



## Special Portion:

### **DEUTERONOMY 14:22-16:17**

- Luke 12:1-3
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- 2 Corinthians 5:9

## Title:

### **LEARN TO FEAR YAHWEH!**

- Don't Live Double Lives
- Don't Challenge His Word
- Seek to Please Him

*Fears—everyone has them. The very thing I'll be doing immediately after Dr. Jeff's introduction is the number one fear I found when I researched "things people fear the most." Yes, public speaking is considered a "social phobia" and it tops the list of things that people fear the most. It's hard to imagine considering the competition: death, poverty, loss of a loved one, sharks, etc.*

*Interestingly enough however, is that nowhere on the list of things people fear the most is the "fear of the Lord." Sure, not everyone surveyed was a professing believer, but since the study was conducted in the United States, where the majority of people still claim Christianity as their faith, it should have had some influence on their responses. I pray "fear of the Lord" missed the list because of a proper understanding of what it really means, awe and reverence for a holy God; may it always be.*

*But I have a strong suspicion that is not the case at all, especially if we observe the lives of most church attendees. If what is easily observable is any representation of how most “professing Christians” really feel about Yahweh, then I’d say self-deception is much more prevalent than awe and reverence. A sad commentary for sure, and I shudder when I think about what God views as lip service. Y’shua said this of religious hypocrites, as He affirmed the words of the prophet Isaiah; “These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.” Self-deception is much more common than we would like to admit and, as you can see, we are not alone; both the children of Israel and first-century leaders suffered from the same character defect.*

*One of the hardest things to do in our daily walk with Christ is to recognize the areas in ourselves that require attention. These are classically things we like to avoid, often painful things. Unfortunately, these are the sins in our lives that ought to be addressed promptly, but instead we oftentimes minimize them, saying, “I’m not perfect; I’m just a human.” Of course you are human! But that should be no excuse for Christians, as you are no longer “just human”. You are now human with a heart possessed by God. My prayer for you today is you put aside your defense*

*mechanisms and let God's word be the spiritual scalpel He designed it to be, one that is "sharper than any two edged sword."*

**THEME: MAIN SCRIPTURE(S) THAT HAS INSPIRED MESSAGE**

And before the LORD your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may ***learn to fear the LORD*** your God always. Deuteronomy 14:23 ESV

**OUTCOME: MAIN TAKEAWAY(S) I AM HOPING FOR PEOPLE**

In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, "***Beware of the leaven*** of the Pharisees, ***which is hypocrisy***. Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops. Luke 12:21-23 ESV

The ***fear of the LORD*** is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. Proverbs 9:10 ESV

Better is a little with the ***fear of the LORD*** than great treasure and trouble with it. Proverbs 15:16 ESV

For the word of God is **living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword**, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Hebrews 4:12 ESV

## Let's Set the Scene: Portion in a blurb

1. On the final day of Passover, which commemorates the crossing of the Red Sea, there is a custom to end the season of redemption with an additional Torah Portion from Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17. It reviews the following:
  - (a) Tithing Principles
  - (b) Debts being Canceled Every Seven Years
  - (c) Generosity to the Poor
  - (d) The Law Concerning Bondservants
  - (e) The Law Concerning Firstborn Animals
  - (f) A Review of Passover, The Feast of Weeks, and The Feast of Tabernacles

### **Deuteronomy 14**

2. **Improper Mourning:** Don't cut yourself or shave your heads in strange ways like the pagans do when they are mourning the loss of a loved one.

3. **Clean and Unclean Meat:** Moses reiterates his message from Leviticus 11 about what is permitted to be eaten from the land, the sea and the air. You can read all the details in Deuteronomy 14:3-21. Note Deuteronomy 14:21: “*You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.*” This is the verse that Rabbinic Judaism interprets to prohibit eating milk products and meat in the same meal. They do this to insure they do not consume the milk from the mother of the animal they are eating.

(a) From the land, the animal must have the hoof split into two parts, and must chew the cud in order to be clean as food. Of course, some animals have neither, and there are some that have one or the other. To be clear, the animal must have both to be considered food. This has never changed. See the Jerusalem Counsel Ruling in Acts 15:1-29 if you are uncertain about this fact. And if you think Peter’s vision in Acts 10:9-16 changes these laws, think again. The vision was about men, not food.

