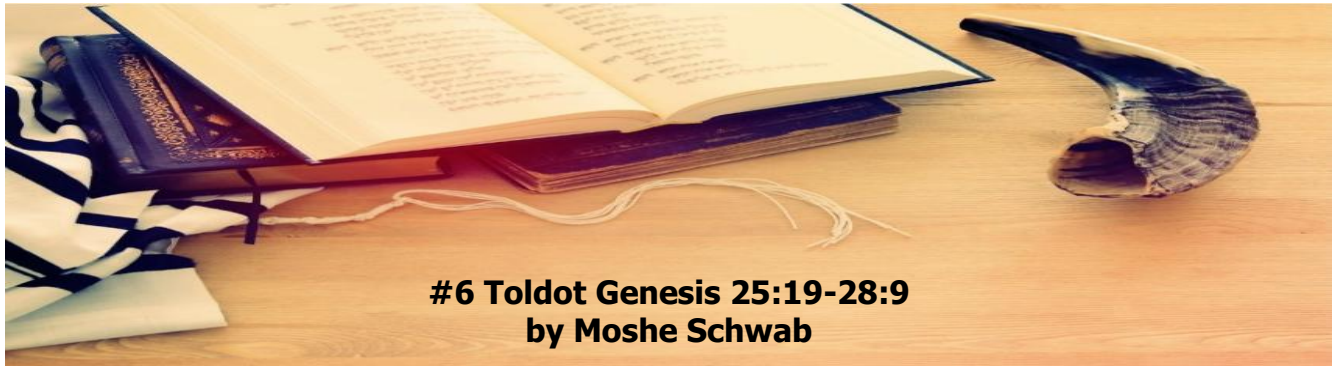




#6 Toldot Genesis 25:19-28:9 by Moshe Schwab

Names

Esav – Esau

Hevron – Hebron

Jasher – ancient book quoted in the Bible

Ya'akov – Jacob

Kefa – Peter

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

Moshe – Moses

Rivkah – Rebecca

Shaul – Paul

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

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

Yitz'chak – Isaac

Yochanan – John

Terms

Toldot – 6th Torah portion

Cohen – priest

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

Toldot means, “generations.” The Torah portion for Toldot is Genesis 25:19 to 28:9. This portion begins by telling us that Yitz'chak got married at 40 years old to Rivkah and that they were having trouble conceiving so Yitz'chak prayed, and Rivkah conceived.

First, I would like to begin by talking about that God sees us and cares about His people. From the very beginning, God cared about His people, the people who keep His commandments. Genesis 6:8-9 NKJV says, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God." Walking with God is to keep His commandments. 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;" (also see, Deuteronomy 8:6, 10:12-13, 11:22, 13:4, 19:9, 26:17, 28:9, and 30:16). It makes perfect sense, those who do not keep God's commandments are not walking with God and not doing what our good God tells us to do for a good life. God wants things to go "well" for mankind and keeping God's commandments can even "prolong" our lives.

Some people say that you mean that God does not care about me? Sure, God cares about those who do not keep His commandments.

**But they do not care about themselves enough
to keep God's commandments for their own good.**

Also, God notices when people are not walking with Him. Proverbs 15:3 NKJV says, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good." Some people act as though God does not know what is going on, but He does. Things done in secret or in the dark are not hidden to God.

Psalms 139:12-17 NKJV says,

Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You. For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them. How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!

There are so many things that stick out to me in these scriptures in Psalms 139. Basically, nothing hides us from God, not even darkness or when we were in the darkness of our mother's womb. God does not wish evil on us and cares about each human being. The word "precious" can mean valuable, to be prized (according to Strong's Dictionary), therefore we are precious to God.

God gives each person the choice whether they will walk with Him or do things their own way. When we live a life of sin, we are living in iniquity, and do not follow God's commandments. We have decided not to walk with God, so God leaves us to our own thoughts and values. Isaiah 59:2 NKJV says, "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you." God knows what is going on, He lets you go your own way. God does not want people to fail in life though, and He wants people to repent so they will do well.

Repentance is not often talked about in most of Christianity. Many think that all they need to do is belong to a certain religion or just accept Yeshua (Jesus). A friend of mine told the people at his father's funeral to accept Jesus. Then after he talked, the priest said they needed to accept his religion. There is more to being in relationship with God than belonging to the right club. Repentance means more than accepting a theology or a religion. The Hebrew word means to turn around and turn towards God. We are to stop doing things our own way and then turn towards God and keep His commandments. Living a sinful life separates us from God and from God's wonderful future eternal kingdom.

There are several different words that are used for sin. Iniquity, evil, wicked, depravity, lawlessness, abomination, wrong doing, dead works, and some other words. In the Bible, they are all used to mean that a person is not following the good ways that God told us to live. Because in our English language, we use these words in different ways, we need to understand what they mean when used in the Bible. For example, Ya'akov said that dead works refers to sin. He says, "Do not be deceived." James 1:15-16 NKJV says, "Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren." For some reason, people often do not pay attention to or understand the following scriptures in Galatians. The works of the flesh are the dead works, namely sin in the following verse. Shaul (Paul) says that those who do the works of the flesh and live in sin will not be in God's future kingdom. The word flesh here refers to sin. In other places the word flesh is used in other ways. One of those is to refer to

the flesh as wrongly applied commandments made up by men (see Isaiah 29:13; Galatians 2:16).

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.

