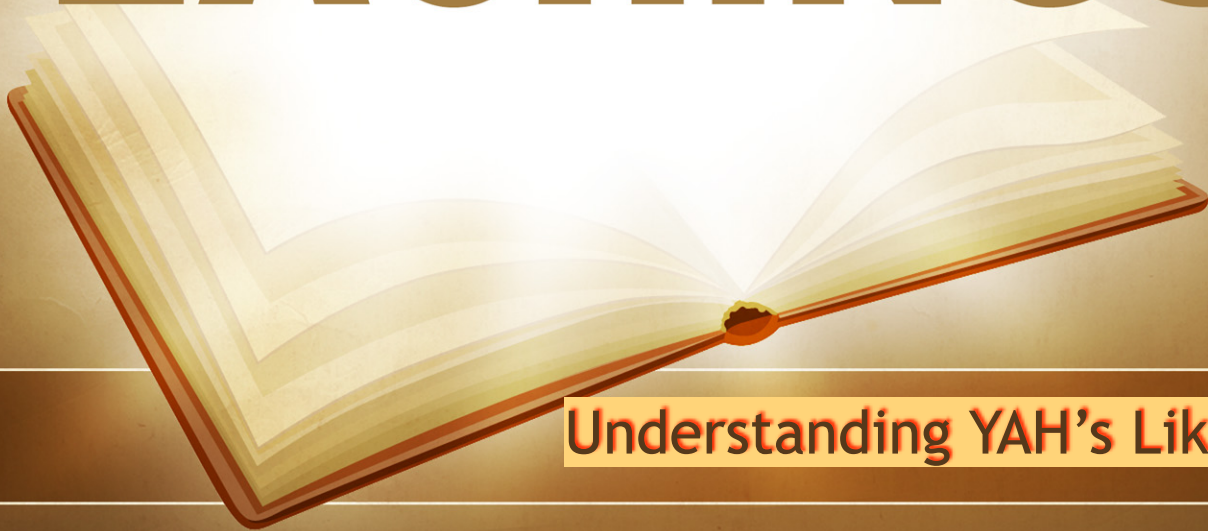


TORAH TEACHINGS



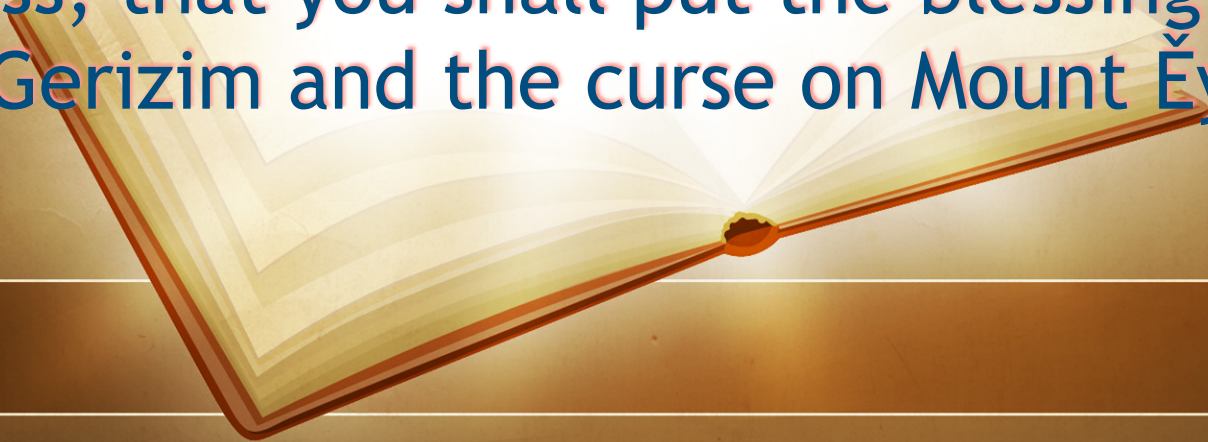
Understanding YAH's Likes and dislikes



#47 Re'eh (ראה)
– Hebrew for “see”

Torah: Deuteronomy 11:26 - 16:17
Haftarah: Isaiah 54:11 - 55:5

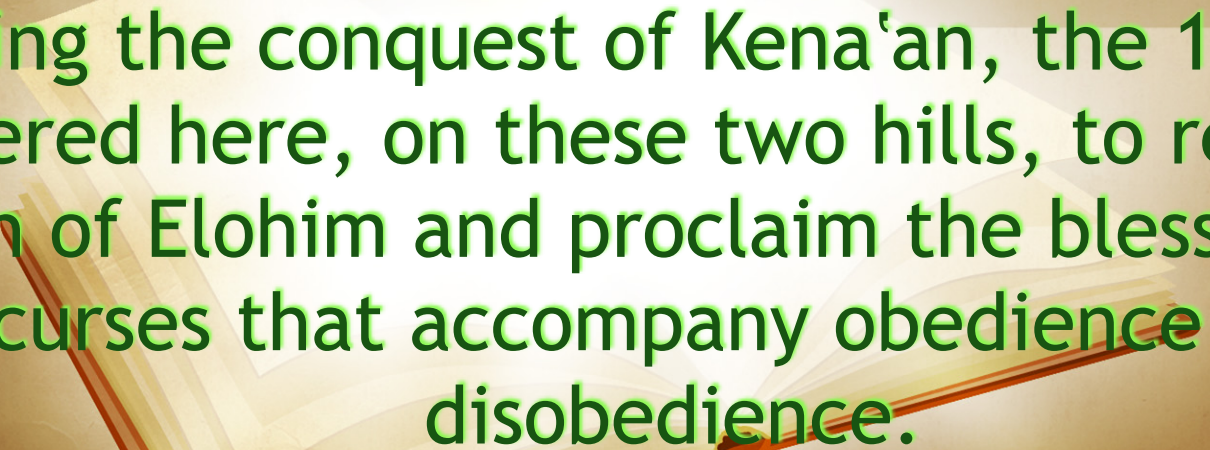
Deu 11:29 And it shall be, when יהוה your Elohim has brought you into the land which you go to possess, that you shall put the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ēybāl.



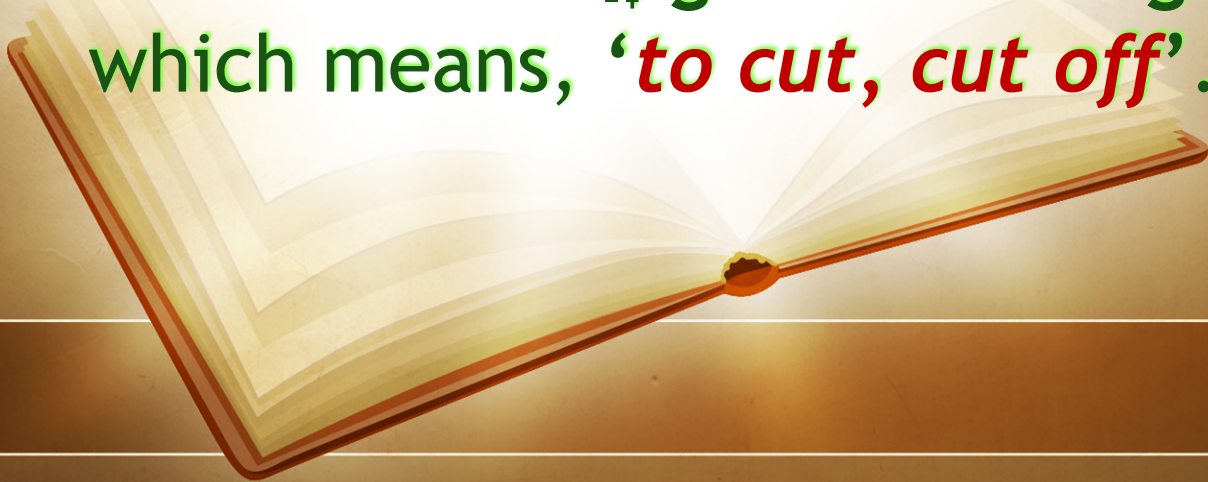


Later, Ya'aqob would return here and settle with his family for a short while.

During the conquest of Kena'an, the 12 tribes gathered here, on these two hills, to recite the Torah of Elohim and proclaim the blessings and curses that accompany obedience and disobedience.



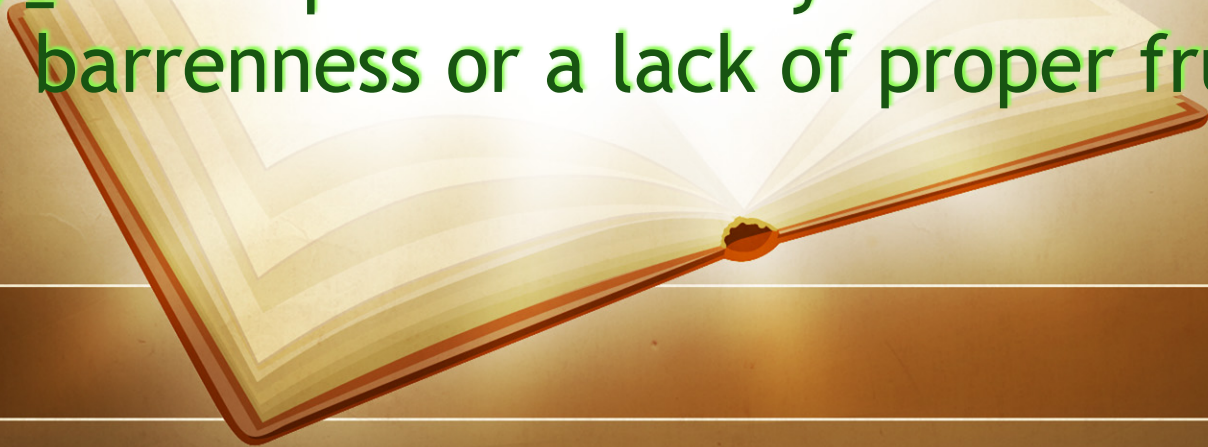
The Hebrew word גְּרִזִּים Gerizim - Strong's H1630 has the meaning, '*cuttings off*', which comes from the root word גָּרַז garaz - Strong's H1629 which means, '*to cut, cut off*'. \

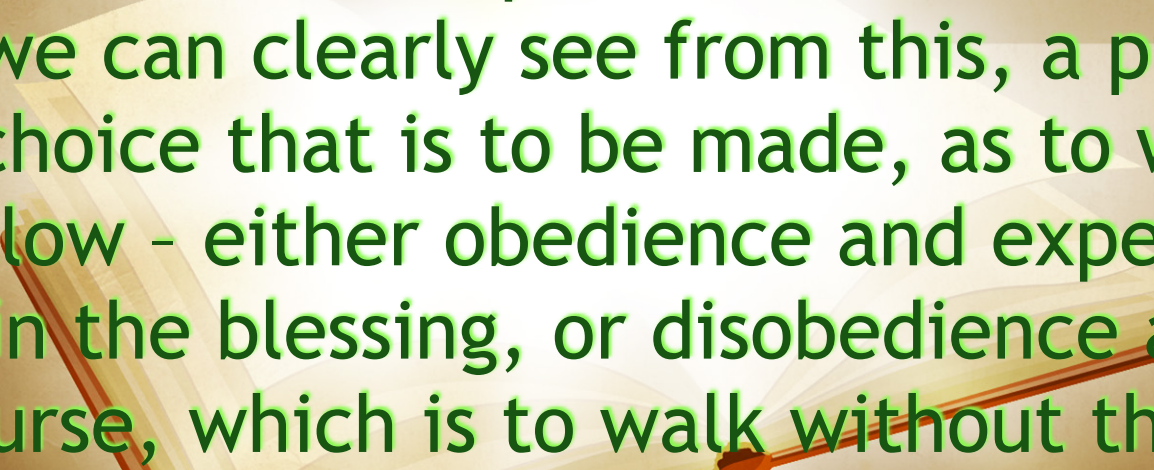




The Hebrew word עִיבָל **Ĕybal** - Strong's H5858
means, '**stone or bare mountain**'.

Gerizim represents for us a picture of fruitfulness
- as the ‘**cuttings off**’, picture the good fruit
which are cut from good and useful tress; whereas
Ĕybal is a picture that symbolises for us a
barrenness or a lack of proper fruit!





What we must notice here, is that the blessing and the curse was to be put on two different ‘mounts’ and we can clearly see from this, a picture of a clear choice that is to be made, as to what we are to follow - either obedience and experience and walk in the blessing, or disobedience and walk in the curse, which is to walk without the blessing!

What is being pictured here, in a sense, is that from a Scriptural point of view, there is no 'middle ground' - no valley to camp in and hide in so to speak!

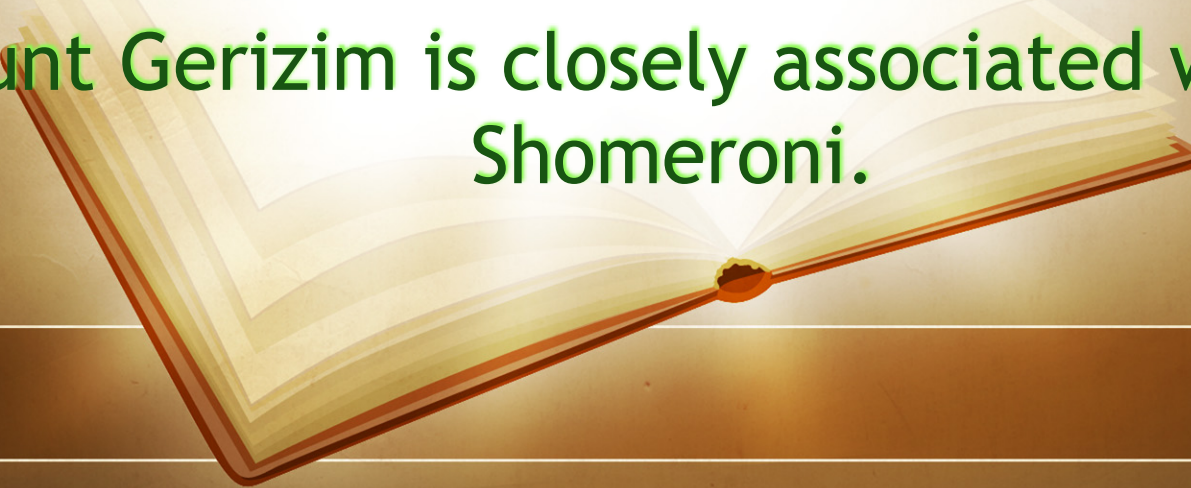
You either obey or not, and to waver between two or more opinions is the sign of instability.

We are called daily to choose who or what we follow, and it has been made very clear what the blessing is for guarding and walking in the Torah and what the curse is for not.




There is a lot of history regarding this valley between these two mounts, as the city of Shekem is located here.

Mount Gerizim is closely associated with the Shomeroni.



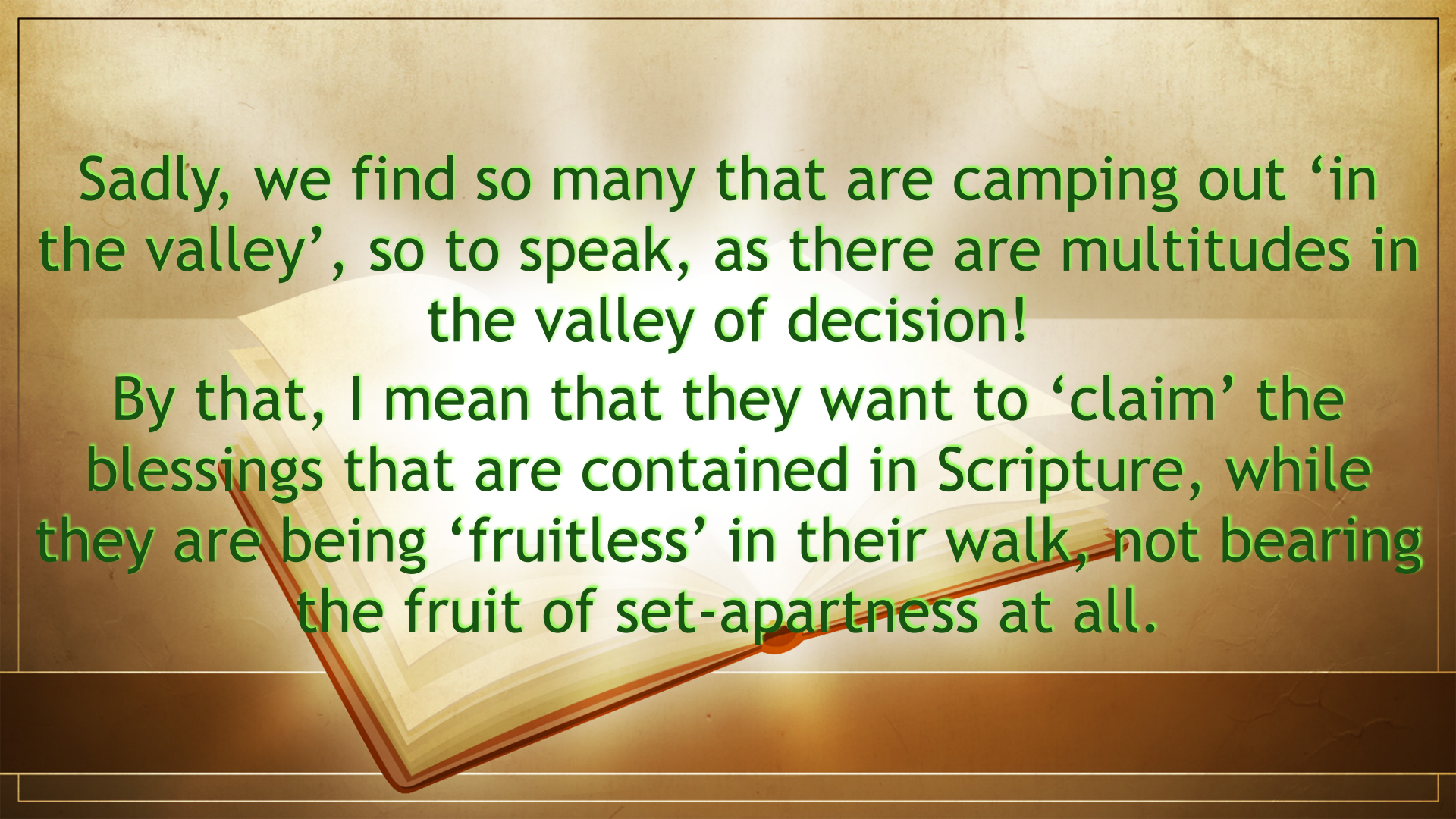
When the Northern tribes/ House of Yisra'el was taken into captivity by Ashshur, the Ashshurians repopulated this region, with people who did not know the Elohim of Abraham, and these 'mixed' people became known as Shomeroni (Samaritans), from the town's name Shomeron (Samaria) which was so named by the wicked king Omri, father of Ahab.



Over time, the Shomeroni built their worship site on this hill, and it was at Shomeron that Messiah met with the woman at the well and offered her the Living water!

