

Triennial Parsha Reading for - 2/18/2012

B'chukkotal ("In My statutes")

<u>Tab</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>verse</u>
1	Torah	Lev 26:3-27:34
2	Haftorah	Jer 16:16-17:4
3	Brit	Joh 15:1-27

Torah - Lev 26:3-27:34

³ If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; ⁴ Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. ⁵ And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. ⁶ And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land. ⁷ And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. ⁸ And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. ⁹ For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. ¹⁰ And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new. ¹¹ And I set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. ¹² And I will walk among you, and will be your Elohim, and ye shall be my people. ¹³ I am YHVH your Elohim, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright. ¹⁴ But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; ¹⁵ And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: ¹⁶ I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. ¹⁷ And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before

your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. ¹⁸ And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. ¹⁹ And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass: ²⁰ And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits. ²¹ And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins. ²² I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate. ²³ And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; ²⁴ Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins. ²⁵ And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. ²⁶ And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied. ²⁷ And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; ²⁸ Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. ²⁹ And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. ³⁰ And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you. ³¹ And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors. ³² And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. ³³ And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. ³⁴ Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. ³⁵ As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. ³⁶ And upon

them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.³⁷ And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.³⁸ And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.³⁹ And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.⁴⁰ If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;⁴¹ And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:⁴² Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.⁴³ The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.⁴⁴ And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am YHVH their Elohim.⁴⁵ But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their Elohim: I am YHVH.⁴⁶ These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which YHVH made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.¹ And YHVH spake unto Moses, saying,² Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for YHVH by thy estimation.³ And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.⁴ And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.⁵ And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old, then

thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.⁶ And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver.⁷ And if it be from sixty years old and above; if it be a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.⁸ But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.⁹ And if it be a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto YHVH, all that any man giveth of such unto YHVH shall be holy.¹⁰ He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.¹¹ And if it be any unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto YHVH, then he shall present the beast before the priest:¹² And the priest shall value it, whether it be good or bad: as thou valuest it, who art the priest, so shall it be.¹³ But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.¹⁴ And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto YHVH, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.¹⁵ And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.¹⁶ And if a man shall sanctify unto YHVH some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.¹⁷ If he sanctify his field from the year of jubilee, according to thy estimation it shall stand.¹⁸ But if he sanctify his field after the jubilee, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubilee, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.¹⁹ And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.²⁰ And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more.²¹ But the field, when it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy unto YHVH, as a field devoted; the

possession thereof shall be the priest's. ²² And if a man sanctify unto YHVH a field which he hath bought, which is not of the fields of his possession; ²³ Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation, even unto the year of the jubilee: and he shall give thine estimation in that day, as a holy thing unto YHVH. ²⁴ In the year of the jubilee the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought, even to him to whom the possession of the land did belong. ²⁵ And all thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel. ²⁶ Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be YHVH's firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether it be ox, or sheep: it is YHVH's. ²⁷ And if it be of an unclean beast, then he shall redeem it according to thine estimation, and shall add a fifth part of it thereto: or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy estimation. ²⁸ Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto YHVH of all that he

hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto YHVH. ²⁹ None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death. ³⁰ And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is YHVH's: it is holy unto YHVH. ³¹ And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. ³² And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto YHVH. ³³ He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed. ³⁴ These are the commandments, which YHVH commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.

Mitzvot for this Parsha

Verse(s)	Mitzvah Number	Category	Law
Exo 21:20; Lev 26:25	285	Punishment and Restitution	That the Court shall pass sentence of death by decapitation with the sword.
Lev 27:30; Num 18:24	409	T'rumah, Tithes and Taxes	To set apart the tithe of the produce (one tenth of the produce after taking out t'rumah) for the Levites (affirmative) . See Levi.
Lev 27:32	410	T'rumah, Tithes and Taxes	To tithe cattle.
Lev 27:32 - 33	411	T'rumah, Tithes and Taxes	Not to sell the tithe of the heard.
Lev 27:2 - 8	523	Sacrifices and Offerings	That one who vows to the L-rd the monetary value of a person shall pay the amount appointed in the Scriptural portion.
Lev 27:10	524	Sacrifices and Offerings	If a beast is exchanged for one that had been set apart as an offering, both become sacred.
Lev 27:10	525	Sacrifices and Offerings	Not to exchange a beast set aside for sacrifice.
Lev 27:11 - 13	526	Sacrifices and Offerings	That one who vows to the L-rd the monetary value of an unclean beast shall pay its value.
Lev 27:11 - 13	527	Sacrifices and Offerings	That one who vows the value of a his house shall pay according to the appraisal of the kohein. See Kohein.
Lev 27:16 - 24	528	Sacrifices and Offerings	That one who sanctifies to the L-rd a portion of his field shall pay according to the estimation appointed in the Scriptural portion.
Lev 27:26	529	Sacrifices and Offerings	Not to transfer a beast set apart for sacrifice from one class of sacrifices to another.
Lev 27:28	530	Sacrifices and Offerings	To decide in regard to dedicated property as to which is sacred to the Lord and which belongs to the kohein. See Kohein.
Lev 27:28	531	Sacrifices and Offerings	Not to sell a field devoted to the Lord.
Lev 27:28	532	Sacrifices and Offerings	Not to redeem a field devoted to the Lord.

Stand alone Aleph Tavv for this Parsha

וְאִם-לֹא תִשְׁמְעוּ לִי וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֵת כָּל-הַמִּצְוֹת הָאֵלֶּה	Lev 26:14	But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;
כָּל-יְמֵי הַשְּׁמָה תִשָּׁבֵת אֵת אֲשֶׁר לֹא-שָׁבַתָּהּ בְּשַׁבְּתֵיכֶם בְּשַׁבְּתֵיכֶם עָלֶיהָ	Lev 26:35	As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.
וְחָשַׁב-לוֹ הַכֹּהֵן אֵת מְכַסֵּת הָעֶרְכָּךְ עַד שְׁנַת הַיָּבֵל וְנָתַן אֶת-הָעֶרְכָּךְ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה	Lev 27:23	Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation, even unto the year of the jubilee: and he shall give thine estimation in that day, as a holy thing unto the LORD.

Haftorah - Jer 16:16-17:4

¹⁶ Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith YHVH, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. ¹⁷ For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. ¹⁸ And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things. ¹⁹ YHVH, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit. ²⁰ Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods? ²¹ Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is YHVH. ¹ The sin of

Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars; ² Whilst their children remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills. ³ O my mountain in the field, I will give thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil, and thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders. ⁴ And thou, even thyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not: for ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, which shall burn for ever.

Brit - Joh 15:1-27

¹ I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. ² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. ³ Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. ⁶ If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. ⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. ¹⁰ If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. ¹² This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. ¹⁵ Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. ¹⁶ Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, that ye love one another. ¹⁸ If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. ²¹ But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. ²² If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. ²³ He that hateth me hateth my Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. ²⁵ But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. ²⁶ But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: ²⁷ And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

Bechukotai

Written by Carl & Julie Parker, Friday, 23 May 2008

Scriptures

Leviticus 26:3 to 27:34
Jeremiah 16:19-17:14
Matthew 23:1 to 24:2
John 14:15-21; 15:10-12

Held in the study of Bechukotai, the last portion of the book of Leviticus, are YHVH's closing remarks to the Children of Israel. We have enjoyed this ten-week study with YHVH as He finishes teaching His people His decrees, laws and regulations – in Hebrew, understood as *His will, His testament and His order* – with these last words spoken from His heart to His people Israel. Today may we heed His words and walk in the redemption given us since ancient days.

It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in because of their disobedience. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Yeshua the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess (Hebrews 4:6, 14).

