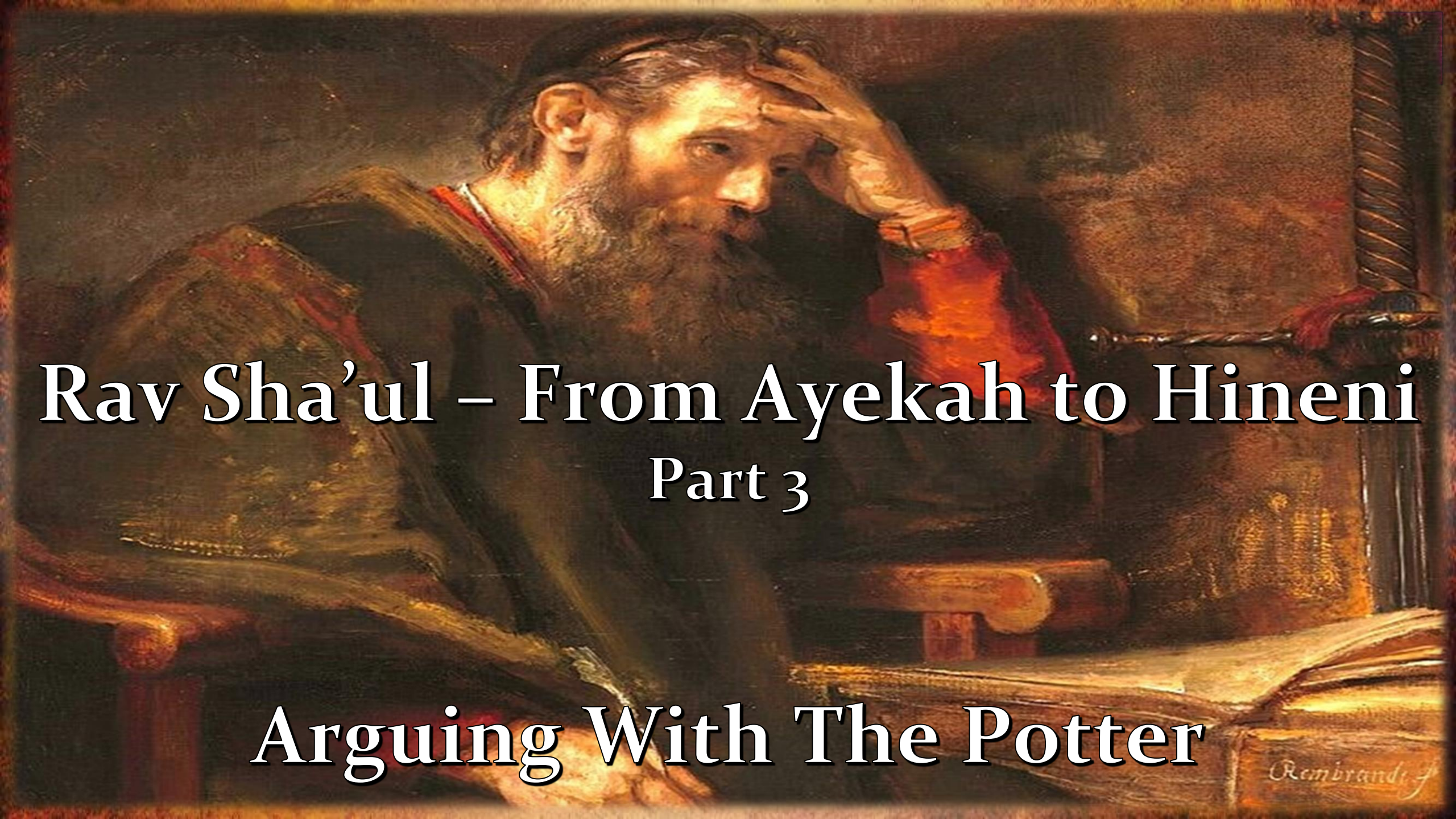


A painting by Rembrandt depicting a man with a long, dark beard and hair, wearing a dark robe with a red lining. He is seated at a wooden table, resting his head on his right hand in a contemplative or distressed pose. On the table in front of him is an open book. The background is dark and textured. The signature 'Rembrandt f.' is visible in the bottom right corner.

