

Parasha 18: Mishpatim (Rulings)

Shemot/Exodus 21:1 – 24:18

*All Scripture References from The Orthodox Jewish Bible- Referred to as OJB- unless otherwise noted

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In our present parasha, we are beginning to make a transition. Last week's parasha 'Yitro', we had the 'mattan **[giving of]** Torah'. Here, in 'Mishpatim/Rulings', we have YHWH beginning to bring Yisrael into 'practical expressions' of 'civil relationships' as a nation. The 'giving of the Torah' has brought Yisrael into a 'recognized status' as a 'nation' for the very first time in the biblical record. Now, YHWH is defining how Am Yisrael as a nation, should live as a 'Torah based community'. It is interesting, and

important to note, that in the 'Hebraic mind', there is NO SEPARATION between the 'secular', and the 'holy'. Torah has as much to say, when it comes to the 'construction of the Mishkan/Tabernacle', as it does about the 'everyday affairs of life'. In YHWH's estimation, EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE IS HOLY. The 'Greek mind' is what has made such divisions. How necessary it is, that we 'renew our minds' to the 'Hebraic understanding' according to the 'ancient paths' of Torah. In our next parasha, we will make the 'further transition' into the 'raising up' of the 'Mishkan/Tabernacle'. YHWH is continuing to 'lay the groundwork' for that most important aspect of Yisrael's 'purpose for existence'.

The above truth, is further supported by the way the Torah Scroll, and Chumash [**Torah scroll in book form**], present the first verse in this parasha. In most bibles the verse reads,

“Now these are the ordinances which you are to set before them:” (Shemot/Exodus 21:1 NASB- emphasis mine)

“Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.” (Shemot/Exodus 21:1 KJV- emphasis mine)

Let's look at the 'Jewish Chumash'. It is a good idea, if you don't have one of these as part of your 'reference library', that you invest in adding it. It is a good way to see how words appear in a 'Torah Scroll', which most do not have ready access to. Many times, in the actual Hebrew rendering, there are 'important differences', that do not appear in most English Bible translations. As a result, those differences, may actually 'change the way' a verse is understood, as in our example here.

“And these are the ordinances that you shall place before them.” (Shemot/Exodus 21:1 The Stone Edition Chumash)

So, what is the *'big difference'* between *'now'*, and the conjunction *'and'*? The use of *'now'* as it is translated in most bibles, *'allows'* for there to be an *'unintended division'* in the Scriptural text. Again, we see the product of the *'Greek mindset'*, that *'divides'*, and *'dissects'*, causing *'fragmentation'*. As a *'conjunction'*, it provides a *'bridge'* in the text, that *'ties'* the previous parasha, to our present one. It shows the *'continuity'* of YHWH's mind between the Torah (**Aseret HaD'varim- The Ten Words**), and the *'mishpatim/rulings'*. These *'mishpatim/rulings'*, are given to *'govern'* the *'spiritual'*, and *'civil affairs'* of Yisrael as a nation. THERE IS TO BE NO DIFFERENCE! The *'Hebrew mind'* sees these things as a WHOLE. Our blessed YHWH, the Mighty One, is ONE in *'His Being'*. (Devarim/Deuteronomy 6:4) He is ECHAD, or ONE *'unit of divinity'*, NOT *'three separate Persons'*. Most Christian theology, because it is based upon the *'Greek mindset'*, DIVIDES YHWH up into *'three separate Personages'*. In the *'theological process'* of this vein of thinking, this supposition is immediately followed with: *'God the Father'*, *'God the Son'*, and *'God the Holy Spirit'*. Followed by: THESE THREE ARE ONE. The *'latter portion'* of the statement, THESE THREE ARE ONE, is true. However, to state, that they *'each'* are *'a God'* [**God the...**] VIOLATES the Torah's *'definition of YHWH'*.

"Shema [Hear] Yisroel Adonoi Eloheinu [YHWH our Mighty One] Adonoi Echad [YHWH is ONE]." (Devarim/Deuteronomy 6:4 OJB- *emphasis/definitions mine*)

This may seem as a *'miniscule differentiation'*, but it is an *'major intrinsic violation'* of the *'essence'*, and *'nature'* of YHWH. While it may not have been the *'intent of Christendom'* to create *'three gods'*, this is, in essence, what has happened. Such an *'unfortunate divisionary definition'* of YHWH's *'true essence'* is an *'intolerable violation'* of the *'revelation'* provided by Torah... **YHWH IS ONE**. This in turn, is *'why'* the *'church of Christendom'* is so *'fragmented'*. The *'Greek mindset'*, DIVIDES, and SPLINTERS, which in turn, reproduces such *'fragmentation'* in its adherents. Unfortunately, Judaism also suffers in some ways from this *'fragmentation'*, as the *'Greek mindset'* has made inroads into the religion of Judaism. The *'Hebraic mind's'* essence is UNITY. YHWH IS ONE! What we *'see'*, and *'love'*, WE BECOME! As Torah brings restoration to our heart and mind, the Ruach HaKodesh/YHWH's Spirit of Holiness, is able to *'heal our fragmentation'*. YHWH's ONENESS, begins to produce UNITY within our own being. Only Torah, applied by YHWH, through His Ruach HaKodesh/Spirit of Holiness, can bring about such unity.