- 1) God told Peter, “And a voice spoke to him again the second time, “**What God has cleansed you must not call common.**”” Acts 10:15 NKJV
- 2) And to leave nothing to your imagination, Peter interprets the vision for us: “*Then he said to them, “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go*

to one of another nation. **But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.**” Acts 10:28  
NKJV

- 3) Peter tells his testimony about this vision and revelation again in Acts 11:1-18. In Acts 11:9 he quotes God’s exact words in Acts 10:15. *“What God has cleansed you must not call common.”* And the entire context of Acts 11:1-18 is clearly demonstrating that what God was teaching Peter (and us) is to never call people unclean who He has called clean. He was calling Peter to preach to the gentiles! *“If therefore God gave them [the Gentiles] the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, **who was I that I could withstand God?**”* (Acts 11:17 NKJV) His “blanket-coming-down-vision” was about people was not food and who was Peter to deny his calling to the Gentiles despite his religious predisposition to call them unclean!

#### 4. **Tithing Principles:**

- (a) Tithe your increase of everything so you may learn to fear Yahweh always.
- (b) Eat it before Yahweh in the place where He chooses to make His name abide.
- (c) But if the journey is too long, then exchange your increase for money, and take the money to the place God chooses.

Spend that money for whatever your heart desires. Then, eat it there as you rejoice.

- (d) At the end of every third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates. Use it to feed the Levites, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow who are within your gates. Yahweh will bless you in all the work of your hand if you do.

## **Deuteronomy 15**

### **5. Debts Canceled Every Seven Years:**

- (a) At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release of debts of fellow Israelites (natural and grafted), but from a foreigner you may require it.

- (b) Give up all claims except when there are no poor among you. (And there will always be poor among you...

Deuteronomy 15:11)

- (c) *“For the LORD your God will bless you just as He promised you; you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you.”* Deuteronomy 15:6 NKJV

### **6. Generosity to the Poor:**

- (a) Open your hand wide to the poor and willingly lend to him what is sufficient for his need.

(b) Do not let the proximity of their need to the year of release influence your lending. That would be evil!

(c) For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.'"

Deuteronomy 15:11 NKJV

\*"For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always." Mark 14:7 NKJV

7. **The Law Concerning Bondservants:** Your Hebrew servant is released in the seventh and you are to send them away with abundant livestock, grain, and wine. The reason is because you are so blessed and you must pass it on, plus you were so prosperous because of him. If he wants to stay because he loves you and prospers with you, he can do so, but it is a one time forever decision. (For detailed teachings on the subject see Exodus 21:2-6 and links to KEM [Sermon Notes](#) and Impact Discipleship Notes and Video: [The Bondservant and the Master](#))
8. **The Law Concerning Firstborn Animals:** Separate the firstborn of your flock and don't work it or shear it, and eat it before the LORD each year in the place the LORD chooses. If it has a defect, you can still eat it, but you cannot offer it to Yahweh. Of course, do not eat its blood.



## Deuteronomy 16

9. The portion ends in chapter 16:1-17 with a review of the Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. These are the pilgrimage feasts in which you are go to Jerusalem. This way you can celebrate in the place where the LORD chooses to make His name abide.
  - (a) *“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.”* Deuteronomy 16:16-17 NKJV

## DON'T LIVE DOUBLE LIVES

### 1. When we learn to fear the LORD...

#### A. We don't live double lives!

(1) Beware of Hypocrisy

(a) And if you think you can hide your pretense, guess again!

1. In the meantime, when **so many thousands of the people** had gathered together that they **were trampling one another**, he began to say to his

disciples first, **“Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.** Nothing is covered up **that will not be revealed,** or hidden that will not be known. Therefore **whatever you have said** in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops. Luke 12:1-3 ESV

(b) Choose this day whom you will serve!

1. “Now **therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness.** Put **away the gods that your fathers served** beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, **choose this day whom you will serve,** whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Then the people answered, **“Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods,** for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples

through whom we passed. And the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God." But Joshua said to the people, "**You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy God.** He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. **If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods,** then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good." Joshua 24:14-20 ESV

(c) Self-righteousness!

1. It is easy to get mingled in with the masses. More often than not, this is how we measure something's value, accuracy, enjoyability or relatability.
2. This is no different in spiritual matters.
3. In the days of Y'Shua, He brought judgment on the religious zealots because of **their seemingly contradicting life**. They would be very quick to point a finger at those outside of their immediate religious circles, but would judge themselves righteous in comparison.

4. It is of interest to note that Y'Shua pointed out the **hypocrisy** of the Pharisees and warned His followers to "Beware" of the leaven which is hypocrisy.
5. Can you relate to this warning?
6. If you were standing in front of Y'Shua at this very minute, what would be your reaction if He made that statement to you?
7. One of the easiest pitfalls in all of Christianity is to become enamored with **self-righteousness**. This is really no different than what a Pharisee would do in the days of Y'Shua who would judge themselves, and find themselves altogether righteous.
8. Paul discovered this to be the greatest impediment of his "countrymen" seeing the truth about Y'shua. *"For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. **For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.**"* Romans 10:2-3 ASV

(2) Examine Yourself...

