



Names

Kefa – Peter
 Moshe – Moses
 Pesach – Passover, Yeshua is our Pesach lamb
 Shaul – Paul
 Shavuot – Pentecost, a spring feast of God
 Sukkot – God's Feast of Tabernacles in the Fall
 Yeshua – Jesus
 Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)

Yochanan – John

Terms

#47 – the 47th portion
 Haftarah – the weekly reading from the prophets
 Parashah – (portion) one of 54 portions of the Torah
 Rosh-Hodesh – the 1st day of the Jewish month
 Shabbat – the 7th day of commanded rest by God
 Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
 Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Mankind often follows the worldly powers that exist as though it is the way to eternal life.

One of the ways that people do this is the tendency to seek the fast-track or easy way in life. It is worldly because it is a, "something for nothing mentality." The Bible says that it is wrong to not compensate people for their work. Therefore, we are to work for what we earn. Jeremiah 22:13 NKJV says, "Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by injustice, who uses his neighbor's service without wages and gives him nothing for his work." The Bible establishes that we are to have a fair monetary system.

Communism teaches people to give up their life to the government and they will decide what is equitable, they will take care of us. Their system empowers those who they choose, and it is not fair. What gives them the right to decide what is right for us; they are not God. Communism then watches over the rights of its people and enslaves its people. The people who do not go along with their system are executed. Communist governments and dictatorships like Hitler's executed over 101 million people in the 20th century.

Another fast-track mentality is the lure of gambling. People are drawn to gambling because they think it is possible with as little effort as possible to obtain a large gain. They feel a sense of joy over winning something. Those that run gambling establishments often give out little prizes to entice people to keep gambling. It is a something for nothing scam. A person would do much better celebrating over something they buy (like a toaster) that is useful than gambling. Those huge casinos with all those bright lights were built with the money of gamblers.

What are other ways that people avoid doing something useful? Success is often equated with knowing a lot of information instead of knowing how to live right. We have taken the lessons of the Bible out of our schools, so children do not understand how to be wise. Even atheists would benefit from the lessons in the Bible. So, because our emphasis is all on learning information and not the wisdom of the Bible, we end up with lots of mindless people

who do not respect others.

Sometimes people look for immediate gratification instead of something of value for life. So, we end up with people who indulge in sexual sin and mind-altering drugs. Sexual sin and drugs can enslave people to that lifestyle. The Bible says, people become slaves to sin and evil. Instead, become a slave of doing what is right and bring good into the world. Romans 6:22 NKJV says, "Having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life." Fruit refers to the end result, in this case holiness by keeping 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."

Get set free from the slavery of sin, I have. I try every day to do what is "right and good." Won't you join me. Do not stay down, fight spiritually. Shaul says in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NKJV, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds. Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God." Shaul said we all need to fight spiritually. That is what we need to do to get set free. God will forgive you if you have sinned.

Psalms 103:11-13

For as the heavens are high above the earth, 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. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him.

God is a merciful God. He will remove the penalty for sin from us if we change and decide to do what God says. Sin is evil because our good and caring God gave us His commandments with our best interests at heart. God's commandments are good. He gave us His commandments because He cares about mankind. Fear, respect, and honor God for His goodness.

The fast-track mentality can even apply to spirituality. People will say just love God and love your neighbor and if you do, you are in relationship with God. They then must define what is right instead of following the commandments of a loving God who knows what is right and what is best for us. It is a fast-track mentality because it would take effort to learn God's commandments and follow God instead of one's own ideas. They are not actually believing in God and following God because they do not care enough to learn and do what our good God says to do. The "just love God and your neighbor" mentality without actually having a true relationship with God by following His commandments is similar to a something for nothing scam.

Just in case you do not know what the Bible says about how to love God and love your neighbor, here are a couple of scriptures that tell us. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall love the Lord your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always. It makes sense. Since God is a caring and loving God, not keeping what He says is not respecting and caring about our good God.

Leviticus 19:18-19 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. You shall keep My statutes." The next verse starts talking about breeding livestock, so loving your neighbor must be connected to loving others by keeping God's commandments. That also makes sense. Since God is an all-knowing God who has our best interests at heart, keeping God's commandments is the best way to act in life and therefore is the best way we can relate to others.

People often say, just love others, but then they must make up their own ways to do that. They are replacing God's ways with their own ways and not only that, they can also change their minds and change their ideas anytime they want. God does not need to change His commandments because He is an all-knowing God and knows what is "right and good." Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." Their fast-track mentality will not get them into God's future kingdom. If you are going to a congregation that is not teaching you to keep God's commandments, you need to find one that is. Or start your own small group and teach people the truth.

