



Double Portion:

Title:

SCRIPTURES

- #1 Numbers 30-32
- #2 Numbers 33-36
- Matthew 5:33-37

OH WHAT A WORLD IT

WOULD BE, IF...

- Thou Shalt Swear
- Thou Shalt Perform

Oh what a world it would be if men kept their word, but they don't. Wars are fought over such things and people die. Vows are broken; marriages fracture and families are scattered. Fathering is optional and children are abandoned. Promises are forgotten and trust is lost. Help is withdrawn and dreams are shattered. Doing the right thing is discounted and someone always gets hurt. Greediness prevails and needs go unmet. Faith is discarded and every wrong option becomes available. Forget you are created in the image of God and the enemy gains free reign in your life.

Why must it be said, "If you make a promise you should keep it?" But, unfortunately, it must. Man has the propensity to violate his vows, to renege on his promises. And this condition is not novel. The disease is universal and timeless. God made it clear; "If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some

agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth."

Oh what a world it would be if man exemplified fidelity with his "I do..."; responsibility with his "I have..."; integrity with his "I will..."; confidence with his "I can..."; character with his "I know..."; generosity with his "I possess..."; freedom with his "I believe..."; and certainty with his "I am...!" Oh what a world it would be.

THEME: MAIN SCRIPTURE(S) THAT HAS INSPIRED MESSAGE

"Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which the Lord has commanded: **If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth."**

Numbers 30:1-2 NKJV

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

"You shall fear Yahweh your God and serve Him, and shall **take oaths in His name."** Deuteronomy 6:13 NKJV

"And **you shall not swear by My name falsely**, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord." Leviticus 19:12 NKJV

““Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, **‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’** But I say to you, do not swear at all: **neither by heaven,** for it is God’s throne; **nor by the earth,** for it is His footstool; **nor by Jerusalem,** for it is the city of the great King. **Nor shall you swear by your head,** because you cannot make one hair white or black. **But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’** For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” Matthew 5:33-37 NKJV

Let’s Set the Scene: Portion in a blurb

1. **KEM Statement about Double Portions:** The Torah is divided into 54 weekly readings meant to be explored throughout each biblical calendar year called the annual Torah cycle. Yet, the normal length of a biblical year is counted by lunar (moon) cycles, not a solar (sun) cycle, and has only 354 days, which yields only 50 or 51 sabbaths on which to do those readings. The biblical “leap year” adds an extra month every 3 years which then adds 4 sabbaths for reading. In addition, a few of the readings each year are meant to be read on biblical feast days and not on the weekly sabbath. So to insure that each year all of the portions are read, some weeks have double portion readings. This can happen up to 7 times in any Biblical calendar

year, differing dependent on when the feasts days fall and if we are in a leap year. This week calls for one of those double portion readings.

The First Portion this Week:

2. Numbers 30-32: Numbers 30 discusses laws of vows and oaths. Numbers 31 tells the story of Israel's war with Midian. Numbers 32 relates the story of how the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Mannaseh came to inherit the land east of the Jordan River.

The Second Portion this Week:

3. Numbers 33-36: The last reading from the book of Numbers, recounts the “journeys” of Israel. It also settles several last-minute details. In it we find a list of the encampments from Egypt to the plains of Moab. We also find instructions for apportioning the land, as well as the specifics regarding the borders of the land. Moses introduces the laws of the cities of refuge and more inheritance laws.
4. This final portion is the end of the continuous narrative of Torah that began in Genesis with the creation of the universe. The narrative does not resume until the end of Deuteronomy, when Moses dies.

Portion One: Numbers 30-32

Numbers 30

5. **The Law Concerning Vows:** “These are the statutes which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, and between a father and his daughter in her youth in her father’s house.” Numbers 30:16 NKJV
6. If a man makes a vow, he shall keep it. that simple!
7. If a young woman makes a vow and she is still under her father’s roof, he has the right to overrule it. If he does not, it stands; if he does overrule it on the same day he hears of it, then the vow is not binding. If she is married, her husband holds that same authority.
8. If a widow or a divorced woman made a vow while still in her husband’s house (when they were married or he was still alive), then the same rules apply.

Numbers 31

9. This chapter catalogs the very events Balak had hoped to avoid, Israel’s defeat of the Midianites. (See: [What Did the Donkey Say to The Jackass?](#))
10. **Vengeance on the Midianites:** Israel goes to war with 1000 men from each tribe (twelve thousand) with Phinehas and Eleazar along with with the holy articles and the signal trumpets. All the kings of Midian and all the males are slaughtered, including Balaam (the insidious prophet for hire; he should have never second-guessed Yahweh or instigated Israel’s harlotry). The

women are taken captive, and the spoils are collected and the cities burned.

11. **The Return from War:** Moses is not happy that the women were kept alive! Why? *“Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.”* Numbers 31:16
12. So, kill every male child and kill every woman who is not a virgin. Here is what you need do when you defeat an enemy in battle:
 - (a) *“Only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, everything that can endure fire, you shall put through the fire, and it shall be clean; and it shall be purified **with the water of purification**. But all that cannot endure fire you shall put through water.”* Numbers 31:22-23
13. **Remember the Waters of Purification were made with the ashes of the red heifer:** *“Then a man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and store them outside the camp in a clean place; and they shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for the **water of purification**; it is for purifying from sin.”* Numbers 19:9
14. **Dividing the Plunder:** the plunder is divided in two parts (the total of what was taken is cataloged). Half will go to the 12,000

men who went to battle and the other half to the rest of the people. Remember: Moses just took another census in Numbers 26 and there were 601,730 men (not including Levites.)

