



### Names

Kefa – Peter

Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one.  
Christ in the Greek means to be smudged

Moshe – Moses

Shaul – Paul

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

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

Y'hudah – Judah

Yochanan – John

Yosef – Joseph

### Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets

Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible

Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah

Shemot – the 13<sup>th</sup> Torah portion

The Torah portion for this week is Shemot and it means, "names." This portion begins by saying that originally seventy men of Israel came to Egypt. All that generation died, and the children of Israel multiplied and became so powerful that the Pharaoh became alarmed with their numbers. I would like to begin by talking about our spiritual diet.

There are many good teachers out there that give us a good spiritual diet. First of all, the Bible was given to us by holy men who wrote down what God told them to write. So, the scriptures are not to be interpreted in just any way we want or added to or subtracted from. 2 Peter 1:20-21 NKJV says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Yeshua said in Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV, "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!'" Yeshua most definitely was saying that those who were not keeping the Old Testament law would not be in the future kingdom of God.

People who are subtracting from God's law by interpreting it in their own way or making up their own laws are interpreting the scriptures their own way. Therefore, people who are upholding God's commandments and God's Old Testament law are good teachers. Do not confuse this with normative Judaism which follows tradition. They say true Jews keep their extra man-made laws which they often call traditions. Shaul says in Romans 2:29 NKJV, "He is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart."

Every true Jew knows that we are to have a circumcised heart and keep God's Old Testament commandments. Deuteronomy 10:13, 16 NKJV says, "Keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good." – "Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer." Moshe tells the people not to be stiff-necked which means to do things their own way. We are to turn towards God. Therefore, true Jews keep God's commandments and do not have to keep contrived commandments or false doctrines in order to be a true Jew.

The word "Jew" comes from the word Judah which means praise; we are to be a people who are a praise to God. Ephesians 1:12 NKJV says that we are to be, "To the praise of His glory." After Shaul quotes from the Torah and says we are to have a circumcised heart, he goes on to say in Romans 3:31 NKJV, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." Find good teachers who encourage people to **not** follow made up false doctrine but instead they teach people to follow God's good commandments that He gave us for 'our own good,' so that we can be "to the praise of His glory." There are some good teachers out there.

There are different ways that ideas about life are packaged. Watch out for false doctrine that is packaged as though it is truth. One of the ways that we get our information is through books. There are lots of books on good ideas and there is nothing wrong with how to do books, but they are not God's commandments even if their concepts are workable and helpful.

The original New Testament was inspired by God, but we know that it was tampered with. I have a copy of the Greek text, which is called, Novum Testamentum Graece. It shows what scholars think is the best Greek to be used for translation of the Greek. Some pages have as few as 4 verses on it and the remaining information on the page show the deviations to those verses from the different manuscripts. Some verses have up to 10 deviations. The New Testament contains almost 8 thousand verses. If we just used a low number like 3 times the number of scriptures, we come up with a whopping 24,000 deviations to the Greek originals.

So, we have tens of thousands of deviations to the Greek originals. Some seminaries are now teaching that we cannot know what the New Testament says. We have Hebrew scriptures now of the New Testament that we can compare to the Greek and remarkably, they are very similar to the Greek that is used in the Greek text, but not entirely.

We know that in ancient times, they used the Hebrew scriptures to correct the Greek. We know that there were whole sections of the Hebrew New Testament that were added to the New Testament Greek. We also have quotes from the early church Fathers that line up with the Hebrew manuscripts. We know that the heretic scribes of the Roman Empire changed the Greek and Latin to make the New Testament anti-Jewish so they could take over Christianity. So where does that leave us?

Those that study the Hebrew New Testament manuscripts are interested in preserving the truth. They compare the Hebrew to the Greek and to the many quotes from antiquity in order to get a more inspired New Testament portion.

Those in some seminaries who teach we cannot know what God said in the New Testament because of the many deviations to the text are not trying to find the truths of the scriptures. Those who oppose the Hebrew scriptures of the New Testament are also not interested in truth. They join the heretics of the Roman Empire who opposed God's holy Hebrew scriptures. The Roman Empire killed those who had the Hebrew scrolls of the New Testament and burned the holy scriptures in order to preserve their takeover of the Christian church. The lies and ceremonies of the Roman Empire got transmitted into early Christianity. Those who hate the Hebrew New Testament are not interested in finding truth. We are interested in truth.

