

Opening Words:

On Sunday, August 25, 2019, 6:22:43 AM MDT, Kartik Pal wrote:

Dear pastor Ryan,

Thanks for your prayers. Today while having our morning worship a group of Hindu activist came and disturbed our time. They wanted me to deny Jesus Christ which I did not do. Then they threatened me and took this matter to the Police station accusing me that I am converting Hindu to Christianity. Police came and informed me to be in the police station tomorrow. Kindly pray for me as I deal with this case wisely. - Kartik

A pastor by the name of Florescu was tortured with red-hot iron pokers and with knives. He was beaten very badly. Then starving rats were driven in to his cell through a large pipe. He could not sleep because he had to defend himself all the time. If he rested a moment, the rats would attack him.

He was forced to stand for two weeks, day and night. The Communists wished to compel him to betray his brethren, but he resisted steadfastly. Eventually, they brought his fourteen-year-old son to the prison and began to whip the boy in front of his father, saying that they would continue to beat him until the pastor said what they wished him to say. The poor man was half mad. He bore it as long as he could, then he cried to his son, "Alexander, I must say what they want! I can't bear your beating anymore!" The son answered, "Father, don't do me the injustice of having a traitor as a parent. Withstand! If they kill me, I will die with the words, 'Jesus and my fatherland.'" The communists, enraged, fell upon the child and beat him to death, with blood splattered over the walls of the cell. He died praising God.

Tortured for Christ, Richard Wurmbrand

We Christians were sometimes forced to stand in wooden boxes only slightly larger than we were. This left no room to move. Dozens of sharp nails were driven into every side of the box, with their razor-sharp points sticking through the wood. While we stood perfectly still, it was all right. But we were forced to stand in these boxes for endless hours; when we became fatigued and swayed with tiredness, the nails would pierce our bodies. If we moved or twitched a muscle – there were the horrible nails.

Tortured for Christ, Richard Wurmbrand

It was strictly forbidden to preach to other prisoners, as it is in captive nations today. It was understood that whoever was caught doing this received a severe beating. A number of us decided to pay the price for the privilege of preaching, so we accepted their terms. It was a deal: we preached and they beat us. We were happy preaching; they were happy beating us – so everyone was happy.

The following scene happened more times than I can remember. A brother was preaching to the other prisoners when the guards suddenly burst in, surprising him halfway through a phrase. They hauled him down the corridor to their "beating room." After what seemed an endless beating, they brought him back and threw him – bloody and bruised – on the prison floor. Slowly, he picked up his battered body, painfully straightened his clothing and said, "Now, brethren, where did I leave off when I was interrupted?" He continued his gospel message!

Tortured for Christ, Richard Wurmbrand

Isaiah 66:4-5

⁴I also will choose harsh treatment for them
and bring their fears upon them,
because when I called, no one answered,
when I spoke, they did not listen;
but they did what was evil in my eyes
and chose that in which I did not delight."
⁵Hear the word of the Lord,
you who tremble at his word:
"Your brothers who hate you
and cast you out for my name's sake
have said, 'Let the Lord be glorified,
that we may see your joy';
but it is they who shall be put to shame.

Matthew 5:10-12

The Sermon on the Mount

¹⁰ "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² **Rejoice and be glad,** for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

James 1:2-4, 12

Testing of Your Faith

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

(James' zeal for Jesus resulted in his being the first of the 12 apostles to be martyred. He was killed with the sword on order of King Herod Agrippa I of Judea, about 44 A.D., in a general persecution of the early church – James was the brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55, Mark 6:3) and Authored the New Testament epistle, "James".)

Matthew 7:12-14

¹³ "Enter by the **narrow gate**. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the **gate is narrow** and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

John 10:9

I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

Last Week We Talked About:

SIGHT and HEARING

The difference between the **GRANTED** (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might") and the **EARNED** (Deuteronomy 11:13-21, "And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, he will give the rain") **DAILY** prayer of Scripture, is also the difference between two of our major senses -**SIGHT** and **HEARING**.