Leviticus 26:2-13 extends to us *the laws that govern the land*. To those who follow YHVH's ways there is a blessing of physical and spiritual merits, plus promises of provision and prosperity. However, in Leviticus 26:14-34, YHVH also states the other side of the consequences *if we do not follow His ways and stray from His words for life*. YHVH has laid out five levels of warnings to help us see the error of our ways. The promise to scatter His people among the Nations was also given in the event that after all the warnings the people still would not listen and turn their backs to His ways. Only when the Land lay desolate and was cleared of disobedience could it finally enjoy its Sabbath years.

1. "**If** you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, I will do this to you appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart and you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you."
2. "And after all this, **if** you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze and your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit."
3. "Then, **if** you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins. I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be desolate."
4. "And **if** by these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me, then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins and I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied."
5. "And after all this, **if** you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols; and My soul shall abhor you. I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste."

"**Then the land** shall enjoy its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest and enjoy its Sabbaths. As long as it lies desolate it shall rest – for the time it did not rest on your Sabbaths when you dwelt in it" (Leviticus 26:2-23).

Unfortunately the Children of Israel did not obey the message and fell as a nation. They were forced to leave the land and live in exiled regions among the Nations. The prophets record how the House of Judah (the Jews) fulfilled their repentance and witnessed a remnant return to YHVH and to the land. But no record is made of the same with the House of Israel (Ephraim), as they have yet never repented or returned until this day in time.

The Two Houses of Israel are in the land of their dispersion today. Very few live in the Land by comparison and of those, only a remnant obeys YHVH's teachings. These warnings applied to our ancestors and are our heritage today. These words are still in effect through Yeshua who fulfilled the Word at Mount Sinai, which then made it applicable in our lives today. Through Him the Word was perfected and made manifest. YHVH does not leave us without hope. The Hope of all Israel rests in His Word, Yeshua the Living Word.

We repeat the last lesson's quote from Angus Wootten's book *Restoring Israel's Kingdom* that "Ephraim's punishment as outlined in Ezekiel 4:5 was for three hundred and ninety years. However, Leviticus 26:27-28 says that if there is no repentance the punishment will be sevenfold. There was no record of Ephraim repenting, so the punishment was for three hundred and ninety years multiplied by seven years, or two thousand and seven hundred and thirty years. The punishment has to have a starting point and an ending point. Surely, we cannot use a date later than 721 BC which marked the fall of the City of Samaria, the last bastion of the Northern Kingdom. Two thousand and seven hundred and thirty years from that date brings us to the year 2008 as the end of the punishment.

However, a better starting date could well be 734 BC that marked the year that Ephraim or the Northern Kingdom had lost all political and religious control of any territory it still held. It had become a vassal state of Assyria. Going forward two thousand and seven hundred and thirty years from 734 BC, brings us to 1996, a year in which every feast of YHVH was marked with a blood red moon. It was also the year of the Hal-Boop Comet. Further it marked the beginning of the one hundredth Jubilee/Yovel year from Noah and the fiftieth Jubilee from Yeshua. Also, it has been my experience that the vast majority of those coming to an understanding of the Messianic Age did so after 1996.

IF we confess our sins **and** the sins of our fathers, **then** when our hearts are humbled and we fulfill the costly consequences of our disobedience to His ways, **then YHVH** will remember His Covenant He made with our fathers Jacob, Isaac and Abraham and restore us (Leviticus 26:40-45 ref. 2 Chronicles 7:13-14)

YHVH is faithful to the curses as His is to the blessings.

Leviticus 27 Redeeming what is YHVH's

The teachings of vows and the redeeming of vows are placed at the very end of Leviticus and handled differently than the other instructions of YHVH. "Up to this point in the Book of Leviticus, the Torah has described all types of offerings that can be brought in forms of life: animal and vegetable (grain). The only form of sacrifice that has not been discussed is one measured in the value of human life. Here the Torah introduces human life as a subject for offering, but stated that it must be in the form of a monetary payment to help support the Temple treasury, not for the Altar.

Regarding the valuation of human beings, the next sections deal with the holiness of the nation of Israel and the land of Israel. The effect of this holiness was revealed in the laws of the Jubilee/Yovel, which prevented land from being sold in perpetuity; it must be returned in the Jubilee Year. Here the Torah speaks of the holiness inherent in the individual person and the value of his soul. YHVH's teaching assesses the payment depending on age and gender.

Yeshua is our payment for the vows we spoke through the generations. On the night He was betrayed, the High Priest or Kohan determined what His Soul was worth thirty pieces of silver. This payment was given to the Kohan, who did not put it into the Temple. Yeshua at His trial "remained silent." He paid our redemption price and our death according to YHVH's will. (Matthew 27:1-9; Jeremiah 32:6-9; Zechariah 11:12-13)

"What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins. When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Yeshua was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility." So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the coins and said, "It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money." So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty silver coins, the price set on him by the people of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

Leviticus 27:30-33 Tithe

A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to YHVH; it is holy to YHVH.

The teaching of the Tabernacle opened with the command for the Children of Israel to bring their freewill offerings to help set up the Mishkan (Exodus 25:1-2). Now at the close of the teaching of the Tabernacle we have instructions for the tithe again. In earlier teachings, the tithe was the first commandment for the Tabernacle after the teaching of the Sabbath. The silver collected became the foundation of the Tabernacle. This represented redemption, just as tithing is a redemptive act of the people of God. Once the

Tabernacle was/is built, the tithe is then used for maintaining it. This commandment to tithe is important for the continued provisions for the daily upkeep and operations of the Kingdom of YHVH and for the priesthood. The priesthood survived on the tithes.

History of Rabbinic Authority and the Tithe

With the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, the priests were out of their element. It was during this time that they experienced competition for their authority. In 70 more years, their authority would be in the hands of the Rabbis. In Scripture, it was the priests that YHVH gave the authority to, not the rabbis. Rabbinic writings contain only the views of the rabbis on how the sacrifices and offerings were to be conducted; they do not contain the views of the priests who had conducted them. The rabbis rejected all Sadducean views, and the priests were primarily Sadducees. The rabbinic writings declared that the rabbis were the ones with the authority not the priests. If the Temple were ever rebuilt, the priests would have to operate under rabbinic law, whereas Scripture states that this is clearly under the domain of the priests. With the rabbinic authority in place, the rabbis laid down the law for the priests.

It was Akiba, the father of rabbinic Judaism, who put into motion the rabbinical order in place of the priests. His decisions effectively demolished the priestly authority and nullified YHVH's law of the tithe that provided for their support. Akiba authorized the law of gathering the grain far too early so that the grain not gathered was free from the tithe. He went further to maintain that the grain was free from tithes unless it was stored in a protected barn. If it was stored in a court to which two people had keys, it was unprotected and free from tithes (Mish. Ma'aserot 3.5; Mish. Ma'aser Sheni 4.8).

These interpretations effectually abolished the whole system of tithes. Abolishing the whole system of tithes effectually eliminated the livelihood of the priests, which effectually eliminated the priesthood as a competitor for rabbinic authority. In this way, Akiba was able to firmly establish his own Judaism over that of the priests to make the Torah what it "*should have been*." It was Akiba's involvement in the Bar Kokhba rebellion that led to the never before *complete expulsion* of all Jewish people from the land of Israel for eighteen centuries.

