



#25 Tzav Leviticus 6:8 (6:1 in JPS)- 8:36

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

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

Yochanan – John

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets

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

Tzav – 25th Torah portion

The Torah portion for today is Tzav and means “command.” This portion begins by God giving commands about the burnt offerings, meal offerings, sin offerings, guilt offerings, a priests' offering, and well-being offerings.

I would like to begin today by talking about one of the accounts in the New Testament portion of the Bible that some people use to say that Yeshua broke the Sabbath or did away with the Sabbath. Some people think that Yeshua broke the Sabbath and taught others to break the Sabbath, but breaking God's commandments would eliminate Him from being the Messiah. To break the Sabbath is to break the 4th commandment and it is a sin. No sinner could possibly be the Messiah or a true spiritual leader. The Sabbath is probably the most often mentioned commandment in the Bible. The Sabbath is mentioned in 89 verses in the Old Testament portion and 62 verses in the New Testament portion (from Blue Letter Bible online). The Bible says that we are not to listen to anyone who teaches others to not keep God's commandments.

Deuteronomy 13:1-4 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, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.

We are not to follow anyone who teaches others not to keep God's commandments. Was Yeshua breaking the Sabbath? As I have said many times, no one would have believed in Yeshua if He was telling the people to not keep God's commandments. The fact that Yeshua

said that He will reject those who do not keep the law speaks for itself. Matthew 7:23 NKJV says, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; **depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!**'" Yeshua also said in Matthew 5:17-18 NKJV, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law." Unfounded conjectures aside, Yeshua does not say specifically the law is done away with but appears to say that the law will never be done away with until, "heaven and earth pass away." We can safely assume that at present, the earth still exists.

Also, no one would have accepted what Shaul (Paul) had to say if he was teaching the people to not keep God's Old Testament commandments. Acts 24:14 NKJV says, "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, **believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.**" Shaul believed in the Law, kept the Law, and taught others to keep the law. Shaul said in Romans 3:31 NKJV, "We establish the law." So, it makes sense that those who say the law has been done away are false teachers. We are not supposed to listen to them.

Let's examine some of the scriptures that people use to say that Yeshua did not keep the Sabbath.

Matthew 12:1-8 NKJV says,

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!" But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

We need to examine each section of this account to get a complete picture of what is going on. It is true that we are not to harvest on the Sabbath (see Exodus 34:21). That is work. People were allowed to take small amounts and not harvest other's crops, but that should be done on other days of the week and not on the Sabbath.

Some Messianic believers think that Yeshua's disciples were not obeying the extra laws of the Sanhedrin. In this case that is not true because they were not allowed to pick non-gleaned grain or from the corners of a field on a Sabbath as well. It is not an extra law.

First, let's look at the perspective of the Pharisees. The Sanhedrin and local judges enforced biblical law and if a person was working on the Sabbath, they could incur the death penalty. God had the Israelites set up magistrates and judges in each city. They were the ones that enforced the law. In this case, the Romans were imposing the law.

Most of the people at that time apparently did not have a squabble with Yeshua. Just a few verses down, it says that great multitudes followed Yeshua. Matthew 12:15 NKJV says, "Great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all." Just because someone points out something, it does not mean they are against that person. Say you are driving and one of the passengers in your car says that you are driving too fast. They are not against you but trying to help you to not get a speeding ticket. So, it is not necessarily true that the Pharisees were antagonistic towards Yeshua at the time. Later though, we see they have formed a negative opinion of Him and they wanted to kill Him. That would be murder. That is a little startling for a religious person. It makes me wonder if this was added. Like Jerome said in the 4th century, the Greek manuscripts had been altered (see the introduction to His Latin Vulgate).

Many Christian pastors have been indoctrinated to believe all the Jews were against Yeshua and when I pose anything that contradicts their doctrine of hate, they flatly reject what I am saying and say things like, "No they did not follow God" or similar mistruths. It is true that not all Jews followed God the way they should have, but that does not mean that all Jews did not follow God the way they should have. For example, Christians will admit that they sin at times. Does that mean all Christians are bad? In the case above, it appears these Pharisees were bad people.

