

PARASHAT SHALACH L'RHA

(SEND ON YOUR BEHALF)

NUMBERS 13:1-15:41

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

Joshua 2:1-24

Testimony of Yeshua

On the faithlessness and unbelief of the Israelites: **Hebrews 3:7-19**

On the faith and the victory of the redeemed believer: **Romans 8:31, 37; Philippians 4:13; Hebrews 11:33**

On learning from the mistakes of the Israelites: **Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11**

The law (Torah) is for the Jews and the Gentiles: **Romans 3:29-31; Galatians 3:28-29; Ephesians 2:11-19**

On the fringes (tzitzits) of Yeshua's garments: **Matthew 9:20; 14:36; 23:5; Mark 6:56; Luke 8:44**

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 13:1 Moses Sends Spies to the Promised Land
- 13:16 Moses Gives Instructions to the Spies
- 13:27 The Spies Give Their Report
- 13:30 Caleb Gives a Good Report and Is Shouted Down by Those With an Evil Report
- 14:1 The People Murmur and Accuse Moses
- 14:6 Joshua (of Ephraim) and Caleb (of Yehudah) Attempt to Strengthen the People's Faith; The People Attempt to Stone Them; The Glory of YHVH Intervenes
- 14:11 YHVH Threatens to Annihilate the Faithless People, But Moses Intercedes
- 14:20 Elohim Forgives the Complaining Israelites But Sentences Them to Forty Years of Wandering
- 14:26 Elohim Explains Why They Must Wander for Forty Years
- 14:40 Israel Recognizes Its Sin and Some Defiantly Determine to Go Up to Possess the Land Only to Be Defeated by the Canaanites
- 15:1 The New Law of the Wine Libations
- 15:15 Only One Law (Torah) for the Israelites and Gentiles
- 15:17 Challah (Dough) Offering to YHVH
- 15:22 The Atonement for Public and Individual Unintentional Idol Worship Forgiven
- 15:30 Intentional Idol Worshipers to Be Cut Off From Israel

—15:32 A Man Executed for Desecrating the Sabbath

—15:37 YHVH Commands the Wearing of Tzitzit (Fringes with Blue Thread) as an Aid in Remembering YHVH's Torah Commandments

Study Questions for This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion)

1 13:1–14:45, The incident of the spies followed directly after Miriam had spoken evil against Moses, and just before Korah's rebellion. *The ArtScroll Tikkun* (p. 339) notes that the incidents of Miriam and Korah both occurred in Hazeroth, while the spies were sent from the Wilderness of Paran (13:3). Why then does the Torah sandwich the incident of Paran between the Hazeroth incidents? At Hazeroth, sins of the mouth were committed where individuals spoke against YHVH's leaders resulting in serious consequences. The spies should have learned their lesson, but they did not. They spoke evil against YHVH's land and Israel's leadership. Please pray this prayer with me:

Father in heaven, help us to learn from our forefathers the evil consequences resulting from speaking against the anointed and commissioned leaders, elders, shepherds and teachers you have placed over us for our spiritual growth and protection. Cleanse our lips and our hearts so that instead of speaking slander and lies we speak blessing and praise. Amen.

2 Even though YHVH declared the land of Canaan (The Promised Land) to be good, the people were unable to take his word at face value. They felt the need to “confirm” YHVH's word by sending out “spies” to verify the accuracy of his word. Were they demonstrating faithlessness or simply caution and prudence? The Scriptures labels the children of Israel as a faithless, hard-hearted and unbelieving generation causing the anger of YHVH to burn against them. This attitude prevented them from entering the Promised Land (Heb 4:1–7). Are we any different? Do you walk by faith (when you have heard a sure word from YHVH) or in fear, doubt and unbelief?

3 13:2, *Send forth men, if you please* (*The ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*). The implication here is that Elohim gave Moses permission to send out the spies, but left the final decision up to him. This idea is confirmed in Deuteronomy 1:22 where Moses states that the idea to spy out the land came from the Israelites, not from YHVH. By allowing them to do this, was YHVH deliberately putting them to the test to see if they would trust him when he had already told them that Canaan was a good land and theirs for the taking with his help? Would they walk by faith in his word and promises or would they have to see the actual land before believing YHVH's word?