Some people will say that sounds like we are under the law as though that is something bad. They may call you names like legalist or Judaizer because they do not know the truth. Keeping God's laws are good things. Keeping extra man-made laws as though they are God's laws are not a good thing. Yeshua said in Matthew 15:8 NKJV, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

Theology sometimes reverses what the Bible teaches, so some people have been taught a false theology instead of what the Bible teaches. They apply their theology to the whole New Testament portion. By not keeping God's laws, they are keeping a man-made law, a theology about what the Bible is saying. Shaul said that sin is death, namely it is sin that is dead works. Romans 6:16 NKJV says, "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?" It is obedience to God's commandments that leads to doing what is right, namely righteousness. Do not be confused by Shaul's reasoning.

Kefa says that misunderstanding Shaul leads to destruction. 2 Peter 3:15-16 NKJV says, "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." We know that destruction refers to not making it into the future kingdom of God, but it can also refer to the consequences that sometimes accompany sin. Shaul also says, "Do not be deceived." 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV says, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." People have been deceived by wrong teaching and false theology.

One of our most basic beliefs is to repent of dead works. Hebrews 6:1 NKJV says, 'Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works.' Ya'akov said that sin results in death and so did Shaul. We are to change, stop sinning, and stop doing dead works, the sin that results in death and eternal separation from God.

If no one ever told you these things, they were not acting out of love for you. There are eternal consequences for those who live in sin, and it is called 'the lake of fire and brimstone.' Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and

brimstone shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." Those who are essentially lying to you by not telling you all you need to understand are sending people to the lake of fire for eternity. Do not go there with them. Have a relationship with God and follow His good commandments. We need to be reminded of these things frequently because of all the false teaching that is out there.

God reveals His love and goodness to us and shows us that His commandments and the Holy Spirit are good.

We should love God and walk in His ways because He is a good God that has given us His good commandments. God is the creator, and He is a loving and good God and gives us good commandments. God is not vindictive or evil like the pagan gods. The commandments of the Old Testament portion were given by God for our good. They are good.

Deuteronomy 10:12-14 NKJV says,

Fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good? Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it.

God is the creator, and He has our best interests at heart.

Sometimes we have to be courageous to keep God's law. Most importantly, keeping the law will help us to do what is "right and good," so that we will make it into the amazing and good future kingdom of God. Since the law is good, it will help us in this present life to be prosperous and have success.

Joshua 1:7-8 NKJV says,

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Also, consider the goodness of God in giving those who believe in the Messiah the Holy Spirit in this Messianic era. God is good and so is the gift of the Holy Spirit through the Messiah.

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!"

The people who followed the Old Testament God understood and knew that God is good. His law is good, and therefore, the Holy Spirit is good. God was good, is good, and is still good. Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." God healed and helped believers in the Old Testament portion and God still heals, restores, is merciful, is able to give us good things, and can renew our lives because He does not change.

Psalms 103:2-5 NKJV says,

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Think about how scriptures apply to you.

How does knowing that God is good help you to follow His commandments and the Holy Spirit?

Therefore, I can trust in God's commandments to help me live the way I am supposed to instead of making up my own rules. Some people say we should follow our own heart, but the heart can be deceitful and even evil. Good intentions do not always end up being good. I might have good intentions for you by feeding you only sweets for your meals. Medicine says that we need a well-balanced diet and that eating a lot of sweets and starchy foods all the time can lead to a person getting sick with diabetes. I know of at least two people who have died from that horrible disease. Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Like I have said many times before, sometimes the heart is right and sometimes the heart is wrong and even evil.

Because God is good, I have truths for life instead of just observable facts. Facts do not give people the ethical tools for a good life. We need math and science to make things, but they are limited in usefulness. How does knowing how far the Sun is from the Earth help us to treat others right? Often, people are being taught to value facts over how to live life in our culture. Psalms 119:93 NKJV says, "I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life." Real life, a good life comes through God.

Because God is good, I do not need to be entertainment driven. Some people revolve their lives around thrills, doing things that excite them, seeking happiness through the things they own, or valuing what they can achieve. Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 NKJV says, "That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, 'See, this is new'? It has already been in ancient times before us." If we want a more fulfilling life, put God and His commandments before our frivolous activities. Colossians 3:2 NKJV says, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." I once asked a person if they would be willing to learn more about God and they said they were too busy watching TV. I am not kidding. While some entertainment can be fun, making that a main function of life means that person will have no meaningful accomplishments in life. When I asked a person I know who went to Harvard what TV show he liked to watch, he said he did not have a TV. Instead, he spent his time actually living life and accomplishing things in life. God is the creator and knows how we should best live. So, keeping God's commandments leads to a real and meaningful life.

Some think that being an important, rich, or a famous person would lead to a fulfilling life. Psalms 89:47-48 NKJV says, "Remember how short my time is; for what futility have You

created all the children of men? What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of the grave?" As the saying goes, "You cannot take your riches with you." Psalms 49:16-17 "Do not be afraid when one becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dies he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him." All the things of this world will come to nothing. Those that keep and teach God's commandments will be honored in the future kingdom. Daniel 12:2-3 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. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever."

There will be a future kingdom. 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." We not only have hope in this life, but we wait for a future hope. Psalms 39:7 NKJV says, "And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You." What God has promised for us in the future kingdom will be amazing. 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! You can be sure that God will bless those who love Him and keep His commandments, His ancient ways. If people want to be saved, it says we must keep God's ancient ways.