The Shomeroni believed that this was the place where they were to worship the Elohim of Abraham, and this is what we see in:

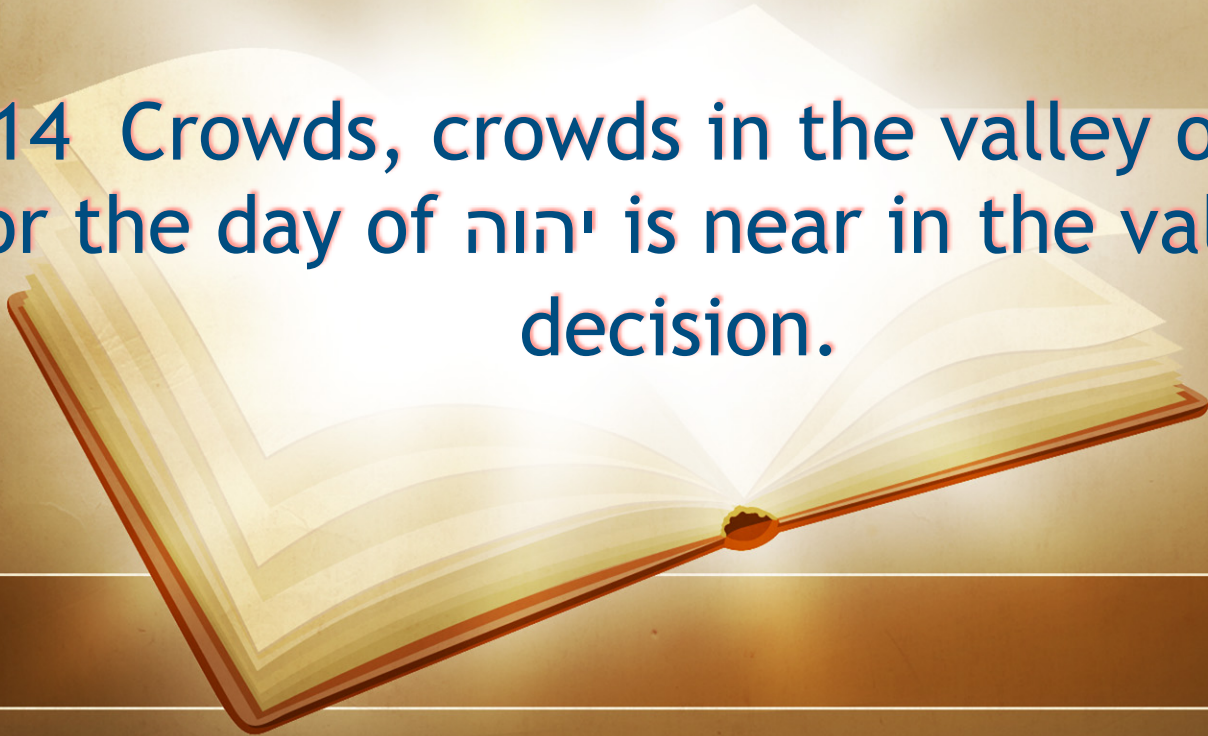
Yohanan/John 4:20-24 “Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you people say that in Yerushalayim is the place where one needs to worship.” 21 יהושע said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Yerushalayim, worship the Father. 22 “You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, because the deliverance is of the Yehudim. 23 “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father also does seek such to worship Him. 24 “Elohim is Spirit, and those who worship Him need to worship in spirit and truth.”

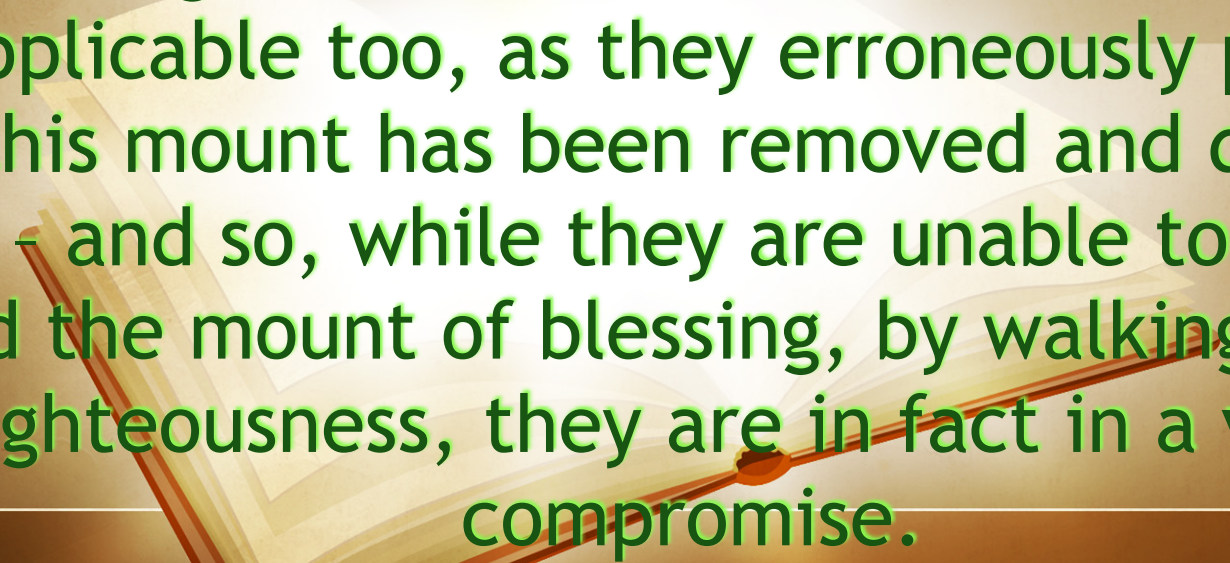


Sadly, we find so many that are camping out ‘in the valley’, so to speak, as there are multitudes in the valley of decision!

By that, I mean that they want to ‘claim’ the blessings that are contained in Scripture, while they are being ‘fruitless’ in their walk, not bearing the fruit of set-apartness at all.

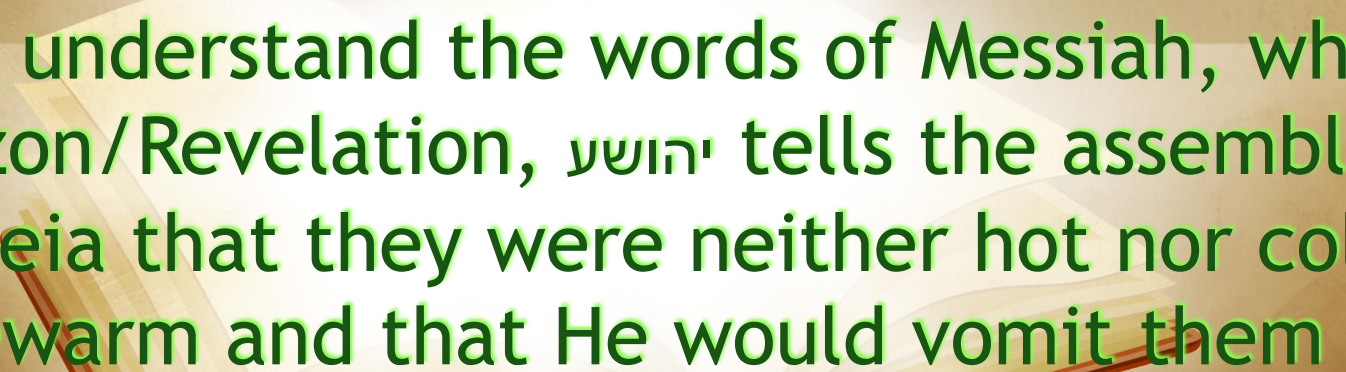
Joe 3:14 Crowds, crowds in the valley of decision!
For the day of יהוה is near in the valley of
decision.

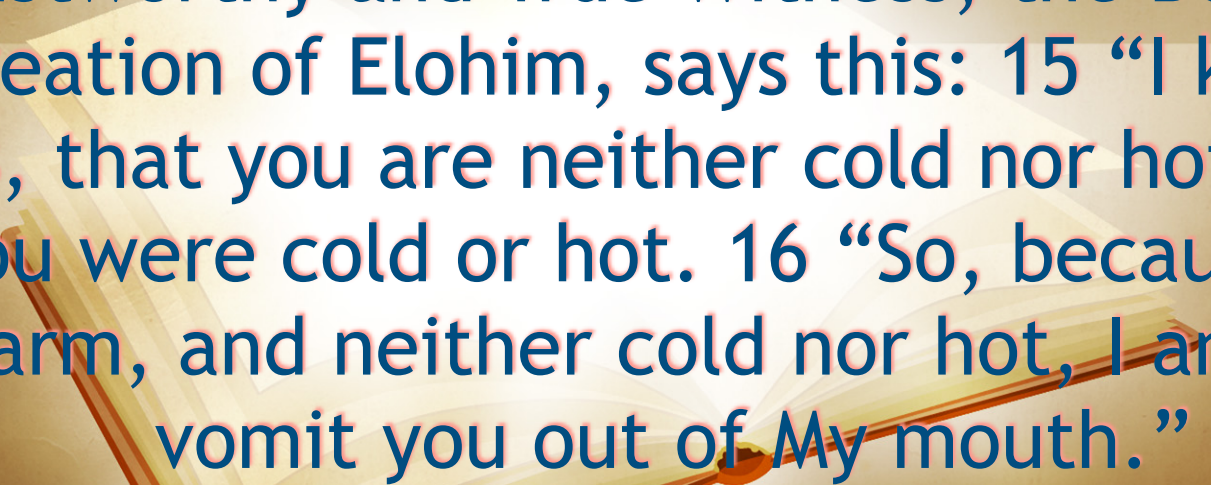




They assume to appropriate the blessings for themselves, through belief alone, and refuse to acknowledge that there is a mount of curses, that is applicable too, as they erroneously proclaim that this mount has been removed and done away with – and so, while they are unable to properly ascend the mount of blessing, by walking faithfully in righteousness, they are in fact in a valley of compromise.

This place, between Gerizim and Shek_{em}, helps us to also understand the words of Messiah, where, in Ḥazon/Revelation, יהושע tells the assembly in Laodikeia that they were neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm and that He would vomit them out:





Hazon/Revelation 3:14-16 “And to the messenger of the assembly in Laodikeia write, ‘The Amēn, the Trustworthy and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of Elohim, says this: 15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would that you were cold or hot. 16 “So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth.”

He goes on to say that they think that they are rich, yet that they are 'poor, blind and naked' - a picture of barrenness and lack, being exposed for what they really are!

Here is some interesting information on the ancient cities of Laodikeia, Hierapolis and Colossae:

LAODIKEIA

History

The leading city in the valley during the first century, Laodikeia, was destroyed by an earthquake in C.E. 60.

According to Roman writer Tacitus, Rome offered to pay for the city to be rebuilt, but the people declined, saying that they were wealthy enough to restore their own city.

Industry

The city was renowned for three main industries:

It was a banking centre for the province of Asia Minor, including a gold exchange;

It was the textile centre, where glossy, black wool was woven into garments called trimata, which was prized in the Roman world.

It was the location of a major medical school known worldwide and where an eye salve, called Phyrigian powder, was made from a local stone.

Geography

It was located in the fertile Lycus River Valley, and the city had no nearby water source, so tepid, mineral-filled, and nauseating water, was piped in from six miles away.

What Happened to the Assembly in Laodikeia?

History records that the assembly in Laodikeia remained dynamic, after most assemblies in Asia disappeared.

One of its 'bishops' was martyred for his faith in C.E. 161, about seventy years after Yoḥanan wrote his warning to the city in Ḥazon/Revelation.

In C.E. 363, Laodikeia was the location chosen for a significant assembly council.


So, it appears that the assembly in Laodikeia learned its lesson and Elohim continued to bless the believing community there for some time.



Yoḥanan's Warning

Laodikeia is a beautiful location in Asia Minor.

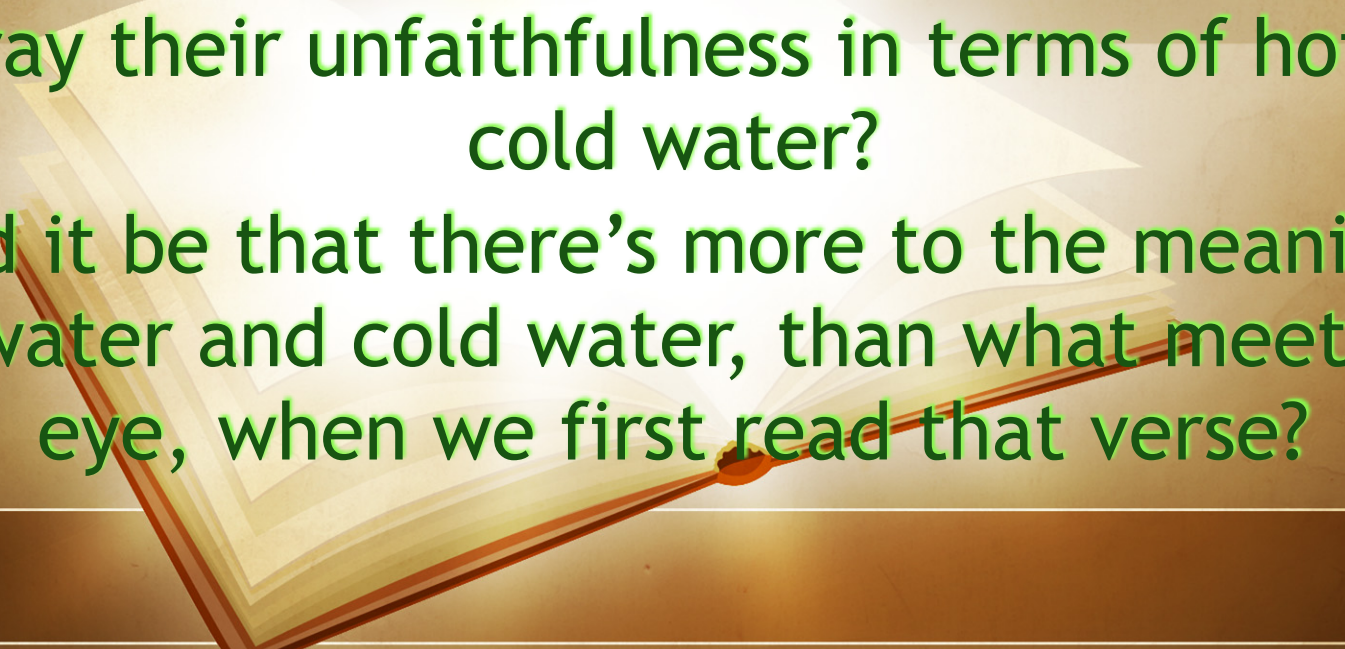
Nearby, are the great ruins of the cities of Colossae and Hierapolis, known for their springs - hot springs at Hierapolis and cold cold at Colossae. To the assembly at Laodikeia, in between the two, Yoḥanan wrote these words of Messiah as a clear warning:



(Hazon/Revelation 3:15-16).

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm - neither hot nor cold - I am about to spit you out of my mouth”

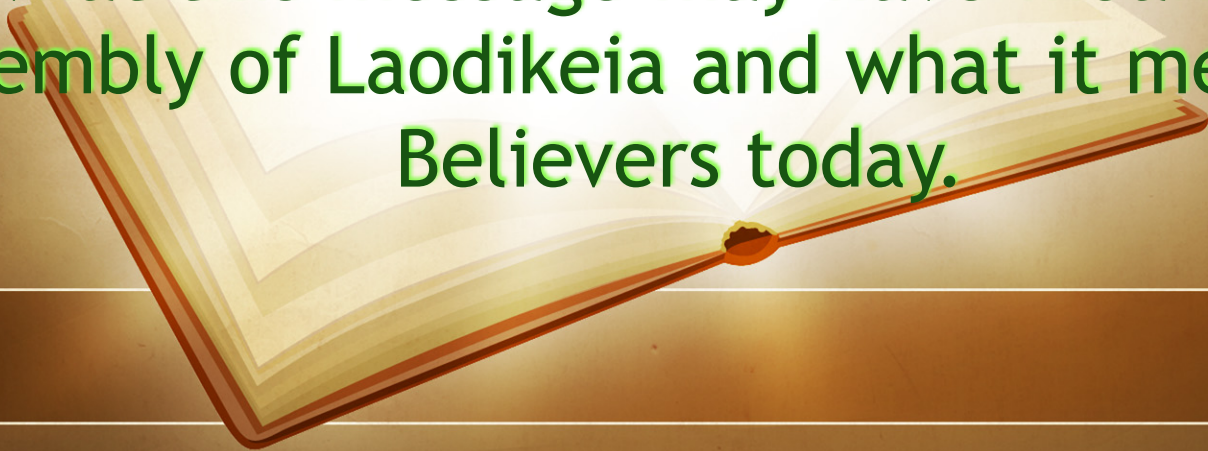




What was it about the believers in Laodikeia that led Yoḥanan to address them with those words - to portray their unfaithfulness in terms of hot and cold water?


Could it be that there's more to the meaning of hot water and cold water, than what meets the eye, when we first read that verse?

An understanding of the geography, and particularly the water sources, of these neighbouring cities gives us a new understanding, of what this message may have meant to the assembly of Laodikeia and what it means for Believers today.



During the first century, the city of Laodikeia was the richest and most powerful of the three cities.

Located in the Lycus River Valley, on the main trade route between the Mediterranean region and Persia, Laodikeia was known for its soft black wool that was appreciated throughout the Roman world; its healing eye salve; and its banking, as already mentioned.



In fact, an ancient writer recorded that the city, of approximately 120,000 people, refused an emperor's offer to rebuild, following an earthquake.

The Laodikeans apparently told the emperor that they were rich and didn't need his money.

Despite its prosperity, however, Laodikeia had a serious problem.

Its water, unlike the healing hot springs of Hierapolis or the fresh, cold mountain water of Colossae, was lukewarm and full of minerals. It tasted so bad that it made people sick.

Changing the World by Being Hot *and* Cold

In light of the water, for which the cities of Hierapolis, Colossae and Laodikeia were known, the apostle Yohanan might have been expressing the following thought:

“If you were hot, like the springs of Hierapolis, you’d bring healing, restoration, and comfort to people who suffer. If you were cold, like the water in Colossae, you’d refresh and encourage people who are hurting. Instead, you are lukewarm. You don’t do anyone any good and you make me sick - just like your own water.”

So, he therefore challenges Believers as well today, to be hot and cold in our daily lives - to bring people the healing, caring and encouraging touch of יהושע.

We must also be aware of how Elohim prepares people to receive His message and to make the most of the opportunities He has provided.

He uses as His example, two earthquakes, one in C.E. 17 and one in C.E. 60, that destroyed Laodikeia before the Besorah/Good News arrived.

Because of these disasters, the people's faith in their pagan mighty ones wavered.

Zeus, Apollo, Domitian, and Demeter didn't save us, they thought, so who will?

They were searching for someone who could fill the gap. So, the message of יהושע the Messiah, took root in fertile ground.

And it appears the believers of Laodikeia took Yohanan's warning to heart: the assembly of Laodikeia remained a dynamic community, after most of the assemblies in Asia Minor had disappeared.

HIERAPOLIS


The Domitian Gate:

The city of Hierapolis, known for its healing hot springs, was about six miles from Laodikeia.

What is left of the entrance to the city, is a gate complex of two gigantic towers and three arches that opened onto a paved street about a mile and a half long - which stands as a testimony to the city's former majesty.

What is most important is not the gate's size or architecture, however, but what it represented.

Like most city gates of the ancient world, the gates of Hierapolis expressed the people's devotion to their deities or rulers. For Hierapolis, that deity was the Roman emperor Domitian - one of the first emperors to declare himself to be divine.



Thus, anyone who entered the Domitian Gate was, in a sense, acknowledging that Domitian was elohim - their provider and protector whom they would honour and obey above all others.

Obviously, the early believers who lived in the Hierapolis had to choose to serve and worship Caesar (in this case, Domitian) or to serve and worship the Elohim of Yisra'ěl.

According to ancient tradition, an early missionary named Philip, who most likely was Philip the disciple of Messiah, refused to recognize the authority of Domitian.

Philip and his children stood fast in their declaration that יהושע alone is Master of Masters and King of Kings, and they paid the ultimate price.

High on a hill overlooking Hierapolis, are the remains of a small building, known as the Martyrium of Philip.

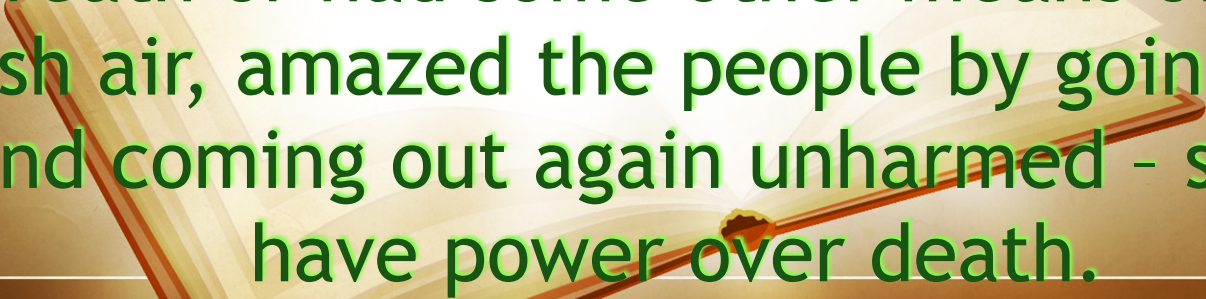
The Apollo Temple and Plutonium:

Hierapolis was also the site of the Apollo Temple and Plutonium, where the pagan deity of music, prophecy, and light was worshiped. Inside the temple, a grand fountain called 'Nymphia' was a constant reminder to the people that Apollo was supposed to be their source of life.

Next to the temple was a mysterious hole in the ground, known as the Plutonium, the Devil's Hole, or the Gates of Hades.

It was believed to be an entrance to the underworld, where Pluto (Latin) or Hades (Greek) lived. Poisonous gases emanated from the hole and instantly killed any animals that wandered in.

But, the priests of Apollo, who apparently held their breath or had some other means of breathing in fresh air, amazed the people by going into the hole and coming out again unharmed - seeming to have power over death.



