



Parasha Re'eh

August 23, 2025

Torah: Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17

Haftarah: Isaiah 54:11-55:5

Ketuvim Shlichim: Hebrews 6:20; 7:1-28

Shabbat shalom, Mishpacha! Our *parasha* this week begins with *Moshe* telling Israel about the blessings and curses which ADONAI has placed before Israel, which will be declared when they enter the Land. 26 “See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse— 27 the blessing, if you listen to the *mitzvot* of Adonai your God that I am commanding you today, 28 but the curse, if you do not listen to the *mitzvot* of Adonai your God, but turn from the way I am commanding you today, to go after other gods you have not known. 29 Now when Adonai your God brings you into the land you are going in to possess, you are to set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.” (Deuteronomy 11:26-29 TLV). All Scriptures are from the Tree of Life Version of the Bible. This is a clear picture. Under the Covenant made at Sinai, ADONAI’s blessings will come if Israel “listens” to all the *mitzvot*, but the curses if they don’t listen. But saying “listen” doesn’t seem to be emphatic enough; ADONAI said, “you do listen,” the Hebrew תִּשְׁמָעוּ, *tishma’u*. But that isn’t true at all. It is emphatic! The root of *tishma’u* comes from the word שָׁמַע, *shema*, which means to listen, but it is also understood that when ADONAI says to listen, He is, in effect, telling us to obey. *Shema* means both to “listen” and, more importantly, to “obey.” Israel understood clearly what Moses was saying about the blessings and curses, as well as all of ADONAI’s commands.

Each *Shabbat*, as we pray the *Shema* together, we also acknowledge that when we confess our love for ADONAI, we show it through our obedience to Him. *Shema*, the word displayed on the front of this reading table, serves as a reminder for us every time we gather here. In the *Torah* scroll, two letters are enlarged in: שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל: יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְהוָה אֶחָד, *Shema Yisra’el, ADONAI Eloheinu, ADONAI Echad*. This representation with vowel points from the *Mechon-Mamre* Hebrew Bible is inscribed in our *sefer Torah* without vowel points. As you see on the front of the reading table, the *ayin* in *Shema* is enlarged, as are the *ayin* and the *dalet* in the full *Shema*. Together, *ayin* and *dalet* spell *ed* עד, meaning “witness.” The rabbis established this concept to emphasize ADONAI’s oneness and that we are His witnesses. The word *Shema* on our reading table is always there to remind us of what ADONAI has commanded and also prompts us that we should love Him with all our hearts, minds, and souls, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Each time you see the *Shema* on the reading table, think about these things, and when we listen, it is also our duty to obey.

Israel was told to proclaim the blessing and the curse in *Eretz Yisra’el* when they entered it. This seems to have involved taking possession of the land and declaring, through proclamation, ADONAI’s *Torah* to the land and its people—a confession over the land, affirming that from now on, He will be the “only G-d and this the only *Torah*.” ADONAI was very specific about where it had to be done on *Har Gerezim* and *Har Eival*. 29 Now when Adonai your God brings you into the land you are going in to possess, you are to set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.” (Deuteronomy 11:29). The blessings and curses are listed in Deuteronomy 27 and 28, but to learn about the actual event, we need to go to Joshua 8.

Once Israel was in the land, Joshua carried out ADONAI's commands, proclaiming the blessing and the curse. The concept of "proclamation" takes us back to the concept of "hear and obey." Which commands should we follow? Rabbinic Judaism holds that ADONAI inspired both the Oral Torah and the Written *Torah*, and they are equal in authority for the Jew. They derive this understanding from a writing called *Pirkei Avot*; the Ethics of the Fathers. It was written down in about 200 CE by Rabbi Judah the Prince and became known as the *Mishnah*, but before that, it was orally transmitted. While it was not written until the 3rd century CE, it began to be proclaimed orally in some form sometime after Israel returned from captivity in Babylon, sometime after 538 BCE. Briefly, *Pirkei Avot* states that Moses received the Oral Torah from ADONAI at Mount Sinai and then transmitted it orally through the various generations, including Joshua, the Elders, and the Prophets. A group of men known as "the men of the Great Assembly," men who had returned from Babylonian captivity, is thought to have originated this idea, but it was likely composed by several authors sometime before Rabbi Judah made it a part of the *Mishnah*. The Pharisees evolved from "the men of the Great Assembly" over the following centuries. In Yeshua's day, the first century, there were many faithful Pharisees who consistently called Israel back to the *Torah*. We do not have a negative impression of all Pharisees, because there were also those sympathetic to Yeshua who warned him of Herod's intentions, as well as the two who became His disciples. However, most of the Pharisees Yeshua interacted with were hypocritical and more concerned about their position and wealth than the people they were teaching.