God's word is referred to as truth. God has no need to lead us in the wrong direction because He is the creator. God does not need anything from us but only wants our love for His goodness towards us. Psalms 119:142 NKJV says, "Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth." God's commandments are good forever because they are truths to live by. Psalms 119:151-152 NKJV says, "All Your commandments are truth. Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them forever." God has no ulterior motives and has no need to lie to us. Numbers 23:19 NKJV says, "God is not a man, that He should lie."

Lay the groundwork for a life that has a basis in truth. No matter where you are with your spiritual life, we need to learn and keep learning and applying God's truths for life, His ancient ways. They are not outdated because they always have been truths for life and always will be truths to live by. So do not despise the goodness of God.

Romans 2:4-9 NKJV says,

Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who "will render to each one according to his deeds": eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness – indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil.

Evil is another word for sin because not keeping the truths for life that God has given us brings negative consequences most of the time in this life and most certainly at judgement

time and God, "will render to each one according to his deeds." Those who live in sin will not escape the judgement of God even if they do not believe in God.

Remain clearly focused on living in what is reality and truth. Often, when people go to a major event, they try to obtain the best seats they can afford. Some people are willing to use less time and money to obtain the best seat because they just want to be there. What about eternal life? Don't you want to be at your best so that you will not only make it but be rewarded well in eternity? Eternity is a long time. Kings have tremendous resources at their disposal. Yet, King David asks God to help him live a life that is free of sin. King David understood that the future kingdom would be an amazing and wonderful kingdom. We should do everything God commands us, so we get there in good standing. Psalms 139:23-24 NKJV says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

I want to please God and not only to be rewarded for it, but I also know that living how God says to live is what is best for others as well. I want to love others the way God tells me to. Leviticus 19:18-19 NKJV says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes." So, keeping God's commandments is a good way to love your neighbor.

Righteousness means someone who does what is right and keeps the law. God's laws are "right and good;" see Deuteronomy 6:17-18. So, we proclaim the good news of righteousness, God's lovingkindness through His law, and His truth. God's will for us is to keep His good law.

Psalms 40:8-10 NKJV says,

I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart. I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness in the great assembly; indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD, You Yourself know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great assembly.

Put God's law in your heart so you will treat others with righteousness and honor. Proverbs 21:21 NKJV says, "He who follows righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness, and honor.

Here is some more to consider.

Work at being at peace. Make the effort; almost everything in life requires effort and not just wishful thinking. You can do it.

We need to be at peace in life and we begin doing that through God's commandments. We are to apply God's commandments in all of life. Have you ever met someone who seems detached from their spirituality? They put in their one hour each week and they are done with anything spiritual for the rest of the week.

They have a relationship with God and others on their own terms instead of God being part of their life. Perhaps they have been misled to believe that God's commandments are not important. Those who keep God's commandments in all they do brings peace to our life.

Psalms 37:37 NKJV says, "Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright; for the future of that man is peace." God wants us to have a successful and satisfying life. He has given us His commandments to help us with life.

Psalms 85:8-11 NKJV says,

I will hear what God the LORD will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints; but let them not turn back to folly. Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

God wants His people, His saints, His holy ones, to have a good life and a life of blessing. We do what is right by avoiding mistaken ideas and sin. God's deliverance will be with those who deeply respect God, namely those who fear God. Why is that? It is because they recognize God for who He is, the creator of the universe. They have accepted God's goodness and truth from the creator God who knows what is best for us. Living right, (being righteous) and living according to God's commandments brings peace. Our all-knowing God has given mankind the right way to live from His holy habitation, from heaven. Isn't that wonderful?

Also, keeping God's commandments puts us in right relationship with God because we are listening to Him and doing what He tells us to do. In this Messianic age, the Holy Spirit also helps us to be at peace with God and others. Note that the Holy Spirit will not tell us to disobey God's commandments but is a helper for life just like God's commandments are. John 14:15-17 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." God's commandments help us to do what is right and the Holy Spirit can remind us to do what is right, lead us in the right direction in life, inspire us, help us to act in good ways, and so much more. God's commandments are to lead us in life and are truth. The Holy Spirit can also help lead us. John 16:13 NKJV says, "When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth."

Knowing what is right gives us confidence and mental rest in all of life so that we have the strength and joy to move forward. Psalms 16:11 NKJV says, "You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy." When we do God's will, life will go better. Psalms 28:7 NKJV says, "The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices." Trusting in and doing God's commandments helps in life and we have reason to rejoice.

I would like to talk about a second aspect of having peace, the peace we get from being disciplined to have peace. Some people are always seeking the worldly things of life; riches, fame, thrills, honor, excitement, and so forth. Isaiah 26:3 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." We are to trust in God's abilities, in God's provision, in God's commandments, in the work of the Holy Spirit, in doing things God's way and not our own way.

Being a man or woman of God can give us peace in life both day and night. Psalms 4:8 NKJV says, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety." Keeping God's commandments can give us satisfaction and peace in life. Psalms

119:165 NKJV says, "Great peace have those who love Your law." God can strengthen His people and bless us with peace. This can come either supernaturally or as a result of keeping God's commandments. Psalms 29:11 NKJV says, "The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace." We can have peace, so make sure to appropriate the peace in life that God wants for us. Stand against fear, doubt, and worry. Trust in God. 2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV says, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

We can have peace in life knowing we have truths for life. Psalms 119:160 "The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever." Psalms 85:10-11 says, "Righteousness and peace have kissed. Truth shall spring out of the earth." Let us hope and pray that more people will begin living God's truths for life, do what is "right and good" (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18), and bring God's goodness into the world.