Scholars estimate that there were approximately 3 million people including woman and children.

- (a) So, 2% of the men (12,000) gets 50% of the plunder, and 98% of the men (589,730), plus their families (2.4 million), get the other 50%.
- (b) Plus everyone must give a part of their share to the Levites who keep charge of the tabernacle (as we know they have no inheritance and are always provided for by Yahweh).
- (c) Each man of war must give 1/500th of their take to the priests and each of the people must give 1/50th. So, the blessing for going to battle verses sitting on the sidelines is astronomical!
- (d) One final detail: The men who went to war, in addition to the booty divided by the priests, had collected many items of gold jewelry along the way that they get to keep.
- (e) **Catch this amazing testimony:** the officers of those men did a head count after they got back and they had NOT LOST ONE MAN in the battle. In great appreciation they collected all that gold (sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels) and brought it to the Eleazar in great thanks and as a

memorial of this outrageous miracle of ZERO CASUALTIES,
and for all the people to remember forever!

Numbers 32

15. **Tribes Settling East of the Jordan:** Reuben and Gad had such a multitude of livestock and they see that there is some land on the east side of the Jordan that is perfect to use. They ask Moses, Eleazar and other leaders if they can stay on the east side of the Jordan to settle. The only complication Moses sees is that if they do so, they will exempt themselves from fighting the battles across the Jordan in the promised land. He warns, “Don’t make the mistake your forefathers did the first time they had a chance to go into the land!” Plus your brothers will be discouraged that you are not with them in the fight. If you do this, Yahweh’s fierce anger might even be greater than it was back 40 years ago.
16. So the Reubenites and Gadites say they will build their sheepfolds on this side and then they will arm themselves and go over with their brothers until they have the victory. *“We will not return to our homes until every one of the children of Israel has received his inheritance.”*
17. Moses says that if they fulfill their promise, it will be acceptable and they will be blameless. But if they go back on their word, they will be sinning against Yahweh! So go build your cities and

sheepfolds on this side and then prep for battle. This applied to the Reubenites, Gadites and to half the tribe of Manasseh.

Second Portion: Numbers 33-36

Numbers 33

18. Israel's journey from Egypt is reviewed from the moment they left Egypt all the way up to where they are right now, looking across the Jordan. Each starting and stopping place is named. Of note is that they, of course, left Egypt in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover. They did so while Egypt was dealing with their dead firstborns and reeling over the total annihilation of their gods (as Yahweh executed judgment on each of them during the plagues.)
19. Special mention is made of Aaron's death in the fortieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, at one hundred and twenty-three years old.
20. **Instructions for Conquest of Canaan:** Pay attention here! When you cross over, you better drive out the inhabitants, and destroy all things they use to worship their gods. Then divide the land according to the plan I gave you. If you don't drive all of them out, it will come back to bite you!
 - (a) *"But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and*

they shall harass you in the land where you dwell. Moreover it shall be that I will do to you as I thought to do to them."

Numbers 33:55-56 NKJV

Numbers 34

21. **The Appointed Boundaries of Canaan:** The northern, southern, western and eastern borders are detailed and we are reminded that Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan, across from Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise.
22. **Leaders Appointed to Divide the Land:** one leader of every tribe, by name, is assigned to divide the land for the inheritance.

Numbers 35

23. Cities are assigned to the Levites as they have no land inheritance. They are to be given from the other tribes, plus common land around the cities for their livestock. And the common-land around the cities is designated. (It is fascinating how the cities of the Levites shall be in the middle of a perfect square of land, much the same way the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21:9-27 will be a perfect cube!)
24. Six Cities of Refuge (three on each side of the Jordan) are designated for someone who kills someone by accident. The

cities are for the children of Israel, for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them.

25. Clear distinctions are made between accidents, murders and revenge. The congregation shall judge between these. And the one who has committed an accident may use the cities of refuge and return to his home after the death of the high priest.
26. You may take no payoffs to let someone skirt the penalty for murder.

Numbers 36

27. **Marriage of Female Heirs:** The final chapter of Numbers, chapter 36, expands on the ruling about inheritance that we saw in Numbers 27:1-11, when the daughters of Zelophehad brought their concerns to Moses. Will women lose their family land or family name if their father dies without sons? *“Why should the name of our father be removed from among his family because he had no son? Give us a possession among our father’s brothers.”* Numbers 27:4

- (a) Moses brought their case before Yahweh and Yahweh agrees. ***“If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter. If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father’s brothers. And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give***

his inheritance to the relative closest to him in his family, and he shall possess it. Numbers 27:8-11

- (b) Now in Numbers 36:1-13, Moses adds to this ruling, instructing that if these land-owning daughters later marry, they must marry within their tribe so that the tribal land does not change hands to another tribe. *“Let them marry whom they think best, but they may marry only **within the family of their father’s tribe.**’ So the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of Israel shall keep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.”* Numbers 36:6-7 NKJV

