



#37 Shelach Lekha Numbers 13:1-15:41
Torah Teaching and teaching, Move Forward
By Moshe Schwab

Names

Kefa – Peter
Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ
in the Greek means to be smudged
Mishkan – Tent of Meeting in the desert
Moshe – Moses
Shaul – Paul
Yeshua – Jesus' real name
Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Ex. 3:15)
Yochanan – John

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets
Menorah – 7 candle Israelite lamp
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
Mishkan – tent of meeting in the desert
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the
Torah
(There are also transliterations from Hebrew)

Shelach Lekha means, "send for yourself." This parashah talks about the scouts who were sent into Canaan to scout the land. I would like to begin by talking about how we decide we will live.

We think things will last and there will be no problems with the way we live. So, we get entrenched in how we live and in the way we relate to God. Jeremiah 2:13 NKJV says, "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns – broken cisterns that can hold no water." God's truths are like a life-giving fountain of fresh water. Instead, people develop their own belief systems that are not from an all-knowing creator and good God.

Nehemiah 9:6 NKJV says, "You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You." There is only one God who created everything, and God makes all things continue to exist by His will. Some say that God created everything and then just walked away. That is not true. If God did not preserve His creation, it would cease to exist. Also, since God is the creator, He knows what is best for us and how we should live.

People often base their beliefs on their own viewpoint. The problem with that is there is nothing to hold them to what they believe. Their views can change at any time to what they may perceive as their advantage. With nothing to guide them but themselves, we could say their views are slanted. For example, we view ourselves as standing upon the earth. But a person who defines their own truths might think their slanted version of truth is the same as anyone else's. That cannot be true unless there is a source for truth. Without a source for truth, someone's up can become someone else's down. Up must be up and down must be down in terms of how gravity works. Gravitational force is defined by which direction an object falls. The idea that we can define life how we want to is therefore a lie.

Psalms 100:3 NKJV says, "Know that the LORD, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture." We are not God, so we cannot define life on our own. There are a lot of people who think they are God, but that does not make them God. Just because someone thinks they are the king or queen of England; it does not make them the king or queen of England. People who think are a something that they are not are often labeled as crazy. Also, when God says that we are the sheep of His pasture it does not mean we are sheep. The wording is used to describe the caring nature of God. There are figures of speech in the Bible, but they are easily understood.

We have people out there who believe they can define everything and anything in life their own way. Unfortunately, they are setting themselves up for the lake of fire for eternity because they reject the goodness of God and the truths of the Bible. God wants what is best for us, but there are many who think they are God and know everything. Because they reject what is "right and good" (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18), they bring evil into the world, so God must judge people justly.

Notice that Shaul says that he has warned the Galatians in the past. We need to warn people in our era as well because of the false doctrine being taught. Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV says, "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." People must also live right to be saved. James 2:17 NKJV says, "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

We must live by truth and discard those things that are contrary to truth. I once looked at some land that looked like any other piece of land. But when I began to walk around the 160 acres of land, I realized it contained lots of trash from people who drove by and threw their trash out their car window. What seemed to be a great property needed to be cleaned up. We are talking about an immense amount of work. In the same way, people need to adjust their thinking and get rid of the trash in their minds and replace them with what is "right and good."

We are to be a good and kind people but hate sin. I treat everyone with respect. I most certainly will not succumb to the idea that sin is okay to do. Only deluded people think that bringing evil into the world through sin is okay. Do not follow their made-up belief system. 2 Chronicles 7:14 NKJV says, "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." God can make life better because He is God. Each one of us has the opportunity to bring good into our land instead of evil. Listen to God and how He wants us to think and live. Stop doing evil.

God will forgive us if we decide to do what is right. Psalms 103:12-13 NKJV says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him." Notice that this is an Old Testament scripture.

God has always forgiven those who want to change and live right. We live right by following God's commandments and not our own ideas on life.

There is no better time than the present to begin getting rid of false belief systems and wrong ideas. In that way, we can begin the process of looking at things from their right perspective. Imagine that someone puts up a fence that is crooked and it looks awful. That is how a life of evil looks. We all need to straighten out how we think so that we can function properly. Make the scriptures alive through your life. Some people do not want to follow the true God. Do not be like them. Be your own person, a person who appreciates God's commandments and does them. Psalms 18:30 NKJV says, "As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him." If you trust in God, you will keep His commandments; they are proven to help us in life. God's commandments give us hope in life. Psalms 119:114-116 NKJV says, "I hope in Your word. Depart from me, you evildoers, for I will keep the commandments of my God! Uphold me according to Your word, that I may live; and do not let me be ashamed of my hope."

