



#5 Chayei Sarah Genesis 23:1-25:18
Torah Study
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Names

Hevron – Hebron

Kefa – Peter

Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ in the Greek means to be smudged – anointed

Moshe – Moses

Rivkah – Rebecca

Shaul – Paul

Shlomo – Solomon

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)

Yitz'chak – Isaac

Yochanan – John

Terms

Chayei Sarah – 5th Torah portion

Haftarah – reading from the prophets

Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible

Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah

Chayei Sarah means, "life of Sarah." In this portion, Sarah dies at the age of 127 and Abraham asks to buy the cave of Machpelah in Hebron to bury her there.

There is an amazing future kingdom for those who keep God's commandments. Proverbs 23:17-18 NKJV says, "Do not let your heart envy sinners, but be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day; for surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off." We sometimes find out that some of the more successful people we have heard of do not keep God's commandments and have evil intentions. We wonder why these evil people seem to be living a satisfying and happy life. The Bible tells us not to envy them. They will one day die, and they will be cut off from the future good kingdom of God. Daniel 12:2 NKJV says, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt." Contempt means to despised and dishonored (see American Heritage Dictionary).

These sinners may think they are getting away with their bad behaviors, but they are not. So, do not envy them. It is better to have nothing than live in sin. Matthew 18:7 NKJV says, "Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!" Like it says in Daniel, some will rise from the dead and end up being 'despised and dishonored' for eternity. They may feel good about themselves in the present, but they will suffer for their stubbornness to God for eternity. Yeshua said in Matthew 18:6 NKJV, "It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Yeshua uses other harsh words in the context. Suffice to say that it is important to keep His commandments. Do not envy evil people who do not keep God's commandments!

Walk in God's good ways. It should not be difficult for us to understand that we need to do what is "right and good" for our own good and keep God's commandments. That is an understatement, isn't it. 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, and that you may prolong your days." God wants what is best for us in the here and now and also to enter into His future kingdom. God does not want any of us to fail at life and end up despised and dishonored forever. Look at what Rabbi Kefa has to say.

2 Peter 3:7-9 NKJV says,

But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

God will forgive those who change and decide to keep God's commandments.

Isaiah 1:16-19 NKJV says, "Come now, and let us reason together," says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient." God forgives but we must be committed to God and to keep His good commandments. God pleads with us. 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 that wonderful, God wants what is good for us forever. Forever suggests eternal life.

Look forward to what God has promised us. It will surely come to pass. Stay faithful to God's commandments, and have fear and faith towards our creator God. It is not imaginary or wishful thinking. Psalms 39:7 NKJV says, "And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You." God has no reason to lie because He is the creator of all that exists; God is surely able to raise us from the dead." Isaiah 26:19 NKJV says, "Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." God will raise those who keep His commandments from the dead so we can be part of His wonderful and amazing future eternal kingdom. Revelation 21:21 NKJV says, "And the street of the city was pure gold." God is able to do that because He is God (also see Revelation 21:9-21).

Yeshua the Messiah was the first to raise permanently from the dead as a witness to us. The word Christ means to be smudged in the Greek and refers to the Anointed One, the anointed Messiah Yeshua.

1 Corinthians 15:3-6 NKJV says, "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once." Over 500 people at once saw the resurrected Yeshua. We have great hope!

Hebrews 6:17-19 NKJV says,

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul."

There is an amazing and wonderful future kingdom in store for those who follow His good commandments. In the present, God has also given the gift of the Holy Spirit to all those who believe in the Messiah Yeshua. We are commanded to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in this era (see Acts 2:38-39). We have something to look forward to so, be strong.

God is looking for some good people to be with Him in His future kingdom. The military here in the United States at one time was placing ads for some good people to join the military. The ad showed some of the advantages of being in the military and one of those was the training they provided. In the same way, God is looking for some good people to be trained to learn and keep God's good commandments, and also be led by the Holy Spirit.

The Bible says that God's word is like a shield to those that trust it. It helps protect us from what is wrong. Psalms 18:30 NKJV says, "The word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him." We are to trust in God's word and not in false doctrine, or in people who contradict God's word, or in those who are influenced by the devil.

For example, the Bible tells us not to consult mediums. We know that mediums give information from devil spirits. The Bible says there are devil spirits, and they lead people in the wrong direction in life. Ephesians 6:11-12 NKJV says, "Stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (also see Isaiah 14:12). 1 Chronicles 10:13 NKJV says, "Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, because he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance." He was led the wrong way by a medium who received information from a devil spirit, and he died because of the bad advice. Bad ideas and bad advice can cause problems in life and even worse.

