are* in the waters that have fins and scales: 10 And whatever does not have fins and scales, you may not eat; it is unclean to you. C-MATS



Salmon has scales and fins

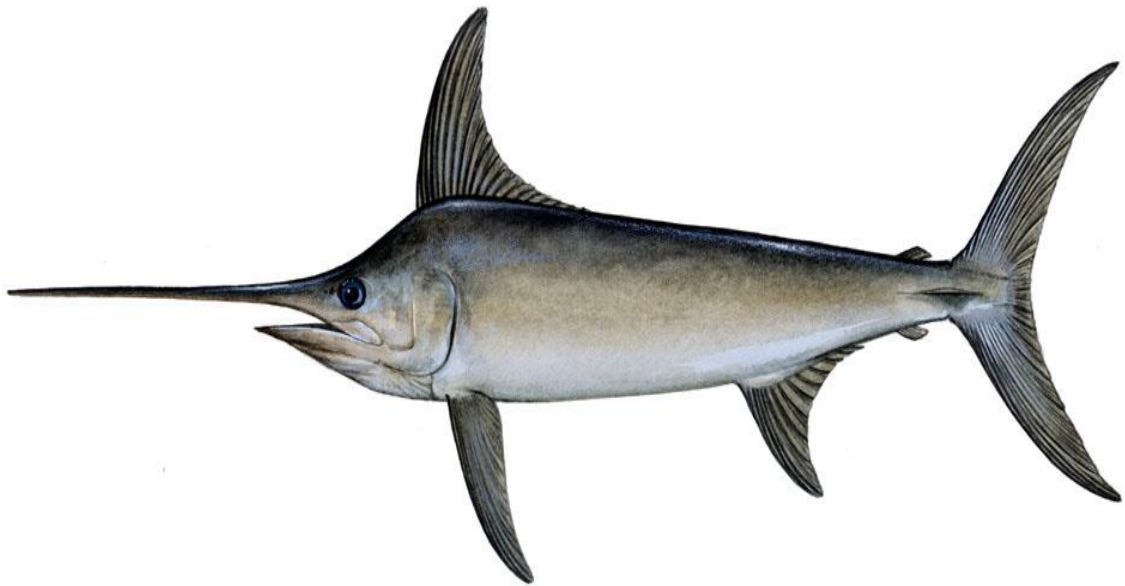
Question: What fish are clean? There are over 29,000 species of fish, making them the most diverse group of vertebrates. Most of them have scales and fins, such as Albacore, Anchovies, Bluebill Sunfish, Bluefish, Bowfin, Buffalo fish, Butterfish, Carp, Chubs, Cod, Crappies, Flounder, Fresh water mullet, Groupers, Grunts, Haddock, Hake, Halibut, Herring, Kingfish, Mackerel, Mullet, Pike, Pilchards (sardines), Red snapper, Redfish, Salmon, Sea Bass, Smelt, Striped Bass, Tilapia, Trout, Tunas, White Fish, Yellow Perch. Here is the complete list of clean fish:

<http://www.kashrut.com/articles/fish/>

Question: What fish are unclean? These are scale-less fish which are not fit for food: catfish, eels, paddlefish, sculpins, sticklebacks, sturgeons, and swordfish. These fish do not have true scales. Together with these creatures are other forms of sea life unfit for human consumption: abalone, clams, shark, crabs, lobsters, mussels, oysters, scallops, shrimp, whale, dolphin, porpoise, escargot (snails). Clean fish must have scales that can be scraped off with a knife.



Catfish-bottom dwellers, no scales



Swordfish-has no scales



Crab-no fins or scales



Abalone-makes beautiful jewelry but is not suitable to eat



Lobster-no fins or scales



Clams-no fins or scales



Mussels



Scallops



Oysters on the half shell



Escargot (snails)



Shrimp-has no fins



Eel on the grill-unclean

Deuteronomy 14:11 From all the clean birds you may eat. 12 But these *are the ones* which you may not eat: the eagle, vulture, buzzard, 13 And the glede **אֵת** and the red kite, falcon and any type of vulture, 14 **אֵת** and any kind of raven, after its kind, 15 **אֵת** and ostriches, **אֵת** and screech owls (*night hawk*), **אֵת** and sea gull (*cuckow*) **אֵת** and the hawk after its kind, 16 **אֵת** the little owl, **אֵת** and great owl (*hawk*) and horned owls, 17 And the **אֵת** cormorant (*pelican/desert owl*), **אֵת** and barn owl (*gier eagle*) **אֵת** and cormorant, 18 And the stork, hoopoes, bat and any type of heron. C-MATS

Question: What is the one identifying marker that is common to all kosher fowl? In Torah, there are 20 non-kosher species of bird that are listed. The one identifying marker that is common to kosher fowl is the fact that they are not predators. In practice due to the many uncertainties as to the precise identity of the non-kosher birds listed by the Torah, only birds that by tradition you know to be kosher should be eaten. *Chumash*

Question: What are other unclean birds? Carnivorous Birds- All birds that eat other animals and do not have a crop are considered unclean. Birds that draw fish from the water are unclean. *Chumash*



Vultures eating a dead zebra



Eagle lifting a fox



Buzzard carrying a rabbit



Osprey carrying a fish



Kite



Seagull



Owl



Ravens fed Elisha in the Wilderness



Hawk catches a fish



Ibis



Falcon



Cormorant with a fish



Brown pelican



Heron with a rabbit



Stork



Roadrunner



Hoopoe



Bat



Emu



Rhea



Ostrich

Clean Birds



Grouse



Partridge



Pheasant



Quail



Pigeon-used as a sacrifice in the Temple



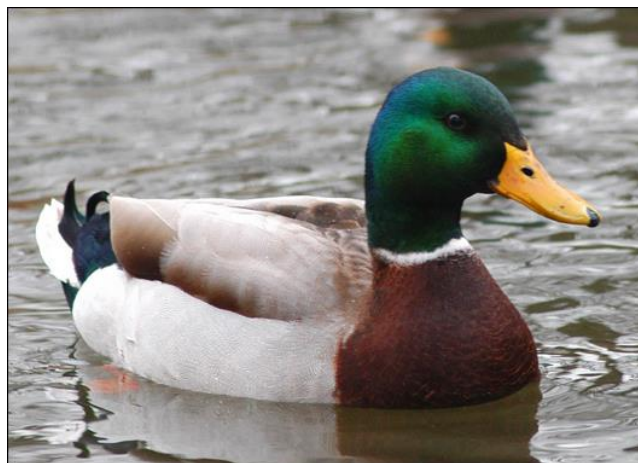
Dove-used as a sacrifice in the Temple



Swan



Chicken



Duck



Goose



Turkey

Question: What are the clean birds? Chicken, Dove, Duck, Geese, Grouse, Partridge, Pheasant, Pigeon, Quail, Turkey, Swan, all song birds