The Theatre:

Another prominent feature of Hierapolis was its theatre, which communicated through its architecture, as well as its activities, the people's devotion to their 'gods' and 'goddesses'.

One can still see the images of 'gods' and 'goddesses' being depicted today, in the ornately carved stones.

The Baths:

By far, the most impressive feature of Hierapolis was its hot springs.

The baths of the Hierapolis were among the largest in all of Asia Minor, allowing hundreds of people to bathe at the same time.

People from distant regions came to soak in warm baths and seek healing for arthritis, skin diseases, and even abdominal problems.

Street and Byzantine Gate



Hierapolis, the “Sacred City,” is located at present-day Pamukkale, in south central Turkey. In the first century, it was part of the tri-city area of Laodikeia, Colossae, and Hierapolis.

This connection between the cities lies behind Sha’ul’s reference to Hierapolis and Laodikeia in his letter to the Colossians (Col 4:13).

Before 70 C.E. Phillip (either the apostle or the evangelist) moved to Hierapolis, where he was believed to have been martyred.

The Apollo Temple



In the foreground of this picture, are the remains
of the Apollo Temple.

Its foundations date to the Hellenistic period, but
the structure itself was built in the 3rd century
A.D.

Apollo was thought to be the city's divine
founder.

The temple was built beside the plutonium, an
underground cavern from which poisonous gases
emerged.

The city's theatre stands in the background.

The Theatre



After an earthquake, in 60 C.E., a theatre was built against a hillside.

This theatre contains one of the best examples of original Roman theatre decoration.

The stage was ornate, decorated with various reliefs.

A seat for distinguished spectators was located in the centre of the seating area (cavea).

Approximately thirty rows of seats are preserved

The Necropolis



Another prominent archaeological aspect of Hierapolis, is the necropolis, located just outside the northern city walls.

Here lies one of the largest and best-preserved cemeteries in all of Turkey.

It contains sarcophagi, many different types of tombs, and funeral monuments, dating from the Hellenistic until the early Believer times.

There are also numerous inscriptions here, more than 300 of which have been translated and published

COLOSSAE

In contrast to the Hierapolis, the ancient city of Colossae was known for its cold water.

Located about eleven miles from Laodikeia, Colossae was built at the foot of Mt. Cadmus, which towered more than nine thousand feet high.

Colossae was known for a purple dye, called colissinus and for its many, ice-cold snow-and-rain-fed streams, that rushed down from the snow-covered peak of Mt. Cadmus.

People in the fertile Lycus River Valley commonly talked about this wonderful, invigorating water.

Founded several hundreds of years before the Hierapolis, Colossae's inhabitants worshiped many false mighty ones, including Artemis, Athena, and Demeter.

The city was in serious decline, by the time of Sha'ul and Yoḥanan, because of the growth of Laodikeia and Hierapolis. It is known by Believers today, because Sha'ul wrote a letter to the Colossians, which was the home of his friend Pileymon/Philemon, and his slave Onesimus.

The Tell



Colossae was located 120 miles east of Ephesus in the Lycus River Valley in ancient Phrygia, part of the Roman territory of Asia Minor.

It was one of a triad of cities in the area (the other two being Laodikeia and Hierapolis), resting at the foot of Mount Cadmus.

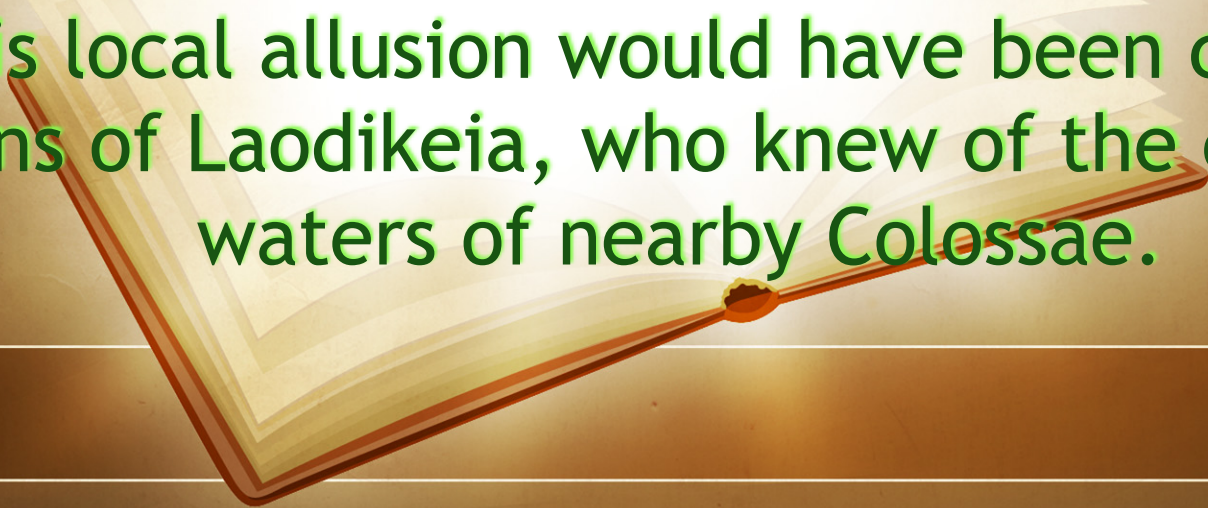
Its Scriptural significance lies in the fact that the book of Colossians was addressed to the assembly here (Col 1:2) and that Philemon lived in this city.

Streams of Cold Water



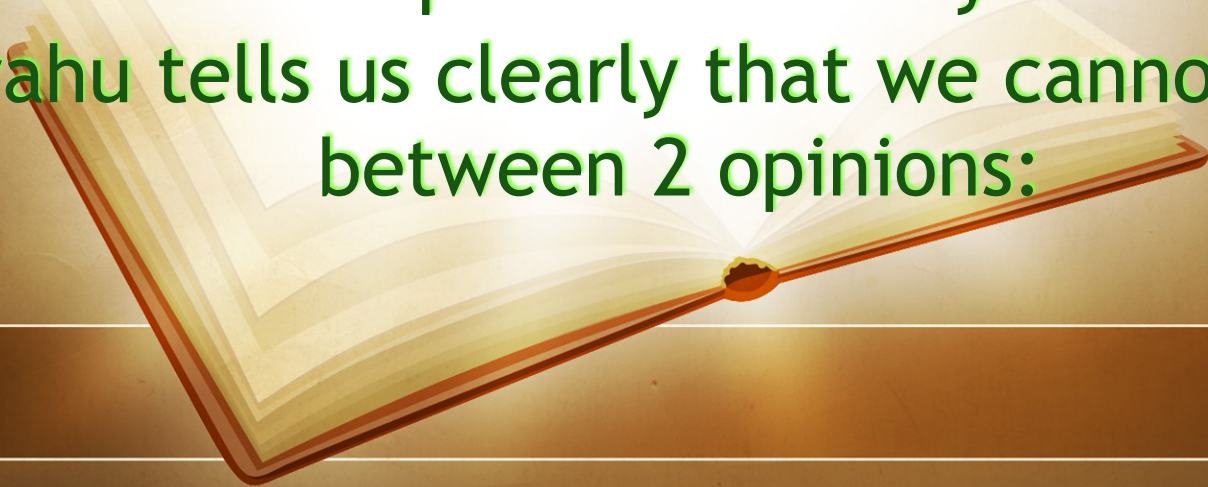
In Yoḥanan's message to the Laodikeian assembly (Rev 3:14-22), he speaks of the luke-warmness of Laodikeia, saying that they were “neither cold nor hot” (vv. 15-16).

This local allusion would have been clear to citizens of Laodikeia, who knew of the cold, pure waters of nearby Colossae.



These places are clear warnings and witnesses for us, to make sure that we hear, guard and do the commands of Elohim and not waver in compromised lifestyles

Ēliyahu tells us clearly that we cannot waver between 2 opinions:

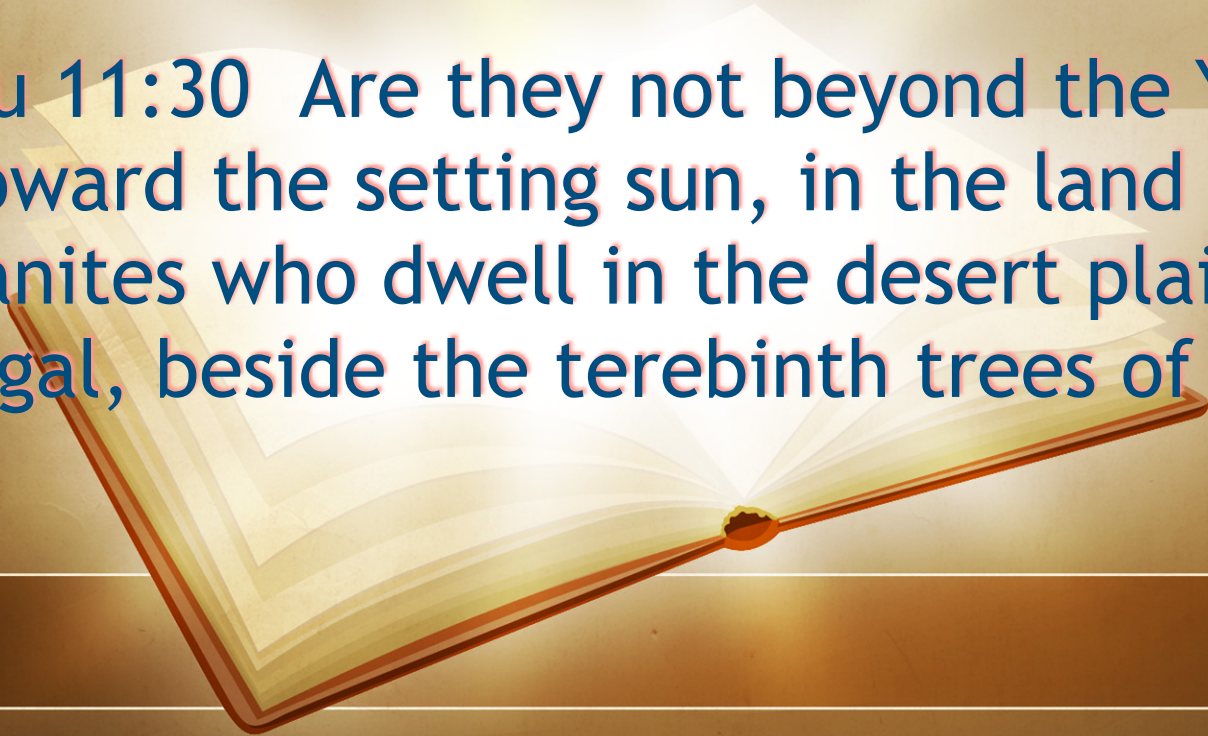


Melakim Aleph/1 Kings 18:21 “And Ĕliyahu came to all the people, and said, “How long would you keep hopping between two opinions? If יהוה is Elohim, follow Him; and if Ba‘al, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.”

Yo‘ēl/Joel 3:14 “Crowds, crowds in the valley of decision! For the day of יהוה is near in the valley of decision.”

The ‘blessing’ is having a right relationship with יהוה; while the curse is not having His presence with us!!!

Deu 11:30 Are they not beyond the Yardēn,
toward the setting sun, in the land of the
Kena'anites who dwell in the desert plain opposite
Gilgal, beside the terebinth trees of Moreh?



Verse 30

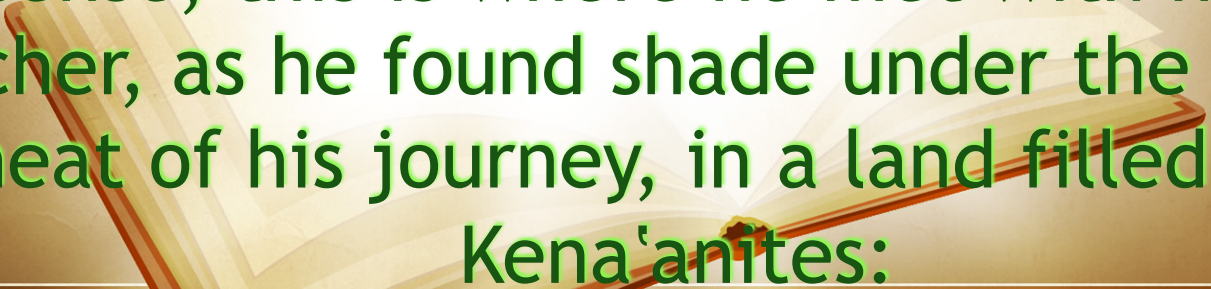
The terebinth trees of Moreh!!!

In **Berēshith/Genesis 12:6** we are told that **Abraham** set out and came to the “**terebinth tree of Moreh**” - which, in Hebrew is written as: אֵלוֹן מוֹרְהָ - **elon moreh**.

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘terebinth’ is אֵלוֹן **Elon - Strong’s H436** which means, ‘**terebinth or mighty**’ and is it also often translated as ‘oak’ and is a tree of the cashew family that yields turpentine.

The Hebrew word מוֹרֶה Moreh - Strong's H4176
means, '*teacher*'.

The terebinth tree was known for its good shade
and it is under this tree that he stopped and, in
one sense, this is where he met with his Mighty
Teacher, as he found shade under the pressing
heat of his journey, in a land filled with
Kena'anites:



Tehillah/Psalm 121:5 “יהוה is your guard; יהוה is your shade at your right hand.”

This reference to Moreh, is a clear reminder to Yisra'el that the place of ‘blessing and curses’, which was ‘beyond the Yardēn, would be a place where they would be reminded that they need to follow in the clear teaching of Elohim, and be reminded of the promise given to Abraham and to his seed!

The English word 'terebinth' is used in the ISR Scriptures 1998 translation 23 times, being translated from 3 different Hebrew words that have very similar meaning.

The first times that we find the word 'terebinth' being used in the ISR Scriptures, is in:

Berēshith/Genesis 12:6 “And Abram passed through the land to the place of Shekem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. At that time the Kena'anites were in the land.”

This is translated as 'terebinth' 9 times from the Hebrew word אֵילֹן eylon - Strong's H436 which means, '**terebinth, oak, mighty**', which is the prolonged from אֵיל ayil - Strong's H352 which means, '**terebinth, chief, pillar, door post, ram**'. The other word that is translated as 'terebinth', 13 times in Scripture, is אֵילָה eylah - Strong's H424 which also means, '**terebinth, oak**' and is the feminine of the root word אֵיל ayil - Strong's H352.

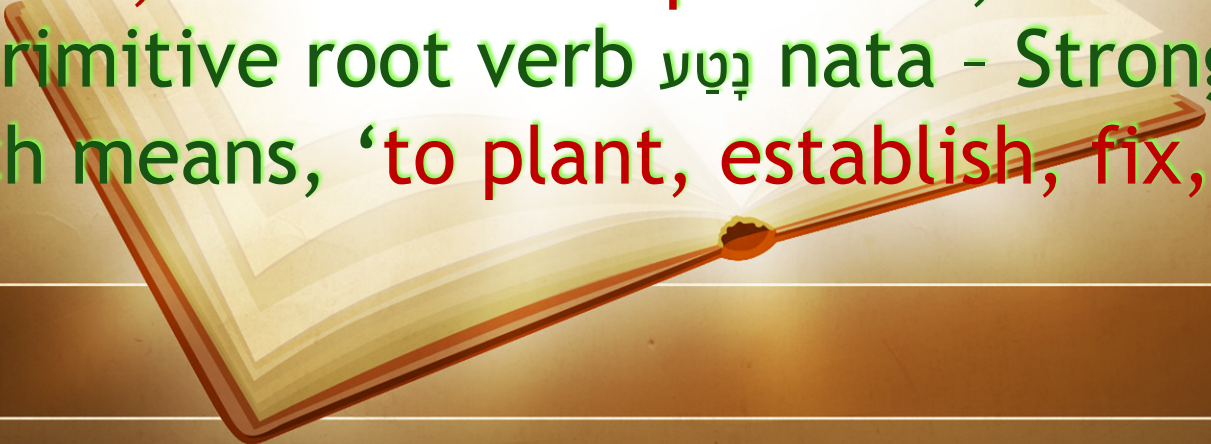
While some may debate whether these words mean, terebinth or oak, what we recognise from Scripture, is that these Hebrew words give clear reference to a very strong and very durable tree, which has a sturdy structure, as well as an extensive root system that enables the tree to remain green, even during a drought!

This strong tree is known to grow up to 12m high and due to its root system, it can sprout up from a stump, after having been cut down which, as we will see, is used as a parable picture that is given to us in Scripture!

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 61:3 “to appoint unto those who mourn in Tsiyon: to give them embellishment for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And they shall be called trees of righteousness, a planting of יהוה, to be adorned.”

In Yeshayahu/Isaiah 61:3, as quoted above, the Hebrew word that is translated as ‘trees’ comes from the root word אֵיל ayil - Strong’s H352, and the Hebrew word that is translated as ‘righteousness’ comes from the root word צְדָקָה tse_q - Strong’s H6664 which means, ‘*righteous, just, righteousness*’.

The Hebrew word that is translated as 'planting' comes from the root word מַטָּה matta - Strong's H4302 which means, 'a place or act of planting, plantation, where it was planted', and comes from the primitive root verb נָטַח nata - Strong's H5193 which means, 'to plant, establish, fix, fasten'.



When Messiah comes again, and His reign is established here on earth, we who are in Him, shall be firmly planted and called trees of righteousness!

As ambassadors of the Kingdom to come, we recognise how we are to be firmly planted in His word, as strong trees of righteousness.

In Scripture, we find many agricultural word pictures that are used to describe man, and Dawid tells us what the faithful, who meditate on the Torah day and night, will be like:

Tehillah/Psalm 1:3 “For he shall be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, that yields its fruit in its season, and whose leaf does not wither, and whatever he does prospers.”

In this verse, the Hebrew word that is translated as ‘tree’ comes from the root word עץ ets - Strong’s H6086 which means, ‘*trees, wood, timber, staff*’, which is primarily the basic term, in Scripture, for trees and wood products.

While this is the most common word for trees, we see how the picture, or reference to man, as metaphorically referred to as trees, gives us insight into how we, as righteous trees in the field of the world, ought to be praising Elohim and bringing esteem to Him in all we do:

Tehillah/Psalm 96:12-13 “Let the field exult, and all that is in it. Let all the trees of the forest then shout for joy, ¹³ at the presence of יהוה. For He shall come, for He shall come to judge the earth. He judges the world in righteousness, and the peoples with His truth.”

Tehillah/Psalm 104:16 “The trees of יהוה are satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon which He planted”

Wisdom is a tree of life to those who cling to her:

Mishlĕ/Proverbs 3:18 “She is a tree of life to those taking hold of her, and blessed are all who retain her.”

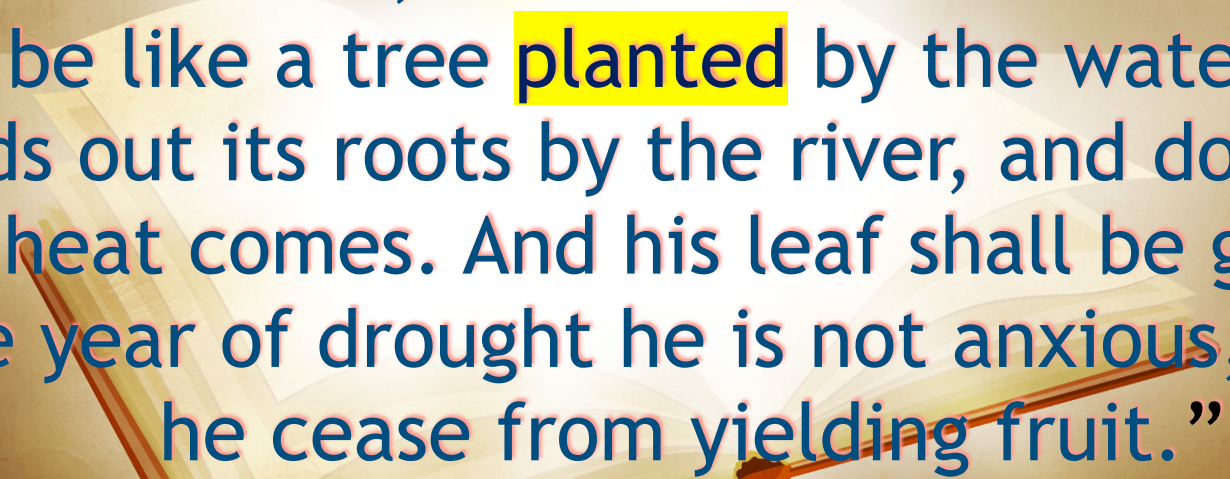
Mishlĕ/Proverbs 11:30 “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is winning lives is wise.”