Shaul says that the unrighteous, those who do not do what is "right and good" will not be in the future kingdom. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV says, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." People will say that they do what is right, but by whose standards? Is it by their own standards or God's standards? I do not think they will be able to fool God with their wishy-washy grace mentality when they stand before Him at judgment time. You either follow God or you do not.

There are extra things in life that keep us from our spiritual life and are not helping us. I am not saying we should have not fun and enjoyment. All too often though, people will place an inordinate priority on hobbies, fun activities, and other things and then not have times for their spiritual development and other things that relate to their spirituality like prayer and spiritual encouragement.

True happiness comes from a balanced life that includes spirituality. 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." The "right and good" path for life is to follow God's commandments. Without the truths and wisdom for life from God, there is only temporary happiness. Doing what God says can give us sustained joy.

Take time for the things that God gave us to enjoy and work at learning to relax and have peace. Every day I thank God for what I was able to do and accomplish. If I made something or fixed something, I sometimes take a moment to think about what I did and enjoy my accomplishment. We should be thankful in life. In our last Torah portion, it tells us to be thankful. Deuteronomy 8:10 NKJV says, "When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you." Understanding that God has blessed us with what we need to live a good life through His creation and His commandments is important. Ungrateful people are often filled with discontent and anxiety.

Learn to be at peace in life. One great way to practice that is to make Shabbat not only a day of rest from work, but a day of rest away from stressful conversation. How can you develop peace in your life by working at something all the time, even if it is a hobby? We have a saying in our family that goes something like, "That is not Shabbat like," and it can even refer to what we talk about. We do not talk about work!

Some hobbies are work. Do not be fooled by thinking that since it is not my job, it is okay to do that on Shabbat. God gave us 6 days to work.

Exodus 20:8-11 NKJV says,

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

The fact that it says to get your work done on the other six days suggests that we are to get anything that requires effort done on the other days of the week. God made Shabbat holy in Genesis 2:3 so it is for all of mankind, and we demonstrate that we believe that God is the Creator by keeping Shabbat. Shabbat is biblically defined as the 7th day, our sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. The biblical day starts in the evening, Genesis 1:5 NKJV says, "Evening and the morning were the first day." One way to keep the day holy is by not engaging in stressful conversation.

Like I said, it is good to practice being at peace on Shabbat, but please take every opportunity to be at peace each and every day. Isaiah 26:3 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." We trust in God's commandments that lead us to do right and that give us peace. God helps us to move forward in life by giving us strength and peace. Psalms 29:11 NKJV says, "The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace." And we should always be mindful to pray and ask God for help. Psalms 55:17 NKJV says, "Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice."

Here are some ideas on how to have peace in life:

Be in relationship with God by keeping His commandments.

Get physically rested and quiet mentally for 10 minutes (or for even 2 minutes).

Practice being at peace on Shabbat. See Isaiah 58:13.

Speak in tongues for 10 minutes out loud. It is prayer (see 1 Corinthians 14:14-15).

Play games.

Pray, read the Bible.

Take a Walk.

Think and reason while driving.

Meditate on God's commandments.

Enjoy nature, godly music, or take a nap.

Do what God says and not what the world expects.
 Tell yourself to be at peace.
 Ask God to help you.
 We cannot have it all.
 Do not be jealous of others or covet what they have.
 Play a musical instrument.
 (What helps you to have peace?)

Do what is right and do not be swallowed up by worldly things that keep us from a relationship with God. We talked about some of the worldly things that enslave people. Fast-track mentality refers to things like getting something for nothing. We briefly mentioned that Communism promises they will take care of you if you give your rights to them. We talked about the fallacy of gambling, about people who learn lots of information without the needed wisdom, and also not becoming a slave to sin, instead be a slave to do what is "right and good." Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV says, "You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good."

We talked about the need for spiritual dedication and that in order to be truly happy; we need a balanced life with God in it. We also talked about the need for peace in our lives and to practice being at peace. And do not forget to be thankful.

More to Consider

Christian churches often focus on their meeting places and their meetings instead of knowing and teaching truth. For example, some churches teach that we are to love God and love our neighbor and that is all there is to being Christian. People then must make up what it means to be Christian instead of following God's instructions in the Bible. The Bible tells us that to love God, we must keep His commandments. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always."