We are not going to look at all of the *'mitzvot/instructions'* we have in our parasha. We will instead, look at some that have a *'definite application'* beyond their *'pashat'*, or *'literal understanding'*. In doing so, we may be able to *'clear up'* some *'misunderstandings'*, that have been used to *'impinge meanings'*, NOT INTENDED by YHWH in giving them. However, sometimes, there are in Hebrew, *'ordinances'* called *'chuk'* [**ch-oo-k/singular**], or *'chukot/chukkim'* [**plural**], which HAVE NO LOGICAL REASONING. The *'Hebraic mind'* accepts this fact. The *'Hebraic principles'*, that govern such *'illogical commands'* are...IN DOING YOU SHALL KNOW. (Yochanon/John 7:17)

The Law Of The Bond-Slave

"If thou acquire an eved Ivri [Hebrew servant], shesh shanim [seven years] he shall serve; and in the seventh he shall go out lachafeshi (to the freedom) for no charge.

If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he were a ba'al isha [husband of a wife], then his isha [wife] shall go out with him.

If his adon [master] have given him an isha [wife], and to him she gives birth to banim [sons] or banot [daughters]; the isha [wife] and her yeledim [children] shall be her adon's [masters], and he shall go out [free] by himself.

And if the eved [servant] shall plainly say, I love adoni [my master], my isha [wife], and my banim [children]; I will not go out lachafeshi (to the freedom);

Then his adon [master] shall bring him unto HaElohim [The Mighty One- YHWH]; he shall also bring him to the delet (door), or unto the mezuzah [door post]; and his adon [master] shall pierce through his ozen (ear) with a piercing-tool; then he shall serve him l'olam [forever].” (Shemot/Exodus 21:2-6 OJB- definitions mine)

In this particular passage, YHWH gives the 'mishpatim/rulings' concerning dealing with bond slavery. Slavery was an accepted circumstance within the Hebraic culture. However, on a number of different levels, such slavery was not to be imposed, so as to demoralize the individual. There were those, who for one reason or another, became slaves to Yisrael from other cultures. Most times it was due to Yisrael's having defeated the nation, or people, to which that individual belonged. Even in this instance, YHWH set specific guidelines, for how these slaves were to be treated. YHWH reminded Yisrael not to treat these people hatefully, because they themselves had been slaves in Mitzrayim/Egypt.

There was also a particular 'form of slavery', that might befall a Yisraelite. It had to do with an individual falling into 'indebtedness'. If a person, a male, found himself in such a circumstance, he could 'sell' himself to his debtor for a period of 'six years'. During which time, he would be treated with dignity, and respect, while at the same time, working to pay off his debt. At the end of 'six years' the debt was canceled out. In the 'seventh year' he could go free. If he came in with nothing, his master was to bless him, so he could return, and reenter the Yisraeli community with something to make his start. However, if while he was in servitude to his master, and he received a wife, and they had children, then when he left, he must leave them behind. On the other hand, if the slave decided, that he didn't want to leave, but desired to stay, then he could do so. The slave may realize, that his life has become much better living in his master's house. He sees how YHWH has blessed him with a wife, and children. So, he comes to his master and says, 'I love my master. I don't want to be free'. The master then takes him to the door post of his house, and pierces his ear. An earring is inserted as a 'sign', that he is no longer a 'free man'. All who 'see' the earring know, that this man 'belongs to another'. He has 'willingly' given up 'his rights', and 'his will' to be a 'free man'. This man is no longer merely a slave. He, in fact, becomes the closest thing to actually being a 'biological son' of his master. He is what is termed a 'bond-slave'.

With this in mind, you will immediately be taken over into the 'Kethuvim HaNotzrim/Writings of the Nazarenes' (Messianic Scriptures). Rav Sha'ul, you will remember, continually referred to himself as, the 'bond-servant of Adon/Lord Yeshua HaMashiach/The Messiah'.

“Paul, a bond-servant [slave] of Christ Jesus, called {as} an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,” (Romans 1:1 NASB- emphasis added/definition mine)

“Paul, a bond-servant [slave] of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,” (Titus 1:1 NASB- emphasis added/definition mine]

Ya'akob/James in his epistle, calls himself a 'servant', but it is the same Greek word used in these other passages 'doulos', which is a 'bond servant'.

