



#24 VaYikra – Leviticus 1:1 to 6:7 (5:26)
Torah Teaching and teaching, Yeshua is the Way
By Moshe Schwab

Names

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

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets
 Menorah – 7 candle Israelite lamp
 Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
 Mishkan – tent of meeting in the desert
 Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
 Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the
 Torah
 Vayikra – the 24th Torah portion
 (We also use transliterations from Hebrew)

Today we begin a new book of the Bible. The portion VaYikra means "and He called," and it is also the name of the 3rd book of the Torah. God's ways bring blessings; sin entangles people in pain and traps them.

Jeremiah 17:7-10 NKJV (LORD is the Hebrew name for God, Yĕhōvâh)"
 Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.

The person who trusts in God will prosper and be at peace. People's innermost thoughts can be wicked and their thoughts and intentions are not hid from God. God will bless those who trust in Him and the wicked will not get away with what they are doing in the sight of an almighty and all knowing God.

Also, I'd like to digress some here. Never forget that God has created mankind in His image and deserve dignity. We are to treat all people with respect and do what is "right and good" (Deuteronomy 6:18) towards everyone. Yeshua said in Matthew 5:44-48 NKJV:

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do

not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

So be consistent in your behaviors and do what is right.

Fight spiritually to depart evil and do what is "right and good;" Deuteronomy 6:18. Psalm 43:14-16 NKJV: Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry. The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." We are to stop doing anything that is wrong and do what is right. When it says to seek peace, it also means to live right. After all, doing what is right helps us to have peace in life. Those who do evil do not bring peace. Instead, evil often brings hurt and pain. Malachi 4:5 NKJV says, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." There is a coming day of tribulation and there is also a day of judgment. Revelation 21:8 tells us that no one who is living a sinful life will be in the future kingdom.

God is at work in our lives through the Holy Spirit and knows us deeply. He will not lead us astray. We just read some scriptures that taught us that God knows what we do. People may think that are getting away with their behaviors, but those who do what is wrong will receive the fruit, the results for what they do. There is no hiding from God. We should understand that the consequences of our sin can not only be in the present. Those who do not change and do what is right will also stand before God someday and be punished for their sin.

Through the Messiah Yeshua we are commanded to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. God knows us better than we know ourselves and the Holy Spirit will lead us to keep God's commandments and in godly directions. The Messiah brought peace to mankind through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us to live right and have peace in our lives. Some say Yeshua did not bring peace, but **yes He did**. We should understand that the Holy Spirit does not teach us to do sin or evil. God will never lead us to stray.

We read this next section of scripture to show that God is loving, faithful, and merciful. Deuteronomy 7:7-11 NKJV:

The LORD did not set **His love on you** nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because **the LORD loves you**, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, **the faithful God** who **keeps covenant** and **mercy** for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. Therefore you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments which I command you today, to observe them.

God is a faithful God who extends His mercy and love. He does not bring evil into our lives. He gives us the Holy Spirit as our helper, so accept God's help. Luke 11:11-13 NKJV says, "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will

he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Bread was often cooked on stone so it could take the appearance of a stone. There are serpents that swim in water, and scorpions also have eggs. Fathers would not give something bad to their children. So Yĕhōváh gives the Holy Spirit, and it is a good gift. Shaul said we are to seek God's gifts. 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Pursue love, and **desire spiritual gifts**, but especially that you may prophesy."

Keep your life together; don't let it fall apart. God does not take over our lives. We need to take care of ourselves in all areas of life. Proverbs 6:6-8 NKJV, "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest." Even an ant has the sense to take care of itself!

Proverbs 4:14-19 NKJV says:

Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on. For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

The scriptures often talk about our need to stay away from evil; God knows what we are doing. So don't do what is wrong. The scriptures also often use dichotomy and tell us the benefits of doing what is right and good.

Don't do what is wrong. Some actually take pleasure in misleading you. Some actually devise ways to trap those who want to follow God. Instead shine bright and live out good and perfect days. Those that do evil stumble in their own darkness; they don't know what's going on. Proverbs 23:19 NKJV, "Hear, my son, and be wise; and guide your heart in the way." Proverbs 13:20-21 NKJV says, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed. Evil pursues sinners, but to the righteous, good shall be repaid."