When YHVH gives you a promise, do you have to see it come to pass before believing it, or are you able to simply begin taking steps of faith toward the fulfillment of the promises without actually seeing any tangible evidence of the end goal? What has YHVH promised you and what steps of faith have you taken toward possessing your spiritual “promised inheritance?” (Read the scriptural definition of faith in Heb 11:1.)

YHVH did not choose the twelve spies, the people did; hence, the name of this parashah, “Send for Yourself.” When people choose their own leaders the failure rate is high — in this case ten of twelve leaders were faithless duds. Man-inspired and initiated efforts seldom produce lasting spiritual benefits. This effort ended in the faithless leaders shouting down those who had courage and faith. Do you act like Caleb and Joshua or one of the other ten spies in your spiritual approach to what YHVH has called you to do? Are you running upward and onward toward your spiritual inheritance, or are you holding back? Are you hearing the voice of YHVH's Spirit so that you know what your personal spiritual marching orders are? Do you know how to hear his voice? If not, why not? Most of us sometimes act as Joshuas and Calebs and at times like the other ten spies. We tend to be inconsistent in our spiritual walk. What are you doing to become more like Joshua and Caleb?

Eighteenth-century Christian Bible commentator, Matthew Henry, in his comments on this passage, discusses the demerits of the people's choice to search out the land of Canaan. He then compares the unbelief of the ten carnal spies with the doubt and unbelief in the walk of the believer. He notes that the motion to search out the land appears to have come from the people (see Deut 1:22). They had a better

opinion of their own policy than of Elohim's wisdom. Thus we ruin ourselves, he says, by believing the reports and representations of sense rather than of divine revelation. We walk by sight, not by faith (pp. 130–131, *Matthew Henry Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Moody Press).

What is “divine revelation?” One does not hear this concept often discussed. What is it and how does a born-again believer receive it? Henry continues, Difficulties that are in the way of salvation dwindle and vanish before a lively, active faith in the power and promise of Elohim. All things are possible, if they are promised, to him that believes, but carnal sense and carnal professors are not to be trusted. Unbelief overlooks the promises and power of Elohim, magnifies every danger and difficulty, and fills the heart with discouragement. May YHVH help us to believe! We shall then find that all things are possible through him who strengthens us (Ibid.)

4 **13:16**, *Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Yehoshua*. Prior to sending the spies forth, Moses renames his assistant Hoshea (whose name means “salvation”) to Yehoshua (or Joshua, meaning “Yah [short for Yahowah] Saves”) by adding the Hebrew letter *yud* /^ו to Hoshea's name so that his name would now begin with the first letter of YHVH's name — the English letter “Y”. What was the prophetic significance of this name change? Who is it that will lead us into our spiritual Promised Land or our spiritual and eternal rest? (See Heb 4:8 and 11, especially verse 8, where the author shows that Yehoshua was the foreshadow of Yeshua.) Do you possess a vibrant and active faith in Yeshua? Is he the Chief Cornerstone of your spiritual house, the Author and Finisher of your faith and the Captain of your salvation to lead you into the spiritual rest of his eternal kingdom? Are you faithfully following him as the Israelites followed Yehoshua/Joshua into the Promised Land?

5 As a result of doubt and unbelief (disbelieving YHVH's Word), Israel nearly got exterminated. In the end, they were made to wander in the wilderness for another 38 years (for a total of 40 years from the time they left Egypt, or 40 years for the 40 days the spies were in the land). Have you been wandering in circles in your spiritual journey? The Scriptures says that “the just shall live by faith” and that “without faith it is impossible to please him” (Heb 10:38; 11:6). Numerous times Yeshua scolded his disciples for their fear or faithlessness, which hindered the advance of the work of Elohim on earth. Do you refer to your doubt and unbelief by the euphemisms of “caution” and “prudence”? These are fine as long as they do not keep us from moving forward in obedience to YHVH's Word — Yeshua the Messiah, the Word of Elohim incarnate!

