

PARASHAT EIKEV

(BECAUSE)

DEUTERONOMY 7:12-11:25

ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

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

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

Haftorah Reading

Isaiah 49:14-51:3

B'rit Chadashah

On being blessed because of righteousness obedience: **Matthew 6:33; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2**

YHVH chastens whom he loves: **Hebrews 12:5-11; Revelation 3:14-22**

YHVH is a consuming fire: **Hebrews 12:29**

On preparing to enter into the spiritual Promised Land: **Hebrews 4:1-7**

On circumcision of the heart: **Romans 2:28-29**

On being fair and impartial: **Colossians 3:25; 1 Peter 1:17**

On caring for orphans and widows: **James 1:27**

On loving YHVH by keeping his commandments: **John 14:15; 1 John 2:3-5; 1 John 5:3**

On raising our children properly: **Ephesians 6:1-4**

On being victorious over this world: **Luke 9:1; 10:19; Romans 8:31-39; 1 John 4:4**

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

- **7:12** The Reward for Torah Obedience
- **7:18** The Assurance of YHVH's Protection Against Our Enemies
- **8:1** Trusting YHVH for Food
- **8:11** A Warning About Forgetting to Obey YHVH in Times of Prosperity
- **9:1** Do Not Become Arrogant or Self-Sufficient; In Spite of Your Stiffneckedness, YHVH Delivered You out of Egypt and Brought You Through the Wilderness
- **10:1** The Second Stone Tablets and the Ark of the Covenant
- **10:6** The Death of Aaron
- **10:8** The Tribe of Levi Is Set Apart
- **10:12** What Does YHVH Require of You?
- **11:1** Stay Loyal to YHVH Because You Experienced His Greatness and Mercy Firsthand

— 11:8 The Great Virtues of the Promised Land

— 11:13 The Second Passage of the Shema: Obey YHVH and Be Blessed, Disobey and Be Cursed; Remember to Obey YHVH

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

1 7:17–18, Do we walk by faith or by sight (i.e., relying strictly on human logic or intellect)? Was it logical to think that Israel could dispossess a fortified land full of people mightier and greater in number than themselves? Fear and logic are often the enemies of faith in YHVH's Word and promises. Without faith it is impossible to please YHVH (Heb 11:6), and the just shall walk by faith (Heb 10:38). What is faith? (See Heb 11:1.) By faith the physical creation came into existence (Heb 11:3), therefore, faith preceded the physical creation and is the "mother" of it. From the "womb" of faith, if you will, came forth all that we see and know. That "womb" is the very heart, character and mind of YHVH Elohim. It is spiritual. We live in a physical dimension. The new heaven, new earth, and the Jerusalem from above, for which we look, will be of a spiritual dimension. Those who plan on being there must learn to walk in that dimension here and now by trusting in the Word and promises of YHVH for all of their needs. What lessons can we learn from the Israelites in this regard?

2 7:18; 8:2, 11, *Remember... forget not.* An essential element of a strong faith in the promises of YHVH (e.g. prosperity, verse 13; fruitfulness of the womb, verse 14; healing, verse 15; victory over enemies, verse 16; etc.) is to *remember* YHVH's past accomplishments in your life: how he has healed you, prospered you, answered your prayers, transformed your life, delivered you from enemies and troubles, given meaning, hope and purpose to your life. In the last days, many are turning away from Yeshua the Messiah (YHVH of the Hebrew Scriptures, see Acts 7:36–38; 1 Cor 10:4,9; and compare John 14:15 with Deut 11:1 and Exod 20:6) and turning to idolatry, doubt and unbelief, secularism, materialism, hedonism, rabbinic Judaism and false religions because they have forgotten what YHVH-Yeshua did for them. Have you forgotten? To forget is a slippery slope that can lead to spiritual oblivion. Take a moment to recall the wonderful things he has done for you. Write them down. Remember them. Thank and praise him for them.

3 7:20–24, Do you really believe that YHVH is leading you into your spiritual Promised Land? What is your mission, calling, destiny and purpose in life vis-à-vis helping to advance the kingdom of Elohim? As he promised to be with the Israelites and to go before them (7:20–24), so his promises, commandments and faithfulness are for a thousand generations (7:9), which means they are for you! If you do not have a mission, goal or purpose (the Israelites' goal and mission was to enter and to possess the Promised Land) then you will wander aimlessly in the wilderness indefinitely.