Deuteronomy 14:19 And every winged swarming creature *is* unclean to you: they may not be eaten. **20** *But* all the clean birds you may eat. **21** You may not eat anything that dies *naturally*: you may give it to the stranger that *lives in your house*, that he may eat it; or you may sell it to an alien: because אִתְּךָ you are a sacred people to לַיהוָה your Elohim. C-MATS

Question: What **stranger** is this verse talking about? This stranger is a gentile who resides in the Land and has agreed to observe the Noahide laws, but is permitted to eat non-kosher meat (Rashi). Obviously the word in this context cannot be rendered proselyte (converted believer in Torah), since a carcass is no less forbidden to a proselyte than to any other Israelite. *Chumash*

Question: Why should the stranger be given the meat and not another Israelite? The righteous stranger should be rewarded with this gift to assist him in his livelihood. The owner of the carcass has the right to sell it. The verse means to say that it is permitted for the owner to benefit from the carcass, even though it may not be eaten by Israelites (Pesachim 21b). It is forbidden to an Israelite because it is not fitting food for a sacred set apart people (Sforno). *Chumash*

Question: Why do you think there are more Torah 'rules' for people living in the Land of Israel? The whole world is full of forms of righteousness, but Israel is truly a sacred land and the place where a person can feel the most connected to יהוה and reach his or her highest spiritual potential. Therefore, it only makes sense that such a special 'high-intensity' spiritual environment would require more spiritual behavior to take maximum advantage of it.

Deuteronomy 14:21 You will not to boil a young goat in his mother's milk. C-MATS

Question: Is this commandment a dietary warning or a warning against idolatry? This was only a warning against idolatry. "It was a custom of the ancient heathens, when they had gathered in all their fruits, to take a kid and boil it in the milk of its mother; and then, in a magical way, to go about and sprinkle with it all their trees and fields, gardens and orchards; thinking by these means to make them fruitful, that they might bring forth more abundantly in the following year." יהוה commanded that these vile practices were not to be used in observing His Feast Days! *Clarke's Commentary*

Deuteronomy 14:22 You will truly tithe (tenth) את all the increase of your seed that produces in the field year by year. 23 And you will eat it before יהוה your Elohim, in the place which He will choose to place His name, the tenth of your grain, new wine, olive oil and the firstborn from your herds and your flocks; so that you may learn to fear את your Elohim always. 24 And if the distance is too far for you and you are not able to carry it; because the place is too far away from you, which יהוה your Elohim will choose to set His name, then when יהוה your Elohim has blessed you: 25 You will turn it into money and take the money with you and go to the place which יהוה your Elohim will choose: 26 And you will spend that money on whatever you desire whether oxen, sheep, wine, strong drink, or whatever you desire: and you will eat there before יהוה your Elohim and you will rejoice, אתה you and your household. 27 Do not forsake the Levite that is living with you; because he has no share in the inheritance with you. C-MATS

Question: Why should you tithe? The Torah teaches that if you give tithes, you will become rich, in complete contradiction to those who claim that they cannot contribute to charity because they are afraid of becoming poor. *Chumash*

Question: What does יהוה say about giving to the poor?

Proverbs 14:31 He that oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker; but he that has mercy on the needy honors Him. C-MATS

Deuteronomy 24:14 You must not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is your brother or one of the strangers who are in your land within your towns: 15 On the day you hire him give him his wages before sundown, because he is poor and sets את his heart upon it: when he cries against you to יהוה, it will be a sin against you. C-MATS

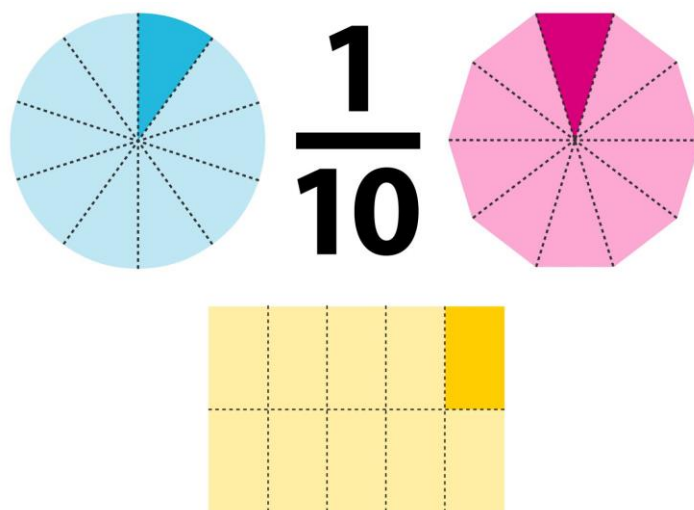
Proverbs 17:5 Whoever mocks the poor reproaches his Maker; and he that is glad at calamity shall not be unpunished. C-MATS

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

Proverbs 21:13 Whoever stops his ears at the cry of the poor, He also shall cry, but shall not be heard. C-MATS

Proverbs 22:9 He that has a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he gives of his bread to the poor. C-MATS

Proverbs 28:27 He that gives to the poor shall not lack; but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse. C-MATS



Deuteronomy 14:28 At the end of three years you will bring **את** all the tithe (*tenth*) of your produce of that same year and you will lay it up within your towns: **29** And the Levite, (because he has no share or inheritance with you,) the stranger, fatherless and the widow, who lives in your town, will come and eat and be satisfied; so that יהוה your Elohim may bless you in all that you set your hand to do. C-MATS

Question: What tithe should you give today? Since the Temple is destroyed and we no longer have the Levites caring for the temple, we can no longer give offerings to the Temple. But we are commanded to support those who preach the gospel (1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture said, You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward.) We should be generous to those in need. (Hebrews 13:16 Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to Elohim.) Believers must give as led by the Spirit of Elohim which could mean giving more than 10 percent.

