



#33 Bechukotai Lev. 26:1-27:34

Torah Teaching and teaching, Making Adjustments to Life By Moshe Schwab

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." 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.

There is eternal blessing in being faithful to the true understanding of the Bible. We want to understand the Bible with its original understanding. Sometimes we call that the Jewish or Hebraic roots. Reading the Bible without this context leads to man-made theology. Context is an important way to understand anything we read.

There is a whole group of people who have ascribed to a man-made theology that it is by faith alone they have eternal life, and they also teach eternal security. They reinterpret the scriptures based on what they believe instead of their original context. They are reading into the scriptures a doctrine that was developed in the 16th century. It is not a biblical 1st century idea.

I know that I share scriptures like the following to get people to realize they have bought into a man-made theology. We need to do this because of these pervasive wrong man-made teachings.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 NKJV

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. And such were some of you. But you

were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

It says those who do not do what is right will not be in the future kingdom of God. Then it says, "do not be deceived," but many are deceived by this false doctrine. In spite of this explicit warning, they interpret that they are holy and justified because they have the Holy Spirit. They do not understand that the Holy Spirit is our helper to keep God's commandments and so much more as we have previously talked about. Just this week, someone told me that the Holy Spirit helped them from having car trouble and possibly saved their car's transmission. One time the Holy Spirit woke me up in the middle of the night and saved me from a fire in my house. You cannot put price on a saved life.

We talk about false doctrines frequently because those that ascribe to false doctrines like "by faith alone" think they are validated and that they will not lose their eternal life. They believe this because they have the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given by God to help us and is very real. The Holy Spirit should be an encouragement for people to fear God, but their false doctrine subverts the truth. They think they are okay with God no matter what they do.

Hebrews 10:26-31 NKJV

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 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.

Those that sin willfully lead a life of sin will not be in God's future kingdom. It says God will judge the believers and if they do not live right, Yeshua's sacrifice for sin will not cover them.

Then there are those who react negatively to the Holy Spirit and think it is a false spirit because of these believers who do not respect God, live in sin, and do not keep His word because of false theology. Think about it; if you do not listen to someone's good advice, then you do not regard them, and you don't respect them and their words. It is like a person who builds their home on sand. Yeshua talks about this in Matthew.

Matthew 7:21-27 NKJV

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who

built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

It is obvious that Yeshua is talking about believers. Again, as I have shared before, the word lawlessness is the Greek word *anomia*. *Nomia* was used by the ancient rabbis for the Torah. The "a" negates the Greek word so Yeshua says, 'go away (to the lake of fire – Revelation 21:8) you who do not keep the Torah. These false teachers say that they believe in the Jesus to save them, yet they do not follow His words do they.

Stay refreshed and faithful. God can help you in tough times. Do not turn to sin and false belief systems. Remain godly and do not sin. Do what is right (righteousness); that shows you trust in God. The Psalmist says in Psalm 4 that God has made his heart wonderfully happy and that he has peace.

Psalms 4:1-8 NKJV

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; have mercy on me, and hear my prayer. How long, O you sons of men, will you turn my glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood? Selah

But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly; the LORD will hear when I call to Him. Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD. There are many who say, "Who will show us any good?" LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us. You have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased. I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

Look to the light; see God's light; understand work of His word and Holy Spirit. God gave us His word and He gave us the Holy Spirit; they are both good.

Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV, "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**."

Psalms 119:10-16 NKJV

With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts, and

contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

Just a little further, the Psalmist says in Psalms 119:105-106, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep Your righteous judgments." God's commandments keep us on the right path and protect us.

The psalmist is praising God for His commandments. We should praise God for His commandments because they help us to live well and that is also the purpose of the Holy Spirit. John 14:15-17 NKJV says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — the Spirit of truth." God knows what is best for us and has our best interests at heart. The psalmist rejoices in God's commandments, and we should also rejoice in the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:11-13 NKJV, "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" The gifts of the Holy Spirit are good! The Bible tells us that God would not give us something that is bad. Just because someone is using God's gifts in a weird way does not make His gifts wrong.

Those people who are minimizing the work of the Holy Spirit and telling people not to speak in tongues or give a word of prophecy are contradicting God. They are lying. Shaul said to desire the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit, "Desire spiritual gifts;" 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV. Right after he talks about the gifts of the Holy Spirit he says, "The things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord;" 1 Corinthians 14:37 NKJV. So, using God's gifts of the Holy Spirit are commandments of God. But we need to use them in a kind, sensitive, and sensible way.

Be a place of light in a dark world. Do not do evil; do not think what you think or believe is better than what God tells us. Isaiah 5:20-21 NKJV says, "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!"

Proverbs 3:7-8 NKJV says, "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." Isn't that wonderful; God's commandments and the work of the Holy Spirit can invigorate you!

The people who do not care about God think they are okay and pursue their own ways. They bring evil into the world instead of good. They destroy their own life and the lives of others and keep people from a good and all-knowing God who wants to give us good lives and eternal life in His future Kingdom.

