

# *Shiur L'Yom Shenit*<sup>1</sup>

[Monday's Study]

READINGS:     **Torah Ki Tetze:**                     Deuteronomy 21:10-23  
                  **Haftarah:**                                 Isaiah 54:1  
                  **B'rit Chadasha:**                     I Corinthians 5:1

*All Israel will hear and reverently fear.*

[Deuteronomy 21:21]

Today's Meditation is Psalm 27:1-2;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Petition, *S'lach* [Forgiveness]

*Ki-teitze l'milchamah al-oyveicha* - When you go out/stretch/extend yourself for milchamah in the face of your enemies ... *unetano Adonai Eloheicha b'yadeicha v'shavita shivyo* - and the Holy One entrusts then into your hands, and you take custody of, captives .... Deuteronomy 21:10.

The 49<sup>th</sup> parsha - *Ki Tetze* – opens a 2-parsha download that will bring Moshe's 'How to Build a Kingdom-of-Heaven-Scented Society' Discourse to a conclusion. This Discourse, which constitutes the heart of *Sefer Devarim*, began at Deuteronomy 4:1. Moshe has followed up his initial *shofar* call of: '*V'atah Yisrael – SH'MA ...*' [And you, Israel – Tune your ears to, pay attention, listen to, hear, come into spirit-, soul-, body-, speech- and conduct-alignment with, internalize, and begin to resonate in tone, rhythm, and frequency (with these instructions) ...] with layer after layer of 'Kingdom-of-Heaven-Scented-Society-Building Blueprints. To conclude this Opus Magnum Moshe is going to go 'rapid-fire', touching briefly on a bevy of subjects. The subjects he will address seem mundane. Rest assured, they are not. They represent critical points of divergence from other cultures. Moshe knows exactly what he is doing. Every syllable: and every word carries Living Water and bathes us in Divine Light.

## ***Real Life Challenges of the Narrow Road To Relevance That Lies Ahead***

Moshe is warning us about, and applying Heavenly perspective to, some of the internal and external challenges that we will have to navigate once we get to the land. He knows that as we need to refuse to get either sucked into the drama or seduced into the folly of the *emotionally overstimulated, fleshly indulgent, sensuality-triggered, darkness seduced, materially obsessed, ethnically snobbish, pseudo-intellectual yet sentimentality motivated, self-interest promoting people that we are destined to meet among the nations*. What areas of drama and

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temptation does Moshe want to talk to us about? He will start off the week speaking to us about *war*, which he knows very well often functions as a seedbed where toxic levels of *physical, emotional, and sexual attraction* sprout and flourish. He will then talk to us about *marriages – where petty insults often turn into open wounds of the soul, and where minor offenses often explode into lovelessness and disdain; about the dangers inherent in letting oneself get involved multiple romantic episodes involving intimate relations with different partners; about broken and dysfunctional households; about fathers who abandon children – emotionally if not physically - when they fall out of love with the women who bore them.* He will talk to us about *dysfunctional sons and daughters who embrace a lifestyle that demonstrates utter disdain for their parents, their Creator, their own health and welfare, their Avrahamic heritage, and the glorious plan the Holy One purposed for their lives before the foundation of the world.* Moshe will even talk to us about the protocol for the *execution of certain criminals who present a serious danger to society.* Are those topics real and current enough for you?

Moshe is not going to pull any punches. He has one mission now – to exhort each individual within the Covenant nation to be diligent and faithful to build and model to the world a *Kingdom-Scented Society*. Moshe knows that this will not ‘just happen’ – but will require wisdom, understanding, diligence, and steadfast adherence to both the overall themes and the specific instructions of the Torah. He knows the Kingdom-Scented Society we are called to build is not going to be a utopian state of bliss, full of perfect people, perfect marriages, perfect childhoods, and perfect social structure. He knows such a society is going to have to be forged with blood, sweat, and tears - link-by-link, in the crucible of the real world and the most difficult problems life can throw at us. He knows the whole idea is REDEMPTION – not utopia. And he knows that for redemption to occur, something – and many someones - must desperately need to be redeemed. Moshe therefore opens with these chilling words:

***Ki-tetze l’milchamah al-oyveicha ...***

*When you go forth for milchamah in the face of enemies ...*

[Deuteronomy 21:10]

***The Holy One Has Great Compassion – And a Wise, Patient Plan  
for the Redemption and Restoration  
of Lives Shattered and Souls Stained By War***

Has your life been affected by *war, Beloved*? By military campaigns? By gang wars? By cartel turf struggles/ By racial, ethnic, economic class, or regional riots or conflicts? Either as a soldier/combatant thrown into situations of extreme danger and crucibles of choice that no human being should have to make, on the one hand, or as an innocent who happened to live, work, or have family members

who got caught in the crossfire of a combat zone, on the other hand, has your soul been stained by the slings and arrows of armed combat? If so, I have some good news for you – *really* good news! The Holy One saw it all. He is the reason you are still alive. He understands the trauma you have experienced. He knows your wounds. He wants to take away your pain. He wants to heal your wounds. He wants to repair your soul. He wants to renew your mind ... and restore your innocence. He has a wise, patient plan for the redemption and restoration of all lives that that have been shattered, all souls that have been stained, as well as all lands that have been devastated, by war. That plan includes you. You have a special place in his heart. Your heart, your mind, your emotions, your soul/psyche, and your spirit and even your body, are each on the Great Physician's 'patient list'. Knowing the trauma you have suffered, He has a special place in His Heart for you. He is working on your behalf, night and day, plotting and implementing your unique *healing health, wellness, and wholeness protocol*. And He is working '*the Divine remedy*' into your life day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, decade after decade. Don't give up – on Him or on yourself. Don't stop *reporting in*. Don't resist or misinterpret the 'overcoming therapy' scenarios He sends your way. You too can be healed and restored. In fact, the only one who can stop the healing process He has begun in you – is *you*.