We should probably think of Yeshua giving them a lesson on how to keep the Sabbath properly or as Yeshua says, with mercy. It is not a blanket mercy as some believe in Christianity, but it is mercy towards those who are not breaking God's commandments. I often tell people this, but I often do not have the time to thoroughly explain myself. Yeshua refers to Hosea 6:6 NKJV which says, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

Let's go back to Yeshua's first reason for allowing His disciples to pick grain on the Sabbath. Yeshua points out that King David took the Temple bread that was unlawful for others to eat (see 1 Samuel 21:1-6). Years ago, this story used to bother me, but I came to understand why it was okay for King David to do that. King David and his men were hungry and may have been famished with hunger. In this case, it was okay for the priest to give King David the bread.

Why is that? Deuteronomy 30:15-16 NKJV says, "See, **I have set before you today life** and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments." God's commandments are contrasted with not keeping God's commandments, but I want you to keep in mind that God's commandments give life.

Not keeping God's commandments can cause calamity and evil. God wants us to keep His commandments because He is a good God who has our best interests at heart and wants us to have a good life. God pleads with us to accept and keep His good commandments. 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!"

God's commandments are wonderful according to the psalmist and give us understanding. They are a light to our path and help us to avoid evil and the destructive ways of life.

Psalms 119:101-105 NKJV says,

I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Your word. I have not departed from Your judgments, for You Yourself have taught me. How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Psalms 119:93 NKJV says,

I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life.

It is okay to break a commandment to save life.

God's commandments give us life and not death. Therefore, it stands to reason that since God's commandments give us life, it is okay to break a commandment to save a life. Also, the Jewish writings agree with the understanding that God's commandments give life and not death. Mishna 7b says, "Great is Torah, for it gives life to its doers." The ancient Rabbis qualified breaking a commandment to save life by saying that certain sins cannot be done regardless, for example idolatry or sexual sins. But in the case of the Temple service, saving a life supersedes the commandment concerning the Temple ritual.

If a priest knows of the innocence of someone, he is required to save their life even if he is in the middle of making a sacrifice. Yoma 85b says, "To preserve a life, e.g., if the priest can testify to the innocence of one who is sentenced to death, one removes him even from on top of My altar, even while he is sacrificing an offering." So, it was okay for King David to eat the Temple bread, and it was okay for Yeshua's disciples to pick grain on Shabbat because they needed it to sustain their life. They must have been extremely famished.

Having mercy overrides the Temple service.

Yeshua also uses an argument concerning the Temple sacrifices. The priests are excused from the work they do on Shabbat, because the Temple work is okay to do on Shabbat. The Temple service supersedes the commandment not to work. Saving a life according to the Jewish writings even allows for the interruption of the Temple service! So, saving a life overrides even that. Yeshua concludes His instruction with Hosea 6:6 NKJV which says, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Yeshua's reasons were

perfectly in line with Jewish beliefs. Therefore, there was no action taken against Him. You can see this type of reasoning in all of Yeshua's healings with certain nuances which we will talk about some more when we cover them.

All Yeshua's reasoning fits perfectly together with some of the standard Jewish beliefs, and we should understand from this that:

Yeshua is instructing others on how to properly keep the Sabbath and is not doing away with the Sabbath as some say. God desires mercy and saving life.

It was not a matter of an extra inappropriate law that was in question here since Yeshua justified what the disciples were doing through appropriate reasoning. Therefore, the judges did not prosecute Him.

Those questioning Yeshua may or may not have had a squabble with Him at the time. Yeshua was either instructing them or giving His side of a standard Jewish argument. It is apparent that some in His time disagreed with His reasoning, but as we can see, these were standard Jewish arguments. The text is startling because it goes on to say they wanted to commit murder. One has to wonder if this was another modified story. In our era, Jewish doctors are required to work on a Sabbath when it is required of them.

Yeshua actually substantiated the law through His arguments and was not doing away with the law. Why would Yeshua make legitimate legal arguments if he did not need to do so? He could have simply said they were adding extra commandments to the law or that He had done away with the law. He did not do that.

Some say that when He refers to Himself as being Lord of the Sabbath that he has the power to do away with the Sabbath. In this section, Yeshua is actually saying that He is greater than the Temple and He knows that they have condemned the innocent. This has to be an obvious reference to that. It says in verse 7, "You would not have condemned the guiltless." Some were not guilty of breaking the Sabbath so they should not have been condemned. In one of the Hebrew manuscripts of Matthew it says, "the Son of God" and not the "son of man" for Yeshua. So Yeshua is the Son of God and He is aware that they have unjustly condemned people that should not have been condemned because they were not working on Shabbat and perhaps doing the very thing or a similar thing to that of what He was doing like saving life. Yeshua is Lord of the Sabbath and He is giving a correct application of the law.

