



Names

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

Terms

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

This week is a double portion, Behar and Bechukotai. The Torah portion Behar means, "on the mountain." This portion begins with God telling Israel that He will bless them if they keep His commands and that He would be against them if they did not. The Torah portion Bechukotai means, "in my statutes." God would bless them with many things. And as proof, Leviticus 26:13 tells them about God delivering them from slavery to Egypt.

We talk about God's good commandments a lot because God in the Bible encourages us to keep His commandments a lot. We should probably understand that people who do not keep God's commandments are living a lifestyle that is against their true nature. Since God is the creator, people who do not keep God's commandments often bring negative circumstances and pain to their life and others through their disobedience to God.

We should also understand that not keeping God's commandments are evil acts since they are not listening to how God designed us to live. Therefore, they bring evil into the world. It is easy to understand this concept because of just two commandments, the commandments to not murder and not to covet would eliminate a lot of the pain and suffering that wars cause and even eliminate some wars. God is against those who commit evil and will punish those who bring evil into the world. He must be just and reward those who do "good," those who keep His commandments. There are not always consequences for people's actions in this present world. God will judge mankind justly.

Daniel 12:2-3 NKJV says,

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

Hebrews 10:30-31 NKJV says,
 "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The portions covered each week were instituted by God's holy prophets at the time of Nehemiah or perhaps even way before that. The prophets were led by God and the Torah portions ensure us that we talk about the various commandments and history that God gave us and wanted us to understand. We need to be reminded frequently to be faithful to our spiritual walk. Today, we will review some basics.

We also have a special section to explain a little about what the Bible is saying when it talks about the kingdom of heaven.

Have joy and enjoy your spiritual walk. Always pursue following God the way we should. When we talk about our spiritual walk, we must understand that the term "walk" means to keep God's commandments. For example, the Bible says Noah walked with God. Genesis 6:9 NKJV says, "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God." The scriptures tell us that to walk with God refers to keeping God's commandments. Deuteronomy 5:33 NKJV says, "You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you." Walking with God as keeping God's commandments is a frequent way the Bible talks about keeping God's commandments. Deuteronomy 8:6 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him."

So, when it talks about our walk in the New Testament portion, it is talking about keeping God's commandments. For example, Ephesians 4:1 NKJV says, "Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called." We are called to follow God and keep His commandments.

Righteousness also refers to keeping God's commandments. 2 Peter 2:5 NKJV says, "Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness." Noah walked with God and taught God's commandments. Psalms 15:2 NKJV says, "He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart." To walk right by keeping God's commandments is to do righteous works. We are to live by faith that accompany keeping the works of God's commandments. James 2:17 NKJV says, "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." Not keeping God's commandments leads to spiritual death. Romans 6:16 NKJV says, "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?"

When we obey God's commandments it leads to righteousness. Not keeping God's commandments leads to eternal spiritual death which then leads to eternity in the lake of fire. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "The cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone."

We have a lot to be thankful for! So have joy in knowing the truth. To have truth in your heart is to have God's commandments in your heart and not your own ideas on life. Psalms 119:2

NKJV says, "Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with the whole heart!" We do not follow our own heart but are blessed through God's good commandments. Psalms 119:10 NKJV says, "With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!" We are to follow God's word which contain His good commandments. Psalms 119:11 NKJV says, "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You."

Some people teach that God's commandments are done away with. Why would God's good instructions for life be done away with? They are deluded. Proverbs 10:8 NKJV says, "The wise in heart will receive commands, but a prating fool will fall." To be wise is to follow God's good commandments. So, make sure you follow God the way you are supposed to. Deuteronomy 4:40 NKJV says, "You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you." God has good intentions for us!