God sees us and cares about His people. He knows what we are doing and wants us to be in relationship with Him and walk with Him. God has revealed His love and goodness to us through His good commandments and the Holy Spirit. Believers for all of time have understood that God was good, is good, and will always be good. Learn and keep learning God's truths. Apply the truths of the scriptures well to life, make sure to keep God's commandments, and be thoughtful in life. We can have peace in life through God, His commandments, and the Holy Spirit. Also, make sure to speak peace to our minds through the scriptures and be determined to keep your mind at peace.

Torah Study.

The Torah portion for this week is Toldot, and it means, "generations." The Torah portion for Toldot is Genesis 25:19 to 28:9. We learn more about Isaac in this portion. This parashah begins by telling us that Yitz'chak got married at 40 years old to Rivkah and that they were having trouble conceiving. According to the Book of Jasher, Abraham first prayed for them and then Rivkah asks Yitz'chak to also pray.

At the end of our Torah study, we have a short presentation on, "Some Important Biblical Concepts."

The Book of Jasher is an ancient book that was quoted in the Bible. It is not considered inspired by God but sometimes explains some of the details of what happened. Rivkah says in Jasher 25:6, "And Rebecca said unto him, but arise now thou also and pray, that the Lord may hear thy prayer and grant me children, and Isaac hearkened to the words of his wife."¹ So Yitz'chak prayed, and Rivkah conceived. Why did he wait to pray? Some people are indifferent to prayer, but Yitz'chak was a believer. Perhaps he trusted that God would do what He said without taking any action, but that is not a good reason not to pray. Yeshua Messiah tells us to pray over and over in the story of the unjust judge (see Luke 18:1-8). Luke 18:1 NKJV says, "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."

¹ <https://sacred-texts.com/chr/apo/jasher/26.htm>

We are to pray much.

Shaul encourages us to pray much to God. Ephesians 6:18 NKJV says, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." Saints refers to God's holy ones who keep His commandments. Deuteronomy 28:9 NKJV says, "The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways." Saints are not dead people, but people who keep God's commandments. Shaul said in Ephesians we are to pray always; we are to be diligent to pray.

While Rivkah's twins were in her womb, they were very active, so Rivkah asked God what was going on. She asked Abraham, Shem the son of Noah, and Noah's son Eber according to the Book of Jasher and they inquired of the Lord. The Lord told her there were two rival nations in her womb and that the older would serve the younger. So, either from our understanding of the Bible or from Jasher, she had received by revelation that Ya'akov was to receive the blessing of the first born and not Esav.

Yitzchak liked Esav because he was a hunter and seemingly disregarded the word that Rivkah received from God. This caused a lot of trouble when it came time to pass on the blessing. There seems to be some favoritism going on. When the twins were born Esav came first and was reddish and Ya'akov came out holding Esav's heel. Yitz'chak was 60 at the time. Ya'akov was a quiet child and Rivkah favored him probably because of the prophesy given to her.

One day Esav came home exhausted and asked Ya'akov for some food. Ya'akov said he would give him food if he would give him the rights of the firstborn; so, Esav gave his firstborn rights for some food. As we can see, God had already given Ya'akov the rights of the firstborn. Esav actually gave away what he did not have and what he did not care about anyway. God gave the birthright to Jacob by revelation and also, the Bible says that Esav "despised" his birthright and gave it away; see Genesis 25:34. Strong's Dictionary says that the word despised can also mean to disdain.

In other words, Esau had contempt for his birthright. I have known some very good parents who believed in God and taught their children to keep God's commandments, yet their children hated their parents and had contempt for their parents and what they believed. Their children reject the goodness of God. Having a good family does not always lead to having good children. Then there is a famine, and God tells Yitz'chak to stay in the land instead of going to Egypt and God reiterates the promise to Yitz'chak that He gave to Avraham.

God still speaks to His people.

We see God communicating with His people and helping them. I find it remarkable that people resist the leading of the Holy Spirit and do not want the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit. God knows everything! Isn't it to our advantage to have the help of God in life in addition to His commandments. Also, it seems some do not want God's commandments either. God knows what is best for life, so they reject God's goodness.

God's commandments were passed down verbally at first.

It says about Abraham in Genesis 26:5 NKJV, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge,

My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Believers keep God's commandments. There are some people who teach that Abraham and other ancient believers did not know God's commandments, but as we can see, that is not true. God had Israel write down God's commandments after they left Egypt for future generations to have. That was the reason for writing down God's commandments at Mount Sinai. It was not because they did not know them.

Israel knew God's commandments. Why would Moshe have his sons circumcised when he went back to Egypt if they did not know God's commandments? They also had the means to write them down. Archeology has found Hebrew writing dating back to around 1650 BC. Modern archeology shows that Israel escaped their slavery in Egypt around 1450 BC instead of 1305 BC. They have now found Hebrew writing in Canaan that they date to the time Israel entered the land. Israel passed on their alphabet to the Canaanites and subsequently to the Phoenicians. So, our modern alphabet with letters that substitute for sound has its roots in the Hebrew alphabet.