We pray that we may stay strong in our God all the days of our life. Let us walk the true path for life no matter where we are or what we are doing. Oh God, your words give life; they are more than just words on a page. You are a real, kind, and caring God over everything. Make our ways easy and give us strength in all we do. We put our hope in You, Your word, and in Yeshua the Messiah, and in nothing else. Amen.

More to consider

Some people seek the truth and want to know God. The truth is there, but they cannot receive it. If your glass is already full, you won't be able to put any more in it. So likewise, people may want truth, but they are unwilling to let go of what they have and therefore they cannot receive the truth.

Ever since I began my quest for God and for truth, I didn't realize that I was on mission for life. Truth doesn't come by being closed off to it. We need to be able to discern and consider spiritual truths. I learned early on in my quest for truth that we must rely on the Bible as our source for truth. It is getting through the ideas presented to us that can be difficult. A lot of the concepts being taught by mainstream Christianity are taken out of their context.

Years ago, I remember reading Colossians Chapter 2 out of context and applying it to what I already believed. The truth is, Colossians Chapter 2 is about not following man-made doctrines. Colossians 2:8 NKJV, "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men." Colossians 2:22 NKJV, "Which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men." We talked about this last week. Most people seem to use these scriptures to defend their man-made doctrine which they already believe. I'm not kidding. They reverse the context of Colossians Chapter 2 to mean we do not have to keep God's commandments in the Old Testament portion. We are to keep God's commandments and watch out for man-made commandments.

For example, they say we don't have to keep the true day of rest that God instituted and made holy. Genesis 2:3 NKJV, "Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." When we honor the true day of rest, we honor God as the creator. Over and over, it tells us to keep Shabbat in the Old Testament portion. False teachers tell us that somehow God has changed His mind and we are not to honor God as the creator on the right day – the right day is our Friday evening at sunset to Saturday at sunset. They are making up a commandment of men because they don't consider the context of Colossians Chapter 2 correctly. Making commandments of men is the very thing that Colossians 2 tells us not to do! Some people teach just the opposite of what Colossians Chapter 2 is saying in order to substantiate their man-made belief system!

Do not use what you know for the wrong purposes. If you know the truth, reach out to others in a loving and kind way. God is the final judge; it is not up to us to pronounce judgment.

Sometimes I wonder what will happen to people who keep the day of rest on the pagan day of the Sun god, Sunday. They inherited this day from the pagan Roman Empire which used religion to control the people. They actually promised eternal life for following their pagan religion and not what the Bible says.

All we can do is to let people know that they are being misled by religion instead of the Bible. Share the Bible and let people decide for themselves what they will follow. Will they follow God or what people contrive? It may cause us pain to see people being led by false doctrine and man-made theology; just give it to God.

They may ask their pastor why keep the day of the Sun god and not the Sabbath that the Bible tells us to keep. Their pastor will tell them that it is because Sunday is when Yeshua rose from the dead. You see, the religious system does not want to change so they make up false doctrine. In fact, if you are Jewish, it is simple to understand that when Mary Magdalene saw Yeshua early on the first day of the week, it was our Saturday evening. the Jewish biblical day starts in the evening. Genesis 1:5 NKJV says, "So the evening and the morning were the first day." In the Gospel of John, **Mary Magdalene met Yeshua** after sunset on our Saturday. Yeshua is still at the tomb.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell a different story about women going back to the tomb early on the next morning, our Sunday morning. They are called the synoptic gospels because these gospels have a lot of the same information in them. Mary Magdalene went back to the tomb with other women on our Sunday morning and **Yeshua is no longer there**. The synoptic gospels tell this story, and the gospel of Mark qualifies the story by including the information about Mary Magdalene being the first to see Yeshua. Mark 16:9 NKJV says, "Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene." John tells the story of Mary Magdalene meeting Yeshua at the tomb after He rose from the dead – that would be early the first day of the Jewish week which is our Saturday evening. Theology just makes up what it wants to keep their false belief system intact.