Stay above the ways of this world. Have a proper spiritual focus so that we are always ready to do what is right even when we face pressures in life. Life can be a struggle at times. Some people face struggles every day. We all face struggles but do not give into sin. Do what is right and be righteous. Psalms 90:3 NKJV says, "You turn man to destruction, and say, 'Return, O children of men.'" God gave us free will and God does not override our will. People turn to their own destruction by their own free will. God has reached out to mankind with His lovingkindness and wants us to keep His commandments and walk in His ways and truths for life that it may go well with us and our family. Psalms 26:3 NKJV says, "For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth."

Listen to God and try to determine the best way to proceed. Since God has given us free will and the ability to think, we need to determine the best way to keep His commandments. God's commandments are very much easy to understand, and they can be applied in many ways. I sometimes use the example of putting up a wall around the top of a building as an example. Deuteronomy 22:8 NKJV says, "When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring guilt of bloodshed on your household if anyone falls from it." In ancient times, people would sit on top of their houses. To keep anyone from falling off, they were to put up a wall on the top of their house.

It was a safety issue. We can learn from this that we should think about safety in the construction of our homes, in life, and work safely. So, we put up railings on our stairs and railings around any structure that is above ground to keep people from falling and getting hurt. This commandment can apply to all sorts of safety issues. Being safe is a commandment of God. We could understand that safety and much more than that can be understood from Genesis where it says we are made in God's likeness. Genesis 1:26 NKJV says, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness."

We have special abilities because of the way God created us. We can think, decide, be kind, help others, and the list goes on and on. We are not gods, but we are created as special creatures and therefore we should treat others with respect, and be kind and thoughtful people. We should care about life. Do you see how God's commandments can be applied appropriately in many different ways?

So we need to think about how we do things and apply God's commandments to the things of life. Hebrews 5:14 NKJV says, "But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Hebrews then briefly mentions some of the basic beliefs that we need to know, but that does not include all the practical applications of God's commandments. We have minds to be able to figure those things out. Notice that the Torah tells us not to go make up commandments that do not properly apply. 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." We have to watch out for commandments that micromanage life and are just nonsense.

Many in Christianity have negated God's commandments and in so doing they disobey God. Israel had also made up lots of such commandments and misinterpretations of God's commandments. 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." This was written about 2,600 years ago. Many so-called believers have substituted their own beliefs in place of God's lovingkindness and truths for life. They follow their own hearts instead of God's heart for them in His commandments that has our best interests at heart.

Celebrate God's feasts. Watch out for pagan elements in life and in the way we celebrate God's feasts. Do not celebrate the way pagans do or engage in their practices. Some people celebrate their own celebrations instead of God's celebrations. They make up excuses not to keep what God says to do. It should be easy enough to understand what it is saying in Leviticus.

Leviticus 23:2 NKJV says,
The feasts of the LORD, which you shall
proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.

What does it say? What do you think it means? So, why are people disobeying God? They have been talked out of doing the things that connect them with God. If people celebrated God's feasts, then their year would revolve around His feasts and they would be reminded throughout the year to follow the God's truths.

Then there is the problem of including pagan practice in life. There are some that change God's commandments so that they can engage in idol worship. They will say they are praying to God, but they are breaking God's commandment not to worship anything or anyone but the true God. Exodus 20:4-5 NKJV says, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image – any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them." They bow down before statues or pictures and they rely on objects to help them supernaturally instead of praying to God.

It is very unfortunate and sad. They are worshipping idols and not God. Those that commit idolatry will not be in God's future kingdom. 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." Some people will say they do not think of it as idolatry, so it does not apply to me. The Bible says we are to not to do anything that is associated with pagan practice. 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." We are to be careful how we live life. God gave us brains, so use them.

You can do it. People have shown that they can even do ridiculous rituals. Some people even tear their toilet paper before the Sabbath because they think tearing a piece of paper is work. Isn't that ridiculous. I will not do anything that is construed as work on the Sabbath but turning on a light switch is not work and it is not starting a fire. The commandment not to start a fire on the Sabbath has to do with the amount of effort applied. The context was the work of the Tent of Meeting in the desert. That is the immediate context. God did not want them to work on the Tent of Meeting on the Sabbath. A spark is not work. They are adding nonsense to God's commandments. They dishonor God by adding misapplied commandments. We are not to add, we are not to subtract to God's commandments inappropriately.