“James [Ya'akob], a bond-servant [slave] of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ...”
(Ya'akob/James 1:1a NASB- emphasis added/definition mine)

Kefa/Peter also uses this term to describe himself in his epistle,

“Simon Peter, a bond-servant [slave] and apostle of Jesus Christ...” (11 Kefa/Peter 1:1
NASB- emphasis added/definition mine)

Lastly, even Yahudah/Jude uses this same title in his epistle,'

“Jude [Yahudah], a bond-servant [slave] of Jesus Christ...” (Jude vs. 1 NASB- emphasis
added/ definition mine)

All the talmidim/disciples, and sh'likim/apostles, were Jews. They understood clearly the 'implications' of using such a title to describe themselves in their ministries. It was an 'intended effort' on their part, to let all who knew them 'understand', that they were no longer to be considered 'free men'. Even though it was true, that through the 'redemptive work' of Yeshua HaMashiach they were 'free'. They, like the 'bond-slave' in our Torah parasha, turned, and said to YHWH, 'I love my Master. I don't want to be free'.

Beloved, this is something that most believers within the Western world have never come to in their relationship with YHWH. What we read in the above verses is not something these men did out of some sort of coercion. No. They gave themselves wholly as an 'act of love' led devotion to their blessed Master Yeshua. **[Our relationship to YHWH as Abba is 'sons'- Our relationship to Mashiach Yeshua is as 'bond-slaves']** It is also one of the reasons, all Yisraelites were commanded to wear the 'tassels/fringes' on the four corners of their garments called 'tzitzit'. **(Bamidbar/Numbers 15:15:38, and Devarim/Deuteronomy 22:12)** It was to be a 'reminder' to all Yisraelites, that it was YHWH who had 'redeemed them' from Mitzrayim/Egypt, and their lives were 'no longer their own'. When they looked upon the 'tzitzit/fringes', it would 'keep their mind' in the midst of temptation. They were not to go after the 'lusts of their own heart', or the 'desire of their own eyes'. THEY BELONGED TO ANOTHER. Therefore, to wantonly go after such enticements, would be to 'act unfaithfully' toward YHWH. He was the One to whom they had been redeemed, and betrothed. Even today, it is good for all Yisraelites to wear the 'tzitzit', because we too are, in reality, 'bond-servants' to our Master Yeshua. We have been 'bought', and 'redeemed' with His blood. Have you ever asked yourself, why YHWH set us free from sin? Was it just so we could rejoice over our debt to our sins having been paid? Or, is there something more? **HAVE WE BEEN SET FREE, SO THAT WE COULD TURN, OUT OF SUCH A DEEP LOVE FOR YHWH, AND THE GIFT OF HIS SON, YESHUA HAMASHIACH, AND GIVE OURSELVES BACK TO HIM? TO TURN AND SAY, 'I DON'T WANT TO BE FREE'!** Have you ever done that? If not, then maybe you should. Do you wear the tzitzit? Are you willing to provide an 'outward testimony', that you are a redeemed/ReNewed Covenant Yisraelite, whose sins have been forgiven? You have given your life, and **SURRENDERED YOUR WILL** forever to your Master Yeshua HaMashiach as Adon/Master? Our blessed Master Yeshua was a 'Son who chose to serve'. We too are 'sons', who follow in our Master's footsteps. We too must 'choose' to

serve YHWH. Remember, TORAH IS ALL ABOUT LOVE. Therefore, let us bring to mind the words of our blessed Master,

“If you have ahavah [love] for me, you will be shomer [keep, guard] regarding my mitzvot [commandments/instructions].” (Yochanon/John 14:15 OJB- definitions mine)

The Torah And Capital Punishment

“He that strikes down an ish [man], so that the ish [man] dies, shall be surely put to death. And if he lie not in ambush, but HaElohim [the Mighty One-YHWH] deliver him into his Yad [hand], then I will appoint thee a makom (i.e., city of refuge) where he shall flee there. But if an ish [man] come premeditatedly upon his re’a [neighbor], to murder him by guile; thou shalt take him from Mine Mizbe’ach [Altar] for capital punishment. (Shemot/Exodus 21:12-14 OJB- definitions mine)