### ***First Subject: War!***

As you will recall, when the Holy One led us out of Egypt, he did not lead us *by* way of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near. He said, "***Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.***" Exodus 13:17. That was now a *long time* – and a *whole lot of wars* – ago. Are we now ready to face war as a regular fact of life? Is that a part of our destiny? Is teaching the world how to do war 'right' as much a part our reason for being placed on earth at such a time as this as teaching them how to do worship 'right', and do 'business' right, and do caring for the poor, the widow, the fatherless and the foreigner 'right' are?

I guess we had better get used to it. There is a time for peace – but there is also a time for war. In this parsha the Holy One introduces some truly *startling revelations* about the kind of 'point of the spear', 'edge of the sword' lifestyle that our Covenant Partner in Heaven has redeemed us to live. First of all, Torah assumes the people of the Holy One will never *have any shortage of bitter enemies* – people with whom the Holy One's people will never be able to peacefully co-exist. Secondly, Torah assumes the people of the Holy One will from time to time be called upon to "*go forth to battle*" *against those enemies*. We are called to stay very, very calm under pressure. We are called to stay ever

tender to and ever focused on the Beautiful Voice of the Bridegroom. We are called to stay on task and on mission. We are called to wait for orders from the High Command. We are to move only on those orders instead of breaking ranks and running to the battle on our own. And we are called to stay ever humble, ever kind, and ever faithful, in the face of armies and enemies physically larger and stronger than us. With the Psalmist we need to internalize the immutable truth that because the Holy One is our ‘light’ and our ‘salvation’, and the ‘stronghold’ of our lives - ***Though an army may encamp against me, my heart will not fear; though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident.*** Psalm 27:3.

Facing enemies who hate you; forming ranks with strangers who you may or may not even like, much less trust; fighting battles that look impossible to win; following the high command’s authority’s ‘rules of engagement’; and somehow maintaining courage and focus in the face of propaganda, bombardment, and withering charge; knowing all the while that your life and that of those you love hang in the balance - these are not pleasant things to consider. Most human beings like to take the *path of least resistance* in life – avoiding conflicts and controversies wherever possible. In the 1960’s the rallying cries of the world’s youth were “*make love, not war*”, and “*Give peace a chance*”. The author of these studies came from that generation. I wanted to “*teach the world to sing, in perfect harmony*”. My peers and I from that generation really thought we could make that happen by giving people *a Coke and a smile*. It all sounded so good, so warm, so fuzzy, and so wise. “*All you need is love*”, we sang – and truly believed. But we were wrong. We were *dead wrong*. Passivity and pacifism are not the ways of our Divine Bridegroom. And they are not the ways to which He calls His Bride.

***Our King Will Take On the Persona of a Man of War<sup>2</sup> Himself  
If, As, When, and To the Extent He Deems It Necessary to  
[A] Protect and Preserve His People, or [B] Keep His Grand Plan  
of Redemption and Restoration Moving Forward***

The Holy One wants a People who will sh’ma His Voice, and His alone. That means never surrendering to fear, to hate, to envy, to greed, to lust, to offense, to anger, to pride, or to sloth on the one side, OR to philosophy, ideology, political

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<sup>2</sup> In the Song of the Sea we are told: “***The Holy One [is] a man of war: the Holy One [is] his name.***” Exodus 15:3. Two chapters later, in Exodus 17:15, Torah says that “***The Holy One will be at war against the Ameleki [Amalekites] from generation to generation.***” Revelation 19:11 says of Y’shua: “***In righteousness He judges and makes war.***” And Y’shua Himself said to His talmidim: “***Do not suppose I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law – a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.***”

propaganda, religious doctrine, social ‘movements’, or ‘moral’ crusades on the other hand. He does not desire us, His People, to be consider ourselves either passive or pacifist, dove or hawk. Nor does He want us to identify as either liberals or conservatives, nationalists or socialists, libertarians or law-and-order advocates, or leftists or rightists. He knows that all of these labels are manufactured by the fallen mind of men, are totally artificial and unsustainable, and lock us into mindsets and roles that, sooner or later, will cause us to be squarely on the wrong side of His Will. ***He does not, therefore, want us to wear any label, or assume any identity, except His Name and Character.*** To embrace any other label than He provides is to water down – even sabotage – our mission. He has a plan of redemption and restoration broad enough for all human beings and all geographical regions, so He does not want His Bride to *be repulsed by man at his worst* or to *idolize man at his best*. He does not want us to automatically – i.e. without fresh, case-specific direction from Him – choose either *conflict avoidance* or He calls us instead to be *vigilant soldiers in His army*, constantly on guard against our *yetzer hara* [i.e. self-interest inclination], against the world’s traps of uncleanness, and against His enemies. He calls us into situations in which we will often be *distrusted, disfavored, disliked*, and even *hated*. He implies in Torah – and Yeshua later will make it crystal clear - that *if we are not encountering hate and opposition, we are simply not being who we were created to be, much less doing what He created us to do*. Yeshua did *not come to bring a state of world peace as the world imagines it upon the earth*. He came instead to *plant, cultivate, and nurture a form of inner-shalom in us that will operate even in the presence of a sword*. **Matthew 10:34**. And He also did not come to bring about *unity and harmony as the world dreams of it* any time soon. He came to endue us with the power to radically shift the atmosphere on earth – which He knew full well always results, for a period of time at least, in ***tumultuous division***. **Luke 12:51-52**.