28. **You can see the last two years’ teachings on this double portion here:** [Miracle Army](#) and [Dissipation or the Spirit](#)

THOU SHALT SWEAR

1. Swearing Oaths

A. First let’s clear up a misunderstanding...

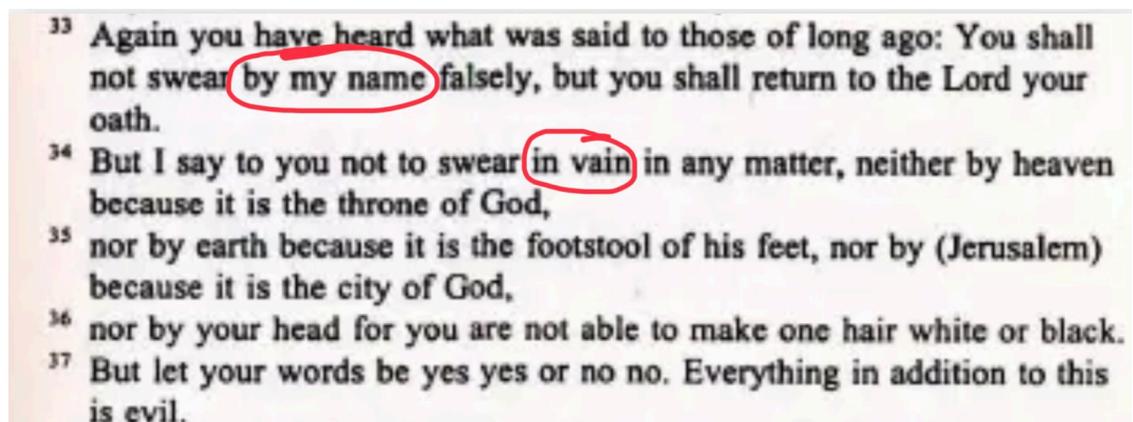
(1) Did Y’shua forbid making oaths?

- (a) ““Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is

the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. **But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.'** **For whatever is more than these is from the evil one."**
Matthew 5:33-37 NKJV

(2) Shem Tob's Hebrew Gospel of Matthew

- (a) **Shem Tob's Hebrew Gospel of Matthew** is the oldest surviving [Hebrew](#) version of the [Gospel of Matthew](#). It was included in the 14th-century work *Eben Boḥan* (*The Touchstone*) by the Spanish Jewish Rabbi [Shem-Tov ben Isaac ben Shaprut](#). [George Howard\[1\]](#) has argued that Shem Tov's Matthew comes from a much earlier Hebrew text that was later translated into Greek and other languages.



³³ Again you have heard what was said to those of long ago: You shall not swear **by my name** falsely, but you shall return to the Lord your oath.

³⁴ But I say to you not to swear **in vain** in any matter, neither by heaven because it is the throne of God,

³⁵ nor by earth because it is the footstool of his feet, nor by (Jerusalem) because it is the city of God,

³⁶ nor by your head for you are not able to make one hair white or black.

³⁷ But let your words be yes yes or no no. Everything in addition to this is evil.

*Y'shua's words in the Hebrew version are more consistent with the Old Testament verses He is referencing than the Greek translations! **Focus: Swearing by my name & in vain.**

B. The issue was not the swearing; it was vanity!

(1) Almost all English Translations say this...

(a) ““Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, **‘You shall not swear falsely,** but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But I say to you, **do not swear at all:** neither by...” Matthew 5:33-36 NKJV

1. heaven

2. earth

3. Jerusalem

4. Or on your own head

5. **But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’** For whatever is **more than these is from the evil one.**”

Matthew 5:37 NKJV

(2) But, what is left out in these Greek translations are the modifiers to the swearing. It’s not the swearing that is prohibited, it’s the swearing falsely by His Name and in vain that’s prohibited! “I say to you NOT TO SWEAR FALSELY IN MY NAME AND IN VAIN in any matter...”

(a) “...You shall not **swear by my name falsely,** but you shall return to the Lord your oath. But I say to you not to **swear in vain** in any matter, neither by... But let your word be yes yes or no no. Everything in addition to this is evil.” Matthew 5:33-37

(3) The precedent was well established... Quoting Y'shua quoting Torah! *(This is what Y'shua was referring to in Matthew 5:33-34. Notice the emphasis on Yahweh's name and vanity!)*

(a) **"You shall** fear Yahweh your God and serve Him, and shall **take oaths in His name.**" Deuteronomy 6:13 NKJV

(b) **"You shall not take the name of the LORD [Yahweh] your God in vain,** for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." Exodus 20:7 NKJV (Also Deuteronomy 5:11)

(c) **"And you shall not swear by My name falsely,** nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD." Leviticus 19:12 NKJV

(4) Taking His Name in Vain! (What does this really mean?)