SIGHT gives the mind the information all at once, conveying a scene, with its thousands if not millions of details, as a single imprint upon the retina. The eye sees it all simultaneously; the mind then proceeds to process all this information, drawing from the all-embracing image imparted by the eye.

Our faculty of **HEARING** functions in the very opposite manner: we hear but one sound at a time. We cannot grasp the entire idea at once: we can only hear it, sentence by sentence, word by word, syllable by syllable. We cannot see the entire concerto as a whole: we can only hear it, bar by bar, note by note. Each of these particulars is virtually meaningless on its own; we must recreate the idea or the score in our minds, piecing it together bit by bit.

Let's begin by reviewing the passages just before, Chapter 7-11 of Deuteronomy:

A Chosen People

7¹² "And because you listen to these rules and keep and do them, the Lord your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love that he swore to your fathers. ¹³ He will love you, bless you, and multiply you.

¹⁷ "If you say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I. How can I dispossess them?' ¹⁸ you shall not be afraid of them but you shall remember what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt,

When you understand that the nations are more numerous than you, and that you, with your own power, cannot defeat them but are totally dependent on G-d's help, then you need not fear them. But if you begin to believe that you can defeat them on your own, then you indeed have great cause for fear. The only danger they pose is the spiritual one.

Remember the Lord Your God

8 "The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers. ² And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ³ And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

9 Not Because of Righteousness (but Wickedness), The Golden Calf, New Tablets of Stone

Circumcise Your Heart

10¹² "And now, Israel, WHAT DOES THE LORD YOUR GOD REQUIRE OF YOU, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart (heart - inner man, comprehending mind, affections and will, courage, "hearts like his heart") and with all your soul (soul - desire, passion, pleasure, appetite, emotion, feelings), ¹³ and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I am commanding you today FOR YOUR GOOD? ¹⁴ Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. ¹⁵ Yet the Lord set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. ¹⁶ **CIRCUMCISE** therefore the foreskin of YOUR HEART, and be no longer stubborn. (Read Galatians 3:6-9 & Romans 11:11-24 - "Grafted In")

10¹⁷ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. ¹⁸ He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹ Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. ²⁰ You shall fear the Lord your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. ²¹ He is your praise. He is your God, who has done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen. ²² Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons, (69 + 1 - "+1" Moses' Mother; the deliverer's mother was born before God's people even set foot into Egypt (Genesis 46:26-27), their bondage of 210 years) and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven.

Love and Serve the Lord

11¹ "YOU SHALL therefore love the Lord your God and KEEP HIS charge, his statutes, his rules, and HIS COMMANDMENTS ALWAYS. ² And consider today (since I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen it), CONSIDER THE DISCIPLINE (instruction) of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, ³ his signs and his deeds that he did in Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land, ⁴ and what he did to the army of Egypt, to their

horses and to their chariots, how he made the water of the Red Sea flow over them as they pursued after you, and how the Lord has destroyed them to this day,⁵ and what he did to you in the wilderness, until you came to this place,⁶ and what he did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, son of Reuben, how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel.⁷ For your eyes have seen all the great work of the Lord that he did.

11⁸ **“YOU SHALL therefore KEEP THE WHOLE COMMANDMENT THAT I COMMAND YOU today, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that you are going over to possess,⁹ and that you may live long in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them and to their offspring, a land flowing with milk and honey.¹⁰ For the land that you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and irrigated it, like a garden of vegetables.¹¹ But the land that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven,¹² a land that the Lord your God cares for. The eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year (continuously).**

40-Year Lesson: For the land... is not as the land of Egypt.. where you did sow your seed, and did water it by foot, like a vegetable garden... [rather] it drinks water of the rain of heaven (11:10-11)

"Rain" represents the reciprocal relationship between heaven and earth. "A vapor rises from the earth" to the heavens, and the heavens return it as rain which "quenches the face of the land" (Genesis 2:6). This represents the spiritual truth that "an arousal from below evokes an arousal from above" -- that G-d responds to the efforts of man, reciprocating our prayers, yearnings and deeds with nurture from Above.