The goal of our faith is the deliverance of lives and as we walk in righteousness, we are able to bear the fruit of winning the lost, as we proclaim and present to them, through our own lives, pure and true righteousness and obedience to the Word!

The Hebrew word that is translated here as ‘planted’ in Tehillah/Psalm 1:3 is שָׁתַל shathal - Strong’s H8362 which means, **‘to transplant, planted’**, which, in itself, carries a great picture for us in understanding the great and mighty work of our Master, who ‘transplants’ us into His Pure root, after having been far off due to sin!

This word שָׁתַל shathal - Strong's H8362 is used 10 times in Scripture, and once again, pictures for us the effect of being firmly rooted and grounded in love, which is being rooted in Messiah and guarding to do all He commands as a pure expression of our love for Him!

Tehillah/Psalm 92:13 “Those who are planted in the House of יהוה flourish in the courts of our Elohim.”



Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 17:7-8 “Blessed is the man who trusts in יהוה, and whose trust is ביהוה. “For he shall be like a tree **planted** by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and does not see when heat comes. And his leaf shall be green, and in the year of drought he is not anxious, nor does he cease from yielding fruit.”

Our continued trust in יהוה causes us to be ‘transplanted’ into His satisfying root system, and be able to sustain the pressures of the heat of trials that blow across our lives!

Yisra’ěl was **planted** in a good land, and positioned to bear much fruit and shine the light of the Truth of Elohim to the nations, yet they failed to do this:

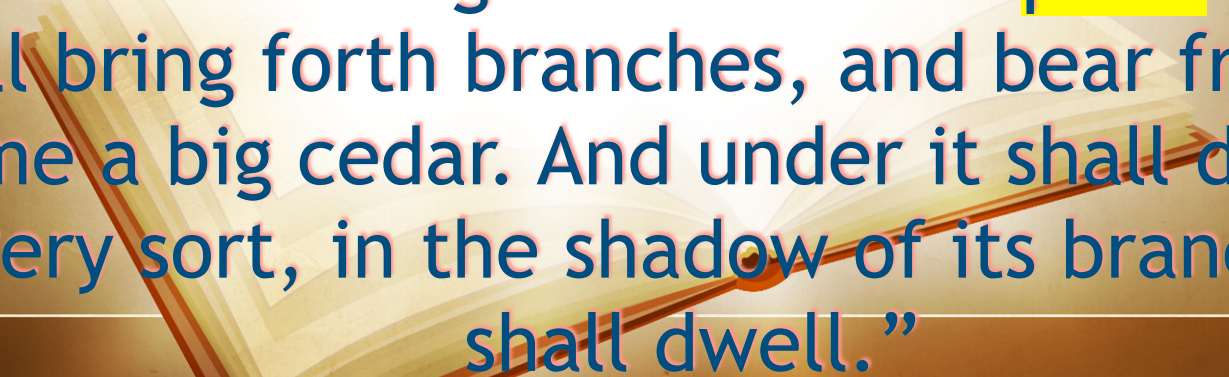
Yehezqěl/Ezekiel 17:8 “It was **planted** in a good field by many waters, to bring forth branches, and to bear fruit, to be a splendid vine.”

This was part of a stern rebuke to a rebellious House that had neglected to stay rooted in love!

Yehezqěl/Ezekiel 17:10 “See, it is **planted**, is it going to thrive? Would it not utterly wither when the east wind touches it - wither in the beds where it grows?”

In יהוה's loving-commitment to His Covenant, He promises to 'transplant' a remnant of the rebellious House that withered under the heat of persecutions, temptations and trials:

Yehezqěl/Ezekiel 17:22-23 “Thus said the Master יהוה, “And I shall take of the top of the highest cedar and set it out. And I Myself shall pluck off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs, and **plant** it on a high and lofty mountain. 23 On the mountain height of Yisra’ěl I **plant** it. And it shall bring forth branches, and bear fruit, and become a big cedar. And under it shall dwell birds of every sort, in the shadow of its branches they shall dwell.”



Yehezqěl/Ezekiel 19:10 “Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard, **planted** by the waters, a bearer of fruit and branching, because of many waters.”

Yehezqěl/Ezekiel 19:13 “And now she is **planted** in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land.”

A nation who had been delivered from bondage out of Mitsrayim, and **planted** in a good land, rebelled and, as a result, were plucked out and **planted** in the Wilderness!

What we can learn from these passages that I have mentioned, is that we must do our utmost in ensuring that we continue to meditate on the Torah of Elohim, day and night, and walk not in wrong counsels, as we guard to do all He commands us, lest we find ourselves being cut off due to unrighteousness and compromise.

Mattithyahu/Matthew 15:13 “But He answering, said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted shall be uprooted.”

Psa 1:1 Blessed is the man who shall not walk in the counsel of the wrong, And shall not stand in the path of sinners, And shall not sit in the seat of scoffers,

Psa 1:2 But his delight is in the Torah of יהוה, And he meditates in His Torah day and night.

Psa 1:3 For he shall be as a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That yields its fruit in its season, And whose leaf does not wither, And whatever he does prospers.

These words of our Master, were words in response to the hypocritical Pharisees, who accused the talmidim (disciples) of Messiah of breaking the traditions of the elders by not washing their hands before eating!

יהושע was making it clear here, that those who hold fast to traditions and forsake the commands of Elohim, are those who put on an outward show and draw near to Elohim with their lips, yet their hearts are far from Him, and teach as teachings the commands of men. These hypocrites are not the righteous ones, and they will be uprooted!

The picture of being 'firmly rooted trees', is a vital and very practical lesson for us to understand, in guarding our obedience to Elohim.

I would now like us to look a little deeper at the Hebrew words that I have already mentioned, and are translated as '**terebinth**' or '**oak**', in order to help us recognise how we are to be true trees of righteousness, as we look at the locations of these specifically mentioned **Terebinth trees**:

I have already mentioned that the first reference to a terebinth tree is in Berēshith/Genesis 12:6.

This was where יהוה appeared to Abram!

יהוה physically made Himself visible to Abram at this terebinth tree, which was at 'Moreh' - מוֹרָה

Moreh - Strong's H4176 means, '*teacher*', as mentioned, and it was here at this Mighty Tree that Abram met His Teacher:

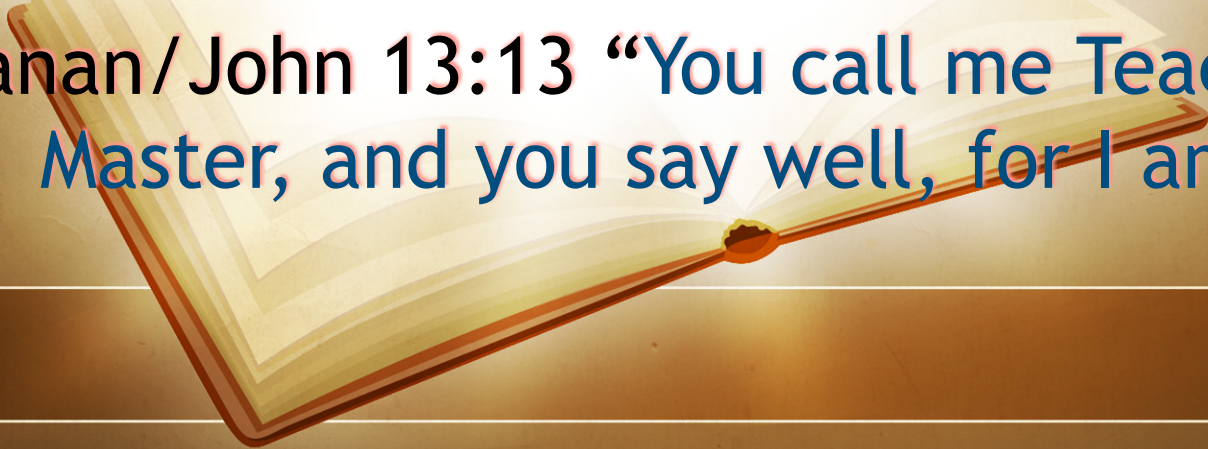


Iyob/Job 36:22 “See, Ėl is exalted by His power; who is a Teacher like Him?”

The term מוֹרֶה **Moreh** - Strong's H4176 is used 3 times in Scripture; and the other times that we see this word being used, is when Mosheh was giving reference to Yisra'ĕl, of this very location where Abram had met יהוה, as a marker of where they would proclaim the blessing and curses on Mount Gerizim and Ėybāl, when they had crossed the Yardĕn! (Debarim/Deuteronomy 11:30), hence me taking time to highlight the significance thereof, when going through this week's Torah portion.

○ This can also remind us that we, who have ‘crossed over’, and understand the clear blessings and curses of Scripture, will keep our eyes on our Good Teacher and Master, יהושע Messiah:

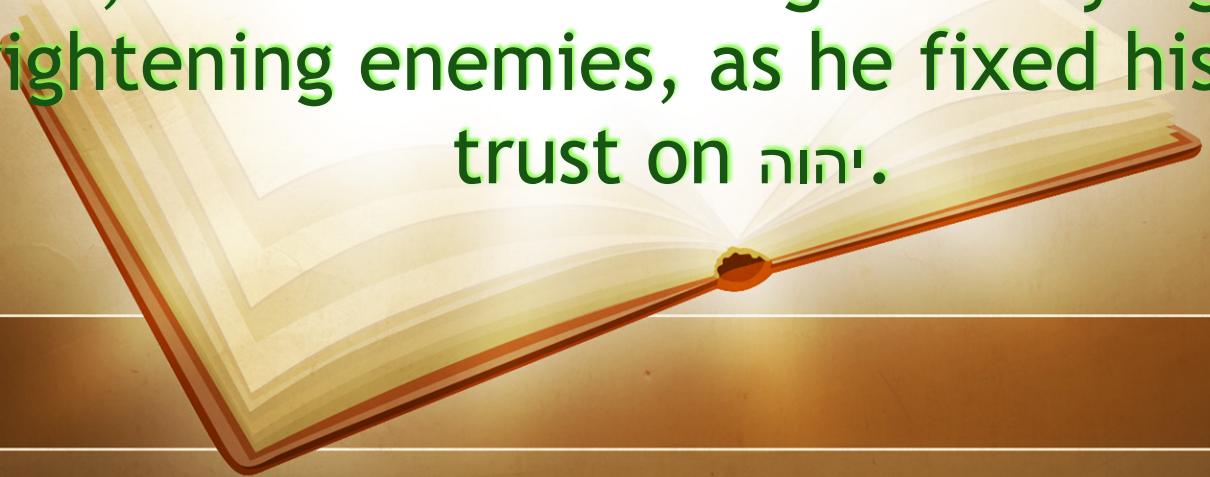
Yohanan/John 13:13 “You call me Teacher and Master, and you say well, for I am.”

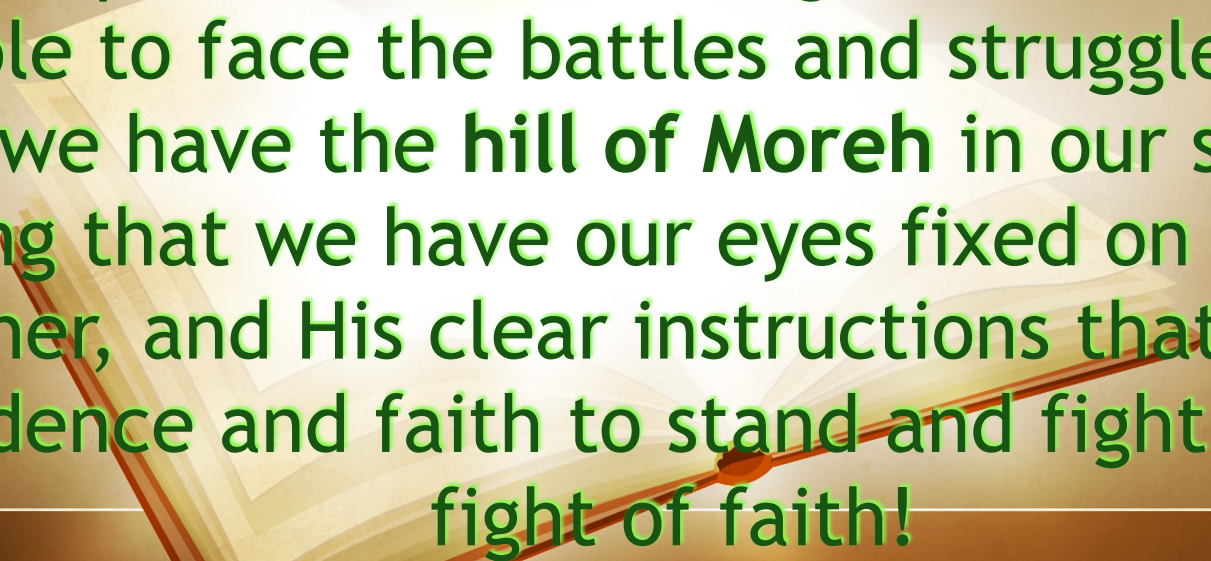


The 3rd time that we see this word מוֹרֶה **Moreh** - Strong's H4176 being used, is in Shophetim/ Judges 7:1, when Gid'on was encamped at the fountain of **Harod**, while Midyan was on the north of them, by the hill of **Moreh**.

The Hebrew word **Harod** comes from the root word חָרַד **ḥarad** - Strong's H2729 which means, 'trembling, to be terrified, frightened, afraid'.

This, in itself, carries a great encouragement for us, especially when we understand the full story of Gid'on, who overcame huge terrifying obstacles and frightening enemies, as he fixed his eyes and trust on יהוה.





Here we recognise that, in the face of danger and terrifying circumstances, which in Scripture is often represented as coming from the north, we are able to face the battles and struggles, as long as we have the **hill of Moreh** in our sights - meaning that we have our eyes fixed on our *Mighty Teacher*, and His clear instructions that gives us confidence and faith to stand and fight the good fight of faith!

We have a Teacher of Righteousness - and as good, faithful students we must take careful heed to hear, guard and do all He teaches us through His Word - then we will be equipped to face the tough battles in life!

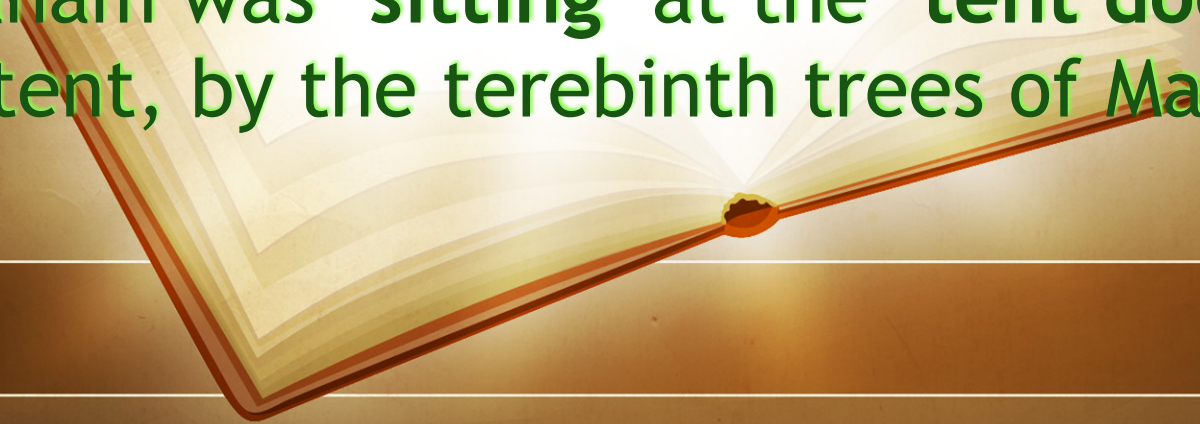
The second place where we see a reference being made to a 'terebinth tree', is at מַמְרֵ Mamrě - Strong's H4471 which means, '*strength or fatness*'.

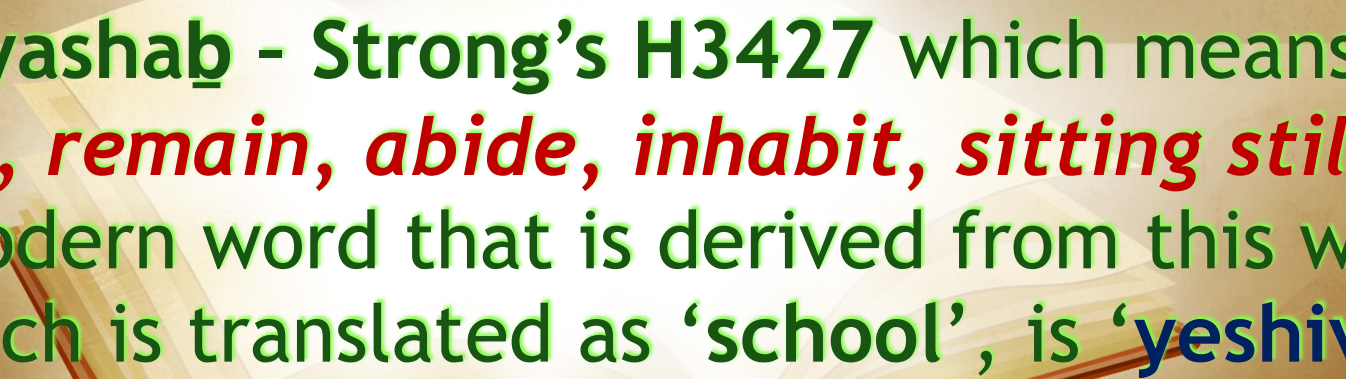
This Hebrew root word מַמְרֵ (Mamrē - Strong's H4471) is used 10 times and was the location where Abram had moved to and had dwelt, “by the terebinth trees of Mamrē”, which was in Hebron, and it was here that he also built a slaughter-place to יהוה.

Mamrē was an Ammonite who had made a covenant with Abram.

It was here that we see, in **Berěshith/Genesis 18:1**, that יהוה once again, made Himself physically visible and appeared to **Abraham**.

Abraham was **'sitting'** at the **'tent door'** of his tent, by the terebinth trees of Mamrě.






In Hebrew, the root word that is used for ‘sitting’ is יָשַׁב *yashab* - Strong’s H3427 which means, ‘*sit, dwell, remain, abide, inhabit, sitting still*’ and a modern word that is derived from this word, which is translated as ‘school’, is ‘*yeshiva*’.

And so, ‘**sitting/ dwelling**’ in the Hebraic mind-set, is an idiom for learning; and it is at the Master’s Feet that we come and sit and drink of His Pure and Clear Living Water and get great clarity and insight and strength to sojourn with joy!

The idea of **sitting** in the Hebrew mind-set is to **learn**, and not to simply sit and vegetate, but rather sit and pay attention to the instructions of their teacher.



Abraham is clearly pictured for us, as a great example of a man who meditated on the Word day and night and was so focused on the Master יהוה, making himself readily available for יהוה to make Himself visible to His faithful servant and friend! It was here that Abraham ate a meal with יהוה and two Messengers, just before judgement over Sedom and Amarah was passed and delivered!




This location also gives us great insight in understanding our need to be attentive students of our Mighty Teacher, יהושע Messiah, and who love to come together on His Sabbaths, in order to sit and learn and be strengthened in His Word that leads us in righteousness, and enjoy the fellowship of a good meal too!

It is when we gather, as diligent talmidim, that He makes Himself visible to us through His Word and strengthens us as we grow in our knowledge and understanding of who He is.

This was also the place where Yitshaq dwelt, when Ya'aqob came to him before he died at 180 years of age. (Bereshith/Genesis 35:27-28)

Moreh = Teacher and Mamre = Strength

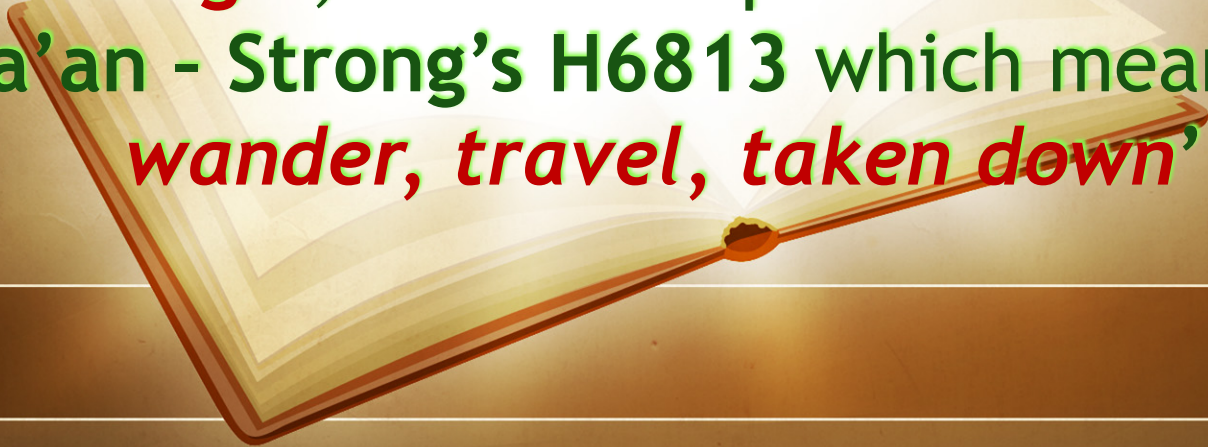
And it is clear that as we submit to our Good Teacher and fix our eyes on Him and submit to hearing, guarding and doing His Word, that we are equipped to stand and fight, as His joy strengthens us and renews us!



