



**#34 Bamidbar Numbers 1:1-4:20**  
**Torah Teaching and teaching Give Glory to God**  
**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 Bamidbar and means, "In the wilderness." We now begin our study on the book of Numbers. Numbers teaches us some of the stories of those who failed so we do not make the same mistakes. The census' given in the Torah tell us that there were some 600,000 men who left Egypt. If we count women and children, that adds up to a possible 2 million who left Egypt. Tens of thousands did not fail but some would have you believe that all of Israel failed. In the end, some 2 million people entered the land of Canaan. That is a lot of people who pulled together and made it.

The same is true today. Some believers are genuine believers who desire to keep God's commandments and do what is right. There are some though who make up excuses to not follow God's commandments and they will not make it into the future kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV says,

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Shaul is repeating himself. He already told before and is telling them again. He must have considered this important and so we should too. I would like to begin by talking a little about the pressures of life.

Find good ways to keep yourself from succumbing to the pressures of life so they do not overcome you. Pray and talk to God about the pressures you are facing and ask Him for help. God can help us and even inspire us on how to handle what we are facing. 1 Chronicles 16:11 NKJV says, "Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face evermore!"

I remember making a mistake at work and I wondered how I should tell my boss. I told them what I did, and they were fine with my honesty. We all make mistakes at times. If I had

avoided the truth, they would have lost trust in me. Ask God to give you the strength to do always do what is right.

Hopefully, none of the pressures we are facing are due to sin but if they are, be honest with yourself, turn away from sin, and do what you are supposed to do. Some sins may require making amends in some way.

Proverbs 4:23-27 NKJV says,

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.

Stop lying and do not say or think things that are evil. Think about what you are doing and do what is right so that you do not do evil.

Just like we used the scriptures to help us understand that we are to stop doing what is wrong, we can use other scriptures that address areas of sin. For example, if a person is committing sexual sin, they could use Revelation 21:8 NKJV which 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." The Bible instructs us on how to live, so start doing what it says.

Resist evil because evil can complicate life. Not all sin has extreme negative consequences but why do evil? Most people want to do what is right so why not do what you know to be right. If you do not know what is right and good, begin reading the Bible and form appropriate conclusions from what God tells us. For example, the Bible says we are created in God's image (see Genesis 1:26), so we are different than the animals. This is a standard Jewish understanding. My mom used to tell me frequently that we are not animals. We are not like animals that act more on impulse. We are special because we can decide to do what is right or wrong. We are special because we can be creative. We are special because God wants us to be in relationship with Him and keep His commandments. God has given us the scriptures so we can learn and grow as people.

Often, atheists believe there is nothing special about human life. I have known atheists and they believe there are only consequences in life because they are made up. They believe we are just intelligent single celled organisms or perhaps nothing better than a rock. That is why the atheist countries in our world executed over 101 million their people in the 1900s. That does not include all the deaths from the wars they have started. If you do not have a conscience or a set of truths to follow, it is easy to start a war to steal what others have. The Bible says we are not to commit murder or steal. These evil people will end up in the lake of fire. Do not follow their false propaganda or you will go there with them.

Be useful in life. Apply yourself to things that matter. One way to reduce the pressures of life is to accomplish tasks that need to get done. Make both personal and spiritual goals. And make sure you do not minimize your spiritual goals. It is easy to get involved doing the things of work and life and not be involved with spiritual things.

I have a list of things that I need to get done and sometimes I will do something easy that does not take much time so I can cross something off my list. Prioritize your list of things to do so that you take care of important things first. When you identify something that needs to be done, make a list of how you are going to accomplish the task and what you need to do to get ready to do it. Make a list of things you would like to do for when you get caught up.

Make a list of things that you intend to do every day. For example, take time every day to pray and read or study the Bible. Make a concerted effort to work at keeping God's commandments. It is okay to be a little conservative. For example, I tend to think of extra little things to do during the day. I resist doing extra little things extra little things on Shabbat so I can properly keep Shabbat, the day of rest that God tells us to keep.

Also, do not forget to include family activities, doing something with your spouse, being a friend to someone, exercise, and having fun. Make your home a special place to live, and give, and value. Decide how much time you will give to each activity, or you will get nothing done. My niece sets a timer when she is on the phone so does not overdo her phone usage. I set a limit on some of my fun activities so I do not get overly consumed by them.