If, as, when, and to the extent we are about His business – walking out a true and intimate love relationship with Him – we should expect that we will be ***hated*** by other men. We should prepare our hearts, our households, and our communities for the inevitable attacks that will be launched at us by people who hate us – whether those attacks be verbal or physical, state-sponsored or hate-group incited. We should understand that those who desecrate our cemeteries, call us insulting names, accuse us of blood libels, and forge weapons and bombs with which to wound us, or kill us or our children, actually think they are doing some cultural god they serve – or at least the other peoples of the world - a huge favor.

Alas, warfare is something we will experience all too frequently. Before it is over, we will all wind up becoming grizzled veterans – and hopefully highly

skilled masters - of it. We will see casualties – and, alas, we will inflict them. We will take some serious hits – and, to our chagrin, we will be forced into positions where we will have to deliver some as well. We will all see – and occasionally wind up causing – some really ugly collateral damage. But this, too, can – indeed *will* - turn out for the good. **Romans 8:28**. So gird up your loins, Dear Ones! Polish your armor. Resin up your bow. Ready your shield. Wait for your orders. Follow whatever rules of engagement you are given in your morning briefings. March on command. Go where you are sent. But never, never slack on your commitment to revere the Holy One more than than you either fear or be hate any man, any army, or any enemy. And never, never, let yourself be repulsed by anyone or anything more than you are repulsed by *the lusts of your own fallen flesh* and *the folly of your own pseudo-intellect*. Before we deal with the meat of the instructions for living our Covenant Partner in Heaven has for us in *Ki Tetze* therefore it behooves us to spend a few moments examining and coming to grips with these rather unsettling presuppositions of Torah.

### ***All is Fair In Love and War***

Though love is a ‘*more excellent way*’, even while walking in love we simply do not have the option of altogether forsaking war. We can try to feel compassion *until our heart hurts*. We can give *until our hands and feet bleed*. We can, individually at least, love until the objects of our love turn on us in fury and shoot us down like dogs in the street, rape and mutilate our wives, and smash our precious children’s skulls in with rifle butts. And we should. But as a community we will still need to study very diligently, and know very well, how our Divine Bridegroom would teach our hands to war.

No matter how much we proclaim *shalom*, or how much we may desire it, sometimes peace is simply not going to be an option. If we are going to do what we see our Divine Bridegroom doing we will at some point have to learn the meaning of such statements as ‘*in righteousness He judges and makes war*’, and ‘*let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king’s enemies*’<sup>3</sup>, and ‘*Your troops will be willing on your day of battle*’<sup>4</sup>, and ‘*he will crush kings on the day of his wrath; he will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.*’<sup>5</sup>

everything there is a season – even war. I know this is not politically correct. But it is what the Word of our glorious Bridegroom-King says. So let’s chance a look at – and see what the Torah has to say about - such unpopular issues as

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<sup>3</sup> Psalm 45:5.

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 110:3.

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 110:5-6.

[1] *why we have enemies*, [2] *who our enemies are supposed to be*, and [3] *how and when we are supposed to wage war*.

### ***Why Do We Have Enemies?***

When I was 2 years old, for no apparent reason, if I tried to play outside in my own front yard an older neighbor child would chase me with an iron rod in his hands, trying to hit me in the head and dash my brains all over the sidewalk. When I was 4, with no provocation whatever the other boys in my neighborhood ganged up on me, held me down, and shoved gravel in my ears, permanently injuring my hearing. When I was 8 years old a burly, heavy-drinking man who lived in my Houston, Texas apartment building saw me playing outside one day and with no explanation grabbed a bullwhip and began chasing me, cursing and threatening to kill me if he ever caught me outside my apartment again. When I was 16 the local sociopath of the small town in which I lived, a young man in his 20's that I did not even know, picked me out to be his victim. He stalked me day-in and day-out. Everywhere I went I saw him watching me, mocking me, threatening me. He made every excursion outside my home or school an adventure in terror. I never knew where he would catch up with me. But he made sure I knew he was always watching, waiting around the next corner. I escaped, time after time, by the skin of my teeth and the grace of the Holy One. One day, when he pulled his car up to a parking lot where I was walking with some friends and began spouting his usual avalanche of threats and profanity toward me, I looked him in the eye, called him by name, and asked him "*What have I ever done to make you hate me so?*" His mocking reply was: "You don't have to do anything to make me hate you - *I just don't like your looks.*"

Now *wait a minute*. We who are the Holy One's do not go around "looking for a fight". We are not bullies or bigots or brigands or braggarts or brats. We do not claim to be better than anyone else, or turn up our noses at anybody. We respect all people, even those society does not consider "cool". We do not hate or retaliate against even those who hurt and injure us. We are not perfect, of course, but we're not troublemakers by nature. So why in the world do we have so many enemies? Our enemies would say, like the young "tough guy" of the small town where I graduated from high school: "you don't have to do anything to make me hate you - *I just don't like your looks.*" But why? Because we are - or at least are *supposed to be* - different from the rest of the world. We do not - or at least we are not supposed to - *conform to the popular thinking, the popular "political-speak" of the day or the socially accepted behaviors of the cultures in which we may find ourselves*. We do not *value what the people in the societies around us value*. We do not *share the worldview the people around us espouse*. We do not *dress like the people of our age and social status dress*. We do not