Today we are learning to rebuild and maintain the Tabernacle of YHVH (His Kingdom), just as the Israelites did. If we are reading this lesson we are part of the remnant of Ephraim and Judah rebuilding and unifying together in a fulfillment of prophecy. We are coming back in record numbers, living out Ezekiel 37. YHVH is rebuilding David's fallen tent by placing the desire to know Torah, God's teaching and instruction, in our hearts. We are the fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:31-34. Our tenth or tithe is a command for today just as it was for the Israelites in Leviticus. It was needed to fulfill the vision, *not for the receiver but for those who gave the tithe. The tithe we give is our seed. By giving the tithe, the seeds we give bring provision into our lives.* It is like making a deposit into YHVH's bank of blessings. That is why we give with a joyful heart! Selah. (Luke 12:41-44)

The Book of Malachi is foundational to our understanding of this (Malachi 3:6-12). We are to bring the *whole tithe* in. Often we are distracted by other needy causes but the tithe must be brought in first before we give out offerings or gifts. Offerings and gifts are not tithes taken from the tithe to YHVH, but are over and above the giving of tithes. Redeeming or substituting the tithe is not an option without a cost, as every tenth unit *was* to be counted and set apart *holy* unto YHVH (Leviticus 27:31-33). This is a spiritual realm as well as a physical realm. Malachi speaks of a storehouse. We are to put our tithes into YHVH's storehouse, the place that teaches the true gospel and feeds YHVH's true manna: those who teach how to know the difference between holy and unholy, distinguish between clean and unclean, how to teach and keep YHVH's moedim (His appointed feasts), and how to keep His Sabbaths holy are true priests and prophets who serve in His Tabernacle today (Ezekiel 44:23-24; 22:26).

Yeshua is the manifestation of the spoken Word at Mount Sinai (John 1:1, 14). Yeshua spoke all the commandments to the Children of Israel at that time. Yeshua commanded us to keep His Word and again exhorted us in John 14 to keep His commandments and walk in them.

If you love Me, keep **My commandments**. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever -- the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has **My commandments** and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him (John 14:15-21).

If you keep **My commandments**, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's **commandments** and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is **My commandment**, that you love one another as I have loved you (John 15:10-12).

**Chazak! Chazak! Venischazeik!
Be Strong! Be Strong! And May We Be Strengthened!**

Shabbat Shalom,
Carl and Julie Parker

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Past Parshot: www.messianicisrael.com/sheepfold-gleanings/

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Bechukotai

Written by Natan Lawrence Friday, 23 May 2008

Scriptures

Leviticus 26:3-27:34

Haftorah Reading

Jeremiah 16:19–17:14

B'rit Chadashah

Yeshua on blessings and curses: Matthew 7:21–27

The blessings of keeping YHVH's commandments: John 14:15–21; 15:10–12; 1 John 2:3–6; John 3:18, 36; 5:24

Elohim's judgement against the Torahless: Romans 1:18; 2:2–10

Put off wicked lifestyles: Ephesians 5:1–7; Colossians 3:1–10

Yeshua to deliver the saints from the wrath of Elohim: 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9

The wrath of Elohim to come upon the wicked in the end times: Revelation 11:18; 14:10,19; 15:1; 16:1,19

Etz Chayeem Hoo (He Is a Tree of Life)

Yeshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion):

- **26:3** Blessings for Obedience and Curses for Disobedience
- **26:16** The First Series of Punishments for Failing to Hear and Obey YHVH's Torah Commandments
- **26:18** The Second Series of Punishments for Failing to Hear and Obey YHVH's Torah Commandments
- **26:21** The Third Series of Punishments for Failing to Hear and Obey YHVH's Torah Commandments
- **26:23** The Fourth Series of Punishments for Failing to Hear and Obey YHVH's Torah Commandments
- **26:27** The Fifth Series of Punishments for Failing to Hear and Obey YHVH's Torah Commandments
- **26:42** The Conclusion of the Admonition—YHVH Will Remember His Covenants
- **27:1** The Valuations of Gifts/Voluntary Contributions to the Tabernacle
- **27:9** Sanctification and Redemption of Animals as Used in Offerings
- **27:16** Redemption of Houses and Fields When Given as Gifts to YHVH
- **27:28** Personal Property Segregated/Excluded From Personal Use and Given Over in Service to YHVH
- **27:30** The Second Tithe Collected Four Times Every Seven Years (First, Second, Fourth and Fifth Years) for Use at the Aliyah Festivals
- **27:32** The Tithe of Animals: Every Tenth Animal of Israelites' Flocks to Be Sanctified as an Offering to YHVH

Study Questions For This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion):

1. **26:3** *Walk ... keep ... do [my commandments].* The Hebrew word for *walk* is *halak* (*Strong's* H3212) and is the generic word meaning "to walk or go." *Keep* is the Hebrew word *shamar* (*Strong's* H8104) meaning "to guard, observe, give heed." *Do* is the generic Hebrew word *asah* (*Strong's* H6213) meaning "to fashion, accomplish or make." Ponder and discuss the different - connotations of these words with regard to one's day-to-day life of obedience to YHVH's Torah commands.

2. Starting in 26:3ff, notice the direct correlation between obedience and physical blessings? Is this part of YHVH's Word still applicable to us today? If not, why not? If we can "do away" with this part of his Word, as some teach, are there other parts that we can also annul? Read what Yeshua had to say about the rewards for Torah-obedience in Matthew 5:19.
3. **26:6** *Evil beasts*. This phrase literally means *evil life* (*chai ra*, *Strong's H2416*). *Beasts* can mean "life, beast, creature, living thing." To the degree that our nation turned from its Judeo-Christian heritage evil (lawless) individuals (like wild beasts) have overrun us in our institutions of government, education, politics, economics and religion. In many of our churches, a diluted truth is preached for fear of infuriating spiritual beasts such as sexual deviants, abortionists and the wicked in general. What can you do to help turn the tide in your own life and sphere of influence? Are you salt and light? Do you allow yourself to be a spokesman for YHVH whenever opportunities present?
4. In **26:7** we see an allusion to "spiritual warfare." Do you exercise spiritual warfare in your life? If not, why not? Yeshua, the apostles Paul and John view it as a normal activity for saints (Luke 9:1; 10:19; Mark 16:17–18; 2 Cor 10:3–5; Eph 6:10–18; Rev 12:11). Does your past religious tradition (or "spiritual baggage") ignore these Scriptures saying that they somehow do not mean what they say? Are you AWOL (absent without leave) from YHVH's spiritual battle, and are you letting others who have more faith than you fight those spiritual battles?
5. **26:8** If five Israelites who are walking in Torah obedience can put 100 enemies to flight (a 1:20 ratio) while 100 can put 10,000 to flight (a 1:100 ratio) what does this teach us about spiritual synergism? Can the more of us who band together to help to defeat the forces of darkness be more effective in advancing YHVH's kingdom? What does this teach us about *being* the spiritual body of Yeshua (see 1 Cor 14) and being part of a spiritual community as opposed to being an island unto oneself or a spiritual "lone ranger"? As the days get more evil and the forces of hell squeeze with greater ferocity those who hew to a Judeo-Christian ethic, will the need for like-minded believers to unite and to cooperate increase for spiritual defense against our common (spiritual) enemies?

There is another lesson to be learned from this verse. The arithmetic of the verse seems to be faulty. If five Israelites can pursue a hundred enemies, a ratio of 1:20, then a hundred Israelites should pursue 2,000, not 10,000, as the verse teaches. This teaches us that the more people who are united in serving [Elohim], the more effective their actions (*ArtScroll Vayikra-Leviticus Commentary*, p. 449). How much of our spiritual ministry efforts are spent devouring, envying, bad-mouthing, attacking, competing with one another—even those of like faith? Now what happened when the early Messianic believers in the Book of Acts were together and in one accord (and not fighting each other)? (Read Acts 2:24ff; 4:24ff, 32ff; 5:12; 8:6f for the answer.) If it could happen then, why not now? Stop fighting one another! Unite to fight the devil. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of Elohim (Matt 5:9).