Also, years ago I was surprised at how some felt about merely a meeting place. Some even spoke of a spirituality to places made of brick and stone. Isaiah 37:18-19 NKJV talks about the works of wood and stone: "Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands — wood and stone." The buildings made by man can sometimes be places of idolatry because they are fashioned by man just like idols are made by man.

It is not wood and stone that we are supposed to follow, but God and His commandments. It has always been God's desire that we follow His word and have hearts that keep His commandments. God's commands are for our own good and God has our best interests at heart. People who do not follow God bring evil into the world and their deeds will not go unpunished.

Ezekiel 11:19-21 NKJV says,
 "Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and

take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. But as for those whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord GOD.

Some people and their denominations make up their own ways to follow God. It seems simple enough in Ezekiel. Psalms 119 has a lot of good advice for us. We need to clean out our heart and give it completely to God. We need to get to the place in our lives where we value and "delight" in God's good statutes.

Psalms 119:9-16 NKJV says,

How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

We are to live in the light and truth and avoid the darkness of man-made religion. Perhaps you've never thought of some of the shortcomings of man-made religion. They want you to follow them and their rules instead of what God teaches. They may even tell you that you don't have to follow God's rules. That's not what the Bible says. Don't be tricked by their 'wood and stone' buildings made by man. Some think they have the right to contradict God.

Stay connected to God in the middle of a mixed-up world so that your life is filled with light. Light is the word used for understanding in the Bible. For some, understanding is doing what they want to do in spite of what God says is "right and good" (Deuteronomy 6:17-18). Some think they have the right to interpret what is right, but we all know there is a right way and a wrong way and making up your own rules tells God you value what you make up instead of the truths that God gave us.

If you punch someone in the face several times, they may say that you shouldn't do that. We know there is right and wrong; and it is not a matter of private interpretation. Kefa said in 2 Peter 1:20 NKJV, "No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation." The Bible says we are not allowed to make up our own rules. We are not God; He is the creator, and we are not.

Those who reinterpret what is right and wrong by their own values have nothing to tether them to reality. They are following themselves and not God. Psalms 119:130 NKJV says, "The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple. Proverbs 2:6 NKJV says, "For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding." Obey God's commands no matter what the world or false believers say. Work out your salvation with "fear and trembling." Your life and thoughts are not hidden to the creator God who knows what is best.

Philippians 2:12-16 NKJV says,
 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life.

Do not get caught up in worldly disputes about how to live right because the worldly redefine truth and makes it into a lie. They call what is good evil and what is evil good. They will have to pay for their evil it said in Ezekiel so don't follow their false system of lies. We live among perverse people, but we are not to live like they live. Hold fast to the words of life. Don't pretend to be God of your life; we are not God.

Torah Study

The Torah portion for this week is Re'eh and means, "behold" or "see." What do we see? Do we only see the world, or do we also see things spiritually? What are the most important things to us? Is this world all there is? Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." Obviously, there is something more important than our own views and ideas. If we do not tell people, they will blithely go along with the crowd and end up in the lake of fire. Matthew 7:13 NKJV says, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it." Prophets are supposed to encourage people to stay faithful to God. Those who do not tell the truth are false prophets. It talks about false prophets in this portion.

In this portion, Moshe (Moses) begins by telling Israel that if they obey God's commands they will be blessed and if they don't, they will be cursed. Psalm 34:8 NKJV says, "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" Notice how it says "see." That is from the same verb as "re'eh," namely the verb ra'ah. The psalmist said that we will see the goodness of God if we trust in Him and His commandments. I have experienced this supernatural work of God; it is not by chance. If you obey God's commandments, you will "see" too.

We've talked about the good eye and the evil eye some. The good eye looks at things from a positive perspective and that includes, trusting in God. The evil eye is filled with cynicism in life and distrust in God. Yeshua tells us that in order to help others, we need to see right. Matthew 7:5 says, "Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." It is true isn't it. People have all kinds of opinions, so they don't see right; they do not want to follow the truth of God's word. They are hypocrites; they could have truth, but instead they trust in themselves. True believers are not hypocrites because they are in the process of trying to live right. In this portion it says that God tests us to "see" if we will trust in Him (see Deuteronomy 13:4). Stay

faithful always and pass our tests.

They were to destroy all the idols and places of idolatry after they enter the land of Canaan. They were to go to the place that God would put His name and rejoice in His presence with their offerings. They were not to do what is right in their own opinion. They were not to make up their own commands and misapply God's commands.