You may say, what is the difference, but theology doesn't stop with just one thing. It just keeps on going, replacing truth with their own version of the Bible. They have made up a false man-made belief system that circumvents the truth. Yeshua said about people like these, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men;" Matthew 15:9 NKJV. That's what Yeshua said, so do you want to trust these false teachers with your eternal life?

Study and know what is right and true. Do not give in to spiritual death. One thing for sure is that the Bible clearly says that those who live in sin will not be in God's future kingdom. There are some people who are good people, but they do not accept what the Bible says about sexual sin or idolatry, or perhaps some of the other things the Bible says will keep them out of God's future kingdom. If they are unwilling to follow our God and King in this life, what makes them think they will be allowed to be in the future kingdom with God as our King?

Proverbs 2:1-7 NKJV

If you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you,
 So that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding;
 Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding,
 If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures;
 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.
 For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding;
 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly.

We are to receive God's words and commandments over the words of people. They are a treasure because they are from an all-knowing and good God. We are to try to understand how to apply His commandments and cry out for discernment. We are to seek God's ways like they have value; they are as good as money and even treasure. Have awe towards our God and His word; God gives us knowledge and understanding it says. God's commandments are wisdom for life so they can act as a shield in life.

The world has a lot to offer and entices us with thousands of options. This is in stark contrast to God's commandments which offers us knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Whether it is online or at the store, we are offered thousands of things and perhaps we think at times that is all there is to life. We don't need as much as we think we do. It's important to have necessities and even some nice things to enjoy.

I went to a garage sale in the neighborhood I was living in a few years ago and I was a little shocked at the extravagance that these people lived in. Some of the baubles at the sale were going for \$300; it was interesting. We lived a simpler life and I think we had less to worry about; we were content with what we needed, and we had a few nice things that we liked.

Many people live for the things of this world instead of valuing their spiritual lives. It is a very sad how most people are deluded into thinking that this life is all there is. I remember going to a mansion years ago to pick up something for my aunt. The lady at the mansion told me that all that she had meant nothing as I stood in her foyer with a six-foot-wide staircase with beautiful wood banisters and life size portraits along the staircase. We can't take these things with us

after we die. It is important to understand that there is much to look forward to in the future kingdom of our creator and God.

The Bible says there is nothing waiting for us in the grave. Ecclesiastes 9:10 NKJV, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going." Fortunately, those who follow God's commandments have something wonderful to look forward to.

In Jewish and biblical thought, the greatest treasure is God's commandments – we saw this in Proverbs where we just read that. Again, Proverbs 2:4 NKJV says, "Search for her as for hidden treasures." Yeshua said in Matthew 6:19-21 NKJV, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Are our thoughts consumed with doing what is right and keeping God's commandments? Don't be confused by the Chinese idea that treasures are considered your thoughts.

So don't treasure earthly ways or thoughts over what God has given us. If you treasure God's ways like it said in Proverbs Chapter 2, they will be a shield for your life. Yeshua implies that by keeping God's commandments, we will also lay for ourselves treasures in the future kingdom. How wonderful that will be – a kingdom created by a loving and great God with streets that appear like they are gold. Revelation 21:21 NKJV says, "And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass." It is going to be amazing!

Still More to Think About

We need goodness and godliness to be a constant part of our lives. Jewish synagogues in the first century were called schools of virtue. The Jews had refined how to apply the scriptures. How do we love others? Yochanan says it is by keeping God's commandments. 1 John 5:2-3 NKJV, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." There was no New Testament at the time, so he is talking about keeping the Old Testament portion laws which give us "**wisdom and understanding,**" – see Deuteronomy 4:6.

We need good and healthy spiritual food. That's why Kefa tells us to work on our virtues. There is a tendency to disregard good manners and considerate acts and communication, but that is not biblical. Kefa says these things are important.

2 Peter 1:5-9 NKJV

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

Feel good theology is only a temporary fix for life. You might feel good after the teaching when you leave your congregation, but did you get encouraged to do what is right? Did you get doctrine that was grounded in the Jewish context of the Bible or a just advice and false Gentile theology? Did you get a teaching that will help lead you to eternal life? Kefa also says that they are to actually do what is right, or they will end up like those in the past who sinned.