6. In **26:11–12** YHVH says he will set his Tabernacle among his people and will walk among them. Do you have a sense of this in your life? The word *tabernacle* in verse 11 is the word *mishkan* meaning "dwelling place, residence or habitation." From this word comes the word *shakan* meaning "abiding or presence." From this word derives the well-known word *shekinah*, which refers to the anointed and *kadosh* or set-apart Presence of YHVH. Obedience to his commands and setting oneself apart unto him is the key to having the Presence of YHVH in one's life. What steps are you taking in your life to press into a deeper relationship with your Heavenly Father?
7. In **26:14–5** we read, "But if you will not listen to me and will not perform all these commandments; if you consider my decrees loathsome, and if your being rejects my ordinances, so as not to perform all my commandments, so that you annul my covenant, then ..." (and then a long list of curses follows that will befall those rebellious Israelites. The last several verses of the Christian Bible's "Old Testament" states, "**Remember the Torah-law of Moses** my servant which I commanded unto him at Horeb [i.e., Mount Sinai] for all Israel with the statutes and judgments ..." (Mal 4:4). Yeshua states in Matthew 5:17, "**Think not** that I have come to destroy the Torah-commandments or the prophets ..." Have Christians followed these admonitions (as highlighted above) when they teach that we are "no longer under the (curse of) the law" or "the law was nailed to the cross or done away with" or "the law was for the Jews, but we're under grace," etc.?
8. **26:14–15** Rewards and punishment are contingent upon Torah-obedience. Did this change in the Brit Chadashah (New Testament)? If you think it did, then please read Matthew 5:19.
9. **26:21** *If you behave casually with me and refuse to heed me* (*ArtScroll Stone Edition Tanach*). What does this mean? It means that Israel's performance of the commandments, despite the punishments, would be haphazard and erratic; they would treat them as a matter of choice and convenience, rather than as divinely imposed obligations. *Casually* can also mean "with stubbornness," meaning that they would stubbornly refuse to draw close to Elohim (*ArtScroll Vayikra-Leviticus Commentary*, p. 455). Does this explain your heart attitude and spiritual walk with regard to YHVH's Torah—his instructions in righteousness?
10. In **26:23–24** we see that if we **walk contrary to** YHVH (in obedience to his commands) so he will walk contrary to us and bring cursings upon us (see Ps 18:24–26). What we do will determine our rewards or punishments. This is a theme found in the Apostolic Scriptures, as well (see Matt 5:19; Rom 2:6–11). In Leviticus 26:14–15, we see that those who hear and do his commandments will be blessed while those who despise and abhor his commandments will be cursed. His blessings are conditional upon our obedience. He will not force his ways down our throats. It is **our choice** what we do and we will then have to accept the consequences of our actions (2 Cor 5:10; Matt 16:27; Rom 2:6).
11. In **26:30** we read as part of the fifth series of curses to befall a disobedient and Torahless people, "*I will destroy your lofty buildings and decimate your sun-idols ...*" (*ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*). The same Chumash on this verse comments, "The people placed their confidences in the high towers from which they would be able to repulse invaders, but God would destroy the buildings leaving the people helpless against their enemies" (*Ibid.*, p. 713). Could what happened on September 11, 2001 when a group of terrorists attacked America's economic and military centers have been a fulfillment of this? Has this

nation become vulnerable and somewhat defenseless against a small band of terrorists who can virtually hold a nation hostage on the threat of striking anywhere anytime because we have forsaken our Judeo-Christian heritage and turned to the gods of humanism, hedonism and materialism? Consider the destruction of the city of New Orleans and the gambling casinos along the coast of Mississippi in 2005 by Hurricane Katrina. Could this be a judgment of YHVH against America's "high tower" idols of immorality, decadence, hedonism and greed?

12. **26:33** *I will scatter you among the heathen.* Eventually this prophecy came to pass when Israel (both the House of Judah/Southern Kingdom and the House of Ephraim/Northern Kingdom) were scattered over the face of the whole earth as a judgment for their disobedience to the Torah commands and covenants of YHVH (Deut 30:4; 32:26; Ezek 34:6,12; 36:19; 37:21; Amos 9:9; John 11:52; Jas 1:1; 1 Pet 1:1). In regards to Deuteronomy 32:26 which says, "I said, I would scatter them into the corners,..." *ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash* comments, "This refers to the exile of the ten tribes, who were scattered to an unknown place where they have never been heard from again." On the phrase of the same verse, "I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men..." the same *Chumash* states, "This is a reference to the exile of Judah and Benjamin, the Davidic kingdom from which today's known Jews are descended." It goes on to say that though nations would seek to destroy Israel entirely, YHVH would never allow Israel to become extinct or to disappear. Israel's perpetual existence is a constant reminder of YHVH's plan and eventually Israel will thrive and fulfill YHVH's intention for it (pp. 1105–1106). Hirsch in his commentary on the Pentateuch on the same verse translates the phrase, "I would scatter them into the corners,..." as, "I would relegate them into a corner..." and then says that the Hebrew here refers to the "extreme end of a surface, the side or corner..." He, too, relates this fate to the ten tribes who would be scattered "to some distant corner of the world, where, left entirely to themselves, they could mature towards serious reflection and ultimate return to [YHVH]..." (p. 650). Despite Israel's punishment, would YHVH leave them in a scattered state? We discuss the answer to this question in the corresponding Haftorah portion that follows.
13. In **26:42** YHVH states that "I will remember my covenant with Jacob and even my covenant with Isaac, and even my covenant with Abraham will I remember ..." Classical Jewish Torah commentators Rashi and Baal HaTurim both note that the patriarchs are mentioned here in reverse order (the only place in Scripture where this occurs). They both give different reasons as to why this occurs. Allow me to give you our reason why we believe YHVH wrote this in the Torah. In the preceding verses, Torah prophesies what will be Israel's punishment for her disobedience to YHVH's Torah commandments and covenants. As a result of her unfaithfulness to YHVH, she would be dispersed among the heathen nations (Ezek 36:19) from where she would later confess her sins—the sin of walking contrary to YHVH with an uncircumcised heart (verses 40–41). As a result, YHVH promised to remember his covenants that he had made with her patriarchal fathers (verse 42).

At the same time, Scripture prophesies that in the days to come Israel will awaken spiritually from the lands where YHVH has driven the them (because of their disobedience to his Torah-commands) and in captivity they will recognize their idolatrous state and that their fathers have inherited religious and spiritual lies (Jer 16:14–21). They shall remember their evil and Torahless ways (Ezek 36:31) and YHVH will begin to regather his people back to the land of Israel from those nations (Ezek 36:24). This is what was prophesied by Malachi about the hearts of the children being turned to the fathers just before the day of YHVH's wrath (Mal 4:6) and the return of Yeshua the Messiah. Therefore the verse that lists the patriarchs in reverse order is prophesying that wayward Israel will return to the Hebraic roots of her faith working her way backwards as she sheds off the false religious lies she has inherited.

Rabbi Hirsch in his commentary on this verse confirms our interpretation (*Hirsch Pentateuch Leviticus*, pages 808–809). He discusses the children of the Abrahamic covenant who have been carried away captive for their Torahlessness. Scripture refers to them as the *captivity* or *galut* (*Strong's* H1546 and 1547, *TWOT* 350b). Hirsch notes that as Jacob was exiled from the land of Israel and his father's house for his sins and went into captivity under Laban, this was prophetic of the fate of his sinful descendants. From out of the nations where the galut of YHVH will be scattered they will awaken (like the prodigal son of the parable of Yeshua in the Gospels) to their Torah-covenant roots and will return to *Beth-el* (the House of El), as did Jacob when he left Lot and returned to his father Isaac's house. Is this what we see happening today in the current Messianic movement where Christians are returning to the Hebraic roots of the Christian faith?