Deuteronomy 15:1 At the end of *every* seven years you will make a release. **2** And this is how the release is to be done: Every creditor that lends anything to his neighbor will release *it*; he will not require it from **את** his neighbor **את** and his brother; because it is called to ליהוה as *His* release. **3** But from **את** a foreigner you may demand he repays his debt: but that which is your **את** brothers you *must* release. C-MATS

Question: When should you release a brother in יהוה from a loan? Just as the Torah ordains that seventh-year crops of field and orchard are free for the taking by anyone, so does the Torah ordain that loans are canceled at the end of seven years. That the cancellation of a loan does not apply to gentiles indicates that the cancellation is in the nature of an act of kindness that the Torah commands us to extend to fellow believers, for if it were a dishonest act to collect such debts, it would be forbidden to do so from gentiles, as well. Only personal loans that are with your brother are canceled, but if a loan is secured by collateral, it is not subject to cancellation (Sifre). *Chumash* Leviticus 25:5 **את** That which grows of itself from the seeds of your previous harvest you will not reap, **ואת** and neither gather the grapes of your untended vine: for it is a year of rest for the land. 6 And the Sabbath produce of the land will be your food; for you, your servant, your maid, your hired servant and the stranger that lives with you, 7 And for your cattle and the beasts that are in your land, everything the land produces will be used as food. C-MATS

Deuteronomy 15:4 In spite of this, there will be no poor among you; because יהוה will greatly bless you in the land, which יהוה your Elohim gives you for an inheritance: 5 Only if you carefully listen to the voice of יהוה your Elohim and obey **את** all **אֵת** these commandments, which I command you this day. 6 יהוה your Elohim will bless you, as He promised you: **ואתה** and you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; and you will reign over many nations, but they will not reign over you. C-MATS

Question: What does “Only if you carefully listen to the voice of יהוה your Elohim” mean? “If you listen a little, you will be permitted to hear a great deal” (Rashi). Usually, the reward for a commandment is the opportunity to repeat the performance of a similar commandment, thus, one who is careful to perform the commandment of Tzitzits would be rewarded with beautiful clothing to which he can affix Tzitzits. Here the Torah promises a different kind of reward: in return for generosity to the needy, Israel will be rewarded with such prosperity that there will be no more poor people, and no need to perform that commandment again. Hence the Torah gives the consolation that Israel will be given the opportunity to perform other commandments and to gain deeper insight into the Torah's teachings (Malbim). *Chumash*

Question: Should you borrow from anyone? You should not borrow from others, but you should release yourself from the burden of debt. יהוה wants you to walk in the commandments-one of which is not to covet the things of the world, which makes you fall into debt.



1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is *the* root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. C-MATS

2 Timothy 3:1 Know this also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. **2** For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, **3** Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, **4** Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of Elohim; **5** Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. C-MATS

Ephesians 5:5 For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Mashiach and of Elohim. C-MATS

Hebrews 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as you have: for he has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you. **6** So that we may boldly say, Adonai is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. C-MATS



Question: Are you under a curse if you owe others money? Yes, you are under a curse of poverty.

Question: How can you get out from under the curse of poverty and owing others money? Consider getting a second or third job to release yourself from the curse of poverty, and then you can give to others and be blessed by יהוה. You cannot be blessed financially until you pay back others what you owe and begin to give to others. Every week you should put in a savings account five or ten dollars not to be used up unless you have an emergency or unexpected expense. Everyone should do this and you will have the personal assurance that you will have something on hand to meet the situation.

Question: If you spend more than what you earn from your paycheck, are you in sin? If you are spending more money that you have on dining and entertainment and not your bills, then you are in sin. If you have more bills than what you earn, go to your debtors and make some kind of plan so that you can pay all your debtors off as soon as possible.

Spiritual Exercise: Focus on paying off all your debts before you purchase anything for yourself, so you can be released from the curse of poverty.

Question: How can you save money and live within your budget?

1. Cook at home often.
2. Make your own coffee.
3. Bring your lunch to work.
4. Make a list before going shopping: Stick to the list and avoid buying unnecessary items.
5. Go grocery shopping while you are in a hurry: Hunt it down and get out of there.
6. Watch out for expiration dates on perishable goods.
7. Buy in bulk whenever possible. Look for local food co-ops.
8. Buy generic products whenever possible not brand names.

9. Use grocery store bags to line trash cans.
10. Consolidate and pay off debt as soon as possible. Money paid in interest is money thrown away!
11. Transfer balance on credit cards to a 0% interest credit card while paying off your debt.
12. Save postage fees. Bank online.
13. Pay your bills on time and avoid late fees. Be aware of your bank balance and avoid over draft fees. Watch the amount of cash you have in the bank and do not overspend.
14. Avoid ATM fees.
15. Avoid credit cards with annual fee. Use credit cards that have cash back features.
16. Disconnect land line if possible. Stream line your cell phone bills by avoiding extra charges.
17. Instead of buying books, borrow books from the library or read the free books online. If you have to buy books, check if you can buy it used. For text books, rent online. If you have to buy the textbook, then sell it back to the seller.
18. Avoid impulse buying. Waiting means you will be able to check prices and make an informed decision to buy it at the best possible price. Check online prices first.
19. If you shop online, beware of extra shipping costs. Buy a membership instead of paying extra shipping costs, such as Amazon Prime.
20. Bottle your own water. Buy a water bottle and fill it up with filtered water.
21. Avoid the vending machines: Consider carrying healthy snacks in your car in case you need to grab a quick snack.
22. Keep your car as long as possible.
23. Do regular scheduled maintenance on your vehicles.
24. Avoid buying a new car. Buy a late model used car.
25. Ride your bike or carpool or take public transportation whenever possible. Save gas.
26. If you pay to watch a lot of movies, get an online membership, such as Amazon Prime.
27. Regulate your electric use. When not in use, unplug electric appliances. Apparently, unplugging the TV instead of just switching it off can save a lot of electricity! When not in a room, switch off the lights and the fan.
28. Plan vacations ahead of time: Save up money for the vacation before you go, so you will not come home to credit card bills.
29. Make your own gifts instead of buying gifts from the store. You can make food mixes, candles, bread, cookies, soap, and all kinds of other things at home quite easily and inexpensively.
30. Master the "thirty day rule". Whenever you're considering making an unnecessary purchase, wait thirty days and then ask yourself if you still want that item.
31. Invite friends over instead of going out.
32. Keep your distance from lavish, high-spending friends who have to have every conceivable electronic gadget, eat out at fancy restaurants every night, and just live way beyond their means.
33. Instead of throwing out some damaged clothing, repair it instead.
34. Call your credit card company and ask for a rate reduction.
35. Clean out your closet. You can have a yard sale with it, take it to a consignment shop, or even donate it for the tax deduction.
36. Give up expensive habits, like cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs.
37. Beware of yard sales. You could spend money on things you really do not need.
38. Buy appliances based on reliability, not what's cheapest at the store.
39. Only carry cash. Hide your credit cards and ATM cards. Don't keep plastic on you until you have the willpower to not use it even when you're sorely tempted.
40. Do a price comparison – and find a cheaper grocery store. Use coupons.
41. Challenge yourself to try making your own things. Try making your own bread or laundry detergent. Keep your home clean with a little dish soap, vinegar, water, and baking soda.
42. Don't spend money just to de-stress. You will feel much better by going home and taking some quiet time just to stretch or do yoga or take a warm bath and then meditate on יהוה.
43. Cancel unused club memberships like the gym or movie channels.

