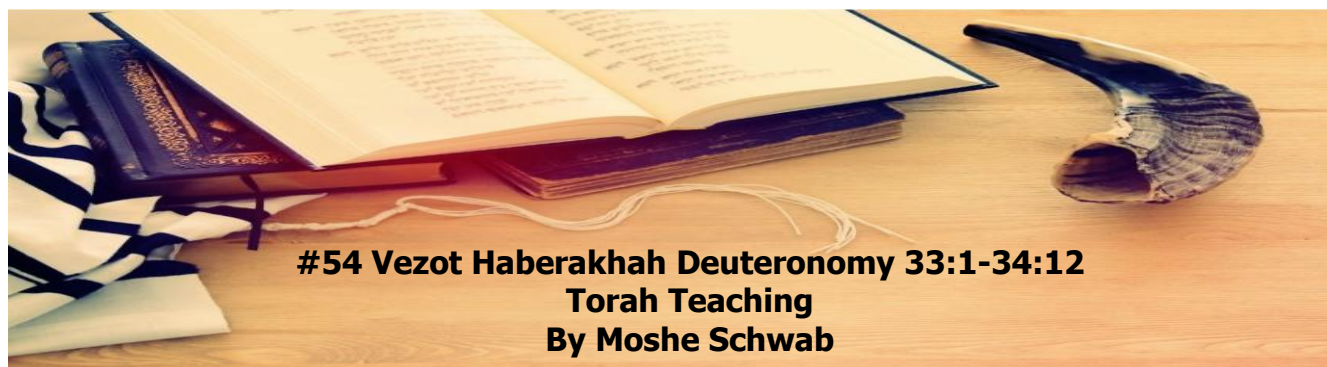




#54 Vezot Haberakhah Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12

**Torah Teaching
By Moshe Schwab**

Names

Kefa – Peter
Moshe – Moses
Shaul – Paul
Ya'akov – James
Yeshua – Jesus (in Hebrew it means "Salvation")
Yehoshua – Joshua
Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)
Yochanan – John

Terms

Cohen, Cohanim – Priest, priests
Haftarah – the weekly reading from the prophets
Parashah – (portion) one of 54 parts of the Torah
Shabbat – the 7th day of the week; we are to rest
Sukkot – Feast of Tabernacles, Booths
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement

Today we finish the book of Deuteronomy. The reason we focus on the different portions of the Torah throughout the year is because it was instituted by God's holy prophets. That is what Yeshua was doing when he went to His hometown and read from Isaiah. The first leader of those who believed in Yeshua as Messiah was Ya'akov (James), and in the context about the Gentiles, he says they are to go to synagogue and learn God's Old Testament commandments and keep them. In Acts 15:21 NKJV, "For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." So, new Gentile believers were to learn God's Old Testament commandments and keep them. After all, they are God's commandments. That's what the Bible says.

Just before Sukkot, we celebrated Yom Kippur which is the day of forgiveness of sins and is sometimes referred to as the Day of Atonement. It is a picture of the future time of Judgement of our God. It is a solemn day of rest, and some type of denial is required, often achieved through fasting. Sukkot follows just four days later, and it is a 7-day celebration and is a picture of our future celebration in the future kingdom of God. The first day of Sukkot is a day of rest. The 8th Day is just a day of rest following Sukkot. Perhaps it is a picture of our eternal joy in the future kingdom of God.

We keep this day in our congregation as a day of rest without any activities. So, we have the final portion this week instead of on the 8th day. There are some differing opinions on the practice of observing the 8th Day, also known as Shemini Atzeret. Some believe it is to be a day of assembly. Numbers 29:35 NKJV says, "On the eighth day you shall have a sacred assembly. You shall do no customary work." I have done some Hebrew translating, but I am not a Hebrew scholar as the people were who translated the Hebrew scriptures. Why they translated the Hebrew word to "close out" as "sacred assembly," I do not know. The Eighth Day was merely a "closing day" and a day of rest as the Hebrew instead says. 1 Kings 8:66 shows us that is what it was. Unfortunately, Jewish theological practice puts their tradition over what the Bible says and we often cannot learn what we are supposed to be doing from them. That is not to say that they do not have some good ideas at times. Just as Christianity often puts theology over what

the Bible says, so does Jewish theology. Some take a strong exception to the 8th Day being only a day of rest and not a day of assembly. It can represent the final eternal rest in God's future kingdom no matter how you observe it.