6 **13:28**, This verse begins with the word *but* or *nevertheless*. The spies' initial report (verse 27) was factual and was in agreement with what YHVH had already said about the land, but all that was disqualified and negated in the minds of the faithless spies by the statement in verse 28 beginning by the qualifier *but*. Medieval Jewish Torah commentator Rambam comments that the key word in their report that revealed them to be lacking in faith was the word *but*. By using a word that implied a contradiction to the optimism of their first two sentences, they were, in effect, telling that nation that no matter how rich and blessed the land was, it was beyond their reach. The inhabitants were too strong and their cities too impregnable. Ordinary human beings could not do battle with giants. Thus the spies were advising the nation not even to attempt an assault on Canaan.

How often do we fail to possess our spiritual inheritance, move into our giftings and callings because we have a “yes ... but” response to YHVH? Listen to yourself. How often do you make excuses and curse yourself by your own negative and faithless words and attitudes and disqualify yourself from the spiritual destiny and inheritance YHVH has for you?

7 **13:32**, *It is a land which devours its inhabitants*. The Jewish commentators in *The ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash* cogently observe, “Such misinterpretations are typical of people who choose not to have faith. Invariably they interpret events in a way that will conform to their own notions” (p. 803). Having faith in YHVH is a conscious choice that one has to make. Faith does not come automatically. Fear, doubt and unbelief do, however, and are part of the fallen nature or evil inclination that all men possess.

Paul talks about leaving behind the fallen, faithless, sin-bent nature and moving into a walk of faith in the Spirit of Elohim when in Romans 8:1–2 he contrasts the “law of sin and death” with “the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua.” Through Yeshua we become more than conquerors (Rom 8:37). First John 5:4

says, “For whatever is born of Elohim overcomes the world, and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith [i.e. faith in Yeshua who is the Author and Finisher of our faith, the One who gives us the gift of faith, the One in whom we have faith, and on whose words and promises believers stand firm and secure as a house built on a rock].” Fear of death is the mother of all fears and is what plagued the disbelieving Israelites. Through identification with Yeshua’s death, burial and resurrection at baptism (Rom 6:3–6) we too (through Yeshua) can be victorious over the sting of death and the grave, which is the death sentence upon all Torah-lawbreaking mortals. (Read 1 Corinthians 15:47–58 and rejoice!)

8 13:33, *And so we were in their eyes ... (The ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash)*. “As [Israelites] and emissaries of the [Israelite] people, they should have thought only of their mission, not of what anyone else thought of them (Ibid. p. 803).

What can we learn from the example of the 12 spies? We must walk by faith and not by sight always keeping our eyes on Yeshua. Remember the Gospel account of Peter walking on the water (Matt 14:22–33)? As long as Peter kept his eyes on Yeshua he was able to walk on the sea, but when he took his eyes off of Yeshua and looked at the stormy circumstances around him he began to sink. The Scriptures tells us, “Now the just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Heb 10:38), and, “without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that comes to Elohim must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb 11:6).

9 14:22, *Have tempted me now these ten times*. Israel, while in the wilderness, tested YHVH ten times and refused to heed his voice. According to the Jewish sages, these ten times were: Exodus 14:11; 15:24; 16:3; 16:20; 16:27; 17:2; 32:4; Numbers 11:1; 11:4; and here (i.e., believing the spies’ evil report). Look at each of these incidents where Israel “tested” YHVH and preferred to walk in doubt and unbelief rather than to trust YHVH’s Word. These are examples for us to learn from (1 Cor 10:11). Be blatantly honest with yourself: how many times have you tested your Heavenly Father in the same areas Israel did?

