

עֵקֵב

Eqev

(because)

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 7:12-11:25

Because You Shema

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 7:12

“And it shall come to pass, because you listen and obey these ordinances, and keep and do them, that YHWH your Elohim will keep with you the covenant and the lovingkindness which He swore to your fathers:”

This Parasha begins with a promise. It is a conditional promise based upon obedience. The promise is that when we begin to actually “shema”; i.e., listen and obey, YHWH will then fulfill the covenant that He made with our fathers. It is interesting to note that the letter ת precedes “shema”, תִּשְׁמָעוּ, which indicates to us the future tense of the word.

What this seems to indicate to us, is that at some time in the future, Israel will actually begin to truly “shema” His Voice. And when we do listen to and obey His Voice in all matters, then we will see YHWH bring to pass all the promises of the covenant that He has made with our fathers. But He cannot, and will not, bring to pass all the promises of the covenant until we actually do shema His Voice.

Wouldn't that be a wonderful blessing to witness in our lifetime?

Being Truly Blessed by YHWH

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 7:13-16

13 “and He will love you, and bless you, and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your body and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the young of your flock, in the land which he swore to your fathers to assign to you.

14 You shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.

15 And YHWH will take away from you all sickness; and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you know, will he put upon you, but will lay them upon all them that hate you.

16 And you shall consume all the peoples that YHWH your Elohim shall deliver to you; your eye shall not pity them; neither shall you serve their gods; for that will be a snare to you."

Please carefully note all the above blessings that YHWH promises to Israel when she begins to properly "shema" His Voice.

- 1) Loved and blessed by YHWH
- 2) Physical multiplication
- 3) Increase in grains and vineyards and oil
- 4) Increase in cattle, flocks and herds
- 5) No sterility in any male or female of Israel, man or animal
- 6) No sickness or diseases
- 7) Victorious in all battles

Please consider this question: Has Israel ever in her history enjoyed these blessings?

No, she has not. So sometime in the future, YHWH willing in the near future, Israel will begin to hear and obey His Torah in such a way as it will please Him.

The Nations in His Land

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 7:17-21

17 "If you shall say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I; how can I drive them out?'

18 you shall not be afraid of them; you shall remember what YHWH your Elohim did to Pharaoh, and to all Egypt;

19 the great trials which your eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm, by which YHWH your Elohim brought you out; so shall YHWH your Elohim do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid.

20 Moreover YHWH your Elohim will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves, perish from before you.

21 You shall not be frightened of them; for YHWH your Elohim is in the midst of you, a great and a terrible Elohim."

The nations that occupied the Land then were very fierce warriors. YHWH had arranged this in order that Israel would have no choice but to depend upon Him for the victories in each and every battle.

It is no different today. The Arab nations that surround Israel today are a mighty and fearsome people. It is difficult to tell which are friendly and which ones desire to kill you. They sneak into crowds with bombs hidden in their clothing in order to instill fear into the people of our Nation by maiming and murdering the unsuspecting and innocent.

But in order to have the victory promised to us, we must hear and obey His Voice and not have any fear of them, for He promised that when we do this, He will fight our battles. However, we must fight those battles on His terms. When Israel takes those cities in the Land captive, she is to leave no one alive. When we follow His commandments, then He blesses us. When we do not follow His commandments, He will not bless us.

Destroy Them All and Erase Their Name

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 7:22-24

22 “And YHWH your Elohim will cast out those nations before you little by little; you may not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon you.

23 But YHWH your Elohim will deliver them up before you, and will confuse them with a great confusion, until they are destroyed.

24 And He will deliver their kings into your hand, and you shall make their name to perish from under heaven; there shall no man be able to stand before you, until you have destroyed them.”

In order for us to obey His commandment, at some point in the future, we will have to destroy those nations that are in the Land, who do not obey YHWH or His Torah. Their destruction will be so complete that their name will perish.

Israel has not fulfilled this commandment yet. Israel will have to complete this at some point in the future. Who will do this?

It will have to be the twelve tribes of Israel. Scripture seems to indicate that this process will actually begin before the reunification of the two houses of Israel. Then, during the process of Israel cleaning out the land, the two nations will be formed into one nation once again.