Find time to do some meaningful volunteer activities. Perhaps you can only do something once a week or once a month. I have done lots of different things. I do extra prayer for people on a regular basis, I have feed the poor, helped people in need, taught Bible classes and seminars, and talked to people on the street about God. I have volunteered to do lots of different things including removing rocks from a cave, and even working on church buildings. I know someone who kept asking God what he should do, and God said, 'do something.' We do not have to get locked into something we do not want to keep doing. Try different things and see how it works out.

Insulate yourself so that that you can function well and be established. People have written books on knowing how to manage life in society. Find a book that deals with something you need to work on. For example, if you want to be a better wife or husband, look for an encouraging book on having better relationships. Apply it to yourself and not to your spouse. You can always tell them you are enjoying a certain book.

Boundaries include having appropriate relationships in life. We are not friends with everybody, but we can be good and kind towards everyone.

We have different relationships in life. We should respect everyone because we are created in God's image. That is one thing in life we can be proud of. Those who love God and keep His commandments are trying to do what is right and bring good into the world.

The grocery store clerk deserves our respect and kindness because they also are created in the image of God. Those who are more part of our life most certainly deserve our respect and kindness.

Parents are in charge of their children in a loving and respectful way. We are not to overindulge our children or not antagonize them. We are to be a model for them and help them to grow up. We are helping our children to develop themselves so they can be well functioning adults who will follow God. Parents and children should have a living and caring relationship where the parents take time to instruct their children and warn them about the evil ways of this world. Proverbs 1:8-10 NKJV says, "My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother; for they will be a graceful ornament on your head, and chains about your neck. My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent."

We have a responsibility to help our children to know what is right or wrong. We all have the responsibility to remain firm and not sin. Do not consent to sin.

Take comfort in God's ways. Learn to understand how God's commandments help you in life. It is very simple. God's ways bring us a better and more satisfying life. Here is one way. How do we relate to others? We are to not hold into grudges, but to love others and keep God's commandments. Leviticus 19:18-19 NKJV says, "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes."

So, when someone makes a mistake and we are offended, we do not stay angry but work out the problem. We do not act like babies who hold onto their toy. God gave us a mind to use, and we can act in a rationally and good way towards others despite our differences.

Notice how it says we are to love others and keep God's statutes in Leviticus. Often, people stop after it says to love others. They think that just the idea of loving God and others is enough. They then make up how they live instead of keeping God's commandments. God gives us good commandments and we love others by keeping God's commandments. 1 John 5:2-3 NKJV says, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." Anyone who is keeping God's commandments is bringing good into this world. I would sooner trust someone who is keeping God's commandments than someone who is not.

People who have trouble understanding that God's commandments are what is best and bring good, do not understand the advantage we have through God. They were duped into thinking that the ways of society provide what is best. One wealthy person that I know had everything he could want. When he became a believer, he said that he now had satisfaction and joy in life since finding out about God. Are you lacking satisfaction in life? Give God a try. God is adding goodness, satisfaction, and peace to our lives and not taking away what is good as some say. Deuteronomy 6:17a and 6:18a says, "You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God," ... "and you shall do what is right and good." Make a decision now to do what is "right and good."

We should not forget about the comfort and hope the Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit gives us. The Holy Spirit gives us joy, peace, patience, love, kindness, goodness etcetera as we cooperate with God (see Galatians 5:22-23). The Holy Spirit will lead us, guide us, and help

protect us. The Holy Spirit and its associated gifts bring so much goodness into our lives (see Romans 12:4-8; and 1 Corinthians 12:6-11).

Even the simplest things the Holy Spirit does are extremely impactful. The Holy Spirit has alerted me to danger, has encouraged me at critical times, and has brought God's goodness into my life in so many ways. Some misinterpret the Bible and say all they need to do is follow the Holy Spirit. They then make up how they live instead of following God's commandments. They are putting their own ideas over those of God's concepts and commandments.

Here is something that can help you understand some of Shaul's letters better. We need to understand that not keeping God's commandments in the Old Testament portion is sin. There was no New Testament at the time.

1 John 3:4 NKJV says, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness."

Then 1 John 3:8 NKJV says, "He who sins is of the devil."

James 2:19 NKJV says, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe, and tremble!"

Not keeping the Old Testament law is sin and sin is of the devil. The devil believes there is a God so what makes a person different if they are not keeping God's commandments? The devil is trying to keep you from following God. He has rebelled and he wants you to rebel too. The devil is going to the lake of fire, and he wants to take you there with him. Revelation 20:10 NKJV says, "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone." Do not go there with him.

Notice how Yochanan defines sin. He says sin is not keeping the law. The law is God's Old Testament commandments. So, at times, we may substitute the words, "**not keeping God's commandments**" for the word, "sin" to help us understand what Shaul is saying. Let's try that with some scriptures that are talking about the Holy Spirit. Try it for yourself with other scriptures.