In Mark it says that the Sabbath was made for man. It is a deep-rooted understanding that those who keep the Sabbath enjoy it as a day of rest and that God gave it as a blessing for mankind. In ancient times, the servants of pagan

cultures worked 7 days a week. Perhaps we could say that we are no longer servants to sin, but a people who are blessed.

Psalms 1:1-2 NKJV says,

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates
day and night.

They should have been applying the law correctly and understood that God desires mercy and to save life. At the time, it appears that some of the Jews understood these concepts because we see the concepts of mercy and saving a life in the Jewish writings and in Hosea 6:6 and other scriptures.

Some modern rabbis say that Yeshua did not keep the law, or that He taught that the law is done away with. They should know better. Many modern rabbis say that Yeshua was a legitimate rabbi and taught the law. For example they see in Matthew that Yeshua said that the law would not be done away with while the earth exists. The earth still exists, doesn't it? Some rabbis are being deliberately deceitful and saying Yeshua broke the law and they do this in order to discredit Yeshua. Most gentiles do not understand how to apply the Old Testament scriptures properly and they come to inappropriate conclusions such as, we do not have to keep God's laws or keep the Sabbath, or that Yeshua taught us not to keep the Sabbath. They are agreeing with the rabbis who purposely malign Yeshua.

It should be easily understood that Yeshua did not break the law based on Yeshua's reasoning.

Yeshua refers to the principle of having mercy from Hosea earlier in Matthew.

Matthew 9:9-13 NKJV says,

As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" When Jesus heard that, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: I desire mercy and not sacrifice."

This story gives us another application of Hosea 6:6 which seems to be a major point of some of Yeshua's teachings. We can surmise that having mercy for the innocent has been a problem of misinterpretation in the past and was probably still an issue for some people at the time of Yeshua. Yeshua is not saying that we are to hang around with sinners but to help them repent. If they do not repent, we are to move on and let them be. Matthew 10:14 NKJV says, "And

whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet." In ancient times, some pagans believed that the dust of their feet was holy. That is why Abraham washed the feet of the angels and God when they came to visit him (one of the angels is Yě-hō-váh, the true name of God, see Genesis 18:33 in the Hebrew). God can appear as a man because He is God. When Yeshua washed the feet of His disciples and told them to wash each other's feet, he was probably referring to this concept and it was meant to teach them to help each other to keep God's commandments and serve one another in this way.

The parable of the Good Samaritan uses this same concept of mercy. It is told in the gospel of Luke. He is answering a man's question, and the man understands the person who showed mercy to perhaps a good person who was on his way to the Temple was applying the Bible correctly.

Luke 10:30-37 NKJV says,

Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

While the man was on His way to Jerusalem from Jericho. Jericho was in the Judean desert. He got robbed, was beaten, and left there to die. Since He was traveling in Judea, he was probably Jewish and perhaps on His way to the Temple.

A priest went by and did not help him. Perhaps the priest was going to Jerusalem to serve and did not want to become ritually unclean and not be able to serve at the Temple. A person who touched a dead person would become ritually unclean that day and not be able to serve at the Temple. A Levite perhaps did the same thing for the same reason and did not help the man. A Samaritan who was considered to be below the standards of the Judeans helped the man. Yeshua poses the question, "So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him?" The person Yeshua was talking to said it was the person who had mercy on the man. Again, we see Yeshua applying Hosea 6:6 NKJV which says, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

The men who passed by were probably going to help out with the Temple sacrifices. Yeshua was teaching the people to allow for mercy. Of course, Yeshua was not allowing for sin or saying the priest or Levite could serve at the Temple even though they were ritually unclean. He

was teaching the people the importance of saving life. Psalm 119:93 NKJV says, "I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life." God's commandments give life and not death. In this case, Yeshua points out they should have saved the life of the man. Yeshua was instructing the people on how to correctly keep God's law. Yeshua was not doing away with the law. God is not going to do away with His good commandments. Anyone who does so is a false teacher or false prophet.