Be purposeful in the direction you take. We are in a spiritual battle. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NKJV says, "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." What is the knowledge that God gave us to win the spiritual war in our minds? It is God's commandments. Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'"

The devil tries to destroy people's lives because we are created in God's likeness. The devil is behind all the suffering and evil in the world by getting people to sin. Isaiah 14:12 NKJV says, How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!" When people disobey God's commandments, they can do it of their own accord, but sometimes they are so entrenched in that sin that they give place to devil spirits.

Yeshua cast out the devil spirits of people who were demon-possessed. Matthew 8:16 NKJV says, "When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick." The Jews of Yeshua's time knew what He was doing. They obviously could see what was happening. They said in Mark 1:27 NKJV, "For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

Yeshua gave His followers power over devil spirits. Matthew 10:1 NKJV says, "When He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. Luke 10:1 and verse 17 NKJV says, "After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them." Then in verse 17 it says, "Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in

Your name." If there is no such thing as devil spirits, then how could the demons be subject to them in the name of Yeshua?

People living in sin can be possessed by devil spirits. God's commandments help turn them from the power of Satan and his devil spirits to God. Yeshua said in Acts 26:18 NKJV, "To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me." So, we are each in a spiritual battle. Ephesians 6:11-12 NKJV says, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

By keeping God's commandments we are set free from sin so we could serve God and not sin.

Romans 6:16-18 NKJV says,

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Sin leads to spiritual death and eternal separation from God. That is why sin is called dead works. Keeping God's commandments delivers us from sin so that we are no longer controlled by sin or the devil.

-Have joy and enjoy your spiritual walk. Always pursue following God the way we should. We walk with God by keeping His good commandments. They are God's lovingkindness and truths for life that He gave us to help us. Stay above the ways of this world. Have a proper spiritual focus so that we are always ready to do what is right even when we face pressures in life. Listen to God and try to determine the best way to proceed. God gave us a brain so use it. Do not add or subtract inappropriately from God's commandments. Celebrate God's feasts. Watch out for pagan elements in life and in the way we celebrate God's feasts. Do not make things or people into a god. Be purposeful in the direction you take in what you do. We are in a spiritual battle. Stay strong and faithful to God.

Torah Study.

Behar means, "on the mountain." This portion begins with God telling Israel that He will bless them if they keep His commands and that He would be against them if they did not. We talk about this a lot because God in the Bible encourages us to keep His commandments a lot. God knows all; God knows what is best for us because He is the creator; and He is over all. Much like a father that hates to see his children suffering for doing what is wrong, He can prod us to do what is right, just as it says God would prod Israel for their sin in this portion. It talks about this in the New Testament portion too. The basis for the New Testament portion is the Old Testament portion. We can only have a proper understanding of the scriptures by understanding the teaching of the Old Testament portion of the Bible.

If we follow God, He can bless us above all that we ask or think because He gave us His commandments as a tremendous and good guide filled with understanding and wisdom.

Deuteronomy 4:5-6 NKJV says, "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" Those that do not follow the Old Testament lose out on what God intended to give us. God can also bless us more than we imagine through the Holy Spirit (see Ephesians 3:20). We receive blessings by keeping God's commandments and also blessings through the Holy Spirit.

Also, in this portion, it says that God broke the yoke of the Egyptians over Israel. The rabbis understand the word "yoke" as sort of a technical term for either following the yoke of the Torah or following the yoke of the false gods and the ways of this world (for example, see 2 Corinthians 6:14-18). In other words, Israel was set free from the idols and worldly ways of the Egyptians so they could live right and follow the yoke of God's instructions (the yoke of the Torah). Therefore, if we sin, we are under the yoke of sin. Shaul (Paul) says this another way. He says if we sin, we are slaves to sin (see Romans 6:20).