(The Chassidic Masters)

THE PROMISE OF ENTERING HIS REST STILL STANDS Hebrews 4

Therefore, **while the promise of ENTERING HIS REST still stands,** let us fear lest *any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.*² For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.³ For **we who have believed ENTER THAT REST,** as he has said,

“As I swore in my wrath,
‘They shall not enter my rest,’”

*although his works were finished from the foundation of the world.*⁴ For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “*And God RESTED on the seventh day from all his works.*”⁵ And again in this passage he said,

“They shall not enter my rest.”

⁶ Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news **failed to enter because of disobedience,**⁷ again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“**Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.**”

⁸ For if *Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on.*⁹ So then, **THERE REMAINS A SABBATH REST for the people of God,**¹⁰ **FOR WHOEVER HAS ENTERED GOD’S REST HAS ALSO RESTED FROM HIS WORKS AS GOD DID HIS.**

¹¹ **LET US THEREFORE STRIVE TO ENTER THAT REST,** so that no one may **fall by the same sort of disobedience.**¹² For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.¹³ And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Isaiah 66:22-23

Final Judgment and Glory of the Lord

²² “For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain.²³ From new moon to new moon, and **from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me,** declares the Lord.”

11¹³ **“And IF YOU WILL INDEED OBEY MY COMMANDMENTS that I command you today, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,¹⁴ he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil.**

Zechariah 14:16-19

¹⁶ “Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths.¹⁷ And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, **there will be no rain on them.**¹⁸ And if the family of Egypt does not go up and present themselves, then on them there shall be no rain; *there shall be the plague with which the Lord afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths.*¹⁹ This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths.”

¹⁵ And he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full.¹⁶ Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them;¹⁷ then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the Lord is giving you.

Deuteronomy 11:18–25

¹⁸ “You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand (hand: keep, to do, commit without any delay), and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes (between your eyes: of judging, knowing, teaching, of a covenant or sign).¹⁹ You shall **teach them to your children** (your disciples/students – “make disciples”), **talking of them when you are**

sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise, ²⁰ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹ **that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied** in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

²² **For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the Lord your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him,** ²³ **then the Lord will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you.** ²⁴ **Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours.**

²⁴ Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. ²⁵ **No one shall be able to stand against you.** The Lord your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you.

This Week

"Reclaiming the Blessing"

Week 47 - Re'eh (See / Behold)

Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17; Numbers 28:9-15; Isaiah 54:11-55:5; Matthew 7:7-29 [Shabbat Rosh Chodesh: Isaiah 66:1-24]

"See (ראה Re'eh)," says Moses to the people of Israel, "*I place before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known.*" Deuteronomy 11:26-28

Last week in the Reading Eikev ("Because" – The Generation at the Foot Heels of the Messiah), Moses promised the Israelites that if they were obedient to the commands of the Torah, they would prosper in the Promised Land.

This week, as the children of Israel stand poised to cross over into the Jordan, **God sets before the people two separate and distinct directions: a way of blessing if they choose to obey God's commandments and a way of cursing if they choose to walk in disobedience to those laws.**

Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17

²⁶ **"See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse:** ²⁷ **the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today,** ²⁸ **and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known.** ²⁹ **And when the Lord your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. . . .** ³¹ **For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you. And when you possess it and live in it,** ³² **you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the rules that I am setting before you today.**

Behold (See), I set before you today a blessing and a curse... And it will be, when the L-rd, your G-d, will bring you to the land to which you come, to possess it, that you shall place those blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and those cursing upon Mount Ebal. (Deuteronomy 11:26, 29)

In this mysterious ritual, Moses instructs the people that when they finally enter the Land, they are to pronounce blessings at Mount Gerizim, and curses at neighboring Mount Ebal. **The Priests and Levites were to stand in the valley between the mountains.** Six tribes were to stand on Mt. Gerizim and the six remaining tribes on Mt. Ebal. As **the Levites called out a series of blessings and curses, the tribes on the mountains answered "amen" after each statement.** We are told that Gerizim was fertile and lush with greenery and Ebal was a barren, bleak rock.