How could we apply Yeshua's reasoning? Years ago, our friend Dean stopped to check on a truck driver whose truck appeared out of place. He was on the way to church. The truck driver turned out to be delirious, and he helped him get medical treatment. His story was similar to that of the good Samaritan that Yeshua used to save life. Perhaps you could think of some other ways you could do this.

Do not be trapped by "feel good" religion.

Any number of the following things can be at work in churches today. Much of Christianity today tries to appeal to people by avoiding difficult issues, making its belief system simplistic, appealing to positive beliefs, ignoring biblical truth, through outright manipulation of the scriptures through false theology and teaching, through an entertainment culture, by appealing to a good works culture, by establishing ritual as practice instead of doing what the Bible says to do, by claiming to have spiritual truth but teaching false doctrine, and there are probably more things than that some churches choose to focus on instead of teaching truth. Some churches act as a business instead of a place where people can get to know the truths of the Bible. Any number of these can produce a wrongly focused false biblical system.

I am all for being generous and good to others, but that is only a couple of the commandments of God. Churches will sometimes focus on one thing at the expense of the whole picture. Some believe that all we need is positive thinking and a positive focus. The Bible says that this is a good way to think (see Philippians 4:8). But instead of teaching what is right and wrong, they avoid the issue, or they make the positive teachings of the Bible their main focus. For example, murder is wrong and takes the life of a person. Each person is valuable and special. Being a drunkard is wrong and is a waste of a life. They do not want to talk about any of the negative aspects of sin so that they do not offend anyone. They may have a simplistic doctrine that avoids any commandments or issues. The Bible is easy to understand without 1700-page books. Do not worship anything and kneel down to it, do not murder, do not steal, etcetera. God's word is straight forward enough to understand. Some churches do some great things to help others, but they most of all should lead people to the truths of the scriptures.

Some think that their man-made ritual authenticates them. They do not care about the things of God as much as their church building and made-up doctrine. They follow people and not God. Isaiah 29:13 NKJV says, "These people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men." Yeshua said their man-made doctrine is worthless. Matthew 15:9 NKJV says, "In vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

Also, take for instance the entertainment type church. It draws people to its meetings through lively or talented singers and musicians. I went to a large church once that put on a concert with talented singers and musicians and when it came time to teach the people, the pastor said that we could now all go home now. Somehow, the music took the place of any true biblical teaching. I watched another church on TV once that put on an amazing musical performance followed by a teaching that gave people good advice instead of teaching people what the Bible said.

I appreciate great music and singing, and we all need good advice. These churches seem to authenticate their existence by attendance and the fact they have a building and an organization. Singing is not all there is to a spiritual life and a building is just a place and does not authenticate their teaching. It is nice to have a place to go to, but the building is just a tool and just made of wood or stone. The Bible has the truths we need for right living. Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV says, "You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you." God's commandments are right, and they are good. God gave them to us to help us with life. He is God and knows what is best for us. Do not go to a church that does not teach you to keep God's commandments.

Some believe that any form of commandment is wrong. Some believe that God will not judge us or that all we have to do is have faith and nothing else. Faith is good but we also need to keep God's commandments. James 2:17 NKJV says, "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." It is talking about keeping God's commandments. The works of the flesh or dead works refers to not keeping God's commandments. Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV says, "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." This is a partial list of some of the more grievous sins.

So, those who are doing things their own way instead of God's way will, "not inherit the kingdom of God." Some believe in a prosperity message or that we will never face trouble. If you have troubles of any kind, then somehow the person who is having the trouble is at fault. People can sometimes become a bunch of smiling liars. John 16:33 NKJV says, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation." The Messiah said that in this era we will have trouble at times.

That will only change in the new heaven and earth where the people who follow God through His commandments will be allowed in. Revelation 21:4 NKJV says, "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Also, in this Messianic era, we are also to receive the Holy Spirit to help us in life; the Holy Spirit will not tell us to disobey God's commandments. James 1:14-15 NKJV says, "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death." Living in sin causes spiritual death and loss of eternal

life. That's why sin is dead works. One of the first things new believers need to do is repent of dead sinful works.

Those who live in sin will not be allowed into the future kingdom of God. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "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." This is a different partial list of some of the sins that will keep you out of the future good kingdom of God (also see 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Notice that hell is a real place. Those that say there is no hell will probably be going there unless they repent. Let's look at a section of scripture from the book of Matthew.