Rav Sha'ul – From Ayekah to Hineni

Part 3

Arguing With The Potter

Genesis 2



8 Adonai, God, planted a garden toward the east, in 'Eden, and there he put the person whom he had formed. 9 Out of the ground Adonai, God, caused to grow every tree pleasing in appearance and good for food, including **THE TREE OF LIFE [EY TZ HACHAYIM]** in the middle of the garden and the **TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL [EY TZ HADA'AT TOV VA'RA]**.

Genesis 3



9 *Adonai*, God, called to the man,
“WHERE ARE YOU?”

אַיֶּכָּה

(ayekah– Where are you?)

אֵיכָּה

(eichah – How?)

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



SIN'S RESPONSE

COVER

HIDE

BLAME

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



Genesis 3



12 The man replied, “**THE WOMAN YOU GAVE TO
BE WITH ME** — she gave me fruit from the tree,
AND I ATE.”

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



Genesis 3



24 So he drove the man out, and he placed at the east of the garden of 'Eden **THE K'RUVIM** and a flaming sword which turned in every direction **TO GUARD THE WAY TO THE TREE OF LIFE.**

Psalm 119:44

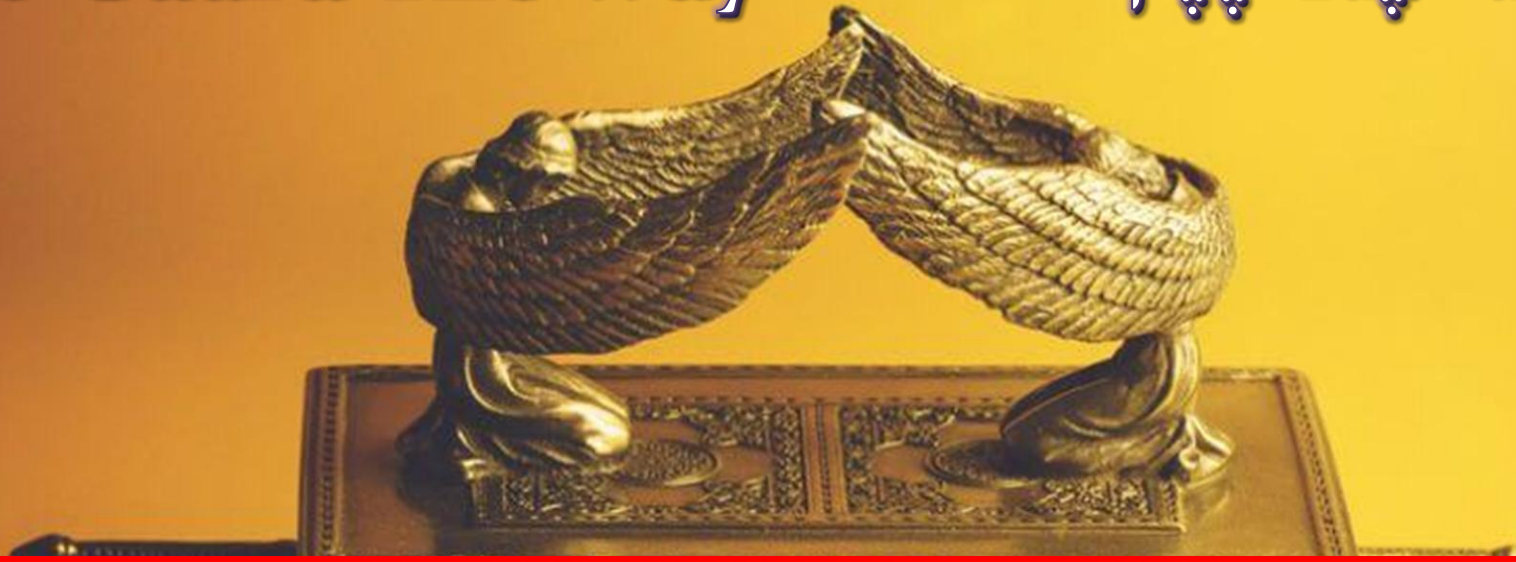
and I will **KEEP** your Torah
always, forever and ever...

