



### **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, priests  
Haftarah – the weekly reading from the prophets  
Parashah – (portion) one of 54 parts of the Torah  
Shabbat – the 7th day of the week; we are to rest  
Sukkot – Feast of Tabernacles, Booths  
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible  
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible  
Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement

Today we finish the book of Deuteronomy. The reason we focus on the different portions of the Torah throughout the year is because it was instituted by God's holy prophets. That is what Yeshua was doing when he went to His hometown and read from Isaiah. The first leader of the those who believed in Yeshu as Messiah was Ya'akov (James), and he says about the Gentiles learning and keeping the Torah 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."

Yom Kippur is approaching and is the day of forgiveness of sins and is sometimes referred to as the Day of Atonement. It is a picture of the future time of Judgement of our God. It is a solemn day of rest, and some type of denial is required, often achieved through fasting. Sukkot follows just four days later, and it is a 7-day celebration and is a picture of our future celebration in the future kingdom of God. The first day of Sukkot is a day of rest. The 8<sup>th</sup> Day is just a day of rest following Sukkot. Perhaps it is a picture of our eternal joy in the future kingdom of God. We keep this day in our congregation as a day of rest without any activities. So, we have the final portion this week instead of on the 8<sup>th</sup> day.

Start this season right. Seek those things which are above, do not focus on the worldly.

Sometimes people think that worldly things are what is most meaningful. Guarding or keeping our relationship with God is what is most important. Some congregations have what we call a low bar for a relationship with God. In other words, they believe little is required of the believer in God. The Bible says over and over we are to keep God's commandments and there are eternal consequences for not keeping them. The Bible holds us to a high standard, a high bar. God forgives us for our sin when we change and confess our sins to God, but God requires a sincere repentance.

I once heard a story of someone who felt lied to after going to a church for that held to a belief in a low bar. They never heard the truth at their seeker friendly congregation. After reading the Bible, she realized she was being lied to and decided to no longer be a believer. Perhaps she felt that churches could not be trusted. These seeker friendly congregations seem to only appeal to

obtaining numbers and donations. While they may not hold to this concept, they certainly are not leading people to follow God the way they should. They will say people are growing spiritually, but how can that be true if their congregants are not being taught what they should be taught.

Sometimes believers look only at the shortcomings or darkness and evil that continue to exist. We should understand that God is still at work and that darkness and evil will not ultimately rule.

The Bible teaches us to hate evil. We hate evil by doing what is "right and good," namely by following God's commandments. Deuteronomy 10:13 NKJV says, "Keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good." God's commandments are good and not keeping God's commandments is not good for people. We often feel sorry for the people who are failing spiritually in life because the Bible says they are destined for the lake of fire for eternity (see Revelation 21:8). We do not hate them. Often it is the other way around. They often hate believers, but they often turn that around and say we hate them because we say they need God. We are only trying to help them. But they have decided to follow their heart instead of God.

The Bible says the heart can be evil. Sometimes it is right, but it can also be terribly wrong. Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The religions of Communism, Atheism, and Humanism often rely on their own feelings instead of doing what an all-knowing and good creator God tells us is right and good. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, over 100 million people were murdered by people who held to these philosophies which can also be termed religions. Religions are a belief system and that is what they are. This does not include the wars and suffering they have caused, which makes them the most murderous belief systems that have ever existed.

They teach hatred and discontent to get people to comply to their religions. There are other religions besides their murderous religions that subscribe to these same methods. Some believers live in these societies. So how do we deal with hate? That is more and more the question in our society. How do we as believers in God, deal with hate? We should first of all be committed to doing what is right by God's standards and not our own standards. Next, hating these people back will only make them hate us more. It is okay for us to defend ourselves if they try to hurt us. Realistically, helping them to see our true nature should help them to understand that we are a good people. I know of someone who says that he became a believer in God because he saw the goodness of those who believed in God.

Yeshua tells us that following God's commandments help others see what is right and good. Matthew 5:14-16 NKJV says, "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Even if they do not like you, perhaps they see the good that you do. I had an atheist friend tell me that he would much sooner trust a believer in God than another atheist. That is saying something!