People in our era are sometimes living in the alternate realities of movies, TV, and sports. While having fun and entertainment can be good for us, making alternate realities the goal of life is fooling yourself. I sometimes tell the story of a lady who did not have time to fellowship with believers because she watched TV. It sounds ridiculous to be so wrapped up in fantasy.

God is real and this is a time of testing for mankind. Will we honor God and keep His commandments? We value passing exams and doing well in worldly ways, but why not value God as equally? Genesis 1:1 NKJV says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Everything we have come from a good God. James 1:17 NKJV says, "Every good gift and

every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights." God continues to sustain the universe and give us gifts.

Where are we situated in life? Are we on the outside of true life and not looking in? Have we formed barriers that keep us in a place of illusion? Do we make processes and lofty goals to replace God? Proverbs 8:12-14 NKJV says, "Find out knowledge and discretion. The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding."

Fearing God means to honor and respect God. Life is not about living a fantasy life or only living for worldly things. God is the creator; He gave us His word in the Bible; the Bible and the Holy Spirit through the Messiah can give good counsel, wisdom, and understanding. In fact, the Bible says we bring curses on ourselves by doing things our own way and not being a person of understanding. Galatians 3:10 quotes Deuteronomy 27:26 NKJV: "Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law by observing them." That is what Shaul meant; people bring curses on themselves by not keeping the commandments the creator God. God knows best. Theology says the opposite about that scripture in Galatians 3:10 and it is a disgrace to their intellect. Theology sometimes explains away biblical truths; do not change God's word. "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;" Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV.

Where are our thoughts and desires? Do they have substance or are we living a fantasy life? Learn and grow spiritually, find out about God, and do what is "right and good" (Deuteronomy 6:18). Pass the test of life. God is good and He provided His commandments to show us the way to live, and He provided the Messiah Yeshua who also came to help us and show us the way.

Torah Study

VaYikra means "and He called." VaYikra begins with God calling to Moshe from the Tent of Meeting to speak with him about various offerings the Israelites were to make. "Tent of Meeting" is the literal name for the Mishkan in the desert. The word "meeting" from The Tent of Meeting is the Hebrew word *moed*. It is translated seasons in Genesis 1:14 (*moedim*, the plural form). God gave us the sun, moon, and stars to know when to meet with God. That would be on the Sabbath, (Friday night and Saturday during the day). God rested on the 7th day and made it holy (Genesis 2:2-3). Observing Shabbat recognizes God as the true God and creator. We got Sunday from pagan sun god worship.¹

God made Shabbat holy in Genesis.

The animal offerings were to be animals without defect; the person making the offering was to lay hands on the head of the animal and it would be accepted on behalf of the person for their sins. The priest was to sprinkle the blood of the animal on them and then sacrifice it.

¹ "On 3 March 321, Constantine I decreed that Sunday (dies Solis) will be observed as the Roman day of rest [CJ3.12.2]: 'On the venerable **day of the Sun** let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed.'" – from, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord%27s_Day. This is a good article: https://www.the-ten-commandments.org/did_constantine_change_sabbath.html.

The Hebrew word for offering is korban. A person was to lay hands on the head of the animal as an act called semichah. Then to complete the act of transference, they would say the viduy (וידוי), pronounced vee-doo-ee) which is a confession of sin. They would say that they deserved to die instead of this innocent animal. Yehovah would accept their act and korban (sacrifice) based on their faith and teshuvah (turning away from sin with a commitment to not do it again).

We should note that laying on of hands was also used to transfer blessings, healing, and anointing in the Old Testament. It is still Jewish practice to lay hands on the head of their children and bless them. We see this Jewish practice in Acts 4:29-30 NKJV, "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." We stretch out our hand to transfer blessing from God.

If they offer birds, they should be a dove or young pigeon. For the grain offerings, choice flour was to be used; no leaven or honey was to be used for a burnt offering; they were to make sure to use salt for all the offerings. If anyone sinned both in ignorance or not, they could be forgiven. A person can also sin by keeping silent when their testimony could exonerate someone. A person could sin in the treatment of holy things, or by being deceitful, by stealing, or by lying.

In this portion we see that sin in ignorance was still sin and a sacrifice had to be made for those sins. Also, we see in Leviticus Chapter 5, that sins not done in ignorance were forgiven too. After repentance, a sacrifice had to be made for sin. It has always been understood that forgiveness involves repentance whether the sin was done in ignorance or not. Repentance means true sorrow and the determination not to repeat the mistake (the sin) again. Sometimes after they repented, they would be immersed (baptized). Immersion came after repentance.