If this is so, could your interest in your Hebrew roots be a part of prophecy being fulfilled? Rejoice that the Sovereign Ruler of the universe is calling you back to your spiritual roots! YHVH's prophets prophesied that this would happen thousands of years ago.

14. According to Rashi's commentary and *The ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash* commentary, when verse 45 (of chapter 26) states, "I [YHVH] will remember the covenant of the ancients, those whom I have taken out of the land of Egypt before the nations, to be Elohim unto them ..." this is a reference to the whole House of Israel (all 12 tribes), and this is YHVH's promise to redeem their offspring. In Hebraic thought, redemption involves bringing back the Israelite exiles to their land from the nations where they were scattered due to their Torahlessness. It involves reestablishing them into covenantal relationship with YHVH, their Maker and their spiritual Husband. Is this what Paul was referring to when he wrote in Ephesians 2:11–13:

Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past peoples of the nations in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants [plural, referring to the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants] of

promise, having no hope, and without Elohim in the world: but now in Messiah Yeshua ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Messiah. (emphasis added)

15. **27:32** Concerning the tithe. We must never forget that all that we “possess” belongs to YHVH and we honor him through the tithe. Those who greedily hoard that which belongs to him, or who stingily say, “I can’t afford to tithe” will quite simply be cursed in their finances. Again, the choice is ours: to tithe and be blessed, to not tithe and not have that blessing on our finances.

Haftorah Reading—Jeremiah 16:19-17:14 Come Out of Her My People!

In the Torah portion, YHVH declares the blessings that come when his people faithfully obey him, as well as the curses that result from disobedience to his Torah. Similarly, Jeremiah the prophet, acting as YHVH’s spokesman, states that Israel would be scattered among the nations for their disobedience to YHVH’s Torah and for their turning to the pagan idolatrous practices of the surrounding nations. The prophet then foretells of an eventual return of the exiled Israelites to their land as they turn from their pagan traditions and return to the true worship of YHVH as per biblical instruction.

1. **16:15** *Children of Israel ... from all the lands where [YHVH] had driven them ... I will bring them again into their land.* This verse corresponds to Leviticus 26:33 of this week’s Torah portion, which states as a result of Israel’s disobedience to YHVH’s Torah-Word: “And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.” When did this prophecy come to pass in ancient Israel? To whom did it apply? (On Israel being dispersed among the nations of the world, see Isa 11:12; 56:3, 6–8; Ezek 36:19; Zeph 3:10; John 7:35. On Israel becoming outcasts from its land, see Isa 11:12; 27:12–13; 56:8; Ps 147:2; cp. Deut 30:3–4.)
2. **16:16** *Fishers.* Not only this verse, but all of Jeremiah 16:16 is a prophecy about exiled Israel returning from the lands where YHVH had driven them (verse 15). Jeremiah says YHVH would use spiritual fishermen to fish his scattered people out of all the places—even to the ends of the earth (verse 19)—where he had driven them. Some of Yeshua’s disciples were fishermen by trade whom he recruited to become “fishers of men” (John 4:19). Who has that commission now?

Another way to look at this issue is to compare Israel to lost sheep. How many times does Yeshua liken his mission to that of a shepherd gathering his lost sheep? (Please note Ps 119:176; Isa 53:6; Ezek 34:4, 16; Matt 15:24; cp. Isa 40:11; Matt 18:11; Luke 15:4; 1 Pet 2:25 [cp. 1 Pet 1:1].) When will these lost sheep be regathered? In the end days, YHVH will gather his sheep that have lost their way, been scattered, hurt and wounded by hireling shepherds and self-seeking religionists (Ezek 34:11,16). YHVH will gather them from the nations where they have been scattered and return them to the land of Israel with David (or Messiah Son of David) as their king (see Ezek chapters 34 and 36–37).

3. **16:19** *Ends of the earth.* Who are these “Gentiles” that have been scattered to the ends of the earth? The word *gentiles* is the Hebrew word *goyim* (*Strong’s* G1471, Greek: *ethnos*, *Strong’s* G1484) This word is translated in the Tanakh (Hebrew Scriptures) as *nation* 374 times, as *heathen* 143 times, as *Gentiles* 30 times, and *people* 11 times.

Whenever the word *gentile* is used in the KJV it is the word *gowy* or *goy*. According to *Strong’s Concordance*, the meaning of *goy* is “a foreign nation; hence a Gentile; also (fig.) a troop of animals, or a flight of locusts.” According to *Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*, the word *gowy* means “a people, a confluence of men,” and “contextually in holy Scripture it is used to refer to the other nations besides Israel, the foes of Israel, and strangers to the true religion of Israel.”

There are times when *goy* refers specifically to Israel (e.g., the descendants of Joseph in general: Gen 48:19; of the Southern Kingdom of Judah when it forsook Elohim and its covenant with him and became like the surrounding heathen nations: Isa 1:4; of the Southern Kingdom: Isa 9:1; of Israel in general: Isa 26:2; 49:7; Ps 33:12; Gen 12:2; 35:11). There are numerous other instances in Scripture where the words *goy* or *goyim* are applied to the descendants of Abraham. Scripture’s use of the term is unbiased and lacks any of the pejorative implications that have been applied to the term subsequently (e.g., Gen 17:4, 5, 6, 16; 18:18; 25:23; 46:3; Exod 19:6; 33:13; Deut 4:6, 7, 8, 34; Ezek 37:22).

As already noted, the word *goy* simply means “people group.” The Greek word *ethnos* as found in the Apostolic Scriptures is equivalent in meaning to the Hebrew word *goyim*. So clearly, in Jeremiah 16:19 *gentiles* is a reference to lost and scattered Israel who has mixed herself with the heathen (Hos 7:8; 8:8), and who is now returning to YHVH.

4. **16:19** *Our fathers have inherited lies.* What are some of the lies (false or pagan religious traditions) that our spiritual (Christian) fathers have inherited and have passed on down to us that we must let go of in order to serve our Heavenly Father in a manner that is pleasing to him and consistent with his Word (including the Torah)? Compare this verse to Revelation 18:4, where YHVH admonishes *his people* to come out of the Babylonian religious system that would exist on earth in the end times. Keep in mind that many of these religious systems derive from ancient pagan sex and sun worship rituals as we note below under 17:2.

5. **16:21** *They shall know that my name is YHVH.* In Hebraic thought, a name is more than just a word. It also refers to one's reputation, character and authority. But here, it states that Israel will *know* what Elohim's name is. Have you found it ironic that our English Bibles, in this verse, translate YHVH as *Lord*? *Lord* is not his name! YHVH (pronounced Yehovah, Yehowah, or something similar to this) is his name. It is time the people of YHVH recognize this and start using it!
6. **17:1** The hearts of Gentile-Israelites have become hardened by the sinful traditions they have inherited from their fathers. What was your response when someone began sharing with you about the pagan origins of many sacred cow Christian traditions such as Sunday observance, Christmas and Easter? Once your eyes were opened, were you excited to share the truth with family and friends? What was their reaction?
7. **17:2** *Groves/Asherah trees.* Sacred trees (like obelisks) were set up near pagan altars for the worship of the Babylonian and Canaanite sex goddess, Astarte (or Ishtar from which the Christian festival Easter derives its name).

In Exodus 34:13, YHVH commands the Israelites to destroy the pagan sex worship symbols that the *NIV Study Bible* describes as wooden poles, or carved images, that were set up in honor of this pagan goddess at pagan worship sites. *The International Bible Encyclopedia* (vol. 1, p. 317) states that a tree trunk with branches in honor of this pagan deity was often placed next to the altar of YHVH—something YHVH abhorred! (Deut 16:21; Judg 6:25, 28, 30; 2 Kgs 23:6).