The Bible says God's commands are "right and good," see Deuteronomy 6:18. I have a number of books that make keeping God's commands difficult because they create volumes of information on just a few commandments. I have a friend of mine who told me he was reading a 1,700 page book on the gospel of Matthew. When God gave Moshe His commandments again, they were simple enough in the context of their lifestyle to understand and do. We just need to understand their context and apply them properly.

The reason I say that God gave His commandments again is because Adam and Eve were in a close relationship with God, so they knew how to live right. We see Cain and Abel making sacrifices. In the time of Noah, man became evil, so the people of that time ignored doing what was right. The people chose not to keep God's commandments, but Noah did what was right and was teacher of righteousness – he taught the people how to live right. Mankind was originally not far from God at first as some say. The teaching that mankind evolved into a relationship with God is a false teaching.

God had Moshe write down His commandments at Mount Sinai not because people did not know how to follow God but because God wanted it written down to help believers follow Him. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." There is no ambiguity or vagueness about what it says about Abraham. Abraham kept what God told Him to do; he kept God's commands; he kept God's statutes; and he kept God's laws. Those who are saying otherwise are just coming up with their own ideas.

Context is important. God said Abraham knew how to keep God's commandments and He kept them. When the Bible says they were not to do what the pagan idolators did or incorporate any of their practices, it means just that. Deuteronomy 12:31-32 NKJV says, "You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, **be careful to observe it;** you shall not add to it nor take away from it." It says to be careful to keep what God says.

So, when people say it's okay to observe the day of the sun god Mithras which is Sunday, it is wrong no matter what a theologian may make up. Constantine made it a day of rest to the sun god and not to Yeshua, and Christianity inherited the non-biblical lie. This is what theology does and false teachers do. They make excuses and negate what God tells us to do.

Some even make excuses to do all sorts of evil – their evil is not hidden to God. Kefa said in 2 Peter 2:17 NKJV, "These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." False teachers will be judged for leading people the wrong way. What is a well without water? It is a death trap, a hole in the ground. So, if you are a false teacher, guess what?

There are things that draw us to meetings like music or teaching style. Are we being drawn to truth? How are they using their music or teaching? I went to a church once that put on a rock concert for their Sunday service and it was amazing. The pastor got to the podium and said something like we can all go home now after that time of worship. It was just a performance. Also, they were not teaching regularly about keeping God's commandments.

There are a lot of churches and ministries that keep things going by performance values and not biblical values. They will say they believe in the Bible, but the people are being drawn by music, singing, or some other activities. Like I said, I am not saying there aren't genuine ministries with good Bible teachings. **If they are not** teaching people to keep God's commandments the way the Bible says, then they are deceiving people.

There's life in truth even if it is not packaged in an appealing way. Some people expect their meeting experience to be an ice cream and cake like experience. We need God's truths, or we are just getting man-made performance or 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." Those who are following man-made doctrines are far from God it says. So, let's be committed to doing things God's way.

God's intentions are good. For example, Galatians 5:22-23 says that the Holy Spirit helps us to love, have joy, be patient, kind, and tender. We should be thrilled to know what God wants us to do because that is what is best for mankind. Worldly people don't understand this and are brainwashed by a deceitful world. God even saved my life from a fire years ago through the Holy Spirit. You can't put a price on God's help and goodness. For those who want to follow our all-knowing and good God, there is an expectation of a better life and a wonderful eternal life.

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." We will have a festive Shabbat every week and not just in the here and now. Leviticus 23:2 NKJV, "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." People have the choice to follow a good God or to lose out for eternity. Celebrating for eternity is much better than the "lake of fire," or "the blackness of darkness forever." Did I really have to say this? People can be very deluded at times. We sometimes need things spelled out for us.

Work diligently on our hearts. Be pure and good; do what is "right and good," again, see Deuteronomy 6:18. Shaul said in 2 Timothy 4:1-2 NKJV, "I charge you therefore before God

and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

It is our duty to let people know the things we have been talking about. In that way they can choose the way of life that leads to eternal life or reject it. Yeshua said in John 14:15-17 NKJV, if you love me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth." We are to accept God's commandments and keep them, accept Yeshua as the Messiah, and we are commanded to accept the Holy Spirit through the Messiah as another helper in life (see Acts 2:38-39). Yeshua as God gave us the commandments at Mount Sinai and also gives us the Holy Spirit. Yeshua said if you love me, keep my commandments. We love God by keeping His commandments. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always."