Yeshua says in Matthew 7:13-23 NKJV,

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 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. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. 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!'

What does the Bible say? Do not think that your wide gate approach to God is going to merit you a place in God's future kingdom. These people who teach this are false teachers who teach hurtful lies. Not everyone will enter God's future kingdom but those who keep God's law, His commandments and laws. The Messiah Yeshua said that He will reject those who do not keep the law! These false churches are lying to you.

Be satisfied with being connected to God and being at peace with God.

Why not be satisfied with being connected to God the way the Bible says and not to just an organization, building, or some false teacher? It is a lot more important to be at peace with God instead of having to face judgement for the evil you have brought into the world. That's right. Since the creator God knows what is best and has our best interests at heart, not following His ways brings sin and evil into the world. Keeping God's commandments brings peace to our life. Peace and satisfaction are two of the greatest achievements in life. Isaiah 48:18 NKJV says, "Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea." Righteousness means to do what is "right" and keep God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). Psalms 119:165 NKJV says, "Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble." We can have great peace through God's commandments.

God blesses His people with peace, those who keep His commandments. Psalms 29:11 NKJV says, "The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace." God wants peace for His people so do not turn away from His commandments. Psalms 85:8 says, "I will hear what God the LORD will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints; but let them not turn back to folly." Saints are not dead people. The saints are those who keep God's commandments. What God gives us through His commandments is wonderful so much so that doing what is right and peace have kissed. Psalms 85:10 NKJV says, "Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed."

Trust in God and go to God in times of trouble.

Psalms 73:28 NKJV says, "But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all Your works." Sometimes we are in impossible situations, but God comes through for us. I remember hearing a story about someone who said that God picked up their car and delivered them from a serious auto accident. I know it was true because I have also seen God at work in my life.

Some of my friends who lived in the Amazon jungle had their boat sink during the rainy season. The river they were on can swell to 40 miles wide in some places. They had no way of making it to land and a boat just happened to pass by. I have been on that river, and you can go for days and not see another boat. Praise God for helping them! God's commandments and the Holy Spirit can help us, and God will supernaturally intervein at times. Psalms 115:9 NKJV says, O Israel, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield."

We have peace with God and peace in our life through God's commandments and the Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 4:16 NKJV says, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." So, talk to God and ask Him for help in all you do and when you face troubles. Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV says, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Seek truth and follow truth.

We need to follow God's truths in His commandments and to tell others about the truths God has given to us. Do not teach others evil, it is a disgusting way of life. Proverbs 8:7 NKJV says, "For my mouth will speak truth; wickedness is an abomination to my lips." Speak the truth and declare God's "right and good" commandments. Do not be deceitful and lead others the wrong way. Proverbs 12:17 NKJV says, "He who speaks truth declares righteousness, but a false witness, deceit."

God's commandments have been good for thousands of years, they are still good, and they will always be good. Isaiah 25:1 NKJV says, "O LORD, You are my God. I will exalt You, I will praise Your name, for You have done wonderful things; Your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." God's word gives us truths for life. Why seek anything else when we already have something that is so wonderful?

Do not be trapped by feel good watered down man-made religion. Today, there are many who do not realize that they believe in a building or a mission statement instead of the Bible. Yeshua did not say that the path to God's future kingdom was wide and easy. Through God we can have peace in life. Be connected to God and His good ways. Doing what is right and peace are connected. God's commandments are a better way of life and God will also act on our behalf so trust in God. Seek the truths of the Bible. God's ways are wonderful because they come from an all-knowing and good God.

Torah Study

The Torah portion for today is Tzav and means "command." This portion begins by God giving commands about the burnt offerings, meal offerings, sin offerings, guilt offerings, a priests' offering, and well-being offerings. The offerings were only to be made at the Temple in Jerusalem. There is no Temple at this time, and they cannot be done. They will be reinstituted sometime in the future when the new Temple exists. Perhaps they will be sacrifices for a remembrance ceremony. Yeshua instituted a remembrance ceremony for us.

Burnt offerings were to be entirely burnt up and the fire on the altar was to never go out. The priests were to eat some of the other offerings at the tent of meeting; the meal offering at the anointing of the priest was to be burnt up completely. There was to be no leaven in the offerings, and no blood or fat was to be eaten. Moshe then does a consecration ritual for the priests. He dresses them, anoints them with oil, does a bull offering and two ram offerings, a blood ritual, and an elevation offering. Moshe then anoints them with blood and oil, and they were to remain at the Tent of Meeting (the Mishkan, the Tabernacle) for seven days until their consecration and atonement was over.