Jeremiah's description of such a tree in chapter 10 is eerily reminiscent of our modern Christmas tree. Have you ever seen a Christmas tree next to the altar in a Christian church? Sometimes this pagan deity was represented by a tree, sometimes by an obelisk type pole. The *asherah* pole is related to the *matstebah*, which is defined as "image, pillar, stump, tree or altar." This type of pagan representation made its way into the religious system of ancient Israel, something YHVH forbade and something he expected righteous leaders to destroy (e.g., 2 Kgs 10:25–27). Have you ever wondered about the origins of the church steeple and about its striking resemblance to the ancient Egyptian obelisk, which was associated with phallic and sun god worship?

8. **17:5–8** Two trees are mentioned in these verses. Both are in the wilderness and subjected to the heat and drought thereof, yet one does not flourish and "will not see when good comes," while the other is fazed neither by the heat nor the drought of the desert. If these trees represent two types of people going through the same wilderness experience called life, then what is the fundamental difference between them? Relate this back to verse five and ahead to verses nine and ten.
9. **17:14** *Heal me, O YHVH.* This is a plea to YHVH, the Great Physician. Only he can heal the hardness (17:1) and crooked deceitfulness or weakness (17:9) of Israel's heart. Various prophets link the concept of healing to that of the two houses of Israel being reunited, being restored to their promised land and spiritual inheritance, returning to Torah and the establishment of a Messianic kingdom on earth. Here are some thoughts on these things:
 - **The Breach Will Be Repaired**
Those who are returning to the Sabbath in its full spiritual sense and are returning to the "old (ancient, everlasting) paths" are called "repairers of the breach" (Isa 58:12; Amos 9:11).

What is a *breach*? By dictionary definition a *breach* is "an infraction or violation of a law; a broken, ruptured or torn condition; a split, crack or divide between two sides; a break in friendly relations." This is what occurred when the Northern Kingdom was torn away from King Rehoboam causing a split in the nation of Israel (1 Kgs 11:13, 29–40; 12:1–20).

The last question the disciples asked Yeshua before his ascension was whether he was about to restore the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6). What was Yeshua's response to them? He told them to preach the gospel everywhere (verse 8). This message of restoration and repairing the breach was the focus of what Paul called the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18) and the middle wall of partition between Jews and non-Jews coming down and the making of one new man out of two through the atoning sacrifice of Yeshua (Eph. 2:11–19).

- **The "Sick" Will Be Healed**
The hireling and self-seeking shepherds of Israel who should have cared for, healed and fed YHVH's sheep have instead left them in a weakened, sickly and malnourished state (Ezek 34:4, 16). Yeshua came to heal his sick sheep (Ezek 34:8–31).
- **Spiritual Blindness Will Be Healed**
In Hebraic thought, blindness is a metaphor for spiritual blindness, lack of spiritual enlightenment, and especially Torahlessness; that is, it is a reference to those who are blinded to the light of YHVH's truth (Isa 29:18; 42:7, 16, 18–19; 43:8; Jer 31:8, see also Rom 11:25; Isa 56:10).

Bechukotai

Written by Boaz & Rina Dreyer Friday, 23 May 2008

Scriptures

Leviticus 26:3 – 27:34

Haftara:

Jeremiah 16:19 – 17:14

This parasha begins with the idyllic blessing that awaits the people if they live up to their covenant with YHVH. It then proceeds to the *tochacha* (admonition), a sobering account of punishments, frustrations, and curses that will result from attempts to destroy the covenant. Though YHVH's underlying mercy prevents all of these curses from befalling Israel in any one unbearable instant, a careful reading of Jewish history shows that they *have* taken place at various intervals, before and after the exiles.

The blessings are given in general terms. The curses however, are given in great detail, because they are intended to awe the people into obedience to YHVH's will (*Ibn Ezra v.13*).

26:3-5 The blessing of adherence to Torah. If we walk in all of the mitzvot of Torah, YHVH will give fruitfulness to our Land and we should have bread to the full. "I will give you rain-showers in season." This alludes to the early rains and the latter rains – the *yoreh* and the *malkush* (Deut. 11:14).

26:6 By climaxing the above blessings with that of peace, the Torah teaches that peace is equivalent to all other blessings combined (*Rashi; Sifra*).

26:14-43 These horrendous punishments are meant not as revenge, but to influence people to repent. For that reason, they are inflicted in stages of increasing severity. If the first stage comes and we do not derive the desired lesson, the next and more severe stage of punishment will befall them, until repentance and YHVH's mercy finally comes.

26:42 The order of the Patriarch's names is reversed. This indicates that Yaakov alone should be worthy of bringing redemption to his children; and even if his merit is insufficient, there is Isaac's merit. If even that is not enough, there is Abraham, whose merit will surely be sufficient (*Rashi*).

26:46 The word *vehatorot* is plural because it refers to the two Torahs: the Written Torah and the Oral Torah. This verse emphasizes that both were given at Sinai (*Rashi; Sifra*).

27:1-8 One may vow to contribute the "value" of oneself or of another person or thing. Here the Torah speaks of a specific form of vow known as *erech*, which for lack of a better translation we use the word "valuation."

27:9-13 If an animal is sanctified for use as an offering, and it is not suitable (i.e. blemished), it is redeemed and its value used for the offering for which the animal was originally dedicated.

27:32-33 The tithing of animals. The newborn herd or flock is put into a corral with a narrow opening, and the animals are allowed to leave one by one. The owner or his designee touched each tenth one with a paint daubed stick, marking it as the *ma'aser* or tithing (*Rashi; Bechort 58b*).

27: 28-29 *Cherem*, or segregated property. In the context of this passage, the word *cherem* refers to a person's expressed resolution to consecrate an object and thus make it forbidden for personal use.

27:30-31 During the first, second, fourth and fifth years of the seven year *Shemittah* cycle, a farmer sets aside one-tenth of his produce, which he must take to Jerusalem to be eaten. It is known as the *ma'aser sheni* (second tithing), because it is separate from the crop only after the first tithing is separated for the Levite. The Torah permits the owner to redeem the tithing for coins, which he must take to Jerusalem and use it to purchase food or offerings that may be eaten.

Commentary - Year 2 Sabbath 46

Leviticus 26:3 - 27:34 - Jeremiah 16:19, Ezekiel 12:20, Isaiah 1:19 - Psalm 90 - John 15:1-27

Im Bekuqutay / If In My Statutes [SCRIPTURES](#) (should be read first)

In this last portion of the Book of Leviticus, we see the various states of the hearers. God's Word is received in some good ground, where various states of growth are achieved; it is also received in some thorny or rocky ground, as Yeshua stated in parable (Matthew 13).

Today's readings concern this present life. We will look at the present state of those who are God's chosen – those who are redeemed. We will see the great distinction between living by faith (in truth, not blindly), and living by our own feelings.

If we are redeemed, we will be disciplined until we learn obedience. We can live a prosperous life by walking with God, or we can live under increasing difficulties by fighting for our own rights. A prosperous life means that, in serving God, He will provide every need for His work. There is great satisfaction and peace in serving God. A difficult life means that, in serving self, He will provide increasing penalties to turn us around. It is greatly to our advantage to submit quickly.

All of these things were written for our admonition (1 Corinthians 10:11).

(V.3) This is God's Word to His people who are obedient.

Yahweh said, *"If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, then I shall give you . . ."* – Leviticus 26:3-4.

Isaiah says: *"If you consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land; . . ."* – Isaiah 1:19.

Yeshua said, *"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full"* – John 15:10-11.

(V.14) This is God's Word to His people when they are disobedient.

"But if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments, if, instead, you reject My statutes and if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, and so break My covenant, I, in turn, will do this to you: . . ." – Leviticus 26:14-15.