The third location, that we see in Scripture being
'marked' by a 'terebinth tree' is צֶעֱנָנִים

Tsa'ananniym - Strong's H6815 which means,
'*removings*', and is the plural of the word צֶעַן

tza'an - Strong's H6813 which means, '*to
wander, travel, taken down*'.



It is in Yehoshua/Joshua 19:33, where we are told that this place formed part of the borders of Naphtali - נַפְתָּלִי - Strong's H5321 - whose name means, '*wrestling*'.

This place is also used in Shophetim/Judges 4:11 where Heber, of the children of the father-in-law of Mosheh, had come to, after separating himself from the Qēynites, before Baraq and Deborah went up and destroyed Sisera.

This terebinth, at צַעֲנַנְיִם Tsa'ananniym, was beside
קִדְשׁ Qedesh - Strong's H6843 which means, '*set-
apart place*'.

What we can learn from this terebinth tree's location, is that, we who have been called out of darkness and are a set-apart people of Elohim, will recognise how we have all wrestled with the removal of our old ways, and all the vain inherited traditions and lies.

Therefore, as we live set-apart lives, we must remove all falsehood and compromise, in order to truly live set-apart lives unto our Mighty Teacher and Master!

The 4th place that we find a terebinth tree being mentioned, as a key marker or location, is at שְׁכֶם Shekem - Strong's H7927 which means, '*back or shoulder*'.

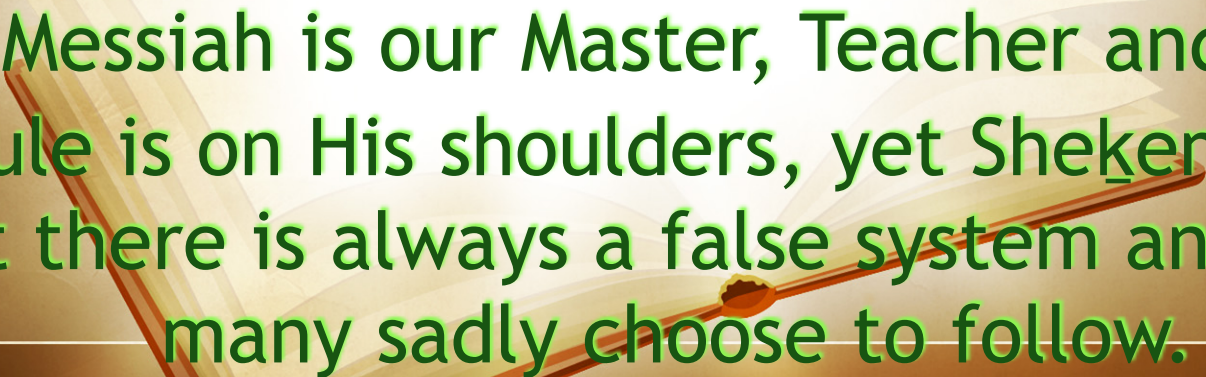
It was here at Shek_{em} that Ya'aqob_u dug a well -
the well where יהושע met the Shomeroni woman
and so opened the door for the return of the lost
sheep of Yisra'el!

It was also here, at the terebinth at Shek_{em}, that
the masters of Shek_{em} set up Abimelek_u, the son of
Gid'on, as their king, after he had killed his 70
brothers! (Shophetim/Judges 9:6).

It was also here at Shek_{em} that Ya'aqob_u buried the idols under the terebinth tree.

A very eventful place indeed, one that typically presents to us the clear choice of who we will serve and follow.

יהושע Messiah is our Master, Teacher and King and the rule is on His shoulders, yet Shek_{em} teaches us that there is always a false system and rule that many sadly choose to follow.

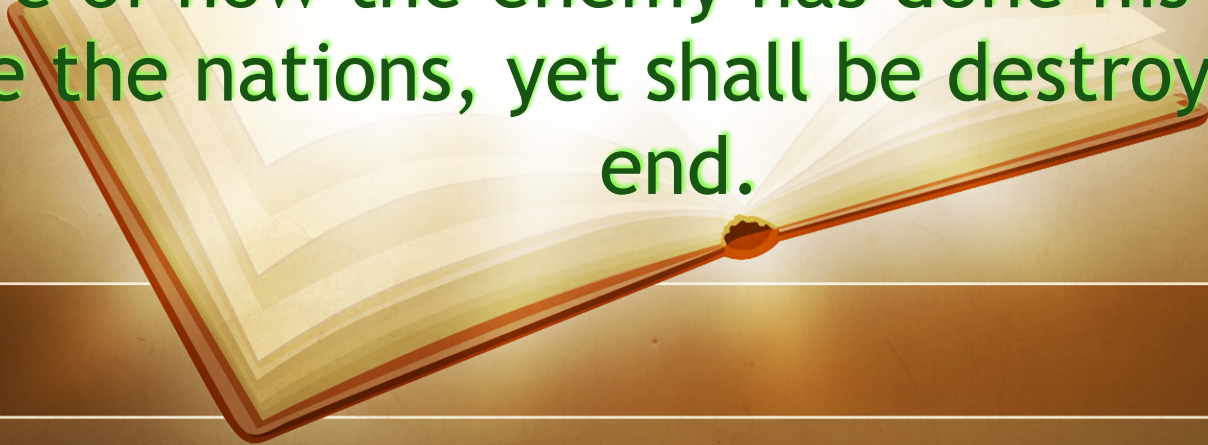


After Abimeleḵ was set up as king of Sheḵem, Yotham went and proclaimed a clear parable of trees from Mount Gerizim, as a witness against the leaders at Sheḵem.

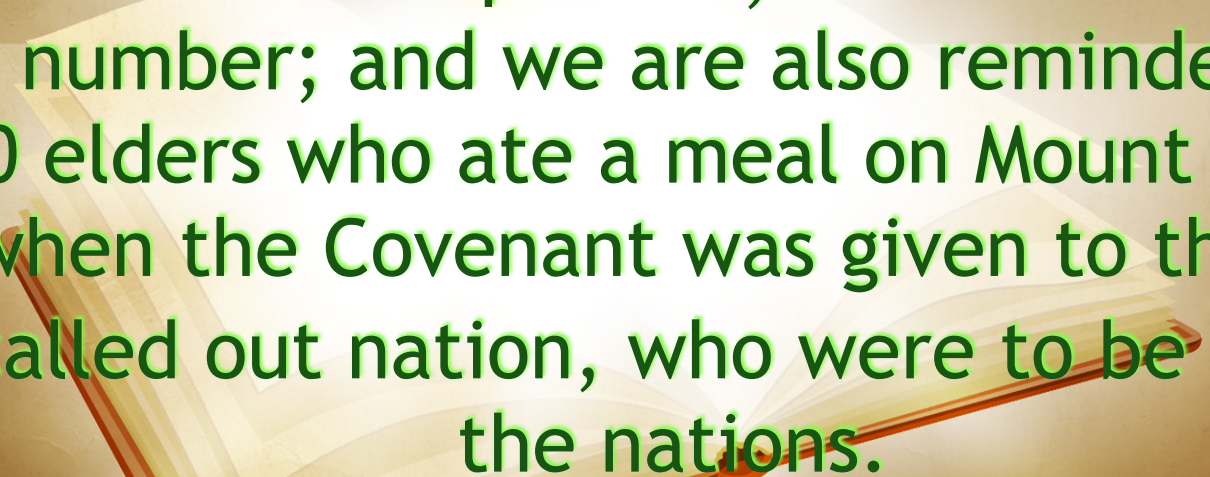
Abimeleḵ ruled Yisra'ēl for 3 years, after which he was killed when a woman dropped an upper millstone on his head and crushed his skull.

He then asked his armour bearer to kill him, lest it would be said a woman killed him - and so Elohim repaid Abimeleḵ for the evil of killing the 70 sons of Gid'on.

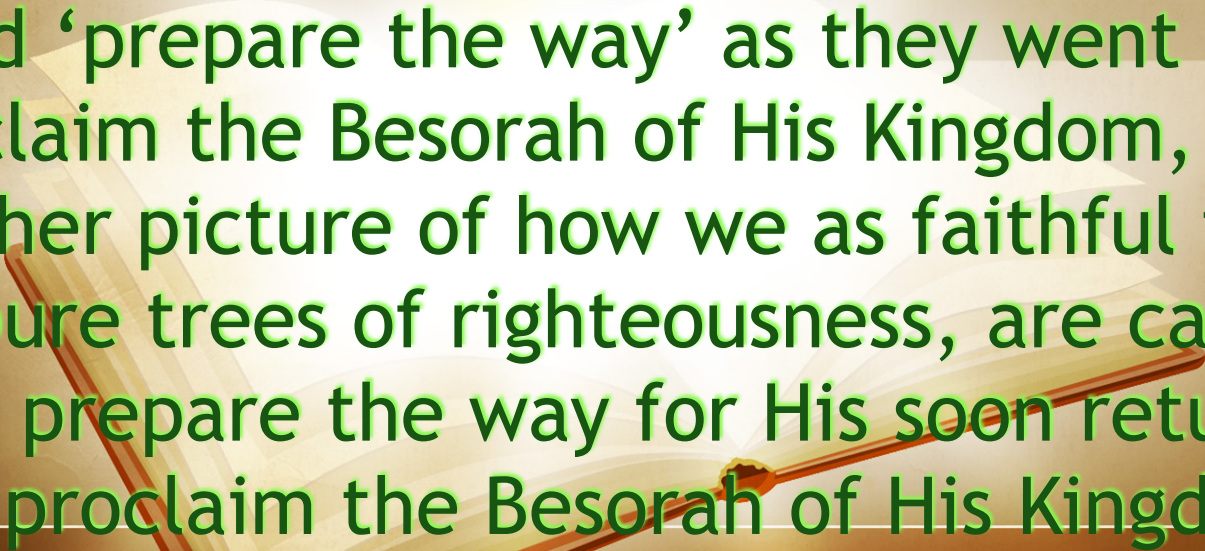
Why I am sharing this with you, is simply to show how the enemy will certainly have a way of getting many to follow him, and with the 70 sons of Gid'on being killed by him, we are given a picture of how the enemy has done his utmost to defile the nations, yet shall be destroyed at the end.



70 is a significant number, in representing the fullness of the nations, as we are reminded that generations of Noah's sons, after the flood, were 70 in number; and we are also reminded how it was 70 elders who ate a meal on Mount Sinai with יהוה when the Covenant was given to the chosen and called out nation, who were to be a light to the nations.



יהושע Messiah also sent out the 70 taught ones, two by two, ahead of Him into every city and place where He was about to go, so that they would 'prepare the way' as they went to go and proclaim the Besorah of His Kingdom, which is another picture of how we as faithful talmidim and pure trees of righteousness, are called to go and prepare the way for His soon return, and proclaim the Besorah of His Kingdom!

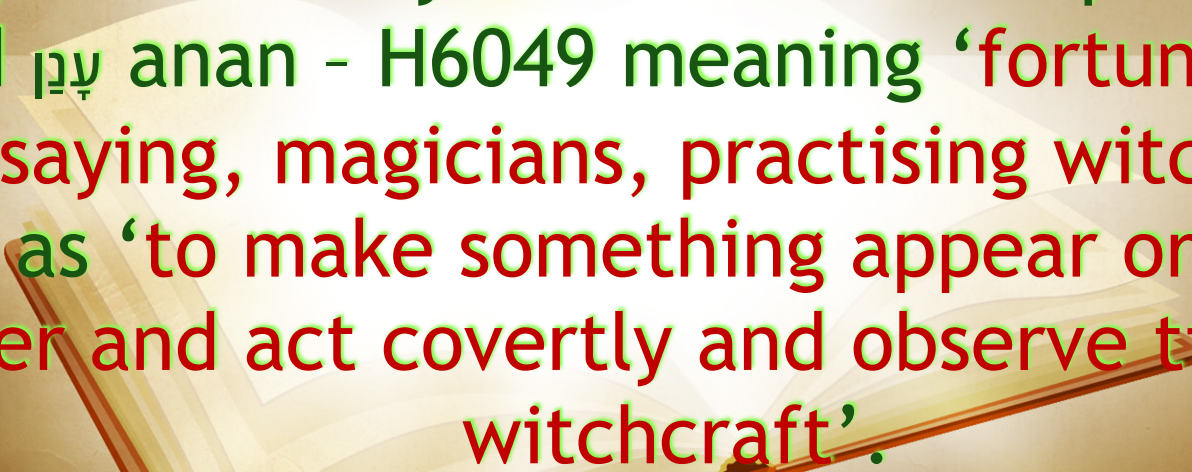


We must choose to follow the Righteous King, by guarding His Word and bearing each other's burdens on our shoulders, and so fulfil the Torah!

There was another '**terebinth tree**' in Shekem, that is mentioned in **Shophetim/Judges 9:37**, and was a place where witchcraft was performed and sought after.

In the Scriptures, we are told that the people were coming from the '**Diviners terebinth tree**'.

The Hebrew word that is translated as 'diviners' is מְעוֹנְנִים - 'meon'niym' - which is the plural of the word עָנָן anan - H6049 meaning 'fortune telling, soothsaying, magicians, practising witchcraft' as well as 'to make something appear or to cloud over and act covertly and observe times of witchcraft'.

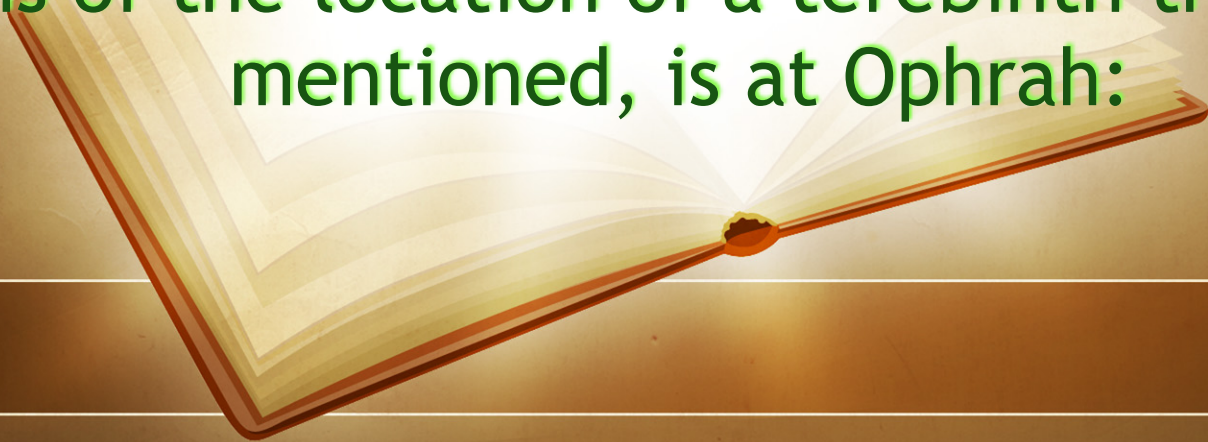


This is a lesson for us, that we are to not allow any form of witchcraft or magic in our lives, for as we live in the world we are not of the world and must not follow after the world's ways, as this has not been appointed for us:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 18:13-14 “Be perfect before יהוה your Elohim, 14 for these nations whom you are possessing do listen to those using magic and to diviners. But as for you, יהוה your Elohim has not appointed such for you.”

Miḳah/Micah 5:12 “And I shall cut off witchcrafts out of your hand, and let you have no magicians.”

The 5th site that I want to highlight for you, in terms of the location of a terebinth tree being mentioned, is at Ophrah:



Shophetim/Judges 6:11 “And the Messenger of יהוה came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Yo’ash the Abi’ezerite, while his son Gid’on threshed wheat in the winepress, to hide it from the eyes of the Midyanites.”

The name גִּדְוֹן **Gid’on** - Strong’s H1439 means, ***‘hewer, one who chops down’***, and he certainly was a very courageous man who chopped down and destroyed the abominable Asherah pole and altar of Ba’al, that his father had.

It was here at the terebinth tree in Ophrah, where Gid'on lived, that the Messenger of יהוה appeared to Gid'on and called him a mighty brave one.

Gid'on, of course, engaged in a discussion with the Messenger of יהוה, and discussed his doubts and fears, and challenged Him by asking that if יהוה was with them, then why were bad things happening to them, as they had been suffering under the oppression of the Midyanites.

Gid'on was told to go in his strength, for he would save Yisra'el, and he responded with the fact that he was just a small guy from Menashsheh, and was the least in his father's house.

With these physical facts, in his own eyes, of him being the smallest in his father's house, he asked the Messenger of יהוה how he was to, or with what that he, would save Yisra'el - and the answer was very simple and yet very clear - He would do so because יהוה was with him!!!

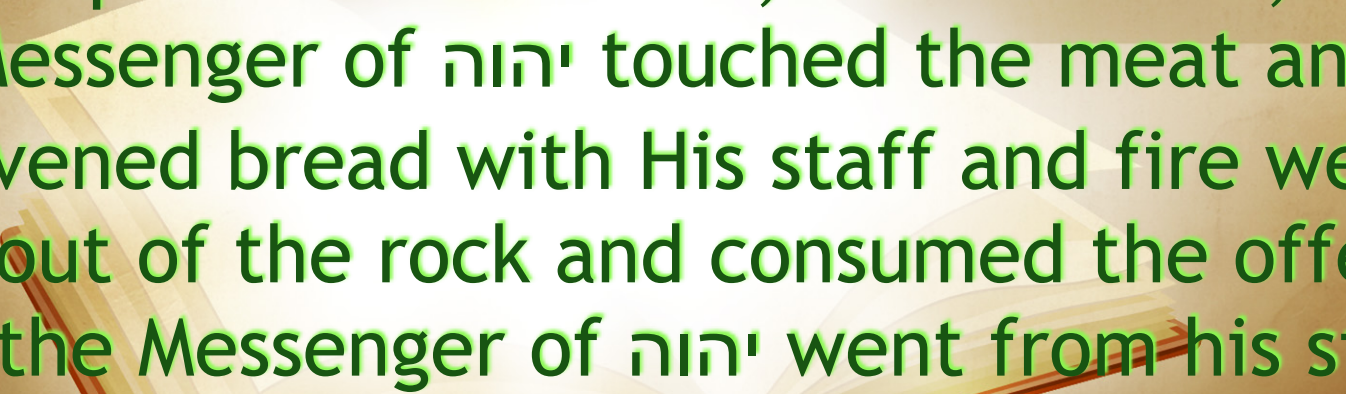
Because יהוה was with him, he would destroy the Midyanites, as one man!

This is a very practical truth that we all need to hear, amidst the most daunting circumstances in our lives!!!

If יהוה is with us, then we have the full assurance of walking in victory!

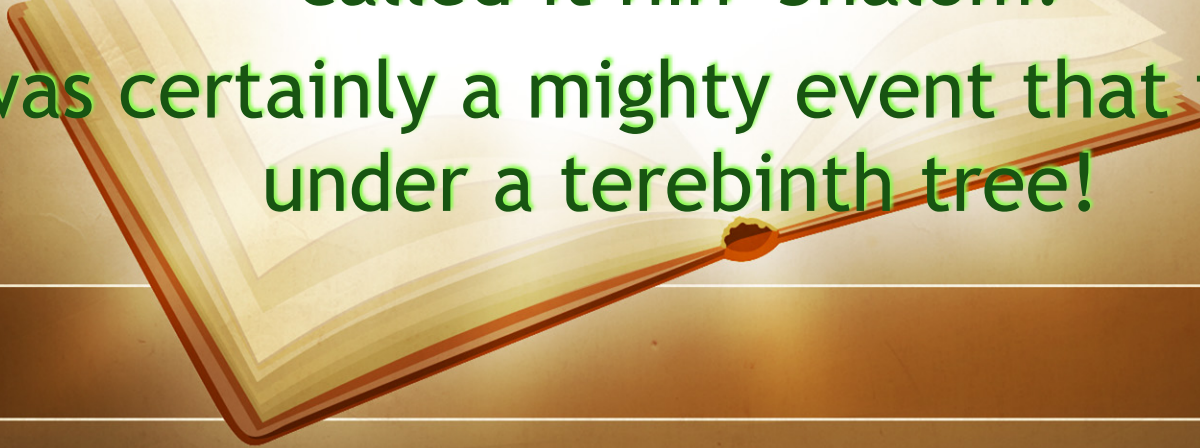
Gid'on still finding this a little hard to take in, he asks for a sign and then proceeds to prepare an offering for יהוה.