10 14:40–45, *We ... will go up*. Now the Israelites prepare to go and to possess Canaan in their own strength and against the will of YHVH. Matthew Henry discusses this showing how the carnal mind is enmity against YHVH, for when he bade them to go, they would not, and when he forbade them, that is when they decided to go. They distrusted his strength, and trusted in their own. What was the result of their expedition? Failure! Let us take warning from the fate of Israel, lest we perish after the same example of unbelief. Let us go forth, depending on YHVH’s mercy, power, promise and truth (p. 132). Do you think that the Israelites were rationally aware of what they were doing? We can easily look back in 20/20 hindsight and see the folly of their ways, but let us pray that YHVH gives us the discernment to see when each of us is guilty of the same in our own lives.

11 Two types of sin are delineated in 15:27–31. They are the *sin of ignorance* and *the sin of presumption* (i.e., willful sinning, or literally, “sinning with a high hand”). For the first sin there is an offering or atonement. For the second sin, the penalty is death as illustrated by the example of the Sabbath-breaker in verses 32–36. It is interesting to note that breaking the Sabbath is the example used to illustrate the second sin. Why is this? Does this reveal YHVH’s high regard for the Shabbat? Is it prophetic of the attitude some men who claim to obey the Scriptures would take toward the Shabbat in subsequent years?

12 15:30–36, *The person who does anything presumptuously*. Here we see an example of presumptuous sin with regard to the Sabbath. Presumptuous sinners despise the Torah commands in YHVH’s Word thinking themselves to be too great, too good, and too wise, to be ruled by it. The act of gathering the sticks on the Sabbath was an affront both to the law and the Lawgiver (Henry, p. 133).

Here are some word definitions:

- ☞ *Presume* means “to assume, to undertake without leave or clear justification, dare.”
- ☞ *Presumptuous* means “audacity; overstepping due bounds, taking liberties.”
- ☞ The Hebrew word for *presume* is *ruwm/רום* (Strong’s H7311) meaning “to rise up, be high, be lofty, be exalted, to exalt oneself, magnify oneself, to be rotten, and to be wormy.”

Reflect on your own life. Are there areas of disobedience of which you need to repent? Many times we sin

out of human weakness, not willful disobedience. Can such sin, if not eliminated, lead to presumptuous sin? Can we become so callous to sin that we become brazen and willful? Paul talks about those whose consciences have become seared (1 Tim 4:2). What does this mean? In the Testimony of Yeshua, willful or presumptuous sin is often known in common parlance as *the unpardonable sin*. Let's read what the writer of Hebrews has to say about this. (See Heb 6:6–7 and 10:26–31.)

13 **15:32–36**, Let's take a closer look at the Sabbath desecration in the wilderness. The Torah juxtaposes the sins of idolatry and Sabbath desecration because they represent the same concept. Just as the idolater denies the sovereignty of Elohim, so too, one who flouts the Sabbath, which testifies to Elohim's creation of the universe, declares his lack of faith in the Creator. Because of the vital place of Sabbath in the constellation of Jewish belief, the Torah places this incident here, although it did not necessarily happen immediately after the rebellion of the spies (*The ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*, p. 815).

Working on the Sabbath is evidence of lack of faith in the Creator to provide for our needs on the other six days so that we will not have to work on the seventh day. Working on the Sabbath is also a result of unbelief (faithlessness), which is fear (the antithesis of faith; see 2 Tim 1:7). It is doubt, unbelief and fear (faithlessness) that prevented Israel from entering into the Promised Land for 40 years (Heb 4:1–11). As we see from Hebrews 4, the Sabbath is a picture of entering YHVH's spiritual rest and is a spiritual picture of the Promised Land and the Millennium. When we rest from our physical labors on the seventh day we demonstrate that we have the requisite faith to enter the spiritual or millennial rest that YHVH has prepared for us, unlike the ten evil Israelite spies who lacked the faith in YHVH's word necessary to go in to possess the Promised Land. Joshua and Caleb had this faith and they were able to go in. Remember that the Sabbath is the sign of the Sinaitic Covenant (Exod 31:7, 13). If one walks in the righteousness of that covenant, one will be a recipient of the promised blessings of the New Covenant, which also includes the blessings of Torah-obedience as found in the Sinaitic or Mosaic Covenant. Perhaps this is why the Sabbath incident is juxtaposed with the spy incident in this section of the Torah. It shows the connection between keeping the Sabbath and entering the Promised Land.

