



## **#22 VaYakhel Exodus 35:1-38:20**

### **Torah Teaching 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  
Yĕhōvāh – 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  
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible  
Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah  
Vayakhel – the 22<sup>nd</sup> Torah portion  
(We also use transliterations from Hebrews)

Our portion for today is Vayakhel which means "and he assembled." Sometimes it is a double portion, but today it is not. Sometimes portions are doubled up because there are 54 portions each year and there are also portions that are taught on God's feasts which makes for a few more portions each year. In Vayakhel, we see the people acting together for the work of the Mishkan. They were making the effort to do what God told them to do.

The people were being generous with their time and money. Do not underestimate what they had to do to survive in the desert. Although God provided water and manna, they still had to take care of all the details of life including gathering the manna. In this era, we also must take care of all the things we need to do for life, but that should not stop us from being generous towards the things of God both with our resources or our time.

I would like to talk a little about what it means to worship God. We do that most of all by treating God for who He is. For example, God is our provider because He is the creator. Also, God knows what is best for us because He is the creator and has given us His commandments. We have a good and kind God. Psalms 145:15-16 NKJV says, "The eyes of all look expectantly to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing."

When the people were to bring their offerings to the Temple, they were to rejoice in all that God had provided. Deuteronomy 26:9-11 NKJV says, "He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O LORD, have given me. Then you shall set it before the LORD your God, and worship before the LORD your God. **So you shall rejoice in every good thing which the LORD your God has given to you.**"

We should give thanks verbally for all God has given us. Our thoughts should also agree with what we are saying. After they came and gave the first of their harvest from their crop, they

were to then worship it says. In the Hebrew, the word translated worship is, Chavah (Strong's number, H2331) which means, "to live; by implication (intensively) to declare or show." The translators thought that the sense of the usage meant to worship but what does it mean to live before God? We are to recognize and behave like God is the creator. In the case of the firstfruits offering, they were to make the offering and rejoice to the creator God. In life, we are to have joy over all that God has provided for us and that includes His good commandments and also the Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit in this era. Every day when we eat, we are to give thanks for God's provision. Deuteronomy 8:10 NKJV says, "When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you." In the giving of thanks for God's provision we recognize God as the creator.

We are to have a thankful attitude towards our creator God's commandments. The Psalms were actually songs. There are different ways we can be thankful to God.

Psalms 19:8-11 NKJV says,

The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

God did not give us His commandments to burden us, but to help us. They are more valuable than gold so be thankful for them.

We should also have joy because of God's gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 13:52 NKJV says, "And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." Just like God's commandments help us in life, the Holy Spirit is another helper for the believers in Messiah Yeshua. 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." Be thankful for God's gift of the Holy Spirit and just like we are to be diligent to keep God's good commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18), we should desire the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 14:1).

Joy is an important element for life and the lack of joy can cause problems in life and even cause us to desire sinful ways to achieve satisfaction. Deuteronomy 28:47-48 NKJV says, "Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, therefore you shall serve your enemies." God wants us to guard (keep) His good commandments; we are to live before God by keeping His commandments.

Shaul talks about this in Romans 12:1-2 NKJV: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." What is God's perfect will for us? It is to transform our lives through His good commandments that are worth rejoicing over, they are right and enlightening, they endure forever, and they can warn us and are worth keeping.

I would now like to begin our introductory teaching for today. God has a special way for us to excel in life. We are to be God's unique people. Exodus 19:5-6 NKJV says, "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." Isn't that wonderful! God wants us to be His treasured people. We do that by being a holy people. Deuteronomy 7:6 NKJV says, "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth." Deuteronomy 14:2 NKJV says, "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

What does the Bible say about how we can be God's holy people? 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." We are holy if we keep God's commandments. That has not changed. 1 Peter 2:9 NKJV says, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." We are God's holy people by keeping His commandments. If we do not keep God's commandments, we will fall short of the grace of God. Hebrews 12:14-15 NKJV says, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God."