New King James Version

Romans 8:2-4 NKJV says,  
For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

"Not keeping God's commandments" is subbed for "sin."

"Messiah" is substituted for "Christ."

"Yeshua" for "Jesus."

Romans 8:2-4 says,  
For the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua has made me free from the law of not keeping God's commandments and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of not keeping God's commandments: He condemned not keeping God's commandments in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

By substituting a few words, we came up with the following. Life through the Holy Spirit helps us to keep God's commandments. The law through the flesh needed a helper because it was weak and is kept in the flesh. One of the reasons Yeshua came in the flesh is because people in the flesh need help. Yeshua condemned the not keeping of God's commandments. The commandment of the law to live right is completed by those who keep God's commandments with the help of the Holy Spirit. The word fulfilled is the Greek word plēroō according to Strong's Dictionary and means completed. So, the Holy Spirit does not do away with God's commandments but works with God's commandments.

So, the weakness of our flesh needed a helper to keep God's commandments. It says in 2 Peter 1:3-4 NKJV, "As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." We partake of the divine nature as we keep God's commandments through the help of the Holy Spirit.

If you do not keep God's commandments which are intended to help us do what is right and good (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18), then you are not taking part in how God intended us to best live. We are to live in the image that God intended for us to live. If you reject the help of the Holy Spirit, you cannot keep God's commandments properly because you are only living in the flesh.

It is important to understand that the Holy Spirit has not replaced God's commandments. For example, murder is still wrong. Yochanan said that not keeping the law is sin. Some people teach that we no longer need God's commandments because we have the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will not tell us to break God's good commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). Also, people who say they live only by the Holy Spirit are making up how they are to conduct themselves instead of keeping God's commandments. They are not following God.

When we read the New Testament scriptures, we must take into account that the Old Testament has not been done away with as some say it is. Shaul would suppose that we understand that we are not to break God's Old Testament commandments and he would not have to repeat himself incessantly in order to establish that. Romans 3:31 NKJV says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." The Old Testament law is still in effect except for the sacrificial system (see Hebrews 9:23-28). The first helper is the Old Testament law and God gave us another helper through the Messiah. 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." The Holy Spirit has not replaced the law.

Some people have trouble with the idea of a Holy Spirit. The Bible says that God is a Spirit and therefore God is also a Holy Spirit. Yeshua as God came as a man. The Messiah was to be from the line of David and to be God (see Jeremiah 23:5-6). God can do what He wants. Why cannot God also function as the Holy Spirit? Of course God can.

### **Here are some of the functions of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament portion:**

The Holy Spirit created and sustains life. Genesis 1:2, Psalms 104:29-30.

The Holy Spirit gave people words from God. 2 Samuel 23:2, Micah 3:8.

People can rebel against the words from the Holy Spirit and grieve the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 63:10.

God gives believers a new heart through the Holy Spirit. Ezekiel 36:26-27.

God puts his Holy Spirit in man. Numbers 27:18.

God empowers people through the Holy Spirit. Zechariah 4:6.

The Holy Spirit empowered those who taught about God. Nehemiah 9:20.

The Holy Spirit as God is not to be confused with the spirit of man. We are composed of a physical body, soul which means what makes us alive, and spirit which is who we are. Numbers 27:16, Genesis 2:7, Genesis 35:18, Ecclesiastes 12:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

The Holy Spirit gives people understanding. The "breath" of the Almighty refers to the Holy Spirit. Job 32:8.

The Holy Spirit gave people special abilities. Exodus 31:1, Genesis 41:38.

The Old Testament scriptures were given by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20-21.

The Messiah is to have the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 42:1.

Since the Holy Spirit has always had specific functions, the same should be true in our era. God does not change (see Malachi 3:6). We should not have trouble with the function of the Holy Spirit and the special gift of the Holy Spirit in this Messianic era. Luke 11:11-13 NKJV says, "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!"

Now to my final point. Be aware of how God is helping you. Perhaps begin to write down how God is helping you. Perhaps at first you will not be able to understand all that God is doing for you. God can give you joy or peace and a satisfying life. Satisfaction in life is a wonderful gift. Especially when you know the truth.

Take time to be thankful to God even if it only a thank you God. I thank God for everything I have, but most of all, I am thankful to God for the opportunity to have a relationship with the God of the universe. That is amazingly awesome. Psalms 90:14 NKJV says, "Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days!" Psalms 107:8-9 NKJV says, "Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfies the longing soul." I hope that God will satisfy your life as much as He has for me. May God bless you and keep you and be with you.

