



**#51- 52 Nitzavim – Vayeilech, Deuteronomy 29:9-31:30  
Torah Teaching by Moshe Schwab**

**Names**

Kefa – Peter  
Moshe – Moses  
Shaul – Paul  
Ya'akov – James  
Yeshua – Jesus (in Hebrew it means "Salvation")  
Yehoshua – Joshua  
Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)  
Yochanan – John

**Terms**

Cohen, Cohanim – Priest, priest  
Haftarah – the weekly reading from the prophets  
Parashah – (portion) one of 54 parts of the Torah  
Rosh Hashanah – Yom Teruah; Jewish New Year  
Shabbat – the 7th day of the week; we are to rest  
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible  
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

This week's portion is a double portion, Nitzavim and Vayeilech. Nitzavim means "you all are standing" and begins with all Israel standing before God. Nitzavim can also mean established and an associated word in Hebrew (matz'vah) means pillar. Ya'akov (James) is referred to as a pillar in Galatians 2:9, an established one. Ya'akov acts as the head of the church in Acts 15 and not Peter (Kefa) as some say. The Roman Empire made up a false system of religion with Peter as the first leader and even made it illegal to keep some of God's commandments in the Bible. They made up this false religious system to distance their belief system from its true biblical Jewish roots. This false system of religion was passed down into Christianity.

Vayeilech means, "he went." These portions were established by the prophets. Ya'akov (James) speaking about instructing the Gentiles says in Acts 15:21 NKJV, "For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." The early believers were reading the sections of the Torah every week and teaching on them.

Vayeilech begins by saying that Moshe is 120 years old, and he is not allowed to enter the promised land. It seems a small matter, but it is perhaps a spiritual picture to us that little things matter to God. Yĕhōvâh will go over the Jordan before Israel perhaps expelling any fears.

I would like to start by talking about being a true champion in life. We are victorious in life by following God and His good commandments. In the end, those who are faithful will receive eternal life in an amazing and wonderful future kingdom of God.

As believers in the true God, we are to keep God's commandments because He is a good and all-knowing God who knows what is best and has His best intentions for mankind. Therefore, to reject God's commandments is to reject God and what is best for us. God is good; therefore, His commandments are good. Psalms 34:8 NKJV says, "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!"

Since God's ways are good and what is best in life, those who keep His commandments experience good things in life. Psalms 34:12-14 NKJV says, "Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." Also, Psalms 37:3 NKJV says, "Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness." Often, people think that they can define what is right and good, but it is our all-knowing creator God who knows what is right and good. Again, an important scripture to remember is Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV which says, "Diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you." God wants things to go well for mankind and that is why He gives us instructions to follow.

A person cannot be a true champion in life by doing evil and not following God's commandments. God must hold those accountable who do not keep His commandments. Daniel 12:2-3 NKJV says, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever." Righteousness is to do what is "right and good" and keep God's commandments. Proverbs 11:5 NKJV says, "The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness."

It is a win-win situation for those who do what is "right and good." Keeping God's commandments help us in life and those who do what is right, the righteous, will be rewarded eternally. In the end, those who do not keep God's commandments will rise from the dead to face everlasting contempt. They will end up in the lake of fire. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "The cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." If they do not lose out in this life, they most assuredly will lose out for eternity, forever.

So, we need to be a people who be a people who are filled with God's goodness, a people of light and understanding what is right. Some people look okay on the outside but on the inside, they are filled with darkness. By just looking at someone, we cannot always tell what kind of person they are. I remember meeting this drug dealer years ago. He was dressed normally, and one might have thought that he was a successful and normal member of the community. He was destroying people with the hard drugs he was selling. Yeshua said in Luke 11:34-35 NKJV, "The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness. Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness."

Some people blindly think that they are to just do what they think is good. They are not necessarily doing what is good. I sometimes talk about this supposed very smart person who thought the disabled are just a burden on society so they should be done away with. That was also the philosophy of Hitler who caused untold pain on the world. Hitler and people like him put on a show and make people think they are okay people, but they are not. They will support causes as though they are the rules for life instead of what is truly "right and good."

God is good and His commandments are good. Psalms 107:1 NKJV says, "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever." This is in the Old Testament portion so contrary to what some say, God does not change. He was good in Old Testament times and will always be good. He is an all-knowing God and knows what is best and good for mankind and His Old Testament commandments are still good. A person who is good is someone who keeps God's commandments and a person who is bad or evil does things their own way instead of what is "right and good."

When people do evil instead of doing what is good, God is displeased. They bring pain and evil into the world. Deuteronomy 29:19-20 NKJV says, "He blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart'—as though the drunkard could be included with the sober.' The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man." Yeshua said in Matthew 15:19-20 NKJV, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man." The word for fornication according to Strong's Dictionary means, "adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals," or any other type of sexual sin the Bible says is wrong.