YHWH, in the Torah, established ‘capital punishment’ for certain crimes. The one thing that we learn from studying Torah is: THERE ARE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR ACTIONS. One reason the Torah has been rejected by much of the religious world is, it is a ‘manifestation’ of YHWH’s ‘conscience’! It is through Torah, that we ‘learn to identify sin’. (1 Yochanon/John 3:4) When we throw Torah away, then we ‘lose our moral compass’. Our society, especially here in America, has ‘lost its moral bearings’. There is no ‘justice’ on many levels. Our justice system has in many ways gone bankrupt. Those who break the law are more skilled in finding loopholes, than most lawyers. YHWH knows, that when evil is not dealt with, and punished accordingly, then it warps a society’s psyche. (Kohelet/Ecclesiastes 8:11) Therefore, He commanded, that those who murder, should themselves ‘suffer a penalty’ of equal magnitude. If that person committed such an act by ‘premeditation’, then he must suffer by forfeiting his own right to live. Such ‘justice’ puts the ‘fear/reverence of the Mighty One’ in people’s heart. They won’t be so quick to choose the act of murder, if they know it will cost them their own life. We don’t have time here to discuss the virtues, and failures, that our justice system here in America must deal with.

On the other hand, there are those who erroneously have divided the Bible into so-called ‘Old’, and ‘New Covenants/Testaments’. ***[An important teaching, that will clearly show, the ‘Hebraic understanding’ of the Scriptures, not as ‘Old/New Covenants’, but as ONE WHOLE REVELATION of the mind of YHWH to His nation Yisrael, and the world is almost complete. Keep checking our website for this important release]** This is a ‘faulty theological idea’ at best. It erroneously depicts YHWH in the so-called ‘Old Covenant/Testament’, to be a vigilant, angry Elohim/Mighty One, full of judgment. It then, makes the Elohim/Mighty One of the so-called ‘New Covenant/Testament’, as an ‘anti-thesis’ to its older counterpart. This Elohim/Mighty One, is a picture of an all loving, merciful Being. One who speaks, and acts in the fullness of compassion. There is no judgment, anger or malice here. Those who buy into this ‘warped theological concept’, do not realize, they have bought into a very old heresy!

A man named Marcion, who lived during the second century, is the one who developed this ‘false mode of thought’ concerning YHWH. He was denounced by most of the ‘church of Christendom’, at that time, as a heretic. However, this ‘false doctrine’ has continued to pop up throughout ‘church history’, even to the present. The fact is, YHWH HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME AS HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN. He is the Mighty One of love. The Torah, as we discovered in last week’s

parasha, is founded upon love. However, YHWH's love is also balanced by His Truth. In a Torah based society, there is a 'moral foundation' of justice, righteousness, and mercy. The opposite of Torah is not freedom. IT IS INIQUITY/LAWLESSNESS! The latter is a 'distinguishing mark' of the world prior to the return of our blessed Master Yeshua. (Mattityahu/Matthew 24:3-13) [*'iniquity' is 'lawlessness', or more clearly, 'torahlessness'*]

The Torah clearly depicts YHWH as both 'just', and 'compassionate' in dealing with Yisrael, and establishing justice for the nation as a society. If a person's death happens as the result of an accident, or unintentional circumstance, then YHWH instructs Yisrael to provide a 'city of refuge' for such a one. The innocent person who took the life of another by accident, could escape, and go to one of these 'cities', and find asylum. No vengeance could be executed while that person stayed within that city. YHWH established guidelines to govern how the 'process' was to work. Such as, who could qualify to go to these cities. How long they could stay? What were the conditions governing the possibility of future release? These cities were to be built in The Land, after Yisrael returned from Mitzrayim/Egypt, and started to occupy it. To say that YHWH, and His Torah, is without mercy, and not founded on love, is simply not true.

The Purpose Of An Eye For An Eye

“If men fight, and hurt an isha harah (pregnant woman), so that she gives birth prematurely but not with any injury; he shall be surely punished, according as the ba'al haisha [husband of the wife] will assess a fine upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any ason (harm, fatality) follow, then thou shalt take the nefesh [soul] for nefesh [soul], Ayin [eye] for ayin [eye], shen [tooth] for shen [tooth], yad [hand] for yad [hand], regel [foot] for regel [foot], Burn for burn, wound for wound, chaburah (stripe laceration) for chaburah. (Shemot/Exodus 21:22-25 OJB- definitions mine)

Here, in this particular passage, we have the 'eye for an eye', 'tooth for a tooth' familiar biblical quote. This 'mode of justice' was familiar to the cultures surrounding Yisrael in that day, with one exception. The justice of those cultures required BOTH EYES, AND ALL THE TEETH! YHWH's 'justice' only required one. Yet, the 'justice' of Torah was not about 'mutilation'. It was about 'making recompense', that was 'equivalent' to what an 'eye', or a 'tooth', would have cost the person who lost it. This is plainly seen in the passage following these verses.

