



Ki Teitzei, Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19
Torah teaching and teaching, Hold onto God
By Moshe Schwab

<p><u>Names</u> Kefa – Peter Moshe – Moses Shaul – Paul Yeshua – Jesus (in Hebrew it means "Salvation") Yĕhōváh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15) Yochanan – John</p>	<p><u>Terms</u> Haftarah – the weekly reading from the prophets Parashah – (portion) one of 54 portions of the Torah Shabbat – the 7th day of the week; we are to rest Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible</p>
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Introduction

The Torah portion for this week is Ki Teitzei and it means, "when you go." We teach the Torah portions because it was instituted by God's holy prophets, perhaps Nehemiah. Yeshua would have taught from the portions and that is what He was doing in Luke 4:21. We also have a teaching following the Torah study.

At what stage are we spiritually? We have talked a little about what Yeshua said in Matthew 5:20 NKJV: "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." The Pharisees kept extra misapplied laws. Some of their judgments contradicted God's commandments in the Old Testament portion and that is the context of Matthew Chapter 15. Yeshua says, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men;" Matthew 15:9 NKJV.

In Matthew 15, Yeshua objects to taking away from God's commandments in the Torah and Yeshua said it is wrong. Now that we have identified one of the main issues that Yeshua addressed in His time concerning the Pharisees, we can understand what Yeshua is saying in Matthew 5:20. Since the Pharisees were not keeping the Torah properly, they would not be allowed to enter the kingdom of heaven.

This is a stunning charge against those who do not keep the Torah. Some Christian preachers do exactly the same thing the Pharisees did. They make up a belief system that teaches people they do not have to keep certain commandments just like these rabbis did at the time of Yeshua.

The point I am making is, are we also doing following a belief system that teaches people not to keep God's commandments? Righteousness is doing what is right and doing what is right is to keep God's commandments. Yochanan explains this in 1 John 3:7 NKJV, "Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous." He says do not let anyone deceive you. So, do not let their false systematic theology concerning righteousness deceive

you. Some say you do not have to follow God's commandments in order to be righteous. That is not true. And do not follow their false system of theology that contradicts Yeshua. They will say that we are to follow the Messiah and then contradict His teachings. Many preachers in our era avoid the teachings of Yeshua because He contradicts their belief system.

Notice that Yochanan is teaching those who need to grow up in 1 John 3:7 and he calls them children. Shaul says we need to grow up too in Ephesians 4:14 NKJV, "That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men." Some preachers today are tricking people with their false theology. They do not understand the scriptures the way they were originally intended to be understood and they negate the scriptures with their teaching. Once we know what we are supposed to be doing, we should begin working on keeping God's commandments so that we will enter the kingdom of heaven. Are we growing up?

In the book of Hebrews, it talks about us learning the words of God, There was no New Testament portion at the time. Therefore, it is talking about learning the principles taught in the Old Testament portion. They needed to grow in the words that teach us what is right, to be righteous.

Hebrews 5:12-14 NKJV

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Start with learning the 10 Commandments and then the other applicable commandments in the Torah. Also, some of you have been lied to and told God's commandments in the Old Testament are too difficult. The Bible says that His commandments are not too difficult. Mitzvah means commandment. Deuteronomy 30:11 CJB says, "For this mitzvah which I am giving you today is not too hard for you, it is not beyond your reach." What is your spirituality like?

Are we learning and growing or are we just a spectator just having fun? I once went to a large congregation and their idea of coming before God was comparable to singing at a Christian rock concert on Sundays. Their spirituality amounted to enjoying a concert and a friendly encouraging teaching for about an hour each week. The pastor came out after the musicians finished and said we could all go home now. He was implying that their concert is all we need. He then proceeded with his mushy sermon.

That is a lot different than what the Bible tells us. Deuteronomy teaches us that our relationship with God is to be in every part of life.