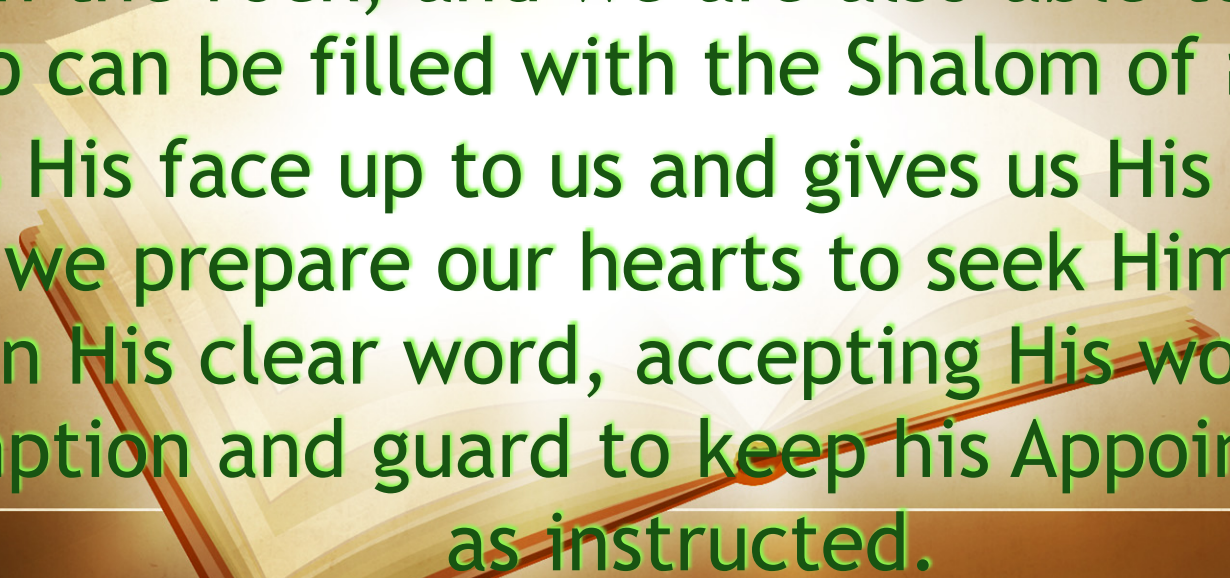
Gid'on was told to put the meat and bread on the rock and pour out the broth, which he did, and the Messenger of יהוה touched the meat and unleavened bread with His staff and fire went up from out of the rock and consumed the offering, and the Messenger of יהוה went from his sight.



In total awe of having seen the Messenger of יהוה face to face, he feared that he would die, and he was told to take courage for he would not die; and then Gid'on built a slaughter-place there and called it יהוה Shalom.

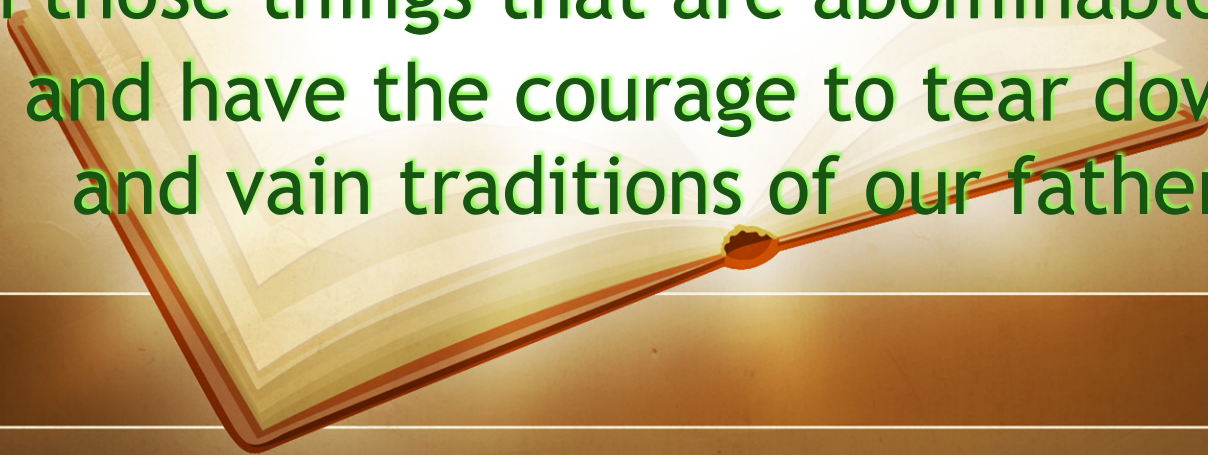
This was certainly a mighty event that took place under a terebinth tree!





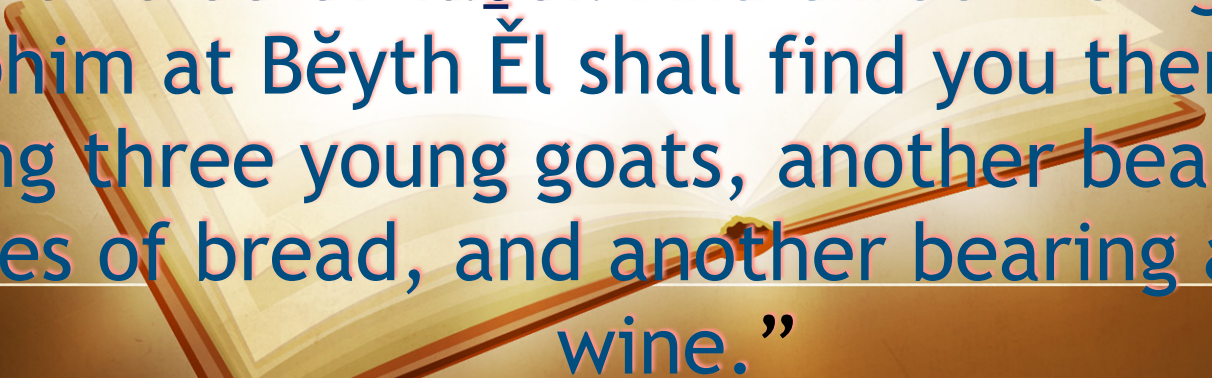
We can see great picture of Pěsaḥ being given here, through the offering that he prepared and set on the rock, and we are also able to see how we too can be filled with the Shalom of יהוה, as He lifts His face up to us and gives us His Shalom, when we prepare our hearts to seek Him and walk in His clear word, accepting His work of redemption and guard to keep his Appointed Times as instructed.

The Shalom of יהוה enables us to stand firm in the face of great dangers, as we offer up our lives as a daily living sacrifice and give Him our all - for then we too would be strong and courageous to chop down those things that are abominable in יהוה's eyes - and have the courage to tear down the lies and vain traditions of our fathers!

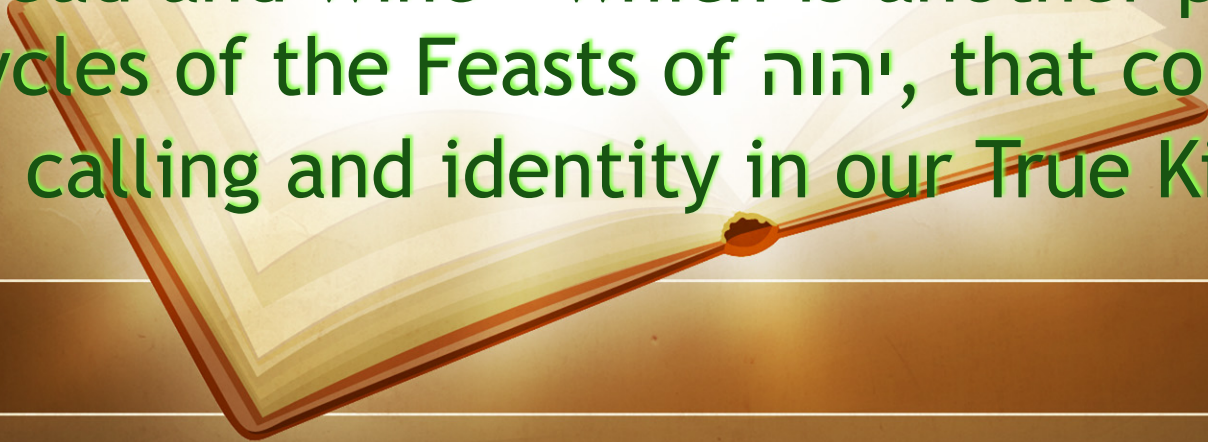


The 6th location of a terebinth tree, that I want to mention, is at תָּבוֹר Tabor - Strong's H8396 which means, '*mound*'.

Shemu'ěl Aleph/1 Samuel 10:3 “And you shall pass on from there, and beyond, and shall come to the terebinth tree of Tabor. And three men going up to Elohim at Běyth Ĕl shall find you there, one bearing three young goats, another bearing three loaves of bread, and another bearing a skin of wine.”



After having anointed Sha'ul as king, Shemu'el told Sha'ul that he would be met at the terebinth tree by three men who were on their way to Běyth Ĕl, and he was to receive from them 3 goats, 3 loaves of bread and wine - which is another picture of the cycles of the Feasts of יהוה, that confirms our calling and identity in our True King!



This was a confirmation of the prophecy of Shemu'el to Sha'ul, and it was after this event that Sha'ul received the Spirit of Elohim.

Later, we know that, the Spirit departed from Sha'ul, because of his rebellion and disobedience.

This location can therefore clearly picture for us the vital need for us to be guarding the Sabbaths and Feasts of יהוה, lest we find ourselves without His Spirit dwelling in us!

With the 3 men having 3 goats, 3 loaves of bread and a skin of wine, we are quickly reminded how the metaphoric picture behind these 3 men and their gifts of provision point us toward the '3 times a year' every male was to go up to Yerushalayim and perform the Festivals of יהוה!

This reminds us how important it is for us, in guarding the sure promise of the hope we have in Messiah, that we are to keep His Feasts with joy!

The location of this **terebinth tree** also gives us the assurance of the providence of יהוה and the urgency with which we must guard His Appointed Times and not take our set-apart calling for granted.

In Scripture, we also are told that Abshalom's head got caught in a great **terebinth tree**, and Yo'ab thrust 3 spears through his heart while he was still hanging alive in the terebinth tree (Shemu'el Bět/2 Samuel 18)

We are also told of the young prophet who had gone and delivered a strong message of rebuke to Yarob'am, and then went on his way as instructed by Elohim.

He stopped off and rested under a terebinth tree on his way home, where he was enticed into breaking the clear instructions of Elohim, through the trickery of twisted words of a false prophet, which ultimately got him to be mauled by a lion!

(Melakim Aleph/1 Kings 13)

What we can learn from this Terebinth tree, is that we must be sober and alert, for the enemy is like a roaring lion seeking who he can devour!

This young prophet was tired and weary and had stopped to rest under a terebinth tree; and here we can be cautioned in regards to our 'resting' in our Master! When we are tired and weary, that is when we need to be on the highest alert, and not neglect our 'entering into the true rest of our Master', as we do not neglect the gathering of the set-apart ones, as some are in the habit of doing, due to weariness and tiredness!

When we are tired and weary, we must do our utmost to be gathering, lest we find ourselves being led astray in a moment of weakness!

We are called to be set-apart and planted, as tree of righteousness whose leaves do not fade when the heat comes. When compromise and disobedience creeps in, the tree begins to fade, as the fruit of righteousness begins to become less and less, until there is not fruit - and this was the rebuke given to a rebellious Yisra'el in:

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 1:30 “For you shall be as a terebinth whose leaf fades, and as a garden that has no water.”

Compromise and any form of idol worship will cause the source of your strength to fade and be proven wrong when the heat comes!

The sad tragedy, is that for so many who do not realise that they are fading, because the heat has not come, will find that when the heat of the wrath of Elohim comes, it will be too late to repent!

יהוה does give us assurance of a faithful remnant,
that shall return like a terebinth that has been cut
down, with only a stump that remains - for the
set-apart seed is its stump - and Messiah has
restored life to the root!

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 6:13 “But still, there is a tenth
part in it, and it shall again be for a burning, like a
terebinth tree and like an oak, whose stump
remains when it is cut down. The set-apart seed is
its stump!”

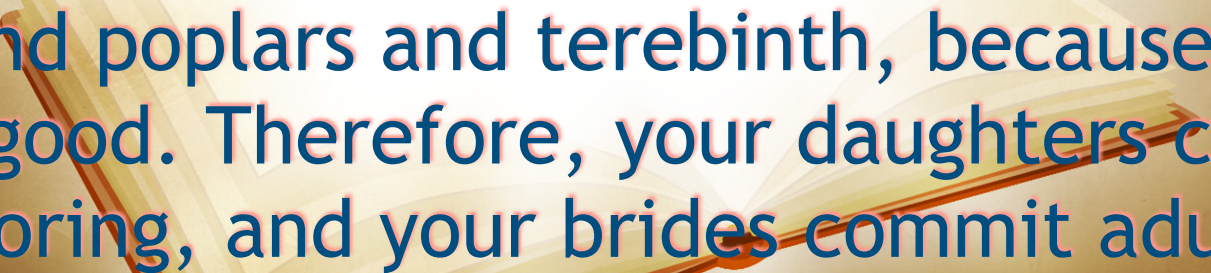
Trees were often seen as places of significance, to the ways and practices of the abominable worship rites of the nations and יהוה makes it clear that all idol worship will be destroyed!

Today, the world worships the Christmas tree - and this too will be destroyed:

Yehezqěl/Ezekiel 6:13 “And you shall know that I am יהוה, when their slain are among their idols all around their slaughter-places, on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, under every green tree, and under every thick oak, wherever they offered sweet incense to all their idols.”

Sadly, we find that many find comfort in the 'shade' of their false trees, and in the process, are simply whoring after idols:

Hoshěa/Hosea 4:13 “They slaughter on the mountaintops, and burn incense on the hills, under oak and poplars and terebinth, because its shade is good. Therefore, your daughters commit whoring, and your brides commit adultery.”

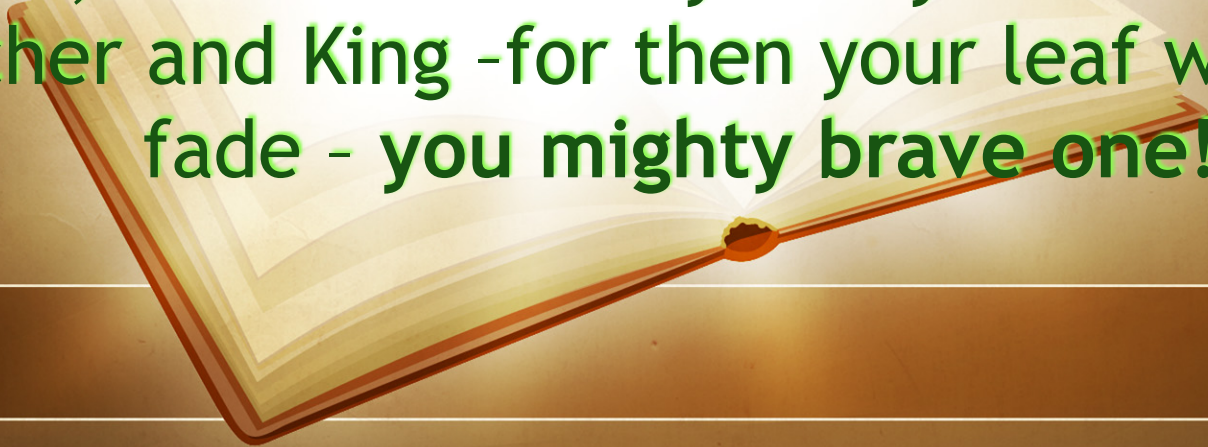


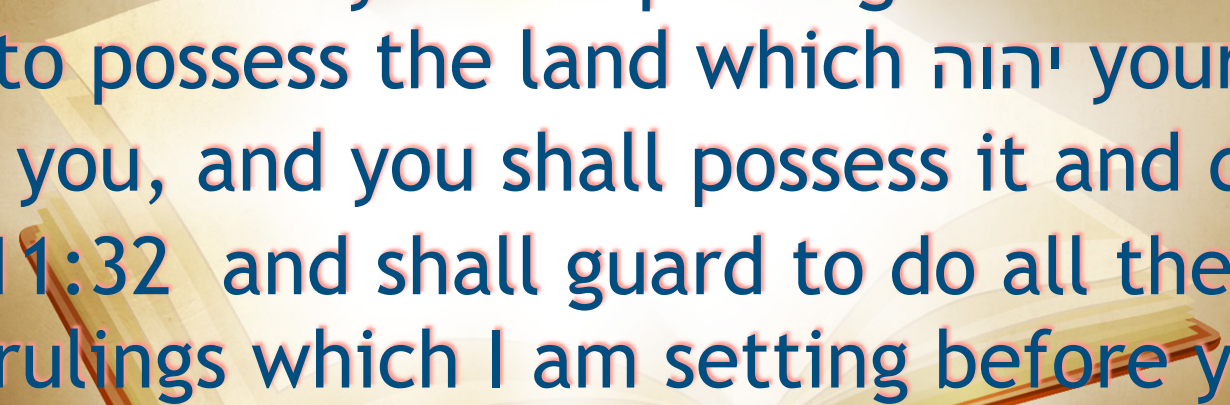
While we recognise some very significant events that take place under or around a **terebinth tree**, we also recognise that there is also the clear danger of following after strange mighty ones, which are not mighty ones at all, yet through traditions and lies, have caused many to seek their refuge, strength and shelter under the trees of falsehood, as they are rooted in nothing more than shallow dogmas of man, that will prove false when the heat of the wrath of יהוה comes!

When the fire of His wrath does come, those who are truly planted in יהושע Messiah and remain in Him, will find their continued strength from Him, and their leaves and covering will not fade, when His heat comes upon the sons of disobedience!

As we consider the analogy of trees in Scripture - let me ask you if you have truly been 'transplanted' by Elohim, having been grafted in by the Blood of Messiah, and are staying in Him to be a true 'TREE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS' that is daily being adored by His beautiful Word?

Perhaps you have been facing some fierce and seemingly life threatening battles of late - then be like Gid'on and present yourselves as a daily living sacrifice, and never take your eyes off of our Good Teacher and King -for then your leaf will never fade - **you mighty brave one!**



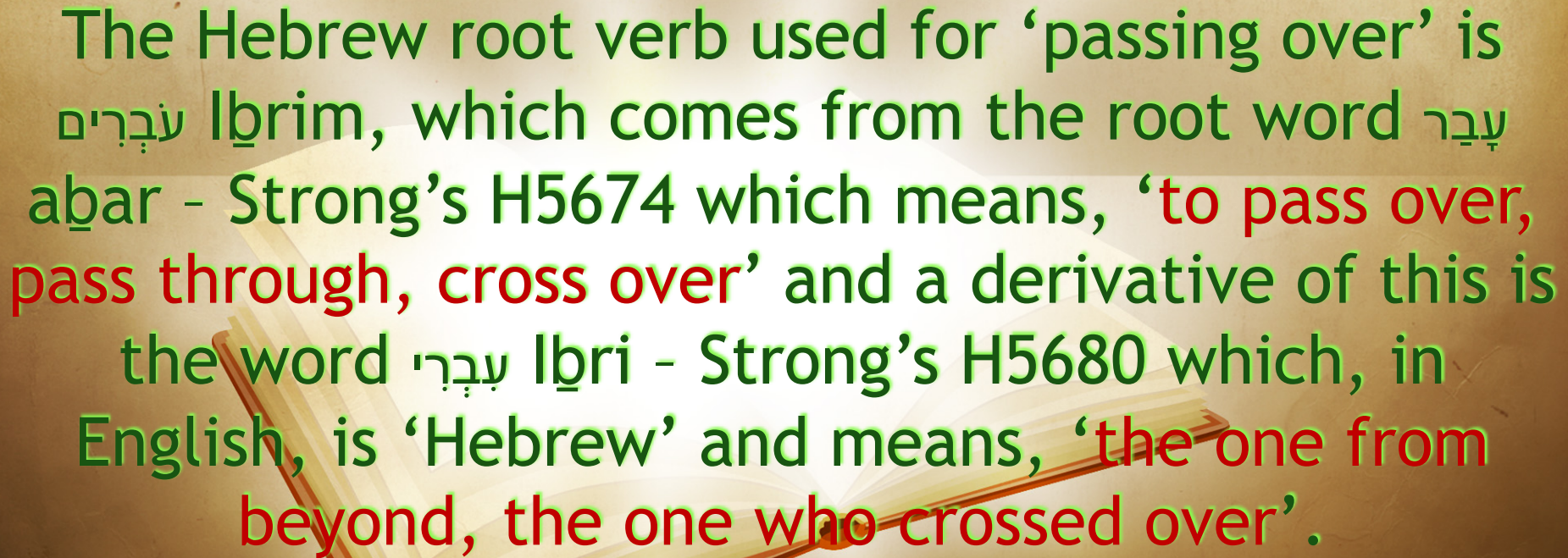


Deu 11:31 For you are passing over the Yardēn to go in to possess the land which יהוה your Elohim is giving you, and you shall possess it and dwell in it,
Deu 11:32 and shall guard to do all the laws and right-rulings which I am setting before you today.'