44. When shopping for standard items (clothes, sports equipment, video games, etc.), start by shopping used. Know where all the thrift stores are in your town.
45. If you are a senior citizen, look for discount days and shop only on these days.
46. Keep your hands clean. This helps keep the medical bills away.
47. Remove your credit card numbers from your online accounts. When you're tempted to spend, you'll be forced to dig out your card – and really think about why you're spending this money.
48. Give a gift of a service instead of an item. Babysitting, take care of their pets when they travel, lawn care, etc.
49. Join up with a volunteer program. It also comes without a cost to you and can provide a lot of entertainment and a fulfilling day.
50. Go for reliability and fuel efficiency when buying a car.
51. Don't go to stores or shopping centers for entertainment.
52. Master the "ten second rule". Whenever you pick up an item in order to add it to your cart or to take it to the checkout, stop for ten seconds and ask yourself *why* you're buying it and whether you actually *need* it or not.
53. Create a visual reminder of your debt. Keep it before your eyes. It keeps your eyes on the prize and leads you straight to debt freedom.
54. Get rid of unread magazine subscriptions or newspapers.
55. Eat breakfast, and then you will not have to buy a big lunch.
56. Don't fear leftovers – instead, jazz them up.
57. Go through your clothes – all of them. Bring your old clothes to the front of your closet, so you feel like you have a new wardrobe.
58. If something's broken, give a fair shot at repairing it yourself before replacing it or calling a repairman. Go to Google for a repair video.
59. Air up your tires. For every two PSI that all of your tires are below the recommended level, you lose 1% on your gas mileage.
60. Find free events to go to on your community calendar.
61. Cut your own hair or get a member of your family to cut it for you.
62. Get a crock pot, so dinner is done when you get home.
63. Do some basic home and auto maintenance on a regular schedule. Clean your air conditioner and car filter. Change the oil in your car.
64. Pack food before you go on a road trip.
65. Consolidate your student loans.
66. Refinance your home if you have a high interest rate and the interest rates drop.
67. Don't speed. Not only is it inefficient in terms of gasoline usage, it also can get you pulled over and cost you a bundle
68. Read more. Reading is one of the cheapest – and most beneficial – hobbies around.
69. Avoid overeating. You will save money, lose weight, feel healthier, and save on medical bills.
70. Don't overspend on hygiene or beauty products. Make your own products that are healthier for your body using essential oils.
71. Eat less meat. Not only is this a healthier way to eat (saving on health costs), it's also less expensive.
72. Buy paper or cleaning products at a dollar store.
73. Exercise more and improve your health.
74. Eat out during lunch. If you do want to go out occasionally, go for a lunch date, since it's cheaper than eating dinner. Look for restaurants with a lunch special.
75. Replace soda and energy drinks with water.



Do not borrow money.

Deuteronomy 15:7 If there is among you a poor man who is one of your brothers who lives in any of your towns on your land which יהוה your Elohim gives you, you will not harden את־ your heart or close את־ your hand to your poor brother: 8 But you will open wide את־ your hand to him and will lend to him what he needs, so he can have what he wanted. C-MATS

Question: What does it mean to “harden את־ your heart”? The Torah warns against the all too human fear that one cannot afford to give charity or make loans. You must never ask whether to offer help to someone. Only ask to whom you should give and how much you should give, because the Ultimate Helper of the poor and the rich is יהוה Himself. Some people suffer [as they deliberate] whether they should give [to the needy] or they should not give. If you do not give to him, you will ultimately become a “brother of the needy” [becoming needy yourself]. *Chumash*

Question: In Deuteronomy 15:8 who is the One that you "open wide את־ your hand to him"? By covenant when we bless each other it is as if את־ Messiah opens His hand to bless us. Confirmation of this is when Yahusha speaks in **Matthew 25:40** 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' (C-MATS)

Question: What does “open wide את־ your hand to him” mean? The compound verb tells us to give again and again (Rashi), and not lose patience after giving once or twice. The verse continues that if the needy person is too proud to accept charity, lend him what he needs. Although you are not obligated to make the one who asks wealthy, you should try to give him what he lacks, according to his individual needs. Someone who was once wealthy and lost everything cannot exist on what would be sufficient for someone who was always poor (Rashi). *Chumash*



Question: Should you give to panhandlers on the street? The scriptures tell us, “if any would not work, neither should he eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Yet some are not capable of working and others prefer not to work. Homeless advocates say that responding to panhandlers is a personal decision. We must be led by the Spirit when to give and when not to give. We do not want to harden our hearts to those really in need, but we do not want to contribute to those who are capable of working and choose to live a life of begging. Experts say do not give cash to panhandlers. Giving food or directing the panhandler to local services can be a better choice. Giving money may contribute to him buying drugs or alcohol. Donating to nonprofits can be a better way to help achieve the long-term goal of housing. Pray for wisdom as you engage those on the street. You may be the one to speak Truth into their ears and change their life.