2 Peter 2:4-6 NKJV

God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.

Noah actually did what was right and saved the world! Celebrate our true God and King, stay away from the lies of Gentile theology. Our God is the true God and Creator. He defines Himself as the Creator God so that is who He is. Our God is big enough to let us know what is best for life; therefore, His words still give us "wisdom and understanding," Deuteronomy 4:6.

Why do we talk about the portions from the Torah? The prophet Nehemiah is credited with separating the Torah into portions (54 sections), but Moshe (Moses) himself could have done that. Nehemiah was a holy prophet who wrote one of the books of the Bible. God probably told the holy prophet Nehemiah to teach these portions so people would be instructed throughout the year.

We need frequent instruction so we can be faithful. Shaul (Paul) said in 2 Timothy 4:1-2 NKJV, "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." There was no New Testament at the time, so he was talking about the Old Testament. Shaul says that God's word is important, so it is not a matter of our belief system or what we think, but of truth.

Torah Study

Shelach Lekha means, "send for yourself." This parashah talks about the scouts who were sent into Canaan to scout the land. Of particular interest for us is Caleb who represented the tribe of Judah. He was not Jewish according to modern Jewish standards, but he was assimilated into the tribe of Judah. His genealogy is in the Bible. The Bible says the Israelites were a mixed group (Exodus 12:38) so they assimilated into different tribes. It was always God's intention that the Gentiles be assimilated into the Jewish community. Moshe changed Hoshea's name to Yehoshua (Joshua). Hoshea means God saved; Yehoshua means God saves. Joshua could have felt that he was on a mission for God when Moshe did this. Caleb and Joshua were the only scouts to give positive reports.

Perhaps the scouts left for Canaan at the end of the month of Sivan because it is said that the sin of the spies took place on the 9th of Av (see Mishna Taanit 4:6-7). The 1st and 2nd Temples are said to have been destroyed on the 9th of Av. After forty days, the spies returned and the 10 negative spies said that although the land was plentiful, the people there were well fortified.

Some of the Israelites responded by being filled with fear. The people were about to stone Moshe, but the presence of the Lord appeared, and the Lord threatens to disown them. Moshe pleads for the people and reiterates the mercy that God had revealed to Moshe previously and the Lord relents.

Because of their sin and unbelief, the people of that generation, those 20 and over except for those who didn't commit the sin of the ten spies, would die in the wilderness. Israel would spend forty years (38 more years) in the wilderness. Don't forget though that some 2 million people still made it to the promised land, isn't that wonderful! Believers are not perfect in our era either. Be a person who will make it into the future kingdom of God.

Those that spread the negative rumors would die. Satur the son of Michael who was one of the negative scouts, whose name adds up to 666, was perhaps the instigator of the unbelief among Israel. Perhaps the number used by Yochanan (John) in the book of Revelation, 666, has more to do with a people who lack faith in God. It seems more and more in this age are denying the existence of God.

Psalms 14:1-2 NKJV says, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God." Sometimes we try to assess what is going on in the world and it looks like everyone has become fools. Just go to YouTube sometime and listen to some of the junk that's on there. There are as many opinions as there are people. If you want truth, you need to go to the Creator God who knows all and wants us to have the wisdom He has given us in the Bible.

Some of the Israelites among the camp decided to go into Canaan after they were told not to, and they were defeated because they were no longer supposed to go into the land. This teaches us that we need to listen to how God leads us. If He says no, then the answer is no.

Then information is presented about the giving of offerings after they enter the land. They stoned a man who was not keeping Shabbat. They all had different jobs. He was probably doing his job which he wasn't supposed to do on Shabbat. Also, it says they were to make fringes on the corners of their garments (called tzitzit) with a blue cord as a reminder to keep God's commandments and be a holy people. The Jews can't agree on the color blue, so they use all white cords. So, they don't keep the commandment because of their micromanagement and man-made doctrines. Anything man-made can become an idol.

It doesn't seem to occur to them that any shade of blue would provide for keeping this command. Instead of arguing about God's commandments, they need to do them. Deuteronomy 4:2 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." God said keep the Sabbath (Friday night and Saturday during the day), but Gentile theology says it is okay to change that. They are also changing God's commandments.