*Just as God freed Israel from the Egyptians so they
could flee sin and do what is right, we are to flee sin.*

The portion Behar begins by saying that every seven years the land was to rest and that every fiftieth year was a Yovel year (a Jubilee year) and that the land was to rest that year. They could eat what naturally grows; they were not to till the soil. They were not to take advantage of the rules regarding the Yovel year. God would provide for three years for Israel. The Yovel year would demonstrate they trusted in God's faithfulness. God promised they would eat their fill; see Leviticus 25:19. God says we should not desire the lusts of the flesh nor covet what others have (see Exodus 20:17 and Leviticus 18). Riches can be a trap to some (see Psalm 69:22). We are to instead, trust in God; He "will not leave you or forsake you" (see Joshua 1:5 NKJV). We have no other King, Ruler, Provider, or God. In Deuteronomy 4:35 NKJV it says that Yě-hō-váh (יְהוָה) "Himself is God; there is none other besides Him." Yě-hō-váh is God's real name forever (see Exodus 3:15) as seen pointed that way in over 2,300 different manuscripts to date. Haggai 2:8 says that the gold and silver of this world belongs to Yě-hō-váh. We dishonor and disrespect Yě-hō-váh by avoiding using His name. You would disrespect a person by not using their real name. So, we need to use God's name, but with respect.

If a person had to sell their land, the person or a relative could redeem the land and they were to prorate its use when redeeming the land. At the year of Yovel year, the land should be returned except in a walled city where it must be redeemed within a year. The Levites will always be able to redeem their land. They were to take no interest from a poor person. They could have slaves from the nations, but Israelite slaves were to be set free in the Yovel year or they could be redeemed beforehand; they were not to be treated harshly. If they were redeemed it was to be prorated. The Israelites belonged to God. They were not to make any idols, and they were to keep God's Shabbats. Doesn't it make sense that if we belong to God, we would also do the same?

Wouldn't it make sense that as God's people, we would also keep the days we are supposed to meet with Him?

In Behar it talks about redeeming the land in the Yovel year (year of Jubilee) and we will see Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) doing this in Jeremiah 32 as a sign that Israel will return to ha-aretz, the land of Israel (from captivity). In the Brit Chadashah we see Yeshua (Jesus) rising from the dead and it is a sign that we, the believers in Yeshua HaMeshiach, will rise from the dead. Those who remain faithful to keep God's commandments will be redeemed by God. The Yovel year is not only a shadow picture of Yeshua redeeming us, but also a picture of the new heaven and earth that is to come where all will be set free, and everything will be restored to what God originally intended for mankind. We are not to love this evil world; it is passing away (see 1 John 2:15-17). The portion ends by saying the Israelites belonged to God. Believers in Messiah also belong to God. Rabbi Shaul (Paul) says that we have been bought with a price; we belong to God through the Messiah.

The significance of numbers in scripture.

The Yovel year comes every 50 years after 7 times 7 years. There are numbers that are used frequently in the Bible and the number 7 is one of those numbers and carries with it the idea of completeness. There are 7 days in a week and there are 7 weeks counting the Omer until we get to the 50th day, Pentecost, which means 50. Just like the number 7 carries with it a meaning, so other numbers are used in the Bible with significance. Number in Scripture by Bullinger is a good book about the meaning of numbers in scripture.

The Haftarah for Behar is Jeremiah 32:6-27. Jeremiah tells Hanam'el that he intends to redeem a piece of property that God told Jeremiah to redeem. The deed was to be kept as a witness that land would again be bought in ha-aretz, namely Israel. Then Jeremiah gives praise to the all-powerful and merciful God. He is just and sees all, He did signs in Egypt and continues to show His power. The disaster prophesied about Jerusalem is nearly now fulfilled. Israel did not keep God's commandments; this is why Jerusalem is going to fall. When Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) redeemed the land, it was a sign that Israel would come back from captivity to possess their land. Yirmeyahu says that nothing is too hard for God.