Charity (illustration from a Bible card published 1897 by the Providence Lithograph Company)

Deuteronomy 15:9 Beware that you do not think in your wicked heart that the seventh year, the year of release, is close and you turn against your poor brother and you give him nothing; because he will cry to יהוה against you and it will become your sin. C-MATS



Deuteronomy 15:10 You will give to him and your heart will not be grieved when you give to him: because if you do this thing יהוה your Elohim will bless you in all your works and in all *that* you put your hand *to do*. 11 Because the poor will always be with you in the land: therefore, I command you saying, You will open wide את־ your hand to your brother, to the poor and needy in your land. C-MATS

Question: Why does the verse repeat the words “give to him” in verse 10? The verse could have just said “give to him”, once. Some people experience a deep inner struggle when it comes to giving charity. In their hearts they rationalize, “I worked very hard to earn this money; why should I give it away?” The way to overcome this hesitancy is through “give, you shall give” -- continuous giving. Thus, besides instructing us to give charity, the Torah is also suggesting a method to facilitate our fulfilling the commandment. By continually practicing charity, we will become accustomed to it and not only will our hearts not grieve when we give, but we will enjoy giving and be pleased to put our resources to good use. *Chumash*

Question: How will יהוה bless you when you give to the poor? Releasing a man from his loan in the seventh year can be frightening to many a lender, for if his borrower cannot pay in time, the loan will be canceled. The Torah warns that such fears are sinful and betray a lack of faith in יהוה. Even if the loan becomes a total loss, יהוה guarantees His blessing -- surely more than whatever the loss may be. Poverty is a constant phenomenon and today's tycoon can be tomorrow's pauper. The charity one dispenses today may well be returned to him in the future if his fortunes are reversed (Ralbag). *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 15:12 *And* if your brother, a Hebrew man or woman, is sold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year, let him go free. 13 *And* when you set him free, do not let him go away empty handed: 14 You should give to him liberally from your flock, (*threshing*) floor and winepress: you will give to him from what יהוה your Elohim has blessed you. 15 *And* you will remember that you were a bondman in the land of Egypt and יהוה your Elohim redeemed you: therefore, I command you את־ thing (*matter*) this today. C-MATS



Do not mistreat a bondman.

Question: How does a person become a “bondman”? An Israelite can be sold into slavery in two ways: He can choose to sell himself to raise money (**And if your brother who lives by you becomes poor and is sold to you; you will not make him to serve as a slave servant: 40 But as a hired servant and as a sojourner, he will live with you and will serve you until the Year of Jubilee. Leviticus 25:39**), or he may be sold by the court to pay for a theft (**If you buy a Hebrew servant, six years he will serve: and in the seventh year he will leave free owing nothing. Exodus 21:2**). He only serves six years and then is released. The bondsman must enjoy the same standard of living as the owner. You should not eat white bread while he eats black bread, nor should you sleep on cushions while he sleeps on straw" (Kiddushin 20a).The master should feel an obligation not merely to give his outgoing servant a "bonus," but to be very generous and give him a gift that will raise his self-esteem and reputation (see Ibn Ezra; R' Bachya). Remember that your ancestors were slaves, and when they went free, יהוה caused the Egyptians to give them lavish gifts; then after the Egyptian army drowned in the sea they became even richer from the spoils of the Egyptians (Rashi). *Chumash*



Pierce an awl through his ear

Deuteronomy 15:16 And if he said to you, I do not want to go away from you; because he loves you **אֹתָךְ** and your house, because he is happy living with you; **17** Then you will take **אֹתָךְ** an awl and pierce it through his ear to the door and he will be your servant forever. Do the same **לְאִמָּתְךָ** to your maidservant. C-MATS

Question: Why would a bondman not choose to be a free man? After six years, a man was quite free to leave his master’s house and go wherever he pleased. But it seems that the servitude was so exceedingly light, and, indeed, was so much for the benefit of the person in it, that frequently men would not go free. They preferred to continue as servants to their masters. Now, as it was not desirable that this should often be the case, and as, if it were permitted oppressive masters might sometimes frighten a servant into such an agreement, the law was made that in such a case the matter must be brought before the judges, and before them the man must say very distinctly and plainly, so that there was no doubt about it, that it really was his wish not to accept his liberty, but to remain as he was; and then, after he had stated his desire, and given as his reason that he loved his master, and loved the children, and the wife that he had obtained in his service, his ear was to be pierced against the door of the house. This ceremony was intended to put a little difficulty in the way, so that he might hesitate and say, “No, I will not agree to that,” and so might, as was most proper, go free. But if he agreed to that somewhat painful ceremony, and if he declared before the judges that it was his own act and deed, then he was to remain the servant of his chosen master as long as he lived. *Charles Spurgeon*

Question: Why does a human being, even a “bondman”, deserve respect? The Torah teaches that a human being is more than just an intelligent animal. We believe that each person has been created in יהוה's image, which means that יהוה has invested each person with the unique gift of free ethical choice and great potential to bring good and righteousness into the world. By showing respect to all humans, even those who have chosen to misuse their gift; we are acknowledging that gift and showing respect for יהוה as its giver. *Chumash*

Question: Does a person's external status ever warrant our giving them extra respect? The Torah does take into consideration a person's external status as a factor in respect given. For instance, it is proper to especially honor our parents, the aged, and those who are distinguished in wisdom, governmental position, and in certain cases even wealth. However, there is a certain basic respect which is the right and privilege of every human being, no matter what situation he is in, and we must be careful never to let that be overlooked.

Spiritual Exercise: Treat everyone with respect today. Do not look down on others who have less than you do.