Purity in Our Homes

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 7:25-26

25 “The graven images of their gods shall you burn with fire; you shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it to you, lest you be snared therein; for it is an abomination to YHWH your Elohim.

26 And you shall not bring an abomination into your house, and become a banned thing like to it; you shall utterly detest it, and you shall utterly abhor it; for it is a banned thing.”

It has been many years since YHWH first showed me the significance of this passage. It was just before coming into a fuller understanding of Torah, that He showed me that I needed to obey this passage. As a result of this obedient act, He opened to me the rest of Torah; all praise to Him.

Many people today are coming back to the knowledge of our Hebrew roots and all that goes with that. People are once again seeking to obey all of Scripture. Most of these people who are coming into this understanding, have a background in Christianity of some flavor. As such, there are many things in our homes that are actually images which YHWH in His Torah forbids. But it is not just things, but even the very words that come out of our mouths. Some of the words, names, and titles that we learn to use in Christianity are also under the ban. Particularly those names and titles which some people use to refer to YHWH, but in actuality, are the names of pagan deities. As this passage points out, bringing these things into our homes ensnares us.

What I did, was to put a box in the living room and gathered my family, and then read this passage and gave instructions. The instructions went something like this. You go through the things that belong to you. If you feel impressed for any reason whatsoever that you need to get rid of it, then put it in this box (the box was about three feet cubed).

Now I was thinking that was a pretty big box and was plenty big enough. Boy, was I wrong! At that time my sons were quite small, but they entered fully into the spirit of the quest and eagerly went through their things. I just sat by the box and observed what they put in it.

I had explained that it did not matter what it was, or what it cost, or what it was worth. The important thing was to listen to His Voice, and obey what He impressed upon them. I explained: do not look just with your physical eyes, but listen to the Spirit; sense what He was saying to get rid of.

After the box was full to overflowing, we took it out and burned it. That's right. Just like the Scripture passage above commands, we burned it all.

Well, the boys were not satisfied with that; they wanted to do it again. So we did. We cleaned and purified our home until there were no images left of any kind (especially toys).

It was such a freeing and clean feeling to obey Scripture in this way.

And if we are not willing to do this in our own personal lives, how will we be able to do this in His Land?

What really saddens me, is when I see those who are not willing to do this with their speech. When a person who begins to know and understand what YHWH's name is, but reasons within themselves about using such titles as "lord" or "god", that YHWH knows their hearts and their intent. Yes, He does know your heart and your intent. But, to reason away what He has commanded us in this regard, is simply disobedience because of the fear of man. It is time that we put these unclean practices away from us completely! Are you willing?

Prove Yourself to be a Doer of the Commandments

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 8:1

“All the commandments which I command you this day shall you guard to do, that you may live, and multiply, and go in and occupy the land which YHWH swore to your fathers.”

Please note the condition that YHWH attaches, to this promise to multiply us, and for occupying the Land. We must be careful to guard, observe, keep, and protect His commandments to do them.

To do them is to guard them. As Ya’aqov (James) 1:22 teaches us, we are to prove ourselves to be doers of the word, not merely hearers, who only delude ourselves.

In the next several verses, Moshe continues to remind them of the past and future blessings.

A Warning Against Not Doing His Commandments

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 8:11-17

11 “Beware lest you forget YHWH your Elohim, in not keeping His commandments, and His ordinances, and His statutes, which I command you this day;

12 lest, when you have eaten and are full, and have built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied;

14 then your heart be lifted up, and you forget YHWH your Elohim, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;

15 who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, (wherein were) fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where there was no water; who brought you forth water out of the rock of flint;

16 who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers knew not; that He might humble you, and that He might test you, to do you good at your latter end;

17 and lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand has gotten me this wealth.’”

It is not a good thing for us to forget what YHWH has done for us. When we forget, we begin to elevate ourselves in our thinking, and we think we are something when we are nothing. Scripture teaches us that every good and perfect gift is from YHWH.

Ya’aqov [James] 1:17.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.

And the Ruach Qodesh teaches through Shaliach Shaul the following.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 4:7

what do you have that you did not receive, and if you did receive it why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

The truth is that we have nothing. We are not guaranteed our next breath, or even life itself. All that we have is a gift from our heavenly Father. We need to live each day, and every moment of every day, with this knowledge and understanding. When we do, then we will live a life of thankfulness and humility. This, in turn, makes it easier for us to obey His commandments, knowing that He is YHWH our Elohim and we are His servants!