We need God's good words. God's words are right so they will not mislead us. God created the world and made it so that it could sustain life.

Psalms 33:4-7 NKJV says,

For the word of the LORD is right, and all His work is done in truth. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD. By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses.

Notice that it says that God put the waters in deep storehouses. At the time this was written, the people did not know about the deep trenches in the oceans. Science says that if it were not for these great ocean depths, the land would be covered by water.

Also, there are more than 10 commandments just like there are more than 9 gifts of the Holy Spirit. Often people focus in on a few things in the Bible that God says but ignore others. In our era there should be more people experiencing the gifts associated with the Holy Spirit. Rabbi Shaul says we are supposed to seek the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Desire spiritual gifts."

Back in Samuel's time, in the Old Testament era, they did not have the gift of the Holy Spirit

because the Messiah had not yet come so revelation was not as widespread as it can be now through the Holy Spirit. Samuel 3:1 NKJV says, "The word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation." Things should be different for those who believe in Yeshua. Acts 2:38-39 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.'"

The giving of the Holy Spirit appears to come at least in part in this temporary era. It has not come in its completeness yet as it is mentioned in the context of Joel. These scriptures in Joel refer to the giving of the Holy Spirit. Joel 2:28-29 NKJV says, "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days."

In addition, desiring the associated gifts and evidences of the Holy Spirit are commandments of God in the present era. Again, 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Desire spiritual gifts." And in the context, it says in 1 Corinthians 14:37 NKJV, "The things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord." The context is the gifts of the Holy Spirit. There are so many things the Holy Spirit does for us. In addition to the gifts or manifestations associated with the Holy Spirit (see Romans 12:4-8, Ephesians 4:11-13, and 1 Corinthians 12:4-11), the Holy Spirit also helps produce virtue in our lives (see Galatians 5:22-23) and can even help us in the everyday things of life.

For example, let's look at one set of the scriptures we just referenced.

Romans 12:4-8 NKJV says,

For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

These are not natural gifts, but supernatural gifts. Some people have natural and developed abilities, but these here are extraordinary gifts from God. Like I said, God is looking for some good people to develop their spiritual knowledge, apply His commandments, and use the gift of the Holy Spirit through the Messiah.

Problems with understanding the Bible.

This is important because of all the man-made teachings in our era. We find God's commandments in the Bible. It is God's commandments we are to follow. Sometimes people come up with good ideas and good ideas can be helpful in life, but sometimes people make up commandments that are not biblical. Some extra man-made commandments can end up micromanaging life and make our spiritual life difficult. Sometimes people will contradict what the Bible says. Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV says, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I

command you."

Also, the Bible is referred to as God's word in many places because holy people wrote down the words that God gave them. 2 Peter 1:20-21 NKJV says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." When we see the word scriptures, we must understand that there was no New Testament portion put together at the time so their primary reference for truth was the Old Testament portion of the Bible.

We are to allow the scriptures to speak for themselves. We are not to put our own spin on the scriptures, namely, to make up something that is not there. For example, Yeshua said in Matthew 5:17 NKJV, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets." People then put their own spin on what Yeshua said and immediately contradict Him. Even the context says not any of the Law and Prophets will be done away with, even to their smallest letter markings. Matthew 5:18 NKJV says, "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."

Not all has been fulfilled yet and that includes the final judgment and the new heaven and earth. It also says in Matthew 5:19 NKJV, "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." The word "least" can mean of little importance according to Strong's Dictionary. We could say they come to nothing. Yeshua is probably referring to Daniel 12:2-3 where it says that some will rise to shame and dishonor. These verses in Matthew are clear verses that tell us that the Messiah did not come to do away with the Old Testament commandments as some believe.

Also, there are differences between the writings because those who wrote down God's word used their own ability to write down what God gave them. Each person has only their own vocabulary to use. Also, the scriptures must be understood in the context of the chapter or chapters they are in and that includes the context of the culture. Yeshua lived in a Jewish culture so the gospels must be understood how the people of His time would have understood them.

For example, no one in Yeshua's time would have accepted a teacher who taught them to not keep the Old Testament commandments. That would also be true about Shaul (Paul). When we see scriptures that seem to contradict this, we need to put those scriptures aside until we know what was originally intended. I talk about how to understand some of these difficult scriptures in some of my teachings.