As we see, it appears that modern Judaism wants to support what some rabbis teach instead of what the Bible says. As true believers in God, we do not believe in man-made commandments as though they are God's commandments. Of course, we respect the laws of the land so that we are not looked on as evildoers. 1 Peter 2:13 NKJV says, "Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." Also, see the context in 1 Peter 2:13-17.

Theology tends to take liberties with the scriptures whether they are Jewish or Christian theology. My JPS Bible (Jewish translation from the Hebrew) has even taken some liberties with their translation of the Bible and the JPS says we are not to say God's real name even though it does not say that in the Hebrew. Strong's Dictionary even disagrees with their wrong translation.

Why do they change the meaning of the scriptures? It is to support their false doctrine. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." 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." Notice that it says they are God's commandments and not Jewish commandments. I hear that remark at times because people have been misled to think God's commandments are not good and were only for the Jews. Isn't that ridiculous? They are good doctrine and God's good commandments.

According to what seems to be a scholarly article that I have read that cites historical practice, The Eighth Day is most likely simply a day of rest after Sukkot. Therefore, the making of it into a day of assembly is changing God's commandments (and altering the scriptures). The article says it was only a day of rest and not a day of assembly. That is what The Eighth Day was in second Temple times before 70 AD. We also go over this a little in our Sukkot General Teaching that is available online. The Bible describes the 8th day as a closing out and not an assembly.

1 Kings 8:66 NKJV says,

On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the good that the LORD had done for His servant David, and for Israel His people.

God's commandments often make good sense. For example, why wouldn't the creator tell us the best way to live and even what we should and should not eat. What makes sense about what is called the eighth day of Sukkot as only a day of rest is demonstrated logically. They had just spent the last 6 days celebrating with all the work involved with celebrating. The eighth day was to be a day of rest then and not a day to continue celebrating. Normative Judaism added activities that made the eighth day a day of work for some people. The venue was supposed to change from activities to a day of rest. Logic may not always apply to God's commandments but in this case, it appears to.

Modern Judaism wants to keep their man-made commandments, and they say that is what being Jewish is about instead of following what the Bible says. Shaul says that being a true Jewish believer is someone who keeps God's commandments. Romans 2:29 NKJV says, "**He is**

a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart."

Shaul is referring to Deuteronomy 10:12-16 NKJV which 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?** Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it. The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day. Therefore **circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.**

To be stiff-necked is to do what you want to do like an animal that goes where it wants to go instead of where you want it to go. A true believer is a person who keeps God's commandments. Again, the Old Testament commandments are doctrine for mankind. That is why Shaul refers to them over and over. Again, Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law."

Also, the same is true for Christianity. They want to keep their man-made commandments and say their made-up theology is true Christianity instead of doing what the Bible says. So, they make up a theology to explain away anything that contradicts their man-made doctrine.

This was a note given me from a fellow believer called: Accepting all of the Bible.

It seems to me that one of the tenets of Christianity is the inerrant word of God, namely the errorless and perfect words of God, the Bible. With that belief comes a fierce unrelenting strict, relentless, and stubborn way of thinking. For them, certain particular scriptures seem to stand by themselves, and they consider them to be 100% true. They will say, "If God said it, that settles it." So, what happens when a scripture or scriptures seem to contradict other scriptures? They will certainly say that if the seemingly contradictory scripture is from the Old Testament, it is said to no longer apply.

They then apply that same way of thinking to scriptures in the New Testament portion. They will say that any scripture in the New Testament portion that says that God's Old Testament commandments still apply, actually longer actually apply. Or they will make up an alternate understanding to explain away a scripture that says the Law is not done away with. Also, if the New Testament uses the Old Testament commandments as an example, they will make sure to say that things are different now and the God of the Old Testament was harsh back then. And, any scripture that uses the Old Testament to make a point, it is only the new point in the New Testament that is important and not the proof from the Old Testament.

What if God is not denying the validity of the Old Testament commandments but building on them and even explaining further what He expects of His true believers? For example, Yom Kippur is the day of atonement. God instructs His people to afflict their souls by fasting food. When reading Isaiah 58, it identifies that God is after a fast where the hungry are fed, the people's burdens are removed, the naked are clothed, and we are cared for. So, what does that mean, no fasting? Does it mean to only do these other things? What if both are true? Yes, we are supposed to fast, and also, the goal of humbling ourselves before God is to realign

ourselves with His mission for the true believers. Should not our life also reflect how Yeshua lived in obedience to God and His commandments, to live like Jesus. Shouldn't our life be directed by God and His commandments, by the Holy Spirit and the power of the Holy Spirit, to, to break the bonds of sin, to heal the sick, to care for the needy, to unload heavy burdens.