Psalms 119:130-133 NKJV

Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple. I opened my mouth and panted, for **I longed for Your commandments. Look upon me**

and be merciful to me, as Your custom is toward those who love Your name. Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me.

God's word gives us light and understanding. God is always merciful and will forgive us. Follow God's word and His commandments and do not let any sin control your life.

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 (Deuteronomy 7:6). 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.***

The Hebrew word mitzvah means command. "For this mitzvah which I am giving you today is not too hard for you;" Deuteronomy 30:11 CJB. 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 (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.

It says in this portion that if they do not follow God's commands (mitzvot), 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 Shabbats (Shabbatot).

During this Corona virus crisis, perhaps some of us have thought about how Christianity has not kept God's true Shabbat but created their own Shabbat (So the land is being repaid its Shabbatot. It is a possibility. I generally don't make speculations. It is just a thought.) Those that created the virus were surely doing 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 Mt. 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.

Making Adjustments to Life **(An accompanying teaching for the Torah portion)**

God is there; seek Him. He is blessing and a light to those who find Him.

Again, we read in Psalms 119:105 NKJV says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." My friend took his motorcycle to a jungle town and could not remember which path led to the town, so he got off his bike and walked ahead by foot. As he was walking, he heard a crash and decided to check it out.

There was a panther (a very big cat) trapped in a pit that had been stalking him. Talk about being on the right path! God's ways are the best ways; God knows the best way to live, so follow Him. Make adjustments to life so you stay on God's path.

Watch out for ugly chatter. Is that how we want to live?

I often start my day by committing myself to do what is right and committing myself to being good and kind. Any time of day is a good time to do that. I found myself doing that later today

as I was doing things. We often can get caught up in the moment; do not let things get to you; be who you want to be and do not live like those who are trying to impose their false philosophy of life on us.

Enjoy life and fellowship with God. Find ways to enjoy your relationship with God; sing and have joy.

Confess to doing what is right. Resist being drawn into the ridiculous behaviors that are pressing on our good nature and desire to live right. Shaul (Paul) suggests singing some spiritual songs and have carefree joy in your heart. Ephesians 5:19-21 NKJV says, "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God."

Think of some good things to say instead of all the blah blah blah we hear. Shaul tells us to think those good things in Philippians 4:8. It must be the nature of mankind to get off track. We can make ourselves miserable by focusing on the negative. Why do that to yourself?

Name some ways that you can use to readjust your focus (thinking)?

- * Stop just thinking about yourself.
- * When we are faced with tension, we should remember to drop our defensive and aggressive behavior.
- * We should purposely avoid worldly talk and ideas.
- * We should talk about the productive things we are doing.
- * We can get involved doing things of value.
- * We can validate (give value and support) others; think good things about them.
- * We should guard against the urge to think and say negative things about others (lashon harah; evil speaking). Evil speaking is wrong (James 3:5-12).
- * We can validate what we do and make sure that includes using our abilities for the kingdom of God and our spiritual gifts.

What other ways can you think of?

Continue to focus on our spiritual lives. Seek to live in God's ways; seek His light; come out from the tunnel vision of darkness.

Have you even gone through a mountain, and it seems like the tunnel goes on and on? I remember being relieved getting out of a long tunnel the first time I went through it. That is what we need to do; be focused on getting out of the tunnel of darkness and staying in a place and focus of doing right and keeping God's commandments and being at peace. 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." Trust in God and be at peace; allow God to be your strength in life and how you live.

We can focus on worldly or evil thoughts or have good thoughts. God knows what you are thinking. Matthew 9:4 NKJV says, "But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, 'Why do you think evil in your hearts?'" Guard your life from evil thoughts and ways; be diligent and work at it.

Proverbs 4:23-27 NKJV

"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you. Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left; remove your foot from evil."

Keep your heart; stop focusing on worldly rhetoric and speech; think about what you are doing; and establish your life in godly ways. Do not get distracted and do evil.

God wants to bless us and give us wisdom and understanding that is better than all we can imagine it says in Deuteronomy 4:5-6. God knows what is best for us. God is real and can also bring us supernatural blessings as we follow Him through His word and with the help of the Holy Spirit. We need to seek Yě-hō-váh so we will have godly direction in our lives and His supernatural blessings. Why live by man-made ideas when we have a good God who wants to help us? Enjoy your good and godly life and stay focused. Readjust how you think and actively work at keeping your life in line with God and His commands. Stay on God's path. Watch where you are going; do not do evil; do not turn away from God.

We have finished reading the book of Leviticus. When we have finished reading a book of the Bible, it can be a great idea to affirm our faith in what we have learned.

We say:

Hazak, hazak, v'nit'chazek! 3x

Be strong, be strong, and let us be strengthened! 3x

The Aaronic Blessing

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.

The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. Over 2,363 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:

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ

יְאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וַיְחַנְּךָ

יְשַׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וַיִּשְׂא לָךְ 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.