

# PARASHAT SHOFTIM

(JUDGES)

DEUTERONOMY 16:18-21:9

## ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

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

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

### Haftorah Reading

Isaiah 51:12-53:12

### B'rit Chadashah

On resolving disputes and rendering judgments: **Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8**

On retaliation: **Matthew 5:38-42**

On dealing with idolaters in the congregation: **1 Corinthians 5:9-13**

On leadership within the local congregation: **Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; Ephesians 2:22; 4:11**

Regarding the testimony of multiple witnesses: **John 8:17; 2 Corinthians 13:1; Hebrews 10:28-31**

On supporting the ministry financially: **1 Timothy 5:17-22; 1 Corinthians 9:6-14; Galatians 6:6**

On the first Moses and Yeshua the Second Moses: **Acts 7:35-53; Acts 3:13-26**

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

- 16:18** The Establishment of a Just Legal System
- 17:1** Blemished Sacrifices Are an Abomination
- 17:2** Idol Worshipers Are to Be Put to Death
- 17:8** Listen to and Obey the Verdicts of the Judges of Israel
- 17:14** The Future King in Israel
- 18:1** Gifts Given to the Priests to Help Support Their Ministry to the People
- 18:9** Learn Not the Ways of the Heathen: Child Sacrifice (Abortion), Divination, Astrology, Necromancy
- 18:15** A Prophet Like Moses (the Messiah) to Arise out of Israel in the Future
- 19:1** Cities of Refuge for Those Who Commit Unintentional Murder
- 19:14** Prohibition Against Moving Property Boundaries
- 19:15** Conspiring (False) Witnesses
- 20:1** When Israel Goes to War Seek Strength from YHVH and Do Not Fear the Enemy
- 20:5** Those Exempted from Military Service
- 20:11** Overtures for Peace With the Enemy
- 20:19** Preservation of Fruit Trees During Military Exploits

—21:1 Determining the Jurisdiction of an Unsolved Murder and Atonement Made for Shed Blood

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

**1** **16:22**, And you shall not erect for yourselves a pillar, which YHVH your Elohim hates. The word *pillar*/מצצבה (Strong's H4676/TWOT 1398g) literally means “stand (upright), be set (over), establish.” One of the derivatives of this word is *pillar or standing image*. Such pillars were erected for pagan religious purposes (see TWOT). C.J. Koster in his book *The Final Restoration* (reprinted as *Come Out of Her My People*) cites historical evidence for relating these pillars to the Egyptian and Babylonian obelisk, which was connected to sun worship and the phallic symbol. He states that these pillars were commonly erected at the entrances to pagan temples as fertility symbols in honor of the sun deity (Ibid. p. 79). Even as an Egyptian obelisk of this sort sits in the very center of the Catholic Church's St. Peter's Square in Rome, so, according to Koster, it is traditional for obelisk-shaped steeples to be found on Christian churches to this day (Ibid., p. 81). Richard Rives in his book, *Too Long In the Sun*, makes the same connection between the Egyptian obelisk, Canaanite standing pillars and the Christian church steeple (p. 136). What is the point here? YHVH commanded Israel to destroy these pagan symbols and to have nothing to do with them. They were abominations that would defile YHVH's set-apart people. Have his people heeded his command? Many of these remnants of ancient pagan cultic practices remain in both the Protestant and Catholic churches to this day (Easter/Ishtar, Christmas/Saturnalia, the Christmas tree/Tamuz tree, the Christmas wreath/a pagan fertility symbol, Lent, Easter eggs and rabbits, and the list goes on and on). Does YHVH's command to his people of the end times to come out of spiritual Babylon (see Rev 18:4) take on a new meaning to you?

**2** **17:1–3**, Yeshua, for us, offered himself as a spotless Lamb without blemish. Do you give YHVH your best, or do you give him the crumbs and leftovers? For example, do you give YHVH the best part of the day (the morning) for prayer, Bible reading and devotion, or the end of the day when you are tired and ready for bed? Do you give YHVH the first fruits (tithe) of your income or the leftovers (or none at all)? How are you helping to advance his kingdom on earth by using the talents, time and abilities he has given you, or are you using your energies and abilities to satiate the lusts of your flesh?