Kefa felt that he would be negligent if he did not warn the people. 2 Peter 1:12-13 NKJV says, "For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you."

What did Kefa remind them of?

2 Peter 2:4-6 NKJV says,

For if 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."

Also, 2 Peter 3:14-17 NKJV says,

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—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. You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked."

What scriptures is Kefa talking about? There was no New Testament portion at the time. People were twisting the Old Testament scriptures to their destruction. God did not spare the ancient world that was full of sin. In order for God to be a good God, He must judge those who are wicked and do evil. Beware that you do not fall and be "led away with the error of the wicked." All the writers of the New Testament portion tell us to keep God's good Old Testament commandments. For example, 1 John 3:4 NKJV says, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." It is a sin to not keep the Old Testament laws.

People will say that Shaul (Paul) was not Jewish but Christian. Shaul defends himself before the governor, Felix. Instead of saying he was now a Christian, he affirmed that he accepted the Old Testament law and believed in it. Acts 24:14 says, "I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets." So, people who say that Shaul did not keep the law or teach the law is not true.

We should mention that Jerome, who translated the Bible into Latin, said the Greek manuscripts had been tampered with and they needed to be corrected. So, it is likely that some of our misunderstanding of Shaul comes from the scriptures being tampered with.

For example, in James 1:25, the Greek text adds the word liberty which is not in the Hebrew manuscript of James 1:25. Without the word liberty our Bibles should read, "the perfect law (Torah) and continues therein." In the Hebrew James, this verse says we are to observe the Torah. There is a lot of evidence that both Jew and Gentile are supposed to keep the Torah. Anytime we see something that seems to say otherwise we might be misunderstanding what it is saying, it could be an error in translation (the translators are human), or because the Greek had been changed in some places, it could be something that had been altered by heretics. Do not follow what the heretics taught.

Shaul's standard for life was the Old Testament law.

(We will repeat this short section in the Torah portion for today.)

We are to be those who follow truth. There are a lot of people who say they know what is best and there are many religions that say they teach the truth. What determines that we have the truth? It is the Old Testament portion scriptures that define who is to be the Messiah and the New Testament scriptures refer to the Old Testament scriptures to establish that Yeshua is the Messiah. We see Yeshua carrying out the prophecies concerning Him. When people deny the validity of the Old Testament scriptures, they are denying the validity of Messiah Yeshua. It is the Old Testament scriptures that contain the truths that identify the Messiah and give us truths for life. In fact, the Old Testament law is doctrine. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." The people who say that God's doctrine has been replaced are in effect saying that God's "good" law is somehow not worth keeping.

Shaul (Paul) said that the Old Testament scriptures were his standard for life. Again, Acts 24:14 says, "I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets." He believed in the Law! This was an account from his later years as a believer in Yeshua, perhaps in the later 50s AD. He always believed in the law, and he does not mean that the law is done away with in his teachings. Shaul says it is not done away with. Romans 3:31 NKJV says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we

establish the law." Shaul made certain that others knew that he kept and taught the law. Acts 21:23-24 NKJV says, "We have four men who have taken a vow. Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that **you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law.**"

Shaul was not trying to trick anyone but let them know that he kept the Old Testament law and taught the Old Testament law. Christianity has developed a theological system that contradicts the Bible. When Shaul told them about the Gentiles accepting what he taught, they glorified God, and those listening to Shaul then also reported the good news that thousands of Jews were zealous for the law. Acts 21:19-20 NKJV says, Shaul, "told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law." Myriads is the word 10,000 according to Strong's Dictionary.

So, it also is not true that all the Jews rejected the Messiah. Many Jews accepted the Messiah and kept God's good laws, the Torah. Shaul also taught circumcision. Galatians 5:11 NKJV says, "I still preach circumcision." It was the circumcision of adult males that is against the Torah because it was dangerous for adult men to do. The Torah teaches us to protect life because we are made in the likeness of God with so many special abilities (see Genesis 1:26). Also, note that Yeshua said it was proper to even save the life of an ox on the Sabbath (even though it would be considered work to do so). Luke 14:5 NKJV says, "Then He answered them, saying, 'Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?'"