Deuteronomy 15:18 Do not resent it when you set אָתָּךְ *him* free; because he has been worth twice as much as a hired servant *by* serving you six years: and יהוה your Elohim will bless you in all that you do. **19** All the firstborn males that come from your herd and flock, you will sanctify (*set apart*) to ליהוה your Elohim: you will do no work with the firstborn from your *herd* or shear the firstborn of your sheep. **20** You will eat *it* in the Presence of יהוה your Elohim each year in the place which יהוה will choose, אֶתְּךָ *you* and your household. **21** And if there is *any* defect on it, *or* it is lame, blind, *or* have any blemish, you will not sacrifice it to ליהוה your Elohim. **22** You will eat it on your own property: the unclean and the clean *person may eat it* like the roebuck (*gazelle*) and as the hart (*deer*). **23** Only אֶתְּ the blood *of an animal*, you will not eat, you will pour it upon the ground as water. C-MATS

The Three Pilgrim Festivals

Deuteronomy 16:1 Observe **את** the month of Abib and keep the Passover to ליהוה your Elohim: for in the month of Abib יהוה your Elohim brought you out of Egypt by night. 2 You will sacrifice the Passover offering to ליהוה your Elohim from the flock and herd in the place which יהוה will choose to place His name. 3 You will not eat any leavened bread; seven days you will eat unleavened bread, which is the bread of affliction; because **את** you came out of the land of Egypt in a hurry: thus you will remember **את** day when you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life. C-MATS

Question: What is the “bread of affliction”? The unadorned, unflavored nature of matzah (bread without yeast) is a reminder of the affliction that our forefathers endured in Egypt, and also of the haste with which the Egyptians forced them to leave the country when the time came for the redemption (Rashi). It is also a reminder of how our Messiah was afflicted with stripes from the whip and pierced with the nails. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 16:4 And no leavened bread is to be seen with you in all your territory for seven days; do not allow anything which you sacrificed the first day at evening to remain all night until the morning. 5 You may not sacrifice **את** the Passover offering in any of your towns, which יהוה your Elohim gives you: 6 But at the place which יהוה your Elohim will choose to place His name, there you will sacrifice **את** the Passover offering at evening at sunset at the season that you came out of Egypt. C-MATS

Question: What does “**את** the Passover offering” foreshadow? Deuteronomy 16:5-6 recaps the **את** Passover again from Leviticus chapter 23 implying **את** Yahusha's blood is represented in the sacrifice (*lamb*) as a type and a foreshadow of Calvary. C-MATS

Question: When is Passover celebrated? Verse 1 speaks of Passover as being in the month of springtime and admonishes the people that they must observe that month. The word Aviv means the stage in the growth of grain when the seeds have reached full size and are filling with starch, but have not dried yet. It begins at the spring equinox, and answers to the latter part of March and beginning of April. The month of Nissan must fall in the spring, and the Sanhedrin has the responsibility to add a thirteenth month to the year from time to time to prevent Nissan from moving up to the winter (Rashi). The barley ears must be almost ripe at the time of Passover, so the harvest can be celebrated. *Chumash*

Deuteronomy 16:7 And you will roast and eat the Passover offering in the place which יהוה your Elohim will choose: and in the morning you will return and go to your tents. 8 Six days you will eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day you will have a solemn assembly to ליהוה your Elohim: you will do no work. C-MATS



Feast of Weeks-Feast of Firstfruits–Shavuot

Deuteronomy 16:9 You will number seven weeks: begin to number *the* seven weeks from the time you begin *to put* the sickle to the standing grain. **10** And you will keep the Feast of Weeks (*Shavuot*) ליהוה your Elohim *with* a voluntary *offering*, which you will give according as has blessed you יהוה your Elohim: **11** And you will rejoice before יהוה your Elohim, אתה you and your son and daughter, your male and female servant, the Levite who lives in your town, the stranger, fatherless and the widow, who *are* among you, in the place which יהוה your Elohim has chosen to place His name. C-MATS

Question: When should you give a voluntary *offering* to יהוה? On the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), you should give a voluntary offering above your tithes to the poor according to how יהוה has blessed you. *Chumash*



Question: How is Yahusha foreshadowed during the Feast of Weeks/Feast of Firstfruits? During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a sheaf of first fruits must be waved before יהוה to be accepted for us on the morrow after the weekly Sabbath (when the 50th day count starts). **Leviticus 23:9** And יהוה spoke to Moses saying, **10** Speak to *the* Children of Israel וְאָמַרְתָּ and you say to them, When you have come into the land which I give to you and will reap את- harvest of the land, then you will bring את- a sheaf from the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest: **11** And he will wave את- the sheaf before יהוה to be accepted for you: on the morrow (*next day*) after the Sabbath the priest will wave it. C-MATS



This is exactly what Yahusha did for us after being in the grave 3 days and 3 nights as our sacrificed Passover Lamb. **Matthew 16:39** He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. C-MATS

Yahusha died, rose from the dead, and presented Himself before יהוה for us as a waved sheaf of firstfruits from the dead, just as יהוה commanded His feasts in Leviticus 23. **1 Corinthians 15:20 But the fact is that the Messiah *has* been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have died.** That is why after Yahusha rose from the dead that He told Mary Magdalene not to touch Him, because He had not ascended to יהוה to present Himself as the sheaf of firstfruits. **John 20:17 “Stop holding onto me,” Yahusha said to her, “because I haven’t yet gone back to the Father.”** So until יהוה had received the firstfruits (Yahusha), there could be no gathering of the harvest (of believers).

Question: The wave offering was from the firstfruits of the barley harvest. How did they know the barley was ripe? The barley was white. **John 4:35 Say not, There are yet four months, and then comes harvest? Behold, I say unto you, “Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”** C-MATS



Barley is white and ready to harvest during Feast of Weeks



Feast of Tabernacles

Deuteronomy 16:12 And you will remember that you were a bondman in Egypt: and you will obey **את** *these* statutes. **13** You will observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days after you have gathered in your grain and your wine: **14** And you will rejoice in your feast, **אתה** *you* and your son and daughter and your male and female servant and the Levite, stranger, fatherless and the widow, who live in your towns. **15** Seven days you will keep a solemn feast to ליהוה your Elohim in the place which יהוה will choose: because יהוה your Elohim will bless you in all your *crops* and in all the works of your hands, so you will surely rejoice. **16** Three times in a year will appear all your males' **את** before יהוה your Elohim in the place which He will choose; at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles: and they will not appear **את** before יהוה empty *handed*: **17** Every man *will give* as he is able, according to *the degree of blessing* that יהוה your Elohim has given you. C-MATs

Question: How is Yahusha foreshadowed during the Feast of Tabernacles? Yahusha came to dwell among us. It is very probable that He was born during the Feast of Tabernacles which is celebrated in September or October (not December 25th). **John 1:14** **And the Word became flesh, and did tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth.** This feast has not been fulfilled yet. This will not be fulfilled until His 1000 years reign on earth. **Revelations 21:3** **And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of Elohim is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and Elohim shall be with them, and be their Elohim. 4 And Elohim shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.** C-MATS

Do You Know?