Verse 31-32

The Promised Land is set before us - and so, as we have the blessing and curse been proclaimed - we have no excuse - and for us to fully walk in the fullness of the blessing, favour and shalom of יהוה, we must recognise the need to 'guard to do' all the laws and right-rulings that the Torah sets before us!!!

We are 'passing over' - to do!!!



The Hebrew root verb used for ‘passing over’ is עָבַר לְבָרִים *l̄brim*, which comes from the root word עָבַר *abar* - Strong’s H5674 which means, ‘to pass over, pass through, cross over’ and a derivative of this is the word עָבַר לְבָרִי *l̄bri* - Strong’s H5680 which, in English, is ‘Hebrew’ and means, ‘the one from beyond, the one who crossed over’.

The Hebrew word עִבְרִים **Ibrim** is the plural form and highlights for us a picture of the complete unified body of Messiah, that passes over!

This word עִבְרִי **Ibri** - Strong's H5680 is a patronymic noun from the root word עֵבֶר **Eber** - Strong's H5677 which was the name of a descendant of Shem and means, '*region beyond*' and comes from the primitive root word אָבַר **abar** - Strong's H5674 which means, '*to pass over, through or by, pass on*'.

Abram left the regions beyond the river and forsook his father's house which was riddled with pagan fertility worship under the reign of the wicked Nimrod and entered into covenant with Elohim.

Abram was the first person to be called a Hebrew (**Berěshith/Genesis 14:13**) and we recognise this by his 'crossing over' the Euphrates River, when leaving his father's house and going into the Promised Land at the call and instruction of Elohim!

Our 'passing over' or becoming a 'Hebrew', entails our ability to clearly listen to the commands of Elohim and guard TO DO THEM!!


We too, who have 'crossed over', so to speak, have become 'Hebrews', as we have responded to the clear call of Elohim, who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light! And by the Blood of Messiah, we are grafted in to the Covenants of Promise with Yisra'ěl, and therefore, being 'Yisra'ěl', by definition, we are in fact, also called 'Hebrews', as our father Abraham was, and are a people now belonging to Messiah!

The Hebrew root word עֶבֶר **abar** - Strong's H5674,
in the ancient pictographic script, is written as
follows:




Ayin - אָ:



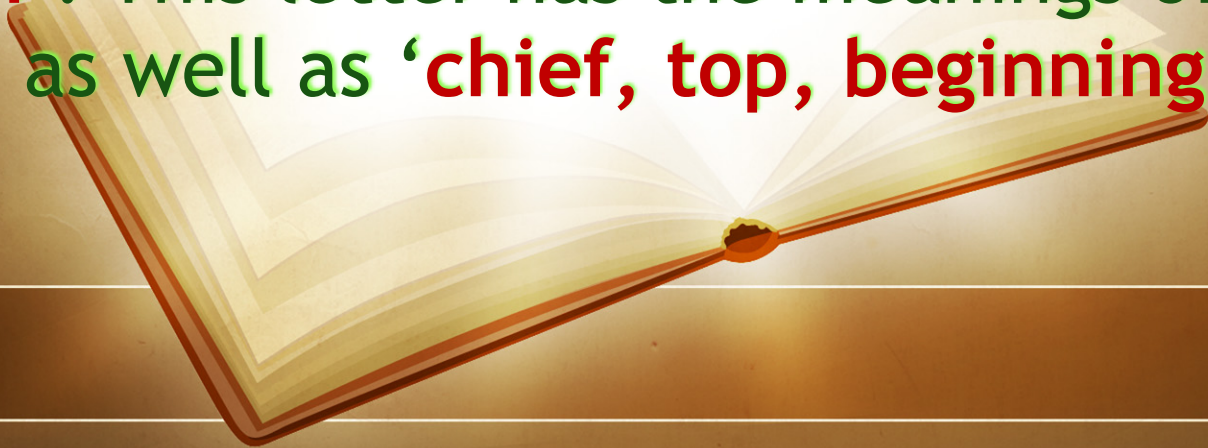
The original pictograph for this letter is  and represents the idea of '**seeing and watching**', as well as '**knowledge**'. as the eye is the 'window of knowledge', and can also render the concept of knowledge revealed!


Beyt - בַּיִת:

The ancient script has this letter as , which pictures a tent floor plan and means, 'house' or 'tent'. It represents family and the importance of those who are inside the tent as opposed to the tent structure itself.

Resh - ר:

The Ancient picture for this letter is , **‘the head of a man’**. This letter has the meanings of **‘head or man’** as well as **‘chief, top, beginning or first’**.





From this pictographic rendering of one who passes/crosses over, we take note that the meaning given here can be understood as:

LOOKING TO THE HOUSE'S HEAD

Or

THE EYES OF THE HOUSE ARE ON THE HEAD

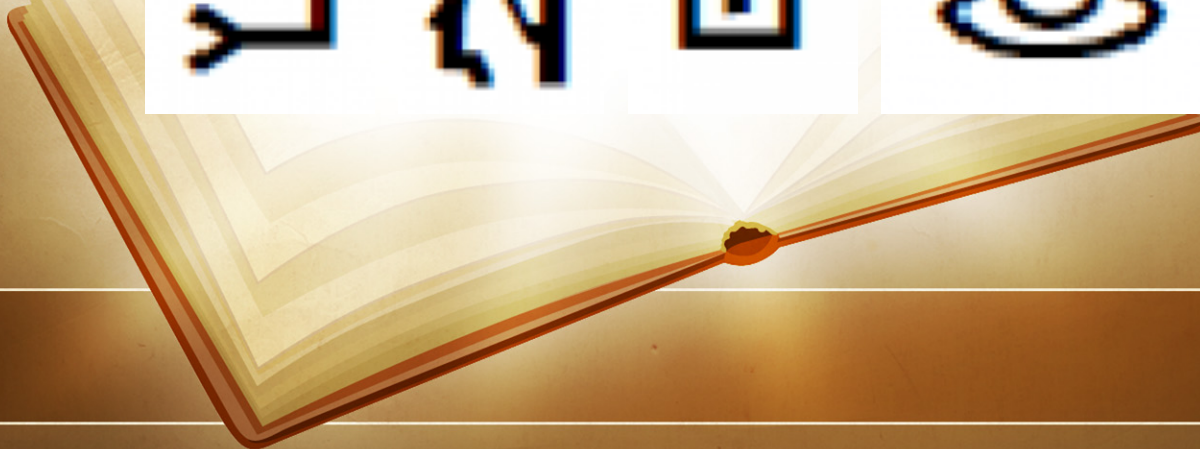
Messiah, is the Head of the Body, that is us, the assembly; which are being up in Him, as living stones that keep their eyes on the Head of the House!

Kěpha Aleph/1 Peter 2:4-5 “Drawing near to Him, a living Stone - rejected indeed by men, but chosen by Elohim and precious - ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up, a spiritual house, a set-apart priesthood, to offer up spiritual slaughter *offerings* acceptable to Elohim through יהושע Messiah.”

The pictographic of the word עִבְרִי Ibrī - Strong's
H5680 - Hebrew looks like this:




י ב ר י



The extra letter that is used at the end of this word is the letter:

Yod - י:

The ancient script has this letter as  which is **'an arm and hand'** and carries the meaning of **'work, make, throw'**, from the primary functions of the arm and hand, and it also represents worship or giving thanks in the extending of hands as a gesture of this. The work of one's hands is the basic meaning of this letter!

As true Hebrew's, we have our eyes fixed on the
Head of the House; because of His work of
redemption, as we look to the revealed arm of
Elohim!

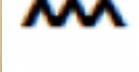
To whom has the arm of יהוה been revealed?
To those who have turned to the Master the veil
has been removed and are therefore able to
properly see the deliverance that our Head has
secured for us, giving us the strength to look to
Him and 'cross over', so to speak!

Collectively, as His Body and Bride that He has washed in His blood, we see the pictographic of the plural word עֲבָרִים **lb'**rim, pictured as follows:

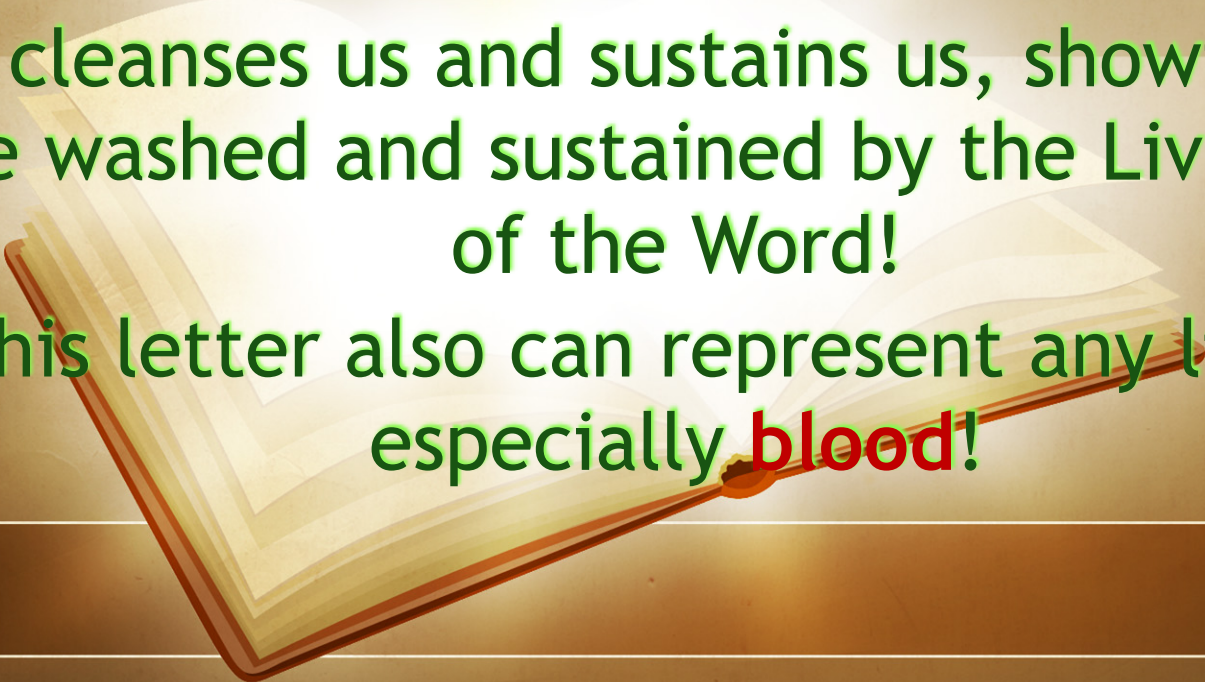


We see following the additional letter being used to form the plural word for 'Hebrews':

Mem - ׀:

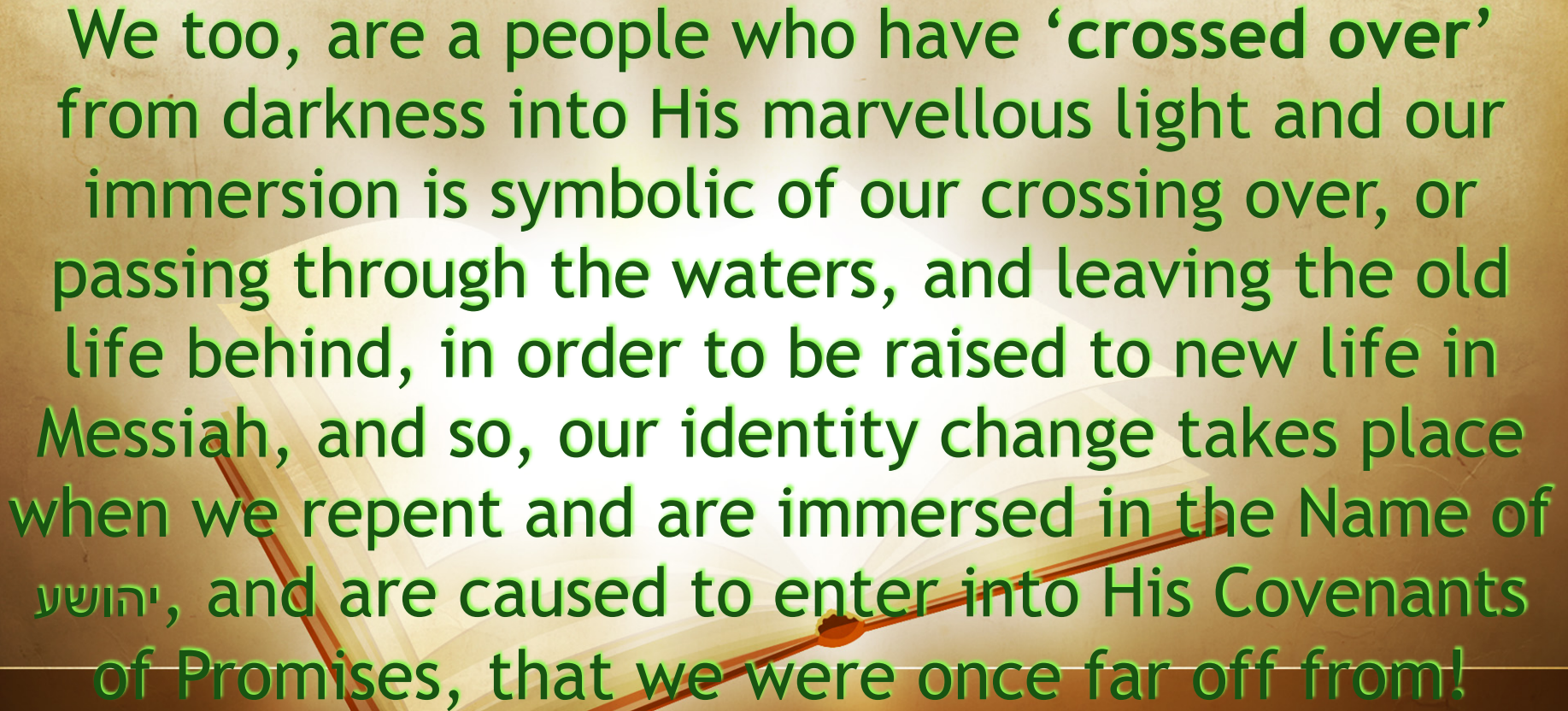
The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as '**water**', and also carries the meaning of '**chaos**' (from the storms of the sea) and can also picture that which is **mighty** or massive as well as the unknown.

We are also able to understand this letter as representing **the nations**, for the nations are often likened to the seas in Scripture.



This also carries for us the picture of washing, as we understand the function of water being that which cleanses us and sustains us, showing us how we are washed and sustained by the Living Waters of the Word!


This letter also can represent any liquid, especially **blood!**



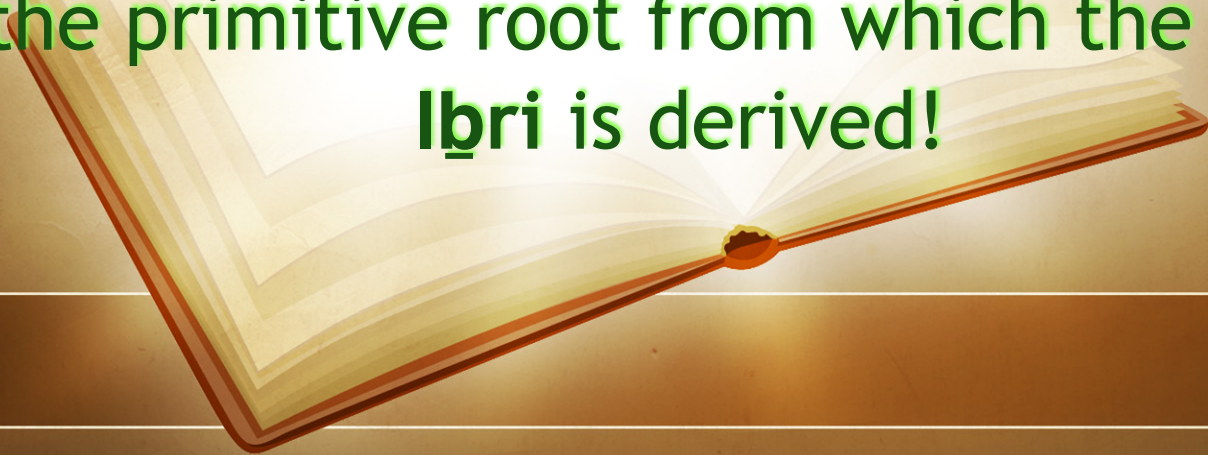
We too, are a people who have ‘**crossed over**’ from darkness into His marvellous light and our immersion is symbolic of our crossing over, or passing through the waters, and leaving the old life behind, in order to be raised to new life in Messiah, and so, our identity change takes place when we repent and are immersed in the Name of יהושע, and are caused to enter into His Covenants of Promises, that we were once far off from!

The reason I am mentioning this, is because the term **‘enter into’** is used in:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 29:12 “so that you should enter into covenant with יהוה your Elohim, and into His oath, which יהוה your Elohim makes with you today”

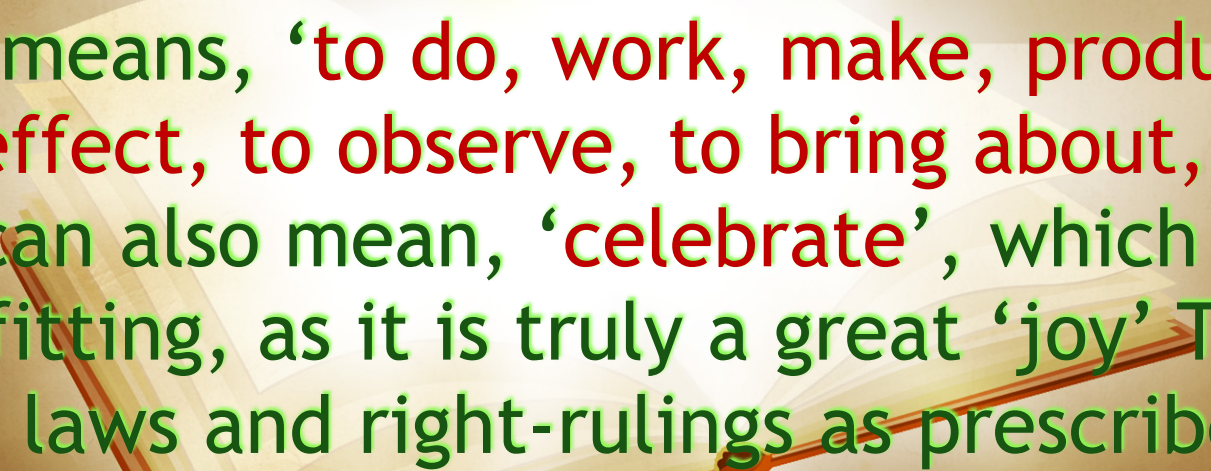


This term 'enter into' is translated from the root word עָבַר **aḅar** - Strong's H5674 which means, '*to pass over, through or pass by, crossed over*' and it is the primitive root from which the word עִבְרִי **Iḅri** is derived!



When we 'enter into' covenant with יהוה our Elohim, we also enter into His 'oath', which comes from the primitive root word אָלָהּ alah - Strong's H422 which means, '**to swear, curse, put under oath, utter a curse**'; and so, we recognise that we accept all the conditions that are outlined in the covenants of promise - including the curses.

