



ראה *Re-eh* Behold!

[Deuteronomy 11.26](#)—16.17 / [Isaiah 54.11](#)—55.5 / [Acts 8](#)—9

ראה [Deuteronomy 11.26](#) opens with, “ראה, I set before your פנים *paniyim* face/faces this day a blessing and a curse...” This gives new meaning to the expression, “It’s right in front of your face!” The Church generally ignores much of this instruction, but it’s right in front of our faces. The next verses say that we will receive blessings if we שמע *shema* hear/listen to/obey the מצוות *mitzvot* commandments (plural of מצוה *mitzvah* command)...and curses if we don’t.



ישוע *Yeshua* Jesus/salvation has freed us from the curse of the Law, [2 Corinthians 5.21](#). But God still expects us to obey and will bless us when we pursue the Written Word, תורה *Torah* Law/Instruction, and the Living Word, ישוע.

ראה has an interesting use in [Genesis 29.32](#). Leah, whom Jacob does not love as much, gives birth to Jacob’s first son and calls him ראובן *Re-uwben* Reuben. Leah is thrilled to have Jacob’s first child and names him (the imperative form of) ראה, Behold! A Son!

Blessings and Curses משה *Mosheh* Moses instructs in [Deuteronomy 11.29-30](#) that when ישראל *Yisra’el* Israel enters the Land, they pronounce the blessings of the Law on Mt. Gerazim and the curses on Mt. Ebal. This is fulfilled in [Joshua 8.33-34](#). The picture shows Mt. Gerazim on the left, Mt. Ebal on the right, and Shechem, modern-day Nablus, in the middle. Abraham builds an altar in Shechem at the tree of Moreh and God promises Abraham the Land in [Genesis 12.5-7](#). Jacob builds an altar near Shechem in a field he buys from Hamor, Shechem’s father, in [Genesis 33.18-20](#). Joseph’s bones are buried in Shechem in [Joshua 24.32](#). Shechem is called Sychar when ישוע talks with the woman at the well in [John 4.5](#). Stephen calls the place Sychem in [Acts 7.16](#). He errs in saying Abraham bought the land which Jacob actually bought, unless he means

allegorically, similar to [Hebrews 7.9-10](#). In [Joshua 8.33-34](#), all the people do as משה says and pronounce the blessings and the curses. There is a Jewish tradition of an oral Law, that God told משה other things that משה did not write down in the Law. But verse 35 seems to contradict that tradition by saying that Joshua reads everything משה commands.



Treat Their gods Poorly, But Don't Limit God משה says in [Deuteronomy 12.1-4](#) that ישראל is to overthrow the pagan altars and destroy their pillars, groves, and graven images. And they are to ([verse 3](#)) אבד *abad* destroy/exterminate/put to death the names of those gods. Instead, ישראל is charged in [Psalm 78.41](#) with causing תוה *tavah* pain/wound/trouble to God, similar to תוה *tavah* to scabble/limit/mark, as if they try to limit God or mark out God's Name.

Do What's Right in God's Eyes, Not Our Own

משה warns in [Deuteronomy 12.8](#) and 13.18 ([verse 19](#) Hebrew) to do what's right in God's eyes, not our own. Yet 400 years later, at the end of the book of Judges, that is exactly how ישראל is described: "...every man did that which was right in his own eyes," [Judges 21.25](#). I used to be amazed that ישראל could fall so quickly in just 400 years from a conquering tribe of devoted followers of God, zealous for the תורה, into the conditions at the end of Judges. But then I consider the Puritans and their zeal for God about 400 years ago, compared to the post-modern, I'm-a-Christian-living-with-my-fiancé culture America is now, and I am not so harsh on ישראל. Especially since America has the benefit of the example of the life of ישוע and still got to this point.



Don't Add To or Subtract From תורה משה adds another warning in Deuteronomy 12.32 ([13.1](#) Hebrew), "All this word which I command you, that shall ye observe to do; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." This verse is echoed in [Revelation 22.18-19](#). Does ישוע add to or subtract from the Law of משה? He may add to it ([John 13.34](#)), but He does not subtract from it, as a careful reading of [Matthew 5.17-20](#) shows. As the Church went from 100% Jewish before Peter's visit to Cornelius in [Acts 10](#) to nearly 100% non-Jewish, ישוע was remade into a תורה-dismissing Gentile. The picture of a Jewish man reading a תורה scroll at the start of this article is probably the most accurate picture of ישוע we've seen, but how many in the Church can accept this? As *The Liberated Wailing Wall* of Jews for Jesus sings, "I knew Jesus before He was a Gentile." Or as Pastor Mark Biltz of [El Shaddai Ministries](#) says, "When ישוע returns, the Church will be amazed—He's Jewish! And Jews will be amazed—He's Jewish!"

