

פרשת

ראה

Parashat Re'eh

*Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17, Isaiah 54:11-55:5
John 16:1-17:26*

Faith in Yeshua Carries the Weight of Torah of both the Blessing and the Curse

In this week's Torah portion Moshe gives the people warnings concerning obeying the commandments of God as it is related to being blessed or cursed. He also warns about the nations, false prophets, and/or a neighbor or relative who leads the people away from the Torah, away from the way of God, to follow after false gods. He speaks of tithes, of the sabbatical year, Passover (*redemption*), Feast of Weeks (*Shavuot, the giving of Torah*), and Succot (*dwelling in the wilderness and the Lord dwelling in our midst*). In the midst of these things, the Lord God tells Moshe to tell the people what they are to do with their mouths by what they put in their mouth as food according to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:3-8*, זאת ג לא תאכל כל-תועבה: ד זאת ה איל וצבי ויחמור ואקו הבהמה אשר תאכלו שור שיה כשבים ושה עזים: ה איל וצבי ויחמור ואקו ודישן ותאו וזמר: ו וכל-בהמה מפרסת פרסה ושסעת שסע שתי פרסות מעלת גרה בבהמה אתה תאכלו: ז אך את-זה לא תאכלו ממעלי הגרה וממפריסי הפרסה השסועה את-הגמל ואת-הארנבת ואת-השפן פי-מעלה גרה המה ופרסה לא הפריסו טמאים הם לך: ח ואת-החזיר פי-מפריס פרסה הוא ולא גרה טמא הוא לך מבשרם לא תאכלו ובגבולתם לא תגעו: *14:3 "You shall not eat any abomination. 14:4 These are the animals*

you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, 14:5 the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. 14:6 Every animal that parts the hoof and has the hoof cloven in two and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat. 14:7 Yet of those that chew the cud or have the hoof cloven you shall not eat these: the camel, the hare, and the rock badger, because they chew the cud but do not part the hoof, are unclean for you. 14:8 And the pig, because it parts the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean for you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch. (ESV)

The Torah writes *לֹא תֹאכַל כָּל-תּוֹעֵבָה* “*you shall not eat any abomination.*” This is very strong language that is being used here in reference to something that is considered of little to no value in the Church today. The commentary *Chizkuni on Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:3 Part 1* states that this command is connected to the rites of mourning since the previous verses speak of tattooing and the cutting of hair that is related to the dead. Holiness, the act of setting one’s self apart, is considered along with the food that we eat as the rabbis say the food of a holy and priestly people are to be different from the pagans who do not distinguish their food from the creatures which they choose to worship. (*Remember the sin of the golden calf, this is something that was done by the nations, and the people chose to construct a calf to lead them as their god. Notice how this was something that one eats, beef.*) This is why the text writes to not eat anything that is an abomination (*תּוֹעֵבָה*) as this is related to idolatry. Ibn Ezra states “*when the Torah spoke about the Jewish people being a holy nation (14:2) this meant that this holiness has to be manifest both in deed and in the way one uses one’s mouth.*” Notice how this draws in the context of lashon hara, connecting the sin of idolatry, murder, adultery, and all of the sins that are common to man. The rabbinic discussions go on to speak of mixtures, milk and meat, as an expansion on the meaning of “*abomination*” which may also lead to the idea of mixing pagan ideologies with God’s way of life. (*Rabbeinu Bahya on Devarim/ Deuteronomy 14:3 Part 1*) The concept of pure (*טהור*) and impure (*טמא*) beasts goes as far back as to Noah as we are told that God commanded him to take into the ark with him one pair of each unclean species, and seven pairs of the pure species. In addition, Tur HaAroch describes this verse from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:3* as consumption being

connected to spiritual contamination, having a negative effect upon what God has given us at a spiritual level. This is consistent with what Ibn Ezra stated about the way one uses his or her mouth, and to lashon hara. The meaning of the term תועבה whenever it appears, is “*something hateful and despicable*,” the common denominator in the command of forbidden foods is that there is something more to this act of disobedience by what one eats than what we realize. This type of disobedience is related to the deadening of the soul.