Another example can be the scripture that says in Acts 2:21 NKJV, "Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." This is being quoted from Joel 2:32. The Hebrew word there for saved is only translated 5 times to save and 47 times to escape (reference, Strong's Dictionary). We escape, but we can also jump ship so to speak. We can refuse to live the life that God wants us to live. We are not saved by grace as some say. Many people believe that "calling on the name of the Lord" is all you need for salvation in this Messianic age, in this era since the Messiah Yeshua came. They will say to just ask Yeshua into your life. When Kefa (Peter) quotes this in Acts, he also instructs the people listening to repent and be baptized. What were they to repent of? There was no New Testament portion at the time. They must have repented of something so they must have repented of not keeping God's Old Testament commandments. There is so much more than a one time declaration that is needed for us to be "saved" from the coming wrath.

Romans 2:5-9 NKJV says,

But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who "will render **to each one** according to his deeds": eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness – indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil.

Do you understand what it is to do good or to do evil? We do not get to decide that. God defines that because He is an all-knowing and good God who has our best interests at heart. God's Old Testament commandments are perfect for life, make us wise, are right, enlighten us, are forever, are valuable, warn us for our good, and are rewarding.

Psalms 19:7-11 NKJV says,

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 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.

Therefore, doing what is good is to keep God's good Old Testament commandments. And to do evil is to not keep God's Old Testament commandments. Psalms 34:14 NKJV says, "Depart from evil and do good." And those who do not keep God's commandments practice wicked works. Psalms 141:4 NKJV says, "Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works." We do not follow our own heart, but we do good by doing what is right. Psalms 19:8 NKJV says, "The statutes of the LORD are right."

Another obvious example of not being perceptive and accurately assessing the meaning of the scriptures is in the understanding of the Law. These are God's instructions for life. There is a

plethora of scriptures in the hundreds about how the Old Testament scriptures instruct us and how the Law is good, the Law is helpful, and the Law is necessary for a proper Kingdom lifestyle. God is instructing mankind so they could become a holy people and a special treasure to God in life. 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."

Then Christianity throws all of that out. For some, it is only about grace. Couldn't it be fully both a life of grace and God's goodness through His good Old Testament commandments? The point of all of this is to gain the understanding of an ancient and holy book that we desire to understand. God does not contradict Himself. God says he doesn't. Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." God instead may be further explaining and commenting and instructing us with His scriptures and not changing His mind. It was the pagan gods who were fickle, changing, and deceptive. God is none of those things.

End of special section.

The Bible refers to God's feasts as the feasts of the LORD, in other words, The Feasts of Yě-hō-váh. They are the feasts of our eternal God and are for all of mankind for all of time. So, do not forget to celebrate God's feasts. Isaiah 66:22-23 NKJV says, "'For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,' says the LORD, 'So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,' says the LORD."

Sukkot Scriptures:

Leviticus 23:39-44 NKJV says,

"Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest. And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God." So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

Be blessed by God's truths for life.

Psalms 25:8-10 NKJV says,

Good and upright is the LORD; therefore He teaches sinners in the way. The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His way. All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth, to such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.

God is good and helps us to live right. Those who are humble, who are willing to be listen and obey God commandments, learn to live justly and learn truths to live by.

Don't be fooled by the word covenant. It means to be in agreement. We all must decide whether we will live in agreement with God or not. It is not automatic. Some use the word covenant deceitfully to mean God treated different eras differently. We need to make this additional point from Deuteronomy 10. For all of time, God has desired that mankind would follow His good directions for life. Let's talk about the scripture on having a circumcised heart again.

Deuteronomy 10:13-17 NKJV says,
 Keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good? Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it. The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day. Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer. For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.

God has always desired a people who would be circumcised in heart, a people who would not be stiff necked so as to do things their own way instead of how God tells us we should live right. God is the creator, so He knows what is best for us. God delighted in seeing people who want to follow His commandments, people like the gentile Abraham. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." It is emphasizing by repetition that Abraham kept God's law. God's laws were passed down verbally before they were written down. The written law was not given yet at the time of Abraham. Psalms 119:151-152 NKJV says, "And all Your commandments are truth. Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that **You have founded them forever.**" God's commandments have been known for all of time, "forever." Be happy that we can know truth. They were true at the time of Noah, Abraham, for Israel, and for us too. They are "forever."

Some people have told me that we do not know that Noah kept the law. They do not know some of the basics of how to understand the scriptures. Sometimes the way words are used in the Bible describe their meaning. For example, over and over the Bible says to walk with God and keep His commandments. 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;" (also see, Deuteronomy 8:6, 10:12-13, 11:22, 13:4, 19:9, 26:17, and 30:16). Therefore, to walk with God means to keep God's Old Testament commandments.