False Prophets The Hebrew Bible numbering of this verse ([Deuteronomy 13.1](#) instead of [12.32](#)) best reflects the rest of the chapter, which gives the test of a true prophet. Many believers think the test of a prophet is whether or not his prophecy comes true, [Deuteronomy 18.22](#). But this chapter says that even if the prophecy comes true, but the prophet tries to get people to follow different gods and “draw thee aside out of the way which יהוה *YHVH* the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in,” then that is a false prophet. God is testing the people to see if they will still follow Him and obey His commands. So when a Christian says to a Jewish person, "Jesus is God and He abolished the Law!" the Jewish person familiar with Deuteronomy 13 will likely consider the Christian—and שׂוֹעִי— false prophets! In fact, this is a generally accurate description of how Jews consider the entire Church and the New Testament. It's similar to how most in the Church feel about Mormons and the Book of Mormon—they've created their own god in order to lead people away from the Bible.

We tend to criticize the Pharisees because they put their own traditions before the Word of God. Yet the Church tends to do that today by making שׂוֹעִי into a Gentile, changing the day of worship from the 7th to the 1st day of the week, and ignoring the biblical feasts.

שׂוֹעִי says that the gate to life is narrow:



“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. **But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. Watch out for false prophets.** They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your Name, and in Your Name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!’” [Matthew 7.13-23](#)

How narrow is that gate, and how few enter into it? What exactly is the gate? Is it the feel-good prosperity teachings of popular televangelists? Is it the Church's combination of God's Word and pagan traditions, such as Easter? Or is it found only in God's Word?

Perspectives on the Law We often hear in the Church, “The Law is done away with, now we live under grace.” Consider this analogy:

Mom Wants Tommy to Take Out the Trash

Old Covenant—Forced Compliance

Keep the Law for its blessings—the alternative is curses.

- “Tommy, take out the trash!”
- **“OK, Mom, I will even though I don’t want to.”**

New Covenant—Spontaneous Initiative

Keep the Law with the joy of the Spirit living in me...

ישוע takes the penalty of death for me.

- “Tommy, thanks for taking out the trash!”
- **“You bet, Mom!”**

Many Believers—Non-Compliance

Ignore the Law—we’re not under Law, we’re under grace.

- “Tommy, the trash is overflowing!”
- **“Leave me alone—I’m not under the Law!”**

If another believer says,

- “Tommy, take out the trash!”
- **“Judge not!”**

Which of Tommy’s attitudes is yours?



Signs and Wonders Miracles are cited in Acts as proof that God approves ישוע and the disciples:

- [2.22](#) God accredits ישוע with miracles, wonders, and signs
- [5.12](#) The apostles perform many miraculous signs and wonders
- [8.13](#) Philip is astonished with great signs and miracles

But ישוע Himself warns in [Matthew 24.24](#) that false Christs and false prophets will perform great signs and miracles in order to deceive. Paul says in [2 Thessalonians 2.9-10](#) that the “lawless one” will be accompanied by counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders. Those who are perishing will be deceived. How can we know the difference?

A Secret Service agent charged with protecting the nation’s currency is often in court on high-profile counterfeit cases. He is called in by the prosecution as an expert witness.

After his qualifications are listed, the defense challenges him,

“Agent So-and-So, you are an expert in counterfeit money?”

“No, I’m not.”

“You’re not an expert in counterfeit money?”

“No, sir, I’m an expert in the genuine.”



And that’s how to tell the difference between the signs and wonders that validate ישוע and those of the false Christs and false prophets. Don’t waste time looking at counterfeits. Become an expert in the Living Word, ישוע, and His Written Word!

False Expectations Many believe the Two Witnesses of [Revelation 11](#) are מִשֵּׁה and Elijah. If so, they will appear as they likely did to יִשׁוּעַ, Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration, [Matthew 17](#), wearing tefillin and prayer shawls and sporting beards and side curls. Even if they perform miracles but say, “Return to תּוֹרָה!” many in the Church will declare them false prophets! Meanwhile, the Antichrist and Beast could show up wearing nice suits, telling people they are free from תּוֹרָה, and calling down fire from heaven, [Matthew 13.13](#), and many in the Church could declare them the Two Witnesses—Don’t be fooled!



The Evil Eye In some cultures, the evil eye is one that brings bad luck, but here it interprets itself in [Deuteronomy 15-9](#). The passage says that failure to lend to a needy brother, because you realize the year of release (Sabbath year) is close so he won’t have to pay you back, is the evil eye. So go ahead and lend him what he needs and don’t be stingy. The רַעַע *ra’a* evil עַיִן *ayin* eye is *stinginess*!



In Proverbs 28.22, the [KJV](#) says the person who is trying to get rich has an *evil eye*, and the [NIV](#) says the *stingy* person is eager to get rich. Whenever I think of this verse, I think of a scene from Robert Louis Stevenson’s story, *Kidnapped!* A man with illegal possession of a treasure chest of gold coins loves to run his hands through it when no one is looking. [Proverbs 22.9](#) gives the opposite description: a טוֹב *tov* good/pleasant/agreeable עַיִן is the person who shares his food with the poor.

יִשׁוּעַ uses the term “evil eye” in [Mark 7.22](#) when talking about the evil that comes out of the heart, and in [Matthew 6.23](#) He uses the same words to describe filling the body with darkness.