Blessings from YHWH are Conditional

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 8:18-20

18 "But you shall remember YHWH your Elohim, for it is He that gives you power to get wealth; that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as at this day.

19 And it shall be, if you shall forget YHWH your Elohim, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish.

20 As the nations that YHWH will make to perish before you, so shall you perish; because you would not hearken to the Voice of YHWH your Elohim."

After reading this passage, it seems pretty clear that what YHWH is telling us, is that if we truly want His blessings in our life, then we must obey Him in all things. If we make the very unwise (really stupid) choice to do things our own way (like calling Him by some name He did not command), then what we can expect from Him is destruction.

I don't know about you, but that is not the path that I want to walk down, ever!

So, in order not to walk down that path, what we need to do is know what His Torah says and then obey it completely without reservation. Perhaps we should have a working definition of what it means to "walk after other gods".

In order to properly worship and serve YHWH, we must do so according to His commandments. We cannot add to or take away from anything He commanded. If a person does take away from or add to His commandments, this means that he is not worshipping Him in a pleasing manner.

In fact, what he is actually worshipping is a god of his own making, which is idolatry. He cannot bless idolatry. He will not bless idolatry.

YHWH Goes Before as a Consuming Fire

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 9:1-3

1 “Hear, Israel; you are to pass over the Yarden (Jordan) this day, to go in to drive out nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to the heavens,

2 a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you have heard say, ‘Who can stand before the sons of Anak?’

3 Know therefore this day, that YHWH your Elohim is He who goes over before you as a consuming fire; He will destroy them, and He will bring them down before you; so shall you drive them out, and make them to perish quickly, as YHWH has spoken to you.”

YHWH set up His Land in such a way that the sons of Anak, the Anakim, settled there. Basically, what this did was to keep all other peoples from entering into the Land because these people were giants and fierce warriors.

It would be no small task to defeat these people and to take their cities. It would be nothing short of miraculous; which is exactly why YHWH caused it to be this way, so that His people would be in a position in which they had no other real choice but to depend on Him.

It was similar to when He led us out of Egypt up to the shore of the Red Sea with the sea before us, mountains on the right, mountains on the left, and Pharaoh charging down from behind with murderous intent.

Literally, the only way out was up!

Likewise, in order to drive out the inhabitants of the Land, we must look up. Looking anywhere else is defeat (and sin).

It is a Matter of the Heart

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 9:4

“Do not say in your heart, after YHWH your Elohim has driven them out from before you, saying, ‘For my righteousness YHWH has brought me in to occupy this land’; rather it was for the wickedness of these nations YHWH drove them out from before you.”

Make no mistake about it; YHWH is primarily interested in the condition of the heart. He is interested in our actions, to be sure; for our actions belie what is in our heart. This is the very reason He is interested in the heart condition.

Scripture is replete with commandments that we are not to have an elevated view of ourselves. Rather, we are to look upon ourselves with honesty and truthfulness. Having a proper view of oneself means he will understand his own sinfulness, His love, mercy, and compassion; and that

He alone is worthy of our worship and service. We are not worthy to live (serve) for ourselves. Living for self is actually idolatry.

YHWH warns us in the above passage that when He does a great work in our lives, we need to be careful not to begin thinking that we did it on our own, or that it was because of our own merit. The truth is that we only merit death, not life.

Here is something that our big brother Yehudah does not understand. The Talmud is full of teachings that certain things happened to our fathers who went before us, because they did this or that to merit a blessing.

This is simply wrong. Why?

The verse above teaches us, that it is not by merit that He does anything for us, but because He chooses to do it. And actually the reason that He may choose to do something, may be because of the sinfulness of the other party (which has nothing to do with us personally).

Basically, the idea YHWH is trying to get across to us, is that *He* is the one that deserves the credit, glory, and honor, all of it, not any of us puny, weak, and sinful humans.

A Stiff-Necked People

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 9:5-6

5 "Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your heart, do you go in to occupy their land; but for the wickedness of these nations YHWH your Elohim drives them out from before you, and that He may establish the word which YHWH swore to your fathers, to Avraham, to Yitzchak (Isaac), and to Ya'aqov (Jacob).