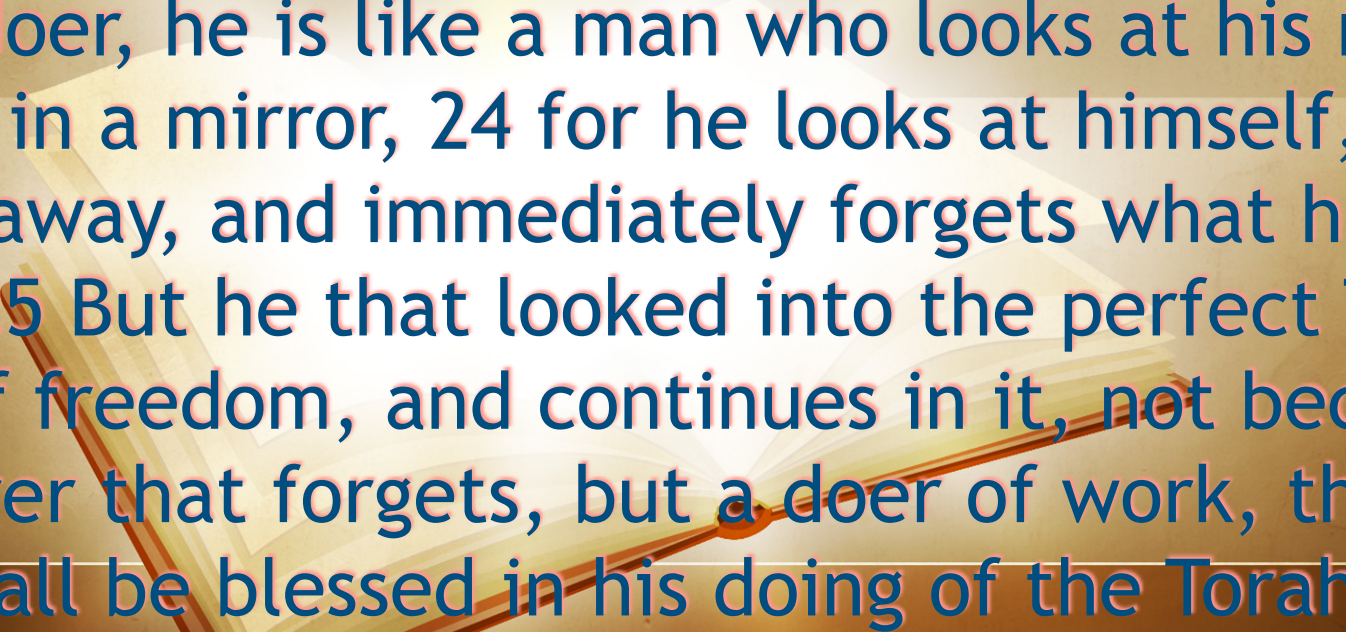
We enter in and are careful to do



The word that is translated as 'to do' comes from the Hebrew root word אָשָׁה *asah* - Strong's H6213 which means, 'to do, work, make, produce, to act with effect, to observe, to bring about, institute' and can also mean, 'celebrate', which I think is very fitting, as it is truly a great 'joy' TO DO the laws and right-rulings as prescribed!

So many today think that it is a huge burden to do what is commanded, yet that is so far from the truth - when we diligently observe and guard to do all He commands us to do - it is a great joy and a delight and not heavy at all!

The perfect Torah of freedom is like a mirror for us - and in looking intently into it we are able to see if we are in fact listening and doing or not:




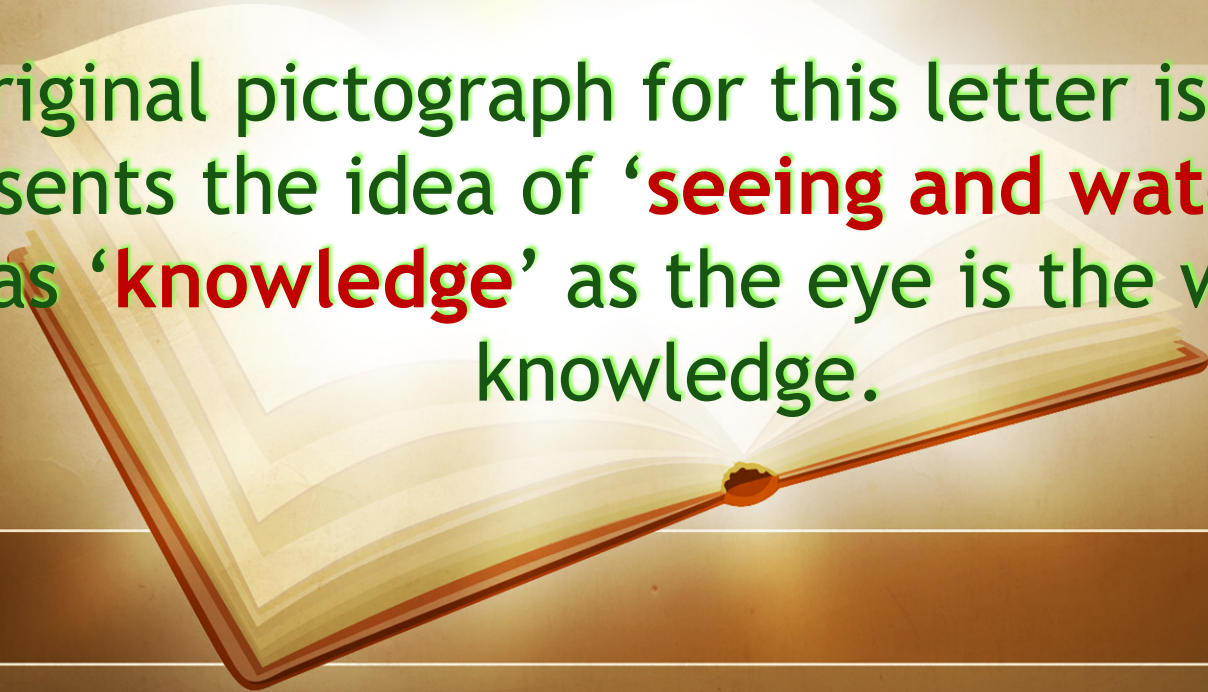
Ya'aqob/James 1:22-25 “And become doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 Because if anyone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror, 24 for he looks at himself, and goes away, and immediately forgets what he was like. 25 But he that looked into the perfect Torah, that of freedom, and continues in it, not becoming a hearer that forgets, but a doer of work, this one shall be blessed in his doing of the Torah.”

In the ancient pictographic script, the verb אָשָׁא *asah* - Strong's H6213 which means, **‘to do, work, make, produce, to act with effect, to observe, to bring about, institute, celebrate’** looks like this:




Ayin - א:

The original pictograph for this letter is:  and represents the idea of '**seeing and watching**', as well as '**knowledge**' as the eye is the window of knowledge.




Sin - שׁ:

This is the letter 'sin/shin' which in the ancient script is pictured as: , which is 'two front teeth' and carries the meaning of 'sharp or press, chew or devour'; which is what the teeth do, and also speaks of the sharpened word that comes forth from the mouth, as the teeth 'chew' or 'meditate' on the Truth, making what comes forth pure and sharp! It also carries the understanding of consuming or destroying - as teeth do to food.

Hey - ה:



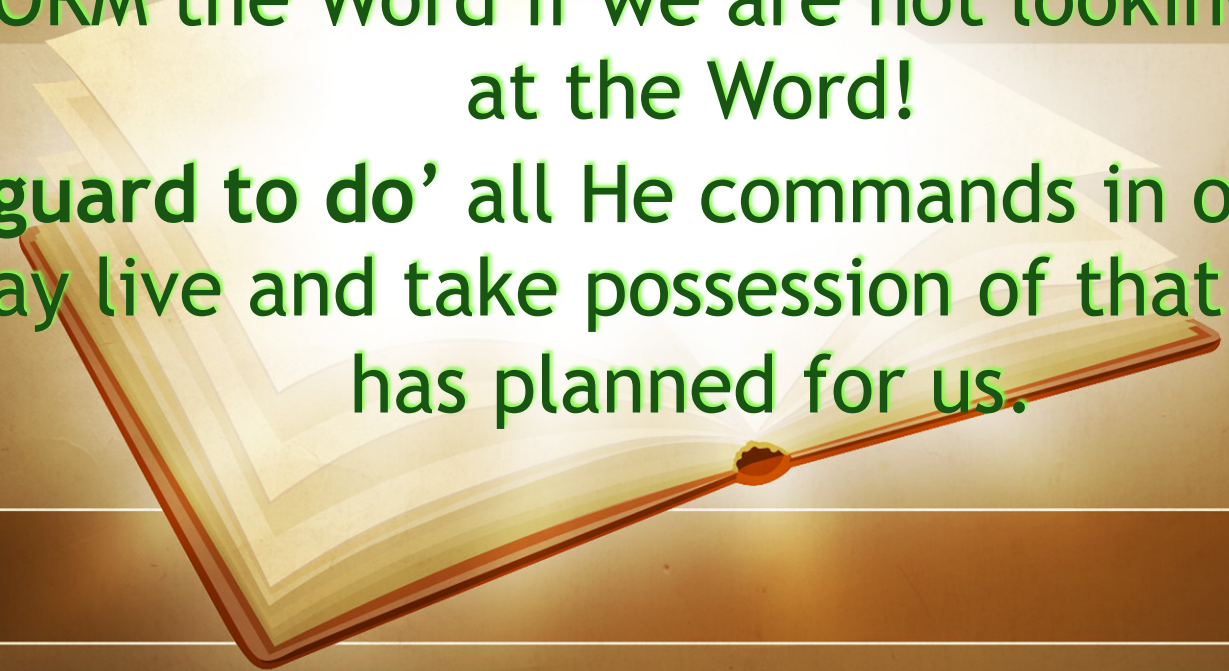
The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as a man standing with his arms raised up and out as if pointing to something, and in essence carries the meaning of '**behold**' as in when looking at something very great. It can also have the meaning to '**breath**' or '**sigh**' as when looking at a great sight and having your breath taken away so to speak! It also has the meaning of **revelation** or to reveal something by pointing it out, as well as '**praise**' through the lifting up of our hands in complete awe and surrender.

When looking at this word אָשָׂה **asah** in the ancient pictographic form, we are able to further understand how critical it is for us to be doers of the Word and so perform and do that which is instructed for us to do. From this picture we can see the meaning of:

LOOKING AT THE WORD THAT HAS BEEN REVEALED!

○ This teaches us that we are unable to DO or PERFORM the Word if we are not looking intently at the Word!

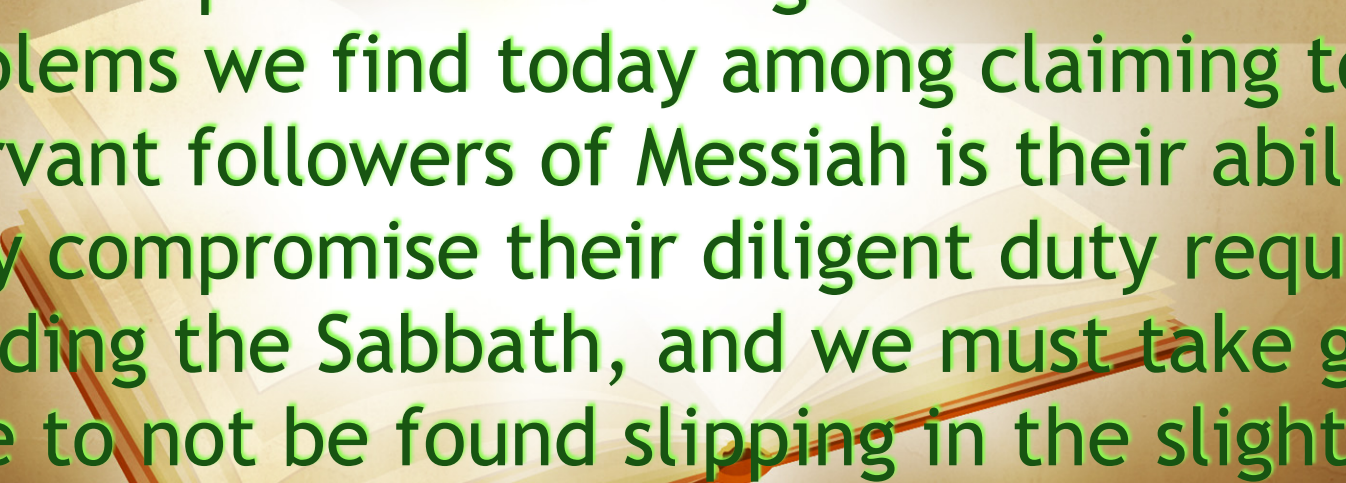
We 'guard to do' all He commands in order that we may live and take possession of that which יהוה has planned for us.



The word used for 'guard' is שָׁמַר shammar - Strong's H8104 meaning, 'keep, watch, present, attend to, pay close attention, guard' and the basic idea of the root of this word is 'to exercise great care over'.

We are to exercise great care over His Torah!





When one is 'guarding' something, being 'awake' and alert is imperative or else the risk of a theft or a loss of possessions is high. One of the biggest problems we find today among claiming torah observant followers of Messiah is their ability to quickly compromise their diligent duty required in guarding the Sabbath, and we must take great care to not be found slipping in the slightest!

When used in combination with other verbs, the meaning is 'do carefully or diligently', i.e. perform carefully by paying strict attention as to what must be done as it expresses the careful attention to be paid to the obligations of a covenant, to laws, statutes, etc.

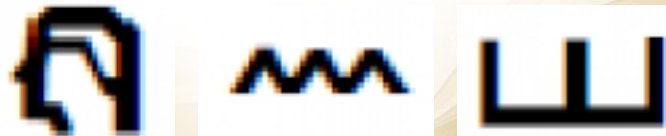
What is interesting and worth taking note of, is the frequent use of the word שָׁמַר shamar in the Torah.




It is used 148 times in 139 verses in the Torah - 15 times in 15 verses in **Berēshith/Genesis**, 25 times in 24 verses in **Shemoth/Exodus**; 16 times in 16 verses in **Wayyiqra/Leviticus**; 19 times in 19 verses in **Bemidbar/Numbers** and 73 times in 65 verses in **Debarim/Deuteronomy!!!**

With **Debarim/Deuteronomy** being seen as the ‘second reading of the Torah’, as it was the instructions given to the new generation, we can see why there is a greater emphasis on the use of שָׁמַר **shamar** - Strong’s H8104 to the generation that was about to enter into the **Promised Land!**

As we look at the Hebrew word שָׁמַר *shamar* - Strong's H8104 which means, '*keep, watch, present, attend to, pay close attention, guard*', in the ancient pictographic form, we are able to identify what true guarding entails.




Shin - שׁ:

This is the letter 'shin' which in the ancient script is pictured as, , which is 'two front teeth' and carries the meaning of 'sharp or press, chew or devour'; which is what the teeth do, and also speaks of the sharpened word that comes forth from the mouth as the teeth 'chew' or 'meditate' on the Truth, making what comes forth pure and sharp! It also carries the understanding of consuming or destroying - as teeth do to food.


Mem - ׀:



The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as 'water', and also carries the meaning of 'chaos' (from the storms of the sea) and can also picture that which is mighty or massive as well as the unknown. We are also able to understand this letter as representing the nations, for the nations are often likened to the seas in Scripture.

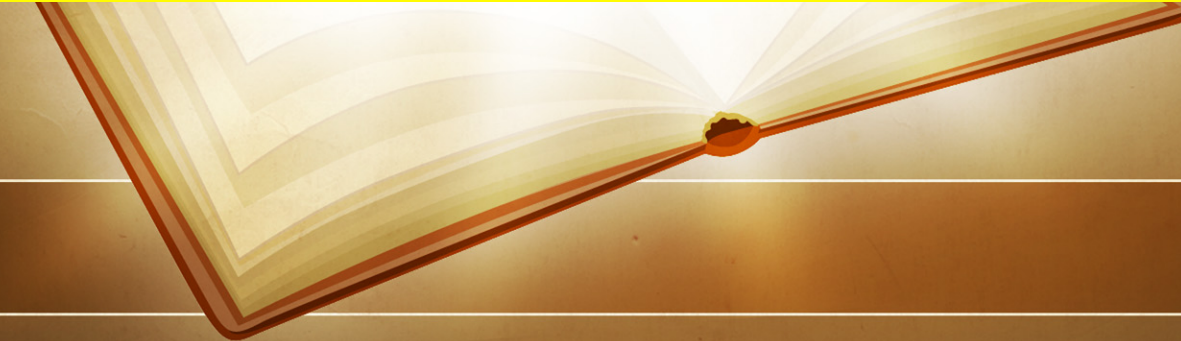
This also carries for us the picture of washing, as we understand the function of water being that which cleanses us and sustains us, showing us how we are washed and sustained by the Living Waters of the Word! This letter also can represent any liquid, especially blood!

Resh - ר:

The ancient script has this letter 'resh' as  and is pictured as 'the head of a man' and has the meaning of the **head of a man** as well as **chief, top, begging** or **first**. Top, as in the top or head of a body and chief, as is head of a tribe or people as well as the one who rules the people.

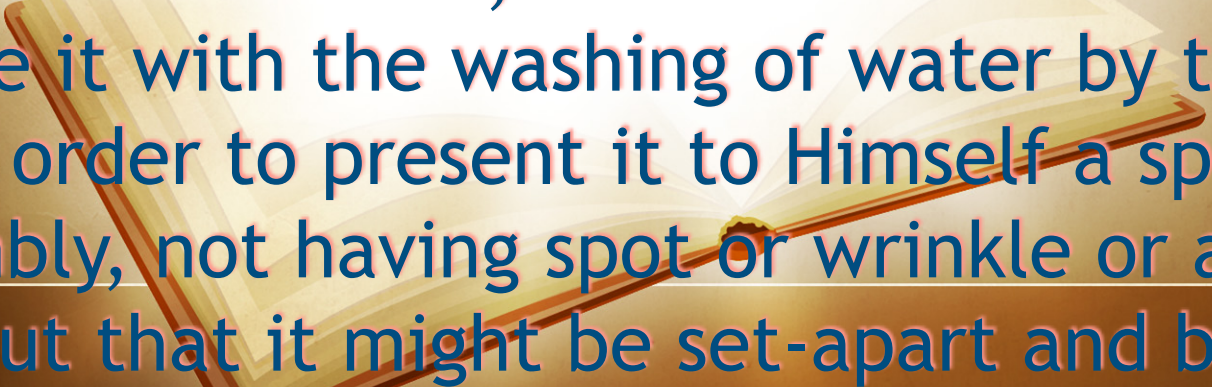
Considering these pictographs that render the word that means to guard carefully, we are able to identify how we are to:

MEDITATE ON THE WASHING OF OUR HEAD



In Sha'ul's letter the believers in Ephesos, he instructed Husbands to love their wives, as Messiah loved us:

Eph'siyim/Ephesians 5:25-28 “Husbands, love your wives, as Messiah also did love the assembly and gave Himself for it, ²⁶ in order to set it apart and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, ²⁷ in order to present it to Himself a splendid assembly, not having spot or wrinkle or any of this sort, but that it might be set-apart and blameless.”



It is through His Word that He washes us, and therefore, we are able to identify the cleansing that His Blood brought to us, giving us the ability to properly meditate on the cleansing that the Word of our Head brings, by guarding to do all that He instructs us to do.



We are to be guarding all the:

1 - Laws - חֻקִּים - ḥuqqiym - plural of the word for law - חֹק ḥoq - Strong's H2706 meaning, 'something prescribed or owed, boundary, allotment, portion, ordinance, statute'.

This word comes from the primitive root חָקַק ḥaqaq - Strong's H2710 which means, 'to cut, inscribe, hack, engrave, decree, carve, sceptre, lawgiver'.

2 - Right-Rulings - מִשְׁפָּטִים mishpatiym, which is the plural of H4941 מִשְׁפָּט mishpat which means *right-ruling or judgement* and are the 'legal procedures' or *firm rulings* that are non-negotiable.

It is through these mishpatim that community is to be ruled and how any issues that may arise would be dealt with in a prescribed way that is just and fair.

These are what we could call the ‘social laws’ that clearly teach us how to get on with each other and how we are to behave and how we are to live according to how we have been created to be in

יהושע.

Tehillah/Psalm 89:14 “Righteousness and right-ruling are the foundation of Your throne; kindness and truth go before Your face.”

Tehillah/Psalm 97:2 “Clouds and darkness all around Him, righteousness and right-ruling are the foundation of His throne.”