**3** **17:6 (and 19:15)**, *By the testimony of two or three witnesses*. One could not be accused of a crime without the testimony of two or three eyewitnesses. This admonition is repeated in the Apostolic Scriptures:

But if he will not hear you, then take with you one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. (Matt 18:16)

This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. (2 Cor 13:1)

Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. (1 Tim 5:19)

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. (Heb 10:28)

Most gossip and slander would stop if this commandment were followed, and thus much division and strife within the body of believers. How many times have you repeated hearsay and gossip without checking the source? Even if you know it to be true, is it beneficial and righteous to report it to others? One Jewish rabbi goes so far as to say that Messiah has not come back because of all our gossip and slander of the people of Israel. Perhaps. At the very least, the Spirit of Elohim is greatly grieved, our intimacy with Elohim is diminished, and our marriages, families, friendships and congregations are fractured, hurt or destroyed because we speak things that should not be uttered.

How often do we accuse, slander, gossip about other people through use of the “evil tongue” (*lashon hara*) without going through proper channels and following proper biblical protocols to resolve interpersonal conflicts as Yeshua instructed in Matthew 18? How often do we attack others and spread our evil reports and accusations about others when we were not even eyewitnesses to what occurred or were not involved in the matter? How often do we attack YHVH's leaders and accuse them of evil when there are no other witnesses? YHVH *hates* those who sow discord among brethren and lying false witnesses, and calls this practice an abomination (Prov 6:16–17,19). So be careful with the mouth!

- 4** 17:2–5, Probably no one reading this is involved in any of the gross idolatrous practices listed here, but there are those little foxes (or little sins) that spoil the grapes (Song 2:15) and the little bit of leaven (tiny sins) that inflates or sours the whole loaf of bread. What idols or heathen practices, unrighteous world views, worldly attitudes, secular tendencies, profane habits and thought patterns; verbal expressions, etc. have you assimilated into your life that are keeping you from walking a higher, and hence, a more intimate and anointed walk with YHVH? Ask the *Ruach haKodesh* (the Set-Apart Spirit) to reveal these spiritual idols and strongholds to you so you can rid your life of them.
- 5** 17:8–13, How respectful and obedient are you to the spiritual leaders YHVH has placed over you? Or do you follow their wise counsel *only* if and when it suits you? Nowadays if we don't like a leader we simply leave the fellowship and find a new one. In ancient Israel, this was not an option, nor was it an option in the first century. There was one congregation in each town, and if there was a disagreement, people had to learn to work out their differences. What if we were in that situation today? How would that change your method of operation if you couldn't just "cut and run" whenever things didn't go *your* way or you got offended?
- 6** 17:14–20, *King over you.* It is YHVH's will for Israel to be ruled by a king. In the Messianic Era (Millennium), King Yeshua the Messiah, the Son of David, will rule not only over Israel but over the entire world from Jerusalem. YHVH ordained righteous leadership to help guide his people in the ways of truth and righteousness. When there is no leadership, everyone does what is right in his own eyes as occurred during the time of the judges. As the *ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash* points out, "Two of the saddest episodes after Israel arrived in its Land—the graven image of Micah (Judg 17–18) and the atrocity involving the concubine at Gibeah (Judg 19–21)—are described by Scripture as having been possible only because there was no king in Israel (Judg 18:1; 19:1); had there been the leadership and discipline of a righteous king, he would never have permitted such outrages to take place" (pp. 1028–1029). Do you resist YHVH-ordained leadership? If you have been hurt or "burned" by unscrupulous and self-serving leaders in the past, do you now refuse to recognize YHVH-ordained leadership thus losing the blessings that such leadership could bestow on your life?
- 7** 17:18, *He shall write.* The king was to know the Torah so that he could rule righteously based on the Word of YHVH. The Book of Revelation says that the saints will be kings and priest ruling with Yeshua in the Millennium. Do you want to rule with him? If so, what are you doing *now* to prepare yourself for that position of responsibility? Is the study of YHVH's Word a priority in your life or does it get bumped to last place after you have completed all the physical things you feel you need to do? How we prepare now for the future will determine our level of reward in YHVH's kingdom. Will you be the least or the greatest? This will be determined by your study and practice of Torah. (See Matt 5:19.)
- 8** 18:10, *One who causes his son or daughter to pass through the fire.* This was done in honor of the Canaanite deity Molach (see Lev 18:21 and 20:1–6). The name *molach*/מלך in Hebrew means "king" with the root of the word meaning "to rule or reign." Child sacrifice (the ancient form of modern abortion/infanticide), though a pagan practice that YHVH abhorred, was practiced by both houses or kingdoms of Israel as they drifted into syncretism with the heathen cultures around them (see 1 Kgs 11:7; 2 Kgs 16:3; 21:6; 23:10, 13; Jer 7:31; 19:5; Ezek 16:20; 23:37). *Baal* appears to be a synonym of *Molach* (see Jer 19:5 and the *Ency. Britan.* eleventh edit., vol. 18, p. 676). The dead bodies of sacrificed children were thrown into the garbage dump of the Valley of Hinnom or Tophet just below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Jer 7:31; 19:5–6). Apparently, the children were not burned alive, but were slain (by knife) like any other sacrifice before being thrown into the fire and then into the garbage dump (*Ibid.*). The ancients sacrificed their children to appease their bloodthirsty gods of prosperity, sensuality and fertility (*The Story of Civilization*, vol. 1, by Will Durant, pp. 66–67, 297).