4 8:2–3, 6ff, *YHVH afflicted/humbled you.* Does the concept of YHVH doing this to his people bother you? Perhaps he will do this to us if and when we need it. The word *afflict/anah* (*Strong's* H6031) literally means "to become low, depressed, put down or stoop." (Note some other places where *anah* is used: Pss 55:19; 88:7; 90:15; 119:71,75.) Scripture says that Israel exited Egypt with "a high hand/upraised arm" (Exod 14:8 and Num 33:3). The word *high/upraised* can connote haughtiness or arrogance, or it can mean that the children left Egypt triumphantly and in jubilation waving banners (*ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*, p. 369). What do you think? Did they leave Egypt in a spirit of contrition or arrogance? If the former, then why would they need humbling?

Are we any different? Do we need to be humbled? Down through the ages, YHVH has allowed his servants to suffer, but it was for their spiritual growth and benefit. What did Paul say about his thorn in the flesh? (See 2 Cor 12:7.) Why did Job experience what he did? (Read Job 42.) The process of humbling us so that we might have a higher view of YHVH results in greater contrition on the part of humans. When this happens, the blessings, power, anointing and provision of YHVH are able to flow into our lives more readily.

How has YHVH been trying to humble your flesh that he might bring you to a deeper level spiritually? The *ArtScroll Chumash* comments, "It is true that Elohim subjected the people to some hardships in the wilderness, but even that was for their good; just as a father may chastise his child to prepare him for the future" (p. 983). Discuss this issue in light of the sufferings of YHVH's servants while they were faithfully awaiting their spiritual inheritance as recorded in Hebrews 11. (Compare this with Jas 1:12–17 and

1 Cor 3:13.) Discuss the two types of judgments of YHVH as recorded in Scripture: his judgments unto repentance and his judgments unto death. What are some examples of each? Do YHVH's saints have to go through the latter type of judgment? (Examples: Noah and the flood; Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah; the Israelites and the plagues on Egypt; the saints and the tribulation, the great tribulation versus the wrath of Elohim periods at the end of the age [these are three separate periods/events]). (See the discussion below on: *Does Elohim Create Evil?*)

5 Here are a couple of thoughts regarding the dangers of pride:

The people of Israel are compared to a vine to teach us that just as a vine has large and small clusters of grapes, the larger ones hanging lower than the smaller ones, the greater a person is (the heavier his wisdom), the profounder his humility (*A Torah Commentary For Our Times*, p. 120–121, UHAC Press).

King Solomon teaches that pride causes a person to speak dishonestly. It forces a person to deviate from the truth and to make accusations that are unfounded. Elohim weeps over those who are filled with pride. (Ibid. p. 121)

6 **8:7–9**, Do you really have the faith to go forward spiritually—to trust in YHVH's leading? Or are you content to stay in the comfort zones of your religious wilderness? Have you put limits or boundaries on YHVH as to where he can lead you and where you refuse to let him take you? Are there certain things in YHVH's Word that you refuse to believe applies to you, even though you have been presented with truth to the contrary? Have you dug in your heels, hardened your heart and stiffened your neck telling YHVH you refuse to go where he is leading? It is this attitude that kept the older generation of Israelites out of the Promised Land (Deut 9:6–7; Heb 4:1–7). Carefully examine your life in this regard and ask the Spirit of YHVH to enlighten your understanding.

7 **8:20**, *Obedient unto the voice of YHVH*. What does it mean to be obedient to the voice of YHVH? When this was written, people did not have Bibles. Nowadays most say that hearing the voice of YHVH refers strictly to reading and obeying YHVH's written Word. This is true in part. But until the invention of the printing press in the 15th century, few people had the Word in written form. So hearing YHVH must, logically, have a broader meaning. Do you hear his voice? How does he speak other than by his written Word?

8 **10:12**, *Fear YHVH your Elohim*. There are two levels of fearing Elohim. The higher of the two is the sense of awe and reverence we should have for him, and that is what Moses calls for here. Such fear is easy to imagine, hard to walk out. The second fear, and the lesser of the two, is the fear of physical punishment because of disobedience to YHVH (*ArtScroll Kestenbaum Edition Tikkun*, p. 433). How can we achieve the greater level of fear and maintain it as a constant force operating in our lives to help keep us on the straight and narrow path of righteousness while at the same time walking in intimacy with the Father?

9 **10:16**, *Circumcise ... the ... heart*. Are you shocked to find that Paul did not originate the concept of heart circumcision? What does it mean to have a circumcised heart? What other concepts that you've heard taught were innovations of Paul actually originated in the Torah? How about salvation by grace and the concept of a loving, merciful and gracious Elohim?