Who has not sinned in ignorance and most people have sinned knowing they were doing something wrong; so, we are all sinners. Psalms 14:1-3, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one."

This Psalm talks about the foolish unbelieving heart of mankind and their need to turn to God. We all need to repent, make reparation (an act of compensation) to man, and make reparation to God. Notice that disobedience to God also requires reparation. With the coming of the Messiah, reparation to God is only possible through the Messiah. It is not enough to simply repent without coming before God for forgiveness. Yochanan (John) said God hears our heartfelt confession (see 1 John 1:7-9).

The ingredients or lack of ingredients in the offerings in Leviticus could point to spiritual things. Sometimes what God has believers do or what rituals God has believers do, conveys important spiritual pictures for us.

Consider these spiritual pictures of the sacrificial system:

- *Animals without blemish and using choice flour – could be a spiritual picture of purity of life; or giving of best.
- *Adding salt (to be added to all offerings) – could also be construed as trusted fellowship.
- *No honey (meal offerings) – could mean no spiritual gladness (perhaps because the Messiah Yeshua had not yet come)
- *No leaven (in the meal offering) – could refer to no sin.
- *Adding oil (in the meal offering) – could mean anointing, making holy or separate.
- *Adding of frankincense (in meal offering) – could be a picture of spiritual goodness.

The thanks offerings are:

The Minchah (is the meal offering) and the Shelamim (is the peace offering); part of these offerings were to be eaten.

The sin Offerings are:

The Olah (it is an ascending offering), Chatat (is a sin offering), the Asham (is a guilt offering); these offerings were to be burnt up completely.

The miracle of the fire that descended from heaven for the offering is recorded in The Talmud; in Yoma 1 it says, "Five things have been said of the fire on the altar: It had the form of a lion, it was clear as the sun, it was palpable, it consumed moist things as dry ones, and never emitted any smoke."

In our present Messianic age, Yeshua gave Himself for us and it is no longer necessary for an animal sacrifice for sin; Yeshua is the final sacrifice for sin. Hebrews 10: 14 NKJV says, "For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified." We are in the process of becoming holy (set apart from sin, sanctified) through the Holy Spirit and through our obedience to God's commandments. Notice the similarities to the fire on the altar. Yeshua was from the tribe of Judah and their symbol is a lion. God came as a person and not a spirit; He was palpable. Yeshua said, "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." Revelation 22:16 NKJV. The fire on the altar was compared to the Sun.

When we sin, we ask Yeshua for forgiveness. 1 John 1:7, 9 NKJV says, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. ... If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Our confession of sin should be understood within a Jewish context. Remember, Yeshua Messiah was Jewish and so were all the early believers. Confession according to Yochanan in 1 John is an act of viduy (וידוי) where we confess that Yeshua has taken our place. He was innocent and without sin (Hebrews 4:15). By our faith and teshuvah (turning away from sin) we are forgiven. We turn away from sin and towards God.

Modern Judaism says that since the destruction of the Temple, sacrifice has been replaced by prayer, Torah study, and acts of charity (chesed). They cite Hosea 6:6 NKJV, " For I desire

mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Their false theology is just like some of the false theology that contradicts the Bible. Leviticus 17:11 NKJV tells us that there must be a sacrifice for sin: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul." Yeshua is the final sacrifice for sin.

In the same way, when we confess Yeshua as God (Romans 10:9), we are making a similar association. In Jewish context, our confession is a sort of viduy with the understanding that we know who Yeshua is and that He died for our sins. Romans 10:10 NKJV tells us, "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." All the components for a Jewish confession are there which requires faith in God and in this case, a turning toward the Messiah Yeshua (teshuvah). We then establish our relationship with God because we do what is right through the Messiah and the Holy Spirit, and we are to escape (we are saved from) the ways of this world. Saved always means *to escape* as in Joel 2:32 and is the Hebrew word *malat*.² *Malat* always means, escape.

