

כִּי־תֵצֵא

KI TETZEH/WHEN YOU GO OUT Devarim/Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19

At first glance, **Ki Tetzeh** appears to be just a **list of random instructions** leaping very quickly from one topic to the next with **no real logical sequence**. **One detail**, however, jumps out when you consider the parasha in its **entirety**. **Ki Tetzeh** is about **relationships**...between men and women, parents and children, employers and employees, lenders and borrowers, and even between humans and animals. The **purpose** of this grouping of **74 mitzvot** (commandments) is to **instruct us** in the **proper and improper** ways of **conducting ourselves with others** in the **daily circumstances of life**.

Ki Tetzeh has been described as a **definition** of “**religious commitment**”. A person who is **passionately in “love”** with the **Creator** is **not committed** to the **commandments** because they are the “**law**”, but he is **committed** to them because the **commandments** represent the “**will**” of the **Almighty** whom he loves. “**Love**” expresses itself through **obedience**:

Devarim 5:10 ...those who love Me and keep My commandments.

John 14:15 " If you love Me, keep My commandments.

The **Polish rabbi** known as the **Sefat Emet** summed up the **reason for “keeping the commandments”**, and thereby **fulfilling the “will”** of יהוה:

“The **commandments** are called ‘**candles**’, **shining light**, by the **power of Torah**, onto every **deed**. There is **no good deed that does not contain some mitzvah** (commandment).”

I think that this is exactly what **Yeshua** said!

Matthew 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

When you have “**kept a commandment**”, the **knowledge** that you have **done the “will”** of your **Father in heaven** will **draw you closer to Him**. It **brings you “joy”** in **knowing** that you have **done the right thing**. It also **encourages you to keep the next commandment**. Again **Yeshua** had something to say about this:

John 15:10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.¹¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.¹² "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Now the **opposite** is also **true**. **Sin** is **disobeying the commandments** and does **NOT** lead to “**joy**”:

1 John 3:4 Whoever commits sin also commits Torahlessness, and sin is Torahlessness.

In the same way that the **keeping of one commandment leads to the keeping of another commandment, one sin will lead to another sin.** The **first sin** can be as simple as an **improper thought**:

James 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

So we see that **our thoughts** and **our actions** have **consequences**. Whether good or bad, a **thought or an action is not an isolated incident**. Each one **leaves a mark upon our heart** that has a **real affect on our future**.

After nearly **all of the commandments** (except the last one concerning Amalek) in our parasha are presented, we find a few verses I'd like to spend some time on. These verses are in fact **strategically placed**. As the reading has gone **back and forth between the do's and don'ts**, it now intends to show us **how all these commands will be "weighed" out**:

Devarim 25:13 "You shall not have in your bag differing weights, a heavy and a light. ¹⁴"You shall not have in your house differing measures, a large and a small. ¹⁵ "You shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure, that your days may be lengthened in the land which ¹⁷⁷⁷ your Elohim is giving you.

The **scale** and the **measuring rod** have been used for centuries for **buying, selling, and exchanging goods**. To this day we still use the **same basic system**. A **value** is determined by the **size or weight of something**. In fact, the prophet **Isaiah** tells us that **even the Creator** used these **tools to create a balanced universe**:

Isaiah 40:12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance?

In his commentary on **Ki Tetzeh**, **Rabbi Lazer Brody** speaks to the **"differing measures, a large and a small"**:

"Before the age of the digital and mechanical scales, people conducted their business with balance scales, where an exact predetermined weight was placed on one side, and the goods were placed on the other side. So, when a storeowner put a one-pound weight on one side of the scale, and six tomatoes on the other side of the scale, if the sides of the scale stood perfectly balanced, then the owner and the customer both knew that they were conducting a transaction over one pound of tomatoes.

Dishonest merchants used to walk around with two sets of weights in their pockets. For selling, they'd use a deficient weight, for example, their one-pound weight might have weighed only fifteen ounces instead of the prescribed sixteen. The average customer wouldn't discern the deficient ounce and would be cheated by six percent, paying for sixteen ounces, but receiving only fifteen.

On the other hand, for buying, the dishonest merchant would have a one-pound weight that weighed seventeen ounces. When he'd buy tomatoes from a local gardener, he'd pay for sixteen ounces, or one pound, but by using a false weighing stone, he'd get seventeen ounces of tomatoes thereby cheating the gardener out of an ounce. Such dishonesty is not only a blatant violation of Torah law punishable by lashes, but it is also called an abomination."

We saw the subject of "*measuring*" in **Vayikra**:

Vayikra 19:35 ' You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume.