We find out in the Old Testament portion what is truth. God's judgements are truth. Psalms 119:30 NKJV says, "I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me." God's truths give us hope. Psalms 119:43 NKJV says, "And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in Your ordinances." The law is truth. Psalms 119:142 NKJV says, "Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth." God is good and merciful. His good and true commandments are forever. Psalms 100:5 NKJV says, "For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations." Shaul kept and taught God's good commandments. God's commandments are for both Jew and Gentile, and they endure forever.

God can give us great peace in all we do. Accept God's peace in every situation.

God's commandments and the Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit helps us in life and can impact us in significant ways. First, it is important to understand that the Old Testament laws are from a good God that has our best interests at heart. Deuteronomy 5:29 NKJV says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! "Again, we should understand that the Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit is also our helper. John 14:15-17 NKJV says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth." The Holy Spirit is another helper.

Instead of living in God's peace, we can substitute stress, dissatisfaction, and lies on how to live. Look for solutions that give you hope and use the scriptures to help you in life's situations. Be optimistic about our spiritual life. God can turn things around for us. Look at the life of Joseph and what he had to endure until God helped him to be 2<sup>nd</sup> to Pharaoh. Be faithful to God's commandments and to your faith until the end no matter what. Since God is the creator, He can reward us in eternity. 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." What do you want out of life? Do you want to shine like the stars forever or be in everlasting contempt for your sin? So, keep the Old Testament law.

God tells us to be a thankful people. God has given us so much. So concentrate on being appreciative and thankful towards God as well as towards others. Also, treat others with patience and respect. Keep pressing forward spiritually. Shaul said in Philippians 3:14 NKJV, "I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Do not allow yourself to be so ingrained mentally with negatives that you cannot see all the good that God has given you. We can decide on a different agenda for life than the ways of the world. Be strong. Isaiah 26:3-4 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever." So, trust in God and all He has given you.

The world often puts pressure on us to conform to ideals or ideas that are contrary to the true way to live.

There are a lot of ideologies and religions. Many of them are convinced that they have the truths for life. Yeshua said that we will know whether they are of God by their fruits. Matthew 7:16-20 NKJV says, "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit."

For example, the religion of Communism is convinced that if everyone gave up their rights to the government and equity is created in their society, that everyone will be happy and content. Any ideology or philosophy of society can be termed a religion even if it does not believe in a god (see The Stanford Dictionary of Religion and Philosophy). One of the tenets of the Communist faith is to create dissatisfaction and discontent in a country and get the people to revolt to create this false concept of utopia. The Communist religions murdered close to 100 million of their own people in the 1900s according to some sources. It is one of the most murderous religions to ever exist. They are a false religion. They will talk about the crusades as if they were yesterday even though they were only for a short period in Christian history.

The Bible says that murder is wrong and those who commit murder will end up in the lake of fire for eternity. Just two of the 10 Commandments, do not murder and do not covet, would prevent many wars. That is a testimony to the truths of the Bible. The religion of Communism produces bad fruit. They believe that other religions are the opiate of the people. You could say that their god is their false ideology.

There are many religions, ideals, and philosophies on life that have nothing to do with biblical truths but with their own ideas and ideals for life. We need to be a discerning people and be able to resist their concepts and false beliefs and ideals. Deuteronomy 11:16 NKJV says, "Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them."

Do not follow those who are not teaching truth. Do not follow false teachers even if what they say sounds good. The Communist ideal of equity sounds good, but not everyone has the same abilities or drive to be productive. The Bible says that those who work are to be paid. I once heard of someone who went into a butcher shop in a communist country and there was no meat. There was no meat because this false system produces a lack of incentive.