### **More to Consider**

Stay on the path of truth. There are ways to live life that seem okay, but they are not what God told us to do. Have you ever gotten lost and gone on happily without knowing you were lost? My wife and I were in Buzzard Swamp, and we thought we knew where we were going. How do you like the name? Does it bring out eerie thoughts? We were actually lost there; I'm not making this up. We had walked about 5 miles and we expected to be back at our car, but instead we were 5 miles from our car! We misread the map we had.

Now let's put this in spiritual terms. Many people go through life thinking they know where they are going, but when they go to stand before God, they will be far from where they should be. They have not kept what God told them to do.

We had to walk back 5 miles to our car. In the same way, spiritually speaking, some people need to make the effort to get on track with the truths of the Bible and begin doing what God tells us to do in the Bible. For example, it says to keep Shabbat many times in the Bible which is our Friday night at sunset to Saturday at sunset.

If you have been keeping the day of the sun god Mithras that was instituted by Constantine, what makes you think that when you stand before God that He will exonerate you? That is up to God. Constantine said, "All judges and city people and the craftsmen shall rest upon the **venerable day of the sun**. Country people, however, may freely attend to the cultivation of the fields, because it frequently happens that no other days are better adapted for planting the grain in the furrows or the vines in trenches. So that the advantage given by heavenly providence may not for the occasion of a short time perish."<sup>1</sup> Sunday is the day of the sun god. This is how Sunday became a day of rest for Christianity. Theology then stepped in to substantiate the lie.

Why take the chance that your false belief system will be okay with God. People say, "What's the difference?" Tell that to God when you appear before Him. Shaul said that no one who commits idolatry will be allowed in God's future kingdom. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 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." If you are doing any of these things without repentance, don't be deceived by those who say it does not matter. When you stand before God, you will go to the lake of fire and not eternal life with God according to Shaul. Being a so-called good person and living life on your own terms will end up with very bad results when you stand before God. We are to follow God and not our own ways.

Be blessed and secure in God's ways. I felt secure when I was growing up, but my life was not all that it should have been. My mother was sick, so I didn't have her as a voice speaking into my life when I was a teenager. Hear the words of Shaul, 'Those that don't do what is right will not be in the future kingdom' – "do not be deceived." If you want to be secure, be secure in doing what is right.

I've heard some say that the Old Testament is too difficult to follow. God did not give us anything difficult to do. Be straightforward in your approach to life. The word mitzvah means commandment. The Bible says God's commands are not difficult and you can keep them!

Deuteronomy 30:11-14 CJB

For this mitzvah which I am giving you today is not too hard for you, it is not beyond your reach. It isn't in the sky, so that you need to ask, 'Who will go up into the sky for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?'

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sabbathsentinel.org/2016/10/13/constantine-march-321-ad/>



Likewise, it isn't beyond the sea, so that you need to ask, 'Who will cross the sea for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?' On the contrary, the word is very close to you—in your mouth, even in your heart; therefore, you can do it!

Isn't it ridiculous that some say the Old Testament is too difficult to do. God's commandments are not difficult! Those that say the Old Testament commands are too difficult are lying. Either they are lying, or God is lying. Numbers 23:19 NKJV says, "God is not a man, that He should lie." It is the extra man-made laws by the rabbis that are too difficult to keep. By the way, idols are man-made. What does that make misapplied man-made laws? What does that make keeping Sunday as a day of worship?

God is at work; meet Him on His terms so that our life tracks with His plan and working. My dad used to say that there is nothing dumber than a person who won't correct their mistakes. Well, that is not exactly right, but there is some truth to that. Deuteronomy 6:17-18 says, "You shall **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." Keeping God's commandments is doing what is "right and good." I think 2 Timothy 2:15 NKV tells us to be diligent to know God's commandments: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God."

Psalms 119:10-12 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.

Do what is right and good and live right. The blessings that God will do in the Old Testament portion are not all just a natural flow from doing what is right. God must also bring His supernatural favor on those who keep His commandments. The Bible says that those who do not keep God's commandments are cursed; there are consequences at times for not doing what is right. We all can understand this. God will empower the keeping of His commandments and there is more to consider.

### **More Thoughts**

The Torah portion for this week is Bamidbar and it means, "in the wilderness." Israel would follow the cloud which usually stood over the tent of meeting in the wilderness. When it moved, they would move and follow it. So, Israel literally followed where God wanted them to go while they were in the wilderness. This is a foreshadowing of the gift of the Holy Spirit which believers in the Messiah are to receive. The Holy Spirit leads us; in a sense, just like Israel was led by God.