Some people decide they will do things their own way and do evil. But we can be a strong and good people who are committed to follow God's good ways; and then, we will get to enjoy a blessed and festive eternity. So, stay strong.

### **Torah Teaching**

Shemot means, "names" and begins by giving the names of the children of Ya'akov. In the past, I found it fun to read the names in Hebrew. I will often use Hebrew words and names to properly place the Bible in its context, a Hebraic or Jewish context. I could use the word biblical context, but people often see biblical context as what their religion teaches. Most religions are only interested in keeping their doctrine the way it is and not in changing for the sake of following truth. They know people will leave their church if they change. They want their money so they can perpetuate their belief system. They serve money and not God.

Understanding the Bible in its original context is important for understanding the Bible properly. For example, Yeshua kept the Torah and many believers in the Messiah Yeshua say we are to do what Yeshua did, yet they philosophize themselves out of keeping God's word. Shaul unequivocally tells us that we are to keep the Torah, yet false teachers contradict what he teaches. Again, Romans 3:31 NKJV says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law."

Faith in God is important, but we must also keep the law. The law is God's good commandments and when we do not keep His commandments, we have walked away from God. Ya'akov said in James 2:19-20 NKJV, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?" If you say you believe in God and do not keep His commandments, you will end up where the devil spirits are going. Revelation 20:10 NKJV says, "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone."

Also, those who are teaching people not to keep God's commandments are deceiving people and guess where they are going? When you take anything out of context, you no longer have the facts. You can say  $2+2=5$ , but that doesn't make it right. I doubt that any one of you

would accept \$5 back from the clerk at the cash register instead of \$10 just because the clerk at the cash register decided that \$5 was just as good as \$10.

*We absolutely want truth, not error.*

This portion continues by saying that originally seventy men of Israel came to Egypt. All that generation died, and the children of Israel multiplied and became so powerful that the Pharaoh became alarmed with their numbers. So, he made them into slaves and worked them hard. Also, Pharaoh told the midwives to kill the baby boys, but the midwives feared God, so they didn't kill the baby boys. They told Pharaoh that the woman had their babies quickly and God blessed the midwives for not killing the babies. They lied to Pharaoh to protect life. The Bible teaches us we are created in the image of God and that murder is wrong. Then, Pharaoh ordered all the baby boys thrown in the river. The Pharaoh no longer recognized Egypt's deliverance through the Israelites. It's also true today isn't it. Many have forgotten that the scriptures came from the Israelites and the Jews and that their Messiah is Jewish. People would have no salvation without the Jews.

A Levite couple hid their child for three months, but eventually had to put him in the river in a basket. The basket is called an ark in the Hebrew just like Noah's Ark. Pharaoh's daughter heard the baby crying and had pity on the child. She had her slave find the mother so she could nurse the baby for her, and Pharaoh's daughter called him Moshe which means drawn out and she raised the child as her own in the palace.

After Moshe had grown up, he saw an Egyptian strike one of his own kinsmen and he waited until no one was around and he killed the Egyptian, but what he did was found out. Pharaoh tried to have Moshe put to death, but he fled to Midyan. In Midyan, Moshe ends up defending a woman at a well and their father tells them to bring Moshe over for some food. Moshe ends up staying with them and is given Zipporah as his wife and has children. Moshe has the heart of a defender of what is right. Are we defenders of truth or do we make up excuses. Meanwhile the Pharaoh that tried to kill Moshe died, but the children of Israel remained slaves. God heard their cries. God values all of mankind. He created us with His characteristics. Genesis 1:26 NKJV says, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image.'"

Moshe was tending the sheep of Yitro and he came to the mountain of God, Horev, where the angel of God appeared to him in a fire in a middle of a bush that did not burn up. He is told to take off his sandals as an act of humility. God identifies Himself as the God of his fathers and Moshe was afraid to look at God. God tells Moshe that He has heard the cries of the Israelites. God then tells Moshe that He is sending him to free Israel and Moshe asks how he could do that, and God says that He will be with Moshe.