In Joshua chapter 8, after Israel defeated the men of Ai, they went to the two mountains to carry out ADONAI's commands. Half of the tribes gathered on Mount Gerizim to read the blessings, and the other half gathered on Mount Ebal to read the curses. After the blessings and curses were read, we observe this: *34 Then afterward he (Joshua) read all the words of the Torah—the blessing and the curse—according to all that is written in the book of the Torah. 35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, including the women and the little ones and the outsiders walking among them.* (Joshua 8:34-35). These verses clearly show that Joshua read everything in ADONAI's *Torah*, from *Bereshit* to *Devarim*, which also included rereading the blessing and the curse. There is a distinct difference between the *Torah* of Moshe and ADONAI's *Torah*, and ADONAI made that distinction for us in this very chapter: *30 Then Joshua built an altar to Adonai, God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, 31 as Moses the servant of Adonai had commanded Bnei-Yisrael, as written in the scroll of the Torah of Moses, an altar (Deuteronomy 27:5-7) of uncut stones on which no man had wielded any iron tool.* (Joshua 8:30-31). This verse shows that Joshua was referring to the Book of Deuteronomy: *כָּכָתוּב בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה, kakatuv b'sefer torat Moshe;* "as written in the scroll of the *Torah* of Moses. But what Joshua read was ADONAI's complete written *Torah*. Regarding what Joshua read after the blessings and curses were read, verse 34 says: *כָּל דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה, הַבְּרָכָה, וְהַקְלָלָה--כָּכָל-הַכָּתוּב, kal divrei hatorah haberah vahaquelalah kekal hakatuv;* "all the words of the *Torah*, the blessing and the curse, according to that which is written." If Joshua read everything, it was everything written in *HaTorah*, ADONAI's complete *Torah*, everything that Moshe spoke to Benei Yisra'el. Verse 35 says "that Joshua read "everything that Moses commanded": *There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel,.* (Joshua 8:35a). If he read everything commanded, there could not have been other commands. "Everything written in the Book of the *Torah*" is much more than just the Blessings and Curses of Deuteronomy 27 and 28.

Why make a fuss about this? It's because we must decide which *Torah* we are to follow. Do we follow either the *Torah she-ba'al peh*, the *Torah* of the Mouth, or the *Torah she-bichtav*,

the Written *Torah*, or both? This is what we understand. The Written *Torah*, as read by Joshua, the *Torah she-bichtav*, is the only authoritative Word of G-d for us. While we can learn from the *Talmuds*, which contain the *Mishnah*, the successor to the Oral Torah, we cannot place them in the category of the total truth found from Genesis to Revelation, which is the complete Bible.

Our *Haftarah* portion for this week includes these words: 1 “*Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the water, and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost!!*” (Isaiah 55:1). We mentioned this verse in our message on *Parasha Va’Etchanan* two weeks ago. Revelation 22, speaking about the time in which all true followers of Yeshua have entered into eternity with ADONAI and their Messiah, and referring to the water, says: 1 *Then the angel showed me a river of the water of life—bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.* (Revelation 22:1). Then Yeshua says: 6 ... “*To the thirsty I will freely give from the spring of the water of life.*” (Revelation 21:6b). His words are an example of *remez*, a Hebraic method of linking thoughts, and hinting back to an earlier Scripture, in this case, Isaiah. Yeshua tells us that Isaiah 55:1 is about Him. If you didn’t hear it two weeks ago, I encourage you to visit *Parasha Va’Etchanan* on August 9th and read about “the water of life,” the free gift of the *Ruach Kodesh*, which brings salvation, on our website. ADONAI’s *Ruach*, the Holy Spirit, which comes from the Father and the Son, is that *Mayim Chayim*, “Living Water.”

Yeshua, ADONAI’s Son, who is also entirely *Elohim*, G-d Himself, has the full authority of the Father to bring salvation. He is also the Mediator between man and ADONAI. *Moshe*, the one speaking in the Book of Deuteronomy, also occupied the position of mediator between Israel and ADONAI. While his brother Aaron was *Kohen HaGadol*, the High Priest, Moses actually heard from and spoke to ADONAI. Aaron did stand between Israel and ADONAI on *Yom Kippur* in his role as High Priest and had the authority to bring about atonement. However, the role of mediator seems to have been divided between *Moshe* and *Aharon*. While he was not involved in atonement, Moses appears to have held the significant position of being “liaison” between G-d and man. Yeshua now fills both of these roles that Moses and Aaron shared. He is the Mediator and the High Priest, and also became the “perfect” sacrifice for all of the sins of mankind.