- (a) This is one of the reasons the Apostle Paul said—  
Examine yourselves, **to see whether you are in the faith**. Test yourselves.

1. **“Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.** Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!” 2 Corinthians 13:5  
ESV

(b) Make a choice!

1. Now, in the Book of Joshua, he debates with the people whether they should choose to serve the Lord or not, based on his assessment that they would not put away their other foreign gods, but instead would try to serve both their made up gods and Yahweh simultaneously.
2. Joshua, emphatically warns them that this is a bad idea to continue such, but as for him and his house, they had chosen to serve Yahweh.
3. We see this scenario play itself out all around us! We hear of people having “received Salvation.” They “make a decision for Christ” at a Church service, only to turn around, walk out totally unchanged, still living as if nothing happened. Why is that?
4. I believe the answer can be found by examining how “new converts” are not being taught to fear Yahweh. As long as we continue to preach of a God who is

hopelessly alone and can't wait for people to ask Him to be their Savior, things will remain as such.

5. This my brothers and sisters is not the God of the Bible! Yes He loves you! There is no doubt about that, otherwise He would not have allowed Himself, in the flesh of His Son Yeshua the Messiah, to be nailed to a Cross. But that is only one part of His character.

## DON'T CHALLENGE HIS WORD

### 2. When we learn to fear the LORD...

#### A. We don't challenge His Word!

(1) Don't question Yahweh!

(a) His Word is inspired!

1. "***All Scripture is breathed*** out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV

(b) His Word is steadfast!

1. ***Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast*** of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "***Did God actually say...*** Genesis 3:1 ESV

2. A huge part of our problem in the Church today is our unwillingness to accept what His word says. In many ways we find ourselves reliving the unfortunate circumstances we read in Genesis 3:1.
3. Furthermore, as believers, we diminish the Body of Christ whenever we don't consider the Scriptures with reverence: God's revelation to His children as it relates to His character, His plans, and His expectations of His Bride, to fulfill His preordained and Sovereign will.

(2) You Cannot Hide!

(a) His Word is a surgical instrument that cuts to the core!

1. **“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”** Hebrews 4:12-13 ESV

(b) If we believe what the writer of Hebrews said in Hebrews 4:12-13, we should recognize:

1. His word is living and active: this means it is applicable at all times, in all circumstances and for any cultural setting.
2. We however, have had the audacity to proclaim that “society has evolved in many ways” and many, if not most, of the precepts God presented His early Church do not apply today.
3. His Word is ***sharper than any two edged sword***: if we consider this in proper context, and then attempt to adapt the meaning to satisfy common culture and current societal mores, then His Word is no longer that ***sharp***. It has become nothing more than ***a dull, rusty and irrelevant tool*** that cannot serve any meaningful purpose.
4. We then fall into the trap of placing ourselves in the position of trying to be “like God” to determine what is right and what is wrong. I shudder to think that whenever we do so, we transport ourselves back to the garden of Eden, as we relive the rebellion all over again.

SEEK TO PLEASE HIM

### **3. When we learn to fear the LORD...**



## A. We seek to please Him!

### (1) Pleasing God

(a) Evident throughout the entire Bible is the fact that God expects obedience from His children, thereby pleasing Him. We fall entirely short of God's calling on our lives whenever we desire to please ourselves more than pleasing Him.

1. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim ***to please him***. 2 Corinthians 5:9 ESV
2. They shall not pour drink offerings of wine to the LORD, and their sacrifices ***shall not please him***. It shall be like mourners' bread to them; all who eat of it shall be defiled; for their bread shall be for their hunger only; it shall not come to the house of the LORD. Hosea 9:4 ESV
3. And without faith it is ***impossible to please him***, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. Hebrews 11:6 ESV

### (2) Pleasing Him does not come without challenges...

(a) Deny Your Flesh!

1. And he said to all, *“If anyone would come after me, let him **deny himself** and **take up his cross daily and follow me.**”* Luke 9:23 ESV

(b) Take up your cross!

1. We are called by Y’Shua to deny ourselves daily, **YES, DAILY!** And this should come as no surprise to you at any stage of your walk!
2. What does that look like for you? What is your cross?
3. As you continue to mature as a believer, it should continually remind you of what brought you to the foot of His Cross, so that you will not succumb to your own sinful desires.
4. The reason that He has asks you to “take up YOUR cross daily” is indeed with the intent to prevent you from surrendering to our own vile passions.
5. It is impossible to carry both your cross and your sin. Make a choice!