Yeshua only mentions some of the more detestable sins. We need to understand that these lists in the Bible are only representative lists. There are several hundred applicable commands in the Old Testament portion and some of them are only for specific people like farmers or just for men or for women. There are about 1,050 commands in the New Testament portion and most of them are applications of commands from the Old Testament portion. After all, the commands of the Old Testament portion are "right and good," so they still apply and can be applied properly and some in many different ways.

Just because someone says they are Christian or Jewish, it does not mean they are "good" people that keep God's commandments.

Martin Luther wrote that we have grace if we sin and he says, "It is enough that by the riches of God's glory we have come to know the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). No sin will separate us from the Lamb, even though we commit fornication and murder a thousand times a day." (cited in Hendrix, Martin Luther, pages 121-122).

As we saw in Deuteronomy 29:19-20, God is angry with those who do not control themselves and who justify their sinful behaviors. While some will say that Luther is only talking about God's forgiveness, it is a disgusting statement that puts no boundaries on sin. We have received grace from God which means we have received God's favor, but we have not received God's grace to sin.

Shaul's statements in the New Testament portion mean just the opposite of what Luther said. God will not forgive those who live in sin and do not repent. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV says, "**Do not be deceived.** Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." So, the faith without works belief system is completely wrong. Fornication refers to any kind of sexual sin.

James 2:22 NKJV says, "Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?" Yochanan said in 1 John 3:4, "Sin is lawlessness." So, sin is not keeping the law. Yeshua said in Matthew 7:23 NKJV, "I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" Those who do not keep the law will be rejected by the Messiah. When we take scriptures out of the context of the other scriptures, we end up with false doctrine.

In fact, what people think is doing good has become more and more just the opinion of the person or some cultural propaganda that they have adopted. They will say something is not loving and apply that to almost anything. A person who says they just love God and others instead of keeping God's commandments must make up their own rules instead of keeping God's good commandments. The same is true for people who say they only live by the Holy Spirit. These people are not trusting in God and are not following God properly.

We need to talk about some of the false doctrines that people teach and also ones that have been passed down to us. While I admired Luther for standing up to some of the false doctrine that was being taught at the time, he taught some false doctrine that is still being practiced today. God forgives those who stop sinning. Psalms 103:12-13 NKJV says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him." Those who continue to sin do not fear God. No one who lives in sin will be in the future kingdom of God according to Shaul (Paul).

Seek God's joy and peace. Our spiritual life is not just to get thrills and frills. Although it is incredibly exciting when God does something supernaturally for us or for someone we know. We need to resist negative thoughts that keep coming back over and over that steal our peace or tempt us to do what is wrong.

We all face various situations in life, and we need to first of all do what the scriptures tell us and then try to work through the situation. Do what you can about a situation, and then let it go. Some situations take time to get fixed. There are some situations that we cannot do anything about. Do not let situations drag you down. Do the best you can to work out situations. Do not put yourself in sinful situations or situations that cause you temptation.

Watch out that you do not be consumed by negative thoughts because they will steal your thinking if you let them. Shaul said in Philippians to pray, give thanks, ask God for help, and think good things.

Philippians 4:6-9 NKJV says,

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

According to Philo, synagogues in the 1<sup>st</sup> century were called schools of virtue. The early synagogues of Christianity helped people to get through life by applying the commandments from the Torah like love your neighbor as yourself. So Shaul was giving us ways in Philippians to help us get through life and to love others properly.

A lot of things in life take effort on our part. We need to make an effort to live in God's light and the understanding that we come to know through His commandments. Light in the Bible often refers to the direction in life that we get from God's commandments. God's commandments give us 'wisdom and understanding;' see Deuteronomy 4:6. They are a light to life.

Most of us will make the effort in life to do things we want to do or accomplish. So, it definitely should be no trouble learning the laws from the Bible that apply to life so we can do what is "right and good." Those engaged in sports often give up their lives to their sport. 1 Corinthians 9:25-27 NKJV says, "And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." Shaul disciplined his life to keep God's commandments so that he would not spend eternity in contempt in the lake of fire.

What do we see when we look at our life? I hope the answer to that question is either that we are doing our best to do what is "right and good," or that we have decided to make the effort to learn and do what is "right and good." We are approaching the Fall feasts of God. Rosh Hashanah begins the Hebraic calendar year where the trumpets are sounded announcing this feast. It is called Yom Teruah in the Bible which means "the day of shouting." It begins a 10-day period of self-examination before the day of forgiveness of sins which is called Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). Then comes Sukkot which is a joyous celebration for what God has done for us. Those in Israel are commanded to live in booths and be thankful.