Saved should be understood as escaping sin by keeping God's commandments. In our Messianic age, we do that with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Yeshua the Messiah came from heaven in the form of a man to be an example for us, to bring us back to God (teshuvah), and to die for our sins. In Philippians 2:7-8 NKJV it says that Yeshua (Jesus), "Made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." Kefa talks about the prophecy of King David concerning the Messiah (Christ): "He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses;" Acts 2:30-33 NKJV.³

It was always determined by God to provide a blood sacrifice for us. Kefa also said about Yeshua in Acts 2:24 NKJV, "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it."

The Haftarah for VaYikra is Isaiah 43:21 to 44:23. Isaiah talks about how God had taken care of Israel, but Israel had not been faithful to the sacrificial system and had been a sinful people. So, God has allowed destruction and scorn to come upon them. Someday though God will pour out the Holy Spirit on them. The redeemer God and Rock is the first and the last; there is no God, but Him. Also, it says that those that worship idols are deceived.

² In Joel 2:32, the Hebrew word *malat* always means to escape. We should understand that the Greek word in the New Testament portion often translated saved has this meaning. h4422. מָלַט *mâlat*; "a primitive root; properly, to be smooth, i. e. (by implication) to escape." – [Strong's' Enhanced Dictionary](#).

³ King Dave prophesied in Psalms 16:9-10 NKJV, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Here in Isaiah God refers to Himself as the first and last. In Revelation Chapter 1, we see God appearing as a man to Yochanan (John) and referring to Himself as the first and last; we find out that it is Yeshua who is speaking to Yochanan in Revelation. He is our redeemer.

Isaiah 44:6-8 CJB says,

"Thus says Adonai, Isra'el's King and Redeemer, Adonai-Tzva'ot: "I am the first, and I am the last; besides me there is no God. Who is like me? Let him speak out! Let him show me clearly what has been happening since I set up the eternal people; let him foretell future signs and events. Don't be frightened, don't be afraid — Didn't I tell you this long ago? I foretold it, and you are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? There is no other Rock — I know of none."

Yeshua said in Revelation 22:12-13 NKJV, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

If you do what is right and good, you will have a good reward.

Yeshua is the Way **(a teaching to accompany the Torah teaching)**

In order to avoid sin, we need to keep our focus on God and be attracted to the things of God. We should have a God centered life. This portion talks about various offerings, what they were for, and how they were to be done. We see Cain and Abel making offerings in Genesis, so after the fall of Adam and Eve, they must have been instructed by God to make offerings. In fact, offerings were made by Abel (Gen. 4), Noah (Gen. 7), Abraham (Gen. 12,13,22), Isaac (Gen.26), and Jacob (Gen. 33, 46). Contrary to some theological thought, Adam and Eve were close to God and their descendants who followed the true God were also close to God. Noah who did what was right was in communication with God and God had him build an ark to save mankind.

Over thousands of years, mankind has had the choice whether to be attracted to the things of God or to do things their own way. We live in a time of testing. How will we live; how will we react; what are the motivations for our plans? Will we pass the test? The Bible says God knows our thoughts. Psalm 139:2-3 NKJV says, "You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways." God knows all and He knows what motivates us.

Like I said earlier, people are in general more concerned about passing their tests at school or at work, or following man-made commandments that they think please their denomination instead of pleasing God and keeping His commandments. Even most observant Jews are more concerned about following the added man-made commandments of the rabbis than the Bible. Keep God's commandments. Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV says, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God."

Every day our focus should be on doing what God says in the Bible and not doing things our own way. That is how we pass the test. Every day we need to be attracted to the things of God like a person who loves chocolate. Psalm 119:103-104 NKJV says, "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."

The word hate there in Psalm 119 can also mean "to sham" according to Strong's.⁴ To sham means to give someone false or misleading information that tricks them. Don't we all hate shams that try to deceive us. I remember ordering something through the mail that looked great in the ad, but when I got it, it was more toy like than what was depicted, and it was worthless. I was fooled; I was shammed! God's commandments are good for us. Stay away from the false ideas and shams of mere people. The Bible says they are just shams and false information; they are often worthless or can even lead us into destructive ways to live and even the lake of fire mentioned in the Bible (Revelation 21:8).

*Kefa warns us in 2 Peter 3:16 NKJV, "Untaught and unstable people **twist to their own destruction.**" What were they untaught in? They were untaught in the Torah and the Old Testament portion scriptures; **there was no New Testament portion at the time.***

Instead, put good and godly thoughts in your mind. Use the scriptures to focus your thoughts appropriately.