*eat what they eat. We do not want what they want. We do not laugh at what they think is funny. We do not get teary-eyed at what they think is sad. We do not hate the people they hate. We think different, talk different, live different, and look different. And they do not – and will never – like our looks. Ahhh, there's the stark reality of it. Get used to it. Get over it. Get on with who you are ... and with what you are called to do.*

## ***Who Are Our Enemies?***

The Hebrew word translated as “enemies” in our text is the plural form of the word *'oyeb*<sup>6</sup>. It is a word that contains the same first and last consonants as *ahav* [love]. The first consonant in both is *alef*, the hieroglyphic symbol of the Holy One. The third consonant in each is *beit*, the hieroglyphic symbol for the household, or family. What is different between *ahav* and *oyeb* is the middle consonant. In *ahav* the middle consonant is the *hey*, a hieroglyphic symbol of a window. *Ahav* [love] is the window through which the Holy One and his household/family interact with each other. In *oyeb* on the other hand the middle consonant is the *yod*, the hieroglyphic symbol of a closed hand, or fist.

An *oyeb* therefore is whatever or whoever “comes between” or “separates” the Bridegroom-King from His household or family. It is that which *shakes a fist* at the God of Avraham, of Yitzchak, and of Ya’akov, and *reaches out to grab, and claim for its own, the Holy One’s household and family*. From a Hebraic standpoint therefore our “enemies” are *those who try to separate us – and any other part of the Holy One’s household, from true relationship with the Holy One, and from correct perspective on who He is and what He wants to do in and through our lives*. I know that the popular theology is that our enemies are fallen angels, demons, and the one alternatively called *Satan, the devil, and Lucifer*. In a sense, of course, there is some truth to that theology (there is always some truth behind every deception). I know that popular charismatic theology tells us that we are called to “spiritual warfare” against unseen spirits which we are to cast out by “pleading the Blood”, playing loud music, doing “war dances”, engaging in “prophetic” actions, and working ourselves into a sweat and a lather till we feel a “breakthrough” in our spirit. Don’t get me wrong - I do not begrudge anyone the catharsis of a good session of yelling, screaming, and quoting Bible verses at “the devil” or his demon horde. It’s a little like a good cry – it always makes you feel better, even if it doesn’t change anything.

### ***Is Ha-Satan Really The Big Bad Guy His Press Agents Promote Him to Be?***

But is it possible we do ourselves and our Covenant Partner in Heaven a disservice if we too readily focus our attention and our energies on Ha-Satan and fallen angels rather than our great and awesome God? Is it possible that the moment we shift our focus from the Holy One and His loving instructions for life to Ha-Satan and the realm of death we begin to *lose ground* in the warfare of life? Is Ha-Satan really our worst enemy? I mean, was it not our Covenant Partner in Heaven Who *created* Ha-Satan? What if the Holy One did not make a

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<sup>6</sup> *Oyeb* is *alef, yod, beit*, Strong’s Hebrew word #341, pronounced *o-yabe’*.

mistake in doing so? What if the Holy One created Ha-Satan foreknowing that Ha-Satan would become the “prosecuting attorney” who would accuse us and prosecute us in the Holy One’s Heavenly courtroom for violations of Torah? See **Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Zechariah 3:1-2.**

Have you ever considered the possibility that our Covenant Partner in Heaven could *take Ha-Satan out of this world* any time He wants to – and chooses not to ... FOR OUR SAKES! Have you ever considered the possibility that the Holy One has Ha-Satan on a *short leash*, such that he can only do to us what the Holy One allows Him to? **Job 1:12; 2:6.** Have you ever considered the possibility that, quite against his will, Ha-Satan is really *an unwitting servant of our Covenant Partner in Heaven*? See **I Corinthians 5:5**, and **I Timothy 1:20**. Granted, his [Ha-Satan’s, that is] service of the Holy One is not pleasant to us. In fact it is *downright un-pleasant* to be constantly accused, and slandered, and backbit, and plotted against – whether by Ha-Satan himself *or* by the human beings he uses as the mouthpieces of his slime. It is however *for our good* – as everything in the Holy One’s creation is for our good.

So when “bad” things happen to us or to those we love we can blame Ha-Satan if we like – if it makes us feel better about ourselves or our circumstances. But if we do we may just miss the point our Covenant Partner in Heaven is trying to drive home. And that truth is especially important to us in the month of *Elul*, when the Bridegroom-King is *trying to get our attention*, and *break us out of unhealthy relationships and entanglements* with the world, and *call us back to Him* – and to His Torah lifestyle - where we belong.

### ***Dealing With the Real Enemy(ies) We Face Every Day***

You see, the most dangerous enemy we have is really not Ha-Satan [whose activity in our lives is limited and carefully monitored and controlled by the Holy One] at all, but *our own yetzer ra* [i.e. our post-fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil inclination to indulge our fleshly appetites and attitudes]. Ha-Satan has nothing in us unless we give it to him. Our *yetzer ra* is his ticket. It is our *yetzer ra* that causes us, when we are given a choice between the Holy One’s way and our flesh’s urges, appetites, and inclinations toward evil, all too often tempts us to “opt out” of the Holy One’s plan for our lives and His Divine protection.