לשמר – Lish'mor
keep, observe,
preserve, watch

THE TREE OF LIFE WAS STILL POSSIBLE

GOD'S MERCY WOULD GUARANTEE IT

“To Guard The Way” ~~~~ “לְשָׂמַר אֶת-דֶּרֶךְ.”



Exodus 25

20 The k'ruvim will have their wings spread out above, so that their wings cover the ark...21...**INSIDE THE ARK YOU WILL PUT THE TESTIMONY THAT I AM ABOUT TO GIVE YOU. 22 THERE I WILL MEET WITH YOU. I WILL SPEAK WITH YOU FROM ABOVE THE ARK-COVER, FROM BETWEEN THE TWO K'RUVIM which are on the ark FOR THE TESTIMONY, ABOUT ALL THE ORDERS I AM GIVING YOU** for the people of Isra'el.

Deuteronomy 30:19

19 “I call on heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have presented you with life and death, the blessing and the curse. **THEREFORE, CHOOSE LIFE**, so that you will live, you and your descendants,

20 **LOVING ADONAI YOUR GOD, PAYING ATTENTION TO WHAT HE SAYS AND CLINGING TO HIM** — for that is the purpose of your life!

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



What Is Going On In Our World?



THE EPISTEMIC CRISIS

A deep disruption in how society develops their understanding of truth, making it hard to separate facts from falsehoods.

Groups operate on completely different sets of "facts," leading to high polarization and low cohesiveness.

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [*KNOWING*] of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]

What Is Going On In Our World?



An Epistemic Crisis

Epistēmē is the Greek word for knowledge

The profound breakdown in a person's, group's
or a society's systems, methods, and institutions
FOR DETERMINING WHAT IS TRUE

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [*KNOWING*] of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]

What Is Going On In Our World?



THE EPISTEMIC CRISIS

2 Timothy 3

7 ...who are always learning but never able to come to full **KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.**

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [*KNOWING*] of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]

THE FIRST EPISTEMIC CRISIS

The right to define reality!

Genesis 3

He said to the woman, “**Did God REALLY say,**
‘You are not to eat from any tree in the
garden?’”

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [KNOWING] of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]

MERCY & JUSTICE

Romans 1

21 because, although they know who God is, they do not glorify him as God or thank him. On the contrary, they have become futile in their thinking; and their undiscerning hearts have become darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they have become fools!

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]



MERCY & JUSTICE



The right to define reality!

Romans 1

25 THEY HAVE EXCHANGED THE TRUTH OF
GOD FOR FALSEHOOD...

A CRISIS OF ACCOUNTABILITY!!

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [*KNOWING*] of Good and Evil

[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]



MERCY & JUSTICE

Romans 1



25 They have exchanged the truth of god for falsehood, BY WORSHIPPING AND SERVING CREATED THINGS, RATHER THAN THE CREATOR — PRAISED BE HE FOR EVER. AMEN.

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [KNOWING] of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]

MERCY & JUSTICE

Romans 1



24 This is why **GOD HAS GIVEN THEM UP TO** the
vileness of their hearts' lusts...

26 This is why **GOD HAS GIVEN THEM UP TO**
degrading passions...

28 In other words, since they have not considered God
worth knowing, **GOD HAS GIVEN THEM UP TO**
worthless ways of thinking...

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



THE JUDGE'S TRAP

- A world with moral weight means that human choices truly matter and carry real consequences for good or evil.
- God provides a clear standard for right and wrong that goes beyond human opinion.
- Small choices grow over time into big results for us, for our families, for our friends and for our communities.

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE of Good and Evil

[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]



MERCY & JUSTICE

WHAT YOU COMPROMISE TO KEEP, YOU WILL LOSE!