10 **10:17**, *Elohim*. The name *Elohim*/אלהים connotes YHVH's omnipotence (all powerfulness), and that he controls every power in the world. But as the *ArtScroll Tikkun* points out, in this Scripture the word is used with reference to anything or anyone imbued with power—real or imagined—over others. Thus *elohim* can refer to judges (Exod 21:6), to a master (Exod 7:1) or even to idols (Deut 5:7) (p. 433). Note that in Deuteronomy YHVH himself uses the “sacred name” *elohim* to refer to idols. What does this teach us about the use of “sacred names”? Because the pagans have appropriated one of the names or titles of YHVH for idolatrous practices does this mean that his people cannot continue to use it in worshipping him?

11 **11:1**, *Love YHVH ... and keep ... his commandments*. Compare this verse with what Yeshua said in John 14:15. When we understand that Yeshua is “YHVH your Elohim” does that not give us a new perspective about not only who Yeshua was/is, but his teachings in the Gospels? Does this shed new light on the issue when Paul said to “follow me as I follow the Messiah” (1 Cor 11:1)? What did Paul mean by this? Was Paul really pro-Torah?

12 11:13, *If you will hearken*. In the Hebrew, this phrase literally reads, “If hearken, you will hearken....” Rashi interprets the double usage of this verb to mean, “If [you] listen to the old, you will listen to the new” meaning that if one listens to what one has already learned by taking care to review and understand it, one will gain new insights or fresh insights into the Torah (*ArtScroll Sapirstein Edition Rashi—Devarim*, p. 110; *ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*, p. 995). What does this teach us about studying YHVH’s Word consistently and regularly? YHVH gave the Israelites fresh (not stale) manna every day and watered the land of Israel with the early and latter rains so that it would be fruitful without the need of man-made irrigation systems. Manna and rain both came from heaven and are used as figures of speech Hebraically to represent Torah-truth. Is your life being renewed regularly with fresh revelation and insights into the Word of YHVH, into his very heart and character? Does this not refresh, nourish and sustain the ground of your life so that it yields an abundant spiritual crop of joy, shalom, intimacy with the Father and anointing? Is your life a place of fresh manna and constant rain, or a place of stale bread and drought? If so, what changes do you need to make in your life to change this situation?

13 11:18–19, Read and meditate on this passage. Look at the phrases: *in your heart, in your soul, between your eyes, teach and speak*. How are you walking these commandments out in your life? Are you doing so with consistency, or only here and there?

Did Elohim Create Evil?

A Look at Deuteronomy 8:3

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In Isaiah 45:7 we read, “I [YHVH speaking] form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I, YHVH, do all these things.” Based on this verse, some readers may be led to believe that all the evil that occurs in the world is YHVH’s fault, therefore, as the creator of evil, how can he be good? Some have even refused to serve and obey YHVH and rejected the truth of Scripture on the basis of this logic. But what is the truth?

First, let us analyze the Hebrew word for *evil*: *ra/רָע* (spelled: *resh, aiyn*; *Strong’s H7451; TWOT 2191*). It is the generic Hebrew word meaning “evil” also meaning (quoted from Online Bible Deluxe Software Program):

- 1a) bad, disagreeable, malignant
- 1b) bad, unpleasant, evil (giving pain, unhappiness, misery)
- 1c) evil, displeasing
- 1d) bad (of its kind—land, water, etc)
- 1e) bad (of value)
- 1f) worse than, worst (comparison)
- 1g) sad, unhappy
- 1h) evil (hurtful)
- 1i) bad, unkind (vicious in disposition)
- 1j) bad, evil, wicked (ethically)
 - 1j1) in general, of persons, of thoughts
 - 1j2) deeds, actions
- 2) evil, distress, misery, injury, calamity
 - 2a) evil, distress, adversity
 - 2b) evil, injury, wrong
 - 2c) evil (ethical)
- 3) evil, misery, distress, injury
 - 3a) evil, misery, distress

3b) evil, injury, wrong

3c) evil (ethical)

As we can see, *evil* is only one of the many and varied definitions of the Hebrew word *ra*, which can also mean “distress, adversity, unhappiness, sadness” and so on. Can “bad” things happen to a person and end up being actually good for that person? Of course. Such has happened to all of us many times in our lives. Keep this point in mind as we study this subject.