These things are connected back to what we read in the opening verses of this week’s Torah portion which state according to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:26* “*See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: 11:27 the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, 11:28 and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. 11:29 And when the Lord your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. 11:30 Are they not beyond the Jordan, west of the road, toward the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh? 11:31 For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you. And when you possess it and live in it, 11:32 you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the rules*

כּו רְאֵה אֲנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרִכָּה וְקִלְלָה: כֹּז אֶת-הַבְּרִכָּה אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם: כח וְהִקְלַלְתָּ אֶם-לֹא תִשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְסַרְתֶּם מִן-הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְלַקֵּת אַחֲרַי אֱלֹהִים אַחֲרַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִדְעֶתֶם: ס כֹּט וְהָיָה כִּי יָבִיֵאדָּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-אַתָּה בָּא-שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ וְנִתְּתָה אֶת-הַבְּרִכָּה עַל-הַר גְּרִזִים וְאֶת-הַקְּלָלָה עַל-הַר עֵיבָל: ל הֲלֹא-הִמָּה בְּעֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן אַחֲרַי דֶּרֶךְ מְבוֹא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּעֶרְבָה מוֹל הַגִּלְגָּל אֶצֶל אֵלוֹנֵי מֶרֶה: לא כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן לְבֹא לְרִשֹׁת אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נֹתֵן לָכֶם וְיִרְשַׁתֶּם אֹתָהּ וְיִשְׁבְּתֶם-בָּהּ: לב וְשִׁמְרַתֶּם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֵת כָּל-הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת-הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר

(אֲנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם: According to these Scriptures, a blessing will

come to those who choose to obey God's Word, applying God's Word his/her life. A curse will come to those who choose to turn away from the commands to go their own way. This is connected to the fulfillment of the promises of God by bringing the people to the Promised Land. Remaining in the land is coupled to the relationship the people have with the Lord God in heaven. To walk away from the commandments is paralleled to one not wanting to remain in a relationship with God. This definitely draws an interesting context to those who teach that the command of God has been done away with!

Rashi describes these verses in the following way:

Rashi on Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:28 Part 1

מִן הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לֵלֶכֶת וְגוֹ' [IF YE DEPART] FROM THE WAY WHICH I COMMAND YOU THIS DAY, TO GO [AFTER OTHER GODS] etc.

— You thus learn that he who serves idols departs from the entire path of life that Israel has been commanded. From this passage they (the Rabbis) taught the well-known dictum that he who acknowledges the divinity of an idol is as though he denied the Torah in its entirety (Sifrei Devarim 54:4).

The whole idea here is that the one who joins himself with an idol departs from the entire way of life that we are commanded according to God's word. The idea behind this is that anyone who prevents himself from listening to the Word of God has already cursed himself. (*Or HaChaim on Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:28 Part 1*) This describes what will happen to those who reject God's Word, will demonstrate that they have departed from "the normal way of life" to develop an alternate lifestyle. (Note how this is what happens with LGBT) The *Talmud Bavli Kiddushin 57* draws this context back to כָּל-צִפּוֹר טָהוֹר, "you may to eat every ritually pure bird," (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:11*) to the repetition of this verse (כָּל-עוֹף טְהוֹר תֹּאכְלוּ, *Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:20*) stating that the live bird which served as part of the offering of the person healed from the disease of tzaraat skin disease (*Vayikra / Leviticus 14:8*) has not been infected and is therefore potentially fit for consumption if it is caught after having

been released. The emphasis in the Torah on the word טהורה reveals how ritual impurity is not transferred from the infected person to the bird. None of God's creatures other than man, is susceptible to the transmission of ritual impurity before it dies. This draws in the differences between man and beast, we have the ability to choose life according to God's Word and to have a relationship with God our Father in heaven. The teaching on tzaraat is on hidden sin having come forth to the surface. The curse as having not harkened (listened) to the commandments of the Lord, the multitude of sins come forth (to the surface) for all to see. This idea of living unrepentant and continuing in sin as opposed to repentance, listening, and obeying is not simply an old testament imperative. Moshe's warning of blessings and curses is as valid for us today as it was back in the day that Moshe wrote these words!