As it is said “We have met the enemy, and *he is us.*” Beyond ourselves, we do not have to look very far around us to see who our other enemies are. It is *those who cannot and will not acknowledge, accept, or tolerate our covenant connection with God.* It is those who have rejected intimacy with our Covenant Partner in Heaven time after time after time, have reduced spiritual life to a list of *do’s* and *don’ts*, theologies and doctrinal statements, and have hardened their

hearts against Him and everyone associated with Him – including us.

Some of the enemies the Holy One brings across our path – though very few in the great scheme of things – are God-hating atheists or agnostics, steeped in perversions they do not have any desire or intention to abandon. To them, we are an ‘inferior race’, less intelligent, less ‘enlightened’, less ‘diverse’, less ‘tolerant’, and worthy of death simply because we are unwilling to acknowledge their cultural – if not genetic - superiority. Such enemies arise in every generation, and they are dangerous indeed. We suffered much at the hands of such enemies last century in Europe, particularly in the death camps of Germany and Poland. Similar enemies are now aligning against us – those who call that which is good ‘evil’, and call that which is evil ‘good’. We will have to deal with those enemies wisely – and soon - or the Holocaust will be repeated, only multiplied by many times in effect.

**Hello!!!! Are you listening, Beloved?** I said that we will have to deal with those enemies wisely – and **soon** - or the Holocaust will be repeated, only multiplied by many times in effect. Shofar sounded. So ... who will *sh'ma*?

### ***And Then There Is the Enemy Within Our Own Gates***

Many of our enemies, however, are not at all like that. Most of them – and perhaps ultimately the most dangerous of them – are very, very religious people – people who belong to the religious “mainstream”. These are the ones of whom Messiah Yeshua said:

***If they persecuted Me they will persecute you also.***

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***a time is coming when anyone who kills you  
will think he is offering a service to God.***

**[John 15:20; 16:2]**

Do not get too comfortable in any religious mainstream – whatever label it bears. Someone out there just *doesn't like your looks*. And when the time is right, and you least expect it – well, use your imagination, Dear Reader. When that happens, doing a “war dance”, shouting at the devil, and binding the “strong man” will not even begin to solve your problem. Your focus had better be on our Covenant Partner in Heaven instead - because you are most definitely *going to need His help*.

### ***Some Practical Wisdom***

One of the things that being in covenant with the God of Avraham, of Yitzchak and of Ya'akov means is that *we do not get to pick and choose our enemies*. As ambassadors of the Kingdom of Heaven we are not simply *not allowed to make critical judgments on our own and go out looking for people (or unclean spirits) to*

*assassinate*. We are simply *not allowed to blame others for our problems*, or for the problems of either our religious institutions or nations. We were not, you see, redeemed by our Divine Bridegroom to be *crusaders*. Those among us who adopt the mindset and tactics of crusaders will meet the same fate the ‘presumptuous ones’ met in Numbers 14:40-45. We are instead to be *yielded vessels*, *His* to strategically place, and *His* to command, seeking no glory for ourselves, and reliant upon His strength – and His plan - instead of our own.

Part of living the *sh’ma* lifestyle involves letting our stronger and wiser Covenant Partner in Heaven choose our enemies for us, and accepting the spiritual reality that He brings those enemies broadside across our path *on purpose*, as part of His Divine Plan for our lives. The Holy One does this *whether we like it or not*, and *whether, in our own minds at least, we are ready or not*. He does it *because He is sovereign and omniscient*, and because *He has a plan that is bigger than we are*.

When our Covenant Partner in Heaven determines, in His sovereignty, that it is a ‘time for war’ [Ecclesiastes 3:8] – then *we had better be prepared to wage war the way Torah tells us to wage war*. Towers fall in our midst. Anthrax comes in the mail. Terrorists strike at every level. Bombs blow up in pizzerias and universities and bus stops and busses. Innocent people – even children – get tortured, crucified and beheaded. False accusations and twisted half-truths burst forth from gleeful lips. And eventually, however idealistic and simple-minded we started out in life, we find that love, as wonderful as it is – and as much as it is and absolutely has to be our chief identifying characteristic – is NOT all we need. The faint of heart, and those with an incurable addiction to being liked by men, need not apply.

### ***Then How, When, and Why are we to Wage War?***

Avraham lived among enemies all the time he wandered Kena’an, *Gerar* [Philistia], and Egypt, yet he waged war only once, and then only to rescue his nephew Lot from captivity by strangers. **Genesis 14:14-16**. Neither Yitzchak nor Ya’akov of blessed memory were, at any time in their lives, called upon to fight a war, though they were provoked – indeed, even attacked - time and time again. Even when Ya’akov’s daughter Dinah was molested Ya’akov held his peace [though, to our shame, his sons Simeon and Levi did not].