When we look at the inspired scriptures there is substantial agreement on what the Greek text should be. That is mostly because scholars have developed ways to make an educated guess on what it should say. We have no originals. Also, the New Testament was quoted by early believers, and we have records of those quotes.

There are some people who are more interested in keeping their false doctrine intact. This is not intended to pick on them, but to make you aware that some are entrenched in false

doctrine. Remember, Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: do not forsake my law." The Bible tells us that the law is doctrine. It is God's law and not man-made law. Some can be very persistent and blinded to the truth. You may not be allowed in their church even though they may not even believe in the Bible! They will even say they believe in the Bible, but they don't really believe in the Bible. I had one pastor of a large congregation up north tell me the Bible was a bunch of bunk. Isn't that crazy. The Bible is the basis for our beliefs and this pastor thinks the Bible is worthless.

They just do not know their Bible. Even just the commandment not to steal would stop a lot of hurtful behaviors. Combine that with the commandment to not murder and not covet, and we would have almost no wars. People always seem to find a way around God's commandments and start a war though. It is okay to protect yourself and countries need to have a good defense because of evil countries. God's commandments alone are evidence to mankind that God's word is truth for life. When encountering people who contradict God's commandments, be kind and try to help them to understand. Say things like, "These are God's commandments, aren't they? I thought God does not lie. Numbers 23:19 NKJV says, "God is not a man, that He should lie." Always say they are God's commandments. Some use the term "God's word" to avoid saying God's commandments. It is true the Bible are God's words. The commandments in His word are God's commandments. They think they are right, and God is wrong, and they will fight you to prove they are right. They are self-willed and believe in their religion or philosophy of life instead of what God says.

These people who care more about their false doctrine than truth will even call those who want truth names. It is sad isn't it. Name calling is a form of abuse and often has its roots in hate. Some think that the Greek text is perfect and will say things like, "How dare you say there is anything wrong with the Greek text!" I have seen people react this way. But because we only have copies of the original, there are some differences between manuscripts. In fact, there are many differences. Even Jerome who lived in the 3rd century said there were problems with the Greek.

For example, there are up to 10 deviations between the manuscripts in the Greek for a single verse in the New Testament scriptures. In some scriptures there are none. There are about 8,000 verses in the New Testament so if we take a low number of deviations per verse say like three, then we end up with 24,000 deviations between the New Testament Greek manuscripts. You do not have to take my word for it. You can buy the Greek text, and it is easy enough for you to see for yourself. The Greek text is what scholars consider how the Greek should read based on the thousands of manuscripts available. It is a little expensive, but for usually for under \$100 you can buy it at Amazon, and it is called, Novum Testamentum Graece. Sometimes there are only 4 scriptures on a page and the rest of the page in small print shows the different deviations between the manuscripts.

Also, we will see some contradictions in our translations that can come from our own understanding of the scriptures, or because of errors in the accepted text, or because of errors in translation. But we have a lot we can understand. Some people say the King James Version is the most accurate version of the Bible, but even the King James Version has an extra verse in it that is not in the original because the translators made up a pagan

explanation for what happened (John 5:4 is in no originals, see the Novum Testamentum Graece on page 306, the Greek is blank). The translators are imperfect people too.

People over the ages have been rebellious towards God. In the early church, many of the pagan Gentiles refused to accept God's commandments when they believed. They said they were done away with. Justin Martyr was a pagan Platonist who lived in the 200s, and he hated the Jews. He said that that God persecuted the Jews by giving them circumcision. That is not true. God gave circumcision as a sign of faith in the true God to the Gentile, Abraham. Shaul said in Galatians 5:11 NKJV, " I still preach circumcision."

Justin Martyr said that anyone who kept God's commandments was not saved. Shaul said in Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV, "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." Those who do not keep God's commandments will not inherit the kingdom of God. It is just the opposite of what Justin Martyr taught.

Many years ago, in the 300s, the pagan Roman Empire waged war on the people of God in order to take over Christianity and they killed some 1 million Bible believing Messiah believing people according to some historians. We inherited a Christianity that has been modified by the Roman Empire and passed down to us. We need to get back to the original truths of the Bible.

People will take sides on how to read into the Bible, but we are to try to read and believe what the scriptures say. For example, Yeshua said that He will reject anyone who does not keep the Torah, the law.

Yeshua said in Matthew 7:21-23 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!'

Bible teachers will explain away anything that does not agree with their man-made theology. Shaul says we are to imitate Yeshua and that he also imitates Yeshua. 1 Corinthians 11:1 NKJV says, "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ." Yeshua taught the law and kept the law. So, we know that any scriptures that say otherwise have been modified and were changed by heretics. Be careful with hate words. Notice that I said that those who changed the scriptures were heretics.