14 **Numbers 15:32. A man gathering sticks.** A man gathering sticks. The man gathering sticks on the Sabbath is an example of intentional sin, for which there is no sacrifice (atonement or forgiveness; Num 15:30–31). Furthermore, the act of gathering sticks on the Sabbath teaches us something else. Sticks are used to start fires, something that the Torah commands us not to do on the Sabbath — especially if it relates to our work, business or secular activities such as building the tabernacle (Exod 35:3 cp. vv. 4–35 or cooking food, see Exod 16:23).

A fire is a biblical metaphor for strife and division, which is usually caused by the misuse of the tongue (Prov 16:27; 26:20–21; Jas 3:5–6). Those who stir up the fires of strife and division must be put out of the camp, even as the man who was gathering sticks on the Sabbath to build a fire had to be put out of the camp of Israel.

Paul gives instructions about putting individuals who misuse their tongues outside of the camp of Israel (or congregation of redeemed Israelites) in several places (Rom 16:17–18; Tit 3:10 cp. 1 Cor 5:9–11 in reference to a reviler).

Why should such individuals be treated as a pariah to the congregation of the righteous? Simply this, with smooth words and flattering speech they will deceive the hearts of the simple (Rom 16:17–18) and destroy the congregation. Paul calls such individuals who use their tongues to draw a following grievous or savage wolves and perverse men (Acts 20:29–30).

15 In 15:37–41, YHVH commands Israelites to wear *tzitzit* (literally, blue tassels or fringes) on the four corners of their garments. This command follows the incident of the Sabbath-breaker. Perhaps had this man been wearing *tzitzit* he might have thought twice about violating the Shabbat. Such would not be dissimilar to a man being prevented from committing adultery when he notices the wedding ring on his finger. Nowadays some may scoff at the need to wear *tzitzit*, but is this not second-guessing YHVH and saying that part of his word is not important for our lives? Many men fail to wear them preferring to spiritualize away this command. Others are fearful of what others may think. Do we fear man more than

loving the praises of YHVH? If we can throw out this command where does it stop? How about the Sabbath, YHVH's feasts, or the dietary laws?

16 15:37–41, A Quick Study on *Tzitzit*

Shofars, Davidic worship dance, talits (prayer shawls), a Torah scroll and tzitzits (fringes or tassels) all have something in common: they are hallmark symbols of those who are returning to the Hebrew roots of their faith. When a Christian begins to discover the Hebraic roots of his faith, like a hand fitting into a glove, it is not long before he is acting out his renewed faith in a highly demonstrable manner. Outsiders may view the wearing of beards, a talit and tzitzit as exhibitionism, but to the saint who truly feels that he has returned to his spiritual roots they are symbols of a faith that is more than superficial in nature. They represent a connectedness to his spiritual family tree, to the nation of Israel and eventually to the God of Israel, YHVH Elohim, the originator of that faith, family tree and nation.

As a wedding ring symbolizes the covenantal agreement one spouse has for another, so the blue fringes worn on the corners of one's garments are an outward symbol of one's spiritual commitment and devotion to the Elohim of Israel through obedience to his instructions in righteousness [i.e., the Torah] as found in the sacred Scriptures.

Indeed, it is not because of man-made tradition, but because of a direct command in the Torah that born-again Israelites wear tzitzit, for we read in Numbers 15:37–41,

And YHVH spoke unto Moses, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes [*tzitzit*] in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribbon of blue. And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that you may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of YHVH, and do them; and that you seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you use to go a whoring, that you may remember, and do all my commandments, and be set apart unto your Elohim. I am YHVH your Elohim, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your Elohim: I am YHVH your Elohim."

To read the rest of this study on the Law of the Fringes, go to <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/tzitzit.pdf>.