6 Know therefore, that YHWH your Elohim gives you not this good land to occupy it for your righteousness; for you are a stiff-necked people."

As if verse 4 was not enough, YHWH continues in these next two verses to make sure that we do not miss the point – it is not for our righteousness! It is not for our righteousness that He brings us into His Land. Besides, we are a stiff-necked (read stubborn, complaining, whining, hard to change, rebellious, never satisfied) people.

YHWH wants to make sure that we get this point!

The rest of chapter nine and the beginning of chapter ten, Moshe reminds the people of how rebellious they have been towards YHWH from the day that He led them out of Egypt. He reminds them how it was that YHWH wanted to destroy them all because of their sin.

It was only by His great compassion that He did not destroy them.

What Does YHWH Require?

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 10:12

“And now, Israel, what does YHWH your Elohim require of you, but to fear YHWH your Elohim, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul,”

Simply put, YHWH requires that we put Him first!

No one and nothing else can be before Him. Nor, even in addition to Him.

And how do we prove that this is true in our lives?

By hearing and obeying each and every one of His commandments. By living in this fashion we show to Him that we love Him with every fiber of our being (heart and soul).

It is interesting to note that the English word “walk” above is translated from the Hebrew word “halak”, הלך, which means “walk”. This is the root of the word “halakah”, הלכה, which is the word used to signify the Scriptural standards in which we agree to live our everyday lives.

For Our Good

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 10:13

“to keep the commandments of YHWH, and His statutes, which I command you this day for your good?”

To keep His commandments that He has commanded us is for our own good.

If one does not to keep His commandments that He has commanded us, it will be for our own undoing.

It is our choice.

It All Belongs to YHWH

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 10:14

“Behold, to YHWH your Elohim the heavens and heavens of the heavens, the earth, with all that is therein.”

Everything that you or I can imagine or think belongs to YHWH. He made it all. Everything in the heavens and the highest of heavens, all belongs to Him.

And everything in the earth also belongs to Him. That includes you and me. We all belong to Him. He will do as He pleases as the Sovereign of the universe. The question is, "What will He do with us?" And the answer to that question will depend upon how we react to His commandments. Will we hear and obey them? Or will we just do our own thing in our own way?

The Key is Obedience

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 11:1

"Therefore you shall love YHWH your Elohim, and keep His charge, and His statutes, and His ordinances, and His commandments, always."

If we truly want to understand the heart of YHWH, then we need to understand that He really only has one requirement: to hear and obey His Voice. It is summed up in the word "shema". In the above passage, that includes what He has charged us to do: His statutes, His ordinances, and His commandments. And to do them always (never stop obeying!).

If we obey His Voice, then we will be a part of His people Israel. He will fill us with His Spirit if we obey His Voice. If we obey His Voice, we will have the fruit of the Spirit. If we obey His Voice, we will

I think that you can see the point here: if we are to live our lives pleasing to Him, we will obey Him in all aspects. The truth is that we cannot go above and beyond the call of duty; i.e., our obedience to Him (His Voice).

Ever wonder why it is that YHWH put the above message so many times in Scripture? Particularly in the book of Devarim, it is a recurring message. Why?

If we back up a few verses to Devarim 9:6, in which we are reminded that we are a "stiff-necked" people, we will begin to understand the frequency of this message. Being a stiff-necked people, we need to hear the same message over and over again, in order for us to really get it.

Ask yourself that question today, "Am I really getting this message?"

Here is that Message Again

Deuteronomy 11:8

"Therefore you shall keep all the commandment which I command you this day, that you may be strong, and go in and occupy the land, when you go over to occupy it;"

Here is the same Message Again!

Deuteronomy 11:13

“And it shall come to pass, if you shall listen and obey diligently to My commandments which I command you this day, to love YHWH your Elohim, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul,”

Same Message, Different Words

Deuteronomy 11:18

“Therefore you shall lay up My words in your heart and in your soul; and you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.”

Okay, Already!

Deuteronomy 11:22

“For if you shall diligently keep all this commandment which I command you, to do it, to love YHWH your Elohim, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave to Him;”

Actually, this message occurs in the beginning of the very next Parasha, not to mention that it occurred at the beginning of this Parasha, as well as many times before this particular section.