God will send terrorism, disease, and poverty. All of the consequences have both physical and spiritual counterparts: the physical enemies and diseases and poverty are symptoms of spiritual enemies, evil rulers, doctrinal error and lack of knowledge of God's word and ways.

The Psalmist asks God to teach us quickly, because our days on this earth are short. We may all wish for God to teach us gently, rather than show his great fury in our lives. If we have a heart to learn and comply, we may experience God's peace and joy for more of our lives.

(V.27) This is God's Word to those who reject His discipline.

"Yet if in spite of this you do not obey Me, but act with hostility against Me, ²⁸ then I will act with wrathful hostility against you" – Leviticus 26:27-28.

All of the above will become more severe, with great fear, unanswered prayer, and starvation.

The Psalmist says, *“Who understands the power of Your anger and Your fury, according to the fear that is due You? So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom”* – Psalm 90:11-12.

Ezekiel says: *“And the inhabited cities will be laid waste, and the land will be a desolation. So you will know that I am Yahweh”* – Ezekiel 12:20.

(V.40) This is God’s Word to the penitent.

“If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me . . . then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land” – Leviticus 26:40-42.

(v.44) *“I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them .*

Jeremiah says: *“O Yahweh, my strength and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of distress, to Thee the nations will come from the ends of the earth and say, ‘Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood, futility and things of no profit’”* – Jeremiah 16:19.

We need to constantly consider our position before an holy God, and make daily confessions of our erroneous ways and wrong attitudes. God has promised to fill us with His Spirit, and righteousness, if we ask. This is the path for answered prayer, and a fulfilled life, and full joy, and a greater future life.

Yeshua said, *“And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”* – Luke 11:9-13.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” – Matthew 5:6.

We must go into today’s reading with the following understandings: Our redemption and eternal destiny is a matter of grace, the evidence being a faith that produces fruit – good works. This life is a process of sanctification – growing in faith and knowledge through the Word of God and the Spirit of God. We will have discipline in this life if we are His: we also will have trials of our faith that are not disciplinary.

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you” – John 15:16.

Ultimately, we live in Yeshua, the true vine, and bear fruit. Or, we can live by the world’s ideas, and get clipped. That relates to our eternal state – whether we are or are not of the redeemed.

“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit.”

“If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned” – John 15:2, 6.

Leviticus 27 ends the Book of Leviticus. It teaches of redemption valuations for people, animals, crops, and property, offered to God.

Matthew Henry

Lev 27:1-13

This is part of the law concerning singular vows, extraordinary ones, which though God did not expressly insist on, yet, if they were consistent with and conformable to the general precepts, he would be well pleased with. Note, We should not only ask, What must we do, but, What may we do, for the glory and honour of God? As the *liberal devises liberal things* ([Isa 32:8](#)), so the pious devises pious things, and the enlarged heart would willingly do something extraordinary in the service of so good a Master as God is. When we receive or expect some singular mercy it is good to honour God with some singular vow.

I. The case is here put of persons vowed to God by a singular vow, [Lev 27:2](#). If a man consecrated himself, or a child, to the service of the tabernacle, to be employed there in some inferior office, as sweeping the floor, carrying out ashes, running of errands, or the like, *the person so consecrated shall be for the Lord*, that is, “God will graciously accept the good-will.” *Thou didst well that it was in thy heart*, [2Ch 6:8](#). But forasmuch as he had no occasion to use their service about the tabernacle, a whole tribe being appropriated to the use of it, those that were thus vowed were to be redeemed, and the money paid for their redemption was employed for the repair of the sanctuary, or other uses of it, as appears by [2Ki 12:14](#), where it is called, in the margin, the *money of the souls of his estimation*. A book of rates is accordingly provided, by which the priests were to go in their estimation. Here is, 1. The rate of the middle-aged, between twenty and threescore, these were valued highest, because most serviceable; a male fifty shekels, and a female thirty, [Lev 27:3](#), [Lev 27:4](#). The females were then less esteemed, but not so in Christ; for in *Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female*, [Gal 3:28](#). Note, Those that are in the prime of their time must look upon themselves as obliged to do more in the service of God and their generation than can be expected either from minors, that have not yet arrived to their usefulness, or from the aged, that have survived it. 2. The rate of the youth between five years old and twenty was less, because they were then less capable of doing service, [Lev 27:5](#). 3. Infants under five years old were capable of being vowed to God by their parents, even before they were born, as Samuel was, but not to be presented and redeemed till a month old, that, as one sabbath passed over them before they were circumcised, so one new moon might pass over them before they were estimated; and their valuation was but small, [Lev 27:6](#). Samuel, who was thus vowed to God, was not redeemed, because he was a Levite, and a particular favourite, and therefore was employed in his childhood in the service of the tabernacle. 4. The aged are valued less than youth, but more than children, [Lev 27:7](#). And the Hebrews observe that the rate of an aged woman is two parts of three to that of an aged man, so that in that age the female came nearest to the value of the male, which occasioned (as bishop Patrick quotes it here) this saying among them, *That an old woman in a house is a treasure in a house*. Paul sets a great value upon the aged women, when he makes them *teachers of good things*, [Tit 2:3](#). 5. The poor shall be valued according to their ability, [Lev 27:8](#). Something they must pay, that they might learn not to be rash in vowing to God, for *he hath no pleasure in fools*, [Ecc 5:4](#). Yet not more than their ability, but *secundum tenementum* - according to their possessions, that they might not ruin themselves and their families by their zeal. Note, God expects and requires from men according to what they have, and not according to what they have not, [Luk 21:4](#).

II. The case is put of beasts vowed to God, 1. If it was a clean beast, such as was offered in sacrifice, it must not be redeemed, nor any equivalent given for it: *It shall be holy*, [Lev 27:9](#), [Lev 27:10](#). After it was vowed, it was not to be put to any common use, nor changed upon second thoughts; but it must be either offered upon the altar, or, if through any blemish it was not meet to be offered, he that vowed it should not take advantage of that, but the priests should have it for their own use (for they were God's receivers), or it should be sold for the service of the sanctuary. This teaches caution in making vows and constancy in keeping them when they are made; for *it is a snare to a man to devour that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry*, [Pro 20:25](#). And to this that rule of charity seems to allude ([2Co 9:7](#)), *Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give*. 2. If it was an unclean beast, it should go to the use of the priest at such a value; but he that vowed it, upon paying that value in money, and adding a fifth part more to it, might redeem it if he pleased, [Lev 27:11-13](#). It was fit that men should smart for their inconstancy. God has let us know his mind concerning his service,

and he is not pleased if we do not know our own. God expects that those that deal with him should be at a point, and way what they will stand to.

Lev 27:14-25

Here is the law concerning real estates dedicated to the service of God by a singular vow.

I. Suppose a man, in his zeal for the honour of God, should *sanctify his house to God* ([Lev 27:14](#)), the house must be valued by the priest, and the money got by the sale of it was to be converted to the use of the sanctuary, which by degrees came to be greatly enriched with *dedicated things*, [1Ki 15:15](#). But, if the owner be inclined to redeem it himself, he must not have it so cheap as another, but must add a fifth part to the price, for he should have considered before he had vowed it, [Lev 27:15](#). To him that was necessitous God would abate the estimation ([Lev 27:8](#)); but to him that was fickle and humoursome, and whose second thoughts inclined more to the world and his secular interest than his first, God would rise in the price. Blessed be God, there is a way of sanctifying our houses to be holy unto the Lord, without either selling them or buying them. If we and our houses serve the Lord, if religion rule in them, and we put away iniquity far from them, and have a church in our house, holiness to the Lord is written upon it, it is his, and he will dwell with us in it.