The biblical name for Rosh Hashanah is Yom Teruah and means "day of shouting." Yom Teruah points to the future time when the final trumpet will sound and the future kingdom will begin. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 NKJV, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet." There is an ancient prophecy that says Yeshua will come back on the day he was born. On the day Yeshua was born, the trumpets were blowing on Yom Teruah, to announce the coming of our Messianic King Yeshua that year and the angels were shouting for joy on the Day of Shouting. Luke 2:13-14 NKJV says, "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!'" Yeshua then is to come again on Yom Teruah at the last trump. Some say Yeshua came on Sukkot, but Yom Teruah makes more sense.

Yom Kippur is a somber and thoughtful day of repentance for sin. While we can be forgiven any time we repent, it is a day to take serious thought about the sins we have committed and

ask God to forgive us. It is a day to make a firm decision to follow God and keep His commandments. It foreshadows the future judgement time when we will stand before God. 2 Corinthians 5:10-11 NKJV says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." We will be judged at the "bema" it says in the Greek. The bema is where the Torah is read in synagogues. We will be judged for the good and evil we have done Shaul warns us. Then comes the joyous feast of Sukkot which foreshadows the future celebration we will have with our God and Yeshua in the future eternal kingdom.

Now is the time to get ready for these upcoming feasts, so take some time to reflect on how we are doing spiritually. Be a champion in life and victorious by following God's commandments, the law. Yeshua warns us in Matthew 7:23 NKJV, "I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" Yeshua encourages us to be victorious and overcome sin. Revelation 3:5 NKJV says, "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life." Be like Shaul who said in 1 Corinthians 9:27 NKJV says, "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." Be a true champion in life.

### **Torah Study**

In this portion, as Israel stood before God, it says they were to keep the words of their covenant with God; namely, their relationship with God. It was God's intention that they become a people who were dedicated to do what is right. They saw the terrible lifestyle of the Egyptians and of those who they passed by on their way to Canaan. They were to understand that their lives would be cursed just like these other people if they did not follow God's commandments.

It says they may think everything will go well if they just do what they want to instead of God's way. Deuteronomy 29:19-20 NKJV says, He blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart'—as though the drunkard could be included with the sober. The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man." Some say that "doing what is right in their own eyes refers to keeping God's commandments." No, it does not. You are not following God if you are doing what is right in your own eyes.

Have you known people who say they are just fine even though they live in sin? This scripture in Deuteronomy makes an important point; it seems to be mankind's nature to think that doing things our own way will work out fine, but we are not to do that. If they do not keep God's commandments, the people will see their devastation and wonder what happened. They will receive the consequences of their sin.

It says in this portion that the things hidden belong to God, but God's instructions, in the Torah, which are revealed are to be kept. We should remember to keep God's commandments; God gave them to us for our own good. There are some things we do not

know, but God has given us His wisdom to make us a "wise and understanding people," see Deuteronomy 4:6.

It goes on to say that when they turn back to God, God will bless them for keeping His commandments. That also applies to us in our era. When we repent of our sin, God forgives us, and we also return to our relationship to God.

Moshe tells them to choose life and keep God's commandments; they are not too hard for them. Mitzvah means commandment in Deuteronomy 30:11 CJB which says, "For this mitzvah which I am giving you today is not too hard for you." There are some who say the Old Testament is too hard to do. It is not true. The extra man-made commandments are too hard to observe.

Yeshua referred to this verse and said His yoke is not too hard to keep. Yoke in Jewish understanding refers to the Torah, the Old Testament. Yeshua said about believers who are doing signs in His name, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" Matthew 7:23 NKJV. The Greek word used for lawlessness is "*anomia*." *Nomia* was the word used by the ancient Rabbis for the Torah. *Anomia*, with the "a" in front of the word negates it. *Anomia* is then to not keep the Torah. Yeshua tells those who do not keep the Torah to depart from Him. Moshe then tells them to cling to God. Cling can also mean to cleave or stay close. Cling, cleave, stay close to God by keeping His commands.

The Haftarah for Nitzavim is Isaiah 61:10 to 63:9. The original Haftarah included the verses Yeshua read just after He finished fasting (Luke 4:18-19). These verses would be read the week just before Rosh Hashanah. So, if we allow for a couple of weeks, when we count back approximately 40 days for Yeshua fasting in the wilderness, we end up near Tisha B'av. Just before Rosh Hashanah, Yeshua quoted Isaiah 61:1-2 NKJV, "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

Yeshua said that these scriptures have been fulfilled. All of scripture has not been fulfilled yet. Some say that Yeshua has already fulfilled everything. The next part of the scripture that Yeshua did not read, Isaiah 61:2b says, "And the day of vengeance of our God." The day of God's vengeance has not occurred yet. Not everything has been fulfilled; there is still more to come.