Luke 9

24 For whoever tries to save his own life will destroy it, but whoever destroys his life on my account will save it.

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]

MERCY & JUSTICE

Romans 2



1 Therefore, you have no excuse, whoever you are, **passing judgment [krineis – decide the sentence]**; for when you judge someone else, you are **passing judgment against yourself [katakrineis – sentence yourself]**; since you who are judging do the same things he does.

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [KNOWING] of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]

MERCY & JUSTICE

Romans 2

2 We know that God's judgment [JUSTICE] lands impartially on those who do such things; 3 do you think that you, a mere man passing judgment [JUSTICE] on others who do such things, yet doing them yourself, will escape the judgment [JUSTICE] of God? 4 Or perhaps you despise the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience;

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [KNOWING] of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]



MERCY & JUSTICE

Romans 2

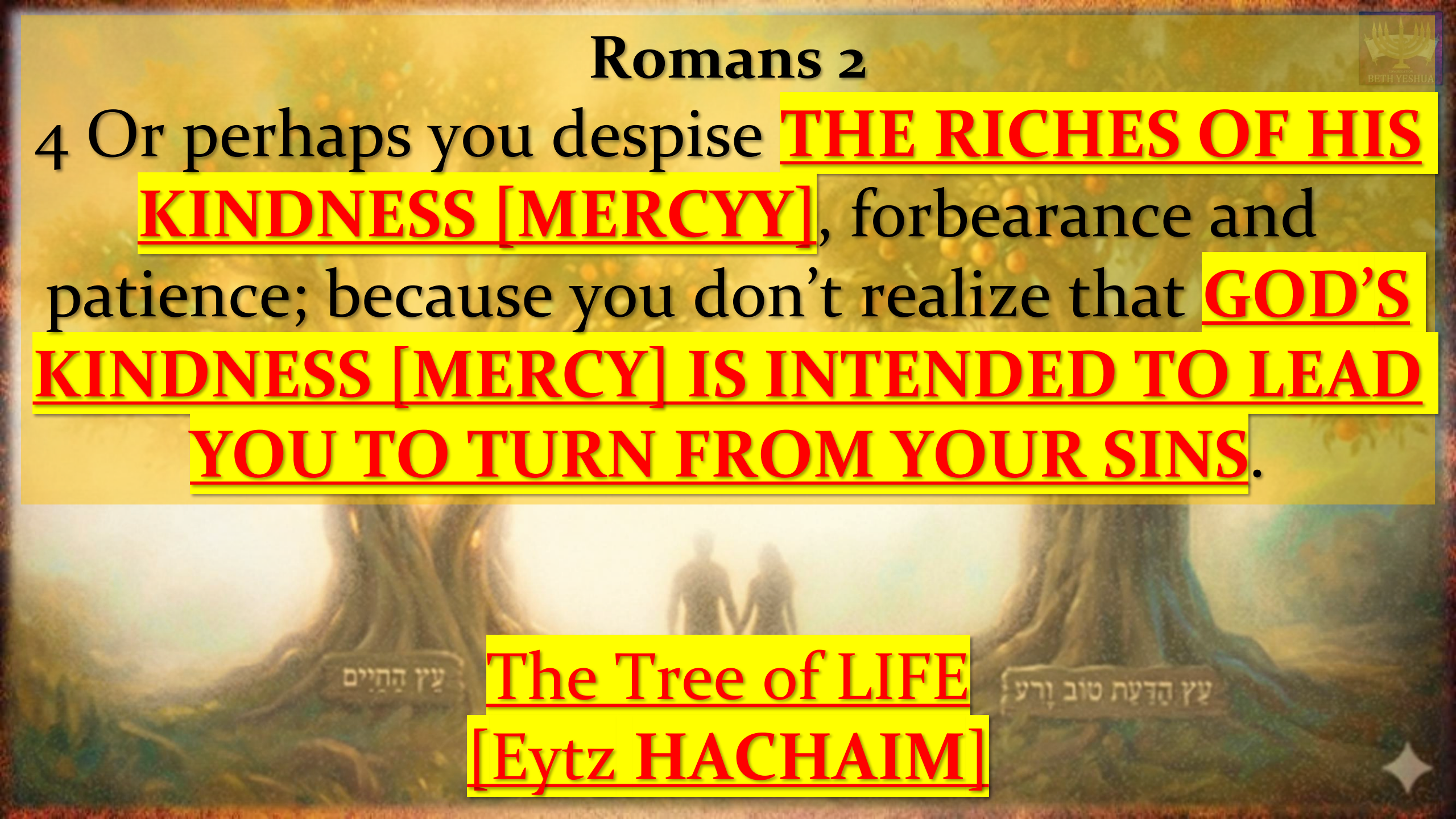
because you don't realize that God's **KINDNESS** [MERCY] is intended to lead you to turn from your sins. 5 But by your stubbornness, **by your unrepentant heart**, you are storing up anger for yourself on the Day of Anger, when God's righteous **JUDGMENT** [JUSTICE] will be revealed; 6 for he will pay back each one according to his deeds.