According to *The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, the word *ra* has as its primary definition “the lack of quality or inferior quality of something or someone and is thus unable to meet standards of value or function beneficially.” The word can also connote “moral deficiencies” and is contrasted to the Hebrew word *tov*, which is the generic word meaning “good.” The *TWOT* notes that Elohim (as the Just Judge of the universe) acts with painful punishment against evil (*ra*) people who refuse to repent of their wicked or evil actions. If he failed to do this, then the forces of evil would take over the earth and universe.

But is YHVH the creator of evil in a direct sense, or is he the creator of the laws of cause-and-effect that go into effect automatically when evil people break them? Can evil (in the sense of punishment) that befalls a person be the result of their actions even as those who follow his laws reap blessings and goodness?

Moses Maimon known as Maimonides or the Rambam, a medieval Jewish Bible scholar and sage, discusses this issue in his classic book, *The Guide to the Perplexed*. He starts from the premise that all that YHVH created was good or *tov* as is stated several times in the creation account of Genesis one. If Scripture is true and cannot be broken, then Elohim is not the creator of evil or wickedness in that sense of the meaning of the Hebrew word *ra*. But as we have seen, this is not the only definition of the word *ra*.

To the western mindset, Rambam points out, darkness and evil are negative existence, but existence nonetheless, like two sides of the same coin. To the Hebrew mind, evil is not even a part of the coin. Since YHVH cannot create evil, for all that he created was good, then the “evil” he created had to be good and all other evil exists outside of his creation. In other words, there are two kinds of evil: ultimate evil that is the total negation of all good, light and truth, and evil that is good in that it produces good results in the lives of people. To the Hebrew way of thinking (and that was the mindset of the authors of Scripture), all that YHVH created is existence and all else is nonexistence. Therefore, that which is non-positive is nonexistence and not a part of his creation, or is outside of his creation. In Genesis one, Elohim created existence, or that which is good, by creating good and light (existence) as a bubble in the midst of darkness and nonexistence. Humans as part of the physical creation live in that created “bubble” that Scripture calls *good*. Everything outside is *evil*. So, reasons Rambam, all evil is the absence of good; that is, all that is evil is the negation of good. For example, death is evil since it is the negation of life (which is good). It is therefore non-existence. The same could be said of ignorance, which is the negation of knowledge.

So when we read that YHVH “created evil” or “afflicted” his people (Deut 8:3), or brought calamity upon his people in one fashion or another (Pss 55:19; 88:7; 90:15; 119:71,75), to the Hebrew way of thinking it cannot be considered evil for the purpose of it was to refine the people of YHVH, to bring them to the higher level spiritually, to bring them (or reconcile them) to their loving Father in heaven. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that as a father YHVH chastens his children whom he loves (Heb 12:5ff), for the purpose of bringing forth the good fruits of holiness and righteousness (verses 10–11).

On the other hand, as noted earlier, those who despise the chastening of their Heavenly Father (Heb 12:5) end up separating themselves from him, and separation from him leads to eternal death, darkness and nothingness, which is ultimate evil and non-existence. Is it YHVH’s fault people choose this path? Is it his fault they removed themselves by their sinful actions from his creation, which was good, and placed themselves outside of his creation, which is evil, so that they become personifications of evil? No. He is good and brings no evil upon people except to allow them to suffer the fruit of their own actions (Jas 1:13–15). YHVH hates wickedness and those who align themselves with evil as workers of iniquity (Ps 5:5). They are outside of his creation and outside of that which is good.

Now YHVH is gracious to both the just and to the unjust. He gives to both an earth to live on along with water, food, air, etc. If he should choose to withdraw his hand of mercy and grace from an evildoer so that they should suffer the consequences of their actions is he therefore the agent or cause of evil? Rambam reasons that YHVH cannot be the creator of evil. Elohim cannot be responsible for or connected to that which he did not

directly cause. The evil actions of the person brought about their judgment. Because Elohim temporarily stayed the judgment of the court against their evil actions does not make him the agent directly responsible for evil.

Now, the big question is this: was YHVH Elohim evil when he “smote” (which means “slay or slaughter”) and “bruised” his Son, Yeshua (Isa 53:4 and 10)? According to the Scriptural definition of evil, the results of Yeshua’s sacrifice at the cross resulted in the reconciliation of man to YHVH Elohim, which is *tov* in the ultimate sense and the opposite of all that is *ra!*

A Thought Provoking Story to Illustrate the Point

Did Elohim create everything that exists? Does evil exist? Did Elohim create evil? The University professor challenged his students with this question. “Did Elohim create everything that exists?”