The Holy Spirit is the backbone of our faith in Messiah, but it does not replace God's commandments. God's commandments are "right and good," and they are still right and good. Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." The Holy Spirit gives us strength, inspires us, and is life giving. When we think of faith in God, we often think about what is

involved in living that out. One of the most important things to consider in these Messianic times is the work of the Holy Spirit as our helper.

Of course, we should follow God's commandments. Yeshua mentions that is our first helper, but then adds that we have another helper for life. John 14:15-16 NKJV says, "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, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him."

God provides the Holy Spirit as a helper for those who believe in and trust in the Messiah. Notice I said trust. Trusting in God means that we follow what He tells us to do. If we do not, we are then pushing away God and the work and blessings of God. 1 Thessalonians 5:22 NKJV says, "Abstain from every form of evil." It makes sense; if we do evil instead of listening to God, why would God bother trying to speak to us through the Holy Spirit?

Interestingly, I heard someone once say that it seems that those **who do not** believe in keeping God's commandments in the Old Testament portion have been blinded with theology. Shaul alludes to this in Romans. Shaul says in Romans 1:28-29 NKJV, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness." There was no New Testament at the time; Yochanan (John) is talking about the Old Testament portion commands in 1 John 2:3-4 NKJV, "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Do not be deceived by those who are duped and deluded by false teachers or by society.

They have been brainwashed by an evil society. Some teachers are just passing on the false teaching that they have learned. They may make excuses not to keep God's commandments, but they will have to stand before God for their hard hearts. Hebrews 3:13 NKJV says, "Exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Back to talking about the Holy Spirit. Shaul said that the power of the Holy Spirit strengthens us. Ephesians 3:16 NKJV says, "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man." I have experienced the inner work of the Holy Spirit in a number of ways and many times; for example, sometimes God has given me strength to move forward and accomplish what I needed to do. God has given me supernatural peace at times as well as patience. The Holy Spirit has helped me with life's situations in many different ways. Who would not want the help of the Holy Spirit! The gift of the Holy Spirit is given to believers in the Messiah; we are commanded to receive this good gift from our good God. Acts 2:38-49 NKJV says, "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'"

Study the truths and commandments of the Bible over and over so you will know how to live and what to do in every situation. God expects us to use our minds and abilities. When I first

started playing basketball, I could not even get the ball to hit the rim of the basketball hoop, but I kept at it. Just like we work at our abilities so that we can do them well, we also need to work on our spiritual life and keep our spiritual skills sharp.

Now when I shoot baskets, I still start out with the basics, the short shots and dribbling, and then try to increase my skill level. My skills come back quickly because of my previous practice. As we practice our spiritual skills, we make ourselves better able to do what is "right and good" (see Deuteronomy 6:18). Remember, most importantly we are to follow God's commands. Man-made commands can sometimes be practical, but God's commands are always right and good. God never intended us to be micromanaged by man-made commandments. Yeshua said that man-made commandments can actually keep us from a relationship with God. Matthew 15:9 NKJV says, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

Enjoy life, and value the goodness of God. Find ways to celebrate our good and blessed life. Be thankful for all you have. Colossians 3:17 NKJV says, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." If you are being blessed by God, do not forget to give thanks. For example, we have a festive Shabbat meal on Friday nights and enjoy what God has provided.

There is great blessing in standing strong. God's ways are best; after all, He is the creator. Shaul says in Romans 11:33 NKJV, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" Shaul is talking about God's commandments when he says, "**wisdom and knowledge.**" He is probably directly referring to Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV where it is talking about God's commandments: "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.'" Shaul was Jewish so when he was talking about God's wisdom, he is thinking about God's commandments. God's commandments give us wisdom and understanding!

Also, never forget that this life is short, and we have so much to look forward to in eternity. 1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV says, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." It says in the book of Revelation that the streets are going to look like gold!

### **Torah Study**

The Torah portion for this week is Bamidbar and means, "In the wilderness." We now begin our study on the book of Numbers. Numbers teaches us some stories of unbelief so that we do not fall into the same trap; they are object lessons for faith. There will always be some who fall into sin and unbelief. Even believers in the Messiah are warned. Hebrews 3:12 NKJV says, "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." Hebrews 3:14 NKJV says we are to remain, "Steadfast to the end." The 2 million believers who started out in the desert desired the promised land. In a similar way, believers in the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) who live in this evil world seek the future good kingdom of God.