The Tree of The KNOWLEDGE [KNOWING] of Good and Evil
[Eytz HADA'AT Tov Va'ra]



Romans 2

4 Or perhaps you despise **THE RICHES OF HIS
KINDNESS [MERCY]**, forbearance and
patience; because you don't realize that **GOD'S
KINDNESS [MERCY] IS INTENDED TO LEAD
YOU TO TURN FROM YOUR SINS.**



The Tree of LIFE
[Eytz HACHAIM]

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Romans 9

19 But you will say to me, “**Then why does He still find fault with us?** After all, who resists his will?”

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Romans 9

19 But you will say to me, “**Then why does He still find fault with us?**” After all, who resists his will?”

20 Who are you, a mere human being, to talk back to God? **Will what is formed say to him who formed it, “Why did you make me this way?”**

21 Or has the potter no right to make from a given lump of clay this pot for honorable use and that one for

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Jeremiah 18

1 This word came to Yirmeyahu from Adonai: 2 “Get up and go down to the potter’s house; there I will tell you more.”

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Jerem

3 So I went down to the
there he was, working at the
pot he made

שָׁחַת – shâchat

To decay, to become
ruined, corrupted

**CAME OUT IMPERFECT, THE
POTTER TOOK THE CLAY AND MADE
ANOTHER POT WITH IT, IN WHATEVER SHAPE**

שׁוּב – shûv

Turned back,
return again

SUITED HIM

יָשָׁר – yâshar

Be straight, even or
upright

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER



“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Proverbs 3

1 My son, don't forget my teaching, keep my commands in your heart; 2 for they will add to you many days, years of life and peace. 3 Do not let grace and truth leave you — bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 Then you will win favor and esteem in the sight of God and of people.

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME ”

Proverbs 3

יָשָׁר - yâshar

Be straight, even or
upright

5 Trust in Adonai with all your heart; do not rely on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him;

THEN HE WILL LEVEL YOUR PATHS. 7 Don't be conceited about your own wisdom; but fear Adonai, and turn from evil. 8 This will bring health to your body and give strength to your bones.



ARGUING WITH THE POTTER



“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Jeremiah 18

5 Then the word of Adonai came to me: 6 “House of Isra’el, **can’t I deal with you as the potter deals with his clay?** — says Adonai. Look! You, house of Isra’el, are the same in my hand as the clay in the potter’s hand. 7 At one time, I may speak about uprooting, breaking down and destroying a nation or kingdom;

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Jeremiah 18

8 **BUT IF THAT NATION TURNS FROM THEIR EVIL**, which prompted me to speak against it, **THEN I RELENT** concerning the disaster I had planned to inflict on it.

שׁוּב - shûv

**Turns back,
return again**

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Jeremiah 18

9 Similarly, at another time, I may speak about building and planting a nation or kingdom; 10 but if it behaves wickedly from my perspective and doesn't listen to what I say, then I change my mind and don't do the good I said I would do that would have helped it.

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Jeremiah 18

11 “So now, tell the people and those living in Yerushalayim that Adonai says: ‘I am designing disaster for you, working out my plan against you. **TURN, EACH OF YOU, FROM HIS EVIL WAYS**; improve your conduct and actions.’