This Haftarah says that Israel will have everlasting joy and will be a people who do what is right, right means to be righteous; they will be a people of praise. All will see this, and God will rejoice over them. They will enjoy the fruits of their labors. Clearly, God is not done with Israel as some say; those that say so are being deceitful. They believe in the false doctrine of "replacement theology." They often misinterpret the Bible and apply what it says in the Old Testament about Israel to Christianity because of their faulty theology.

In the portion Vayeilech, Moshe tells Israel and Yehoshua that God will go before them and to

boldly enter the land. Moshe then wrote down the Torah, gave it to the Cohanim, and told them that they were to read it to the people every seven years on Sukkot. Moshe and Yehoshua go to the tent of meeting and God tells them that someday the people of Israel would become a disobedient people. In this portion, they are encouraged to boldly trust in God and to do what God told them to do; there are consequences for doing what is wrong.

Because they would someday disobey God, they were to write a song that the people should learn as a testimony. Yĕhōvāh commissions Yehoshua as Israel's new leader and Moshe finishes writing the Torah which was to be kept by the Ark. Moshe assembles all the leaders and tells them they will provoke God with their evil and he teaches them the Ha'azinu that God told him to write. Recognizing that any one of us could fail, should make us humble and open to anything that can help us do what is "right and good" (see Deuteronomy 6:18).

Our culture brainwashes us into accepting sin. This brainwashing works through alluring tactics (through lust), by force (by making us conform to sin, or us wanting to belong), and by lying (our culture is filled with lies which contradict God's commands). Yeshua said in John 8:44 NKJV, "**You are of your father the devil**, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and **does not stand in the truth**, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for **he is a liar and the father of it.**" Do what is "right and good" and do not follow lies.

The Ha'azinu is to remind Israel that someday they will provoke God with their evil. While we like to hear and sing about good things, we also need to hear the complete story. We also need to apply ourselves to doing what is right and good. Rabbi Shaul says in Galatians that we should not be deluded, "A person reaps what he sows;" Galatians 6:7 NKJV. If a person sows what is bad, God sees that. Sow good (keep God's commandments) and God will reward us with eternal life. A pretty good trade off; we do what is good and we are rewarded for doing good in the present, and then get rewarded with eternal life with a good God.

It says in Hebrews 10:28-31 NKJV, "Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, 'vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

*God will forgive us if we repent.*

While judgement may be difficult to hear, it is what the Bible says. We should also understand that God will forgive us if we repent. So, do not remain in your sin, but repent and decide you will follow God and do what is right. Shaul says to stand in Ephesians Chapter 6. We should, **STAND UP**, and get back on our feet spiritually! Yochanan said in 1 John 1:9 NKJV, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If God cleanses us of our sin, He will not hold them against us. Psalms 103:11-13 NKJV says, "For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our



transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him." Instead of failing, why not remain faithful. We are told to be strong in this portion. Deuteronomy 31:6 NKJV says, "Be strong and of good courage."

The Haftarah for Vayeilech is Hosea 14:2-10 and Micah 7:18-20. Joel 2:15-27 is included when this Shabbat portion is during the 10 days of repentance. In the Haftarah, Hosea uses pictorial imagery, and He tells Israel to return to God; nothing but God can save us and make us:

Lilly – beautiful	Tree roots – stable	Olive tree – prosperous
Fragrance – pleasant	Shadow – protected	Grain – fertile
Vine – cover the land	Wine – have joy	

Ephraim will even repent of its idols because of what God is doing in Israel. It makes sense; God's ways are fruitful and right; those who do what is right will have life through them, but the sinful will stumble.

In Micah 7:18-20 says that God will forgive for He is merciful. He will have compassion and cast their sins into the depths of the sea. On Yom Teruah, we sometimes do a ceremony where we throw bread into a body of water or river and as the bread gets carried away (or sometimes eaten by birds), we think of our sins going away. It says in Micah that God will keep His promise of truth and mercy that has been promised to the children of Abraham and Jacob. And God will keep His promises to those who of us who keep His commandments and believe in the Messiah Yeshua.

**Commandments, Implied Commandments, Permissions, and other Concepts. (We can also understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible. There are other possible concepts than what is shared here.)**

**People are to hear the entire Torah every 7 years. Since we can each have Bibles, we can read this for ourselves. This can be done a little at a time which is probably better for retention, or all at once. Deuteronomy 31:12.**

**We are to learn the song talked about in Deuteronomy 31:19.**

**In closing, let us say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:**

We need to explain why we use God's real name in the Aaronic blessing. Some believe we are not supposed to use God's name, but they are mistaken. ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yě-hō-váh. Yě-hō-váh is used over 6,000 times in the Old Testament portion. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name.

According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name. Won't you also honor God's and use His true name with respect at times. The ancient rabbis say that

Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. 2,363 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh.

Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה). Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people.

Let's say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶכָּ  
 יְאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְךָ  
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹמִים

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

Yě-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Yě-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace. Amen.

Thank you for being with us today.