(a) **"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain,** for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." Exodus 20:7

(b) **"For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain."** Psalms 139:20 NKJV

1. What exactly is taking the name of Yahweh in vain?

2. **Vain:** [Strong's Hebrew 7723] emptiness, vanity, falsehood, nothingness, emptiness of speech, lying worthlessness

(5) **Forgetting the Name of Yahweh or bringing it to nothing!**

The **outcome** when you insist on following the dictates of your own heart... [see teaching: [Mindful of the Prophets](#)]

(a) ““I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in My name, saying, ‘I have dreamed, I have dreamed!’ **How long will this be in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies? Indeed they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart, who try to make My people forget My name** by their dreams which everyone tells his neighbor, **as their fathers forgot My name for Baal.**” Jeremiah 23:25-27 NKJV

1. **Note:** Baal simply means “the lord.” When you always ONLY refer to Yahweh or Y’shua as “lord” or even other titles like “God”, and never acknowledge their names...and, if you do that long enough, over enough generations, you just might forget they have names (*bring their names to nothing or conflate them with falsehoods*). Many people love “the lord” and love “god”! But who is their Lord and God?
2. “And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Ē’noš. Then men began to call on **the name of the LORD [Yahweh]**.” Genesis 4:26 NKJV

3. ““You shall not **take the name of the Yahweh** your **God in vain** [*Strong’s 7723–bring His name to nothing or conflate it with falsehoods*], for **Yahweh** will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.” Exodus 20:7

a) Taking the name of Yahweh in vain means to leave it out, to bring it to nothing, or conflate it with a lie! You shall not leave Yahweh’s name out of your vows, or in other words, “swear in vain.” Instead, “*You shall **take oaths in His name.***” (Deuteronomy 6:13)

(6) Now think about these verses with or without His name...

(a) “**I am the LORD [Yahweh], that is My name;** And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.” Isaiah 42:8 NKJV

(b) “For “**whoever calls on the name of the LORD [Yahweh]** shall be saved.”” Romans 10:13 NKJV (from Joel 2:32)

1. **Note:** over 6800 times, the name of Yahweh was removed from your bible and replaced with the all caps word LORD. Why?
2. Could this cause you to forget His Name?

C. Let your yes be yes and your no be no; or keep your mouth shut!

(1) Yes, let your yes be yes and your no be no, all else is evil!

James even gets in on the action with a teaching on Y'shua's words. *"But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head..."* Better not to vow at all, than to vow and not keep your word! It's a fool who does such things!

(a) But above all, my brethren, **do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath.** But let your "Yes" be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment." James 5:12 NKJV

(b) **"Do not be rash with your mouth,** And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few. For a dream comes through much activity, **And a fool's voice is known by his many words. When you make a vow to God,** do not delay to pay it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed— **Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.** Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the

messenger of God that it was an error. **Why should God be angry at your excuse** and destroy the work of your hands? For in the multitude of dreams and **many words there is also vanity.** But fear God.” Ecclesiastes 5:2-7 NKJV

- (2) Because...in many words there are also many opportunities to become a foolish liar!
- (a) “For in the multitude of dreams and **many words there is also vanity.** But fear God.” Ecclesiastes 5:7 NKJV
 - (b) “**In the multitude of words sin is not lacking,** But he who restrains his lips is wise.” Proverbs 10:19 NKJV
 - (c) “**He who has knowledge spares his words,** And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.” Proverbs 17:27 NKJV
 - (d) “And when you pray, **do not use vain repetitions** as the heathen do. For **they think that they will be heard for their many words.**” Matthew 6:7 NKJV
 - (e) “Again you have heard what was said to those of long ago: **You shall not swear by my name** falsely, but you shall return to the Lord your oath. But I say to you **not to swear in vain** in any matter, neither by heaven because it is the throne of God...” Matthew 5:33-34
 - (f) Do you see it now?

Summary: THOU SHALT SWEAR

1. Swearing Oaths

A. First let's clear up a misunderstanding...

- (1) Did Y'shua forbid making oaths?
- (2) Shem Tob's Hebrew Gospel of Matthew
 - (a) **Shem Tob's Hebrew Gospel of Matthew** is the oldest surviving Hebrew version of the Gospel of Matthew. Shem Tov's Matthew comes from a much earlier Hebrew text that was later translated into Greek and other languages.
 - (b) Y'shua's words in the Hebrew version are more consistent with the Old Testament verses He is referencing than the Greek translations! **Focus: Swearing by my name & in vain.**

B. The issue was not the swearing; it was vanity!

- (1) Almost all English Translations say this... "You shall not swear falsely...do not swear at all..."
- (2) But, what is left out in these Greek translations are the modifiers to the swearing. It's not the swearing that is prohibited, it's the swearing falsely by His Name and in vain that's prohibited! "I say to you NOT TO SWEAR FALSELY IN MY NAME AND IN VAIN in any matter..."

- (3) The precedent was well established... Quoting Y'shua quoting Torah! This is what Y'shua was referring to in Matthew 5:33-34. Notice the emphasis on Yahweh's name and vanity!
- (a) You shall take oaths in His name.
 - (b) You shall not take His name in vain.
 - (c) You shall not swear by His name falsely.
- (4) Taking His Name in Vain! (What does this really mean?)
- (a) What exactly is taking the name of Yahweh in vain
 - (b) **Vain:** [Strong's Hebrew 7723] emptiness, vanity, falsehood, nothingness, emptiness of speech, lying worthlessness
- (5) **Forgetting the Name of Yahweh or bringing it to nothing!**
The **outcome** when you insist on following the dictates of your own heart...
- (a) **Note:** Baal simply means "the lord." When you always ONLY refer to Yahweh or Y'shua as "lord" or even other titles like "God", and never acknowledge their names... and, if you do that long enough, over enough generations, you just might forget they have names (*bring their names to nothing or conflate them with falsehoods*). Many people love "the lord" and love "god"! But who is their Lord and God?