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 NKJV

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

God's word is to be in our innermost being, our heart, and we are not to plod along in life without acknowledging God during our day. We are to teach about God and His commands. I

am not saying that we are robots that mindlessly impart God's commands during the day. Talk about God and let your family know how you are living that out. I am talking to the children as well. We all need to take time every day to talk about God and internalize what we practice. I have been pleasantly surprised at the conversations that can come from doing this. They can turn into real times of encouragement and instruction. Do not be afraid of honest questions. If you do not know the answer, you can leave it until a future time. Many commandments are easy to understand and apply.

Also, allow the work of the Holy Spirit. In this Messianic age, the Holy Spirit is our helper in so many ways.

*The Holy Spirit helps us personally in life. Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV says that the Holy Spirit help us to have, "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."

*Leaders are given gifts through the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 4:11-12 NKJV says, "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry."

*There are gifts of the Holy Spirit that are used to encourage, nurture, and deliver. Romans 12:6-8 NKJV says, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness."

*Here is another list of uses of the Holy Spirit. Notice it says that it is for "each one" in this Messianic age. These are not just manifestations, but they are to be used in the body of Messiah. Manifestations means evidences.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues."

Keep moving forward spiritually and do not let the worldly sidetrack you. There are so many things that can distract us from making God an integral part of our lives. I am not saying that we cannot have fun or work at a productive and satisfying job. But so many people do not know how to apply themselves spiritually and they lead weak spiritual lives.

Learn God's commandments and thoughtfully apply them. For example, it says in Leviticus 19:18 NKJV, "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD."

Shaul refers to Leviticus in Ephesians and says that we are to forgive and be kind and tenderhearted. Ephesians 4:32 says, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another." When Kefa uses Leviticus 19:18, he tells us to have virtues. Synagogues in Yeshua's time were called Schools of Virtue. 2 Peter 1:5-7 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."

There are many more scriptures that teach us how to apply Leviticus 19:18. These are proper applications of the Old Testament portion. As we can see, the New Testament portion's basis are applications of the Old Testament portion. What other applications of Leviticus 19:18 can you think of? For example, the Holy Spirit helps us with attributes such as joy, peace, patience, and love (Galatians 5:22-23).

More to Consider

Someone once sent me a teaching on us being a chosen people and priests (1 Peter 2:9-10); it was about the power we have, but that is not the real purpose of this scripture. It says in Exodus 19:5-6 NKJV, "You shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." What did it mean to the early believers back then? They were to be special and serve God and help others to be close to God. They were to be different than those who did not believe and they were to live how God told them to live. This scripture is not about our power, but being open and humble towards God.

Someone made a good point during our meeting. They said intentions are important. Are we open to God's loving commandments or are we doing things our own way and rejecting God. Yeshua took this very seriously. He uses an exaggeration to make His point. Yeshua said in Matthew 5:29-30, "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell." We are not supposed to literally pluck out our eye; it is an exaggeration to make a point. What Yeshua says is outlandish and harsh; that is the point. He means we should take our relationship with God very seriously and make every effort to do what is right. Do not end up in hell. Psalms 2:11 NKJV says, "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling."

Some say we are saved and are just to have joy. What does salvation mean? Just as Israel was set free from pagan Egypt (and their sin and oppression) so they could serve God, Yeshua came to set us free from sin so we could serve God. Matthew 1:21 CJB says about Yeshua, "You are to name him Yeshua, [which means 'ADONAI saves,'] because he will save his people from their sin."

The Messiah Yeshua came to help us not sin. **"Sin is lawlessness;" 1 John 3:4.** Some say the law is done away with; they are going to be in for a big surprise at judgement time. Yeshua said, "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 7:22-23 NKJV. It is plain, those who say the law is done away **are liars** and will go to the lake of fire. Do not go there with them. 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."