We repeatedly see that God expects His people to be a holy and believing people and be willing to follow God's leading. Israel kept moving forward even after failure and we also need to keep

moving forward spiritually. Also, the effect of the negative talk of the spies results is a lack of trust in God and is a deterrent to receiving God's promises. So, stay in faith.

What can we learn from the sin of the spies?

*The lack of faith in this era has resulted in several things. Some are afraid of the Holy Spirit even though Yeshua commands us not to be afraid of the Holy Spirit in Luke 11:13 NKJV, "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;" Luke 11:13 NKJV. People think negative things about people who speak in tongues; there is nothing wrong with God's gifts; sometimes people can act a little weird; that's not God's fault. Shaul tells us to desire God's gifts. "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts;" 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV.

*Speaking in tongues and desiring God's spiritual gifts are God's commandments, so not pursuing those are sin. Shaul said, "The things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord;" 1 Corinthians 14:37 NKJV. Wasn't Canaan a gift from God to Israel? God removed the perverted people and child murderers and gave the land to Israel. It is a picture of the future kingdom of God, perverted people will be in the lake of fire. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "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." We all have a choice how we will live and where we will go for eternity.

*Unbelief can affect many areas of our life. We work to provide for our family; our work represents who we are; we provide services for others; our job also provides for those who work with us. A negative attitude about work can be a detriment to our life and the lives of others.

*A negative attitude about people can affect how we treat them. Being negative can cause us to make others stumble. Lashon harah (do not commit evil speaking) is a properly applied command from the Old Testament portion. Stay positive, it's the best defense against the devil. God values people: we are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26); we are valuable; others are valuable. Treat others with respect and dignity. Shaul said, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all;" Galatians 6:10 NKJV. That's what we teach; not the hate that these God haters teach. If people became conscientious understanding believers, this world would be a better place.

*Doing some things without God's permission can result in calamity. Some of those who went back to fight after God said not to ended up dying.

*We should always think about doing what is right. This portion ends by telling the people to wear fringes to remind them to keep God's commands. The Hebrew word "to look" at the fringes is the word "to see" (ra-ah). It then says we are not to use our eyes for lust. It is a Hebrew word play in two ways. First, we are to see the fringes to remind us to keep God's commandments and also, so our eyes won't cause us to sin. Also, the sin of the 10 spies is in this portion. Perhaps we could say that we are to spy on keeping

God's commandments and do not to spy on sinful ways. Be careful how you "spy" things. In the present it is appropriate to wear tzitzit at times to keep the command to wear tzitzit.

We also now have the Holy Spirit to remind us to keep God's commands. We are commanded to receive the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua (Acts 2:38-39), and we are to be clothed with the Holy Spirit the Bible says. Luke 24:49 NKJV, "I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." The word endued is the word to be clothed. Just as we are to wear tzitzit, we are to be clothed with the Holy Spirit.

The Haftarah for Shelach Lekha is Joshua 2:1-24. Joshua sends in two spies to check out Jericho. Rahab hides the spies and tells them that their God is the true God and asks them to spare her family. In contrast to the spies that gave the negative report, the spies reported to Joshua that the Lord will deliver the land into Israel's hands. Israel goes on to succeed. Archeologists have found the ruins and conquest of Jericho for an earlier time period than what was originally thought.

When we apply a more recent understanding, it was actually around 1447 BC that Israel left Egypt; the conquest of Jericho and other conquests found in Canaan fall right into place with this recent find. Then, both the timing and archeology then line up for the time period Israel would have actually entered Canaan. Because people are stuck in old thought, many don't see the how archeology proves Israel entered and conquered Canaan. Perhaps they just don't want it to fit together because they don't want to actually believe in God and be held accountable to God. We should be a people who care about the things of God and want to be accountable to the God of the universe; He cares for us so move forward and be strong in our God and King.

Move Forward
(An accompanying teaching for the Torah portion.)

God cares about us and sees us.

When we fully realize the goodness and love of God, we have no choice but to move forward in faith. It is truly an amazing reality to believe Psalm 139 in your heart and realize that this in your heart. I don't know if I could so appropriately put this into words what King David wrote in Psalm 139.

Psalms 139:1-6 NKJV says,

O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it.