From this verse we can see that the Torah wants us to know that there are also "*measuring*" devices in the spiritual and moral realms. It is interesting that a **scale** is the sign for the month of Tishri, which marks the beginning of the civil calendar year in the fall. The first of Tishri or Day of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), also known as the **Day of Judgment**, is the day when Elohim examines the records of men and weighs their deeds on the scales:

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Another example of this kind of symbolic weighing of deeds is found in the book of Daniel. Belshazzar, the King of Babylonia summons Daniel to read and interpret the writing which a mysterious hand has inscribed on the walls of the palace:

Daniel 5:25 " And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. ²⁶ "This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: Elha has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; ²⁷ "TEKEL: You have been weighed on the scales, and found wanting; ²⁸ "PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

From these verses in Daniel we see that the reference to "*scales*" often applies to human attitudes and motives, feelings and desires, achievements and deeds. מִשְׁכָּלִים will properly "*measure*" these as they apply to each of us:

Proverbs 16:11 Honest weights and scales are מִשְׁכָּלִים's; All the weights in the bag are His work.

It is inherent in human nature to judge ourselves differently than the way we judge others. We often use "*scales*" that are balanced in our favor. By minimizing the worth of others, we try to make ourselves look better. We become experts at rationalizing and believing our own logic. Yeshua had much to say of these double standards:

Matthew 7:1 "Judge not, that you be not judged. ² "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. ³ "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? ⁴ "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? ⁵

"Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Mark 4:24 Then He said to them, "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslev explains that no one has יהוה's "measure of mercy", and this is the reason why no one can judge his fellow man as "mercifully" as the Almighty can. Again, we find this concept of "mercy" in "judgment" in the Brit Chadasha:

James 2:13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Now we can see something very chilling. When we "judge others without mercy", then according to our own non-merciful standards, we forfeit יהוה's loving "mercy" in His judgment of us! We also read Rav Sha'ul's (Paul) warning:

Romans 2:1 Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.² But we know that the judgment of Yah is according to truth against those who practice such things.

The prophet Hosea tells us a bit about Ephraim's short-coming in judging his own sin:

Hosea 12:7 The merchant uses dishonest scales; he loves to defraud.⁸ And Ephraim said, 'Surely I have become rich, I have found wealth for myself; In all my labors They shall find in me no iniquity that is sin....¹² " The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; His sin is stored up.

We see a parallel to Ephraim's inability to see his own sin in Yeshua's words to the congregation at Laodicea, representing an end-times congregation:

Revelation 3:15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.¹⁶ "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.¹⁷ "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' -- and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked --

Both Hosea and Revelation give the remedy for this problem:

Hosea 14:1 O Israel, return (repent) to יהוה your Elohim, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity;² Take words with you, And return to יהוה. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity...

Revelation 3:19 ... Therefore be zealous and repent.

During the time of the tribulation, יהוה's "measuring rod" will play a part in "measuring His Temple":

Revelation 11:1 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the Temple of Elohim, the altar, and those who worship there."

In **Ephesians**, we are given more information about this "**Temple**". How do we "**measure**" up?

Ephesians 2:19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but **fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of Yah**,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Yeshua the Messiah Himself being the chief cornerstone**,²¹ in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a **holy Temple in Adonai**,²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of Yah in the Spirit.

After the 7th millennium, the **New Jerusalem, the perfected bride of the Messiah** will once more be "**measured**". Because now she "**measures up**", the **Almighty is able to "dwell with her"**:

Revelation 21:2 Then I, John, saw the **holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Yah, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband**.³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "**Behold, the tabernacle of Yah is with men, and He will dwell with them**, and they shall be His people. Yah Himself will be with them and be their Elohim..."⁹ Then one of the seven angels ...talked with me, saying, "**Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife**."¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the **great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from Yah**,¹¹ having the glory of Yah. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.¹² Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:¹³ three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.¹⁴ Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.¹⁵ And **he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall**.¹⁶ The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And **he measured the city with the reed**: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.¹⁷ Then **he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man**, that is, of a messenger.¹⁸ The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.¹⁹ The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,²⁰ the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.²² But I saw no Temple in it, for **Adonai El Shaddai and the Lamb are its Temple**.²³ The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.²⁴ And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.²⁵ Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).²⁶ And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.²⁷ But **there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life**.

It is good timing to study this topic of "**measuring up**" as we have entered into the **40 day season of repentance** which takes us from the 1st of the month of Elul through the **Ten Days of Awe** preceding **Yom Kippur**. This is a **time to apply the Father's system of "weights" and "measures" to our souls**

to see **where we stand** in our **relationship with Him and with others**. **Without this reflective time** in our lives we are **prone to repeating past errors** and to **give up on the good works** that may be the **Father's "will" for us**.

Proverbs 11:1 Dishonest scales are an abomination to ייִי, But a just weight is His delight.

Ephesians 5:15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of Adonai is.

Shabbat Shalom!

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