It is also possible we do not understand the scriptures properly. Kefa says that some people do not understand Shaul properly. 2 Peter 3:15-16 NKJV says, "As also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which

untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures." There was no New Testament at the time, so what scriptures are they twisting? They must be twisting the Old Testament scriptures to their destruction. People will end up in the lake of fire for not keeping the Old Testament properly. I do not want that for anyone. We need to talk about these difficult issues.

Even Shaul says the Old Testament has not been done away with and that those who live a life of sin will not be allowed in God's future kingdom. Shaul says in Romans 3:31 NKJV, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not!" Yet some teach the opposite. In another place Shaul says in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 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." Shaul says, "Do not be deceived." So those who are saying it is only by faith are teaching false doctrine. James 2:24 NKJV says, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only."

So, we must keep the Old Testament laws and when we see a contradiction in the New Testament portion, we must either interpret that scripture by what the Old Testament teaches or wait for a proper future understanding. For example, Galatians 3:10 seems to say that those who keep the Torah are under a curse. We know what scripture Shaul is quoting. Deuteronomy 27:26 NKJV says, "A curse on anyone who does not confirm the words of this Torah by putting them into practice.' All the people are to say, 'Amen!'" Those who do not keep the Torah, the Law, are cursed. Psalms 119:21 NKJV says, "You rebuke the proud – the cursed, who stray from Your commandments." It is not the law that is a curse, but not keeping the law.

A lot of the context in Galatians was about those keeping extra laws that were not in the Torah, or they were keeping misapplied laws. Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV says, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." Those that do not keep the Torah are Torah breakers and are not keeping God's commandments. So, some people make up their own man-made theology to their own destruction. Do not listen to these false teachers. They will call you a heretic for questioning their false beliefs.

What are we rooted in? Do we seek what is right and good?

I wish everyone had the best of intentions. I have heard false teachers say over and over that it is "just by faith." After a while you begin to believe them. It is just like the silly arguments that some have that say there is no God. They develop a false belief system based on the false ideas they have heard. Like I said, just the 10 Commandments alone are a testimony to them that they came from God. The Bible testifies to us that God's commandments are good.

Most of the people I know that believe in God simply believe in God because of the complexity of creation. I have said this before, why are the Sun and the Moon the same size in the sky? It just so happens that the Sun is 400 times the size of the Moon and the Moon is 400 times closer. That seems so improbable to me. Science looks for planets that are in the same temperature range as our planet for possible life. That seems amazing. How did that

just happen to the earth by chance? God put them in place. Genesis 1:16 NKJV says, "Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night." There is so much more that can be said.

Are we rooted in doing what is "right and good," or do we make up our own ideas for life?

Psalms 119:2-7 NKJV says,

Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with the whole heart! They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways. You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently. Oh, that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes! Then I would not be ashamed, when I look into all Your commandments. I will praise You with uprightness of heart, when I learn Your righteous judgments.

It is good to have a humble seeking heart. Blessed are the people who keep God's commandments. So, what could be wrong with God's commandments? We actually walk in the ways that God's wants us to walk when we keep His commandments. God is a good God, right? We are to keep God's commandments diligently so that we are not ashamed (This is reference to Deuteronomy 6:17-18.). Praise God for His good commandments. Psalms 119:17-18 NKJV says, "Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep Your word. Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law."

God knows everyone's deepest intentions, and nothing is hidden from God. 1 Chronicles 28:9 NKJV says, "The LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever." God knows the intentions of our heart whether we are committed to His commandments or not. Better to know the truth now than to continue to follow false doctrine. Psalms 19:14 NKJV says, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer." So, may our hearts be completely committed to God.

Yeshua says in Revelation 2:10 NKJV, "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." This does not sound like God knows my heart and will accept me no matter what.

Yeshua says in Revelation 3:5 NKJV, "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." In ancient times to be blotted out was for the name to be scratched out and then the ink lifted off the page. So, it is possible to lose your salvation and those who live in sin take heed. You will not make it into God's future kingdom if you do not change.

God's commandments and the Holy Spirit are what is best and a powerful means to live life. The Bible says God's commandments are "right and good," see Deuteronomy 6:17-18. So, doing good works is to keep God's commandments. We need to study God's precepts. Psalms 119:27 NKJV says, "Make me understand the way of Your precepts; so shall I meditate on Your wonderful works."