What can we learn from these random pieces of information concerning the ancient practice of child sacrifice? It was done in honor of their deity; in other words, their idol was the *king* that *ruled* their lives. What is the chief deity in modern America and most everywhere else in the world? Money and wealth? Sex and pleasure? Fun and entertainment? In ancient times, children were killed by a knife, thrown into

the fire and then into the garbage dump. Today, what happens in America? Parents abort their babies or have them murdered while being born (partial birth abortion) by using burning solutions to kill the baby in the womb and scalpels and scissors to hack the baby to pieces to aid in its extraction. Afterwards the dead baby is placed in a dumpster.

What reasons do parents give for killing their children? “It will cost too much to raise them and it’s too much trouble” (greed, hedonism and selfishness). “It will interfere with my career” (greed). “I want to have pleasure without responsibility” (hedonism and greed). Regardless of the excuses, the reasons today are the same as those of the ancients: prosperity, greed, hedonism and so on. Are we any different or any more “civilized” than the ancients? YHVH called abortion an *abomination* (which means “disgusting, abominable, abhorrent, detestable or loathsome,” Deut 18:12). Do you abhor that which YHVH calls an abomination? In Scripture, does YHVH call children and fertility a curse ... or a blessing? (See Deut 28:11, Ps 127:3–5.)

**9 18:15**, *A prophet from your midst, like me, shall YHVH your Elohim raise up for you.* Obviously, this was fulfilled in the person of Yeshua the Messiah. The non-believing Jews, however, attempt to prove that this verse *does not* apply to Yeshua. For example, the *ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash* in its commentary states, “Moses told the nation that just as he was one of them, so God would designate future prophets [plural] from among the people to bring them his word” (p. 1033, emphasis added). What is wrong with this statement? Is the verse quoted accurately? YHVH said “prophet” singular, not “prophets” plural, as the commentary says. So in this manner, the commentators switch the focus off of one single prophet who would arise, and make it appear as if all the prophets recorded in Scripture helped to fulfill this prophecy.

On another note, does the Christian “Jesus” who, it is taught by many Christian leaders, broke the Sabbath and came to do away with the Torah-law of Moses fulfill this prophecy? Didn’t Moses say that the prophet would speak only the words that Elohim would give him (and the implication is that those words would not contradict what was given at Mount Sinai)? So did Yeshua come to do away with the Torah-law or not? (Read Matt 5:17–19.) In commissioning his disciples in Matthew 28:20, didn’t Yeshua tell them *to do* and *to pass on* to others all that he had commanded them? Didn’t Paul tell us to, “Follow me as I follow the Messiah” (1 Cor 11:1)? So how is it that so many people in Christianity believe otherwise about Messiah Yeshua and Paul relative to their teachings on the Torah-law? The point we are trying to make here is that the “Jesus” of Christianity who, it is taught, came to annul the Torah, *does not* fit the criteria of this prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15–19. Either the Torah prophecy is wrong and Christian tradition is correct or it is the other way around. We choose the former to be the truth, not the latter!

**10 20:1**, *Battle against your enemies.* Scripture tells us to oppose the enemies of YHVH, who are also our enemies. Today, our enemies are spiritual (2 Cor 10:3–5; Eph 6:12). We are living in a time when any vestiges of righteousness in our nation are being assaulted on every side. Do you have the will to fight for what is right? We are called to be warriors. Paul talks about the spiritual battle in which we are all engaged. What are you doing to cry aloud for the sake of truth and to be like a light on a hill? Are you a watchman on the wall? Who are you influencing around you? Who are you supporting financially and through your efforts and prayers to help get the truth out and to fight the enemies of righteousness?