Yeshua’s priesthood is not like Aaron’s. Yeshua is a *kohen* after the order of *Melechizedek*: 15 *And it is even more evident, if another kohen arises like Melechizedek — 16 one made not by virtue of a Torah requirement of physical descent, but by virtue of the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is testified, “You are a kohen forever, according to the order of Melechizedek .”* (Hebrews 7:15-17). The author of Hebrews goes to considerable length to make a connection of “type” between Yeshua and *Melechizedek*, the priest-king written about in Genesis 14. In the Book of Hebrews, Yeshua is revealed to be a forever *kohen*, who holds His office for eternity and is after the order of the priest-king, *Melechizedek*. He, *Yeshua BenDavid*, as King and a descendant of David, has an office similar to that of *Melechizedek* but exercises His office according to the pattern of *Aharon*, the *kohen*. Yeshua is both King and Priest.

In Genesis (14:1-17), we find the story of *Melechizedek*, who was the king of Salem, the city that later became Jerusalem. Nothing is revealed about his lineage, birth, or death, and we shouldn’t take this to mean that he was a supernatural being or even the pre-incarnate Yeshua. He was not either, but the author of Hebrews uses him as a symbol of Yeshua for a crucial reason. That reason is that both *Melechizedek* and Yeshua do not rely on human

descent, as Aaron's sons did, to carry out their priesthood. Yeshua did not belong to the priestly tribe of *Levi* but instead descended from the kingly tribe of *Yehudah*. From a typological perspective, that is, considering shared characteristics and patterns, the author of Hebrews portrays *Melechizedek* as a priest who abides forever in a "figurative" sense, representing a divinely inspired leader, while Yeshua remains a priest forever in an "actual" sense. *Melechizedek* is long dead and gone, but Yeshua is forever.

And that's because our great *Kohen HaGadol* is much more than just a High Priest. He is the Son of G-d, and as such is G-d Himself. Yeshua is *Elohim*, but He is not *YHVH*, the Father. As we mentioned in our *Va'Etchanan* message, Revelation 22:1 tells us that both the Father and the Lamb are found seated on the throne. This remains a mystery to us, one which will not be revealed entirely until we stand before that throne. *Shimon Kefa*, in his message on *Shavuot* at the Temple Mount, said: *33 Therefore, (Yeshua) being exalted to the right hand of God and receiving from the Father the promise of the Ruach ha-Kodesh, He poured out this—what you now see and hear.* (Acts 2:33). The *Ruach Kodesh* had been poured out on the people as described in Acts 2:1-4, just before *Kefa* spoke these words. It is in this position at the right hand of the Father that Yeshua now sits, serving as Mediator between us and the Father, and also interceding to the Father for us. *Kefa* continued: *34 For David did not ascend into the heavens; yet he himself says, 'Adonai said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, 35 until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."'* (Acts 2:34). This is a reference to Psalm 110:1, which shows that David looked into the future and saw his descendant, Yeshua, sitting at the right hand of ADONAI. And David also wrote this about Yeshua: *4 Adonai has sworn, and will not change His mind: "You are a Kohen forever according to the order of Melechizedek."* (Psalm 110:4).

Sha'ul, who heard directly from Yeshua on the road to Damascus, reveals these truths: *22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah will all be made alive. 23 But each in its own order: Messiah the firstfruits; then, at His coming, those who belong to Messiah; 24 then the end, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after He has destroyed all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For God has "put all things in subjection underneath His feet."* (**Psalms 8:6 and 110:1**) *But when the psalmist says that "all" has been put in subjection, it is clear that this does not include God Himself, who put all things under Messiah. 28 Now when all things become subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also become subject to the One who put all things under Him, so that God may be all in all.* (1 Corinthians 15:22-28). These words add even more to the mystery. *Sha'ul* tells us that Yeshua will restore His Kingship to ADONAI, G-d the Father, after all His enemies, especially death, are defeated. Could this be the time that we see the Father and the Lamb on the throne in Revelation 22:1? The verses we just read show that this is a complex subject, and it's unwise for us to dogmatically choose a belief as absolute truth that we must defend to the death. The more we study, the more we realize how much we still must learn. There will always be mysteries that we will not understand until we are living in the עולם הבא *Olam HaBa*, the World to Come.

Yeshua is mentioned in several places in the *Torah*. Deuteronomy, chapter 32, pictures Him as a rock: *4 The Rock—blameless is His work. Indeed, all His ways are just. God of faithfulness without iniquity, righteous and upright is He.* (Deuteronomy 32:4). *Sha'ul* said that, as this rock, Yeshua, was present with Israel in the wilderness. *1 For I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea. 2 They all were immersed into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 And all ate the same spiritual food,..* (1 Corinthians 10:1-3). Yeshua is described as the rock which

gave forth water in the wilderness: *4 and all drank the same spiritual drink—for they were drinking from a spiritual rock that followed them, and the Rock was Messiah.* (1 Corinthians 10:4). As the “spiritual rock” in the Wilderness, Yeshua symbolized ADONAI’s provision for *B’nei Yisra’el* and His followers in the future. He is our provider, but He is also our deliverer, “the Rock, who will defeat His enemies in the last days.