We will be God's holy people if we keep His commandments it says. Noah was a holy and just man who walked with God and kept God's good Old Testament commandments. Genesis 6:9 NKJV says, "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God." The law was passed down from believer to believer verbally until it was written down. Even Kefa said that Noah was righteous. 2 Peter 2:5 NKJV says, "Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness." Righteousness means to do what is "right and good" (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18) and keep God's commandments. We are holy if we keep God's commandments. Those who live in sin are not holy. Noah kept God's Old Testament commandments – they are "forever" it said in Psalms.

Stick to what God says, our life is supposed to be lived by keeping God's calendar, namely His feasts, by keeping His commandments, and with the help of the Holy Spirit.

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!" We should have God's commandments in our heart instead of our own ideas on life. God has our best interests at heart. God says He wants what is best for us and our children forever. Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." He is still a good God and His commandments are still good.

We will not achieve the goodness that God wants for us by doing things our own ways. Do not be sucked into secular or wrong thinking. Those who are meek, who are willing to follow God's good commandments will live in peace. Those who do not follow God do not like us because they do not like God's good ways. Psalms 37:11-12 NKJV says, "But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plots against the just, and gnashes at him with his teeth." They do not want peace. Psalms 35:20 NKJV says, "For they do not speak peace, but they devise deceitful matters against the quiet ones in the land."

God wants what is best for us so stay faithful to His commandments. Psalms 119:165 NKJV says, "Great peace have those who love Your law." Also, Psalms 85:8 NKJV 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."

Seek God's directions always. Torah is the word used to describe the first 5 books of the Bible. The word Torah means instructions and God's commandments are instructions for life. Proverbs 4:13-14 NKJV says, "Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life. Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil." So, make the true God, our creator and good God, your God. Follow God's truth for life.

Psalms 63:1-8 NKJV says,

O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. Because **Your lovingkindness is better than life**, my lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. Because You have been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.

Strongly desire God's truths for life. **Our God is a God of "lovingkindness."** Be satisfied with God's goodness and treat God for who He is, our creator and good God who cares about us and wants us to live in His truths for life. Following God gives us the support we need for a satisfying life. Jeremiah 31:14 NKJV says, "My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, says the LORD." God's commandments are good and so is the gift of the Holy Spirit (see Luke 11:13).

Torah Study.

This week we are finishing the book of Deuteronomy. Instead of having a teaching on The 8th Day, we are finishing the Torah today. The 8th Day was meant to be a picture of our final and future eternal rest and life with our God and King. So, we will just be resting on The 8th Day (Some call it the 8th day of Sukkot). There are some differing opinions on the practice of observing the 8th Day, also known as Shemini Atzeret, as a day of assembly. Numbers 29:35 NKJV says, "On the eighth day you shall have a sacred assembly. You shall do no customary work." I have done some Hebrew translating, but I am not a Hebrew scholar as the people were who translated the Hebrew scriptures. Why they translated the Hebrew word to "close out" as "sacred assembly," I do not know. I referenced an article on Wiki in our general teaching for Sukkot that says it was merely a "closing day" and a day of rest as the Hebrew instead says. That article on Wiki has since changed to reflect their modern observance. Either way, it can represent the final eternal rest in God's future kingdom. Some take a strong exception to the 8th Day being only a day of rest and not a day of assembly.

According to what seems to be a scholarly article that I once read, The Eighth Day is most likely simply a day of rest after the closing of Sukkot. That's what it was in second Temple times before 70 AD (the article has since changed). Of course, they had customs and extra practices in the second Temple period, but extra observances do not need to be practiced. The Eighth Day has taken on extra practices and meaning including celebrating the end of the cycle of Torah reading (Simchat Torah). It is my thinking that this practice is not commanded in the Torah (even though the translation says to have an assembly). That seems to be man-made doctrine; Isaiah 29:13 NKJV says, "Inasmuch as 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."

The Bible describes the 8th day as a closing out and not an assembly.

1 Kings 8:66 NKJV says,

On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the good that the LORD had done for His servant David, and for Israel His people.

The 8th day was simply a closing out and a day of rest. They went to their tents with joy. Joy accompanied God's feast days. They are feasts. Nehemiah 8:10 NKJV says, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." Fat refers to having meat with the meal not just eating fat. Eating the fat of an animal is forbidden (Leviticus 7:23).

The Eighth Day probably is a picture of our future eternal life with God and having extra activities on this day hides this meaning. It all fits together:

Yom Teruah is a picture of Yeshua's return.