[Deuteronomy 15.10-11](#) goes on to say that the giving should be without grief of heart. Don’t say, “Good grief! He wants something else from me! What will it be next?” God’s blessing will be on everything you do if you give. Paul adds in [2 Corinthians 9.7](#) that God loves a cheerful giver.

Evil Eye Being stingy, grieving of loans, gifts, or food: fills one with darkness.
Good Eye Being generous, cheerful with loans, gifts, or food: fills one with light.

8 Levels of Giving According to Jewish tradition, there are eight levels of giving, starting with the least:



1. Sadly and reluctantly
2. Less than needed but in good humor
3. After being asked to give
4. Before being asked
5. Without the giver knowing who will be receiving
6. Without the recipient knowing who is giving
7. Knowing neither the giver nor the receiver
...and the highest level of giving...
8. Not giving(!), but rather providing the opportunity to work, and so allowing a person to keep his or her self-respect

Daniel Lapin in his book [Buried Treasure](#) makes a similar case. He says that a loan, which allows the person to work off the debt, creates a bond of friendship and trust that simply doesn't happen with a gift. A loan says, "I have confidence in your ability to make good with this money, then return it." A gift can say, "You're such a loser, without my generosity you're hopeless."

3 Times a Year—All the Males Why would [Deuteronomy 16.16-17](#) specify that all the males appear before God in the place He chooses? One explanation could be that the females would go anyway and don't need the command! Churches are often predominantly women, since they tend to enjoy the social aspect more than men. Men may prefer to stay home and work on a project, or engage in a hobby. The three pilgrimages are known as the Feasts of Unleavened Bread (spring), Weeks (summer), and Tabernacles (fall).

Future Feasts [Zechariah 14.16](#), after describing Messiah setting foot on the Mount of Olives and then what sounds like a nuclear war, says that everyone that is left of all the nations will worship יהוה in Jerusalem and celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. Those nations which refuse will receive plague and drought.

In the time of ישוע, the Feasts are good and ישוע and the disciples keep them. In the Church age, the Feasts are bad and ignored. At the end of the age, the Feasts are good again. The Feasts were good, now they're bad, and they will be good again—really?



Haphtarah The portion for today is [Isaiah 54.11—55.5](#). Amazing blessings await **ישראל**: cities built of jewels, children taught by **יהוה**, established in righteousness, no fear, enemies destroyed, no weapon will work against them, and every slander is condemned. There is strength, bread, wine, and milk without price, which lasts. **ישראל** will be a witness, prince, and commander to the peoples. [Verse 55.5](#) says that because of **יהוה**, **גוי** [goy](#) nation(s) that didn't know about **ישראל**, and **גוי** that **ישראל** didn't know, will come running to her. We **גוי** don't replace **ישראל**, we run to her!

New Covenant Portion

[Acts 6.7](#) says that even many of the priests became obedient to the faith. That sounds strange today—how many believers would describe themselves as “obedient to the faith”? These priests presumably kept working at the Temple, possibly until 70 AD.

[Acts 8 and 9](#) tell of Saul persecuting the Church and then his conversion on the road to Damascus.



After the stoning of Stephen in [Acts 7](#), [8.3](#) says that Saul begins to destroy the Church, going from house to house and sending men and women to prison. Years later, Saul recounts in [Acts 22.3-5](#) that he was raised as a student of Gamaliel, and he persecuted the Church with letters from the priests and elders. [Acts 5.34-39](#) records how Gamaliel was against the persecution of the believers, urging the Sanhedrin to leave them alone. So Saul was acting against his own teacher's counsel. In [Acts 26.11](#), Paul adds that he often found these believers in the synagogues—that's where the first believers met. [James 2.2](#) agrees with this, addressing believers who meet in the **συναγωγή** [synagogue](#) synagogue/assembly. The obvious translation, synagogue, has been replaced in Christian Bibles with assembly. We aren't supposed to know that early believers met with Jews!

Saul's life changes when **ישוע** meets him on the way to Damascus. If there is an old Saul in your life, be encouraged—he or she may meet **ישוע**, and become a new Paul!

Glossary, in order of appearance:

ראה	<i>re-eh</i>	Behold!
פנים	<i>paniyim</i>	face/faces
שמע	<i>shema</i>	hear/listen to/obey
מצות	<i>mitzvot</i>	commandments
מצוה	<i>mitzvah</i>	command
ישוע	<i>Yeshua</i>	Jesus/salvation
תורה	<i>Torah</i>	Law/Instruction
ראובן	<i>Re-uwben</i>	Reuben/Behold! A Son!
משה	<i>Mosheh</i>	Moses
ישראל	<i>Yisra'el</i>	Israel
אבד	<i>abad</i>	destroy/exterminate/put to death
תוה	<i>tavah</i>	pain/wound/trouble
תוה	<i>tavah</i>	to scabble/limit/mark
יהוה	<i>YHVH</i>	the LORD/God's Holy Name
רעע	<i>ra'a</i>	evil
עין	<i>ayin</i>	eye
טוב	<i>tov</i>	good/pleasant/agreeable
גוי	<i>goy</i>	nation/people
συναγωγῆ	<i>synagogue</i>	synagogue/assembly