Jeremiah 32:16-17 CJB says, "After giving the purchase contract to Barukh son of Neriya, I prayed to Adonai: "Adonai, God! You made heaven and earth by your great power and outstretched arm; nothing is too hard for you." Yeshua also said in Matthew 19:26 NKJV, "With God all things are possible." Keep praying and believing, have hope in the Messiah.

I have experienced some amazing healings in the past and have seen the power of God. This one time while I was in the jungle, I began to feel sick. I have seen what happens when some people get sick in the jungle; it is very ugly. I was starting to feel bad this one time and I had someone pray for me, and in about 15 minutes I felt better. Wow was I relieved, praise God! It was a big deal. Another time, as our group was on our way to the jungle, a friend of mine blew out her knee and had to be carried off the plane. We prayed for her right there in the airport and she was healed instantly and got up and walked. The people standing there watching began to shout and applaud. That is God at work!

Bechukotai means, "in my statutes." This portion begins with God saying that He would bring the Israelites rain, that they would have bountiful harvests and live securely in the land, that others would flee from them, and that God would increase their numbers, that God would put His tabernacle among them and that He would walk among them if they would keep His commandments. This reminds Israel they are God's treasured people if they keep His commandments (see Deuteronomy 7:6).

God would bless them with all these things and as proof, in Leviticus 26:13, it says that God delivered them from slavery to Egypt. God broke the yoke of the pagan religion of the Egyptians so Israel could live right and follow the yoke of the Torah.

*The Torah is not hard to keep, but **extra misapplied man-made laws can make it difficult.***

Deuteronomy 30:11 NIV says, "Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach." Do not believe the lies some people tell you; it says the Old Testament portion is not hard to keep. When Yeshua says His Torah (yoke) is easy (in Matthew 11:30), He is referring to Deuteronomy 30:11. Yoke is a technical term referring to the Torah. We can either be under the yoke of sin and therefore slaves to sin or under the yoke of Torah.

Rabbi Shaul talks about be a slave for God and not sin. Those who do not live in sin will have eternal life. Romans 6:20-22 NKJV says, "For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life."

It says in this portion that if they do not follow God's commands, then they will get sick, their crops will not grow, and other nations will destroy them. God will bring down their pride. increase their calamities, and if they are against God, God will be against them. God will bring down the places of their pagan worship and throw their dead bodies on their idols. Their land will become desolate, and they will be dispersed to the nations if they do not follow His commands. The land will then be repaid its Shabbat. In Leviticus 26:21 it says that those who do not keep God's commandments are contrary to God, in other translations it says they are hostile to God. Do not be hostile to God.

During the Corona virus crisis, perhaps some of us have thought about how Christianity has not kept God's true Shabbat but created their own Shabbat Those that created the virus were surely doing evil. There is such a thing as evil. It was Constantine that changed the true day of Shabbat to the day of the Sun god; he was the head of the Sun god cult, Mithras, and his false doctrine got passed down into Christianity and people blindly follow this false doctrine.

*God must not be pleased with people making Sunday
the day of rest on the day of the Sun god.*

The portion continues, those who are left in the land will be filled with fear and they will be sorry for their sin. If Israel repents, God will remember His covenant with Ya'akov (Jacob).

When they are in foreign lands God will not reject them. For their sake, God will not forget His covenant with their ancestors.

Monetary values are then given to people, animals, houses, and land for the purpose of vows that are made for the upkeep of the sanctuary. The Cohen is to decide the value of an unclean animal, the value of a house, or the value of a part of a field. When someone wishes to redeem something, they are to add one-fifth to its value. The Yovel year (Jubilee Year) is taken into account for valuation. The tithes belong to the Lord and if a man wants to redeem what he tithed he should add one-fifth to what it is worth. The book of Vayikra (Leviticus) ends with it saying that God gave these commands to Israel at Mount Sinai.