When the Redeemed Remnant of Israel came out of Egypt and journeyed toward the land of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya’akov, many peoples rose up to challenge us - but only when the Holy One instructed us were we permitted to even defend ourselves. In most instances, we were instructed very specifically *not* to make war. See e.g. **Deuteronomy 2:4-6, 9, 18-19**. On the other hand, when the people of

Amalek laid in stealth and attacked our weak ones on the way to Sinai, our Covenant Partner in Heaven *raised up a standard* in our midst, and *taught our fathers' hands to war*. Exodus 17:8-10. Similarly, when Sichon and Og the Emori [Amorite] amassed armies against us, the Holy One decried the way of 'peace', and summoned us to battle, and strengthened our hands to utterly destroy them. Numbers 21:23-26, 33-35. And when the Midyani sent their princesses into our camp to seduce us away from our purpose and destiny in life, the Holy One again issued a declaration of war. Numbers 31:1,7. And perhaps some of you remember Jericho. And Ai. And David's little tiff with Goliath. And the fight with Ph'lishtia over the captives of Ziklag. And Yeshua and the moneychangers in the Temple – and so on.

The secret of “warfare” in the Holy One's family and household is not passivism. It is the same secret that applies to every aspect of life – *sh'ma!* We are to *listen*, and *hear*, and *wait for the command* and instruction of our Covenant Partner in Heaven. We have to have eyes to see '*what the Father is doing*'. Only *if the Holy One is in the process of judging a person or a people group*, and literally 'sics' us on them, are we to engage in warfare. Which means, of course, that if our Covenant Partner in Heaven is *not* in the process of judging a people group, and has not 'sicked' us on them, *it does not matter how evil the person or people group may be – we are not to wage war*. And if He is in the process of judging a person or people group, even if we consider the person or people group to be guiltless, or just like us, or if we realize it will make us look like the 'bad guy', *we are to attack with all our strength, and give no quarter*. This is *very, very, very serious business*. We have *very little room for error*. We had better not act on our own volition, or our own sense of what is 'right' and 'wrong'. We had better know and follow Torah's instructions. And we had better be so intimate with our Divine Bridegroom that we receive his signals *loud and clear*. We must only do what we see our Father in heaven doing.

How are we to know when to wage war on the one hand, and when to keep our peace – or perhaps even turn the other cheek - on the other? We must stay in intimate fellowship with the Holy One – He will communicate His orders moment-by-moment, day-by-day. We must know, from heeding our Covenant Partner's voice, when it is appropriate for us to speak to a rock, and when it is appropriate - indeed mandatory - for us to *strike it with the rod*.

### ***Teaching Our Hands to War***

The Hebrew word for “war” is *milchamah*<sup>7</sup>. It is from the root word *lachim*,

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<sup>7</sup> Milchamah is *mem, lamech, chet, mem, hey*, Strong's Hebrew word #4421 pronounced *mil-khaw-maw'*.

meaning to *devour* or *consume* or *chew on* or *swallow up* something or someone. **Milchamah** would be a course of action - first biting, then chewing, and then swallowing – our enemies. At the end of parsha *Shoftim* [last week's parsha], Torah set forth the **methodologies** of war we are to follow [and those we are to avoid]: *When you draw near to a city to fight against it, you are first to **proclaim shalom to it***. We are never to go out looking for a fight. We are always to be looking for an opportunity to spread **shalom** – the peace, blessing, wellness, security, prosperity, and purposeful life which flows to he who **sh'ma**'s the Holy One's Torah. Torah also teaches us that:

*It shall be, if it make you an answer of shalom, and open to you,  
then it shall be, that all the people who are found therein  
shall become tributary to you, and shall serve you.*

If the people we approach and offer **shalom** respond favorably to the Holy One, and accept His Torah, as the pathway to true life, we are to take them into our protection, and let them learn the specifics of Torah by serving us. As Torah-observant masters, we will be kind, openhearted, and good. And they will, ideally, at the appointed time, bind themselves to the Holy One forever, as foreigners within the contemplation of Isaiah chapter 56. We are always to leave our enemies *another option besides war*. But if they choose war, we are to honor their choice, and give them exactly what they want. As Moshe puts it:

*If it [i.e the city to whom you offer shalom] will make no shalom with you,  
but will make war against you, then you are to **besiege it**:*

The Torah tells us clearly that **we are to wage war only on those who make war on us**. Not only must an enemy refuse our offer of **shalom**, they/he must go further, and actually '*make war against*' us before we are authorized to take up arms against them/him. We do not shoot first. We do not decide a man or a group of people is hopeless, or evil, and declare a self-righteous *holocaust* on them. We wait, and wait, and wait - until *they attack us*. Don't worry – if they are truly enemies of the Holy One, *attack us they will*. Attacking us is just what they do. They *live to attack us*. They cannot stand to *look at us*. They cannot even stand to acknowledge our right to exist. They stop up their ears to our offer of "**shalom**". They cannot stand to hear us talk of Torah, or Shabbat, or the *Moedim* [appointed times] of our Glorious Bridegroom-King, or the coming kingdom of Messiah. They cannot stand it when we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They refuse to peacefully co-exist with anyone who practices a **sh'ma** lifestyle, testifying of intimate personal relationship with the Holy One. Such a lifestyle threatens everything about their world. Such a lifestyle means that only what our Covenant Partner in Heaven *says* matters – and that what man desires, or plans, or builds – is wood, hay and stubble. So they bear their fangs, pick up their weapons, and attack the apple of the Holy One's eye. And though the Holy One may allow them to win [or

seem to win] a few battles, in order to seal their judgment more firmly by proving their total lack of relationship with Him, and the total depravity of their souls, they eventually find that they cannot win a war against the God of Avraham, of Yitzchak and of Ya'akov.