**11 20:19**, *Do not destroy its trees.* In its commentary on this passage, *A Torah Commentary For Our Times* states, “While the commandment deals specifically with cutting down trees during a siege, Jewish interpreters extend it to cover all forms of wasteful destruction under the principle of *bal tashchit*, or ‘do not destroy’ ... [all w]asteful destruction is condemned. ‘Anyone who deliberately breaks dishes, tears clothing, wrecks a building, clogs up a fountain, or wastes food violates the law of *bal tashchit*’” (various rabbinical sources are cited, vol. 3, p. 143). What did YHVH commission Adam to do? (See Gen 2:15.) The word *dress* literally means “to serve, work, dress, labor” in the sense of a servant or steward. The word *keep* means “to observe, guard, watch over, or preserve.”

Do you view yourself as a steward with a divine mandate to help preserve, watch over, and guard all that YHVH has given you responsibility over including your body, your marriage, your children, your gifts and talents, your car, your job, your home and yard and everything in your life? Do you view doing this as a



good witness to those around you, as leaving a legacy for future generations, and as glorifying your Father in heaven?

## HAFTORAH—ISAIAH 51:12-53:12

### What Is the Good News (Gospel) of the Kingdom of Heaven?

THE WORD *GOSPEL* IS ONE OF THE MOST COMMON WORDS in all Christendom. But what does it mean, and where does the concept originate? Most believers would doubtless assume that the concept of the *gospel* is a New Testament one? As we shall soon see below, the term *gospel* (Old English for *good news*) originates in the Tanakh (Old Testament) in the writings of the prophet Isaiah from a verse in this week's Haftorah portion.

The word *gospel* itself is easily enough defined, but what about the concept behind the word? This will take us into another dimension of understanding. *Gospel* or its synonyms are used 132 times in the Apostolic Scriptures (NT). *Gospel* (*Strong's* G2097 and G2098) literally means "good news or glad tidings." These two Greek words (*euaggellion* and *euaggelizo*) are translated into English in the Authorized Version (KJV) via the following words: as a noun, *gospel* and as a verb, *preach*, *bring good tidings*, *show glad tidings*, *declare*, and *declare glad tidings*. The word itself is quickly defined, but what really is the *good news*? Let us begin to answer this by seeing how the authors of the Apostolic Scriptures used this term:

- ☞ *Gospel of the kingdom* or *of Elohim* (used five times, see Matt 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; Mark 1:14)
- ☞ *Gospel of Yeshua the Messiah* or *Yeshua* (used 15 times, see Mark 1:1; Rom 1:16; 15:19; 1 Cor 9:12; Gal 1:7; Phil 1:27; 1 Thess 3:2)
- ☞ *Gospel of the grace of Elohim* (Acts 20:24)
- ☞ *Gospel of Elohim* (used five times, see Rom 1:1; 15:16; 2 Cor 11:7; 1 Thess 2:2,8,9)
- ☞ *Gospel of peace* (Rom 10:15; Eph 6:15)

The vast majority of times the term *gospel* is used in the Apostolic Scriptures the word stands alone in its noun form as simply *the gospel* without any adjective modifiers.

But again, what *is* the *good news*? One cannot read the Apostolic Scriptures without seeing that Yeshua the Messiah is at the center of this good news message. Thankfully, this same good news (or gospel) of "Jesus" has been at the center of the Christian message for two thousand years. This hardly comes as a new revelation to the reader. The famous passage of John 3:16 sums up this blessed message perhaps better than any other: "For Elohim so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This good news of the Messiah (Acts 5:42; 1 Cor 1:23; 2:2; 2 Cor 2:12) involves understanding the spiritual significance of his death, burial and resurrection and how that relates to the redemption, reconciliation and salvation of sinful man through Yeshua's shed blood at the cross of Golgatha. But is there more to the basic message of the good news that most have missed? Yes!

The Apostle Paul, a Jewish Torah scholar without peer in the first century, discusses the deeper implications of the meaning of the term *gospel* in Romans 10:14–15,

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!'"

This is a quote from Isaiah 52:7. So what *is* this *good news* or *gospel* to which Paul is referring? Let us now make a quick overview of the context of the Isaiah passage from which Paul is quoting by starting in verse two.

**52:2, "O captive daughter of Zion."** This verse identifies the subject of the prophecy as the people of Israel.

**52:3, "You have sold yourselves [to your harlot lovers] for nothing; and **you shall be redeemed without money.**"** Israel has become apostate spiritually. This history has repeated itself many times in Israel's long and sad history.