The Haftarah for Bechukotai is Jeremiah 16:19-17:14. This Haftarah portion begins by saying that the Lord is Jeremiah's strength and help. Jeremiah prophesies that the nations will come to God, and they will realize that they believed lies. God will make known to them His power. Cursed are those who trust in man but blessed are those who trust in the Lord. Israel will be blessed and yield fruit. The Lord searches our heart. This portion echoes the Torah portion and shows us that the Creator God is over all, knows all, and also that the nations will come to realize that they believed lies. Blessings come from God; the Lord knows what is in the hearts of man.

Jeremiah 16:19 CJB says, "Our ancestors inherited nothing but lies."

Our society teaches us that we can only rely on man. They have made up an alternate reality without God. We also have inherited lies through theology. Jeremiah 17:5 NKJV, "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the LORD;" God is God and mankind is not. What makes people think that their man-made theology is okay with God? They obviously do not respect God because if they did, they would drop their man-made lies and actually begin to do what God tells us to do.

Special Section **The Misunderstanding of the words, Kingdom of Heaven.**

Some people misunderstand the kingdom of heaven to be a place not on earth. The Bible teaches that it will be a physical place where believers in the true God will live. Matthew 8:11 NKJV says, "And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Some modern theologians believe the future kingdom will be on earth.

N. T. Wright, a popular theologian in our era, says in his book, Surprised by Hope that the future kingdom is on earth. I should note that theologians often explain away the truths of the Bible. He did not in this case.

When it says we will meet the Lord in the air, it is the breathable air.

We need to understand the Shaul says we will be raised in the breathable air. That is the Greek word used for air in the following scriptures.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NKJV says,

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

According to Strong's Dictionary the Greek word aēr is "to breathe unconsciously, i.e. respire; by analogy, to blow." It also refers to "The air, particularly the lower and denser air as distinguished from the higher and rarer air" according to Strongs Dictionary.

We will reign together and be with the resurrected Yeshua in the future kingdom.

2 Timothy 2:12-13 NKJV says,

If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

Revelation 20 explains we will first live in a thousand year kingdom before the final judgment.

Revelation 20:1-6

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

The Old Testament portion describes believers as special people as well.

We are God's special people who will reign with Yeshua for 1,000 years and then be part of the new kingdom described in Revelation 21.

Deuteronomy 7:6 NKJV says,

For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

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.

Deuteronomy 26:18-19 NKJV says,

Also today the LORD has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that you should keep all His commandments, and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be a holy people to the LORD your God, just as He has spoken."

Malachi 3:17 NKJV says,

"They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, on the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.

We will be God's special people who keep God's commandments.

Good works refers to keeping God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18)

Titus 2:14 NKJV says,

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.

Micah and Isaiah talk about the future kingdom on earth.

Micah 4:1-5 NKJV says,

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. For all people walk each in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

Isaiah talks about a future kingdom on earth where we will keep God's Sabbath.

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.

After 1,000 years, there will be the final judgment.

Revelation 20:7-15 NKJV says,

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

The final judgment will be followed by a new heaven and earth.

Revelation 21:1-8 NKJV says,

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 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, which is the second death."

People misunderstand the scriptures that say we will go to heaven.

The words kingdom of heaven is used for kingdom of God. We see these being used interchangeably in the Bible. Sometimes it says kingdom of heaven and at other times it says kingdom of God. The word heaven is used by some to avoid using God's name at times. Some people used the expression, "for the love of heaven." Others would use the expression, "for the love of the land." They are respectful ways to say, "for the love of God" which is an expression of exasperation.

Some scriptures use kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 7:21 NKJV says,

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.

Matthew 5:3 NKJV says,

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10 NKJV says,

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Some scriptures that use kingdom of God.

Romans 14:17 NKJV says,

For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Mark 1:14-15 NKJV says,

Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

John 3:3 NKJV says,

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 18:36 NKJV says,

Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world.

In other words, Yeshua was talking about the future kingdom of God.

Where did this idea of going to heaven and not having a physical body come from?

It most likely came from pagan Gnosticism. It is also a misinterpretation of the scriptures.