The verses we are looking at today are from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:1-25*.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:1-25

12:1 'These are the statutes and the judgments which you shall carefully observe in the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess as long as you live on the earth. 12:2 'You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess serve their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. 12:3 'You shall tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and burn their Asherim with fire, and you shall cut down the engraved images of their gods and obliterate their name from that place. 12:4 'You shall not act like this toward the Lord your God. 12:5 'But you shall seek the LORD at the place which the Lord your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come. 12:6 'There you shall bring your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the contribution of your hand, your votive offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock. 12:7 'There also you and your households shall eat before the Lord your God, and rejoice in all your undertakings in which the Lord your God has blessed you. 12:8 'You shall not do at all what we are doing here today,

every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes; 12:9 for you have not as yet come to the resting place and the inheritance which the Lord your God is giving you. 12:10 'When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around you so that you live in security, 12:11 then it shall come about that the place in which the Lord your God will choose for His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to the Lord. 12:12 'And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, since he has no portion or inheritance with you. 12:13 'Be careful that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every cultic place you see, 12:14 but in the place which the Lord chooses in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you. 12:15 'However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your gates, whatever you desire, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and the deer. 12:16 'Only you shall not eat the blood; you are to pour it out on the ground like water. 12:17 'You are not allowed to eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or new wine or oil, or the firstborn of your herd or flock, or any of your votive offerings which you vow, or your freewill offerings, or the contribution of your hand. 12:18 'But you shall eat them before the Lord your God in the place which the Lord your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God in all your undertakings. 12:19 'Be careful that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land. 12:20 'When the Lord your God extends your border as He has promised you, and you say, 'I will eat meat,' because you desire to eat meat, then you may eat meat, whatever you desire. 12:21 'If the place which the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, then you may slaughter of your herd and flock which the

Lord has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates whatever you desire. 12:22 'Just as a gazelle or a deer is eaten, so you will eat it; the unclean and the clean alike may eat of it. 12:23 'Only be sure not to eat the blood, for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh. 12:24 'You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out on the ground like water. 12:25 'You shall not eat it, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you, for you will be doing what is right in the sight of the Lord. (NASB)