There is a striking contrast between the mountains. Mount Gerizim is covered with fruitful terraces, blesses with life, celebration and joy. Vertical rays of light flow down, bringing blessings and peace. On the other side, Mount Ebal is arid, dark brown and barren. It looks dead, with no descending blessings.

It is taught that **when we are aligned with goodness, goodness flows down on the mount of blessing,** while the other mountain, the mount of curses, absorbs the murky blight of our misdeeds.

By Yoram Raanan

Upon their entry into the Holy Land, the people of Israel are instructed to
Reclaim the Blessing.

Each one of us has been given this same choice to FOLLOW Him or not; in fact, the entire direction of our lives depends on which path we choose - the path of the blessing or of the curse.

Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah also told us of two paths - the narrow path that leads to life - and the broad path that leads to destruction. Sadly, it seems that **few choose the narrow path.** Most walk that broad path of destruction.

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because **narrow is the gate** and **difficult is the way which leads to life,** and **there are few who find it.**" Matthew 7:13-14

Why does Yeshua, who is the Gate to salvation, tell us that the path of blessing is difficult, and that few enter His gate?

John 10:9

"I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture."

Because each day, we have to make hard choices between what our carnal nature desires and what is in alignment with the **Holy Spirit**. To obey God requires that we crucify the desires of our flesh.

Holy Spirit (John 16:8, 13: "And when he comes, he will **convict** the world concerning sin and (*convict the world concerning*) **righteousness** and (*convict the world concerning*) **judgment** (discernment/right & wrong).") (AND) "13 When the Spirit of truth comes, **he will guide you into all the truth**, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.")

"I have been crucified with Messiah. It is no longer I who live, but **Messiah who lives in me** (His Teaching & Instruction – "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," John 15:10). And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20

Staying on the Path of Blessing During Trials

Sadly, human pride, love of sin, and opposition from spiritual forces of darkness keep many walking the broad path of destruction, preventing them from entering into a life of blessing THROUGH OBEDIENCE to God.

As well, too many new Believers think that coming to faith in Jesus and living a life of obedience to God are supposed to make all the problems and trials of life disappear.

Jesus did not promise this. In fact, He assured us that in this life we will have trouble. He Himself was persecuted, as were His followers.

Despite that, we need not be discouraged. We can be of good cheer, joyful in the Lord, for He has overcome the world (the teaching and ideas of the world).

"I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I HAVE OVERCOME THE WOLRD." John 16:33

Choosing to obey God's commandments in times of trouble is not always easy, especially when the whole world seems to be going in a different direction.

Going against the current can take a great deal of exertion and determination - for people desiring to live a righteous life. It takes effort to GO against the current.

Even simply making the choice to OBEY God can be excruciatingly painful. **Jesus experienced this in the Garden of Gethsemane when facing the choice to submit to God even to the point of death on the tree.**

It was here, in the dark valley of decision that the battle was won, when Jesus said, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." Luke 22:42

This decision was so agonizing for Jesus that He seemed to sweat drops of blood: "Being in an agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke 22:44

We may not actually sweat drops of blood, but **we may come to a crossroad in our lives where we must also decide whether to obey God's will or to choose our own way** - and the cost may seem beyond our ability to bear. But God has promised that **His grace is sufficient** for us in every circumstance.

"My **grace is sufficient** for you, for **my power is made perfect in weakness**." Therefore I will **boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**" 2 Corinthians 12:9

CHOOSING to OBEY God will LEAD to BLESSING; however, we may not receive our full reward until Heaven.

For that reason, we must **always live with an ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE**, not allowing the trials of life to weaken our faith.

"Blessed is the man who **remains steadfast under trial**, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him." James 1:12

DRIVEN BY ETERNITY

1 Corinthians 9:24-25

²⁴Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

Every one of us is going to Stand before Jesus Christ as our Judge.

1 Corinthians 5:8-10

⁸ Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Every one of us will Stand before Jesus and Give an Account of how we lived this life as believers. The Bible is very clear that He will not only Judge/Examine our works as believers, but He will Judge/Examine our Words, our Thoughts, our motives and our intentions.