שׁוּב - shûv

**Turn back,
return again**

עַץ הַחַיִּים

עַץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרַע



ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Jeremiah 18

‘I am **DESIGNING** disaster for you, working out my plan against you. **TURN, EACH OF YOU, FROM**

HIS EVIL WAYS

יָצַר – yâtsar

To mold, as in a
potter molding
clay

שׁוּב – shûv

Turns back,
return again

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER



“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Romans 11

1 “In that case, I say, isn’t it that God has repudiated his people?” Heaven forbid! For I myself am a son of Isra’el, from the seed of Avraham, of the tribe of Binyamin. 2 God has not repudiated his people, whom he chose in advance.29 for God’s free gifts and his calling are irrevocable.

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Romans 11

30 Just as you yourselves were disobedient to God before but have received mercy now because of Isra'el's disobedience; 31 so also Isra'el has been disobedient now, so that by your showing them the same mercy that God has shown you, they too may now receive God's mercy.

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Romans 11

32 For God has shut up all mankind together in disobedience, in order that he might show mercy to all. 33 O the depth of the riches and the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments! How unsearchable are his ways! 34 For, ‘Who has known the mind of the Lord? Who has been his counselor?’

ARGUING WITH THE POTTER

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

Romans 11

35 Or, ‘Who has given him anything
and made him pay it back?’ 36

**FOR FROM HIM
AND THROUGH HIM AND TO HIM ARE ALL
THINGS. TO HIM BE THE GLORY FOREVER!**

AMEN.

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

1 CORINTHIANS 10

1 For, brothers, I don't want you to miss the significance of what happened to **OUR FATHERS**. All of them were guided by the pillar of cloud, and they all passed through the sea, 2 and in connection with the cloud and with the sea they all immersed themselves into Moshe,

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

1 CORINTHIANS 10

3 also they all ate the same food from the Spirit, 4 and they all drank the same drink from the Spirit — for they drank from a Spirit-sent Rock which followed them, and that Rock was the Messiah. 5 Yet with the majority of them God was not pleased, so their bodies were strewn across the desert.

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

1 CORINTHIANS 10

6 Now these things took place as prefigurative historical events, warning us not to set our hearts on evil things as they did. 7 Don't be idolaters, as some of them were — as the Tanakh puts it, “The people sat down to eat and drink, then got up to indulge in revelry.”

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

1 CORINTHIANS 10

8 And let us not engage in sexual immorality, as some of them did, with the consequence that 23,000 died in a single day. 9 And let us not put the Messiah to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by snakes. 10 **And don't GRUMBLE [Gr. Gongyzo – Numbers 14], as some of them did, and were destroyed by the Destroying Angel.**

OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS 14

1 At this all the people of Isra'el cried out in dismay and wept all night long. 2 Moreover, all the people of Isra'el **BEGAN GRUMBLING AGAINST MOSHE AND AHARON;**

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS 14

1 **THE WHOLE COMMUNITY TOLD THEM, “WE WISH WE HAD DIED IN THE LAND OF EGYPT! OR THAT WE HAD DIED HERE IN THE DESERT!**



OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

“THE WOMAN YOU GAVE ME...”

NUMBERS 14

3 **WHY IS ADONAI BRINGING US TO THIS LAND**, where we will die by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will be taken as booty! Wouldn't it be better for us to return to Egypt?”

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS 14

4 And they said to each other, “Let’s appoint a leader and RETURN to Egypt!”

“nitnah rosh v'naSHUVah Mitzraymah”

שוב – nashûvah
Let’s turn back,
let’s return again

עץ החיים

OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS 14

39 When Moshe told these things to all the people of Isra'el, the people felt great remorse. 40 They arose early the next morning, came up to the top of the mountain and said, "Here we are, and we did sin, but now WE'LL GO UP to the place Adonai promised."