God knows us through and through. There isn't anything that we think about or do that He does not know about. God knows what we are going to speak before we speak it. Perhaps we can apply this in different ways to ourselves. One way is that God knows all we go through, and

He truly cares enough about us to know us. I have seen people deeply touched by God revealing His caring nature.

One time while in the jungle, I had a word from God for a teacher there. I told her I had a vision of her before I went to the jungle and that God just wanted me to encourage her. Think about it. Most people would just say thank you, but she had been struggling; I had no idea. She began crying and after she got her composure together, it just turned out that the teaching that was about to begin was on how God knows us and the prophetic can reveal God's love for us. She began to cry again; the person teaching kept on repeating himself and saying more and more about God's love. She had to get up and go to the back where she continued to cry. The person doing the translating for me had to get up and go to the back because he began crying too. I sat there with tears in my eyes; I couldn't believe what had just happened. God truly does know us and cares about us.

Another thing to consider is that nothing that is in our heart or mind gets past God. Perhaps we feel a deep repentance just knowing how deeply God knows us. There are many times in my life that I have committed my life deeply to God while knowing that He knows me so completely. God's people have a true and personal relationship with God.

We are not a people who put up a fake front.

We're not interested in putting on a false face, but in living true to God and living how He wants us to live. Someone once came to Yeshua (Jesus) and asked Him how to have eternal life. Yeshua said, "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19:17 NKJV. There are people out there that think they are okay with God, but Yeshua said otherwise, "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!' Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV. Sometimes we look at the world and wonder where are the people who are true to God's heart.

There are some people out there that truly want to do what is right, who want to follow God, and want truth.

As we get to know some of these people, we truly see that they have a genuine love for God and want to live right. Years ago, one of my cousins believed in God and the Messiah Yeshua and he responded by telling me one day that he wanted to be holy. That is a natural response to wanting to be in relationship with God.

God set Israel free so they could be freed from the sin and idolatry of Egypt and live for God. Leviticus 11:45 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy." They were to dedicate themselves to being holy and keep God's commandments. Leviticus 20:7-8 NKJV says, "Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you." They were to be a holy separate people and not engage in the perversions of the world. 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."

Joshua and Caleb went into the land that God promised them, and they came back and told the people what God said is true; the land is just as God had told them. That should have been enough for them to realize that God was for them, and He would not leave or desert them. Israel was now God's people, and He would do what He said He would do. But some of the people listened to the words of unbelief and the worldly. After all that they had been through, God was there for them and remained with them. God is there for us and with us too as believers in the true God. So, don't shrink back from understanding that.

God is for us, His Holy Spirit is empowering, and we can have true peace in our God.

There are some great scriptures in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews 10:35-39 NKJV says:

"Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 'For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.' But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul."

Don't be downcast, be strong so you will receive God's promise of eternal life. Have faith, don't doubt, don't go back to destructive and sinful ways. Sin can bring bad things into our lives, and it also hurts our relationship with God. Through God, Israel was set free to live for God as His holy people and we are set free to live for God through the Messiah Yeshua.

Yeshua tells us, "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, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you;" John 14:15-18 NKJV. The world does not know us because we are not of the world. God has not left us alone but is with us and works in us through the Holy Spirit.

What kind of people will we be? Will we be overcome by worldly thinking like some were in the desert? Some 2 million people moved forward and made it to the land God had promised them. What a tremendous witness that is for us! Will we seek truth and seek God and change accordingly? God knows everything about us. Will we encounter God and realize He is God, and we are not? Will we deny Him? It is truly an honor and a privilege to be in relationship with God. How will we treat that privilege? We don't want a fake life, but to live true and good lives as God's people. We are on a mission with other true believers who want to live in relationship with God, and to be holy and keep his commandments. God is holy and He wants us to be holy; He has given us the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua to help us. He empowers us, so move forward and believe in His promise of eternal life. Israel did not give up but kept moving forward even after adversity. May we be a faithful people who keep moving forward and don't shrink back into destructive and sinful works.

The Aaronic Blessing

ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yě-hō-váh. Yě-hō-váh is used over 6,000 times in the Old Testament portion. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name.

According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name.

The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. 2,363 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה). Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people.

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶכָּ
 יֵאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחֲנֹךְ
 יֵשָׂא 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.