With that, let it be understood that you, a Believer, cannot do one things to make God love you any more than He loves you, and you cannot do one thing to make God love you any less than He loves you, but you are in charge of how pleased He is with you.

Hebrews 11:6

And **without faith it is impossible to please God**, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that **he rewards those who earnestly SEEK him**.

SEEK: 1567a. ekzeteo

Definition: *to seek out, demand, inquire*

Word Origin: from EK and ZETEO

EK: 1537

Definition: out-come oriented (out of the depths of the source and extending to its impact on the object).

ZETEO: 2212

Definition: to investigate to reach a required (life impacting) resolution; “*getting to the bottom of a matter*”. To seek (literally or figuratively), especially to worship God.

1 Corinthians 4:5

Therefore, **do not pronounce judgment/decision before the time**, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and **will disclose the purposes of the heart**. **Then each one will receive his commendation (praise) from God**.

Judgement: (not condemnation – 90% in NT): a decision resulting from an investigation (a decision).

So, Jesus is going to Judge/Examine our lives as Believers; He is going to judge/examine our works, our words, our thoughts, our motives, our intentions, and as a result of that through examination/investigation, He is going to make decisions over our life, because **judgement means decision**. And as a result of those decisions we are either going to receive rewards or we are going to suffer losses, and the Bible is very clear that the Rewards that we can receive to the Losses that we can suffer are anywhere from reigning beside Christ forever and ever and ever to all the way to everything we did being burned up, that is a vast range, the **first** being the full reward to the **later** being no rewards, and everything in between the partial reward

Hebrews 6:2

Instruction about . . . eternal judgment.

Eternal Judgment or Eternal Decisions

What does that mean, eternal judgment or eternal decision: there will never be any revision to His decision, they will be decisions that stand forever. What we do with the Cross determines where we are going to spend Eternity, but however, **the way we live** as Believers will determine how we spend Eternity.

James 4:13-15

Boasting About Tomorrow

¹³ Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”—¹⁴ yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. *What is your life?* For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.”

I believe what James is saying is this life is **Zero** (a mist), because, as simple math says, any number divided by Eternity is Zero. **What we do with this Zero time is how we are going to live Eternity**.

The challenge then is, “The way you spend your next day will determine how you will spend your Eternity”. With that, “How would you live the next day?”

Deuteronomy 12:1-32

The Lord's Chosen Place of Worship

“These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. ² **You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods**, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. ³ **You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire. You shall chop down the carved images of their gods and destroy their name out of that place**. ⁴ You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way. ⁵ **But you shall SEEK THE PLACE that THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL CHOOSE out of all your tribes TO PUT HIS NAME and MAKE HIS HABITATION there. There you shall go**, ⁶ and there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, your vow offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock. ⁷ And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your households, in all that you undertake, in which the Lord your God has blessed you.

⁸ **“You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes,”** ⁹ for you have not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance that the Lord your God is giving you. ¹⁰ But when you go over the Jordan and live in the land that the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your enemies around, so that you live in safety, ¹¹ **then to THE PLACE THAT THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL CHOOSE, to MAKE HIS NAME DWELL there, there YOU SHALL BRING ALL THAT I COMMAND YOU: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, and all your finest vow offerings that you vow to the Lord.**

It is forbidden to make offerings to G-d in any other place.

¹² And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male servants and your female servants, and the Levite that is within your towns, since he has no portion or inheritance with you. ¹³ Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see, ¹⁴ but at the place that the Lord will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.

¹⁵ “However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your towns, as much as you desire, according to the blessing of the Lord your God that he has given you. The unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and as of the deer. ¹⁶ Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out on the earth like water. ¹⁷ You may not eat within your towns the tithes of your grain or of your wine or of your oil, or the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vow offerings that you vow, or your freewill offerings or the contribution that you present, ¹⁸ but you shall eat them before the Lord your God in the place that the Lord your God will choose, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your towns. And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God in all that you undertake. ¹⁹ Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

²⁰ **“When the Lord your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised you,** and you say, ‘I will eat meat,’ because you crave meat, you may eat meat whenever you desire. ²¹ If the place that the Lord your God will choose to put his name there is too far from you, then you may kill any of your herd or your flock, which the Lord has given you, as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your towns whenever you desire. ²² Just as the gazelle or the deer is eaten, so you may eat of it.