**52:5, "... my people is taken away for nought?"** Israel went into captivity because of her spiritual apostasy.

- 52:7, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings **good tidings, that publishes peace; that brings good tidings of good, that publishes salvation**; that says unto Zion, Your Elohim reigns!” Isaiah prophesies that the time of Israel’s spiritual restoration, redemption and deliverance is coming.
- 52:8, “... when YHVH shall **bring again** Zion.” YHVH promises to redeem Israel from captivity where they were taken because they left the Torah ways of YHVH and sold themselves into adulterous relationships with their foreign lovers.
- 52:9, “... **he has redeemed** Jerusalem.” How will YHVH redeem Israel out of sinfulness and bring them back to himself spiritually?
- 52:13ff, Enter Yeshua the Messiah, the Suffering Servant, who will redeem his people.
- 53:4–6, Isaiah prophesied that the Redeemer of YHVH would bear upon himself the sin (death) penalty for adulterous Israel and Judah by his dying and then he would “prolonged his days” (verse 10) by being resurrected so that he could remarry Israel (spiritually), as we shall see later.
- 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and YHVH has laid on him [Yeshua the Messiah] the iniquity [i.e., Israel’s sinning against YHVH through violation of the Torah covenant or marriage agreement with YHVH that she made at Mount Sinai] of us all.”
- 54:1, “... for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, says YHVH.” In captivity, Israel became spiritually desolate and was trampled under the foot of men like the dust of the ground.
- 54:3, “your seed shall inherit the Gentiles ...” Where Israel became like the dust of the ground, YHVH promises to redeem her from captivity and declares that she will become like the stars of heaven in numbers and glory. Israel will then become as a net who brings with her the riches of the sea (Gentile people of the nations with whom she has mixed through intermarriage).
- 54:4, “for you shall forget the shame of your youth, and shall not remember the reproach of your widowhood any more.”
- 54:5, “For your Maker is your husband; YHVH of Hosts is his name; and **your Redeemer** the Set-Apart One of Israel; the Elohim of the whole earth shall he be called.” Redeemed Israel shall enter into a righteous and loving relationship with Elohim.
- 54:6, “For YHVH has called you as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when you were refused, says your Elohim.”
- 54:7, “For a small moment have I forsaken you; but with great mercies will I gather you [out of captivity back to Zion].”
- 54:8, “In a little wrath I hid my face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on you,’ says the YHVH **your Redeemer.**”
- 54:10, “... but my kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed,’ says YHVH that has mercy on you.” This is a reference to the renewed marriage covenant YHVH would make with Israel in the future—literally, a renewal of their wedding vows (Jer 31:31–33). This is what is commonly referred to as the New or Renewed Covenant, about which Jeremiah prophesied and to which Yeshua makes reference in Matthew 26:28 and Hebrews 8:8.
- 54:11–12, “And I will make your windows of agates, and your gates of carbuncles ...” This is a reference to the New Jerusalem of which **all Israel** will be a part and which contains only 12 gates named for the twelve tribes of Israel. There will be no Gentile gate (Rev 21:12).
- 54:17, No weapon formed against Israel shall prevent their redemption, restoration and attainment of righteousness through YHVH.
- 55:1, “Ho, every one that thirsts, come you to the waters,” Israel, returning out of the wilderness of her captivity, will be thirsty. Indeed she will drink water from the wells of her salvation in Yeshua, her Redeemer and Bridegroom (cp. Isa 12:3). Isaiah 11:10–12:6 is a corollary passage to this verse. There we find a prophecy about a spiritual root or offspring that would come from Jesse [i.e., Yeshua] that will stand for a banner of the people and the Gentiles will seek after it. Because of Yeshua, a remnant of YHVH’s people

that have been scattered in Assyria, Egypt, etc., the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah, will return to the land of Israel from the four corners of the earth and will reunite with their brothers Ephraim and together they will become a united kingdom under King David once again (Ezek 37:15–28).

**55:3**, “Neither let the son of the stranger, that has joined himself to YHVH, speak, saying, ‘YHVH has utterly separated me from his people.’ Neither let the eunuch say, ‘Behold, I am a dry tree.’” By all appearances it would seem that the dispersed of Israel had been cut off with no inheritance or progeny and had become like a dry tree or like a eunuch and incapable of producing offspring. In reality, the opposite was true. While in captivity, Israel had become a vast multitude of people that would be added to the tree of Judah (Ezek 37:19) or grafted back into the olive tree of Israel (Rom 11:13–24).