א אלה החקים והמשפטים אשר תשמרון לעשות בארץ אשר נתן יהוה
 אלהי אבותיך לה לרשתה כל-הימים אשר-אתם חיים על-האדמה: ב אבד
 תאבדון את-כל-המקמות אשר עבדו-שם הגוים אשר אתם ירשים אתם
 את-אלהיהם על-ההרים הרמים ועל-הגבעות ותחת כל-עץ רענן: ג ונתת
 צמם את-מזבחתם ושפרתם את-מצבתם ואשריהם תשפון באש ופסילי
 אלהיהם תגדעון ואבדתם את-שמם מן-המקום ההוא: ד לא-תעשון
 פן ליהוה אלהיכם: ה כי אם-אל-המקום אשר-יבחר יהוה אלהיכם
 מכל-שבטיכם לשום את-שמו שם לשכנו תדרשו ובאת שמה: ו והבא-
 תם שמה עלתיכם וזבחיכם ואת מעשרתיכם ואת תרומת ידכם ונדריכם
 ונדבתיכם ובכרת בקרכם וצאנכם: ז ואכלתם-שם לפני יהוה אלהיכם
 ושמתם בכל משלח ידכם אתם ובתיכם אשר ברכך יהוה אלהיך: ח לא
 תעשון ככל אשר אנהנו עשים פה היום איש כל-הישר בעיניו: ט כי
 לא-באתם עד-עתה אל-המנוחה ואל-הנחלה אשר-יהוה אלהיך נתן לה:
 י ועברתם את-הירדן וישבתם בארץ אשר-יהוה אלהיכם מנחיל אתכם
 והניח לכם מכל-איביכם מסביב וישבתם-בטח: [שני] יא והיה המקום
 אשר-יבחר יהוה אלהיכם בו לשפן שמו שם שמה תביאו את כל-אשר
 אנכי מצוה אתכם עולתיכם וזבחיכם מעשרתיכם ותרמת ידכם וכל מבחר
 נדריכם אשר תדרו ליהוה: יב ושמתם לפני יהוה אלהיכם אתם ובניכם
 ובנותיכם ועבדיכם ואמהתיכם והלוי אשר בשעריכם פי אין לו חלק
 ונחלה אתכם: יג השמר לה פן-תעלה עלתיך בכל-מקום אשר תראה:
 יד כי אם-במקום אשר-יבחר יהוה באחד שבטיה שם תעלה עלתיך ושם
 תעשה כל אשר אנכי מצוה: טו רק בכל-אות נפשה תזבח | ואכלת בשור
 כבדפת יהוה אלהיך אשר נתן-לה בכל-שעריה הטמא והטהור יאכלנו
 כצבי וכאיל: טז רק הדם לא תאכלו על-הארץ תשפכנו כמים: יז לא-
 תוכל לאכל בשעריה מעשר דגנה ותירשה ויצהרה ובכרות בקרה וצאנה
 וכל-נדריה אשר תדר ונדבתיה ותרומת ידה: יח כי אם-לפני יהוה אלהיך
 תאכלנו במקום אשר יבחר יהוה אלהיך בו אתה ובנה ובתך ועבדך ואמ-
 תך והלוי אשר בשעריה ושמתם לפני יהוה אלהיך בכל משלח ידך: יט
 השמר לה פן-תעזב את-הלוי כל-ימיה על-אדמתך: ס כ פי-ירחיב
 יהוה אלהיך את-גבלך באשר דבר-לה ואמרת אכלה בשור פי-תאנה נפשה
 לאכל בשור בכל-אות נפשה תאכל בשור: כא פי-ירחק ממך המקום אשר

יבחר יהוה אלהיה לשוים שמו ושם וזבחתי מבקרך ומצאנך אשר נתן יהוה
לך פאשר צויתך ואכלת בשעריך בכל אות נפשה: כב אד פאשר יאכל
את-הצבי ואת-האיל פן תאכלנו הטמא והטהור יחדו יאכלנו: כג רק חזק
לבתי אכל הדם פי הדם הוא הנפש ולא-תאכל הנפש עם-הבשר: כד
לא תאכלנו על-הארץ תשפכונו פמים: כה לא תאכלנו למען ייטב לך
ולבניך אחריך כי-תעשה הישר בעיני יהוה:

While studying the Apostolic Writings, there are many things that we read in the Torah that are not explicitly taught upon by Yeshua in the four gospels. For example, Yeshua said nothing about idolatry. In this week's Torah portion, it is obvious how important the topic of idolatry is as it is connected to the Torah command, to either obeying or turning away from the command of God, of either being in a relationship with God or not wanting to be in a relationship with God our Father in heaven. Because Yeshua did not discuss these things, this does not mean that these things are unimportant, or that we are to take the typical interpretation that the Torah is done away with. On the contrary, we find Yeshua living in a culture that was rich in the teaching of the Torah and God's commandments, and so certain things which were not as great an issue were not emphasized (*i.e. the Jewish people were not giving themselves over to idolatry at this time*). Idolatry does however remain a huge issue today. Yeshua did not need to teach specifically on the topic of idolatry because a simple (Peshat) reading of the Torah leads one to understand the errors of idolatry and the dangers therein. On the other hand, Paul writing to the Gentiles, He did have to deal with a people who were given to idolatry and so we read about idolatry quite frequently in His epistles.