The Bible says that we should not follow false teachers even if they do some amazing things. Deuteronomy 13:1-3 NKJV says, "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' – which you have not known – 'and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams."

There are some people who say bad things about the God of the Bible often because they believe in some false system or false religion. Others commit sexual sins, and their minds are controlled by the amount of worldly things they can acquire. There are people who only care about what they want to do even if it is sinful. Some have false sinful ideals and they try to entice people into believing in their false ideals. They have forsaken what is right and are driven by their desires or for the enactment of their false beliefs.

2 Peter 2:12-17 NKJV says,

But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children. They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Do not be confused by false religions and ideologies that can trap us into lies on how to live.

Shaul talks about those who are trapped in foolish or ignorant disputes. People are often trapped by their desires, false ideas or false ideals, or sin that are contrary to God's commandments and truths that we need for a good life. Some of these people think that their truths are the truths we need for life and not the truths of the Bible. Some of their beliefs came from the devil. The devil is real and wants to mess up people's life.

2 Timothy 2:22-26 NKJV says,

Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

Some people are trapped by the lies of the devil. We talked about this last week in a little more detail, but we need to teach about this more often.

We talked a little about the devil and spiritual warfare last week and it is good thing to be reminded of. There is a Jewish teaching about the way the devil deceives people. Adam and Eve were perfect beings before they were drawn away by their own desires and failed to keep what God told them to do. We should understand that the serpent was perhaps taken over by a devil spirit. The Bible says there are devil spirits. The Jewish people who lived at the time of Yeshua understood Yeshua was casting out devil spirits and they were amazed. They said in Mark 1:27 NKJV, "For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

Devil spirits were at one time good beings but rebelled against God. Isaiah 14:12-13 NKJV says, "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." He wanted to be God and define what he thought to be true and therefore, the devil and the devil spirits that sinned with him disrupt the world and weaken the nations perhaps because they think they can get away with it or like some believe, the devil spirits are angry with God and trying to destroy God's creation and destroy the lives of mankind as an act of defiance. The fact that many modern Jews do not believe in a devil does not go along with what the Bible says.

In Genesis, we should understand that the devil through a serpent influenced Eve and then Adam to destroy their relationship with God. The devil thinks that he is god and says to Eve that she will be god. It is the same lie that the devil believes about himself. Genesis 3:4-5 NKJV says, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God." The devil is still trying to destroy our relationships with God, but we can resist the suggestions that the devil speaks into our minds because we have the power to do so. Some people have given themselves over to spirits and cannot resist the devil spirits as they should. They can be delivered if they resist the devil and since Yeshua is over all, they can resist devil spirits through His name.

The story of Adam and Eve sinning is thought to be a fable, but it is a real account of how Adam and Eve sinned. People just do not understand what the story is meant to convey. They are ignorant spiritually. The devil works behind the scenes to trick us. How did Eve get so tricked by the devil? First, the devil questions God's command and then the woman changed what God said.

Genesis 3:1-5 NKJV says,



Has God indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God."

God's command was, Genesis 2:16-17 NKJV says,  
And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Eve omitted the words "freely eat," and added the words "touch it," and then changed the consequences to a maybe. The devil said there were no consequences for sin. She then considered the sin instead of resisting it. Genesis 3:6 NKJV says, "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate." What happened is just like what it said in James 1:14 NKJV which says, "Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed." We all have the choice in life to either obey God or suffer the consequences for their wrongdoing. Adam and Eve brought death on themselves. Before their sin they were perfect beings and would not die, but because they sinned, they would now experience death. "In the day" probably refers to their future death that their sin caused. There are other ideas on this, but that is the simplest answer for what the text says.

The same thing is happening today. People think they can be god of their life instead of following God's good ways for life. The devil can also tempt us and speak to our minds. For example, the devil could say, "Is there a God." Then the devil will say, "No there isn't because I cannot see God." Watch out that you do not succumb to his temptations as Eve did.

