



#33 Bechukotai Lev. 26:1-27:34
Torah Teaching
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Names

Kefa – Peter
Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ
in the Greek means to be smudged
Mishkan – Tent of Meeting in the desert
Moshe – Moses
Shaul – Paul
Yeshua – Jesus' real name
Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Ex. 3:15)
Yochanan – John

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets
Menorah – 7 candle Israelite lamp
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
Mishkan – tent of meeting in the desert
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the
Torah
(There are also transliterations from Hebrew)

The Torah portion for this week is Bechukotai and it means, "in my statutes." God would bless them with many things and as proof, in Leviticus 26:13, it says that God delivered them from slavery to Egypt. The portions covered each week were instituted by God's holy prophets at the time of Nehemiah or perhaps even way before that. The prophets were led by God and the Torah portions ensure us that we talk about the various commandments and history that God gave us and wanted us to understand.

I would like to begin by talking about glorifying God, honoring God, and seeking refreshing and peace in the truth.

Keeping God's commandments glorifies and honors God for who He is. Why is that? Because God gives us good commandments, we glorify God by keeping them and get to experience the goodness of God. Psalms 103:17-18 NKJV says, "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them." Covenant is an agreement. When we keep God's commandments, we are in agreement with Him. Some people say we are in fellowship with God. We have not turned our back on God.

God's commandments are true, just, and will last forever. Psalms 111:7-10 NKJV says, "The works of His hands are verity and justice; all His precepts are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness. He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever: holy and awesome is His name. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever." God's commandments are true forever and are to God's praise forever.

We respect God for who He is when we keep His truths in the Bible. If we needed help to get our car fixed, we go to someone who knows about cars and can fix our car. If they say that we

need a new battery, we do not tell them they are wrong. They are the experts. Since God is the creator, He knows what is best for us and how we should live. Nehemiah 9:6 NKJV says, "You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You." We give God honor and respect when we treat Him as He is, the all-knowing and good creator.

Keeping God's commandments can release us from tension, and strengthens us physically, mentally, and emotionally. Isaiah 26:3-4 NKJV says, " You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever." We are to trust in God and not in the lies of those who do not trust God.

When people think of religious commandments, they sometimes think of being burdened or having to live with expectations. That is not true with God's commandments. For example, there are some 400 traffic laws in the United States, but people consider them necessary for the safety of those who are driving. Most of the time we do not mind learning these laws because we want to be able to drive a car or truck. Now consider how important it is to know how to live life from the creator. God gives us truths for life and doing things His way is the best way to live because God is our good creator and knows what is best for mankind and wants what is best for us.

Someone gave a speech and told the people in attendance that they should get married. Of course, those who do not understand why he said that criticized him. Getting married is part of growing up and accepting responsibility. He was telling them they need to grow up instead of continuing to be children. A no responsibility society makes its people into lifelong children. Many women in our era are frustrated with men who are not willing to take responsibility and grow up. Women are not without fault and also enable this behavior.

There is blessing and fruit in God's light. Be purposeful in what you do.

When I talk about about blessing, I am talking about the good things that come into life that bring happiness and joy. In Proverbs it talks about having happiness through God's commandments that give us wisdom and understanding. When the Bible talks about getting wisdom, it most frequently refers to keeping God's commandments. This scripture in Deuteronomy is foundational for understanding this. Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'"

Proverbs 3:13-18 NKJV says,

Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding; for her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her. Length of days is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her.

Fruit is a term that refers to the end result. The end result of being enlightened by God and His commandments brings good results but we must purposely pursue God's truths which are more precious than gold or rubies. God's commandments can give us peace in life. Contentment is sometimes referred to as satisfaction. A person can have tremendous riches, but not be satisfied in life. It is not true that being poor cannot lead to a satisfying life. Learn to be satisfied with the truths from the Bible. They are truths for life and can give us a satisfying life. Those that say that following the true God brings false satisfaction are deluded. Both rich and poor alike can have a satisfying life through God.

We can be easily be overwhelmed with the things of life. We need to be discrete about what we are drawn towards.

We are to keep God's commandments in our heart and do them. That is how we love God. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always." This is another foundational scripture. It specifically tells us how to love God. We give our God the respect He deserves as our good creator and provider by keeping His commandments. We are to keep God's commandments in our heart. Proverbs 4:21-23 NKJV says, "Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; for they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."