They may kill – or maim - any number of us. But for every one of us they harm or destroy, the Holy One raises up a hundred more. Like seeds, if you drop us to the ground, we multiply. Our individual lives are expendable, for His Glory. But His resources are unlimited. So Torah tells us:

*... and when the Holy One your God delivers it into your hand,  
you are to **strike every male of it with the edge of the sword:**  
but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle,  
and all that is in the city, even all the spoil of it, shall you take for a prey to yourself;  
and you are to **eat the spoil of your enemies that the Holy One your God has given you.***

### ***The Weapons of our Warfare***

In II Corinthians 10 Shaul of Tarsus [the apostle Paul] made a drash on Deuteronomy 20, proclaiming:

*Now I Sha'ul, myself, entreat you by the humility and gentleness of Messiah;  
I who in your presence am lowly among you,  
but being absent am of good courage toward you.  
Yes, I beg you that I may not, when present, show courage  
with the confidence with which I intend to be bold against some,  
who consider us to be walking according to the flesh.  
For though we walk in the flesh, we don't wage war according to the flesh;  
for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh,  
but mighty before God to the throwing down of strongholds, throwing down imaginations  
and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God,  
and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Messiah;  
and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience,  
when your obedience will be made full.*

**[2 Corinthians 10:1-5]**

Contrary to popular charismatic teaching on this passage Shaul is not here referring to “spiritual warfare” against fallen angels or Satanic forces. He is referring to how he approaches *real people* in the *real city of Corinth* who persist in flagrantly violating the Torah of the Holy One despite his warning of the consequences in prior visits and letters:

*... being absent, I write to those who have sinned before now,  
and to all the rest, that, if I come again, I will not spare ...*

**[2 Corinthians 13:2]**

Shaul is saying that as the Covenant community was instructed to proclaim *shalom* to any city and give its residents an opportunity to submit to the Holy

One's ways [the Torah] voluntarily, and to be governed by the Holy One's Torah community, so he [Shaul] had, in previous visits and letters, proclaimed "*Shalom*" to Corinth; but that, as Torah instructed the Redeemed to put to the sword and not spare all those who refused the offer of *shalom* on such terms, so he [Shaul] would be strong in his attack against those in Corinth who refused or ignored his offer of *Shalom*.

### ***Making War For the Right Reasons, In the Torah Way***

So if the warfare to which we are called in the Covenant is not against Satan or unclean spirits, but is against men/ women and cities/earthly kingdoms which refuse our offer of *shalom*, and declare war on us, when do we "make war", and how do we 'make war' – i.e. what are our orders, what weapons are we issued, and strategies and rules of engagement are we supposed to follow? The most important thing we should keep in mind is that we [or our perceived *needs* or our fleshly *desires*] are never to be the driving force of any war in which we are involved. Just because we do not like circumstances in which we find ourselves – or approve of what the people around us think, say, or do - does not mean we have the right to declare war on the people or kingdoms who seem in control.

If we insist on doing that we will find our enemy is none other than the Holy One Himself – who is working His Divine Will out in our lives and the lives of others through the very circumstances we do not like. You see, we are not called to go around starting fights and then asking the Holy One to come in and finish them like a genie out of a bottle. Our Covenant Partner in Heaven is not a supernatural gladiator we can bring in to fight all our battles for us. We are to fight *His* battles, on *His* command – not the other way around. We are 'men *under authority*' – not men '*of authority*'. The Holy One is *the sole Commander of our armies*. The Holy One is to be *the driving force* when we make war. His Plan and strategy is the only plan or strategy. The victory is only ours only when – and to the extent - the battle we are fighting is *our Covenant Partner in Heaven's battle, waged according to His orders, protocols, and rules of engagement*.

### ***But What About Ephesians 6 – and Paul's Law/Command of Putting on Something Called the 'Full Armor of God'?***

Ephesians 6:10-17 is also often quoted as a model of "spiritual warfare" for believers. In that passage Shaul of Tarsus tells the members of the Redeemed Community at Ephesus to "*put on the full armor of God*", because "*our struggle is not against flesh and blood*". Look, however, at the context of this passage. Shaul has been expounding upon the Torah's familiar and timeless instructions for living for *wives* [referencing Genesis 2:18 and 3:16], for *husbands* [harking back to Genesis 2:25 and 24:67], for *children* [quoting the "sixth commandment" of Exodus 20:12], for servants [referencing the faithful servant Eliezer, whose loyalty and service is described

in Genesis 24], and for *masters* [referencing the testimony of Job in Job 31:13-15].

In Ephesians 6 Shaul is not talking about waging war against either people or unclean spirits. He is, instead, talking about fulfilling the *mitzvot* of Torah in regard to the most basic of relationships in life so that the accuser has nothing upon which to substantiate his accusations. The “struggle” referenced by Shaul is thus not an *external* struggle – what men tend to think of as warfare – but an internal “struggle” to maintain Torah-consistent thoughts, words, reactions, interactions, and redemption/restoration promoting behaviors. Ephesians 6 is strictly a strong encouragement by Shaul to adhere to the *mitzvot* of Torah and TaNaKh, in order that one may not be shown to be hypocritical by the Accuser, who examines those areas of life carefully to find grounds in the Torah for accusation against us. The point is that the armor of our Covenant Partner in Heaven is not for *warfare* – it is for *self-protection*. And its substance is not “confession” or “theology” – it is, instead, *Torah-based living*.