In the rabbinic commentary, we read about a parable which explains the importance of how one approaches the Torah as it is related to idolatry and את הברכה, אשר תשמעו את מצות ה' ... ואת הקללה אם 'לא תשמעו אל מצות ה' *“the curse if you will not hearken to the commandments of the Lord.”*

An old man sat at a parting of a path. One of the parts continues smoothly but will soon become covered with thorns and thistles making progress almost impossible. The other is strewn with thorns and thistle already immediately, but will become smooth later on. This is

what the old man explains to anyone asking him which path to take. The old man, naturally advises a traveler to take the path that has thorns and thistles only initially. Some travelers, seeing that the man is old, do not take his advice, and pay for it dearly as it is most difficult to go back to the junction once one has become embroiled in the thorns and thistles, People who commit trespasses against the Torah in their youth, i.e. in this world, because they choose ease and comfort, will find it almost impossible to retrace their steps once they have become caught in thorns and thistles. People who accept the challenge of Torah laws in their youth, will find it progressively easier, and in the end, their path will ensure that they experience the coming of the Messiah in due course. (see Tanchuma section 3, Daat Zkenim on Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:27 Part 1)

What we find in this parable is the matter of listening and obeying God's Word early on and the continual struggle to obey the command will lead to our training ourselves to love the Lord God in heaven. Remember, according to Parashat Ekev, the Torah command was given for us, and so we would remember the Lord our God and what He has done for us! Taking the easy way out (forgetting, ignoring, and sinning without repentance) leads to one never repenting and turning from unrighteous ways. This is why Moshe had to give the people a warning saying in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:1* 'These are the statutes and the judgments which you shall carefully observe in the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess as long as you live on the earth. 12:2 'You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess serve their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. 12:3 'You shall tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and burn their Asherim with fire, and you shall cut down the engraved images of their gods and obliterate their name from that place. 12:4 'You shall not act like this toward the Lord your God. 12:5 'But you shall seek the LORD at the place which the Lord your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and

there you shall come. (NASB) The promise of God hinges upon the people destroying the idolatry of the nations and then drawing near, worshiping and serving the Lord God in the way in which He has chosen. We cannot serve both God in heaven and an idol. Remember the Ten Commandments, the first and second command (i) have no other gods, and (ii) not making other gods to worship. There is profound wisdom in the second commandment in the sense of idolatry. The reason is, anything in this world may be hammered or shaped into an idol and become a false god. This command describes a “*do it yourself*” (DIY) idolatry when one takes and mixes and matches different things in one’s life to create an idol. In order to identify if this is what is taking place in one’s life, we have to look at what we pursue asking ourselves “*what is the most important thing in my life?*” Remember in Parashat Ki Tisa, when the Lord God gave Moshe the two tablets containing the Ten Commandments on the Mountain of Sinai, the people were below complaining about Moshe taking so long up on the mountain. Moshe left his brother in charge, the people asked him to manufacture a god they could follow and one that could lead them. They took all of their gold, through it into the fire and manufactured a golden calf. Ironically, at the same time, the Lord God of Israel was telling Moshe the first two commands, to have no other gods and do not make other gods. The psalmist states the following according to *Tehillim / Psalms 106:19-20* *The people made a calf at Mount Sinai; they bowed before an image made of gold. They traded their glorious God for a statue of a grass-eating bull. (NASB)* Now today, most of us probably do not have a carved stone statute of a god, and you have probably never traveled to Asia and purchased a totem or some other representation of a false god. It is interesting in the Scriptures, the most common warning about sin does not deal with lying, gossip, adultery, stealing, or murder, but has to do with turning from God’s ways as it is connected to idolatry. Notice how many times idolatry is mentioned in this week’s Torah portion alone. There is more to idolatry than bowing down to an Asherah pole, what we read in the Tanach. John wrote in his epistle saying, *1 John 5:21 says, “Little children, guard yourselves from idols.”* Based upon this verse, idolatry is always trying to work its way into our lives and distract us from worshipping and obeying God. The interesting point is one may have faith in Yeshua as the Messiah of God and Savior of