We should understand that God's commandments can be misapplied. Some 1,500 years later in Yeshua's time they had thousands of misapplied commandments. Many of these commandments micromanaged life or added unneeded ritual. The ancient rabbis substituted their own ideas instead of listening to God. They made it so that only what the rabbis said was to be followed and kept. They weren't following God the way they were supposed to.

They made up whatever they wanted to. Does that sound like Christianity today? The Bible says we are not to live by man-made opinion and are not to change or misapply 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 which I command you."

The portion continues; they could eat meat, but not the blood. They were not to inquire about how the pagans worshiped; the pagans even sacrificed their children. This teaches us that we must be careful not to engage or associate with anything that has to do with a false religion or idol worship. We should not look into pagan religions like Buddhism, Islam (which is a false religion that teaches murder and stealing), Hinduism, Catholicism (which teaches idolatry), Kabbalah Judaism (which teaches spiritualism; and is not to be confused with being spiritual. Spiritualism includes false prophecy, witchcraft, various arts like palm reading and for forth.) The Bible teaches that spiritualism is wrong. It is backed by the demonic.

And there are other groups that teach false doctrine. For example, those who do not believe Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah and God (see Jeremiah 23:5-6), and those who do not believe in keeping God's commandments in the Old Testament. It says they were not to listen to anyone who told them to worship another God even if they were their family or they produced signs (see Deuteronomy 13:2-6). A true prophet teaches God's commands. If they tell you not to keep God's feasts and instead keep the feast of the bare-breasted goddess Ishtar (pronounced easter), it is a false religion. Don't do it. Keep the resurrection of Yeshua, not the feast of some pagan god.

*Shaul said those who don't keep God's
commandments will not be in the future kingdom.*

There are signs produced by false spiritual powers, and they do not lead people to God. But the miracles and healings and work of the Holy Spirit are intended to help and bless the believer. They are to be an encouragement. They are **not** meant to prove that we have arrived spiritually. Yeshua said in Matthew 11:21-22 NKJV, "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be

more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you." There are a lot of people who think they are following Jesus, but they do not listen to His words. If you do not follow God the way you are supposed to, you will be held accountable.

Believers in modern society make excuses not to follow God the way the Bible says. They make themselves as gods to the people and tell them things like there are only two commandments or just follow the Holy Spirit. They then have to make up their own ways to follow God instead of what the Bible says. They change God's commandments into their own rules. Shaul said those who don't keep God's commandments will not be in the future kingdom (see Galatians 5:21). The Israelites were to put to death anyone who would lead them to believe in an idol, even if it was a whole city. Don't listen to those who teach false religious practice or false doctrine; as we can see, God takes this very seriously.

They were not to gash themselves or shave their hair over their foreheads (in other words, they were not to do things associated with idolatry and false religions). The command to not cut your beard is in the same type of context. Leviticus 21:5 NKJV says, "They shall not make any bald place on their heads, nor shall they shave the edges of their beards nor make any cuttings in their flesh." This obviously also refers to **a specific** pagan practice. Since these were specific pagan practices, it is not referring to having a beard. We do not have to have a beard. For example, the pagans would make bald spots on their heads that form a halo. The early believers knew better and would never engage in such pagan practice. It is an insult to depict any of them with a halo over their head. Watch out that you don't emulate pagan practice or for that matter, the crazy practices of the unbelieving community.

They were given food laws. They could eat an animal that has both a divided hoof and also chews the cud. They could eat fish that have fins and scales. They were not to eat certain types of birds or anything that swarms or anything that is dead. Why don't people want to listen to God's advice? There are perhaps hundreds of ideas on how we should eat. What about what God tells us? He knows what's best for us. Eating healthy in reality is eating things God tells us is okay to eat. I am all for eating right, but I also put God first in this area. It goes without saying we can eat fruits and vegetables, but we don't have to be vegetarians.¹ If God said that some foods were not good to eat, why would that change now? People are not trusting in God, that's all.

They could exchange their goods to bring money to buy offerings at the place God chooses. Every 3rd and 6th year they were to provide support for the Levites, widows, and orphans. The other years they brought their support to Jerusalem. Every seven years they were to have a shmittah year (year where they rested the land); also on that year, debts were forgiven, and slaves were set free. The Rabbis had the Israelites giving more than 20%, the Bible actually commands us to give a little over 10%. Deuteronomy 15:10 NKJV says, "You shall surely give to him, and your heart should not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your works and in all to which you put your hand."