*Ki Tetze* is the parsha of the '*sons shining*'. Moshe calls us to come out of our safe-rooms, ivory towers, and echo-chambers and bring both the wisdom and the loving-kindness of the King to bear on earth in practical ways - one extremely challenging narrow road crucible of decision at a time.

We are not called to live in a utopia. We are called to be agents of healing in midst of life's bloodiest, most toxic battlefields.

"YOU MUST NOT HIDE YOURSELVES", Moshe repeats over and over again in this parsha. But don't come in like a wrecking ball, either. Before you speak or act, make sure you have PURGED THE *RA* - i.e. the SELF-INTEREST AGENDA, the FLESH MOTIVATIONS, and the PSEUDO-INTELLECTUAL ARROGANCE - from your own heart, mind, and mouth, and that you come in the volume of the Book with your only agenda to do the will and further the Grand Plan of the Holy One.

### ***Questions For Today's Study***

1. Using your Strong's Concordance and your Gesenius' Lexicon look up the word translated “*goesl*” [per the King James Version] in Deuteronomy 21:10 [Hebrew word #3318, 3319]. This word will be the foundation for all you will read in this parsha. What does it mean?
2. Verses 10-14 deal with marriages contracted between Hebrew men participating in wars with other nations and women from other nations encountered in the course of those wars.

[A] Does the Torah absolutely prohibit marriage between a Hebrew man and

a woman from another nation?

[B] Are there nations whose women a Hebrew man may not marry? Explain.

[C] Why do you think the Holy One had Moshe include verses 12-13 in the Torah?

[D] Why do you think the Holy One had Moshe include verse 14 in the Torah?

[E] Do you see any end-time *prophetic implications* to this Torah teaching? If so, explain.

3. In verses 18-21 Moshe details what, once we enter into and possess the land of promise, with Torah as our Constitution, is to be done with a *stubborn and rebellious son*.

*If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son,  
who will not **sh'ma** the voice of his father or the voice of his mother,  
and, though they chasten him, will not listen to them;  
then his father and his mother are to lay hold on him,  
and bring him out to the Zakenim of his city, and to the gate of his place;  
and they are to tell the Zakenim of his city,  
“This our son is stubborn and rebellious,  
he will not sh'ma our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard.”  
Thereupon, all the men of his city are to stone him to death with stones:  
so are you to put away the evil from the midst of you;  
and all Yisra'el will hear and fear.*

[A] What does Torah describe as the characteristics of a “stubborn” son?

[B] What does Torah describe as the characteristics of a “rebellious” son?

[C] List each of the steps in the procedure set forth by Moshe for dealing with such a son.

[D] What “two witnesses” are required for this procedure to be carried out?

[E] How is the requirement of these two witnesses a practical protection for the son?

[F] Imagine you are the younger brother [or daughter, as the case may be] of one accused of being a “stubborn and rebellious son”. Write a “journal entry” concerning [i] what your brother [call him Eliab] had done, [ii] what happened at each stage of the proceeding, and [iii] how all this made you feel.

[G] In Matthew 11:16-19, Yeshua contrasted the way the generation who refused Yochanan’s [John’s] baptism looked upon Yochanan and the way the same generation looked upon Yeshua. What did they label Yeshua? How does this relate to today’s Torah?

[H] Do you see any *end-time prophetic implications* to the ‘rebellious son’ teachings of Torah? If so, explain.

4. In today’s Haftarah we read this prophetic call from the Yeshayahu [Isaiah]:

*Sing, barren, you who didn't bear;  
break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you who did not travail with child:  
for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife,  
says the Holy One.*

- [A] Who is the “barren woman” to whom Yeshayahu is speaking?
- [B] Why is she “barren”?
- [C] Why is she to “sing”, “burst into song” and “shout for joy”?
- [D] Who are her “children” going to be?

5. In today’s B’rit Chadasha verses Shaul of Tarsus says there is something *ra* [evil] among the believers at Corinth. Before the week is over, we will be shocked at Shaul’s approach to this *ra* – and his application of the Torah in the context of a group of what we have historically assumed to be largely gentile, not Jewish, believers. Today we read:

*It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you,  
and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Goyim [gentiles],  
that one has his father's wife.*

- [A] What was the *ra* that Shaul of Tarsus was talking about?
- [B] What Torah prohibitions were being violated [cite book, chapter and verse]?

**[Hint:** There are three references. Look in Leviticus 18 and in next week’s parsha, parsha *Ki Tavo*, as well!].

- [C] According to Shaul is this Torah provision applicable only to Jews?

*May love for the Holy One and His ways consume you.  
May you love people with the Love of the Holy One  
And when, as will inevitably happen, they attack you for it,  
and refuse to allow you to love them any more;  
then, may the Holy One lead you to do His Will  
in the course of the warfare they institute,  
thinking they are waging war against **you**, but are really waging war against **Him**.*

### ***The Rabbi’s son***

### ***Meditation for Today’s Study***

Psalm 27:1-2

*The Holy One is my **light** [Hebrew, **ohri**] and my **salvation** [Hebrew, **y’shai**].  
Whom shall I fear?*

*The Holy One is the **strength of my life** [Hebrew, **ma’oz chai’i**].  
Of whom shall I be afraid?*

*When evildoers came at me to eat up my flesh,  
Even my adversaries and my foes,  
they stumbled and fell.*