Being connected to God protects us from worldly things in many ways. In every area of life we need to apply what God says instead of philosophy or man-made doctrine. Take salvation for example. Some people say that we are to only believe in Yeshua. If you believe in Him, you will trust in His commandments. He is God and He gave us the Torah and the Holy Spirit **to help us** live right. John 14:15-17 NKJV says, "If you love Me, **keep My commandments**. And I will pray the Father, and He **will give you another Helper**, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth." The first helper is the Torah and God gives us another helper, the Holy Spirit through the Messiah.

Believing in the Messiah requires corresponding works; "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works;" James 2:19-21 NKJV. The people who say it's not by works do not understand Jewish context. We are to keep God's commandments. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "**Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments** always." We love God by keeping His commandments.

Sometimes one piece of life out of place can put pressures on life. Putting things in order can relieve the pressures of life. God wants us to have a life of Shalom, a blessed and peace filled life. Isaiah 26:3-4 says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever." Uncomplicate life by trusting in God and order your life. We follow a loving and good God.

God is the powerful source for life. We can rely so much on the world for satisfaction instead of God. For example, it can be a challenge how we use our down time. There is nothing wrong with enjoying things. Perhaps changing some of the things we do during this time of introspection before Yom Kippur can move us towards better ways to use our life and time.

We can be locked into patterns. Break the patterns that weigh us down and keep us worldly minded. Shaul summarizes the Torah and encourages Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12-13, "Be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, **give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.**" The Rabbis would often summarize main points instead of giving all the commandments. For example, the 'Torah expert' in Luke 10:25 CJB said love God and your neighbor. Timothy was to also read and teach the Torah. **They had regular readings for each week that they taught from.** The Torah reading for this week is Ki Teitzei; the readings were established by God through the prophets and Shaul commands Timothy to teach from the readings. It says in Acts 15:21 NKJV, "For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

There is a balance to life. Get done with the things we know that have to be done and then balance your time in other areas of your life. Always make time for prayer and the Torah. The Torah is God's word and was given by God to help us. Be at peace when we face pressure and do not conform to worldly values. And, watch out for man-made values and doctrines.

Torah Study

This Torah portion contains a lot of laws and begins with the law regarding a captive woman. If a soldier wants to make a captive woman his wife, he is to cut her hair and wait 30 days while she mourns. Like so many things in the Bible, the scriptures can also teach us other things. The captive woman teaches us not to marry hastily and that women should not dress in alluring nature. Allowing mourning should teach us to be caring about others' emotions. Lastly, the captive woman must agree to following the Torah; so, we should not marry someone who does not want to follow the Torah. Torah means instruction; namely, God's instruction. The word "yoke" in Jewish thought means the Torah. We should understand this when the Bible uses the word "yoke." In 2 Corinthians 6:14 NKJV it says, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers." So, watch out for people who say they believe in God, but do not live like they believe. The devils also believe the Bible says and they are going to the lake of fire.

A firstborn son should receive his double portion of the inheritance even if his wife is unloved. A rebellious child was to appear before the judges at the gate and to be stoned. This refers to a person who is doing things that warrant stoning. The Talmud incorrectly applies this to a child that is not doing things that warrant stoning. The Talmud is not God's word. It goes on to say in this portion that a person that is hung for a crime should not be left hung overnight. That is why Yeshua was taken off the stake and buried before nightfall. They were obeying the Torah.

Yeshua did not die on a cross. He died on a stake and then rose from the dead on the third day. He died for our sins; Isaiah 53:6 NKJV says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Yeshua fulfilled what was written in Isaiah in the Bible; Isaiah was written some 600 years before He came.

The Greek word translated "cross" was mistranslated. The Greek word that is translated "cross" is always the word for a pointed stake (σταυρός – staw-ráhs). Also, it is wrong to pray to an object like a cross;¹ the Torah commands us to not to make anything to pray to. Exodus 20:4-5 NKJV says, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image — any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them."

This may seem strange to some of you that have been taught that it is okay to pray before pictures, statues, candles, or crosses. Instead of using these objects to pray in front of, pray directly to God. Some believers have not been taught right. We are not to bow down before any objects. For example, the people were praying before the brazen serpent that Moshe made to heal people so King Hezekiah had it destroyed (2 Kings 18:4). Isn't that great; you do not have to kneel down before any objects.