Now the adults of this generation were children when YHWH brought them out of Egypt. They were witnesses of all the miracles and the mighty hand with which YHWH brought them out of Egypt. Yet they and their parents continued to be stiff-necked and stubborn. And if they witnessed all those things and were still that way, what about us who have not seen all those miraculous signs and wonders? Do we not need these reminders even more?

So, do we think we have this message yet?

Let's take a little test and see how well we do.

The Test

Read each question and then answer either “yes” or “no”. Keep track of your answers; and it is important to be as honest as possible.

- 1) Do I have any images in my home, especially religious images?
- 2) Do I spend most of my time thinking about making money?
- 3) Do I use names and titles for YHWH that are more convenient than His true name?

- 4) Do I break His seventh day Shabbat with my words or actions?
- 5) Do I bring dishonor to my parents by my lawless behavior?
- 6) Do I murder my brother with my words?
- 7) Do I adulterate others with my eyes?
- 8) Do I take what does not belong to me from my place of employment?
- 9) Do I give testimony about others that is based upon hearsay (gossip)?
- 10) Do I spend a lot of time wanting and thinking, "If only I had (fill in the blank) my life would be so much better?"

Please take some time and give some honest reflection to these questions. Pray and ask YHWH to help you answer honestly.

We will discuss the answers to these questions shortly.

Headline News

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 11:22-25

22 "For if you shall diligently keep all this commandment which I command you, to do it, to love YHWH your Elohim, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave to Him;

23 then will YHWH drive out all these nations from before you, and you shall drive out nations greater and mightier than yourselves.

24 Every place whereon the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours; from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even to the western sea shall be your border.

25 There shall no man be able to stand before you; YHWH your Elohim shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that you shall tread upon, as He has spoken to you."

The Land, as mentioned in the passage above, is currently in turmoil. There is war everywhere in that region.

That Land, as Devarim 10:14 above states, all belongs to YHWH. He will assign it to those who will be good stewards and obey His Torah. If those so assigned will not do this, then He will destroy them.

At some point (YHWH willing, it will be soon) Israel will be in full possession of all the Land assigned to her. It may be, as in the first taking of the land, that YHWH will go before us; and as we take possession of the land, He will also continue to purify us, and finish removing all the pagan trappings in our lives.

Please note that in verse 22, the word "commandment" is singular in form. This is one reason that Scripture teaches us that if we break one commandment we are guilty of breaking them all. In YHWH's eyes the Torah is a unit. To attempt to keep part of Torah while intentionally

not keeping other parts is to divide Mashiach, because He is the Living Torah. That would be a very dangerous activity to be involved in, to be sure.

Test Answers

10 “yes” answers – If you answered “yes” to all ten questions, then you just really do not get it at all. Go immediately to Scripture (do not pass “Go”) and reread Scripture beginning at Genesis 1:1. As you come to something that you are not doing which the Scripture commands that you should be doing, start doing it (if in doubt, obey Him).

7-9 “yes” answers – If you answered “yes” to 7-9 questions, then you are just beginning in your walk of keeping Torah. Keep reading and learning and obeying. And do not give up; it really is not all that difficult.

4-6 “yes” answers – If you answered “yes” to 4-6 questions, then you have been keeping Torah for a little while. Keep up the good work and keep progressing and learning and obeying Him.

1-3 “yes” answers – If you answered “yes” to only 1-3 questions, then you are doing well. You still have a ways to go yet, so don’t give up, and press on towards the high call of Yeshua.

0 “yes” answers – If you answered “no” to all ten questions, then you are doing quite well. It is obvious that you know the sound of His Voice and work at obeying it. HalleluYah! Now you just need to work at keeping the rest of His Torah every day.

The more “yes” answers that you had, the more studying and obeying that you need to do. The more “no” answers that you had, indicates how hard you are trying to please our heavenly Father.

Of course, we could have included questions on niddah (family purity), head coverings, circumcision, beards, tzitzit (tassels), mixtures, clean foods, Rosh Chodesh, festivals, guarding your gates, and many other things. If you include these items in the test, how would your score be then?

So, do you really get it, or not?

ABBA YHWH, please come and fill us with Your Spirit, that Your Spirit in us will teach us to walk before You in all of Your Torah commandments, guarding and keeping them so that we may do them. We ask this in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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