Some people think that mankind is in general good but that is not always true. Our hearts can mislead us. Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Isaiah gives warning to those whose heart has taken control over their thoughts and do evil and think they are doing okay. Isaiah 5:20-21 NKJV, "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" Some say there is no evil. Communist China murdered 70 million of their own people. That is evil. Communism has produced some of the most evil societies in the history of mankind.

There are things in life that can make life easier. Use can use resources to help you with the tasks of life. In all you do in life use God's word and His commandments for direction in life.

When you have legal issues, get a lawyer to help you. When you build a house get knowledgeable and capable people to help you or do the job. If you need medical help, see a doctor. When we need advice or help, it is be important to get the advice and help of those who can help you. It is empowering to be able to listen to good advice. This makes good sense, doesn't it? When I worked in Long Island, New York, elderly men would sometimes stop me and give me advice. I was always open to their wisdom. The elderly have experienced a lot more than a younger person. I was blessed with the ability to take advice and learn. We all need a trade. We provide things that others need. We all help each other, and we need each other. Do a good job helping others.

I remember this one person who yelled at me for questioning him. I probably was not trying to second guess him but to understand what he wanted. People who are close minded sometimes lose out on the opportunity to learn and succeed at something. The secret to success sometimes comes from unlikely sources. You may already know what they have to tell you. Be

courteous and caring about others. They deserve respect just as much as you do. We are all created in God's image with unique and creative abilities. Genesis 1:26 NKJV says, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.'"

Especially always be willing to learn and grow spiritually. There are a lot of people that can mislead us so be careful not to listen to those who do not follow God but follow their own ideas. I always appreciate good and godly teaching that encourages me even if I have heard it a hundred times. We are to be careful to keep God's commandments and any effort on our part or the good teaching of others is important. Deuteronomy 5:32-33 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you."

According to a scripture in the book of Hebrews, sin is unbelief and when we sin, we turn away from God. Hebrews 3:12-13 NKJV says, "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Do not allow evil into your heart.

Do not allow sin to run your life. Instead, be strong, follow God, and keep His commandments. Joshua 1:8-9 NKJV says, "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage." So be strong and courageous spiritually.

Glorify God, honor God, seek refreshing and peace in the truth. There is blessing and fruit in God's light. Be purposeful in what you do. We can be easily drawn by being inundated with the things of life we are drawn to. Be discrete about what you are drawn to. There are things in life that can make life easier. Use resources and get help you with the tasks of life and especially use God's word for life.

Since we finished the book of Leviticus in this portion, now would be a good time to affirm our faith and commitment.

We say:

Hazak, hazak, ve-nit-hazek.

Hazak, hazak, ve-nit-hazek.

Hazak, hazak, ve-nit-hazek.

Be strong, be strong and may we be strengthened.

Be strong, be strong and may we be strengthened.

Be strong, be strong and may we be strengthened.

Torah Study

Bechukotai means, "in my statutes." This portion begins with God saying that He would bring the Israelites rain, that they would have bountiful harvests and live securely in the land, that

others would flee from them, and that God would increase their numbers, that God would put His tabernacle among them and that He would walk among them if they would keep His commandments. This reminds Israel they are God's treasured people if they keep His commandments (see Deuteronomy 7:6).

God would bless them with all these things and as proof, in Leviticus 26:13, it says that God delivered them from slavery to Egypt. God broke the yoke of the pagan religion of the Egyptians so Israel could live right and follow the yoke of the Torah.

*The Torah is not hard to keep, but **extra misapplied**
man-made laws can make it difficult.*

Deuteronomy 30:11 NIV says, "Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach." Do not believe the lies some people tell you; it says the Old Testament portion is not hard to keep. When Yeshua says His Torah (yoke) is easy (in Matthew 11:30), He is referring to Deuteronomy 30:11. Yoke is a technical term referring to the Torah. We can either be under the yoke of sin and therefore slaves to sin or under the yoke of Torah.

Rabbi Shaul talks about be a slave for God and not sin. Those who do not live in sin will have eternal life. Romans 6:20-22 NKJV says, "For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life."