While Yitz'chak is in G'rar, he is afraid, so he tells the people there that Rivkah is his sister, but he was found out. Rivkah was given protection by Avimelekh. Perhaps Yitz'chak did not need to be concerned, but he was afraid anyway. The ancient writings suggest that people not only lived longer but did not age the way people look now when they are older. Also, pagan kings were known to make women part of their concubines.

Yitz'chak produced a hundred-fold on his crops, and he prospered, and the P'lishtim became jealous and asked him to leave. So, he left and opened up a well that Avraham had dug and the P'lishtim claimed it was their water. They should have instead learned to dig their own wells. Sometimes people become jealous and want to take what others have instead of learning how to do things for themselves.

He ended up digging several wells before they stopped bothering him. He then went up to Be'er-Sheva where God, יהוה (Yĕhōvāh)², appeared to him and promised him the land for his decedents as God had promised Abraham. God appeared to all the patriarchs. It is not true that God cannot appear as a man as some say. Some people are blinded by false teaching. God can do what He wants and if He wants to appear as man or come as a man, He can. When Avraham meets God, God says in Genesis 18:14 NKJV, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?"

Then Avimelekh comes and makes a pact of peace with Yitz'chak because he saw that God had showed favor on Yitz'chak. The portion then talks about Esav. When Esav was 40, he took two Hittite wives, and they caused trouble for the family. Yitz'chak wanted to bless Esav despite what God told Rivkah, and he sent him out to hunt and then receive the blessing. Rivkah heard what Yitz'chak was about to do, and she sent Ya'akov in disguise to get the blessing that as we said earlier, was supposed to go to Ya'akov both through a word from God and Esav also gave it away. Yitz'chak's eyes were failing, and he thought that he was blessing Esav, but the text suggests he might have known otherwise. Yitz'chak blessed Ya'akov with

² Exodus 3:15 says that Yĕhōvāh will be God's name forever as seen pointed in 2,363 manuscripts. Once as Yĕhōvāh; never as Yahweh.

abundance, lordship, and protective favor. These were all things that a worldly person like Esav would have liked.

Ya'akov had just left when Esav came in and Yitz'chak tells him that he had already given his blessing and that it could not be revoked. Perhaps Yitz'chak was pretending to not know he blessed who he was supposed to bless. Also, perhaps Yitz'chak was upset because God had him bless the child who he was supposed to bless.

When Yitz'chak dies, the Book of Jasher says that Ya'akov gives Esav the choice to choose the land of Canaan that God had promised to the line of Abraham or Yitz'chak's belongings and cattle and Esav chose Yitz'chak's belongings and cattle. Apparently Ya'akov understood that Esav would pick what is worldly. Ya'akov looked forward to God's promise and the land of Canaan. Canaan was still inhabited by the Canaanites so, it may seem that Ya'akov got nothing out of the deal. The descendants of Ya'akov end up owning the land of Canaan. God is able to do what He says He will do. May we seek God's eternal kingdom and be worthy of God's promise to come.

After some coaxing, Yitz'chak gave a similar blessing to Esav with a few important differences. Yitz'chak blesses Esav, but it is Ya'akov that gets the blessing of the first born. Esav obviously pretends that he deserves the blessing of the first born. He had given it up for a few beans (see Genesis 25:29-34). Hebrews 12:16 NKJV says, "Lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright."

**It is kind of a twist in fate.
Ya'akov pretends to be Esau
and gets the blessing he was supposed to get,
and Esau pretends that he deserves
the blessing, and he does not get it.**

Some people focus on the deception of Rivkah and Ya'akov lies to his father. In this case, Rivkah, a woman, stands up for what is right. Ya'akov was supposed to get the blessing of the birthright. She is an example of someone who stood up for what is right. Often, good people do not want to cause trouble so they do not stand up for what is right when they should. Evil people seem to be more ambitious to get their way and will resort to any kind of evil to get their way. Good people need to make their voice heard or they may suffer the consequences for their silence.

Esav was planning to kill Ya'akov and Rivkah heard of it. Yitz'chak and Rivkah sent Ya'akov away to Rivkah's brother Lavan and told him to pick a wife from his family. This was done in the hope that Jacob would find a believing wife there. Esav saw that his wives did not please his parents, so he also took a daughter of Ishmael as his wife.

What differences do you see in the lives of Ya'akov and Esav?

Ya'akov was willing to follow what his mother knew to be right.

Ya'akov was more spiritually minded.

Esav had the heart of a murderer. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "Murderers, sexually

immoral, sorcerers, idolaters ... shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone."

Ya'akov fled in order to avoid a conflict; perhaps saving his brother's life.

Esav was thick headed and only did what he wanted to do. He could have joined the blessings of his brother, but he only wanted to do things his way.

Esav passed on his cursed life to his descendants.

Esav hated what was right and good and the good teachings of his parents.

The Haftarah for Toldot is Malachi 1:1-2:7. In this Haftarah portion, Malachi gives a prophecy to Israel. He says that God loves them and the descendants of Jacob and gives them favor but does not favor the wicked descendants of Esau. He says that Israel is not honoring their Father God by their polluted offerings of imperfect animals and imperfect food offerings. If they do not change, God will take away His favor. The priests were making up their own rules about the sacrifices. God says, the Cohens should be guarding His commandments. We too should guard God's commandments.

We must always remember that what God promises He is able to do and will accomplish even if we oppose God. Not following God the way we should can bring dire consequences to our lives. God wants to give us His blessings. God has plans for us, but if we reject them, God will give away our blessing to someone else just like God gave the blessing to Ya'akov instead of Esau. Jeremiah 29:11 NKJV says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

God has good plans for us!