God tells Moshe that Yēhōvāh (yud-hey-vav-hey) is to be His name forever. The word LORD in all caps in the Hebrew of Exodus 3:15 is the word Yēhōvāh. Exodus 3:15 NKJV says, "Moreover God said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.'" Substituting for the true name of God we get in Exodus 3:15, Yēhōvāh the "God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac" etcetera. Can it be any plainer what the

name of God should be? The translation hides the name of God. The name of God has been taken out of our Bibles!

Moshe is to get together the leaders of Israel and tell them that God is going to force Pharaoh to let them go and they will be given gifts when they go. Some say that God is beyond description so we cannot use His name. God tells us His name and it is used over 6,000 times in the Bible. The Jews were being persecuted for using Yehováh around the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, so they made a law not to speak God's name temporarily. It was supposed to be reversed, but they didn't change their man-made law. Thousands of manuscripts have been searched and the name of God as Yehóváh (יהוָה) has been found 2,363 times in different manuscripts pointed as Yehóváh. Only one time in over 7,000 manuscripts has it been pointed differently as Yehóváh. Information provided by Nehemiah Gordon.

### *Do we respect God?*

Some call God Hashem which means "the name." Would you call your father "it?" They dishonor God by their man-made commandment. Yeshua said, "I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." John 17:26 NKJV. At the time of Yeshua, there was no prohibition on using God's name. It says He declared the name of Yehováh. He is the Messiah, and we are to obey Him. Deuteronomy 18:15 NKJV says, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear." We are to obey the Messiah Yeshua.

Some say that to know the name of Yeshua is to know the name of God. What they are saying is that we cannot use the name of God, but we can use the name of Yeshua. It sounds nice, but man-made ideas are not Gods' word. Watch out for these interesting man-made ideas. Some are not right. Yeshua said He declared God's true name (see John 17:6). Obey the Messiah. We have evidence in the Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament portion that Messianic believers were obedient to Yeshua and used God's real name.

Moshe doubts that the people will believe him when he gets there, but God turns Moshe's staff into a snake and back again and made his hand leprous and then normal again. God also said that Moshe could turn water into blood. Moshe then says that he is not a good speaker and God has Aharon come to meet Moshe and be Moshe's speaker. Moshe leaves for Egypt with his family and Moshe encounters God along the way again. This time Moshe's son is circumcised by his wife Zipporah. Perhaps this was written as a lesson to let women know they are also to be defenders of the Torah. When my dad stopped teaching the Torah, my mother took up the mantle in my family and taught me about God and about circumcision.

Moshe and Aharon talk to the leaders of Israel and the leaders believe them. Moshe and Aharon then talk to Pharaoh, but he will not let the people go and he imposes more work on them and mistreats the people. Israel is told they must gather their own straw for the bricks. Perhaps Pharaoh sees himself as a god. He does not believe in the true God. The leaders of Israel were upset with Moshe and Moshe is now also upset. God then tells Moshe that He will force Pharaoh to set Israel free.

As we know, Abraham prophesied that Israel would be slaves. This portion jumps ahead some 215 years. The 430 years included the time in Canaan according to Josephus and the Septuagint (see Jewish Antiquities 4.15.2).<sup>1</sup> We find out that Israel is being treated badly because they are doing well. The Jewish people do well because they follow the true God and His laws, and God blesses them. The Gentiles become afraid of them or are jealous. The fact that the followers of the true God do well is a testimony to the goodness of God and also to His future promises to Israel and to us. The Egyptians were treating the Israelites ruthlessly and having their baby boys killed, but God was going to keep His word to Abraham and bring them back to their land.

In this portion the Bible says there is an appearance of God as a man in the fiery bush. It says that the angel of God appeared to Moshe. Angels look like men; for example, the angels that visited Abraham in Genesis 18; God also appears as a man there too. Then in Exodus 4:1, the angel in the bush is called Elohim and then later, yud-hey-vav-hey, Yěhōváh tells Moshe that He is mightier than Pharaoh and the Israelites will be set free. God tells Moshe He will be with him.

*God can do what He wants; even appear as a man in a fiery bush.*

Israel has doubts throughout this portion, but God is greater than the people's doubts. The prophets in the Old Testament portion tried to get people to return to God. That was their job. So, we have lots of scriptures urging the people to do what is right. Some say that there was nothing good about Israel. They misunderstand why the prophetic scriptures were written.