On the first day of the second month of the second year, God told Moshe (Moses) to take a census of all the people of Israel and to write down the names of all the men twenty years and older for military service. God chooses the heads of the tribes by name that are to help Moshe count the census and the total of those counted 20 and older was 603,550 not including the Levi'im (the tribe of Levi). This is just men above 20, so the 2 million or more of population projected by some is a reasonable estimate. The miracle of Israel was quite an amazing miracle when we consider all that God did for them; He kept them safe, He fed them and gave them water, and He gave them the land of evil people who were even killing their own children.

The Levi'im are to be in charge of the tabernacle and camp around it. Israel was to set up camp by each tribe's banner around the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting – *ohel moed*). There were three tribes on each side of the Mishkan. The encampment formed a rectangle. Moshe and Aharon and his sons camped to the east of the Mishkan and the tribe of Judah east of them. The tribe of Judah had one tribe on each side of them to the east.

Israel was developing a sense of identity with God as their King at the center of their camp and lives. I've talked to some pastors who told me that was not true. They told me God was not at the center of their lives. Some people have a negative attitude towards Israel. Think about this. Some 2 million people entered the land of Israel; not all the people sinned. That is really amazing! Just like in our time, not everyone lives in sin.

The decedents of Moshe and Aharon are than given. Nadav and Avihu the sons of Aharon died because they offered a sacrifice they were not supposed to. El'azar and Itamar served as Cohanim and the Levi'im were to help out at the Mishkan. The first-born males of Israelites and animals belong to the Lord. The clans of the Levi'im and their duties are then given.

The Levi'im take the place of the first born of Israel (as an act of redemption). Extra money is needed to redeem the first born of Israel. Then the portion describes how they were to wrap the articles of the Mishkan and the decedents of K'hat were to carry them, but not look at them or touch them. El'azar is responsible for the items of the Mishkan and each Cohanim is to be assigned a task.

This portion begins with God telling Moshe to take a census on the 1st day of the second month (Iyyar) of the second year since they left Egypt; that would be on the first of Iyyar, just a couple of weeks after Pesach (Passover). It is notable here that God chooses the leaders by name. Next God tells them how they are to arrange their camp, the duties of the Levites, and the numbered Levites redeemed the firstborn of Israel. The Levites were not numbered among the soldiers. They had not committed the sin of the golden calf, so instead they were to be spiritual defenders of the faith.

When God chooses leaders by name here it should help us to understand that God knows us and who we are; Yeshua (Jesus) tells us in Luke 12:7 that even the hairs on our head are numbered; God values us. On the average, there are 100,000 hairs on our heads. Yeshua makes quite a statement, and it demonstrates that God is all knowing. The Levites stand in to redeem the firstborn of Israel; Yeshua came from heaven to redeem mankind. He was an example for us and redeemed us through His blood. We needed redemption through the

Messiah. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul;" Leviticus 17:11 NKJV. We need to believe in the Messiah Yeshua and His act of redemption. He redeemed all believers both from Old Testament times and New, including Abraham. Yeshua said that Abraham looked forward to Yeshua coming (see John 8:56).

Shavuot is near; on Shavuot (Pentecost), we should be thankful for the law which was given on Shavuot and also the Holy Spirit which was given on Shavuot. We will talk more about Shavuot on Shavuot. **Make sure to celebrate God's feast (see Leviticus 23:2).** Since they are God's feasts; shouldn't we celebrate them? After all, we have all kinds of celebrations. Are our birthdays and other celebrations more important than God's appointed days? Shouldn't our lives revolve around God's timing and not just our own celebrations?

Leviticus 23:1-2 NKJV says, "The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, **these are My feasts.**'" The Hebrew word for feasts is "moedim." From the inception of creation, we were designed by God to meet with Him on His feasts. Genesis 1:14 NKJV says, "Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and **seasons.**'" **The word seasons is "moedim" which means meetings and is translated feasts in Leviticus!**

The Bible says that we are to count 50 days after the day of rest (Shabbat means rest. The day of rest following Passover is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. **God's feasts often have a day of rest (Shabbat).** Some argue that we are to count 50 days from the weekend day of rest which then means in most cases that they are beginning the count after 2 Shabbatot. The Shabbat associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the next regular Shabbat of Friday evening to Saturday at sundown.

It makes more sense to me that the 50-day count of the Omer should start the day of rest immediately following the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They would observe Passover. Passover extends into the next day, the day of rest associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They then give their First Fruits offering after the Feast of Unleavened Bread and begin the count and go home to begin harvesting.