We need to firmly be the people we are supposed to be spiritually. We are not supposed to be just ourselves as some say. That is another way of saying just follow your heart. In contrast, we

are to be a man or woman of God and follow God's commandments. I have had atheists hate me and my beliefs and I still treated them with kindness and respect. An atheist friend of mine even volunteered to take me to the doctor once. When people hate us for any reason we do not have to respond with hate. I have had people who hated me for my race who seemed to accept me merely because I was kind to them. 1 Peter 2:20 NKJV says, "For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God." The Bible says that treating others badly stirs up conflict. Proverbs 15:18 NIV says, "A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel."

I am not saying we should spend a lot of time with these people. We do not want to become like them and partake of any of the sins they commit. Also, if you want to try to help people to learn about God, find people who are interested in God and in changing their lives for the better. I have a friend of mine who spent 2 years spending time being kind to an unbeliever couple who never intended to believe in God. My friend ended up being very disappointed. Invest your time in people who want to know about God.

Be a leader of people and lead them to the good truths for life.

Take charge of your life and live the way you are supposed to. Do not take chances with sin. Sin not only leads to spiritual death and an eternity in the lake of fire (see Revelation 21:8), but sin can also literally cause death. My dad tells the story of two men he decided not to be friends with, and the two men were shot and killed trying to rob a bank. So, make good decisions in life.

People can be fooled by wrong ideas and think they are okay. Proverbs 14:12 NKJV says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." God's law is life giving, we are to hold God's commandments close to our hearts. Proverbs 7:2-3 NKJV says, "Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart."

Enjoy life, plan, and consider your path in life.

These are great scriptures in Proverbs.

Proverbs 3:5-8 NKJV says,

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.

Trust God, trust His commandments, trust His law, and do not do things your own way. It says not to lean toward your own understandings. Acknowledge that God is God, and we are not. Set yourself on the right path in life. Do not decide that you know better than God, treat God for who He is. Do not do evil. God gave us His commandments for our good.

In all that you do, be protective of your walk with God.

Do what God commanded us for your own good. Deuteronomy 5:33 NKJV says, "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." Walk in His ways and love Him. Deuteronomy 10:12 NKJV says, "What does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways

and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul." Hold fast to our God, His commandments, and the help of the Holy Spirit. Deuteronomy 11:22 NKJV says, "Keep all these commandments which I command you to do – to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him."

Each person has the choice in life whether to follow God's commandments or not. Also, are we filling our spiritual shoes well?

Not all of our spiritual walk has to do with following the law. Sure, we need to make God's commandments a priority, but we are also to believe in God's power. Psalms 21:13 NKJV says, "Be exalted, O LORD, in Your own strength! We will sing and praise Your power." God helped those in the Old Testament portion. Psalms 59:16 NKJV says, "But I will sing of Your power; yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; for You have been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble." Genesis 25:21 NKJV says, "Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived." God answered prayers in the Old Testament portion, and He still answers some prayer. Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change."

If you need help pray with expectation and humility. It is not just all about the law. We also need to have faith. James 2:18 NKJV says, "But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works." While growing up, my family relied on the law as our basis for life, but it has been my experience that God will hear our prayers at times, so pray. Yeshua said in Luke 18:1 NKJV, "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart." Do not lose heart, keep praying. This one time I wanted to go for a walk, but it was raining. I prayed for the rain to stop, and it started snowing. God answered my prayer, and I went for my walk.

Get to know the truth about God and what the Bible says. God is merciful, gives grace, is patient, and abounds in "goodness and truth." Exodus 34:6 NKJV says, "And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth'" Guard your spiritual life. Deuteronomy 4:9 NKJV says, "Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself." He wants what is best for us, so stand strong. Deuteronomy 5:29 NKJV says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" Isn't God good!

Focus more on doing what is "right and good," and not on everything that is going wrong. Be who you are supposed to be spiritually and do not react to those who hate. Be a leader of your life and take charge of your life and do not be fooled by wrong ideas and ideals. Enjoy life and consider your spiritual path. Trust in God and walk in His ways. Walk with God both in works and faith. It is not all about following the law and it is not all about just having faith. Fill your spiritual shoes well, walk in power, know the truth, and learn and apply God's commandments. God wants what is best for us and for His people forever.

### **Torah Study**

This week we are observing a double portion and are finishing the book of Deuteronomy. Instead of having a teaching on The 8<sup>th</sup> Day, we are finishing the Torah today. The 8th Day was

meant to be a picture of our final and future eternal rest and life with our God and King. So, we will just be resting on The 8<sup>th</sup> Day (Some call it the 8<sup>th</sup> day of Sukkot).

