

Parashah 47

Re'eh

ראה

“See”

Deuteronomy 11:26 – 16:17

Torah Together



In this *Torah* portion, Moses continues to exhort the Israelites to love God and to be obedient to His commands. He then repeats God's commands concerning clean and unclean foods, tithes, and special times. He also makes very clear God's view on the worship of other gods.

1. Love and Obey YHWH - 11:26-32

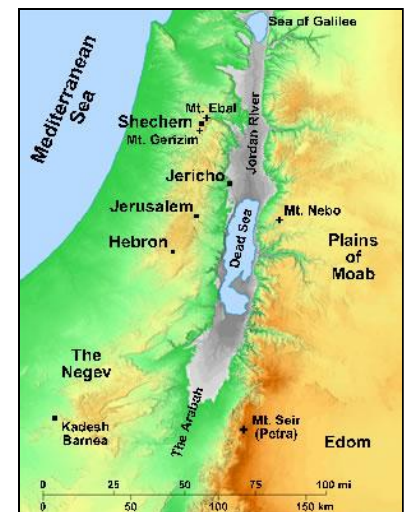
a) What is the effect of obedience or disobedience to God's *Torah*? Is obedience necessary to earn God's love? Does obedience guarantee salvation?

Notice that obedience or disobedience to the *Torah* is not about earning God's love or salvation. God already loves us (**John 3:16**), but by keeping the *Torah*, we can receive a blessing.

b) Where were the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience to be proclaimed? Can you locate these places on a map of *Israel*?

2. The One Place of Worship - 12:1-32

a) What was to be done with the Canaanite places of worship when the Israelites entered the land? What about idols, altars, and other items of worship? According to verse 4, could the Israelites adapt any of the Canaanite worship practices?



b) The Canaanites worshiped their gods in many locations (usually on high hills or under trees). How was the Israelites' worship of YHWH to be different?

Scripture Link:
Joshua 8:30-35
describes the fulfillment of this command when the Israelites entered the Promised Land.

The God of the Israelites was distinctly different than the gods of the Canaanites and those people who worship Him would do it in a distinctly different way.

c) After the Israelites occupied the land, where were they allowed to sacrifice animals for worship to YHWH? Where were they allowed to slaughter animals for food? What was to be done with the animal's blood in either case? What about other food?

3. Worshipping Other Gods - 13:1-18

a) What was to be done with a prophet who sought to lead the people to worship other gods? Why would God allow such a thing to happen? Do you think this is fair?

Based on the harsh punishments for enticing the Israelites to worship other gods, it seems clear that God takes an extremely negative view of this practice. Based on your understanding of the subsequent history of Israel, does this seem like an appropriate viewpoint for God?

b) What was to be done if a close relative tried to entice someone to worship other gods? Why do you think God commanded this punishment?

c) What was to be done when an entire town was found to be worshipping other gods? Why do you think God was so concerned with the worship of other gods?

Scripture Link:
God's rules for which animals were appropriate for food and which were not are found in **Leviticus 11**.

4. Clean and Unclean Food - 14:1-21

a) What do you think is behind God's command to not cut oneself or shave one's head for the dead (verse 1)? How might this tie in with the previous passage?

b) This is a review of the laws of *kashrut*, that is, which animals were acceptable as food. What was the general rule about large animals? Why weren't the camel or the pig acceptable?

c) What was the general rule about seafood? What do you think constituted a "clean bird" (verse 11)? Was an animal found dead acceptable as food? What do you think is meant by the command not to cook a kid in its mother's milk (verse 21)?

When God's rules for clean and unclean food were originally given, they were simply commands – you were blessed for keeping them and were cursed if you did not keep them. However, with today's understanding of health and hygiene, many of these rules seem to make very good sense to avoid some of the diseases that affected other groups throughout history.

5. Tithes - 14:22-29

a) What was to be done with a person's tithe? Where was this to be done? What was to be done if the person lived far away? Does this seem like a good way to celebrate God's blessings for the year?

b) What was to be done for the Levites who lived in cities and towns other than the one which YHWH chose for himself? Who else was to share in this?

Scripture Link:
Leviticus 27:30-32
addresses the tithe (10 percent) of a person's crops, animals or wages. In general, each year a person was to take his tithe to Jerusalem and present it before God as a sacrifice. This passage talks about the exceptions to that rule.

6. The Year for Canceling Debts - 15:1-11

a) What was to be done at the end of every seven years? Did this apply equally to Israelites and to non-Israelites?

God makes it clear that we have an obligation to the poor among us. Do you think His promise to “bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to” (verse 10) is still valid today?

b) In verse 4, Moses said that there should be no poor Israelites among them. What did the Israelites need to do to assure this? What was to be their status as a nation?

c) What did God command that the Israelites do with the poor and needy in the land? What benefit would a person receive for doing this? Do you think this applies to us?

Scripture Link:
Exodus 21 records God’s commands concerning the treatment of Hebrew slaves. Note that a servant who chose to remain with his master after six years of servitude was known as a “bondservant.” Believers in *Yeshua* are known as “bondservants of the Messiah.”

7. Freeing Servants - 15:12-18

a) What was to be done with Hebrew slaves after six years of servitude? When this was done, what was to be the attitude and actions of the slave owner?

b) What was done if a servant wanted to remain with his master? Why might a servant want to do this?

8. The Firstborn Animals - 15:19-23

What was to be done with the firstborn of a person’s livestock? When was a person not required to do this?

9. Passover, Feast of Weeks, and Feast of Tabernacles - 16:1-17

a) When and where was *Pesach* to be celebrated? What was the primary purpose of this celebration? What exactly was to be done? How long did this holiday last? Why was the unleavened bread called the “bread of affliction”?

b) When and where was *Shavuot* to be celebrated? What was the primary purpose of this celebration? What exactly was to be done? What was given to YHWH for this celebration?

c) Where was *Sukkot* to be celebrated? What was the primary purpose of this celebration? How long did this holiday last?

d) How many times during the year were the men of Israel to “appear before YHWH at the place He will choose”? What were they to bring?

Scripture Link:

God’s appointed times (holidays) are defined in **Leviticus 23** as well as other places in the *Torah*. These appointed times served both to help the Israelites remember past events in their lives as well as to rehearse for coming events in God’s plan for mankind.

“See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse”
Deuteronomy 11:26

Digging deeper

Scripture Link:

II Samuel 7 records the story of God's message to Nathan the prophet concerning the "place God would choose to put his Name."

1. Many times in this *parashah*, Moses refers to "the place YHWH will choose for Himself." What place is this? What reasons do you think God may have had for choosing a specific place "to put His Name there for his dwelling" (Deuteronomy 12:4)? What do you think about the fact that Moses' words were recorded 400 – 500 years before King David lived and that even today this city is of world importance?

2. Why do you think it was so important to God that the worship of other gods not be included with the Israelite worship of Him? Do you think this still applies to us today? In what ways does this occur today?

For further study, see

Haftarah : Isaiah 44:11 – 45:5

Brit Hadashah : I Corinthians 5:9-13; I John 4:1-6