22 THE UNCLEAN AND THE CLEAN ALIKE MAY EAT OF IT.

²³ **ONLY BE SURE THAT YOU DO NOT EAT THE BLOOD, FOR THE BLOOD IS THE LIFE, AND YOU SHALL NOT EAT THE LIFE WITH THE FLESH.**

²⁴ You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out on the earth like water. ²⁵ You shall not eat it, that all may go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is right in the sight of the Lord. ²⁶ But the holy things that are due from you, and your vow offerings, you shall take, and you shall go to the place that the Lord will choose, ²⁷ and offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the Lord your God. The blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the Lord your God, but the flesh you may eat. ²⁸ **Be careful to obey all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the Lord your God.**

“You Want to be Where God’s Eyes Are!”

Warning Against Idolatry

²⁹ **“When the Lord your God cuts off before you the nations whom you go in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, ³⁰ take care that you be not ensnared to follow them,** after they have been destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods?—that I also may do the same.’ ³¹ You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way, for every abominable thing that the Lord hates they have done for their gods, for they even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.

³² **“Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. YOU SHALL NOT ADD TO IT OR TAKE FROM IT.**

Deuteronomy 13:1-5

“If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, ² and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ which you have not known, ‘and let us serve them,’

³ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams.

³ **For the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.**

⁴ **You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him.** ⁵ But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, **TO MAKE YOU LEAVE THE WAY in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk.** So you shall purge the evil from your midst . . .

¹⁶ **You shall gather all its spoil into the midst of its open square and burn the city and all its spoil with fire, as a whole burnt offering to the Lord your God. It shall be a heap forever. It shall not be built again.** ¹⁷ **None of the devoted things shall stick to your hand,** that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger and show you mercy and have compassion on you and multiply you, as he swore to your fathers, ¹⁸ **if you OBEY THE VOICE of the Lord your God, keeping all his commandments that I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of the Lord your God.**

"You Want to be Where God's Eyes Are!"

Deuteronomy 14:1-29

The Steps on the Path of Blessing

"For **YOU ARE A HOLE PEOPLE** to the LORD your God, and **THE LORD HAS CHOSEN YOU TO BE A PEOPLE FOR HIMSELF, A SPECIAL TREASURE ABOVE ALL THE PEOPLESE** who are on the face of the earth." Deuteronomy 14:2

This Reading emphasizes that the path of blessing includes not following false gods or false prophets. **All elements of pagan worship must be purged from our lifestyle so that we may be the holy people that God has called us to be.**

The narrow way described in this Weeks Reading, "See", includes God's commandments regarding the consumption of clean and unclean animals: "You shall not eat any detestable thing." (Deuteronomy 14:3)

Although many Christians consider these dietary commands abolished, Yeshua did not support this kind of thinking.

He made this astounding statement: "Don't assume that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill... Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches people to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:17-19)

The path of blessing also includes giving tithes to the Levites, who were dependent on the people for their livelihood:

"You shall not forsake the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you." Deuteronomy 14:27

Deuteronomy 10:8-9

⁸At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to serve Him, and to pronounce blessings in His name, as they do to this day. ⁹**That is why Levi has no portion or inheritance among his brothers; the LORD is his inheritance, as the LORD your God promised him.**

1 Peter 2:9

⁹But you are a chosen race, a **royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession**, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

As well, generosity toward the poor is also important.

God said we are to open our hand and our heart to give to the poor in our land, "If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs." Deuteronomy 15:7-8

Prosperity and financial blessing are not simply the result of working hard. It is also not owed to us because we are Believers. It is dependent upon exercising the spiritual principles of sowing and reaping. As we give, it will be given back to us (Luke 6:38). **God will bless us as we sow generous seeds in giving to the poor and to God's faithful servants.**

"You shall surely give to him, and your heart should not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your works and in all to which you put your hand." Deuteronomy 15:10

Choosing the Path to Eternal Life

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)

One of the most important choices each one of us must make is whether or not to receive Yeshua the Messiah as the atonement for all of our sins and through Him receive eternal life.