¹ Some people say that even kosher meat can be bad for you, but these animals don't transmit their disease unless of course they are sick animals.

God can bless us because He is God and He will bless you for giving. Notice that Shaul quotes from this in 2 Corinthians 9:7. He bases his teaching on the Torah. Yeshua said in Matthew 7:23 NKJV, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" The word lawlessness uses the word used for Torah (nomia) from the Septuagint. The Septuagint is a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures by 70 rabbis in the 2nd century BC. Those who do not keep the Torah practice "anomia," lawlessness. Yeshua will reject those who don't keep the Torah; they practice lawlessness, "anomia."

If a slave wished to remain a slave, then they could drive an awl through their ear and be a slave to their master forever. For the most part, slavery in Israel was for paying off debt as an indentured servant. Shaul talks about being a slave for God. He chose to be a slave for God in service to God; all believers are also to be slaves for God instead of slaves to the standards of the world. Just as Israel was freed from slavery in pagan Egypt so they could instead serve God, we are freed from serving sin by the Messiah so that we should serve God. They were to help the needy and not withhold their help. There will always be poor people. Nothing defective is to be offered to the Lord. Instructions are given about observing Pesach. They were to observe Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot and appear before God on these three feasts. We too should get together on these feasts.

They were to appear before the Lord for the three feasts. God's feasts not only have something to do with Israel but are relevant for those who believe in Yeshua. The Bible even says they will be celebrated in the eternal future kingdom of God. Isaiah 66:22-23 CJB says, "For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making will continue in my presence, 'says ADONAI,' so will your descendants and your name continue. Every month on Rosh-Hodesh and every week on Shabbat, everyone living will come to worship in my presence, 'says ADONAI.'"

The Haftarah for Re'eh is Isaiah 54:11 to 55:5. Isaiah says about a future time; the ravaged city will receive great riches. Your children will have peace, and nothing will prevail against you. He says come to the water come buy food without money; come to me and live. Even the nations will run to you because the Lord glorifies you. God will give Israel great future blessings. God has given His blessings freely if they will come to Him. We also need to come to God and Yeshua the Messiah and He will freely give us blessings too.

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 destroy idols and all things associated with idol worship. We are not to destroy the things associated with the true God; namely any still useful scroll or Temple implements. Deuteronomy 12:2-4.

They were to bring their offerings to the Temple and nowhere else. They were not to eat the sacrifices in their towns, but in Jerusalem. Deuteronomy 12:5-6, 13-14,

17-18.

They can eat clean animals in their towns. Deuteronomy 12:15.

Giving to the Levites as prescribed is not to be done away with. Deuteronomy 12:19.

If they were too far from Jerusalem, they could eat from their flock. Deuteronomy 12:21.

We are not to eat blood or parts of an animal that are torn from an animal (for example a limb). Deuteronomy 12:23.

The Torah is not to be added to or subtracted from. Deuteronomy 13:1.

We are to pay no attention to pagan prophecy. Deuteronomy 13:4.

We are not to pity, spare, or conceal an idolator in Israel. No idolatry is permitted. Deuteronomy 13:9-12.

Witnesses are to be questioned thoroughly. Deuteronomy 13:15.

Cities in Israel that practice idolatry are to be destroyed and not be rebuilt. Nothing is to be taken for profit. Deuteronomy 13:17-18.

Preparing "To See" Spiritually

(A practical teaching to accompany the Torah portion Re'eh – See!)

The first thing we need to understand and "see" as Messianic believers is that Yeshua is the Messiah and He came to give us His gift of the Holy Spirit. Kefa tells us, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call;" Acts 2:38-39 NKJV. We are to live a changed life (repent, turn towards God – the word Teshuvah in Hebrew) and start keeping God's commandments. Baptism means we accept the authority of Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ) and baptism itself is the ritual act representing becoming new through the Messiah. We are to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit which is our helper to keep God's commandments and give us direction in life.

We then begin a lifelong journey of studying the scriptures to find out how we are to live and to remind us how to live. The Jewish rabbi Hillel said we begin our journey by loving others and also learn how to keep God's other commandments in the Torah (see "Hillel the Elder" in Wiki). The early Gentile believers were also told to learn the Torah. Acts 15:20-21 NKJV says, "But that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." The Gentiles were to go to synagogue on the Sabbath and learn from the Torah.

Living right requires some thought and effort.