- (b) Taking the name of Yahweh in vain means to leave it out, to bring it to nothing, or conflate it with a lie! You shall not leave Yahweh's name out of your vows, or in other words, "swear in vain." Instead, "*You shall **take oaths in His name.***" (Deuteronomy 6:13)
- (6) Now think about these verses with or without His name...
- (a) I am the LORD [Yahweh], that is My name.
- (b) Whoever calls on the name of the LORD [Yahweh] shall be saved.
- (c) **Note:** over 6800 times, the name of Yahweh was removed from your bible and replaced with the all caps word LORD. Why? Could this cause you to forget His Name?

C. Let your yes be yes and your no be no; or keep your mouth shut!

- (1) Yes, let your yes be yes and your no be no, all else is evil! James even gets in on the action with a teaching on Y'shua's words. "*But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head...*" Better not to vow at all, than to vow and not keep your word! It's a fool who does such things!

- (2) Because...in many words there are also many opportunities to become a foolish liar!

THOU SHALT PERFORM

2. Integrity

A. Let your yes be yes. Do according to all that proceeds out of your mouth!

- (1) **You shall make oaths (See Numbers 30):** “Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, “This is the thing which the Lord has commanded: **If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.**” Numbers 30:1-2 NKJV
- (a) Every vow you make, no matter what you believe you are promising to do and regardless upon that which you believe you are swearing, is a vow made to the Lord in His name. Your yes **MUST** be a yes and your no **MUST** be a no! All else is vanity! You are deceiving yourself if you believe you can swear on anything lesser (heaven, earth, Jerusalem, your own head) and then be acquitted for failing to keep your promises by using “I did not swear on the name of the Lord” as a defense. It won’t

work. Any lesser thing you think you are swearing upon has been created by Him and therefore stands in proxy for His name in the moment. In other words, you must fulfill your vows or it will be considered a violation against God—every time!

1. ““Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, **‘You shall not swear [by My Name] falsely [Leviticus 19:12; Deuteronomy 6:13]**, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord **[Numbers 30:1-2].’** **But [And] I say to you, do not swear [in vain] at all:** neither by **heaven**, for it is **God’s throne**; nor by the **earth**, for it is His footstool; nor by **Jerusalem**, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear **by your head**, because you cannot make one hair white or black. **But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.**” Matthew 5:33-37 NKJV
2. “You shall fear Yahweh your God and serve Him, and shall **take oaths in His name.**” Deuteronomy 6:13 NKJV
3. “And **you shall not swear by My name falsely**, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.” Leviticus 19:12 NKJV

4. **“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain,** for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.” Deuteronomy 5:11 NKJV
 5. **“Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily** before God. For **God is in heaven, and you on earth;** Therefore let your words be few.” Ecclesiastes 5:2 NKJV
 6. **“But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath.** But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment.” James 5:12 NKJV
 7. **“But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’** For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.”
Matthew 5:37 NKJV
- (b) God requires you keep your word. It is literally a sin to not fulfill your vow and to do it in a timely manner. If you have any doubts, just don’t make the promise!
1. **““When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you.** But if you **abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin** to you. **That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the**

Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.” Deuteronomy 23:21-23 NKJV

2. “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, **to him it is sin.**” James 4:17 NKJV

(2) Think of Balaam from a few Torah portions back...

(a) If you make a vow you better stick with it, Immediately!
If you don't think you can, then better not to vow!

1. Like Deuteronomy 23:21... **“When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed— Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.”** Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 NKJV

(b) Balaam's empty vows: I can't go, God said no, I am certain of it. So, with that being said, I'll go ask God if I can go! Balaam would have been better off keeping his mouth shut.

1. “So he answered and said, **“Must I not take heed to speak what the Lord has put in my mouth?”**”
Numbers 23:12 NKJV
2. “So Balaam answered and said to Balak, “Did I not tell you, saying, **‘All that the Lord speaks, that I must do’?**”” Numbers 23:26 NKJV

B. Object Lesson: An allegorical view of the Ezekiel 17 riddle and parable!

(1) Broken Promises always end badly...

(a) When you are blessed by Yahweh, you'd better recognize and remember from where your blessings come. It is a grave error to turn toward another god after you claim a commitment to Yahweh! Your blessings come from Yahweh and to turn to a counterfeit for continued or greater blessings is monumental mistake.

1. "And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, **pose a riddle, and speak a parable** to the house of Israel, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "**A great eagle** with large wings and long pinions, Full of feathers of various colors, Came to Lebanon And took from the cedar the highest branch. He cropped off its topmost young twig And carried it to a land of trade; He set it in a city of merchants. Then he took some of the seed of the land **And planted it in a fertile field;** He placed it by abundant waters And set it like a willow tree. **And it grew and became a spreading vine of low stature; Its branches turned toward him,** But its roots were under it. So it became a vine, Brought forth branches, And put forth shoots. "**But**

there was another great eagle with large wings and many feathers; **And behold, this vine bent its roots toward him, And stretched its branches toward him,** From the garden terrace where it had been planted, That he might water it. **It was planted in good soil by many waters, To bring forth branches, bear fruit, And become a majestic vine.”** ^{'''} Ezekiel 17:1-8 NKJV

(b) What happens when you try to renege on your commitment to God? Anything you do will fail. You have made a covenant and it is only by your oath to that covenant that your blessings continue.