Again, in this portion, God is very specific about how the animal sacrifices and other offerings were to be done. It should remind us that we are to do things God's way and not our own way. He is God and we are not. Particularly in this portion, it was a special moment in the lives of Aharon and his sons as they were anointed priests and were consecrated to the Lord. We should also conclude that being a priest for the true God or for that matter, any leadership position for God is to be taken very seriously.

The Haftarah for Tzav is Jeremiah 7:21 to 8:3, and 9:22-23. Just before our Haftarah portion it says that God's anger and fury will be poured out on those who worship the queen of heaven and other pagan gods. The queen of heaven is Ishtar (Easter) also known as the multi-breasted pagan goddess of fertility. It is also used for other woman pagan deities and even for Mary the mother of Yeshua by some. Let's consider the kingdom of God being a very high-class place. After all, God is all powerful. So, the future kingdom of God is going to be very amazing.

So, let's imagine a very high-class restaurant being there for everyone and say a guy walks in without a shirt on. It would be a disgrace to show up without a shirt on at a high-class restaurant. So, it is inappropriate and a disgrace to refer to the resurrection of Yeshua (Jesus) as the bare-breasted god Ishtar (Easter). After all, He gave us minds to use to give Him the glory He deserves! Use them.

Praying to Mary is a form of pagan worship since **we are to pray to God only**. The Bible is noticeably clear about this.

Exodus 20:4-6 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**. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Shaul (Paul) said that no one engaged in pagan worship will be allowed in the Kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God."

The unrighteous will not be in God's future kingdom.

We just observed Passover. Passover was when Israel was set free from the Egyptians and given God's commandments so they could serve God. Yeshua died and rose from the dead at the time of Passover so we could be given the Holy Spirit to help us be set free from sin and serve God. Passover is relevant for believers in the Messiah Yeshua and should be celebrated.

I've heard people say we don't have to observe God's feasts. What's the matter with God's feasts? They aren't just Jewish feasts but are biblical feasts. In fact, God says they are His feasts (see Leviticus 23:2)! Shaul says to observe the Passover in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8. Here is some information on a Hebraic understanding of Passover from the [Complete Jewish Bible](#). Pesach is the Hebrew word for Passover and the word Seder is the order of the ceremony for Passover. Hametz is bread with leaven and leaven when observing Passover refers to sin; so, by removing hametz, it means we are to remove sin from our lives. Matzah is bread without leaven. So, the [Complete Jewish Bible](#) translates 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 CJB as, "For our Pesach lamb, the Messiah, has been sacrificed. So let us celebrate the Seder not with leftover hametz, the hametz of wickedness and evil, but with the matzah of purity and truth."

Celebrate the Seder, celebrate Passover! Shaul (Paul) commands us to observe Passover and that applies no matter where we live. The Torah makes allowances for people to keep God's feasts who are too far away to make it to Jerusalem. Some Gentiles say we can't do it unless we are in Jerusalem. They are just anti-Jewish replacement theology critics. Messianic believers over history have observed Passover wherever they lived. Messianic believers who kept God's commandments and God's feasts were the true believers in Shaul's (Paul's) time. Numbers 9:3 NKJV says, "On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time. **According to all its rites and ceremonies** you shall keep it." We are to be prepared to observe Passover.

True believers also didn't keep misapplied man-made laws. We should understand that some pertinent ritual is okay. Ritual is part of life, but ritual is not necessarily a commandment from God unless God says to perform it. Notice I said misapplied man-made laws. Some say you have to wear a hat after you get up in the morning. What does wearing your hat after you get up have to do with God? It's a man-made law. Man-made laws become man-made idols.

Our Haftarah portion begins by saying that they should have obeyed God's commandments, but they did things their own way and were stubborn and had evil hearts. People just want to do things their own way. They celebrate our national holidays instead of God's holidays (feasts). There is nothing wrong with our national feasts, but it is wrong for Christianity not to celebrate God's feasts. Call Easter Resurrection Weekend for goodness's sake. It is not the feast of Ishtar (Easter), the bare-breasted goddess of fertility. Some say it doesn't matter. Tell that to God when you stand before Him in judgment.