the World, and at the same time hold onto an idol in ones life. Do you believe your faith in Yeshua will supercede any form of idolatry that is going on in your life? Remember in *Acts 17* Paul was in Athens, and we read how his spirit was *“troubled within him when he saw that the city was full of idols” (Acts 17:16)*. This is an important passage that we often overlook, and the question is *“are our spirits troubled within us because of the idols of our culture?”* This concept of idolatry is not just related to biblical history, or to physical statues, it is a human issue that takes root on the inside! The *Zohar Volume 2, Bereshit B.49 Introduction* describes idolatry in the following way:

Zohar Volume 2 Bereshit B49 Introduction “Baal and Asherah”

There are two aspects of idol worship. Idol worshiping refers not only to bowing down before statues and icons. Idol worshiping included any material possessions or external situation that controls our emotions and behavior or that motivates us in any way. When any of these influences determine our degree of contentment and joy in life, then we have surrendered control and severed our connection to the light, the true source of all fulfillment. Often our negative tendencies lead us to become worshipers of wealth, or disciples of our own egos.

According to the editor of the Zohar, the summary of this section from *Zohar Volume 2 Bereshit B49 Introduction* titled *“Baal and Asherah,”* idolatry belongs to two aspects, the act of idol worship (bowing down and such) and the worshiping of material possessions, even to worshiping of ones own ego (pride). Ultimately, the reason why idolatry is such a problem is because of sin. It is the nature of sin that causes one to worship idols, whether those fashioned of wood and stone, or the material possessions such as wealth, sex, or pride, etc. The resistance to serving idols such as these is a life long battle. (see *Ephesians 6:11, 1 Timothy 6:12, 2 Timothy 2:3*). The things of this world will never fully satisfy our hearts. Idols deceive, it is their very nature, and this

ultimately leads to death. (*Romans 6:23*) Just as we read in this week's Torah portion on the blessing and the curse as it is related to idolatry and whether one obeys the command or turns away from it, in the Messiah Yeshua, we are under the same imperative, to repent, to turn from sin, and to turn towards the way (command) of God. The good things that we read in the Scriptures are the promises of God that were meant to be enjoyed with a thankful heart that is in submission to Him and His commands all for His Glory. We were created in God's image (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:27*) and designed to worship and glorify Him as He alone is worthy of our worship. Having a relationship with God is the only thing that can save us from a life of idol worship. This is where faith in God's Messiah comes into the picture, and our Father in heaven giving us His Spirit to dwell within, to lead and guide us, and to set us free from idolatry. All of our idolatrous pursuits will leave us empty, unsatisfied, and, ultimately, on the broad road that most people take, the one that leads to destruction (*Matthew 7:13*). Many people today, due to the theologies they have been taught about salvation and covenant relationship, do not even consider what Moshe is speaking of here in relation to the blessing and the curse. The narrow road, the one less traveled, this is the way in which we are called to walk, seeking the Lord God in heaven, having faith in His Messiah Yeshua, and receiving God's holy Spirit, and turning from idolatry in whatever form it make take in our lives! When we consider what Moshe is writing in the Torah concerning the curse and the blessing. The curse is connected to turning away from God towards idolatry. Remember something, when the Lord God Almighty delivered Israel from Egypt, they all saw the miracles, the wonders, and even the presence of God at the mountain of Sinai. They all believed God existed! Even though they believed, they held on to their idolatrous ways and they suffered because Hebrews 4 states they did not mix faith with that Gospel Message they received in the wilderness. This same thing may take place even today in the hearts and lives of those who believe in Yeshua as their Messiah and Savior! This is a very relevant topic for us today, to examine our lives, to see if we are truly seeking the Lord in heaven, or whether we are satisfied with a life of sin? If we mix faith with sin and are comfortable doing so, we are in danger of the very thing Moshe is warning the people of here!