1. Re'eh means _____.
2. יהוה set before the Israelites the choice of receiving a ____ or a ____.
3. יהוה said to totally destroy the ____ of the Canaanites.
4. יהוה said to be strong and not eat the ____ of animals.
5. Beware of false ____ and dreamer of dreams.
6. You should not ____ to the commandments or ____ from the commandments.
7. You should not ____ yourself or pull out your ____.
8. A clean animal chews the ____ and its ____ is completely divided.
9. A clean fish has ____ and ____.
10. A clean bird is not a ____.
11. You should give to the ____.
12. You should release a believer from a loan after ____ years.
13. You should never ____ money and get in debt.
14. After Passover, you should eat ____ ____ for seven days.
15. During the Feast of Weeks you should give a ____ offering to יהוה for the poor.

Bonus: During what 3 feasts were the Israelites required to come to the Temple in Jerusalem and give an offering to יהוה?

Answers:

1. See
2. blessing, curse
3. gods
4. blood
5. prophets
6. add, take
7. cut, hair
8. cud, hoof
9. fins, scales
10. predator
11. poor
12. seven
13. borrow
14. unleavened bread
15. voluntary

Bonus: Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)

Haftorah

Isaiah's prophecy in this portion focuses on how the downtrodden Israelites will once again rise to glory. יהוה reminds the people that no harm can come to them without His consent. Isaiah promises that with יהוה's help, the people of Israel will be invincible. יהוה promises that just as He brought David up from his common roots, and made him royalty, so shall the people be lifted out of their destitute situation, if they turn to Him to reap the rewards He promises..

Isaiah 54:11 O you afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, see, I will lay with fair colors, your stones and lay your foundations with sapphires. **12** And I will make rubies your windows of and your gates of carbuncles and all your borders of stones pleasant. **13** And all your children *will* be taught of יהוה; and great *will be* the peace of your children. **14** In righteousness will you be established: you will be far from oppression; for you will not fear: and from terror; for it will not come near you. **15** See, they will certainly gather together, *but* not by Me: whoever will gather together **אֶתְּךָ** *against you* for your sake will fall. **16** See, I have created the smith that blows in the fire the coals and that brings forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. **17** No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; and every tongue *that will rise* **אֶתְּךָ** *against you* in judgment you will condemn. **אֵל** *This is the* heritage of the servants of יהוה and their righteousness *is* of Me, says יהוה. **Isaiah 55:1** Come everyone that thirsts, come you to the waters and he that *has* no money; come, buy and eat; come, buy without money and without price, wine and milk. **2** Why do you spend money for that which is not bread? And you labor for *that which* satisfies not, listen diligently to Me and eat *that which is* good and let your soul delight itself in fatness. **3** Incline your ear and come to Me: hear and your soul will live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, the faithful mercies of David. *Prophecy Fulfilled-Isa. 55:3 Resurrected by Elohim-Acts 13:34.* **4** See, *for* a witness to the people I have given him, a leader and commander to the people. *Prophecy Fulfilled in Isaiah 55:4 A witness-John 18:37.* **5** See, a nation *that you know not* you will call and nations *that knew you not* will run to you because of יהוה your Elohim and for the Sacred One of Israel; for He has glorified you. C-MATS

Brit Chadashah

Question: Should we associate with every person who calls himself a believer? 1 Corinthians 5:9 I wrote to you in an epistle not to keep company with fornicators: 10 Yet not only with the fornicators of this world, but with the covetous, extortioners, or idolaters; in that case you would have to go out of the world. 11 But now I have written to you not to associate with any man who calls himself a brother who is a fornicator, covetous, idolater, slanderer, drunkard, or extortioner; do not eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging those who are outside in the world? Don't you judge only those who are our brothers? 13 Elohim, will judge those who are outside. Therefore put away from among yourselves any wicked person. C-MATS

Question: Our ancestors ate manna in the Wilderness, yet they soon died. Now we have been given bread that will make us live eternally. How can we obtain this eternal life? John 6:35 And Yahusha said unto them, **I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believes on me shall never thirst.** 36 But I said unto you, That you also have seen me, and believe not. 37 All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but to do the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which beholds the Son, and believes on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. 41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, **I am the bread which came down from heaven.** 42 And they said, Is not this Yahusha, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he said, **I came down from heaven?** 43 Yahusha answered and said to them, **Do not murmur among yourselves.** 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, **And they shall be all taught of Elohim.** Every man therefore that has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto me. 46 Not that any man has seen the Father, save he which is of Elohim, he has seen the Father. 47 He that believes on me has everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life. 49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. C-MATS

Question: How can you measure how close a person is to יהוה? There are different ways of being close to someone else. One way is to be physically near him, but another, more spiritual way to be close is to try to learn from and emulate his good qualities. When in this week's portion the Torah instructs us to make ourselves close to, or cleave to יהוה, it doesn't mean by trying to get to heaven in a space ship. Rather, it means to think about and emulate יהוה's qualities such as kindness, patience, fairness, etc. This is the true measure of how close a person is to יהוה.

"NEXT BEST THING TO BEING THERE"

Janet waved the seashell in front her like a treasure as she ran over to her mother's beach chair. "Mom, look at this beauty. I can't wait to bring this home and show Grandma..." Janet felt a lump in her throat as she stopped herself in mid-sentence. She wasn't going show this to her grandmother. In fact, she wasn't going to see her at all anymore.

Although it had been several months since her grandmother had passed away, Janet still couldn't get used to the fact that the person she felt closer to than anyone else in the world just wasn't there anymore. Her parents had tried everything, including this special trip to the beach to cheer her daughter up, but nothing helped. The girl angrily threw the seashell down and hid her face behind her hands. Who needed any dumb shells now that she couldn't show them to Grandma anymore?

"Hey Janet," said her mom, "Let's you and I take a walk along the beach and watch the waves." She knew this was one of Janet's favorite things to do, and hoped it would make her feel better.