A student bravely replied, “Yes he did!”

“Elohim created everything?” The professor asked.

“Yes sir,” the student replied.

The professor answered, “If Elohim created everything, then Elohim created evil, since evil exists, and according to the principle that our works define who we are, then Elohim is evil.”

The student became quiet before such an answer. The professor, quite pleased with himself, boasted to the students that he had proven once more that the Christian faith was a myth.

Another student raised his hand and said, “May I ask you a question, professor?”

“Of course,” replied the professor. The student stood up and asked, “Professor, does cold exist?”

“What kind of question is this? Of course it exists. Have you never been cold?” The students snickered at the young man’s question.

The young man replied, “In fact sir, cold does not exist. According to the laws of physics, what we consider cold is in reality the absence of heat. Every body or object is susceptible to study when it has or transmits energy, and heat is what makes a body or matter have or transmit energy. Absolute zero (-459° F) is the total absence of heat; all matter becomes inert and incapable of reaction at that temperature. Cold does not exist. We have created this word to describe how we feel if we have no heat.”

The student continued, “Professor, does darkness exist?” The professor responded, “Of course it does.” The student replied, “Once again you are wrong, sir, darkness does not exist either. Darkness is in reality the absence of light. Light we can study, but not darkness. In fact, we can use Newton’s prism to break white light into many colors and study the various wavelengths of each color. You cannot measure darkness. A simple ray of light can break into a world of darkness and illuminate it. How can you know how dark a certain space is? You measure the amount of light present. Isn’t this correct? Darkness is a term used by man to describe what happens when there is no light present.”

Finally the young man asked the professor, “Sir, does evil exist?”

Now uncertain, the professor responded, “Of course, as I have already said. We see it everyday. It is in the daily examples of man’s inhumanity to man. It is in the multitude of crime and violence everywhere in the world. These manifestations are nothing else but evil.”

To this the student replied, “Evil does not exist, sir, or at least it does not exist unto itself. Evil is simply the absence of Elohim. It is just like darkness and cold, a word that man has created to describe the absence of Elohim. Elohim did not create evil. Evil is the result of what happens when man does not have Elohim’s love present in his heart. It’s like the cold that comes when there is no heat, or the darkness that comes when there is no light.”

The professor sat down.

HAFTORAH READING—ISAIAH 49:14-51:3

Israel: Forsaken But Not Forgotten, To Be Redeemed

1 In this Haftorah portion, identify all the instances where YHVH’s grace and tender affection for his

people is exemplified.

- 2 Likewise, identify the places where YHVH speaks of redemption, including several prophecies that point specifically to Yeshua, the Messiah and Redeemer of Israel.
- 3 What typically has been man's response to YHVH's overtures of mercy and redemption to his people? What does Isaiah 50:4–10 prophesy would be man's response to Yeshua the Redeemer?
- 4 **50:1**, *Bill of ... divorcement*. See study below: *Did YHVH Divorce Both the House of Israel (Ephraim) and the House of Judah?*
- 5 **50:10**, *Trust in the name of YHVH*. What does it mean to trust in the name of YHVH (or *the LORD*, as many English Bibles render this phrase)? In modern Christian parlance, what does it mean to "trust in YHVH"? The word *trust* (Heb. *batach*; Strong's H982) means "to have confidence; to be bold, to be or make secure, to feel safe."
- 6 **50:10**, *Obey the voice of his servant*. Who was the servant of YHVH that came to redeem man? Elsewhere, Isaiah refers to him as the arm of YHVH (Isa 53:1). In other places in Isaiah, he is called the Branch (Isa 11:1), Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty El, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6).
- 7 **50:10–11**, *Light*. In Hebraic poetic thought, what does *light* symbolically represent? (Pss 43:3; 119:105; Prov 6:23). Who is the source of that light? Can man generate his own redemptive light? Can man earn his own merit, redeem himself by his own light he can create through human efforts? Who is the only source of redemption? What will be the fate of those who fail to recognize this fact of life? (Read the last sentence of verse 11.)

Did YHVH Divorce Both the House of Israel (Ephraim) & the House of Judah?

YHVH Divorced the House of Israel

"Thus says YHVH, 'Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement [in Hebrew, called a *get*], whom I have put away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have you sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.'" (Isa 50:1)

YHVH is not asking whether there is a *get* or not, but rather he is asking to be shown the *get* that he had previously written. How do we know this is the correct interpretation? If he had not put her away (divorced her) why would he have to make a renewed covenant (or renew his marriage vows) with her (Jer 31:31–33)?