We are all imperfect people; the kingdom has not yet been restored. We must remember to repent and try to rectify our sins and the problems we have caused. Yeshua taught that we not only are to ask God for forgiveness, but also work out our problems. Do not be an Esav who wanted to kill Ya'akov instead of working things out. Esav relied on himself instead of God; his life and progeny came to amount to very little compared to Ya'akov's life. All he cared about was himself and a plate of beans. Yeshua said in Matthew 5:23-24 NKJV, "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." If we know that we have done something wrong, try to work it out and then also ask God for forgiveness. Be a spiritually minded person like Ya'akov.

Finally.

In this portion, God healed Rivkah, and she was able to conceive two children. Yitzchak did not listen to his wife about Ya'akov being the child of promise so Rivkah took matters in her own hands and fooled Yitzchak so he would give the blessing to Ya'akov. Ya'akov chooses to leave rather than confront Esav. Esav is a worldly person and wants to kill Ya'akov. We will see that God worked everything out despite Yitz'chak's shortcomings.

Esav is an example of someone who is worldly minded and Ya'akov is an example of someone who is spiritually minded and wants what God wants. Ya'akov continued to be faithful to God

and God blessed Ya'akov tremendously for his faithfulness to God. God has also blessed the world through Ya'akov even to this day.

The worldly like Esav bring a curse on their families and the world and they will end up in the lake of fire (see Revelation 21:8). Join the forces of good and continue the legacy of blessing through Ya'akov and our Messiah Yeshua and be part of God's future glorious eternal kingdom.

This week seems to be a good week to share some important biblical concepts. Man-made concepts can detract from God's truths at times. Remember, like man-made idols, man-made theology is also man-made. We need to define our understanding of the Bible by what it originally meant to the people it was originally written to. Theology is a man-made construct of what the Bible teaches. They will replace what the Bible says with their own beliefs. The proper understanding of the Bible is that we are to be a holy people who keep God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 28:9). Also, we need to properly understand some of the issues that we can encounter when reading the New Testament portion.

Some Important Biblical Concepts

From time to time, we share some important biblical concepts to understand. While there are quite a few that we need to understand, I hope the following will answer some of your questions or better inform you. Most of the time, it is important to understand the Bible within the context of the scriptures themselves and not read into what's going on. We want to understand the Bible how it was originally meant to be understood.

The Words Holy and Set Apart.

We are to be God's set apart holy people. Deuteronomy 28:9 NKKJV says, "The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, **if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.**" We are to keep God's commandments and continue to learn and grow spiritually in life. Theology teaches sanctification which tends to replace the truth of the Bible by substituting holiness with a man-made idea. We are to strive to do what is "right and good." Doing good in biblical and Jewish thought is to keep God's commandments. Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV 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."

We are to separate our lives from doing evil by doing what is "right and good." When we do not keep God's commandments, we separate ourselves from God. Isaiah 59:2 NKJV, "But your iniquities have separated you from your God." Holiness carries with it the idea that we separate ourselves from sin. Leviticus 20:26 NKJV says, "And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine." We are God's separated holy people when we keep His commandments. Sometimes the Bible uses the word saints for God's holy people. Most of the time, the word translated saint is translated as holy (hagios in the New Testament). People lived as saints in the Old Testament

if they kept God's commandments and continued to learn and grow spiritually. Those in the New Testament are saints, holy ones, if they are also living holy lives and are growing spiritually.

Therefore, those who have been separated by God are holy if they are living holy lives. Shaul talks about us not being separated from God (in Romans Chapter 8) because we live holy separate lives, namely not worldly sinful lives. If we are living holy lives, we will not be separated from God. Psalms 118:6 NKJV says, "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

If we do not live holy lives, we have turned our back on God. Then we must repent and turn towards God and keep His commandments if we want to be God's holy ones. This also involves receiving and using the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Yeshua said in John 14:15-17 NKJV, "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." Our first helper is God's commandments. The Messiah came to give us another helper to be God's holy people, the Holy Spirit.

Some people do not like the Holy Spirit because some people who have the Holy Spirit misuse the Holy Spirit and continue to live in sin. Those that misuse the Holy Spirit or are living in sin are not living as holy people and they are separated from God. Remember, Isaiah 59:2 NKJV says, "But your iniquities have separated you from your God."

Also, Shaul says in 1 Corinthians 14:37 NKJV, "The things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord." In the same context in 1 Corinthians 14:40 NKJV Shaul says, "Let all things be done decently and in order." We are not to misuse the Holy Spirit. He also writes in 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts." We are to desire the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Those who are not using the Holy Spirit in an honoring fashion or not pursuing the gifts of the Holy Spirit are therefore sinning.

The Holy Spirit is our helper just like God's written word is our helper. Also, some people say they are holy without actually behaving like God's holy people. They are delusional. We are to be holy as God is holy the Bible says. Leviticus 11:44 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy." You must live a holy life, or you will be in the lake of fire for eternity (see Revelation 21:8).

The Word Apostle.