We need God's commandments for all of our life. We need to put God's commandments in our hearts and not turn away from them. God's commandments are good, and they revive us so that we do what is right.

Psalms 119:33-40 NKJV says,

Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it. Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way. Establish Your word to Your servant, who is devoted to fearing You. Turn away my reproach which I dread, for Your judgments are good. Behold, I long for Your precepts; revive me in Your righteousness.

Those who look to our God will be strengthened. Isaiah 40:31 NKJV says, "But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." There are blessings for keeping God's commandments. Deuteronomy 28:1-2 NKJV says, "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God." God's commandments are a blessing, and God gave us His commandments for our own good. Deuteronomy 10:13 NKJV says, "Keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good."

God is good and he can also do more than we ask or think anytime He wants and also through the Holy Spirit that we receive through the Messiah Yeshua.

Ephesians 3:16-20 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, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

We need God's good commandments, and we need the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives for our own good. Won't you seek the good things God has for you?

God has amazing and wonderful eternal plans for those who keep His commandments. God's promise is real, and God wants us to accept His commandments and be in His eternal kingdom forever (see Deuteronomy 5:29). Look forward to what God has promised us. Understand the Bible properly and do not be misled by people who do not believe in God's good commandments. Stay rooted in the truth.

Torah Study

Chayei Sarah means, "life of Sarah." In this portion, Sarah dies at the age of 127 and Abraham buys the cave of Machpelah in Hebron to bury her there. Abraham pays Efron 400 silver shekels for the cave. It is evident that he finds this cave important; perhaps its past connections were meaningful to him. It was supposedly where Adam and Eve were buried. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all end up being buried there.

Abraham says he is a sojourner and a foreigner. He is an alien living among them. He asks to purchase a burial site in Genesis 23:4 NKJV, "I am a foreigner and a visitor among you." This is something that believers in the true God have been able to attach special meaning to. Just like Abraham, we are foreigners to this world as we live out our pilgrimage of life. As we have talked about in the past, Abraham was from the East where they were pagan.

The word, "Hebrew" was given to him by the people in Canaan. Being Hebrew essentially means Abraham came from the pagan East, from beyond the Jordan according to Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon. The meaning "crossed over" was made up by the rabbis, it is an acronym formed from the Hebrew word for Hebrew (which is eevreet, עֵבְרִית). We are commanded to confess that we are pagans around the time of Passover. We say that we are pagan Arameans on the day of first fruits which is right after Passover (Deuteronomy 26:5-10). I remember my dad saying this when I was little; we are what!?

We do this out of humility, and we recognize our roots. God has made us His people; we have so much to be thankful for. Like I have said in past teachings, the story of Abraham was important in Jewish culture. Gentiles often do not understand this. They focus on one section of the Gospels where the unbelieving leaders of Yeshua's times identify with Abraham. These Gentiles buy into the misinformation passed down to them and say how messed up the Jews were in Yeshua's time.

The Jews did not kill Yeshua, the Romans did.

A whole false theology has been developed to discredit the Jews. For example, Yeshua said the Gentiles would put Him to death, the leadership in Israel at the time was installed by the Romans, and the Roman historian Tacitus said that the Roman Empire put Yeshua to death. When the Roman Empire took control of Christianity, they turned the story around.

The early believers kept God's commandments and there were tens of thousands of early believers in Yeshua. The word "myriads" in Acts 21:20 means tens of thousands according to Strong's Dictionary. Acts 21:20 NKJV says, "And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law." They glorified God because there were tens of thousands who were keeping God's commandments. God's commandments give us wisdom and understanding (see Deuteronomy 4:6) and they are "right and good" (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). False teachers turn this around. It is crazy isn't it.

The Jewish culture was trying, even if it was misguided at times, to follow God. This misguided focus by some Christians about the Jews comes from a few people who are thinking wrong and do not see the obvious connections in the Bible in its original

understanding. After talking about Abraham, in the book of Hebrews 11:13-16 NKJV it says:
 "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them."

The Jews properly came up with the understanding that we are no longer pagan foreigners, but we are now strangers or foreigners to this pagan world; we look forward to a new heaven and earth where we all do what is right. 2 Peter 3:13 NKJV says, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." It will be a wonderful and amazing time! Isaiah 64:3, 4 NKJV, "No one has ever heard, no ear perceived, no eye seen, any God but you. You work for him who waits for you. ... If we keep your ancient ways, we will be saved." God's work is beyond our ability to comprehend! If people want to be saved, it says we must keep God's ancient ways. So, the people who say that the Bible is old fashioned are wrong.