In our era, God gives us the powerful gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) and the Holy Spirit is with those who believe on Yeshua the Messiah. Good thing for us because the believers in the Messiah are not perfect either. We can always seek God's forgiveness and decide to change our lives and do what is right, and He will forgive us. Psalms 103:11-12 NKJV says, "So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." God is not subject to us, but we are to be subject to our God and king and we are to fear Him, trust in Him, and do what is right.

The Haftarah for Shemot is Isaiah 27:6-28:13, 29:22-23. Israel had just acknowledged that God saved them, and He wiped away their tears and disgrace in Chapter 26. They now have faith and trust in God and God has humbled the mighty. Our portion in Chapter 27 begins saying that Israel will fill the whole world with a harvest (possibly referring to an end time harvest) and His controversy with them is taken care of. A shofar will sound, and Israel will have the land from the Euphrates to the wadi in Egypt and they will be glorious. This is obviously about the end time land promise that will occur in the future.

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<sup>1</sup>Jewish Antiquities 4.15.2; Josephus says, "They left Egypt in the month Xanthicus, on the fifteenth day of the lunar month; four hundred and thirty years after our forefather Abraham came into Canaan, but two hundred and fifteen years only after Jacob removed into Egypt. It was the eightieth year of the age of Moses, and of that of Aaron three more. They also carried out the bones of Joseph with them, as he had charged his sons to do." The Septuagint includes Canaan in the 430 years.

The subject then changes. Can they understand beyond precepts? With another tongue will God give them rest, but they wouldn't listen, and they live only by precepts. After the Haftarah for today it says that God will lay a cornerstone. We know this cornerstone prophetically refers to Yeshua who would come about 600 years later. In Isaiah 29:22-23 it says that Israel will no longer be ashamed (this is yet to come); they will consecrate God's name Yēhōváh (yud-hey-vav-hey), and the Holy One (most likely referring to Yeshua), and they and will be in awe of their God.

Rabbi Shaul sees some of the verses that we read from the Haftarah as prophetic verses. He understands that Isaiah 28:11-13 NKJV being about the gift of speaking in tongues. God gave us the Holy Spirit to help us keep His commandments. The Holy Spirit is to help us with life instead of making up man-made commandments and traditions. The Holy Spirit should be a witness to us, but some disregard that witness and think it is okay to live a life of sin. The Bible says that those who lead a life of sin will not be in God's future kingdom. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV says, "Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." Do not be deceived.

*Trust in the Holy Spirit and trust in God and do what is right.*

Although we see lack of trust in God at times as in today's portion, it was through trust in God that Israel was set free. We also need to have trust in God and live with faith. Faith requires we actually do what is right and not just think we are right. Hebrews 11:23-26 CJB says, "By trusting, the parents of Moshe hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw that he was a beautiful child, and they weren't afraid of the king's decree. By trusting, Moshe, after he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose being mistreated along with God's people rather than enjoying the passing pleasures of sin. He had come to regard abuse suffered on behalf of the Messiah as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he kept his eyes fixed on the reward. By trusting, he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered as one who sees the unseen."

**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.)**

We are to save life. The midwives lied to save lives. God created mankind in His image. Exodus 1:17-19

Good people defend the rights of others, the truths of God's word, and what God says is right. Exodus 2:16-17

God knows what is going on and can act to defend the rights of others. Exodus 2:24, 3:7-9

God keeps His promises. Exodus 2:24-25

God can appear how He chooses. He appeared as an angel in a burning bush. Angels appear as young men. We find out that it is God who appeared to Moshe. Genesis 3:1-7

God says His name is Yěhōváh forever. The word LORD in Genesis 3:15 is the name Yěhōváh as found pointed in 2,363 different manuscripts and as Yěhōvěh only once out of some 7,000 manuscripts. Genesis 3:15 reads, Yěhōváh the "God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac," etcetera. Genesis 3:15

We are allowed to ask God for confirmation and instructions when God asks us to do something. Genesis 4:1-17

God will fulfill His will no matter what obstacles occur. Exodus 5:1-6:1

### **Be Connected to our Good God** **(a teaching to accompany the portion.)**

In the Torah portion for today, we see the beginnings of God's willingness to help mankind and save us from our sin and pain in life. God reveals Himself to Moshe and sends him on a journey to Egypt to help the Israelites, deliver them from oppression, keep His promise to bring them back to Canaan, and bring His people close to Him through His commandments.