The scriptures say we will have a physical body.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 NKJV says,

The dead in Christ will rise first.

1 Corinthians 15:39-45 NKJV says,

All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Not having a physical body is pagan Gnosticism.

To the Gnostics, the physical things of this world are corrupt. So they believe that we need to be freed from the physical. One person said that Gnostics believed the body to be a physical cage. Therefore, a resurrected body would also be physical cage.

Therefore, a physical resurrection is despicable to Gnostics. Gnosticism was also a problem among the early believers because of its similarity to our bodies being raised and changed. In Gnosticism, we become a disembodied spirit. Believers in the true God are raised from the dead and made alive in an eternal real body.

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 not to sow in our field or work on our trees on a sabbatical year. Leviticus 25:4.

We are not to harvest what grows wild in the sabbatical year. Leviticus 25:5. It does not say we cannot eat what grows wild. Harvesting is working the field for storing or for selling. Since harvesting is picking to store or sell, it would be different than a day to day picking for what you need.

A Jubilee Year occurs every 50 years and begins with the sounding of the shofar on Yom Kippur. The commands for a Sabbatical Year are the same as the Jubilee Year. Leviticus 25:8-11.

We are commanded not to wrong others when buying and selling. Leviticus 25:14.

We are not to wrong others in any way. That would include verbal and nonverbal behavior. Leviticus 25:17.

Land is not to be permanently owned in Israel. Leviticus 25:23.

Land is to be returned to its original owner in the Jubilee year. In a city land must be redeemed within a year. Leviticus 25:24, 29-30.

Levites have a perpetual right of redemption and the open land around their cities is not to be sold. Leviticus 25:32-34.

We are not to charge believers interest. Foreigners can be charged interest. Leviticus 25:37; 23:20-21.

Fellow believers who are working off debt are not to be given difficult work like other servants. Leviticus 25:39, 43, 53.

Fellow believers are not to be sold like other servants. Leviticus 25:42.

Unbelieving servants and their offspring can be passed on to the owner's heirs. Leviticus 25:45-46.

No idol or stone figure that is bowed down to is to be put on your land. Leviticus 26:1

The valuation of a person is to be set at a prescribed price. Leviticus 27:2-4.

An animal that has been given for sacrifice cannot be swapped for another. If animals are swapped, they are both holy. Leviticus 27:10. This is to prevent the priests from becoming merchants.

An unclean animal's valuation is to be set by the priest. Leviticus 27:11-12.

If someone vows the valuation of a house, they are to add 1/5th to it to redeem it. Leviticus 27:14-15.

If someone vows a field, the price is set by its production. Leviticus 27:16.

They were not to change what was required for the sacrifices. For example, if a lamb was required, they could not substitute something else. Leviticus 27:26.

Anything vowed to the Lord belongs to Yēhōvāh and is not to be sold or to threaten to destroy it. The penalty for doing this is death. Leviticus 27:28-29. This would also apply for when someone loses something they put up as collateral they are not allowed to sell or destroy it. There should be a penalty of some kind.

A tenth of newborn animals is to be given to Yēhōvāh each year and they were not to judge about what they gave. Leviticus 27:32-33. Perhaps they had second thoughts that they gave too much. Some years they were to give to the Levites and the poor and other years they were to bring their offering to Jerusalem. The ancient Rabbis increased the tax by

having people always bring their offerings to Jerusalem. God had them only give a little over 10 percent every year because they were to leave the corners of their fields for the poor and strangers and not to re-harvest their fields.

The Aaronic Blessing.

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

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

In this portion we are commanded to not misuse God's name. So, some people call God Hashem which means "the name." They dishonor God's name by not using His name. When we honor someone, we use their name in an appropriate way. Do not be afraid to use God's real name.

The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. Over 2,000 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. God's name can be pointed as Yě-hō-váh up to 50 times in just a single manuscript. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה).

Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people.

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

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ
יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיַחַנֶּךָ
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.