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS 14

41 Moshe answered, “Why are you opposing what Adonai said? You won’t succeed! 42 Don’t go up there, because Adonai is saying, ‘If you do, your enemies will defeat you, and you will be struck down by the sword. The reason will be that you have **TURNUD AWAY** from following Adonai, so that Adonai won’t be with you.’”

נָשׁוּבָה – nashûvah

Let’s turn back,
let’s return again

OUR FOREFATHERS IN THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS 14

44 But they were presumptuous and went on up toward the high parts of the hill-country, even though the ark for the covenant of Adonai — and Moshe — stayed in the camp. 45 So the 'Amalekim and the Kena'ananim living in that hill-country descended, struck them down and beat them back all the way to Hormah.

WE ARE IN THE WILDERNESS



1 CORINTHIANS 10

11 These things happened to them as prefigurative historical events, and **THEY WERE WRITTEN DOWN AS A WARNING TO US WHO ARE LIVING IN THE ACHARIT-HAYAMIM.**



WE ARE IN THE WILDERNESS



1 CORINTHIANS 10

12 Therefore, let anyone who thinks he is standing up be careful not to fall!



WE ARE IN THE WILDERNESS



1 CORINTHIANS 10

13 No **TEMPTATION** (*gr – peirasmós: adversity, proving ground, testing*) has seized you beyond what people normally experience, and **GOD CAN BE TRUSTED** not to allow you to be **TEMPTED** (*Gr – peirazo: test, endeavor*) beyond what you can bear. On the contrary, along with the temptation **HE WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE WAY OUT** (*Gr: ekbasis – a going out*), so that you will be able to endure. ✨

THE TWO RETURNS



LAMENTATIONS 3

39 **WHY SHOULD ANYONE ALIVE**
COMPLAIN, even a strong man, about
the punishment for his sins?

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



THE TWO RETURNS

LAMENTATIONS 3

40 Let us examine and test our ways
and RETURN TO ADONAI.

שׁוּב – nashûvah

Let's turn back,
let's return again

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



THE TWO RETURNS

2 Samuel 12

¹ Adonai sent Natan to David. He came and said to him, “In a certain city there were two men, one rich, the other poor. ² The rich man had vast flocks and herds; ³ but the poor man had nothing, except for one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and reared. It had grown up with him and his children; it ate from his plate, drank from his cup, lay on his chest — it was like a daughter to him.



עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



THE TWO RETURNS

2 Samuel 12

4 One day a traveler visited the rich man, and instead of picking an animal from his own flock or herd to cook for his visitor, he took the poor man's lamb and cooked it for the man who had come to him." 5 David exploded with anger against the man and said to Natan, "As Adonai lives, the man who did this deserves to die! 6 For doing such a thing, he has to pay back four times the value of the lamb — and also because he had no pity." 7 Natan said to David, "You are the man."



THE TWO RETURNS

2 Samuel 12

4 One day a traveler visited the rich man, and instead of picking an animal from his own flock or herd to cook for his visitor, he took the poor man's lamb and cooked it for the man who had come to him." 5 David exploded with anger against the man and said to Natan, "As Adonai lives, the man who did this deserves to die! 6 For doing such a thing, he has to pay back four times the value of the lamb — and also because he had no pity." 7 Natan said to David, "You are the man."



THE TWO RETURNS

2 Samuel 12

13 David said to Natan, “**I have sinned against Adonai.**”

“CHATATI L'ADONAI”

Natan said to David, “Adonai also has taken away your sin. You will not die. 14 However, because by this act you have so greatly blasphemed Adonai, the child born to you must die.”

עץ החיים

עץ הדעת טוב ורע



- Ayekah? Where are you right now — not where you'd like people to think you are?
- What fig leaves have you sewn? What are you covering, managing, keeping out of sight?
- Who has become the "woman YOU gave me" in your life? Whose name comes to mind first when you think about why your life is hard right now?
And what will you do about it?

- What might God's kindness be trying to lead you away from, turning from? What might you need to recognize that you may be mistakenly calling his silence?
- In your pain, your fear, your circumstance, which tree are you reaching for: the one that puts you on the throne, or the one that gives life? And which return are you planning: back to Egypt, or to ADONAI?