We can resist these temptations if we make the effort to do so. If you know it is wrong, do not do it. James 4:7-8 NKJV says, "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." God knows what is best for us, so His commandments are intended to help us in life. Do what God says and do not follow false belief systems. Deuteronomy 10:13-14 NKJV says, "Keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good."

### **Torah Study**

Our portion for today is Vayakhel which means "and he assembled" In Vayakhel, we see the people acting together for the work of the Mishkan. Vayak'hel begins with Moshe (Moses) again reminding the people to keep Shabbat. This is just before they take up a collection for the articles and manufacture of the Mishkan (Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting in the desert). From the context this encouragement has to do with their place of worship. They might think that doing the work for the Mishkan was enjoyable and consider it no work at all; but God tells them not to do it. Perhaps that is a good rule to follow for Shabbat. I often say that if it can wait for

tomorrow, don't do it. In life, we prepare to keep Shabbat and are ready to do it. Just like God rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, we rest on the 7<sup>th</sup> day because we believe He is the creator God.

In the context about work on the Mishkan, it talks about not starting a fire. We should probably understand that it has to do with the work on the Mishkan, like smelting and forming of metal. Starting a fire can also be arduous and we should be careful not to do any work like that on a Shabbat. Use good judgment. Not turning on a light switch because it causes a spark is not work and neither is driving a car. Some people will walk a mile with their little children rather than drive their car Shabbat. Which is more work? Their man-made doctrine is just foolishness.

I once explained this to someone who kept all these little extra man-made laws that micromanage life. He said to me that my teaching was not enough to keep people from working on Shabbat. I understood where he was coming from. People make up excuses to work on Shabbat and we shouldn't do that. The Bible says that "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;" Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV. Adding misapplied commandments is wrong. God gave us a brain; stop making up excuses to work on God's days of rest and stop following misapplied man-made laws. Follow what the Holy Spirit is telling you to do if need be. God gave us the Holy Spirit to help us follow His commandments.

Shaul's standard for life was the Old Testament law (Did Shaul (Paul) Keep the Law?)

We are to be those who follow truth. There are a lot of people who say they know what is best and there are many religions that say they teach the truth. What determines that we have the truth? It is the Old Testament portion scriptures that define who is to be the Messiah and the New Testament scriptures refer to the Old Testament scriptures to establish that Yeshua is the Messiah. We see Yeshua carrying out the prophecies concerning Him. When people deny the validity of the Old Testament scriptures, they are denying the validity of Messiah Yeshua. It is the Old Testament scriptures that contain the truths that identify the Messiah and give us truths for life. In fact, the Old Testament law is doctrine. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." The people who say that God's doctrine has been replaced are in effect saying that God's "good" law is somehow not worth keeping.

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Shaul was not trying to trick anyone but let them know that he kept the Old Testament law and taught the Old Testament law. Christianity has developed a theological system that contradicts

the Bible. When Shaul told them about the Gentiles accepting what he taught, they glorified God, and those listening to Shaul then also reported the good news that thousands of Jews were zealous for the law. Acts 21:19-20 NKJV says, Shaul, "told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law." Myriads is the word 10,000 according to Strong's Dictionary.

So, it also is not true that all the Jews rejected the Messiah. Many Jews accepted the Messiah and kept God's good laws, the Torah. Shaul also taught circumcision. Galatians 5:11 NKJV says, "I still preach circumcision." It was the circumcision of adult males that is against the Torah because it was dangerous for adult men to do. The Torah teaches us to protect life because we are made in the likeness of God with so many special abilities (see Genesis 1:26). Also, note that Yeshua said it was proper to even save the life of an ox on the Sabbath (even though it would be considered work to do so). Luke 14:5 NKJV says, "Then He answered them, saying, 'Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?'"