*You can pray directly to God and
that's what God wants you to do.*

¹ It is true that objects not made to be prayed to are not idols, but the history of the cross symbol is pagan. We are not to do what the pagans do the Bible says. The Egyptian cross is an ankh (~3,000 BC). The cross was a pagan symbol in antiquity. Constantine worshiped the sun god Mithra. His vision of the sun and a pagan cross became associated with the religion of the Roman Empire which is completely devoid of the Jewish roots of the Bible. He made the day of the sun god, Sunday, the day of worship and the Roman Empire made God's feasts illegal. "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." Leviticus 23:2 NKJV. Their version of Christianity is a false religion.

Praying before objects is idolatry. The Bible says no idolater will be in the future kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV says, "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."

They were to return each other's animals or keep them until they could return them. They were also to help each other's injured animals. Women were not to wear men's clothing and men were not to wear women's clothing. This practice is often associated with sinful sexual behaviors. We just read in 1 Corinthians that these people will also not be in the future kingdom of God. There are also devil spirits that are associated with and promote these practices. Devil spirits influence and possess these people into engaging in these behaviors. Shaul talks about us being in a spiritual battle. Ephesians 6:11 NKJV says, "Stand against the wiles of the devil." Ya'akov said in James 4:7-8 NKJV, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." You do not have to be controlled by sin.

They could take the eggs of a mother bird, but not kill the mother bird. They were to build a wall around the roof so no one fell off. There are a lot of commands in this portion. For example, the command for a low wall on the roof can be reinterpreted to mean that we should provide protection such as railings, guardrails, and handrails. City ordinances in the United States often have these in their laws. Some of our laws resemble some of the commandments in the Bible. The rabbis in antiquity reinterpreted laws to provide justice in their society just as we do today. We have some 2 million laws in the United States now.

The some 1,050 commandments in the New Testament portion are interpretations of the Torah. There are only a couple hundred of applicable commands in the Old Testament portion, but they have been reinterpreted. The commandments in the New Testament portion are valid interpretations of the law. The rabbis though created many misapplied laws and added unneeded commands. For example, the Orthodox teach to put on the right shoe first. This is micromanaging, if you can even call it that. What does putting on your right shoe first have to do with God? Perhaps they think putting on the right shoe first gets them off on the, "right foot."

Understanding how to apply the Old Testament portion properly is important because it is the basis for the New Testament portion. Sometimes people's eyes will begin to glaze over when I share something from the Old Testament portion because they were told not to pay attention to it, but the Old Testament portion contains the roots of our faith. Where are these liars about the Old Testament going?

It goes on to say in this portion that, they were not to sow different kinds of seed together. They were not to make clothing from both wool and linen. They were to make cords (tzitzit) for the corners of their garment. This command is still valid. There is nothing wrong with doing this and I will wear tzitzit at times to fulfill this commandment, often at congregation.

False accusations concerning virginity would be punished. If these accusations are true, then the woman is to be stoned. Adulterers are to be stoned. Rape was to be punished by death. If a man raped a single woman, he must marry her. A man is not to take his father's wife. A man with disfigured genitals may not enter the area of Temple worship nor a bastard, or an

Ammonite, or a Moabite. They were not to detest an Edomite or an Egyptian. During war, a man who had a nocturnal emission was to wash himself outside the camp, they were to use a latrine, bury their excrement, not see anything indecent in the camp, and give refuge to a slave.

There was to be no male or female prostitution; what is earned by prostitution is detestable to God. There are people who say prostitution is okay since it is not mentioned in the New Testament portion. They just do not understand the Bible; they are wrong. They were not to charge interest to the Israelites, but to outsiders they could. They must perform their vows and they do not have to take vows. They could eat in their neighbor's field, but not harvest it. A man was not to remarry their former wife after divorce. A newly married man should not serve in the army.