In Daniel chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream about a great statue. Daniel explained that it was he, Nebuchadnezzar, representing Babylon, who was the head of gold. Medo-Persia was represented by the chest and arms of silver. The belly of brass represented the Greek empire, and the legs of iron symbolized Rome. The feet were made up of a combination of iron and clay. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar: *34 While you were watching, a stone was cut out, but not by hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from summer threshing-floors that the wind blows away. Not a trace of them could be found. Then the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.* (Daniel 2:34-35). The stone that grew into a huge mountain was Yeshua. The statue depicted all the nations that had controlled the Middle East and dominated the land of Israel, from Babylon to Rome and the subsequent kingdoms. I suggest to you that the feet and toes of iron and clay symbolize a group of Islamic nations surrounding Israel in the modern Middle East.

This group is also pictured in the Book of Revelation: *8 Behold, I saw a horse, pale greenish gray. The name of the one riding on it was Death, and Sheol was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill by sword and by famine and by plague and by the wild beasts of the earth.* (Revelation 6:8). What the TLV translates as “pale greenish gray” is the Greek word *chloros*, meaning green. This is the “Green Horse.” Green is the color of Islam, a group representing more than 25% of the world’s population, and multiple kingdoms covering more than 25% of the world’s area. And more than 25% of the world is being affected by Islam as its followers actively contribute to death through violence, starvation, and disease right now. We can see these three things all in one place today: Gaza. It is this entire group, represented by the feet and toes of the statue, that Yeshua, “the Rock,” will grind into powder—those who have not turned to Yeshua, since I believe many Muslims will trust Him before this happens. Daniel had said: *35 ... Then the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.* (Daniel 2:35b). It is ADONAI’s mighty power through Yeshua, His “right arm,” who will return to earth to defeat ADONAI’s enemies.

While Yeshua, “the Rock,” will defeat the hordes who are following *HaSatan* in the last days, He is also the stone upon which Israel stumbled. Isaiah wrote: *13 Adonai-Tzva’ot, Him will you sanctify, and let Him be your fear, trembling at Him. 14 He will be a Sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 Many among them will stumble, fall, and be broken, snared and caught.* (Isaiah 8:13-15). Yeshua is that “stumbling stone” and “rock of offense.” The *malach* said to Zechariah: *6 ... , ‘This is the word of Adonai to Zerubbabel saying: “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Ruach!” says Adonai-Tzva’ot. 7 “What are you, great mountain? Before Zerubbabel, you will become a plain. He will bring out the capstone with shouts of “Grace, grace” to it.”* (Zechariah 4:6b-7). Who or what is this “capstone?” The Hebrew says: *הָרֹאשֶׁה הַבְּרִיטָה*, *ha’even ha’rosha*, meaning, “the stone, the chief one, or the capstone.” The word *Even*, Stone, is one of the names of the Messiah. *Even* is made up of two words- *av* אב, father, and *ben* בן, son, who together are *echad*, one, but not *yachid*, a solitary one.

The Book of Hebrews is an important book for us as Yeshua's followers. It clearly shows us the greatness of the salvation that we have, and that it could only be accomplished by a sinless, divine, and resurrected Messiah. And because of the finished work of Yeshua, we are told: *16 Therefore let us draw near to the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help in time of need.* (Hebrews 4:16). There is another rock spoken of in Scripture. We can expand on Ha'Even, "the stone," even more. In Rabbinic Judaism, the *Hallel* is read during the festivals on 18 specific days per year in Israel and 21 days in the Diaspora. In the *Hallel*, Psalms 113-118, we find this: *22 The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone. 23 It is from Adonai: it is marvelous in our eyes!* (Psalm 118:22-23). This brings together the capstone of the Prophet Zechariah with the capstone revealed by David. While no author is given for Psalm 118, many believe David to be the author, and in it, he prophesied that the builders, Israel, would reject Yeshua, the capstone. Yeshua is "the Rock," and the stone of stumbling of Isaiah 8, who will return as the chief cornerstone.

No matter where we are in our theology, we must be willing to correct it if we find that it does not align with ADONAI's truth. We are in a day and time in which many spiritual changes are already taking place. Yeshua will soon return for us, and for *B'nei Yisra'el*, as *Sha'ul* prophesied: *25 For I do not want you, brothers and sisters, to be ignorant of this mystery—lest you be wise in your own eyes—that a partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer shall come out of Zion. He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. 27 And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."* (Romans 11:25-26). The day is coming when we will all be united, Yeshua's Jewish and Gentile followers. Pray that each of us will be ready for the coming of *Ha'Even Ha'Rosha*, ADONAI's Son, Israel's Capstone (Chief Cornerstone). *Shabbat shalom!*