The count beginning on the day after the next Shabbat means that in most years, the people would wait around for one or even a few days and then make the First Fruits offering and then begin the count of the Omer. Farmers know that the harvest is important and need to get back to harvest and not wait around.<sup>2</sup> **It is important to celebrate God's feasts** whatever you believe. The confusion comes from an interpretation of the scriptures that doesn't seem to be clear.

The Haftarah for Bamidbar is Hosea 2:1-22. This Haftarah portion begins by saying Israel will number as the grains of the sands of the sea. They will be called the sons of the living God and both Israel and Judah will gather together and have one King. This refers to the future end time kingdom of Israel. Hosea then talks about their present state by talking about their idolatry as

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<sup>2</sup> In ancient times, planting took place over a period of time and not all at once like it is done today by machine.

spiritual adultery and that God will not favor them because of it; He will punish them. Some day they will come to understand that their true love, God, is their true provider. Instead of calling God Ba'ali (my master), they will call Him Ishi (my husband). At this future time, all the earth will submit to God and Israel will be his people. At that time God will make a covenant with the animals, there will be no more war, He will be betrothed to His people Israel, and Israel will again say that Yĕhōvâh (Hosea 2:16) is their God. Yĕhōvâh is God's real name (Exodus 3:15) and means – He was, He is, and He will be.

**Give Glory to God**  
**(An accompanying teaching to the Torah portion)**

We need to stand firm in the truth of the Bible.

I find it remarkable how people can become so opinionated and so easily follow the fads and opinions of others. Remember, the news is trying to get you to watch their show. They are mostly interested in drawing you to their show. They are not interested in helping you to do what is right. The same is true for YouTube and all the sensationalists who post there. A lot of times, they are just trying to get you to watch their nonsense so they can make money off you or because they like the power trip (the feeling of power from the attention).

God really wants to help us; why not listen to Him? God wants to give us wisdom and understanding and He wants us to be a people of glory who honor Him. The Bible says that the people of the world will see that we are a wise people through God's commandments. This is amazing and wonderful, isn't it? God is so good to us and wants to help us. The God of the universe cares about us; it is beyond our imagination that we are so fortunate. Of course, that is only true if you want to do what He tells us to do. When I began keeping God's commandments my life changed for the better.

Deuteronomy 4:5-6 NKJV

"Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. 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.'**"

We need to share this verse with others. They do not know about it and need to know it. People are more interested in developing their ability to hit a baseball, work in their garden or on their house, or watch TV than actually learning something that is wonderful and amazing. If you want to get stirred up about something, forget about YouTube and learn how to keep the Torah (God's instructions).

Get stirred up for God.

We can allow ourselves to get stirred up about all the stupid little things of life instead of being stirred up for God. The world is not going to give you peace, wisdom, goodness, and satisfaction. We have talked a little bit about how lashon harah (evil speaking) is an important biblical principle. How many of us know about the biblical principle of not speaking evil of others

and practice it? How many of us know it is an important biblical commandment from the Old Testament? James 3:5-6 NKJV says, "See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell." Ya'akov (James's real name) was sharing a principle from the Old Testament; you know, the part of the Bible that makes us a wise and understanding people.

People are not being taught the truths of the Old Testament portion. They are not working on applying the commands of the Old Testament, so they know very little truth. Don't we all want truth? Don't we all want to do what is right? Most of what many people believe they make up. Someday we are going to have to give an account to God for how we lived. Are you going to say to God, "I was too busy watching sports or gardening instead of learning how to live right?" Some of us need to stop having our brains filled with mush instead of the substantial sensible thinking from the exercise of God's commandments.

### Be sensible how you go through life.

Life is not all about what we have. Yochanan said that those who sin are of the devil. So, you better learn all the few hundred of God's commandments from the Old Testament and how you can apply them. It is not true it is hard to keep the Old Testament commands (it, "Is not too hard for you;" Deuteronomy 30:11 CJB). You have been lied to. The New Testament was not put together until 150 AD when they put together the Hebrew New Testament. The Romans Empire, in an effort to take over Christianity, killed those who had the Hebrew scriptures of the New Testament and burned the scrolls of the Hebrew New Testament. Fortunately, we still have 84 scrolls of the New Testament portion as of this writing. The Greek New Testament was put together much later. Of note, because there was considerable anti-Semitism when they put together the Greek New Testament, there are quite a few anti-Jewish heretical additions to the Greek New Testament manuscripts.