*The people who say we do not have
to follow God's commandments are wrong.*

Kefa writes to those who live outside of Jewish society and says in 1 Peter 2:11-12 NKJV, "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God;". "Sojourners" most certainly would have resonated with the people of his time. They were strangers even as Abraham was a stranger; and instead of living a life as a pagan evildoer by not keeping God's commandments, they were to keep God's commandments (good works refers to keeping God's commandments, they are good (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). As a people who are on a pilgrimage like Abraham, they were to seek the future kingdom that God has prepared for them. If they take the right path and keep God's commandments, their walk culminates in the future kingdom of God.

Take some time to think this through. We are grateful that we are no longer pagans who have come from the East. We are now those who will live someday in a different world just as our father Abraham was not worldly. Therefore, we are children of Abraham by faith. Probably other scriptures come to mind as well. You can begin plugging them into this understanding the Jews had. Have fun with this instead of making up random studies on numbers and letters as some do. Perhaps some of their studies are good applications. Yeshua said they were mostly just diversions that were off track (John 5:39).

*Some were so off track with reading man-made ideas into the scriptures
that they did not know the Messiah was here!*

Explanation of What Shaul is talking about in Galatians 3 concerning Abraham.

We should take some time to understand what Shaul (Paul) is talking about in Galatians. First, we need to understand that there is a major departure from the truth of the Bible by Christianity that has occurred through man-made theology. This false doctrine had its beginnings in the pagan Roman Empire that made up its own doctrine and subverted the Bible to its own false doctrine. The Roman Empire positioned itself against Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus), His followers, and against biblical truth when they created their own version of Christianity.

Because of false doctrine and the inability of Christianity in general to understand Jewish cultural issues, the false doctrines that they have made up from the scriptures by the Roman Empire continue to be taught. Ya'akov said in James 3:1 NKJV, "Brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment." Those that teach people to not obey God and send people to the lake of fire will end up in the lake of fire. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." What does the Bible say about those who live in sin? Do not be deceived, they will not enter God's future kingdom. So, if someone tells you that God's commandments are done away with, do not listen to them.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV

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.

Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV

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.

Galatians 6:7-8 NKJV

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Revelation 21:8 NKJV

But 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 reason we talk about these things frequently (and other issues) is to lovingly help you avoid falling short of God's good eternal kingdom. God must tell us the consequences of not following His commandments or He would not be a good God.

Also, when we read from the Greek translation, there appears to be some deliberate muddling of the scriptures by the heretics of the Roman Empire. For example, Shaul quotes from Deuteronomy in Galatians 3:10 which says in Deuteronomy 27:26 NKJV, "A curse on anyone who does not confirm the words of this Torah by putting them into practice." **Those that do not keep the Torah are under a curse.** The translation from the Greek seems

altered. Psalms 119:21 NKJV says, "You rebuke the proud – the cursed, who stray from Your commandments." When people stray from God's good commandments, they can incur consequences, a curse and even fall short of God's good eternal kingdom.

First, a little background from Chapter 2. Shaul (Paul) was chosen by Yeshua to reach the Gentiles. Shaul (Paul) talks about an encounter with those who were adding extra stipulations on the Gentiles about receiving the Messiah Yeshua like adult circumcision and not eating with Gentiles and lots more laws. By the way, Shaul still teaches circumcision, Galatians 5:11 NKJV, "If I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution." Shaul does not teach adult circumcision, which is dangerous. We are created in God's image and therefore we are to protect life. Not protecting life is against the Torah.

Shaul shares how Kefa (Peter), and others reacted and stopped eating with Gentiles when **those adding laws** to the Torah were present. Tension was created by a misapplication of the law. It says in Exodus 34:14-16 that they were not to eat with an idolater which at the time meant they were forming a bond with them. We are not to bond with idolaters. But the Gentiles they stopped eating with were not idolaters.

These Gentile believers were no longer idolaters and Kefa and others should not have stopped eating with them. This happened because of people back then who added laws to the Torah. Since these people were adding laws to the Torah, **they were Torah breakers**. Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV says, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God."

Shaul makes a point from Galatians 3:6-9 that the Gentiles can have faith and live justly, the scriptures prophesied this, and all those who believe in the true God both Jew and Gentile are blessed through Abraham. Then in Galatians 3:10, Shaul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26 NKJV, "A curse on anyone who does not confirm the words of this Torah by putting them into practice." Again, **those that don't keep the Torah are under a curse**. The Gentiles were to learn and keep the Torah according to 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."