Do you remember a time when someone was angry with you and how you responded? There are several ways to respond. Most of the time we want to open up a line of communication if we can with those we care about; if not right away, perhaps after things have cooled down some. Communicating appropriately is part of loving and caring about others (see Leviticus 19:18-19).

The Bible has a lot to say about how we communicate:

James 1:19 tells us to restrain our anger.

Proverbs 15:1 says a soft answer can keep things calm.

Ephesians 4:19 tells us to build others up.

Colossians 4:6 says we should be kind and courteous.

2 Timothy 2:16 says to watch that we talk with respect.

Colossians 3:8-9 NKJV has a lot to say, "But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another."

So how do we react to anger? We can restrain our anger; we can speak softly to calm things down; we can be courteous and respectful regardless. We can only do so much. Sometimes people don't want to work things out. We need to be prepared to do what is right. Be thoughtful and planned on how you deal with life's situations; put in the time and effort to learn how to live right.

Work on the mechanics of your life in Messiah so you are ready to do what you should do.

When we learned how to drive, we learned how the car operated and learned the laws so we could drive safely. It's the same things with life. We try to understand our roles and how the Bible tells us to live life. If we are children, we understand that we are to listen to our parents; they are in charge. Proverbs 1:8 says, "Hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother." If we are at work, we do our best at the job and follow directions. As workers, we represent ourselves no matter if we work for others or for ourselves. The Bible says we are also to work for God. Proverbs 16:3 NKJV says, "Commit your works to the LORD, and your thoughts will be established."

Find out what God says about your roles in life and start learning how to apply God's commandments in your life. Be diligent to learn to do what is right. 2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV says, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God." Also, we need each other and are to encourage each other. That's why we need teachings like these, so we can be reminded to follow God. Hebrews 3:13 NKJV says, "But exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Work at applying God's commandments. Get to know them and practice using them.

We don't live life waiting for something to occur, but we are proactive.

Have you ever heard the word proactive? It means to be in control of your life; we don't want our lives to be out of control in the physical or the spiritual realm. There are plenty of scriptures that talk about taking care of ourselves. We are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), so we should value ourselves and others and take care of ourselves. We should have a

proper perspective on life and think about our spiritual condition first. 1 Timothy 6:6-8 NKJV says, "Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content."

Being proactive means that we have a plan. Always keep in mind that God also has a plan for you. Perhaps God wants you to be a great leader, mathematician, or scientist who loves God. It was an engineer who visited the real Mt. Sinai over and over so we could know where it is today. Perhaps God also wants you to teach others the truths of the scriptures. We desperately need people who understand the proper Jewish biblical context and understand the scriptures as they were originally intended. The scriptures must be understood in a Jewish biblical context, or they will not be understood properly.

Doing things God's way is not the same as following the works of the world and the pride of life.

The Messiah came for the purpose of, Titus 2:11-14 NKJV says, "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works." Good works refers to doing what is right and good, namely keeping God's commandments in the Torah (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). We should stop doing what is wrong and following the methods of this world. We are to use our heads, live right, and look forward to the return of our Messiah Yeshua. He came so that we would stop disobeying God's commandments and so we can be a pure and special people who keep God's commandments. We are to be a special people of light and understanding.

Because we know how to live through keeping God's commandments and because we are helped by the Holy Spirit, we can bring so much light (understanding) into the world. There are whole countries that are dedicated to hate because of their false religion. What a difference believing in the Messiah can make. He truly wants to bring peace and save the world from hate and sin, and teach people to love one another (John 15:12). We need to teach people about Yeshua and the true God. God wants to bring His light to the world. Be part of what God is doing so that not only you see, "re'eh," (the name of our Torah portion for this week), but that others will see the light too.

Shaul (Paul) tells us to be lights in Ephesians 5:8-10 NKJV, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord." What could be wrong with goodness and doing right (being righteous)? What is acceptable to God and Yeshua? Yeshua said to keep God's commandments in John 14:15 NKJV, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." The Torah says in Deuteronomy 11:1-2 NKJV, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always."

God gave us His word and His commandments so that we will be blessed and see His goodness. We need to learn how to live right and that comes from following what it says in

the Bible. Do we deal with anger how the Bible tells us to? Learn and be ready to follow what the Bible says. We need to study the scriptures and get encouraged in them. Have a proper perspective of life and put God first. Do things God's way; don't follow the methods of the worldly. Love God and be a person of light and do what is "right and good" (Deuteronomy 6:17-18).

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

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.