**56:1ff**, Sabbath-keeping is at the center of Israel’s redemption. The Sabbath is a covenantal sign between YHVH and his people and one of the first Torah-commands to which YHVH’s apostate people return on their path back to him.

**56:6**, Here are the sons of the stranger that join themselves to YHVH to serve him and to love his name, who keep his Sabbath from polluting it, and take hold of his Torah-covenant.

**56:8**, YHVH will gather the outcasts of Israel.

**56:10–12**, Israel’s (Christian’s) watchmen (prophets) and shepherds (pastors) are blind, ignorant, dumb, barkless and greedy dogs.

**58:1**, “Cry aloud and spare not, lift up your voice like a shofar [in our days, the sound of the shofar is stirring the hearts of apostate Israelites (Christians) and bringing many outcast of Israelites back to their Hebraic heritage] and show my people their transgression [i.e., violation of their Torah-covenant/marriage agreement Israel made with YHVH at Mount Sinai] and the house of Jacob their sins.”

**58:13**, The Sabbath is a focal point again. After all, it was the sign of the Mosaic/Sinaitic Covenant Israel made with YHVH (Exod 31:13).

**61:1**, “The Spirit of YHVH Elohim is upon me; because YHVH has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” Yeshua declared that this prophecy pointed to him and he was fulfilling it (Luke 4:18–21).

**61:2**, “To proclaim the acceptable year of YHVH, [fulfilled in the first coming of Messiah] and the day of vengeance of our Elohim; to comfort all that mourn [to be fulfilled at the second coming of the Redeemer of the outcasts and dispersed of Israel].”

**61:3**, “To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of YHVH, that he might be glorified.”

**61:5**, “Strangers ... sons of the alien ...” are a reference to the dispersed ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

**61:9**, “Their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people ...”

**61:10**, “I will greatly rejoice in YHVH, my soul shall be joyful in my Elohim; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.”

**61:11**, “For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so YHVH Elohim will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.” (emphasis added on all)

## What Then is the Good News or Gospel?

The good news message is the unquenchable love that YHVH-Yeshua has for his people Israel who have been dispersed and exiled among the Gentiles; who have been cut off from their Maker, their Husband; and who have become aliens from the covenants of promise and from the commonwealth of Israel, without Elohim and without hope (Eph 2:12).

But by YHVH's unfailing love, these same wayward children have been brought near to YHVH and redeemed from their sin and spiritual waywardness by the blood of Messiah Yeshua, the Suffering Servant, who paid the price for the sin of their spiritual adultery, and for breaking their marriage agreements with YHVH. They are, therefore, no longer strangers and aliens, but like the prodigal son in the parable of Yeshua, will return to their Father's household (Luke 15:11–32; Eph 2:11–19). They were also like wild olive branches that had been broken off of the olive tree of Israel because of disobedience to YHVH's laws and because of unbelief (Rom 11:13–24), but through repentance and faith in and faithfulness to YHVH they are grafted back into that same olive tree.

Being grafted back in to the olive tree of Israel, or being repatriated into the commonwealth or nation of Israel is rehearsed each time a believer in Yeshua drinks from the cup of communion. Spiritually, this symbolizes the Cup of Redemption, the third cup of the Jewish Passover Seder, which corresponds to the Cup of Acceptance that a Jewish maiden drinks at her betrothal ceremony to show her Israelite suitor that she accepts his marriage proposal signifying the beginning of their betrothal. This corresponds to Yeshua, on the night of his Passover with his disciples, when he drank of the fruit of the vine, and then passed that cup around and had them drink therefrom, which was their accepting, as representatives of the spiritual bride of Israel, his marriage proposal to Israel. This, in turn, corresponds to a new believer in Yeshua confessing with his or her mouth Yeshua as their Master and believing in their heart that Elohim has raised him from the dead. At this point, one believes unto righteousness and accepts the redemption of Messiah Yeshua and is saved (Rom 10:9–10) and is grafted into the olive tree (or tree of life), which is a picture of Yeshua who is the Tree of Life. Yeshua spoke of this tree when he said, "I am the vine and you are the branches ..." (John 15:1–6; Rom 11:13–24).

This is the Hebrew roots message behind the oft-used term *the gospel*.