It is not the law that is a curse. It says cursed is anyone who does not keep the Torah, the law. That has been the issue all along. **The Torah breakers** who added the extra man-made laws **were not keeping the Torah right** and even excluding the Messianic Gentiles. Shaul made two points in Galatians 2:14-21. He also goes on to say we have to have faith in God and not ritual without faith. He also says we do not want to build another system of man-made laws in Galatians 2:18.

Then Galatians 3:11 means that no one is made just by only doing laws without faith. A person who lives justly (justified means to live justly, namely a person who does what is right) requires that we also have faith in God. It says in Habakkuk 2:4 CJB, "The righteous will attain life through trusting faithfulness." Anyone can keep a law without their heart being in it. We must also have faith in God.

You might want to note. People who start interpreting the Bible wrong apply their wrong thinking to all the scriptures and develop a complete false understanding of the Bible through their false theology. God's word is not a curse. It is adding and subtracting from God's word that brings a curse. Just like Eve changed what God had said by adding to and subtracting to God's word, they change the meaning of the scriptures and bring a curse on themselves like it says in Deuteronomy 27:26, "A curse on anyone who does not confirm the words of this Torah."

It is our responsibility first to do what is right. Then, try to help others with humility to also begin doing what is right. Do not expect people to automatically change. It can take a while to unlearn false teaching; be loving, caring, and help them to understand little by little. Just like Eve was deceived, they are deceived, and we need to help them in love (2 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 4:15).

Galatians 3:12 tells us that the law in itself doesn't require faith, but those who live by them will benefit from them; namely, the law of God's commandments in the Torah. Shaul is quoting from Leviticus 18:4-5 NKJV where it says, "You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord." Since he is quoting from this, he obviously does not mean the law is done away with. Anyone who keeps the law will benefit from them (also see Deuteronomy 4:6)

So, in Galatians 3:13, the Messiah has redeemed us from being cursed by the extra man-made laws. The Jews were living by misapplied laws, and he came to set us free from these misapplied man-made laws **so we could observe the law, the Torah, properly.**

The Torah says that anyone hanged on a tree is cursed (see Deuteronomy 21:23), so Shaul sees that Yeshua dying on a tree has removed our curse, the curse of the extra man-made laws that were contrary to the Torah. Therefore, it also stands to make sense that Yeshua has removed the man-made laws that are keeping the Gentiles outside the community of believers – we can understand this from the context, namely the implied thinking that Shaul expects us to have.

Therefore, according to Galatians 3:14, since the man-made laws that are keeping the Gentiles outside the community of believers has been removed, the blessing of Abraham can be fully realized through the Messiah Yeshua, both Jew and Gentile can receive the promise of the Holy Spirit by our faith.

Continuing on with the portion.

Abraham then sends his righteous servant Eliezer to find a wife for his son Isaac. We think that it is Eliezer who ruled Abraham's house for him (see Genesis 15:2 and Genesis 24:2). Just as we have people who provide different services in our era, they had people who served in different functions. He ruled Abraham's house. The name Eliezer means, God will help me. Eliezer is to find a wife for Yitz'chak in Nachor's city in Aram-Naharayim (namely, Mesopotamia). Nachor was Abraham's brother. Abraham does this because he does not want Yitz'chak to marry an unbeliever from the land of Canaan. Abraham says that God would send

His angel before his servant. When his servant gets to the city it is evening, and it was time for the women to draw water. Abraham's servant prays and asks God for a sign that the woman whom he asks water from will say yes and also offer to water his camels. Before he could finish asking God, Rivkah the daughter of Nachor came.

This is not just a funny story at a well, but a recording of God orchestrating events to make His will known. Abraham's servant then asks for a drink of water, and she complies and also offers to water his camels. He asked if they had room to stay and she said that they did. When he arrives at the home of Lavan, Rivkah's brother greets Abraham's servant in the name of yud-hey-vav-hey, (God's real name, Yě-hō-váh¹ – יהוה).

Yě-hō-váh, "This is My name forever" Exodus 3:15 NKJV

Identifying good people.

We see Rebecca being kind and courteous towards Eliazer. And she took the time to be attentive towards his animals as well. We can identify good people often by how they treat others, by their words and good and clear thinking, and by the kind of people they attract. A good person will do what is "right and good" (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). People often are attracted to other people who are like them.