First of all, the word apostle means a sent one. There were many sent ones in the Old Testament portion for example, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Most of the prophets in the Old Testament acted as sent ones at times. All the gifts of the Holy Spirit were present to some extent in the Old Testament except for speaking in tongues. Noah heard from God, Abraham heard from God, and many others heard from God. We see many ordinary people prophesying. Elizabeth prophesied in Luke 1:41-45, Zacharius in Luke 1:67-79, and Anna in Luke 2:36-38. In the New Testament portion, there are perhaps thousands of sent ones. Shaul says that **a sent one is a common ministry** in Ephesians 4:11 NKJV: "And He

Himself gave some to be **apostles**, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." So, it is a lie that there are only 12 apostles. Again, being an apostle is a common ministry according to the Bible. Yeshua had 12 apostles that were closest to him but there were many more. The congregations and people that use the word apostle are often doing this to control others. They think they are special. We are all special to God, not just those who are puffed up. 1 Corinthians 4:19 NKJV says, "But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up."

Also, it is now improper to use the word apostle at this time because of the improper stigma that has been attached to this word. Shaul says in Romans 16:7 NKJV. "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles." Junia is a woman's name. If God sends you to do something, use literal terms instead of the word "apostle." For example, God wanted me to serve in the Amazon Jungle for a short time. In that way you avoid the deceitful pride of some denominations or people.

We should also note, that since there were apostles and prophets in the Old Testament portion, the community of believers was based on the apostles and prophets of the Old Testament and not just the New Testament portion. Some Old Testament believers were sent by God (acted as apostles). They often called people back to God and told them to stop sinning. This would have been the understanding of the people back then. Ephesians 2:20 NKJV says, "Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets." There was no New Testament portion at the time. We need to understand the scriptures how the people back then would have understood them. The apostles and prophets he is talking about are also the apostles and prophets of the Old Testament portion of the Bible. Without these apostles and prophets of the Old Testament portion calling people back to God, we would have no Bible.

People like Moshe, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel wrote the scriptures that God told them to write. 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." Again, there was no New Testament put together at the time this was written so, it is talking about the Old Testament scriptures. God told them what to write and they wrote it down using their vocabulary. There have been many sent ones, apostles, over the years; being an apostle was a common ministry like teaching or being a pastor are common ministries.

We are Called.

We are called to do something. I thought I was called to be a Christian. The Bible explains being called in an active sense. Ephesians 4:1 NKJV says, "Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called." The Old Testament believers were supposed to follow God's commandments and walk in them and so are the New Testament believers. Deuteronomy 30:16 NKJV says, "Love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you." (also see, Deuteronomy 5:33, 8:6, 10:12-13, 11:22, 13:4, 19:9, 26:17, and 28:9). So, to walk worthy is to keep God's Old Testament commandments.

New Testament believers also believe on the Messiah Yeshua and receive the Holy Spirit and walk by God's commandments and the Holy Spirit. That is how we become part of the family; we do what our Father God wants us to do and behave like His children. That is what we are called to do, so live out what you have been called to do.

Some people are also called to do specific things. Shaul was called to be a messenger (apostle), others are called to be teachers, etcetera. God may call us to do specific things during different stages of our life. For example, I was also called to do inner city ministry for a number of years.

Why do we have so many different ideas on what the Bible is saying? Problems with understanding the Bible properly.

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 come up with non-biblical ideas or 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 the New Testament scriptures were written 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. Also, as of this writing, the present heaven and earth still exists. 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 words used in 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 not to keep the Old Testament commandments. That would also be true about Shaul (Paul).

Deuteronomy 13:3-4 NKJV says,

You shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice.

Anyone who teaches others to not keep God's Old Testament commandments is a false teacher. We are not to listen to these false prophets or teachers. When we see scriptures that seem to contradict keeping God's Old Testament laws in the New Testament portion, 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. We even have quotes from the original Hebrew books of the New Testament by early believers.

There are some people who are more interested in keeping their false doctrine intact though. 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 Old Testament law is doctrine. God's law is doctrine 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. Some change the meaning of the scriptures to teach false doctrine and say that is God's word. For example, they will say that we should love God and others. That is true, but these are only two of the commandments in the Old Testament portion. It is true the Bible contains God's words, but they often reject the concept that God's commandments are good, and we are to keep all His commandments. The commandments in His word are God's commandments. Misguided people 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 originals, there are some differences between manuscripts. In fact, there are many differences in the Greek manuscripts. Even Jerome who lived in the 3rd century said there were problems with the Greek.

Jerome says in his preface to the Latin Vulgate (quotes from Vulgate.Org):

You urge me to revise the old Latin version, and, as it were, to sit in judgment on the copies of the Scriptures which are now scattered throughout the whole world; and, inasmuch as **they differ from one another**, you would have me decide which of them agree with the Greek original.

We had no originals even at the time of Jerome who lived in the 4th century (the 300s). Jerome noticeably sees problems with the Greek manuscripts already in his time. He says there were "blundering alterations" by "ignorant critics." He notes that people inserted wording and changed what was written. Jerome says:

Go back to the original Greek and correct the mistakes introduced by inaccurate translators, and the blundering alterations of confident but ignorant critics, and, further, all that has been inserted or changed by copyists more asleep than awake?

A standard Greek text has been put together, and it identifies deviations between the Greek manuscripts. 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 one, then we end up with 8,000 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 at this time 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. This can result 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 and they also used Greek manuscripts that had already been altered! Also, the original King James Version of the Bible has been updated and changed over the years.

Unfortunately, some of the insertions and changes to the originals occurred because some people had a personal agenda and they changed the scriptures. Jerome even says this in the when he was commissioned to work on translating from the Greek. 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 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. It was given first to Gentile believers and then to the Jews. So, it is not just for the Jews. Shaul said in Galatians 5:11 NKJV, "I still preach circumcision." So, Justin Martyr was just a false and uninformed teacher.