Stay deeply connected to God. Don't let anything come between that connection.

Have you ever held your breathe and when you are done, you often take a deep breathe. Perhaps that is how deeply we are to stay connected to God. We sometimes use the saying, "that was a breathe of fresh air" to mean something was refreshing or enjoyable. Shaul uses the word for **God-breathed** in the Greek in 2 Timothy 3:16 which is translated inspiration. He means that the scriptures came from God. Man wrote down what God gave them.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV says, "All Scripture is given by **inspiration** of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.". Perhaps we could say that God's words give life just as God breathed into man the breath of life in Genesis. There was no New Testament portion at the time, so Shaul is talking about the Old Testament portion in 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

We also know from the context that Shaul meant the Old Testament portion. Timothy's mother was a Jew. Acts 16:1 NKJV says, "And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed." Shaul says just before verses 16 and 17 in 2 Timothy 3:14-15 NKJV, "But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures." Timothy learned the Old Testament scriptures from his mother.

Shaul believed it was important to keep the Old Testament scriptures. The next verses in context say in 2 Timothy 4:1-3 NKJV, "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering

and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers." What are they to preach? He was just talking about the Old Testament scriptures. What are you going to be judged by? It is talking about God's commandments in the Old Testament portion.

Why are we talking about this? Some have us have heard this before, but we need to be reminded to keep God's commandments and not get tricked out of keeping them. Yeshua tells us to keep God's commandments; He is God. It's an issue in our day because so many have lost touch with the meaning of the scriptures. Once you understand, you can then begin being close to God by doing what He says. You reject Him when you don't do what God says.

Yeshua said we are His friend if we keep God's commandments (John 15:14). It says in Matthew 19:17 NKJV, "But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." So, why are people saying not to keep God's commandments?

Stay away from ungodly resources. There are many good resources that help you to do what is right.

Some try to use the Talmud to determine what is right, but the Talmud is only a commentary. Man-made books can help us at times, but we need to be discreet. There are literally thousands of books about the Bible, but not all of them are good. Commentaries that tell us not to keep God's commandments or that add man-made commandments will mess us up spirituality. Some treat the Talmud as though it is God's word, and it is not. Some books are just made-up doctrine. The Bible actually says not to make up extra misapplied commandments. Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." Ritual is part of life, and some is not burdensome or bad, but ritual unless it is commanded by God is not a commandment of God.

You would think that after reading what the Bible says, no one would dare contradict what we have been talking about, but that is what some people do anyway. We just read that we will have to stand in judgment before God for what we do. The audacity of some people amazes me. They do not seem to fear God. Ya'akov said in James 3:1 NKJV, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment." These so-called teachers ramble on about what they don't understand and lead people to the lake of fire. So, what's going to happen to them? That scripture in James encourages me to teach the truth.

Did you know that Yeshua will judge us at the *Bema* (see 2 Corinthians 5:10). **Bema** is the Greek word that is used for the word **seat** where it says we will stand in front of the judgment seat of the Messiah Yeshua. *Bema* is the Greek word used for where the Torah is read! I'm not kidding. Ask any Jewish person.

Since Shaul was Jewish, what do you think he meant when he said we will be judged at the *Bema*? A number of times Shaul affirmed he was Jewish. What gospel message do you think he was teaching if he said that that the Old Testament portion was to be diligently kept?

Again, he said according to 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV that the Old Testament portion, "Is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." Some of you need some serious help if you cannot figure this out. The problem we have today is that we are so far removed in time and from the true church of Yeshua that people have replaced the meaning of the scriptures, taken them out of their Jewish context, and created false doctrine.

Shaul also said in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 NKJV, "If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe." What are we supposed to do? Believe in the Messiah Yeshua and keep His commandments. Yeshua said in John 14:15 NKJV, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Yeshua also said in Matthew 5:17 NKJV, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy. Shaul said in Romans 3:31 NKJV, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." Are you lost? I hope not.