God tells Jeremiah to call to the people, but they won't listen or answer. Israel is doing detestable things, and they even offer their sons for human sacrifice. God warns them that their land will be turned to ruin for their sins. Those who were sinning were being stubborn and doing things their own way; they should have known and understood that they were to do things God's way. He is a God of grace (favor), justice (He does what is just), and righteousness (He does what is right.). Why not do things God's way!

Let's read Jeremiah 7:23-24 and 9:23 from the Haftarah for Tzav.

Jeremiah 7:23-24 CJB says,

"Rather, what I did order them was this: 'Pay attention to what I say. Then I will be your God, and you will be my people. In everything, live according to the way that I order you, so that things will go well for you.' But they neither listened nor paid attention, but lived according to their own plans, in the stubbornness of their evil hearts, thus going backward and not forward."

Jeremiah 9:23 CJB says,

"'Instead, let the boaster boast about this: that he understands and knows me - that I am ADONAI, practicing grace, justice and righteousness in the land; for in these things I take pleasure,' says ADONAI."

When I look at some forms of Christianity, I am very saddened because of their lack of knowledge. Hosea 4:6 NKJV says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being a priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children." Pastors who are rejecting God's law will be rejected by God. Do you want God to forget your children; get with it. Understand and keep God's law.

There are laws in this portion that should be applied in our era. Leviticus 7:19 says that any offering that touched anything unclean was to be burnt up and was not to be eaten by those who were clean. The clean could eat the offerings. Not eating things that touched anything unclean should also be applied to what everyone eats on a daily basis. We could also say that **spoiled or contaminated food should not be eaten**. Anything not acceptable to eat should be disposed of and not eaten.

Also, Leviticus 7:23 says that **no one was to eat any kind of animal fat**. We should understand that it is a representative list here. Other places give a single species. This refers to the large amounts of animal fat that can be cut away.

Leviticus 7:26-27 says that **no one was to eat or drink the blood of an animal or bird**.

People in our era have lots of knowledge about everything except for God. 3,000 believed in the Messiah Yeshua on Shavuot (Pentecost) it says in Acts 2. God gave the Holy Spirit on a Jewish feast day; that's why all those Jewish people were at the Temple in Jerusalem. The 3,000 who believed knew their Bible and they were instantly capable home group leaders who had learned the Bible as they grew up. They fellowshiped from house to house and ate together (Acts 2:46). Eating together is something Jews do on Shabbat! Believers observe Shabbat; early believers in Yeshua observed Shabbat because it is one of God's feasts, and they kept God's good commandments. We want what is good; God wants what is good!

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.)

They were to put on their linen garment and put the ashes next to the altar. Then change and take the ashes outside their camp to a clean place. Leviticus 6:10-11.

The fire on the altar is to be kept burning and not go out. Leviticus 6:13.

The High priest and his descendants are to eat the remains of the poor peoples' offerings in the area of the tent of meeting. Leviticus 6:14-16.

The flour offering is not to eaten with leaven. It is holy. Leviticus 6:16-17.

The priests were to make their own flour offering in the morning and evening and it was to be burnt up on the altar completely. Leviticus 6:20,23.

The priests were to offer up the sin offering and eat it in the area of the tent of meeting. The offering sprinkled on the inner altar was to be burned up completely. Leviticus 6:25-26, 30.

The trespass offering is given. Leviticus 7:1-6.

The thanksgiving offering is to be eaten, and the remnants are not to be left until morning. Leviticus 7:15.

They were to burn the remnants of the offerings left over on the third day. If eaten after the third day the sacrifice is annulled. Leviticus 7:17-18.

Any offering that touched anything unclean was to be burnt up and was not to be eaten by those who were clean. The clean could eat the offerings. Not eating things that touched anything unclean should also be applied to what everyone eats on a daily basis. We could also say that spoiled or contaminated food should not be eaten. Anything not acceptable to eat should be disposed of and not eaten. Leviticus 7:19.

Leviticus 7:23 says that no one was to eat any kind of animal fat. We should understand that it is a representative list here. Other places give a single species. This refers to the large amount of animal fat that can be cut away which should be discarded.

Leviticus 7:26-27 says that no one was to eat or drink the blood of an animal or bird.

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:

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ
יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיַחֲנֶנָּה
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיִשָּׂם לָךְ 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.