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 also modified by the Roman Empire and passed down to us. We need to get back to the original truths of the Bible. As we saw in Deuteronomy 13, those who teach that God's commandments are done away with are false teachers and not to be listened to.

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!'

The word lawlessness is the Greek word *anomia*. *Nomia* is the Greek word used by the ancient rabbis for the Old Testament portion scriptures, the word Torah. The "a" in front of the word *nomia* negates the word Torah so, it means to not keep the Torah. So, Yeshua is actually saying, "Depart from me, you who do not keep God's Old Testament commandments." Yochanan says that not keeping God's Old Testament commandments is sin; He used the same word for not keeping the Torah, God's Old Testament commandments, as Yeshua did. 1 John 3:4 NKJV says, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." Yeshua came so that we would stop sinning. Because of the problems with the text and people misunderstanding the scriptures, people will form an opinion or theology on what the Bible is teaching us.

Bible teachers often 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 New Testament 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. It is not God's law that is cursed. Psalms 119:21 NKJV says, "You rebuke the proud – the cursed, who stray from Your commandments." The curse is not keeping the Old Testament laws, which are God's laws and are doctrine.

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. I was surprised to find out that a number of former pastors have small groups that teach people to keep God's Old Testament commandments. They could not teach the truth in their church, so they decided to keep what the Bible says and teach the people the truth. There are some pastors who know the truth and keep God's Old Testament commandments but will not teach their congregation the truth. I know a pastor like that. I believe it is important that people know the truth.

I know of someone who used to go to a church that did not teach the truth. She began reading the Bible and found out that they were holding back the truth and she lost her faith in God because of it.

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 God's commandments coming from the creator God. The Bible testifies to us that God's commandments are good. There are perhaps hundreds of scriptures that say that God's Old Testament 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 wants us to walk when we keep His commandments. God is a good God, right? It says in Deuteronomy 6:17-18 that God's commandments are "right and good." We are to keep God's commandments diligently so that we are not ashamed. 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." We need to have the same attitude.

People who have good intentions but lack the truths of God's word will not escape God's just judgment. 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 and teach and keep God's Old Testament commandments. Some commandments were for men, some for women, some for the priests, some all people are to keep, and some are for specific situations. Apply those that apply to you. A lot is at stake for you. Shaul says in Philippians 3:13-14 NKJV, "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." What is the upward call of the Messiah? Yeshua said he will reject those who do not keep the law. Matthew 7:23 NKJV says, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

Be faithful and endure. You may not be popular with the people who value made up religion over the truth, but I would rather trust in God and His commandments and God's word. Keep God's Old Testament commandments. Hebrews 10:36 NKJV says, "For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise." What

are we supposed to do? There are clear verses that tell us what we are supposed to do. Romans 7:12 NKJV says, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good." We will be in God's future kingdom if we endure. 2 Timothy 2:12 NKJV says, "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him."

**Commandments and Implied Commandments in this Portion.
(We can understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible.)**

We are to pray for God's help with life and family. Genesis 25:21.

The man of the house should take initiative in prayer. This also suggests that men should take spiritual responsibility in their home. Genesis 25:21.

According to the Book of Jasher, Yitz'chak listened to his wife. Men should be kind and caring towards their wives and give them a voice. Jasher 25:6 says, "And Rebecca said unto him, but arise now thou also and pray, that the Lord may hear thy prayer and grant me children, and Isaac hearkened to the words of his wife."³ Ephesians 5:28 NKJV says, "So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies."

We are to ask God for understanding in certain situations and He may inform us. If God tells us something to do, we need to do it. God gave the right of the first born to Ya'akov. Also, God told Isaac to stay in Canaan and he did. Genesis 25:22, 26:2-5.

Sometimes it is better to appease others to keep peace. The wells belonged to Yitz'chak, but he pursued peace knowing that God would provide. He was a man of peace. Genesis 26:18-22; also see Romans 12:18.

We see God speaking to believers in our portions. God spoke to believers in the past and He still does. Genesis 26:23-24; Acts 2:17-18 NKJV says, "That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy."

We may need to use sensible means when dealing with others. Especially fear those who may lead you to eternal damnation. Genesis 27:43-44; Matthew 10:28.

Fathers should pass on blessings to their children. Genesis 28:3-4.

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

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 6,521 times in the Old Testament portion according to Strong's Dictionary. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using

³ <https://sacred-texts.com/chr/apo/jasher/26.htm>

His real name. So, why not use God's real name? According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. In that verse and everywhere we see a name for God in all capitals (in some of our Bibles) it is this exclusive name for God, Yě-hō-váh. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah which means to exist. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. He is our eternal God and creator. I want to honor God's name. Will you also honor God's name?

Some people call God Hashem which means "the name." They dishonor God's name by not using His name (see Deuteronomy 29:20). When we honor someone, we use their name in an appropriate way. Christians for the most part do not use the true name of God. Why not begin using His true name and honor Him? Do not be afraid to use God's real name with respect. I say this in order to encourage you to use God's real name because it points to God being our eternal creator.

The ancient rabbis say that is God's name. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. I have seen God's name pointed as Yě-hō-váh in the Aleppo Codex. 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. So, let's put God's name on His people.

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמְרֶכָּ
יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחֲנֶנֶךָ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

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

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

Thank you for being with us today.