17 15:39, And not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray (*The ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*). The heart and eyes are like the body's spies, brokering for it the sins sought by its animal nature, the heart covets and the eyes seek out, and the body sins (Ibid. p. 817).

We are enjoined to avoid any thought that could entice us to uproot a fundamental of the Torah. Human intelligence is limited and not everyone can ascertain the truth, so that a person can't destroy his world if he follows his random thoughts. For example, if a person ruminates on whether or not there is an Elohim, whether the prophecies of the Scriptures are true, or whether the Torah is of heavenly origin — and he does not have the degree of knowledge and judgment to find the clear truth — he will be opening himself to heretical beliefs. Therefore, the Torah commands that one not explore after heart and eye lest he come to stray from belief in Elohim (Ibid. pp. 817–818).

It is significant that this *sidrah* (*parashah* or Torah portion) begins and ends with the concept of exploring and spying out. The spies who went to reconnoiter the land of Canaan went looking for dangers that would justify their own preconceptions. Caleb and Joshua saw the land and found in it justification for Elohim's assurance that the land was very good, while their comrades saw only confirmation of their fears. Thus the Torah is warning us not to be taken in by the lures that appeal to heart and eyes; instead, we must be ruled by intelligence and faith (Ibid. pp. 818–819). We will see what we want to see in a situation depending on our faith and the negative or positive disposition of our heart. (Read and ponder Jer 17:9 and Rom 8:7.)

HAFTORAH READING — JOSHUA 2:1-24

YHVH Rewards the Faith of a Non-Israelite Gentile

THE OBVIOUS CONNECTION BETWEEN this week's parashah and haftorah portions is the sending forth of spies to scope out the land of Canaan. The first mission ended in a calamitous disaster for Israel based on the faithlessness of the ten spies, while the second mission resulted in Israel successfully conquering Jericho, the fortified gateway city to the Promised Land.

1 Rahab, the non-Israelite innkeeper and inhabitant of Jericho, was a woman of faith who became a sincere convert to the Israelites' religion, and ended up becoming an ancestor of David and Yeshua. Throughout the Scriptures, there are examples of righteous non-Israelites confessing their faith in the Elohim of Israel, choosing to leave behind their pagan cultures, and then being grafted into the nation of Israel. Who are some other examples of this in the Scriptures? (See Gen 41:45; Exod 12:38,48-49; Lev 18:26; Num 15:16; Deut 10:19; 31:12; Ruth 1:16.) Rahab was a stranger or alien seeking to be grafted into Israel. What do the Scriptures say about this class of people?

Stranger (Foreigner or Alien): Scripturally the Hebrew word *nekar* (*Strong's* H5236/*TWOT* 1368b) is used in reference to anything or anyone that is foreign to the religion or people of Israel (Exod 12:43; Deut 31:16; 32:16; Judg 10:16; Neh 9:2; Isa 60:10; Ezek 44:7). *Nekar* can also refer to people who forsake their *foreign* or *alien* ways and join themselves to the people and to Elohim, the God of Israel, and who take hold of the covenants of Israel (Isa 56:3-6; cp. Eph 2:11-14).

In Exodus 12:43 and 48, the kjv uses the word *stranger*, though in each verse they are two different Hebrew words. In the former, the word *nekar* is used in reference to those who *are not* allowed to partake in Passover. In the latter verse, the Hebrew word for *stranger* is *ger* (*Strong's* H1616/*TWOT* 330a) meaning "a temporary inhabitant, or a newcomer." This word is also translated in the kjv as *stranger*, or *alien*, but also carries with it the connotation of "a sojourner." The *TWOT* defines a *ger* as follows: "The root means to live among people who are not blood relatives; thus, rather than enjoying native civil rights, the *ger* was dependent on the hospitality that played an important role in the ancient near east.... The *ger* in Israel was largely regarded as a proselyte. He was to be present for the solemn reading of the [Torah] Law (Deut 31:12) showing that he was exposed to its demands. The law concerning unleavened bread applied to him as well as the native (Exod 12:19) and a circumcised *ger* could keep Passover (Exod 12:48f.; Num 9:14)." He was also included in the celebration of the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29), the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths (Deut 16:14), like the native he was forbidden from worshipping foreign gods (Lev 17:8), and was forbidden from eating blood (Lev 17:10,12,13). The laws of sexual chastity applied to him as well as to the native (Lev 18:26) along with the Sabbath laws (Exod 20:10; 23:12). He experienced the same legal and civil rights as a native Israelite (Deut 1:16; 24:17; 27:19) and Israel was to not oppress the *ger* (Exod 22:21; Deut 10:19) but to love him as themselves (Lev 19:34) (*TWOT*, vol. 1, pp. 155-156).