1. ^{'''}“Say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: **“Will it thrive? Will he not pull up its roots, Cut off its fruit, And leave it to wither? All of its spring leaves will wither,** And no great power or many people Will be needed to pluck it up by its roots. **Behold, it is planted, Will it thrive? Will it not utterly wither** when the east wind touches it? **It will wither in the garden terrace where it grew.”** ^{’ ’} Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, **“Say now to the rebellious house: ‘Do you not know what these things mean?’** Tell them, ‘Indeed the king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and took its king and princes, and led them with him to

Babylon. And **he took the king's offspring, made a covenant with him, and put him under oath.** He also took away the mighty of the land, that the kingdom might be brought low and not lift itself up, **but that by keeping his covenant it might stand.**" Ezekiel 17:9-14 NKJV

(c) And when your life goes sideways after you renege on your commitment, what should you do? Repent of course! But, if you instead seek refuge and relief from yet another imposter, things will go from bad to worse! *"Will he prosper? Will he who does such things escape? Can he break a covenant and still be delivered?"* No, you will not escape; you will be tried and convicted for treason.

1. **"But he rebelled against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt,** that they might give him horses and many people. **Will he prosper? Will he who does such things escape? Can he break a covenant and still be delivered?** 'As I live,' says the Lord God, 'surely in the place where the king dwells who made him king, **whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke**—with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. Nor will Pharaoh with his

mighty army and great company do anything in the war, when they heap up a siege mound and build a wall to cut off many persons. **Since he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, and in fact gave his hand and still did all these things, he shall not escape.**' " Therefore thus says the Lord God: **"As I live, surely My oath which he despised, and My covenant which he broke, I will recompense on his own head. I will spread My net over him, and he shall be taken in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon and try him there for the treason which he committed against Me.** All his fugitives with all his troops **shall fall by the sword,** and those who remain shall be **scattered to every wind;** and you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken."'" Ezekiel 17:15-21
NKJV

- (2) And therein lies the deep connection to our message today.
- (a) "If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth." Numbers 30:1-2

- (b) Will he prosper? Will he who does such things escape?
Can he break a covenant and still be delivered? Ezekiel
17:15
- (3) This is what they should have done instead...
- (a) Trust in God, recognize that the vows you have made
are binding. Do so and you will be delivered!
1. **“In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid.**
What can man do to me? **Vows made to You are**
binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to You,
For You have delivered my soul from death. **Have You**
not kept my feet from falling, That I may walk before
God In the light of the living?” Psalms 56:11-13
NKJV
2. **“I will pay my vows to the Lord** Now in the presence
of all His people,” Psalms 116:18 NKJV

C. Infinite possibilities to either keep your word or not!

- (1) I do! (Marriage) Keyword: Fidelity
- (a) When vows are broken, marriages fracture and families
are scattered. God created marriage (the first covenant)
as the single greatest indicator of His image in the earth.
In chapter one of Genesis we see that Adam alone, in
the appearance of a male figure, had within him the
DNA of a woman and child. *In the image of God He*

created **him**; male and female He created **them...** Be fruitful and multiply. The marriage vow was how God insured that mankind would remember that man and woman were intended to remain as one (in covenant)! That is why Y'shua clarified, "What God has joined together, let not man separate." Therefore it is paramount one be committed to fidelity in their marriage vows!

1. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man **He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh;** She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." **Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."** Genesis 2:21-24 NKJV
2. "And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning '**made them male and female [Genesis 1:27-28],'** and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and **be joined to his wife, and the two shall**

become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.'" Matthew 19:4-6
NKJV

(2) I have! (Children) Keyword: Responsibility

(a) When fathering becomes optional, children are abandoned. As destructive as the ripping apart of marriages, is the devastation of abdicating the responsibility and blessing of parenting. One-parent homes and zero-parent homes are devastating to children, and as a consequence the poison of corrupting God's original intent seeps into our communities. Children are a blessing and reward from God and grandchildren are an honor. We are called to teach, train, rebuke and correct our children, without provoking them. In the end there is no greater blessing than watching your children walk in God's truth.

1. "Behold, **children are a heritage from the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward.** Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate." Psalms 127:3-5 NKJV

2. **“Children’s children are the crown of old men,** And the glory of children is their father.” Proverbs 17:6 NKJV
3. **““And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children,** and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.” Deuteronomy 6:6-7 NKJV
4. **“Train up a child** in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6 NKJV
5. **“The rod and rebuke give wisdom,** But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.” Proverbs 29:15 NKJV
6. **“Correct your son,** and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.” Proverbs 29:17 NKJV
7. “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4 NKJV
8. “Fathers, **do not provoke your children,** lest they become discouraged.” Colossians 3:21 NKJV

9. “I have **no greater joy** than to hear that my children walk in truth.” III John 1:4 NKJV

(3) I will! (Trust) Keyword: Integrity

(a) When promises are forgotten, trust is lost. It does great harm to make promises only to later reconsider them as if the promise was never made at all. This type of behavior ruins a man’s integrity and destroys trust between people. Integrity exists when there is complete aligned between who a man says he is and what he does, and more so how he acts in each facet of his triune nature, spirit, soul and body.