I use the scriptures to help me all the time. Get to know key scriptures that you can use to guide you. Isaiah 26:3 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." When I am not at peace, this is one of several scriptures that comes to my mind. I trust in God and I give Him what is bothering me. This is one of the many scriptures I have memorized and apply to my life. I have some 9 pages of scriptures printed out that have been key to my walk with God.

That is how you get control of your thoughts. You replace the wrong thinking with right thoughts. Regardless of what others are thinking, we need to get our thoughts in the right place; so, get control of your thoughts.

Be appropriate in what you understand to be true. Act reasonably.

We need to be a people who have a conscience. Does what I do please God; am I leading people to do what is right or what is wrong? I once knew a lawyer who worked for a law firm that was somewhat unscrupulous. He told someone at work that he could not in conscience agree with their practice in regards to a particular issue and when his boss found out, they fired him on the spot. His coworker told the boss.

Because he got fired, he had trouble finding another job. God blessed him though and what he does now has impacted perhaps hundreds of thousands of people. It is truly amazing the impact he has had. He probably thought at the time, "How will I take care of my family," or "Why is this happening to me.?" One person taking a stand has led to the blessing of

⁴ Strong's Enhanced Dictionary.

thousands. So, stand and be faithful. Someone once told me that people give up at times just before God is going to use them.

Will we look back on our lives and see the good we have done or the destruction we have left in our wake (left behind us). Deuteronomy 10:12-13 NKJV says, "What does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good." It says God's commandments are for our good!

I was watching a story about some guy who was supposed to be smart and educated. His idea of progress was to commit murder. I am not kidding you. He is like another Hitler spreading his doctrine of getting rid of anyone he thought was a burden on society. He is the burden on society.

Fortunately for us, we have a better group of people that we belong to; we are a people who have a conscience and care about others. The thinking of the world and the thinking of mankind can be so much different than what God wants for us. Look at what it says in Romans 12.

Romans 12:10-19 NKJV:

"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord."

The message from God and Yeshua (Jesus) is so much different than the world's message, isn't it. God tells us to be kind, have hope, be patient, pray (because God can answer prayers), help each other financially, rejoice, and don't think you are too smart to listen to others. Do not do evil, and we are to live peaceably. That is the message of our Messiah Yeshua. He is the Head of His people and we are part of his body of believers.

God has put together His body of believers with Yeshua as the head.

Shaul refers to believers in the Messiah as being part of a body of believers. Each part is necessary to be a functioning body. For example, our body needs its various parts like hands, feet, and head.

Shaul said that Yeshua is the head of the believers and not anyone or anything else and that Yeshua is at work in His people. Colossians 2:19 NKJV, "Holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God." Yeshua is the head of the believers and not a denomination.

We hold fast to the Messiah and not to the shams and fake doctrines of man.

Ephesians 4:14-16 NKJV says,

"That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ — from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

Shaul says we are to each do our part and build up the body of believers. We are to no longer be deceived by everything we hear but speak God's ways in a loving and caring way. He says that each part of the body is effective and helps the body of believers to function. This is amazing, isn't it! We have something to celebrate and something wonderful to be part of.

Have joy in being part of His body of believers.

Shaul said in Philippians 4:4-7 NKJV, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. 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."

We have so much to be thankful for. God has given us His commandments and the right way to live, and it is a good way. Why not have joy! Why be anxious? Keep praying and allow God's peace to fill you up. Allow God to guard your mind through the Messiah Yeshua (Christ Jesus). God tells us to be thankful for what we have been given. Hebrews 13:15-16 NKJV says, "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

God requires a sacrifice for our shortcomings (sin); Leviticus 17:11 NKJV says, "It is the blood that makes atonement." God made a way for all to come to Him through the Messiah Yeshua. People are prone to sin and doing things their own way instead of doing what is right. Have a God centered life. Do not be shammed or fooled by mankind's ideas. Instead, put godly (good) thoughts in your mind. Control your thoughts with the help of the scriptures. Have a proper understanding of things and act reasonably. We are part of a wonderful body of believers in the Messiah so be filled with joy and be thankful.

The Aaronic Blessing

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

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

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

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

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ
 יְאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֶלֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְךָ
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֶלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

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

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