“And if an ish [man] strike the ayin [eye] of his eved [servant], or the ayin [eye] of his amah [female servant], that it perish; he shall let him go free for his ayin's [eye's] sake. And if he strikes his eved's [servant's] shen (tooth), or his amah's [female servant's] shen [tooth]; he shall let him go free for his shen's [tooth] sake.” (Shemot/Exodus 21:26-27 OJB- definitions mine)

As we have already stated, the one lesson we learn from studying Torah is, that there are 'consequences' for our actions. Whether it is regarding our behavior toward YHWH, or toward other people. We cannot live as we please, without taking into consideration how it will affect those relationships. Remember: THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF TORAH IS LOVE.

Torah Allows For Self Defense

“If a ganav [thief] be caught breaking in, and be struck down so that he die, there shall be no guilt of bloodshed for him.” (Shemot/Exodus 22:2 OJB- definitions mine)

In the above verse, we see, that Torah does allow for self-defense against a person who breaks into a home in the dead of night. If in the process, the intruder is killed, no blame, or judgment will be imposed on the homeowner. The verses following this one do stipulate however, that if the break-in should occur during the day, then blame, and judgment may follow. The reasoning behind this is, under the ‘cover of darkness’ the homeowner may ‘assume’, that the intruder has only evil intentions. While, if it happens during the day, one must take other possibilities into account. The intruder may have intended no physical harm. He may have only sought to take something of value, or personal benefit. In that case, he must be given an ‘opportunity’ to leave. Here again, we see Torah’s balance of justice, and mercy being applied.

Torah Care For The Less Fortunate

Thou shalt neither mistreat a ger [stranger], nor oppress him; for ye were gerim [strangers] in Eretz Mitzrayim [the Land of Egypt].

Ye shall not cause pain to any almanah [widow], or yatom [orphan].

If thou cause them pain in any way, and they cry at all unto Me, I will surely hear their cry; And My wrath shall be kindled, and I will kill you with the cherev [sword]; and your nashim [wives] shall be almanot [widows], and your banim [children] shall be yetomim [orphans].

(Shemot/Exodus 22:21 (20)-24 (23) OJB- definitions mine)

YHWH establishes His care for the less fortunate in the Torah. The stranger, widow and fatherless all hold a ‘special place’ in His heart. YHWH commands, that a ‘Torah based community’ take special effort NOT to ignore their plight, or do them injustice. Those who do are warned, that YHWH Himself will dispense judgment.

At the end of shalosh shanim [three years] thou shalt bring forth all the ma’aser (tithe) of thine increase the same year, and shalt store it up within thy she’arim [gates]:

And the Levi [Yisraelite descendants of Levi’s three sons, not priests who descend from Aharon...labored in setting up/breaking down the Mishkan/Tabernacle, assisted priests in the wilderness Mishkan/Tabernacle, and later in The Land, settled in the cities, assuming teaching duties, became judges, also ministered in music/song in the Heikhal/Temple, and other duties there] (because he hath no chelek [portion] nor nachalah [inheritance] with thee) and the ger [stranger], and the yatom [orphan], and the almanah [widow], which are within thy she’arim [gates], shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that Hashem Eloheicha [YHWH your Mighty One] may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

(Devarim/Deuteronomy 14:28-29 OJB- definitions mine)

As you can see, YHWH established through the Torah, that every ‘third year’ there was to be a ‘special tithe’. It was for the Levite, the alien [‘stranger’, or ‘ger’ in Hebrew], the orphan [fatherless], and the widow. When these less fortunate were taken care of by the ‘Torah community’, YHWH promises, that He will bless the work of our hands.

As we are seeing, the restoration of the 'Whole House of Yisrael' today, we too need to not forget those who are less fortunate in our midst. The fullness of this care will once again be established, when all of Yisrael is returned to The Land, and our blessed Mashiach reigns from Yerushalayim/Jerusalem as M'lech/King. However, we need not wait. Even now our 'Torah communities' must begin to exercise 'Tzedakah/charity', and means by which the less fortunate can be ministered to in real physical ways. We have this promise from YHWH,

He that hath compassion on the dal (poor) lendeth unto Hashem [YHWH]; and for his benefits He will repay him. (Mishle/Proverbs 19:17 OJB- definitions mine)

A Shabbat For The Land

And shesh shanim [six years] thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the crops thereof; But the shevi'it [seventh] thou shalt leave it shamat (unplowed) and let it lie fallow; that the evyon (poor) of thy people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the sadeh [field] shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy kerem (vineyard), and with thy zayit (olive) grove. (Shemot/Exodus 23:10-11 OJB- definitions mine)

It is quite interesting, that YHWH would require the 'land of Yisrael' to receive a Shabbat every 'seven years'. Besides the fact, that there are many good agricultural conservation reasons for doing this, there is another. It is simply: THE LAND IS ALIVE! Anyone who has been to Yisrael knows, that there is something more special about that place, than any other on earth. YHWH created this Land [HaEretz] with a 'soul-life'. That's the only reason you let something experience a Shabbat. IT IS LIVING. All living things need time to rest, in order to rejuvenate. YHWH set the example for us during His creation work. He 'rested/ceased', and He commands man, created in His image, and likeness, to 'rest/cease' too. It was Jewish Yisrael's violation of this very 'mitzvah/instruction', that caused them to be taken captive into Babylon.