Our Messianic redemption (liberation / salvation / entrance into eternal life) is not something that we simply read about or hear preached. It is a not-so-distant reality.

Deuteronomy 16:1-17 Passover, The Feast of Weeks, The Feast of Booths

The Feast of Booths

¹³"You shall keep the Feast of Booths seven days, when you have **gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your winepress**. ¹⁴You shall **rejoice in your feast**, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite, **the sojourner**, the fatherless, and the widow who are within your towns. ¹⁵For seven days **you shall keep the feast** to the Lord your God **at**

the place that the Lord will choose, because the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so **that you will be altogether joyful**.

¹⁶“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. **They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.** ¹⁷ **Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God that he has given you.**”

When Jesus returns, He will come on the clouds and every eye will **“See”** Him.

“Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.” **Revelation 1:7**

This New Covenant Scripture about the Second Coming of the Messiah is founded on several Messianic prophecies in which the Hebrew prophets also foresee Adonai coming with the clouds:

“A prophecy against Egypt: See, Adonai [YHVH] rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt with fear.” **Isaiah 19:1**

“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.” **Daniel 7:13**

One day, we will all see the Son of man coming on the clouds with great power and glory! **Until that day comes, may we choose to faithfully and diligently walk on the path of blessing, keeping His commandments.**

“Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” **Luke 11:28**

Isaiah 54:11

“O afflicted one, storm-tossed and not comforted,
behold, I will set your stones in antimony,
and lay your foundations with sapphires.”

God is building a life for each one of us that is **"Rock Solid"**. He wants our gifts shown Brilliantly and with splendor. He wants us to Shine and Sparkle as we are held up to the Light. Our setting (**antimony**) is Durable and Mighty and it displays God's Faithfulness to us. Now that is **Antimony!**

Antimony: the sense is not that the stones would have fair colors, but that **the cement (antimony)** which would be used would be that which was commonly employed to **make the most valued colors**. **The structure (antimony)** which would be reared would be as costly and magnificent as if the very **cement** of the stones consisted of the most precious coloring matter; used also for flame proofing material (ex. components and function of the prongs on a Brilliant Wedding Ring).

Read: Isaiah 54:13-17, Isaiah 66:1-2, 7-8, 15-24

Final Word:

One of our workers in the Underground Church was a young girl. The Communist police discovered that she secretly spread Gospels and taught children about Christ. They decided to arrest her. But to make the arrest as agonizing and painful as they would they decided to delay her arrest a few weeks, until the day she was to be married. On her wedding day, the girl was dressed as a bride – the most wonderful, joyous day in a girl's life! Suddenly, the door burst open and the secret police rushed in.

When the bride saw the secret police, she held out her arms toward them to be handcuffed. They roughly put the manacles on her wrists. She looked toward her beloved, then kissed the chains and said, “I thank my heavenly Bridegroom for this jewel He has presented to me on my marriage day. I thank Him that I am worthy to suffer for Him.” She was dragged off, with weeping Christians and weeping bridegroom left behind. They knew what happens to young Christian girls in the hands of Communist guards. Her bridegroom faithfully waited for her. After five years she was released – a destroyed, broken woman, looking thirty years older. She said it was the least she could do for her Christ.

Tortured for Christ, Richard Wurmbrand

Next Week's Reading & Location:

Week 48 - SHOFTIM (Judges) - Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9; Isaiah 51:12-52:12; Mark 14:53-64

“The King is in the Field”

Next Weekend will begin the new month of Elul

*These 40 days are a time of meeting with the King of Kings - a time to be happy. Which also corresponds to the prophesied Messianic Virgin Birth (Isaiah 7:14), **Jesus' Birth** (which this year would have fallen on **September 7, 2019**), and the prophesied Messianic Return (Zechariah 14:1-4, 9), **Jesus' Return** (which this year would have fallen on **September 29th through October 1st, 2019**).*