The portion Ha'azinu is a prophetic song about the future of Israel that God wanted Moshe to write for them. The gist of the song begins by praising God and then a brief history of man. God was our Father from the inception of His created work on earth. He chose Israel, protected them in the desert, and prospered them in the new land, but they turned away to idols and would arouse God's anger so that He would turn away His face from them. In the end He would avenge their enemies and atone His people. Moshe tells Israel that they were to teach their children the Ha'azinu song so they would understand the urgency of its message.

We should also understand the urgency of doing what is right. First of all, God gave us His commandments to bless us and help us. They are a demonstration of God's favor (grace) towards mankind, and they are not a burden.

Deuteronomy 4:5 NKJV says,  
"Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments;"

Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says,  
"Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding;"

Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says,  
"The peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people;'"

God's good commands are not too hard to keep, Deuteronomy 30:11 NIV says, "What I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach." Yeshua refers to this scripture and says in Matthew 11:30 NKJV, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Yoke in Jewish thought refers to the Torah. Yeshua as God gave us the Torah and it is not a burden. It is the extra commandments by man that are a burden. In Yeshua's time there were thousands of extra man-made laws. Those extra man-made laws were a burden.

Light refers to understanding in the Bible; God's commandments give us "wisdom" and "understanding," namely light, refer to Deuteronomy 4:6. God's ways turn us from darkness to light. His ways release us from evil powers that are out to make us slaves to sin. In Acts 26:18 NKJV the risen Yeshua said He came, "To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me." Shaul said in 2 Timothy 2:25-26 NKJV, "In humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will."

The devil works undercover so we often do not see the evil spiritual powers that are at work against us. If the devil showed his intentions, people would know to resist these evil powers. People sometimes experience and believe in these lying powers instead of believing in God. For example, they think it is the power of the mind or ghosts. Someone once told me that they believed in ghosts, and he thought that ghosts existed. I asked him if he believed in God and he

said no. I then asked him, if he experienced these strange supernatural events and believed in them, why didn't he believe in God?

The devil is against the purposes of God, but we have victory over the devil through the Messiah Yeshua. Yeshua is over all, Ephesians 1:22 NKJV says God, "Put all things under His feet." Also, through His name we have authority over demonic powers. Philippians 2:10 CJB, "That in honor of the name given Yeshua, every knee will bow." We are also to resist the temptations of the devil. James 4:7-8 NKJV says, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." God is real and He knows us and wants us to know Him and His goodness and His deliverance.

The portion, *VeZot Habrakhah* means, "And this is the blessing." It contains various blessings that God pronounces over each of the tribes. People tend to try to live up to expectations. As Moshe blessed the tribes, the people probably paid close attention to each blessing. The portion concludes with it telling them that God is their refuge and shield. Then Moshe climbs Mount Nebo and dies and the people mourned for him for 30 days. Moshe was a great prophet and heard from God face to face. The Israelites were then led by Joshua.

It is important for us to understand the blessings that we have. The Old Testament portion of the Bible mentions the goodness of God and our blessings for keeping His commandments over and over. It also mentions the curses for not keeping God's commandments. It should be easy to understand the consequences of sin. It has been speculated by some that people will not follow God the way they should if just the blessings were mentioned. That is why we need to hear both the blessings and the cursings.

The New Testament portion also mentions blessings for following God's commandments and curses for not following God's commandments. The New Testament portion also talks about the blessings for receiving the Holy Spirit. Shaul talks about how we now have a greater understanding of the devil and victory over the devil. These powers he is talking about are devil spirit beings. Colossians 2:15 NKJV says, "Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it."

In this present Messianic age, we still only see partially what is going on in this world. Mankind walked away from their close spiritual connection in Genesis chapter 3 but was given a second chance to follow God and His commandments. The spiritual things of this world that are not seen are hidden to mankind, but that was partially restored with the coming of the Messiah Yeshua and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Those who have the gift of the Holy Spirit can experience God and know better what is going on in this world. 1 Corinthians 2:14 NKJV says, "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The person without the Holy Spirit is left without understanding and experiencing the supernatural and spiritual verities.