*All the commandments of God are important for those
who want to trust God and want a relationship with God.*

They were not to take a person's tools that they use for business as collateral. Kidnappers were to be stoned. They were to be careful to observe the laws regarding skin outbreaks. They were not to enter someone's house and take collateral. They were to return the collateral of a poor person before nightfall. They were not to exploit their workers and they were to pay them.

This portion teaches us that we are to return each other's property. Sexual crimes were punishable by death; the Bible considers them serious offenses. They were to not to exploit the needy or foreigners. They were not to take a person's tools he used to provide for his family. They were to have honest weights and measures. Just removing the commandment from the Old Testament in our society about honest weights would put our society into turmoil. All the commandments of God are important for those who want to trust God and want a relationship with God. And, they are "right and good."

Fathers are not to be executed for the child's sins and vice versa. They were not to deprive a foreigner or orphan of justice. They were to leave anything they forgot to harvest for the foreigner, orphan, or widow. They were to settle disputes in court and the wrongdoer punished with not more than 40 lashes. Our system of government also allows for punishment to be executed dependent on the crime committed.

They were not to muzzle an ox that treads the grain (Deuteronomy 25:4). Shaul uses Deuteronomy 25:4 in 1 Timothy 5:18 to interpret that spiritual leadership should be supported. Many New Testament "churches" teach that the Old Testament portion is no longer relevant. Since Shaul uses it over and over to support what he is teaching, it cannot be true that the Old Testament is done away with.

A man should marry the widow of his brother and if he does not, he will be humiliated; her first born will inherit her dead husband's inheritance. A woman that grabs a man's genitals during a fight, her hand is to be cut off. They were to have correct and fair weights. They were to blot out the name of Amalek. Bible scribes will write the name of Amalek, scratch it out and scrape off the ink to fulfill this command. Yeshua said, "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life;" Revelation 3:5 NKJV. Stay strong so Yeshua does not blot out your name from the Book of Life. Yeshua is referring to losing your eternal life. We all have choice, why not do what is right.

The Haftarah for Ki Teitzei is In Isaiah 54. It says have joy barren woman you will have children. You will have many descendants. Your husband is God and your redeemer. I am taking you back with grace and God's covenant of peace will not be removed.

Isaiah 54:10 NKJV says about Israel, "For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed." We must remember that scriptures that refer to Israel still refer to Israel. We know that Isaiah 53 is about the Messiah. Isaiah 54 is about Israel. We have to be careful not to reinterpret things meant for Israel. This is a common mistake among some who read the Bible. They are misapplying the scriptures. God is not done with Israel as some say.

Hold onto God **(A practical teaching to accompany the Torah teaching, Ki Teitzei)**

In this portion of the Torah we see a lot of commandments. We follow God's commandments because He is the creator God and knows what is best for us. There are some commands that may not make much sense to us, but God knows why we should keep them. Even if we do not understand a commandment, we should just trust in God. Why not trust in the creator?

Work at directing your life to God. When you keep God's commands, it will prolong your life, and give you peace in life.

Proverbs 3:1-4 NKJV says, "My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man." God's word is truth; who wouldn't want truth for life?

Years ago, I was watching someone describe his 300-page book on TV. He was talking about how to have peace in life. I thought, "The Bible tells us how to have peace and it doesn't cost anything." It says that God's ways can not only give you peace, but extend your life. There was a study done years ago on people who followed God; they determined that the people following God and doing what is right actually had better DNA than others. I find that remarkable!

By keeping God's commands, we are bringing the power of God into our lives. I was talking to someone once and they said that God's word is helping them to think better and even delivering them from some mental oppression. I know of some that have struggled with these issues and they are truly suffering. Wow! God can work in us like nothing else can.