At the writing of this parasha, this year in Yisrael is a 'Shabbat year' for The Land [September 2008-2009]. The 'Shabbat year' is referred to in Hebrew as 'sh'mita', meaning, 'release'. The 'Sh'mita' is observed every 'seventh year' as a part of the greater 'Yovel/Jubilee' release period. The latter occurs after every 'seventh cycle' of 'Sh'mita' [= 49 years]. The 50th year/Yovel-Jubilee, becomes a 'national time of release'. All debts are cancelled. Yisraelite slaves are freed, and all land bought, and sold during the 'Yovel/Jubilee cycle' is returned to its original owner. Ultimately, YHWH OWNS ALL THE LAND OF YISRAEL. So, no one may 'own' The Land in 'perpetuity'. In the 'Yovel/Jubilee', YHWH 'returns' The Land to the tribes, and those to whom it was originally appointed. The 'cycle of Sh'mita' resumes until another 'full seventh year cycle' of 'Yovel/Jubilee' occurs.

It is amazing, how so many Yisraelis, and sadly some rabbis in The Land, have worked so hard to find a way around this Torah 'mitzvah/instruction'. Why? Because even in rabbinical Judaism, Torah on many levels, has become seen as 'Law'. When Torah ceases to be the 'Loving Instructions' of our heavenly Abba, and becomes 'mere ordinances', then it is the nature of the human heart, to try and find a way around it. Yet, when Torah is 'embraced by a heart of love', then we willingly 'yield ourselves' to our heavenly Abba's 'Loving Instructions'. We know His ways, are the 'ways of life, and blessing' for those who love Him, and keep His commandments.

Does Torah Forbid Mixing Dairy And Meat Products?

In 'rabbinical Judaism', a tradition has been imposed for the separation of dairy, and meat products. In most orthodox homes, there are two sets of plates, silverware, pots, pans, and even stoves and refrigerators. One is for dairy products, and the other for meat. This 'tradition' has its beginning in a verse from this parasha.

“...Thou shalt not cook a kid in his mother's cholov [milk]. (Shemot/Exodus 23:19b OJB-definition mine)

Rabbinical Judaism says, because this injunction appears 'three times' in the Torah [the above verse, also Shemot/Exodus 34:26, and Devarim/Deuteronomy 14:21], that YHWH is giving a 'remez/hint', pointing to a 'deeper mystery' not immediately revealed. There are such things that YHWH uses to provoke us in Scripture to search further, in order to find the 'deeper meaning'. However, nothing in this process of 'Hebraic interpretation', is EVER to be 'disconnected' from its 'pashat', or 'simple/literal meaning'. However, in these 'three instances', when held in their 'simple context', these verses have NOTHING whatsoever to do with 'separation of dairy', and 'meat products'. In fact, a quick examination of the Torah, will reveal something quite interesting. The meal that Abraham prepared for the three angels that came to speak with him on their way to S'dom/Sodom, one of which was YHWH Himself, included both meat, and dairy! EVERYONE ATE THE MEAL! (B'resheet/Genesis 18:1-8) I have great respect for the rabbis, but like my Master Yeshua, when the 'traditions' of the 'Oral Torah' are at odds with the 'Written Torah' given to Moshe, the latter must take precedent.

The real reason YHWH forbade Yisrael to do this, it was the practice of the 'pagan religious rituals' of the people whom they were to dispossess from Canaan. This practice of 'boiling a kid in its mother's milk' was, in fact, a 'fertility rite' used to try, and invoke their 'false mighty ones' to give rain, and bless their planting season! YHWH STRICTLY FORBADE YISRAEL TO DO THIS. If they simply obeyed His Torah with loving hearts, then He would bless all they put their hand to do. Therefore, within this same passage, YHWH forbids Yisrael TO MENTION THE NAMES OF OTHER MIGHTY ONES, OR LET THEM BE HEARD FROM THEIR MOUTH IN WORSHIP. [see vs. 13] They were to keep themselves separate from these types of demonic alignments. YHWH the Creator is the ONLY ONE Yisrael is to look to for blessing. He is El Shaddai their Provider. He has given them His 'Ketubah/Betrothal/Torah' with His promises. He is faithful to do all He has said. Now, Yisrael must simply 'continue to love Him', and 'put their trusting faithfulness' in Him, by remembering to do all that He has asked of them. The result? THE BLESSING WILL OVERTAKE THEM! (Devarim/Deuteronomy 28:2)

While we love Brother Judah, we who are a part of the 'restoration of the Whole House of Yisrael', do not blindly follow all the ordinances of rabbinical Judaism. Out of respect to our Jewish brethren, when we are with them, we may 'willingly' opt to respect their belief, and do as they do. This is not a 'salvation issue'. However, we do not see this as a necessary part of our keeping Torah in accordance with a 'true Scriptural understanding' of the 'Written Torah'.