"And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also." (Jer 3:8)

"Then said Elohim, 'Call his name Loammi: for you are not my people, and I will not be your Elohim.'" (Hos 1:9)

"Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband: let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts." (Hos 2:2)

Israel Marries Her Foreign Lovers

While there is no place in Scripture that specifically states that the House of Israel married any of her foreign lovers (the House of Judah, on the other hand, did marry "the daughter of a strange elohim/god," [Mal 2:11]), the Torah specifically states that when two unmarried people have consensual intimate relations they are considered married in YHVH's eyes, for the sex act consummates the marriage (Deut 22:28–29 and Exod 22:16). If, on the other hand, a married woman lays with a man, this is adultery and is punishable by death (Deut 22:22–24). As we have seen, YHVH gave the House of Israel a bill of divorce, freeing her to remarry.

Jewish Rabbinical authorities recognize this fact. Baal HaTurim, the notable medieval Jewish Torah commentator, states in his commentary on Exodus 19:4, "[A] woman may be acquired [as a wife] through any one of three ways (i) through money; (ii) through a legal document or (iii) through marital relations ..." (bracketed

phrases are in the original). He then goes on to show how YHVH acquired Israel through money (i.e., the spoils of Egypt and the sea; through a document (i.e., the Torah as a written marriage document or *ketubah*); and through marital relations (as it is stated, “I will spread my skirt or wings over you ... and I will enter a covenant with you [Ezek 16:8]) (*ArtScroll Baal HaTurim Chumash—Exodus*, p. 731). This is further proof that consensual sexual relations between a man and a woman not only consummate but also legally establish the marriage. The House of Ephraim/Israel and the House of Judah were therefore legally married to their foreign lovers.

The Divorced Wife Grieves For Her Divorced Husband

“And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now. For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.” (Hos 2:7–8)

A Marriage Agreement (Betrothal/*Erusin*) Is Anticipated

“And it shall be at that day,’ says YHVH, ‘that you shall call me Ishi; and shall call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name. And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth you unto me for ever; yes, **I will betroth you** unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.” (Hos 2:16–19, emphasis added)

“You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of YHVH, and a royal diadem in the hand of your Elohim. You shall no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall your land any more be termed Desolate: but you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah: for YHVH delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you: and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your Elohim rejoice over you.” (Isa 62:3–5)

“Behold, the days come,’ says YHVH, ‘that I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was an husband unto them, says YHVH: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel; After those days,’ says YHVH, ‘I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know YHVH: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says YHVH: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer 31:31–34)

Not only did YHVH divorce both the houses of Judah and Ephraim, but there are various prophetic passages in the Tanakh (OT) that anticipate YHVH’s making a new marriage covenant with both parties. Not only is this recorded in the Scripture passages we cite above, but the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews states the same thing:

“Behold, the days come,” says YHVH, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not,’ says YHVH. ‘For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ says YHVH, ‘I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them an Elohim, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, “Know YHVH,” for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.’ In that, he says, a new covenant, he has made the first old. Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away.” (Heb 8:8lp–13)

For YHVH to reattach himself through covenantal agreement to both houses of Israel (or the whole House of Israel) whom he had previously divorced would necessitate several things occurring. First, the Torah forbids that a

man remarry his divorced and remarried wife (Deut 24:4). YHVH divorced the House of Israel. Legally, YHVH cannot remarry her according to his own Torah. The solution: what if YHVH could “die”? Enter Messiah Yeshua, the Suffering Servant (Isa 52:13ff) who would die for his people and redeem them from captivity. Second, the two houses of Israel would need to be reunited, or else, YHVH-Yeshua in the end of days would be entering into a bigamous spiritual relationship with two brides; namely, the Jews who are descendants of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, see *ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*, p. 1106) and those Christians who are non-Jews, but who, according to the Apostle Paul, are born-again or are redeemed Israelites and are the seed or offspring of Abraham (Rom 4:16; 9:8 and 11; Gal. 3:7,9,14,28–29). Scripture calls this reunited Israel the “one new man” (Eph 2:15), and is throughout the pages of the Apostolic Scriptures (NT) referred to as the *ecclesia* (or called out ones) and the saints (the holy or set-apart ones) and are no longer two separate groups: Jews and Gentiles. Together, combined, or united these two people groups make up the bride of Yeshua.