The girl shrugged and half-heartedly went along. The two of them walked along the edge of the water, cool waves licking their feet from time to time. Janet began to pour out her heart to her mom, telling her about how hard it was for her now that Grandma was so far away.

Suddenly a big red, white, and blue beach ball came bounding their way, with a small crying child frantically chasing after it. Janet noticed that all the people walking in front of them were looking on and shaking their heads in pity, but nobody was doing anything to help.

Acting fast, and mustering all of her talents as goalie on her school soccer team, Janet quickly moved to her right and pounced on the runaway ball. She handed it with a smile to the still crying toddler. "It's, okay. It's okay now," she said with a warm, reassuring smile that immediately calmed down the little girl, who gratefully took her ball and walked away.

"Good job!" smiled her mom. "You really jumped in to save the day."

Brushing off the sand she had managed to acquire on her dive, Janet said, "Well, didn't Grandma always say that someone else's problem is our problem too?"

"That's right," said her mom, pausing a moment in thought, then going on with a smile. "Janet, you said that Grandma's far away, but from what I can see, your Grandmother is right next to you."

The girl didn't understand. "Mom, what do you mean? Isn't Grandma..."

"I mean, the way you cared enough to get yourself dirty to help that little kid, just like Grandma would have. The way you knew just how to calm her down was just like your grandmother gently used to calm you when you were little. You learned so many good things from her, and they'll always be a part of you. And that means that Grandma will always be a part of you too, close as can be."

Janet smiled. Maybe her mom was right. She was always thinking about Grandma and trying to be like her. Maybe they weren't so far away after all.

Mother and daughter walked on, enjoying the sparkling reflection of the sun on the ocean as it began to set behind the horizon. Janet felt close to her beloved Grandma once more, and knew that though she would always miss her, perhaps the sun was finally beginning to rise again.

Question: Why did Janet feel better after talking with her mom if her grandmother was still far away from her? Although she wasn't any physically closer to her grandmother, she felt spiritually closer once she realized that she had made many of her Grandma's good traits part of her life.

Question: Do you think this feeling of closeness will increase or decrease as time goes on? While it is likely that the passage of time will make certain memories and feelings fade, Janet, if she chooses to, can keep her deep-down sense of her grandmother's nearness strong, and even grow, the more she appreciates her good traits, and makes them a part of her own life.

Question: Is one person really closer to יהוה than someone else? Ultimately, as יהוה created us, and constantly sustains us, we are all as close to him as could be. However, our ability to feel and benefit from that closeness depends on our choice of whether to behave in a good, righteous way, or not. In that sense we become closer to יהוה by acting more closely like יהוה.

Question: Can a human being really understand יהוה's ways in order to emulate them? The Torah is full of teachings that directly or indirectly show the ways of יהוה, and how He interacts with His creation. While in the absolute sense, we can never fully understand יהוה, He has given us the Torah, to learn from His ways and apply them in our lives, for the best good of the world.

Question: Do you think there is anything wrong with spending time with or being part of a group of people who are behaving wrongly as long as you, yourself, don't do anything wrong? You may have good values and may not intend to act wrongly. But when you find yourself around others who are doing something wrong, you are likely to be influenced by them. You could start to feel that what they are doing really isn't so bad. You may become curious just to try it out. For all of these reasons, it is a good idea to keep your distance from people who are doing things that you feel are wrong.

Question: Does someone ever have the right to tell his friend what to do? It depends on the situation. When others are acting in a way that hurts others, and even themselves, we certainly have the right - and even the obligation - to try to stop them.

Question: Do you think that people who were acting wildly were really having a good time? It might look that way. After all, they may be laughing and joking around. But really, almost always, people who are not following יהוה are very unhappy inside. They don't feel good about themselves, and they act wildly to try to hide those feelings. We can feel sorry for them, but we shouldn't let ourselves be fooled into thinking that they are really happy people.

Spiritual Exercise: Choose friends who want to do the right things. Help your friends by reminding them to do what is right when they begin to make the wrong choices.

Question: Some people claim that they are willing to "try anything once" and justify doing things that go against their values for the sake of the experience. Does this attitude seem reasonable to you? Wanting to broaden our horizons and try out new things can be healthy and can help us grow. However, when this desire comes into conflict with our basic values of what's right and wrong, it can become destructive. The values that we have, and the decisions we make based on these values, either draw us closer to, or distance us, from יהוה.

Question: "Unfortunate is the wrongdoer and unfortunate is his neighbor". How do you understand this statement? All of humanity is interconnected. Every act, either constructive or destructive, influences the whole world. It is almost impossible not to be influenced by the values of the people close to us -- our families, friends, and neighbors. When we are surrounded by others with positive values, we will find ourselves growing. When we spend time with those with negative values, we will find our own values slipping. It is human nature to be influenced by the values of those around us. Since our values determine our character, which determines the quality and success of our lives, we have a lot at stake depending on the values of the people around us. Therefore, we should make every reasonable effort to surround ourselves with people whose values we respect, and keep our distance from those whose values we don't.

Question: There is an old English saying "neither borrower nor a lender be". Is this a proper code of behavior? No. The Torah teaches a person to open his hand and be ready to lend to someone in need. Nobody likes to have to ask help of another, and indeed when we can avoid it, it's best not to borrow. Refusing to lend to someone when you can is selfish. The Torah teaches us to "open our hand (to another in need) and lend him what he needs". This is יהוה's way.

Question: Are we being hypocritical if we don't really feel like helping or lending to someone else and do it in spite of this feeling? Should we wait until we really feel like it and can do it with a full heart? Of course we aim to be able to give with a full heart. However quite often a person's actions have to precede his or her feelings and not the other way around. It's normal to feel a resistance. To try to make ourselves into more giving people is never hypocritical; it can even be called noble.

Question: Zoologists tell us that the "law of the jungle" is that only the strong survive. Do you feel that this is a proper philosophy of how one should live one's life? There is a natural drive to live one's life this way. But our mission as human beings, and as believers, is to elevate ourselves to a higher level. When we give of ourselves to help someone "weaker" than we are, we become less animal-like and more spiritual. This is one of the major lessons of life to learn to give as יהוה gives.

Spiritual Exercise: Give to someone in need today.

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)