We find out in the Old Testament portion what is truth. God's judgements are truth. Psalms 119:30 NKJV says, "I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me." God's truths give us hope. Psalms 119:43 NKJV says, "And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in Your ordinances." The law is truth. Psalms 119:142 NKJV says, "Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth." God is good and merciful. His good and true commandments are forever. Psalms 100:5 NKJV says, "For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations." Shaul kept and taught God's good commandments. God's commandments are for both Jew and Gentile, and they endure forever.

Moshe goes on to tell them in the Torah portion that God told him that they should take up a free will collection for the things needed for the Mishkan. Likewise in the New Testament portion, Shaul talks about taking up a free will collection in 2 Corinthians 8:6-10. We find out that the people were very generous towards the making of the Mishkan. It is good to be a generous person if we can just as they were for the Mishkan.

Then Moshe asks for the craftsmen to come and make the articles for the Mishkan and the clothing and adornments for the priests. The people came and gave freely for the work of the Mishkan. Women who could make fabric began their work and according to Exodus 38:8, the Hebrew text seems to be saying that some women came to the Tent of Meeting to fight spiritually in prayer. The leaders brought precious objects such as precious stones, incense, and oil.

The people seemed to be of one mind as they worked on the Mishkan. This reminds us that we are to be of one mind spiritually. Shaul refers to this in Colossians 3:2 NKJV, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." As they set their minds on the things of God and the Mishkan, they moved forward spiritually. We too need to be of the same mind spiritually.

Bezalel and Aholiab lead the work and they as well as others are filled with the Spirit of God to do the work. It is possible that God gave them instructions on how to do all the work and it wasn't just by natural ability. On more than one occasion, God helped me to accomplish the tasks I had to do. People sometimes diminish the power of God and God's ability to work in us and through us. This is incorrect doctrine. My cousin became a believer and after 2 computer specialists worked for 24 hours straight to get a large company computer working, my cousin was called on. He prayed and within 10 minutes he had the problem fixed. That is God at work in us!

The people brought more than they needed so they needed to tell them they had enough. Then the making of the tent, planks and crossbars, and other items for its construction are described. The making of the ark and k'ruvim (cherubs) are described as well as the other items needed including the Menorah and the altar for the Mishkan.

The Haftarah for VaYakhel is 1 Kings 7:13-26 which is the Sephardim portion. King Shlomo (Solomon) sends for the Jewish bronze worker Hiram from Tyre to do some of the work on the first Temple. This portion describes the amazing work done on the first Temple. In both the Mishkan (the Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting) and the first Temple we see some beautiful work being done in the name of the true God, Yě-hō-váh. Perhaps this should remind us that we being the temple of the Holy Spirit, should strive to live lives that befit the beauty that God has bestowed on us. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NKJV says, "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

Also, the Mishkan in the desert is a picture of our spiritual abode (life) with God. Israel lived in the presence of God in the desert with a fire over the Mishkan at night and a cloud by day. Yeshua said He goes to prepare a place for us – He means a place where we will also live in the presence of God. John 14:2-3 NKJV, says, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." We have an amazing future hope ahead for us.

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

Exodus 35:3 tells us not to kindle a fire on Shabbat. The context was work on the Mishkan so we should understand that we are not to do any work on our meeting places on Shabbat. Also, anything that requires considerable effort is wrong. Kindling a fire can require a lot of work including gathering wood and lighting the fire. In our modern times, lighting a fire can be no work at all, but be careful not to do anything cumbersome on Shabbat. If you feel any conviction for the thing you are doing, then do not do it. Do not do any unnecessary work on Shabbat. Also, consider this. What is more work, driving a car or walking to congregation. Flipping switches is not work unless it is associated with a job of course.

### **The Aaronic Blessing**

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

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

According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah.

Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name. Won't you also honor God's name and use His true name with respect at times. The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. Over 2,000 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. It is a commandment to put God's name on His people and by not using God's name, some are not keeping this commandment. What an honor it is to be a people of the creator and true God.

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

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ  
יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיַחַנֶּנֶךָ  
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיָשֶׁם 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.