Yochanan said in 1 John 3:4 NKJV, "Sin is lawlessness." The Greek word the ancient rabbis used for the Torah was *nomia*. The word lawlessness in 1 John is the word *anomia* which is not to keep the Torah. Sin is to not keep the Torah. Yochanan goes on to say that, "He who sins is of the devil;" 1 John 3:8 NKJV. There are a lot of good people out there that have been lied to. No one would have listened to Yeshua or Shaul if they were saying not to keep God's commandments. Don't mess with God; He wants what is best for us and His ways are the best way because He is God, and we are not.

There are things in life that we may consider as leading us right; the thrills and frills of some spirituality don't lead us to God. Stay at peace and seek His ways.

It's simpler to be close to God than we think. Observe Shabbat; so, start doing it. Lying to others is not treating them right. It is not being loving so, stop lying. Leviticus 19:18 NKJV says, "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself, I am the LORD." Kefa talked about having good virtues in our life. He gets that from Leviticus 19:18. Learn to be courteous and kind; it is scriptural. 2 Peter 1:5-7 NKJV says, "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love."

Shaul said in Philippians 4:8 NKJV, "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." Synagogues at that time were called "schools of virtue." That's why we see the early leaders teaching us about loving others and having good virtues. The Gentiles especially needed to understand this.

Shaul called His synagogue the School of Tyranus; probably having something to do with God's power, because he taught about the power of the Holy Spirit. Tyranus could be taken to mean amazing power and that fits better than that of the name of a person. Shaul still taught virtues as we can see. Shaul was teaching us to do what is "right" (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18).

When we unwrap God's light, it enhances our life.

We should understand that doing what is right helps us to live a better life. After all, keeping God's commandments are, "Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV. This is a simple message; isn't it? 2 Corinthians 11:3 NKJV says, "But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

The devil deceived Eve. How did he do that? The devil reasoned with her to not keep God's commandment didn't he. That's what's happening in our time. Yeshua said in Matthew 5:17 NKJV, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets." Then the devil comes along and says just the opposite. People are listening to wrong advice and teachings and being reasoned out of their relationship with God and eternal life.

The word righteousness actually means to do what is right, but some teach that isn't necessary. It is a contradiction of terms. Noah did what was right by being righteous and because he did what was right, He saved the world. The Messiah came to help us live right through God's commandments and the help of the Holy Spirit so we could be a righteous people who live right. That's how Yeshua saves us.

Shaul said in Galatians 5:19-21, "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." People are being deceived by false teachers. Kefa said in 1 Peter 5:8-9 NKJV, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him." Resist these people or you will end up in the lake of fire with them.

I like the imagery of this scripture in Isaiah. I want to be on that highway of holiness. Isaiah 35:8 NKJV says, "A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness." God is our Redeemer; He brings us back to Him; God helps us, and His commandments show us the ways of life. Isaiah 48:17-18 NKJV says, "Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: 'I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you by the way you should go. 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.'" Doesn't that sound great! I want peace like a river.

God's word and His commandments bless us. Psalms 1:1-3 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. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper."

God is good and He cares about everyone. He is a merciful God and eagerly desires we return to Him; God guides those who are humble towards Him to be good people. 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's ways lead us into truth and understanding. In Jewish thought, light is used for understanding. Don't we all need to be a people of understanding? Proverbs 6:23 NKJV says, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light."

God's ways show us best how to live and can give us wonderful joy. Psalms 16:11 NKJV says, "You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore." Psalms 23:2-3 NKJV says, "He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake."

There is blessing in doing things God's way. There is a steep fall off for those who replace God with worldly ways. Proverbs 19:23 NKJV says, "The fear of the Lord leads to life, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; he will not be visited with evil." In Proverbs 22:4-5 NKJV it says, "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life. Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; he who guards his soul will be far from them." It tells us to listen to God and to fear God. There is nothing wrong with fearing God. He is God and we are not, so we should have a deep respect for God.

People that don't trust in God and break God's commandments are most often rewarded with trouble and problems. Why wouldn't we want to trust in the creator of the universe? Start living in faith and trust in God. Israel had lived in Egypt with all its ungodly influence and somehow, they got things together enough to trust in God. I have heard Bible teachers say Israel didn't trust in God. About 2 million people left their homes in Egypt trusting in God; that is some amazing trust. God came through for them. Why don't we get with it like Israel did and trust in God and do things His way?