It says in this portion that if they do not follow God's commands, then they will get sick, their crops will not grow, and other nations will destroy them. God will bring down their pride. increase their calamities, and if they are against God, God will be against them. God will bring down the places of their pagan worship and throw their dead bodies on their idols. Their land will become desolate, and they will be dispersed to the nations if they do not follow His commands. The land will then be repaid its Shabbat. In Leviticus 26:21 it says that those who do not keep God's commandments are contrary to God, in other translations it says they are hostile to God. Do not be hostile to God.

During the Corona virus crisis, perhaps some of us have thought about how Christianity has not kept God's true Shabbat but created their own Shabbat Those that created the virus were surely doing evil. There is such a thing as evil. It was Constantine that changed the true day of Shabbat to the day of the Sun god; he was the head of the Sun god cult, Mithras, and his false doctrine got passed down into Christianity and people blindly follow this false doctrine.

*God must not be pleased with people making Sunday
the day of rest on the day of the Sun god.*

The portion continues, those who are left in the land will be filled with fear and they will be sorry for their sin. If Israel repents, God will remember His covenant with Ya'akov (Jacob). When they are in foreign lands God will not reject them. For their sake, God will not forget His covenant with their ancestors.

Monetary values are then given to people, animals, houses, and land for the purpose of vows that are made for the upkeep of the sanctuary. The Cohen is to decide the value of an unclean animal, the value of a house, or the value of a part of a field. When someone wishes to redeem something, they are to add one-fifth to its value. The Yovel year (Jubilee Year) is taken into account for valuation. The tithes belong to the Lord and if a man wants to redeem what he tithed he should add one-fifth to what it is worth. The book of Vayikra (Leviticus) ends with it saying that God gave these commands to Israel at Mount Sinai.

The Haftarah for Bechukotai is Jeremiah 16:19-17:14. This Haftarah portion begins by saying that the Lord is Jeremiah's strength and help. Jeremiah prophesies that the nations will come to God, and they will realize that they believed lies. God will make known to them His power. Cursed are those who trust in man but blessed are those who trust in the Lord. Israel will be blessed and yield fruit. The Lord searches our heart. This portion echoes the Torah portion and shows us that the Creator God is over all, knows all, and also that the nations will come to realize that they believed lies. Blessings come from God; the Lord knows what is in the hearts of man.

Jeremiah 16:19 CJB says, "Our ancestors inherited nothing but lies."

Our society teaches us that we can only rely on man. They have made up an alternate reality without God. We also have inherited lies through theology. Jeremiah 17:5 NKJV, "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the LORD;" God is God and mankind is not. What makes people think that their man-made theology is okay with God? They obviously do not respect God because if they did, they would drop their man-made lies and actually begin to do what God tells us to do.

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.)

The valuation of a person is to be set at a prescribed price. Leviticus 27:2-4.

An animal that has been given for sacrifice cannot be swapped for another. If animals are swapped, they are both holy. Leviticus 27:10. This is to prevent the priests from becoming merchants.

An unclean animal's valuation is to be set by the priest. Leviticus 27;11-12.

If someone vows the valuation of a house, they are to add 1/5th to it to redeem it. Leviticus 27:14-15.

If someone vows a field, the price is set by its production. Leviticus 27:16.

They were not to change what was required for the sacrifices. For example, if a lamb was required, they could not substitute something else. Leviticus 27:26.

Anything vowed to the Lord belongs to Yĕhōváh and is not to be sold or to threaten to destroy it. The penalty for doing this is death. Leviticus 27:28-29. This would also apply for when someone loses something they put up as collateral they are not allowed to sell or destroy it. There should be a penalty of some kind.

A tenth of newborn animals is to be given to Yĕhōváh each year and they were not to judge about what they gave. Leviticus 27:32-33. Perhaps they had second thoughts that they gave too much. Some years they were to give to the Levites and the poor and other years they were to bring their offering to Jerusalem. The ancient Rabbis increased the tax by having people always bring their offerings to Jerusalem. God had them only give a little over 10 percent every year because they were to leave the corners of their fields for the poor and strangers and not to re-harvest their fields.

The Aaronic Blessing.

ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yĕ-hō-váh. Yĕ-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, Yĕ-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yĕ-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah. Yĕ-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name.

The ancient rabbis say that Yĕ-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. Over 2,363 manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yĕ-hō-váh, once as Yĕ-hō-vĕh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yĕ-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 Yĕ-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:

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ
 יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחֲנֶךָ
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשְׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yĕ-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

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

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

Thank you for being with us today.