(c) We are called to follow Him!

1. “For **whoever would save his life will lose it**, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.” Luke 9:24 ESV
2. This command to follow Him is elaborated by Y’Shua when He admonishes the believer to “lose his life” in

order to save it. If we dig deeper into what Christ is saying, it becomes self-evident what He means by “follow” Him. One thing is certain, it **MOST DEFINITELY** means to do as He does, and to stay away from that which He would not do.

3. When contemplating that command, how do you **see yourself measuring up**? What area(s) of your life immediately sticks out, things **you are following**, but where Christ is not leading?

(3) We better not fall into religiosity...

(a) Manmade Holidays and Festivals

1. Hear the word of the LORD, ***you rulers of Sodom!*** Give ear to the teaching of our God, ***you people of Gomorrah!*** “***What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?*** says the LORD; ***I have had enough of burnt offerings*** of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. “When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts? ***Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations— I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. Your new moons and your appointed feasts***

*my soul hates; they have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.* Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause. "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." Isaiah 1:10-20 ESV

(b) God is not impressed with legalism!

1. It is common for believers to wrongfully assume that because they are "checking off boxes" in their religious experiences, that somehow Yahweh is pleased. Nothing could be further from the truth!
2. Yahweh is not impressed by how well we observe the feasts, or how sincere we believe we are when we

stretch out our arms in worship, or how much we tithe.

3. Yahweh tells us some of the things that should be found in the life of the believer, along with their worship: *“wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.”*
4. Whenever we fall into the category of those who perform outwardly so those surrounding them “notice,” *we are failing mightily! Yahweh is utterly disgusted with His children!*

## CLOSING

### 4. Obedience

#### A. Not Your Will, but His Will!

(1) You cannot bend God's will!

(a) Trust God no Matter What!

1. “And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, saying, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. **Nevertheless,**

*not my will, but yours, be done.*"" Luke 22:41-42

ESV

2. One of our biggest problems as followers of Christ, is the fact that we, more often than not, try to somehow or someday look for opportunities where we can bend God's will to what we want or what we desire, instead of that which He has already ordained from eternity past.
3. **Learning to Fear the LORD** has, at its very root, trusting that no-matter-what the outcome will be exactly what God has already ordained, what He has already filtered and permitted. (James 1:16-17)

(b) Learn to Fear Yahweh!

1. It might not always be enjoyable for sure, but it is certainly rewarding for His children who are obedient and who love to live according to His desires.
2. Ultimately, if we believe and trust that He has a perfect purpose for our lives, we should really consider willingly obeying, as opposed to finding ourselves in circumstances, which could have been prevented.

3. In the end, whether involuntarily or willingly, we will all ***LEARN TO FEAR THE LORD!***

## QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

1. **As a Christian, you should not try to live with one foot in the faith and one foot in the world:**
  - A. In Luke 12:1-3, what does Y'shua call the religious leaders who demonstrated this inconsistency?
  - B. What does He warn will happen to anyone living as such?
2. **Joshua had a similar experience with the people in Joshua 24:14-20:**
  - A. What were the people doing?
  - B. How did he demand the people serve Yahweh?
  - C. What ultimatum did he give them?
  - D. What choice did he make for his own household?
3. **The Apostle Paul said to examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves... (See 2 Corinthians 13:5)**
  - A. Oftentimes the people did just that, but they seemed to be self-deceived. Why so according to Romans 10:2-3?
4. **How should we view the sanctity of God's Word? (See 2 Timothy 3:16-17)**

- A. What was the enemy's chief strategy to tempt mankind? (See Genesis 3:1)
- B. Use Hebrews 4:12-13 to describe, in detail, the power and function of God's Word, and then relate it also to Y'shua's words in Luke 12:1-3.

**5. How can we be pleasing to God? (See: 2 Corinthians 5:9; Hosea 9:4; Hebrews 11:6)**

- A. What must we do daily and why should we not expect it to be easy? (See Luke 9:23-24)
- B. Y'shua gave us the perfect example of making the hard choice in Luke 22:41-42. How can you emulate His decision in your life?

**6. Isaiah 1:10-20 is a rebuke of common culture and the many things it does in violation of God's will...**

- A. Name at least three things the people are doing that are an abomination to God?
- B. How might the modern church be doing a repeat performance of those in Sodom and Gomorrah?
- C. Name eight things God says they can do to correct their course of action.
- D. What does Yahweh promise if they would do so?