The Angel Of YHWH Sent To Lead Yisrael

“Hinei [Behold], I send Malach [an Angel] before thee, to be shomer [guard/watch] over thee in the derech [way/path], and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Pay heed to him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your peyscha'im [transgressions/rebellions]; for My Shem [Name] is in him.” (Shemot/Exodus 23:20-21 OJB-definitions mine)

YHWH promises to send His Angel before Yisrael as they travel to Canaan. He will be there to 'guard them', and 'help them' on their journey. Yisrael is warned. This Angel is 'different' than other m'lakhim/angels. YHWH says, 'My Name is in him'. In other words, this Angel bears YHWH's 'authority'. What this Angel speaks, is to be considered as if YHWH Himself had spoken it. Who is this Angel?

We are given a clue in the fact that this Angel's voice is, in essence, the 'voice of YHWH'. Who is the 'voice of YHWH'? We know, especially from the Kethuvim HaNotzrim/Writings of the Nazarenes (**Messianic Scriptures**), that the 'voice of YHWH' is His Word. Today, under the 'final renewal of YHWH's original covenant' at Mt. Sinai, The Word is His 'continuous manifestation' in the flesh, Our blessed Master Yeshua! (Yochanon/John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17) The Angel here, in our parasha/portion, was a 'temporary/pre-incarnate manifestation' of our Master Yeshua. **[We don't have time here to give an in-depth examination of this amazing Scriptural revelation of YHWH's 'modes of existence'. We are in the process of updating two important articles, that cover this 'Hebraic understanding', as well as the true 'Hebraic understanding' of the fact that Master Yeshua is YHWH's 'manifestation in human flesh': 'The Mystery of Godliness', and, 'The Fellowship of the Mystery'. Keep checking our site. As soon as these articles have been updated they will be posted under 'The Foundation Series' tab.]**

Yisrael was commanded to 'obey the voice of this Angel', and to 'guard themselves' as to how they interacted with Him. Why? Because this Angel, would lead them against the inhabitants of The Land when they crossed over. YHWH would be an enemy to Yisrael's enemies, and, by His Angel, He would drive out the inhabitants of Canaan. The only prerequisite was SH'MA - HEAR AND OBEY.

YHWH Ratifies His Marriage With Yisrael

In our closing verses in this parasha, YHWH sets about 'ratifying' His Ketubah/Torah with Yisrael. YHWH instructs Moshe to bring Aharon, Nadab, and Abihu two of his sons, along with the seventy elders of Yisrael. YHWH will 'allow' these representatives of Yisrael to worship Him at a distance. Only Moshe may 'draw near'.

Now, Moshe returns to the people, and tells them what YHWH has requested. It is interesting that again, Yisrael responds with acceptance of YHWH's Ketubah/Torah by saying, 'All the words which YHWH has spoken, will we do'.

Moshe, then prepares an altar for YHWH with 'twelve stones', signifying the 'Whole House of Yisrael'. Whole burnt offerings, 'olah', or 'elevation/ascension offerings', were offered to YHWH by fire. Also, 'shalom/peace offerings' were given, which speaks of our 'closeness', and

'fellowship' with YHWH. Then, Moshe took the blood, and put half in a basin, the other half he sprinkled on the Mitzbe'ach/Altar to sanctify it. Moshe read out loud the 'Book of the Covenant'. Again, Yisrael 'verbally announces' their 'willingness' to accept YHWH's covenant words by saying, 'All that YHWH has spoken, that will we do'. In response, Moshe took the blood, and sprinkled it UPON THE PEOPLE! This 'sprinkling' showed, that the covenant between YHWH, and Yisrael was fulfilled. Blood was an 'intrical part' of the 'ratifying of all covenants' in that day. Besides this, it is the blood of the prescribed animals used as 'korbanot/offerings', that act as an 'atonement/covering', providing a 'shield/protection' against YHWH's supernal holiness. As we will come to see in our 3rd sefer/book of the Torah, Wayikra/Leviticus. The blood of the 'animal korbanot' allows Yisrael to 'karov/draw near' to YHWH, and LIVE!