So, unbelievers think there is no afterlife, but believers experience the supernatural and can be assured there is an afterlife. There are eternal blessings for those who keep God's commandments and curses for those who do not (see Daniel 12:2-3). The Bible tells us of many many blessings for following the true God and His commandments. The curse for not keeping God's good commandments is eternity in the lake of fire. Doing what is right or righteousness

means to follow God's commandments. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV says, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? 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." Shaul says "Do not be deceived." There are a lot of liars out there and they "twist" the scriptures to their own "destruction" (see 2 Peter 3:14-16)." Watch out for the liars! 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." We need to hear the blessings and the curses so we will stand strong.

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.

The Haftarah portion is 2 Samuel 22:1-52. It is about God's power, and deliverance. King David's life was in danger, and he refused to go on the offensive, but instead tried to work things out. David had to go through an extremely tough time, but God delivered him. How many of us have the chutzpah to stay true to what we believe like David did?

I would like to talk about ritual at this time. Some people say we have to do certain rituals. Then others say that we cannot do them. Saying we must do or cannot do something is making up commandments. We are not to make up misapplied commandments (see Deuteronomy 4:2). There are properly applied applications of the Torah; for example, the New Testament has hundreds of commandments that are properly applied from the Old Testament.

What pleases God? Is wearing a hat or not wearing a hat a big deal? Is something that has some biblical relevance okay to do? Probably. Do we have to light candles for Shabbat? No, but we can acknowledge the beginning of Shabbat on Friday night by some means. Some people are saying we cannot do anything that is Jewish because some Jews keep rituals as commandments. If it is not a pagan ritual; if done in the proper context; and we have the right attitude, it is not wrong. Most rituals are not commandments of God. We should never say something is or is not a commandment of God when it is not. Also, we can get accustomed to a certain ritual and begin thinking it is a commandment of God when it is not.

Here is an example where we can use some ritual. Moshe and the prophets received instructions from God to institute readings from the Torah. The readings and Torah studies were commanded by God. Acts 15:21 NKJV says, "For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." Ritual involved with the Torah readings can vary. Even in life, there is some ritual. There are people who say we cannot do anything Jewish; not even read the Torah. Wasn't Yeshua a Jew? Isn't Yeshua God, and God gave us the commandments in the Old Testament and the Torah? I have often thought these people who say we cannot do anything Jewish are either misled or anti-Semitic.

Ritual is something we do every day. We also follow rituals that others have advised us to follow. Ritual can be a good thing because it can help us get through life. Some rituals are

wrong though. Again, telling people that a non-essential ritual is a commandment of God is wrong; especially ritual that micromanages life and is nonsense. What does not putting up an umbrella on Shabbat because you think you are putting up a structure have to do with anything sensible? Yeshua referred to Isaiah and said in Matthew 15:9 NKJV, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." Isaiah 29:13 NKJV says, "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men." Those who were following man-made commandments were just following men and not God and those who imposed man-made commandments are doing wrong the Bible says. What makes us followers of God is to keep God's commandments.

Here is another example. We now know that Constantine changed the day of worship to the day of the sun god. Worship on Sunday is a commandment of men. It was not because Yeshua rose on Sunday. And I quote, "Constantine decreed (March 7, 321) *dies Solis*—day of the Sun, 'Sunday'—as the Roman day of rest." [Constantine said,] "'On the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed.'"<sup>1</sup> The real day of rest is Shabbat, our Friday at sunset to Saturday at sunset. We inherited the wrong day from the pagan church of the Roman Empire.

This is a special season of the year. Will we observe God's feasts or will we diminish their value somehow. Guard, keep God's feasts. The word keep in our Bible is often the Hebrew word to guard. Leviticus 19:30 NKJV says, "You shall keep My Sabbaths." We are to Guard God's Sabbaths. They are God's Sabbaths and not just Jewish Sabbaths. Seek God and do what He asks us. He is a good and loving God who has given us His wisdom and understanding through His commandments, and He has also given believers the Holy Spirit in this Messianic age. He is the eternal God, and we are not God. Will we stay faithful to the God of the heavens and the earth? Never give up, stay faithful to the one true God.

### **We have finished the book of Deuteronomy and we say:**

Hazak, hazak, ve-nithazek,  
 Hazak, hazak, ve-nithazek,  
 Hazak, hazak, ve-nithazek.

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.

### **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.

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<sup>1</sup>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sol\\_Invictus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sol_Invictus)



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:

יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ  
 יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחֲנֶךָ  
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

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.