Yom Kippur is a picture of the judgment to follow.

Sukkot is a picture of the great feast to follow for those in the future 1,000 year reign of Yeshua. 2 Timothy 2:12 NKJV says, "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us." Revelation 20:4-6 talks about the 1,000 year reign of the Messiah.

The Eighth Day is a picture of our future eternal life (see Revelation 21).

I point out in other my other writings what The Eighth Day points to, and that the English translation says to keep it as a day of assembly. Whether we are to keep it is a day of assembly I must admit that it seems that it is not because historically it was not a day of assembly (see 1 Kings 8:66) but a later man-made commandment added to be a day of assembly. Perhaps this needs to be explained at present as something that is disagreed on if you keep it as a day of assembly or you do not. Use your best judgement. Unfortunately, both Judaism and Christianity often add or subtract from God's good commandments (see Deuteronomy 4:2).

We talked a little about ritual last week and it is a sometimes a confusing issue. Ritual is something we do every day. We also follow rituals that others have advised us to follow. Ritual can be a good thing because it can help us get through life. Some rituals are wrong though. Sometimes ritual contradicts what God says to do. Again, telling people that a non-essential ritual is a commandment of God is wrong; especially ritual that micromanages life and is nonsense. What does not putting up an umbrella on Shabbat because you think you are putting up a structure have to do with anything sensible? Is putting up an umbrella work?

Yeshua referred to Isaiah and said in Matthew 15:9 NKJV, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." Isaiah 29:13 NKJV says, "Inasmuch as 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." Those who were following man-made commandments were just following men and not God and those who imposed man-made commandments are doing wrong the Bible says. What makes us followers of God is to keep God's commandments.

The portion V'Zot HaBerachah means, this is the blessing. It says that God loves His people. We should understand that means, He loves us too, namely those who want to follow Him and how He told us to live. We are called His holy ones, his saints. Deuteronomy 33:3 says, "Yes, He loves the people; all His saints are in Your hand; they sit down at Your feet; everyone receives Your words." It is a touching scripture of the loving and good God teaching His people, His saints, the truths they need for life. Will we be His people and follow His good commandments?

Then it goes on to talk about each of the tribes. It was their turn to be encouraged. I can imagine each tribe waiting with anticipation to hear what God had to say to them. After the blessing, Moshe goes up Mount Nebo where he dies, and God buries Him. Then Joshua take over leadership over the people of Israel. Deuteronomy closes with these scriptures. It is presumed that Joshua added the words about Moshe when he made a copy of the Torah (see Joshua 8:32).

Deuteronomy 34:9-12 NKJV says,

Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants,

and in all his land, and by all that mighty power and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

The Haftarah is Joshua 1:1-18. The Haftarah begins with God telling Joshua to take the people across the Jordan River and go into the land of Canaan and that he, God would be with him. God tells Joshua to be courageous, to divide the land between the tribes, and to courageously follow God's commandments, God's law. The three tribes that had been promised the land east of the Jordan left their belongings and families east of the Jordan and accompanied the other tribes crossing the Jordan to fight alongside them.

These famous scriptures are in this portion of the Haftarah.

Joshua 1:7-8 NKJV says,

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Keep God's Old Testament law and do what it says to do. It will help you to be prosperous and successful, to have an abundant life.

We have finished the book of Deuteronomy, and we say:

Hazak, hazak, ve-nithazek,

Hazak, hazak, ve-nithazek,

Hazak, hazak, ve-nithazek.

Be strong, be strong and may we be strengthened,

Be strong, be strong and may we be strengthened,

Be strong, be strong and may we be strengthened.

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

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 6,521 times in the Old Testament portion according to Strong's Dictionary. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name. So, why not use God's real name? According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. In that verse and everywhere we see a name for God in all capitals (in some of our Bibles) it is this exclusive name for God, Yě-hō-váh. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah which means to exist. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. He is our eternal God and creator. I want to honor God's name. Will you also honor God's name?

Some people call God Hashem which means "the name." They dishonor God's name by not using His name (see Deuteronomy 29:20). When we honor someone, we use their name in an appropriate way. Christians for the most part do not use the true name of God. Why not begin using His true name and honor Him? Do not be afraid to use God's real name with respect. I say

this in order to encourage you to use God's real name because it points to God being our eternal creator.

The ancient rabbis say that is God's name. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. I have seen God's name pointed as Yě-hō-váh in the Aleppo Codex. 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. So, let's put God's name on His people.

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ
יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיַחַנֶּנֶךָ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיִשָּׂם 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.