The last thing that happened was the sharing of the 'covenant meal'. During this experience, a most awesome event occurs. YHWH REVEALS HIMSELF TO YISRAEL'S COVENANT REPRESENTATIVES. We see plainly in two places,

“...And they SAW the Elohei Yisroel [The Mighty One of Yisrael];” (Shemot/Exodus 24:10a OJB- emphasis/definitions mine)

And then again,

“...also, they SAW HaElohim [The Mighty One- YHWH], and did eat and drink.” (Shemot Exodus 24:11 OJB- emphasis/definition mine)

Now of course, we immediately are brought to mind the verse which tells us, that no one has physically 'seen' The Mighty One, and lived. (Shemot/Exodus 33:20) Do we have a contradiction here? Most assuredly not. THE SCRIPTURES DO NOT CONTRADICT THEMSELVES. Again, I must point you back to the blood that Moshe sprinkled upon Aharon's sons, and the seventy elders. Remember my words in the above paragraph. The blood was 'intrical' in what happened here. When YHWH gave the gathered representatives a 'small glimpse' of Himself in glory, it was NOT Himself in the 'fullness of His glory'. IT WAS ONLY A MEASURE. One, accompanied by the 'blood' of the animal korbanot, which allowed YHWH to 'karov/draw near', and the 'gathered representatives' to LIVE. I will let Messianic Rabbi Ariel Ben Lyman give us his further insight into this event as we close. This is from his weekly Torah portion 'Mishpatim' - you may click the link to read the entire portion, or just read the excerpt below:

[‘Messianic Rabbi Ariel Ben Lyman Shemot 24 Insight’](#) (Click on this link to read the whole article. The excerpt below is from pages 5-7)

“Chapter 24 – our portion concludes with Moshe, Aharon, and the elders having a meal with the God of Isra’el! In this magnificent revelation they actually see a form! Present during this meal is the presence of the atoning blood, splashed upon all the articles of the covenant—including the people themselves! What are we to make of all of this imagery? As we have read in other places of the Torah, the God of the universe is an invisible God! He cannot be seen! So, what are the people seeing? Allow me to use material from one of my HafTarah commentaries: No man has seen the fullness of HaShem at any time and lived to tell about it, despite what some passages seem to be saying! Yet this is one of those exceptional moments, when HaShem actually comes very close to revealing his complete, glorious nature to his created subjects. What is actually taking place here, as well as the many other times when frail man encounters the Supernatural, is that our

senses detect just what HaShem allows them to detect and record. This encounter is then imprinted upon our conscious in such a way as to cause us to proclaim, "I've seen the LORD!" But according to the Torah, our God is invisible, and cannot be seen! What did Moshe actually see and record?

*I want to offer an explanation that is somewhat subjective, yet is based on Scripture. It is my own explanation of what is going on in situations like this one. I will use a Midrash (**homiletic explanation of the text**) to prove my point. When we humans gaze at our own sun, we may not be aware that we are not actually viewing the surface of the sun, much the same way that we might view any other physical body. In reality, because of the great distance from the earth that the sun actually is, we are really seeing a "delayed image" of the sun. Scientists have shown that since our sun is about 93 million miles away from the earth, that if it were to go supernova (explode) the light would take approximately 8 minutes to reach earth-based observers. That means that what I see right now (**if I were to go outside and look at the sun**) isn't even really the full revelation (**represented by the surface**) of the sun itself!*

To be sure, the energy being burned off by our sun is too powerful for my naked eye to withstand. I don't recommend anyone staring at the sun without some sort of eye protection. But because the sun is known to our naked eye by its "sunlight", I do receive all of the revelation needed to sustain my life here on earth. I personally don't need to see the surface of the sun to enjoy its warmth and life-giving light; its radiant energy-giving rays will suffice.

*How does this figure into the Torah? I believe that when man encountered Holy God, that HaShem gave them a "veiled" revelation of himself, lest feeble man be consumed in the Holiness of an unfathomable God! HaShem has used a variety of ways to "manifest" his holiness among men. These include: An Angelic representative, a burning bush, a pillar of a cloud, a pillar of fire, thick darkness, a thunderous voice, etc. All of these manifestations are known in Hebrew thinking as "Sh'khinah", coming from the root word "shakhan" meaning "to dwell". When HaShem decided to manifest himself to his people, he needed to "conceal" himself in such a way as to not actually kill the individual receiving the revelation. Although Moshe and the leaders catch a glimpse of his holiness here in our parashah (verses 9-11), **the best and most complete revelation of HaShem still remains to be in the person and life of Yeshua his Divine Son! To be sure, John tells us that the Word (God) was made flesh and "dwelled" among us. That term "dwelled" shares the exact same root word as "Sh'khinah" above.** (Ariel Ben Lyman, Torah Portion Mishpat-*'emphasis mine'*)*

We say the following blessing as we continue each week's study of Torah...

***Chazak u'Barukh...
Strength and Blessing!***