1. “It is **a snare for a man to devote rashly something** as holy, And **afterward to reconsider his vows.**”

Proverbs 20:25 NKJV

(4) I can! (Inspiration) Keyword: Confidence

(a) When help is withdrawn, dreams are shattered. It is a great privilege to help another human discover what they’ve been created to be, to help them see a vision of their calling and the destiny God has intended for them. But, it’s crushing to first be an inspiration to someone, only for them to realize you never really intended to help. It can be very deflating. Where there is no hope, it is difficult to stay motivated. The good news is that

helping someone else pays dividends for both the giver and the receiver.

1. **“Whoever falsely boasts** of giving is like clouds and wind without rain.” Proverbs 25:14 NKJV
2. **“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes,** it is a tree of life.” Proverbs 13:12 NKJV
3. **“Give, and it will be given to you:** good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and **running over** will be put into your bosom. **For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”** Luke 6:38 NKJV

(5) I know! (Virtue) Keyword: Character

(a) When doing the right thing is discounted, someone always gets hurt. It is one thing to know what is right, and it is altogether different to apply what you know. Being one type of person in public and another in private shows poor character. And making excuses for your lack of character will not excuse you. You are better off keeping your mouth shut than sinning by committing to things you have no intention on keeping.

1. **“Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin,** nor say before the messenger of God that **it was an error.**

Why should God be angry **at your excuse** and destroy the work of your hands? **For in the multitude of dreams and many words there is also vanity.** But fear God.” Ecclesiastes 5:6-7 NKJV

2. “Therefore, **to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.**” James 4:17 NKJV

(6) I possess! (Stewardship) Keyword: Generosity

(a) When greediness prevails, needs go unmet. Talk is cheep; put your money (and time) where your mouth is. The beauty is that you cannot out-give God. Be generous with what you’ve been given and God will give you more.

1. “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? **If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?** Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.” James 2:14-17 NKJV
2. “**The generous soul will be made rich,** And he who waters will also be watered himself.” Proverbs 11:25 NKJV

3. “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and **he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.**” II Corinthians 9:6 NKJV
4. “**A good man deals graciously and lends;** He will guide his affairs with discretion.” Psalms 112:5 NKJV
5. See: [The Coin Has Two Sides](#)

(7) I believe! (Godliness) Keyword: Freedom

(a) When faith is discarded, every wrong option becomes available. As a believer, you are commanded to live your life with a biblical worldview. God said it; I believe it; and it is so! It is not good enough to say you believe and continue to exercise non-biblical options. True freedom is when you have no options. When God’s way is the only way, you are truly free. Godliness is the lifestyle of the believer—all facets of your life (spirit, soul and body) must be in alignment with God. And nothing is more satisfying than a Godly life. True freedom exists when a man is living with biblical integrity.

1. “So shall **I keep Your law continually, Forever** and ever. And **I will walk at liberty,** For I seek Your precepts.” Psalms 119:44-45 NKJV

2. **“The integrity of the upright will guide them,** But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.”

Proverbs 11:3 NKJV

3. **“Now godliness with contentment** is great gain.” I

Timothy 6:6 NKJV

4. “For bodily exercise profits a little, **but godliness is profitable for all things,** having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.” I Timothy

4:8 NKJV

(8) I am! (Identity) Keyword: Certainty

(a) When you forget you are created in the image of God, the enemy gains free reign in your life. It is settled...it is certain you are a child of God—act like you know this to be true. If you forget your identity in the Lord, it’s like you stared into a mirror, saw your own face, and then walked away and completely forgot what you looked like. When that happens you live like a hearer of God’s word only, and not a doer!

1. “So God created man in His own image; **in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.** Then God blessed them, and God said to them, **“Be fruitful and multiply;** fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds

of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”” Genesis 1:27-28 NKJV

2. “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that **we are children of God,**” Romans 8:16 NKJV
3. “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, **he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.** But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.” James 1:22-25 NKJV
4. See: [The Image of God](#)

D. This is how we will know if ...

(1) Obedience

(a) You will be recognized as a true child of God by your obedience to God.

1. “Now **by this we know that we know Him,** if we keep His commandments. He who says, “**I know Him,**” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But **whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him.**”

By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked." I John 2:3-6 NKJV

(b) If we obeyed our oath to God and kept His commandments, oh what a world it would be! A man would exemplify...

1. His fidelity with his "I do..."
2. His responsibility with his "I have..."
3. His integrity with his "I will..."
4. His confidence with his "I can..."
5. His character with his "I know..."
6. His generosity with his "I possess..."
7. His freedom with his "I believe..."
8. His certainty with his "I am...!" Oh what a world it would be.

(2) If you are off on any of these...REPENT

(a) Quickly repent if you realize you have been guilty of breaking your word!

1. "Or if a person swears, speaking thoughtlessly with his lips to do evil or to do good, **whatever it is that a man may pronounce by an oath, and he is unaware of it—when he realizes it, then he shall be guilty** in any of these matters. 'And **it shall be, when he is**

guilty in any of these matters, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing;" Leviticus 5:4-5

NKJV

(b) God is quick to forgive authentic repentance.

1. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." I John 1:8-10 NKJV

(c) Agreements! Do over—begin again with this prayer...

1. "My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips." Psalms 89:34 NKJV

Summary: THOU SHALT PERFORM

2. Integrity

A. Let your yes be yes. Do according to all that proceeds out of your mouth!

- (1) **You shall make oaths (See Numbers 30):** If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

- (a) Every vow you make, no matter what you believe you are promising to do and regardless upon that which you believe you are swearing, is a vow made to the Lord in His name. Your yes **MUST** be a yes and your no **MUST** be a no! All else is vanity! You are deceiving yourself if you believe you can swear on anything lesser (heaven, earth, Jerusalem, your own head) and then be acquitted for failing to keep your promises by using “I did not swear on the name of the Lord” as a defense. It won’t work. Any lesser thing you think you are swearing upon has been created by Him and therefore stands in proxy for His name in the moment. In other words, you must fulfill your vows or it will be considered a violation against God—every time!
 - (b) God requires you keep your word. It is literally a sin to not fulfill your vow and to do it in a timely manner. If you have any doubts, just don’t make the promise!
- (2) Think of Balaam from a few Torah portions back...
- (a) If you make a vow you better stick with it, Immediately! If you don’t think you can, then better not to vow!
 - (b) Balaam’s empty vows: I can’t go, God said no, I am certain of it. So, with that being said, I’ll go ask God if I

can go! Balaam would have been better off keeping his mouth shut.

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- (b) What happens when you try to renege on your commitment to God? Anything you do will fail. You have made a covenant and it is only by your oath to that covenant that your blessings continue.
- (c) And when your life goes sideways after you renege on your commitment, what should you do? Repent of course! But, if you instead seek refuge and relief from yet another imposter, things will go from bad to worse! *"Will he prosper? Will he who does such things escape? Can he break a covenant and still be delivered?"* No, you will not escape; you will be tried and convicted for treason.

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- (1) I do! (Marriage) Keyword: Fidelity
- (a) When vows are broken, marriages fracture and families are scattered. God created marriage (the first covenant) as the single greatest indicator of His image in the earth. In chapter one of Genesis we see that Adam alone, in the appearance of a male figure, had within him the DNA of a woman and child. *In the image of God He created **him**; male and female He created **them**... Be fruitful and multiply.* The marriage vow was how God insured that mankind would remember that man and woman were intended to remain as one (in covenant)!

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 3. His integrity with his "I will..."
 4. His confidence with his "I can..."
 5. His character with his "I know..."
 6. His generosity with his "I possess..."
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- (a) Quickly repent if you realize you have been guilty of breaking your word!
- (b) God is quick to forgive authentic repentance.
 - 1. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” I John 1:8-10 NKJV
- (c) Agreements! Do over—begin again with this prayer...
 - 1. My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

- 1. **It is often taught that Y’shua commanded that we no longer swear oaths to the Lord...**
 - A. Why might you draw that conclusion from Matthew 5:33-37?
- 2. **If you refer to these notes on page 13, you can see another perspective on Matthew 5:33-37 from a Hebrew translation.**
 - A. What are the two significant findings?

- B. How do these findings make the passage more consistent with Deuteronomy 6:13; Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 19:12 and Psalms 139:20?
 - C. What does it mean to take the Lord's name in vain? (See the bottom of page 15)
 - D. How does this understanding bring greater meaning to Jeremiah 23:25-27; Genesis 4:26; Deuteronomy 6:13; Isaiah 42:8 and Romans 10:13?
- 3. According to Ecclesiastes 5:2-7, what are you better off doing, rather than breaking a vow?**
- A. Why is it dangerous to talk too much? (See: Ecclesiastes 5:7; Proverbs 10:19, 17:27; Matthew 6:7)
- 4. Now, connect your new understanding about vows from questions 1-3 to Matthew 5:33-37 and write one paragraph explaining your new perspective.**
- A. Was Y'shua really commanding that we no longer make vows?
- 5. God is very clear in Numbers 30:1-2 about a man's commitment to vows...**
- A. What is God's standard?
 - B. How is this connected to Matthew 5:33-37; Deuteronomy 5:11; 6:13; Leviticus 19:12; Ecclesiastes 5:2 and James 5:12?

- 6. It is literally a sin to not fulfill your vow and to do so in a timely manner.**
 - A. Please use Deuteronomy 23:21-23 and James 4:17 to back this statement.
- 7. Read Ezekiel 17:1-21 (think riddle, parable, allegory).**
 - A. How does this narrative speak to the devastating effects of breaking a vow? (Hint: Ezekiel 17:15 and Numbers 30:1-2)
 - B. Bonus: If you need help begin reading the notes on page 27.
 - C. What should the people have done instead? (See: Psalms 56:11-13, 116:18)
- 8. Again refer to the notes, this time starting at the bottom of page 31:**
 - A. Read the notes up to the middle of page 41 and write a short essay summarizing the detriments of a man breaking his commitment and benefits of a man keeping his word!
 - B. Include something about each of the eight areas of commitment.
 - C. Use the Scripture references provided to enhance your narrative.
- 9. If you have failed on any of your commitments, what should you do? (See: Leviticus 5:4-5)**
 - A. How will God respond? (See: I John 1:8-10)
 - B. Finish by praying Psalms 89:34!