II. Suppose a man should sanctify some part of his land to the Lord, giving it to pious uses, then a difference must be made between land that came to the donor by descent and that which came by purchase, and accordingly the case altered.

1. If it was the inheritance of his fathers, here called the *field of his possession*, which pertained to his family from the first division of Canaan, he might not give it all, no, not to the sanctuary; God would not admit such a degree of zeal as ruined a man's family. But he might sanctify or dedicate only some part of it, [Lev 27:16](#). And in that case, (1.) The land was to be valued (as our countrymen commonly compute land) by so many measures' sowing of barley. So much land as would take a *homer*, or *chomer*, of barley, which contained ten ephahs, [Eze 45:11](#) (not, as some have here mistaken it, an *omer*, which was but a tenth part of an ephah, [Exo 16:36](#)), was valued at fifty shekels, a moderate price ([Lev 27:16](#)), and that if it were sanctified immediately from the year of jubilee, [Lev 27:17](#). But, if some years after, there was to be a discount accordingly, even of that price, [Lev 27:18](#). And, (2.) When the value was fixed, the donor might, if he pleased, redeem it for sixty shekels the homer's sowing, which was with the addition of a fifth part: the money then went to the sanctuary, and the land reverted to him that had sanctified it, [Lev 27:19](#). But if he would not redeem it, and the priest sold it to another, then at the year of jubilee, beyond which the sale could not go, the land came to the priests, and was theirs for ever, [Lev 27:20](#), [Lev 27:21](#). Note, What is given to the Lord ought not to be given with a power of revocation; what is devoted to the Lord must be his for ever, by a perpetual covenant.

2. If the land was his own purchase, and came not to him from his ancestors, then not the land itself, but the value of it was to be given to the priests for pious uses, [Lev 27:22](#), [Lev 27:24](#). It was supposed that those who, by the blessing of God, had grown so rich as to become purchasers would think themselves obliged in gratitude to sanctify some part of their purchase, at least (and here they are not limited, but they might, if they pleased, sanctify the whole), to the service of God. For we ought to give *as God prospers us*, [1Co 16:2](#). Purchasers are in a special manner bound to be charitable. Now, forasmuch as purchased lands were by a former law to return at the year of jubilee to the family from which they were purchased, God would not have that law and the intentions of it defeated by making the lands *corban*, a gift, [Mar 7:11](#). But it was to be computed how much the land was worth for so many years as were from the vow to the jubilee; for only so long it was his own, and God *hates robbery for burnt-offerings*. We can never acceptably serve God with that of which we have wronged our neighbour. And so much money he was to give for the present, and keep the land in his own hands till the year of jubilee, when it was to return free of all encumbrances, even that of its being dedicated to him of whom it was bought. The value of the shekel by which all these estimations were to be made is here ascertained ([Lev 27:25](#)); it shall be twenty gerahs, and every gerah was sixteen barley-corns. This was fixed before ([Exo 30:13](#)); and, whereas there had been some alterations, it is again fixed in the laws of Ezekiel's visionary temple ([Eze 45:12](#)), to denote that the gospel should reduce things to their ancient standard.

Lev 27:26-34

Here is, I. A caution given that no man should make such a jest of sanctifying things to the Lord as to sanctify any firstling to him, for that was his already by the law, [Lev 27:26](#). Though the matter of a general vow be that which we were before obliged to, as of our sacramental covenant, yet a singular vow should be of that which we were not, in such circumstances and proportions, antecedently bound to. The law concerning the firstlings of unclean beasts ([Lev 27:27](#)) is the same with that before, [Lev 27:11](#), [Lev 27:12](#).

II. Things or persons devoted are here distinguished from things or persons that were only sanctified. 1. Devoted things were most holy to the Lord, and could neither revert nor be alienated, [Lev 27:28](#). They were of the same nature with those sacrifices which were called most holy, which none might touch but only the priests themselves. The difference between these and other sanctified things arose from the different expression of the vow. If a man dedicated any thing to God, binding himself with a solemn curse never to alienate it to any other purpose, then it was a thing devoted. 2. Devoted persons were to be put to death, [Lev 27:29](#). Not that it was in the power of any parent or master thus to devote a child or a servant to death; but it must be meant of the public enemies of Israel, who, either by the appointment of God or by the sentence of the congregation, were devoted, as the seven nations with which they must make no league. The city of Jericho in particular was thus devoted, [Jos 6:17](#). The inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead were put to death for violating the curse pronounced upon those who came not up to Mizpeh, [Jdg 21:9](#), [Jdg 21:10](#). Some think it was for want of being rightly informed of the true intent and meaning of this law that Jephtha sacrificed his daughter as one devoted, who might not be redeemed.

III. A law concerning tithes, which were paid for the service of God before the law, as appears by Abraham's payment of them, ([Gen 14:20](#)), and Jacob's promise of them, [Gen 28:22](#). It is here appointed, 1. That they should pay tithes of all their increase, their corn, trees, and cattle, [Lev 27:30](#), [Lev 27:32](#). Whatsoever productions they had the benefit of God must be honoured with the tithes of, if it were titheable. Thus they acknowledged God to be the owner of their land, the giver of its fruits, and themselves to be his tenants, and dependents upon him. Thus they gave him thanks for the plenty they enjoyed, and supplicated his favour in the continuance of it. And we are taught in general to *honour the Lord with our substance* ([Pro 3:9](#)), and in particular to support and maintain his ministers, and to be *ready to communicate* to them, [Gal 6:6](#); [1Co 9:11](#). And how this may be done in a fitter and more equal proportion than that of the tenth, which God himself appointed of old, I cannot see. 2. That which was once marked for tithes should not be altered, no, not for a better ([Lev 27:33](#)), for Providence directed the rod that marked it. God would accept it though it were not the best, and they must not grudge it though it were, for it was what passed under the rod. 3. That it should not be redeemed, unless the owner would give a fifth part more for its ransom, [Lev 27:31](#). If men had the curiosity to prefer what was marked for tithes before any other part of their increase, it was fit that they should pay for their curiosity.

IV. The last verse seems to have reference to this whole book of which it is the conclusion: *These are the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses, for the children of Israel*. Many of these commandments are moral, and of perpetual obligation; others of them, which were ceremonial and peculiar to the Jewish economy, have notwithstanding a spiritual significance, and are instructive to us who are furnished with a key to let us into the mysteries contained in them; for *unto us*, by those institutions, *is the gospel preached as well as unto them*, [Heb 4:2](#). Upon the whole matter, we may see cause to bless God that *we have not come to mount Sinai*, [Heb 12:18](#). 1. That we are not under the *dark shadows* of the law, but enjoy the clear light of the gospel, which shows us *Christ the end of the law for righteousness*, [Rom 10:4](#). The doctrine of our reconciliation to God by a Mediator is not clouded with the smoke of burning sacrifices, but cleared by the knowledge of *Christ and him crucified*. 2. That we are not under the *heavy yoke* of the law, and the carnal ordinances of it (as the apostle calls them, [Heb 9:10](#)), imposed till the time of reformation, a yoke which *neither they nor their fathers were able to bear* ([Act 15:10](#)), but under the sweet and easy institutions of the gospel, which pronounces those the *true worshippers that worship the Father in spirit and truth*, by Christ only, and in his name, who is our priest, temple, altar, sacrifice, purification, and all. Let us not therefore think that because we are not tied to the ceremonial cleansings, feasts, and oblations, a little care, time, and expense, will serve to honour God with. No, but rather have our hearts more enlarge with free-will offerings to his praise, more inflamed with holy love and

joy, and more engaged in seriousness of thought and sincerity of intention. *Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart, and full assurance of faith, worshipping God with so much the more cheerfulness and humble confidence, still saying, Blessed be God for Jesus Christ!*