Before Abraham's servant eats, he explains why he is there and the events that God had orchestrated to bring them together. He lets them know why he is there and asks them if he needs to look elsewhere for a wife for Yitz'chak. They recognize that God has brought them together and he was able to return right away with Rivkah even though they asked him to stay. Rivkah and Yitz'chak ended up seeing each other in a field when Rivkah was almost back. Yitz'chak then takes Rivkah as his wife. Abraham has another wife named Keturah after Sarah dies and Abraham has six more sons before he dies at the age of 175, and he is gathered to his people. Gathered to his people can only be an idiom meaning to join them in eternal life. Namely, he will join the other believers of his family in the future when they rise from the dead (see Deuteronomy 5:29 and Daniel 12:2-3). You go to be with people who are alive and not those who are dead. Yitz'chak inherits Abraham's possessions. The descendants of Yishmael are listed at the end of this portion; he dies at the age of 137 and was gathered to his people meaning that he also was a believer who will be with other believers for eternity.

This portion records the deaths of both Abraham and Sarah. The Jewish writings say that the cave of Machpelah that Abraham bought for his family's burial is where Adam and Eve were buried. In this portion, the highlight of this portion is when God orchestrates the events to bring Rivkah back as Yitz'chak's wife. Abraham sends his servant trusting God that his servant will bring back a wife for Yitz'chak. Then God works out the details.

We see events like these happening to the prophets in the Tanakh and they also occurred frequently to Yeshua. Yeshua's disciples experienced miraculous events as they followed

¹ The name for God is Yě-hō-váh as seen in 2,363 manuscripts to date. Only once as Yehoveh; **never as Yahweh**. The name Yahweh was just made up by a Gentile theologian.

Yeshua wherever He went. In the case of Abraham's servant and also for Rivkah's family, it was apparent to them that the LORD - Yě-hō-váh, יהוה, orchestrated the events to bring back Rivkah as Yitz'chak's wife. After Yeshua ascended to heaven, his talmidim recalled many of the events they witnessed and saw how God had orchestrated the events to show them that Yeshua is indeed the Messiah. It should also be evidence to us that God is in control. I have witnessed events that were set up by God and they were very exciting.

Woe to him who strives with his Maker! ... Shall the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' Isaiah 45:9 NKJV.

The Haftarah for Chayei Sarah is 1 Kings 1:1-31. This reading takes place just before the death of King David. King David is sick and one of his sons began to claim that he was king. Bat-Sheva asks King David if he hadn't told her that Shlomo would be king. Natan also comes in and asks King David about Adoniyah's claim to the throne. King David then orders Shlomo to be anointed king.

In the Torah portion we see Abraham sticking to what God told him to do about Yitz'chak being the heir of promise. Although men may think that they are the ones who are in power and they are the ones that know how to procure power, it was God who ultimately chose the line of people from whom would come the Messiah. Through Abraham the earth is blessed through Yeshua our Messiah.

Abraham lives his life committed to the true God, and God gave him a blessed life. His life was not without trials, but he stood strong. Through Abraham, the entire world has been blessed tremendously. We also can be a people who are committed to God and bring blessings to the world. Never minimize your contribution as a follower of the creator God and our Messiah Yeshua.

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

We should take time to grieve over the death of those close to us. This can be accomplished in many different ways, but not in a pagan way. Abraham put Sarah's body in a special cave in memory of her. Genesis 23.

You can make agreements with trustworthy people. Genesis 24:3-4.

We are to marry believers in the true God. Abraham went to extremes in order to ensure this for his son Isaac. Genesis 24:3.

God will bring to pass miracles on behalf of His people at His discretion. Genesis 24:27.

It was appropriate to use God's real name, Yěhōváh, and it still is. God's name is used over 6,200 times in the Tanakh. God says Exodus 3:15 NKJV, "This is My name forever." We see Nahor's son, Bethuel using God's real name. Genesis 24:50.

A man and a woman are to get married and live together as husband and wife. Genesis 24:67.

It is okay to marry again after the death of your spouse. In Jewish understanding, Sarah left Abraham after he took Isaac to sacrifice him. Abraham had to travel to where Sarah was. Abraham then took another wife. Single people are allowed to remarry. Genesis 23:2, Genesis 25:1.

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

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

According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name. Won't you also honor God's and use His true name with respect at times. The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. 2,363 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh.

Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה).

Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people. What an honor it is to be a people of the creator and true God.

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

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ
 יְאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֶלְיָךְ, וַיַּחֲנֶךָ
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֶלְיָךְ, 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.