In brief, Israel's treatment of the *ger* was a means of evangelizing the world with the message of YHVH's Torah-truth. All could come into a spiritual relationship with the Elohim of Israel without respect to ethnicity and there was one Torah (i.e., YHVH's instructions, teachings or precepts in righteousness) for both Israelite and non-Israelite (Exod 12:49; Lev 24:22; Num 9:14; 15:15,16,29). Indeed, this was the driving force behind Paul's passion for the Gentiles (or people of the nations). Realizing the basis of evangelism from the Tanakh and the command to make proselytes by bringing aliens and strangers into the covenants and commonwealth of Israel and into a righteous relationship with the Elohim of Israel may help us to understand Paul's statements in Ephesians 2:11-19 (cp. 1 Pet 2:8-11).

As we study the concept of the stranger's relationship to Elohim, to the people and Torah covenants of Israel, it is interesting to note that the Scriptures nowhere indicates that YHVH would ever make a new or different covenant with the Gentiles or have different standards of righteousness for them than for Israel. Rather, the Gentiles were expected to assimilate into Israel, become Israel, follow the laws of Israel and be treated as Israel. This rule of law for the people of El never changed even through the apostolic age despite what most Christian religionists teach to the contrary. Remember, YHVH stated clearly that he does not



change (Mal 3:6), and Yeshua taught that any religious tradition of men that nullifies the Word of YHVH should be ignored (Mark 7:7-9).

2 **2:1**, *Came to an innkeeper's house.* Psalm 37 says, "Commit your way unto YHVH; trust in him ... Rest in YHVH, and wait patiently for him ... The steps of a good man are ordered by YHVH, and he [YHVH] delights in his [the man's] way" (verses 5, 7 and 23). The spies embarked on their mission with hearts of faith in YHVH's promises intent on bringing back a good report, unlike that of their forefathers. How did YHVH direct their steps, supernaturally protect them and reward their faith? How did he similarly reward Rahab for her faith? This mission has all the earmarks of a divinely inspired and blessed one. Was it by chance that they happened upon this particular innkeeper's place, that she was a woman of faith, that she would give them valuable information, and that she would become grafted into Israel and become an ancestor of Yeshua? All this occurred because the spies faithfully executed their mission. What can we learn from this about walking by faith and in obedience to the instructions YHVH has given us? The faithlessness of the ten evil spies affected a whole generation of Israelites, while the faith of these two righteous spies effected not only that generation of Israelites, but the salvation of the world through the birth of the Jewish Messiah! What has YHVH called us to do in our spiritual faith walk? Are we being faithful? What kind of legacy will we leave after us?

3 **2:18**, *Line of scarlet thread.* Rahab was saved from judgment against the sins of Jericho at the hand of a righteous Elohim by her hanging a scarlet thread out her window. What is the spiritual significance of this — especially in light of the color red? Relate this to what the Israelites did on Passover eve (Exod 12:22). A scarlet or "crimson thread" runs through the pages of the Scriptures, and is symbolic of Yeshua's redemptive work pointing the way to the cross (John 19:34). Examples of this "crimson thread" can be found in Genesis 38:28-30; Exodus 25:5; 26:14,36; 35:7; Isaiah 1:18; 1 John 5:6ff. (See also 1 Cor 10:2 cp. Heb 11:29.)