It says in Isaiah 45:8 NKJV, "And let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together. I, the LORD, have created it." The word "salvation" in this verse is the word deliverance.² That's what God's words in the Bible can do for us; they can bring us deliverance; they are powerful. I have been blessed by God's words; they have helped me to have a better life; we need His word! They are true and powerful.

²"h3468. עֲשׂוּׁהָ עֵשׂוּׁהָ; from 3467; liberty, deliverance, prosperity" – [Strong's Enhanced Dictionary](#)

*"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind
is stayed on You, because he trusts in You."
Isaiah 26:3 NKJV*

It is one thing to have peace, but perfect peace must be amazing. That is something we all want. Isaiah 26:3 is one of my favorite verses because of that. The words in the Bible do not give you peace by themselves. It says in Isaiah 26:3 that we must trust in God and His word if we desire that peace. We trust in God by growing spiritually, studying the scriptures, keeping God's commandments, and having faith in God.

Strive toward a godly life by being consistent.

We learn and apply the scriptures over and over. Being consistent produces results. Psalms 1:2-3 says, "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season." The Bible says that when we apply God's commandments to life, day and night, we will get results; that's what fruit means.

Imagine living in a dry climate and being a tree that is thriving year-round because it is planted near water. When we consistently apply God's commandments day and night, we will get results, fruit. Fruit is the end result and yield of the tree. There are reasonable applications of this. As we learn to do God's commandments, we apply reasonable ways that help us to keep God's commandments. We understand that these "helps" that we apply are not commandments, but things that help us to keep God's commandments.

For example, when we begin to do something that we should not do on Shabbat, we stop. We do not make up an extra commandment in order to keep Shabbat. Or perhaps there is some ritual that we do. I pray to do what is right and good every morning and that helps me to set the stage for my day. Then as the day goes on, I think about doing what is right. The Bible says that making extra commandments is wrong, but there is nothing wrong with developing personal ways to help us keep God's commandments.

Perhaps there are areas we need to change in our life. Perhaps we have trouble with the words we speak. Yeshua said we will be held accountable for our words. Do our words communicate scriptural values? Do our words help others or tear them down? Yeshua said in Matthew 12:36 NKJV, "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment."

Is it okay to have fun? Of course, but when you have fun, do not do it in a crude or vulgar way. Here is a funny story. A friend of mine liked the Three Stooges and he had a Three Stooges watch with a picture of them on the face of the watch. They were comedians who did silly antics. One time my friend was on an elevator and a person from out of the country was on the elevator with him and asked about his watch and said, "family?"

Perhaps we have trouble with humility. I am not saying we are to accept being humiliated. If we do something that is wrong, own up to it. We are not to be too proud to work on our faults. Proverbs 16:5 NKJV says, "Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD." Abomination means disgusting. If we are too proud to listen to others, if we are always looking at others faults instead of taking care of our own faults, then we are disgusting to God. That is

what it says. We have enough to do to work our own life let alone taking on everyone else. Micah 6:8 NKJV says, "He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Call attention to those areas in life that we need to change and work on them.

Hold on firmly to God; be satisfied and at peace in that.

Remember the tree planted by waters that brings its fruit, it is like someone who keeps God's commands. If you trust in God and allow His word and His Holy Spirit to guide you, you will be satisfied in life. You will never be wanting because you are more satisfied with the things of God than the things of this world. Isaiah 58:11 NKJV says, "The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail." You will be satisfied in life by following God and His Messiah Yeshua.

Psalms 103:1-5 NKJV:

Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! 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.

Being satisfied in life is perhaps half the battle of life, it's important. God has helped me; He has healed me at times; He is truly a kind and good God; I am satisfied following God.

This portion contains a lot of important miscellaneous laws. Some of the laws are used in our own culture. God is the creator and knows what is best for us. Work at directing your life towards God. It will give you peace and even make your life longer; perhaps by even changing and protecting your DNA. Be consistent in developing a godly life. Work at areas in your life that need attention. Be humble and willing to accept correction and grow spiritually. Hold on firmly to God and trust in Him.