Remember there was no New Testament at the time Yochanan (John) wrote his letters. Yochanan was Jewish and early believers kept the law. **Yochanan says that sin is *anomia* (it is translated lawlessness).** *Nomia* is the word used in the Septuagint for the Torah – the Septuagint is the Greek Old Testament translated by 70 rabbis in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>3</sup> "Anomia" (lawlessness) then is to not keep the Torah. So, Yochanan says in the following passages that not keeping the Old Testament commandments is sin; also, he says sin is of the devil.

1 John 3:4-8 NKJV

Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. **He who practices righteousness is righteous**, just as He is righteous. **He who sins is of the devil**, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

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<sup>3</sup> "g0458. ἀνομία anomia; from 459; illegality, i.e., violation of law." Strong's Enhanced Dictionary. A violation of the law (not keeping God's commandments from the Old Testament) is sin Yochanan said.

**Those who do not keep the commandments of the Old Testament are sinning and sin is of the devil.** Yeshua came to help us to not sin and destroy the works that come from the devil. Those that do what is right (the righteous) are the ones who are right according to Yochanan.

**Or you could say that those who actually do what is right are righteous.** Then those who say we are okay without having to keep God's commandments are wrong. Those who sin and do not keep the law are of the devil. That is what it says. That is what Yochanan (John) wrote. Do not listen to those false teachers who say the opposite.

Instead of working on your own ideas of life, work on doing things God's way. Hebrews 5:14, "But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Stop being a baby and grow up! Try working on being good and kind to your family and teaching them about God. Stop just thinking only about yourself. We need to be spiritual leaders for our family. The Bible says that those who do not do what is right are headed to the lake of fire. Tell you family about the lake of fire. It is in the Bible. "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire;" Revelation 20:15 NKJV. Do not think that God is going to judge you on your own values. He gave us the wisdom we need for life it said in Deuteronomy. I think some of you think you are fine, and I am concerned for you.

Be strong; do what is right; God will not forget the good we do.

In biblical thought, doing good is not our interpretation of what is right. It is what the Bible says is right. We do what is right and good by keeping God's commandments and applying them properly.

I remember years ago asking a farmer about going out into the field and pulling weeds. I was looking at all the long furrows in his crop at the time and it looked like a very difficult job. He said that the weeds take the nutrients from the soil that his crops need, and that he needed to go out and weed. The Bible says that those who do not do what is good are like weeds that get burned up. We are to be diligent to live right until the end and not be sluggish. With faith and patience, we keep God's commandments so that we will receive God's promises.

Hebrews 6:7-12 NKJV says,

For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. **And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end**, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

It is not too hard to understand. Why do some people make an issue out of doing what is right? These people often make up excuses to not follow God's commandments. You can make up all the excuses you want to make up, but you will have to stand before God with your excuses. It



says in the Haftarah for today that God will restore Israel someday; this demonstrates that God is a merciful God, and it says in Romans that He wants **mankind to be able to come to Him and be His objects of mercy to be glorified. God will forgive you if you repent.** Show others God's glory by doing what is right.

There are many things that can get in the way of our walk with the Lord that can blur our direction and the purpose God has for us. Just like not everyone in ancient Israel was perfect, we sometimes fail. God was merciful to Israel and He is merciful towards us. Accept His mercy and start living right. Be thankful for the riches of His glory that He has made known to us.

Romans 9:22-33 CJB

"Now what if God, even though he was quite willing to demonstrate his anger and make known his power, patiently put up with people who deserved punishment and were ripe for destruction? What if he did this in order to make known the riches of his glory to those who are the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory."

God cares about us and loves us. Why do you think He gave us wisdom and understanding through His commandments? It was not to torture us. He is a good God. 1 John 1:5 NKJV says, "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." There is no evil in God! Rejoice and be thankful. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NKJV says, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks."

Many of the commandments in the Old Testament portion involved the priests. The commandments that are for us give us 'wisdom and understanding' (see Deuteronomy 4:6). God is wonderful and amazing. God chose their leaders by name. It shows us that the creator God knows each of us. Yeshua said God knows all the hairs on our head (about 100,000). The Haftarah says that in the future, we will call Yĕhōvâh by His real name. We should get stirred up for God instead of just worldly things. We seek the promise of a blessed life and the future kingdom, just as Israel sought the promised land while they were in the desert. We need to learn God's commandments so we can do what is right. Be strong and do things God's way. God wants us to do what is right and to glorify Him. He will not forget the good we do. He cares about us. He is a good God and our Yĕhōvâh – Yĕhōvâh means, He was, He is, and He will be. That is His name forever according to Exodus 3:15.