



#39 Chukat Numbers 19:1-22:1
Torah Teaching
By Moshe Schwab

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
Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Ex. 3:15)
Yochanan – John

Terms

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

The name of the portion for this week is Chukat and it means, "ordinance of" or "decree." This portion begins with God telling Moshe (Moses) the details about the sacrifice of the red cow. It is to be without blemish and never to have had a yoke on it. Not having a yoke on it probably means it was not to be used for work or used inappropriately (it is a cow, not an ox). This week is sometimes a double portion of scriptures.

Where does mankind come from?

Some of this topic will be repeated in our Torah study for today. Atheists would have you believe that we all came from a rock. I find it interesting in this portion of the Bible that God told Moshe to speak to the rock so that water would come from it. Numbers 20:7-8 NKJV says, "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water.'" Moshe was supposed to speak to a rock as though it was alive. We all know that rocks cannot understand us and so did the people back then. So, can a rock do anything but be a rock? Water can come from a rock because the creator God can do that.

I believe that God wanted the people to get the point that God is able to do all things including create the world and mankind. Atheists miss this completely because they do not believe there could be such a being as the creator God. Years ago, I was talking to an atheist lady, and I told her the story of a young man's leg growing instantaneously to the length of his other leg while being prayed for. My friend Larry who was praying for him is an RN which is considered one step below being a doctor! The lady said to me, "There must be an explanation," meaning that it could not have happened, but it did happen and a trained professional experienced what God did. Can a leg grow instantaneous? No, but God can do that because He is the creator God.

Many people believe that God is an imaginary being that was made up to give us comfort. They will say that people who believe in God just need a father figure. The Bible uses the word "father" to describe the relationship God has with His people. God uses that of Himself to

communicate his caring nature towards humanity. It is a figure of speech. People use figures of speech all the time and there are over 100 different figures of speech used in the Bible. For example, "It is like an oven outside," compares the heat of a stove to how it feels outside. In this verse in Proverbs, God is like a father who corrects his son so that his son will not incur difficult or painful circumstances. Proverbs 3:12 NKJV says, "For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights." That God is a caring and good God is one of the main principles of the scriptures that we frequently talk about. God gave us good commandments to help us in life. That's what the Bible says over and over. Deuteronomy 12:28 NKJV says, "Observe and obey all these words which I command you, **that it may go well with you** and your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God;" also see, Deuteronomy 4:40, 5:16, 5:29, 5:33, 6:3, 6:18, 12:25, 19:13, and 22:7. As we can see, the Bible tells us frequently that God's commandments are good and God has good intentions for us, if only we would follow His commandments. Deuteronomy 5:29 NKJV says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, **that it might be well with them and with their children forever!**"

God repeats himself over and over because we need that. Please be patient when we share things you already know. Perhaps someone else has not heard them. God tells us to teach His truths for life frequently. Deuteronomy 6:7 NKJV says, "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." We repeat ourselves in our teachings for our own good so that we will not forget what the Bible says about God. I listen to our teachings for my own encouragement because I enjoy being encouraged to follow God.

I remember someone telling me the story of a lady who accepted Yeshua as the Messiah, got healed and then changed her mind at some point. She then accepted Yeshua again as the Messiah and it is then she remembered that she had gotten healed. She told her daughter that she could not believe that she had forgotten about being healed miraculously. There are hundreds of scriptures that say in one way or another that God's commandments are good. People that reject God's commandments reject the goodness of God.

God is also spoken of as our creator and therefore our Father. Malachi 2:10 NKJV says, "Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?" Isaiah 64:8 NKJV says, "O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand."

Also, God cares about His creation and mankind as a father cares about His own. So, God will forgive us for wrongdoing if we ask Him for forgiveness and stop sinning.

Psalms 103:11-14 NKJV says,

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. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

Also, our creator God is able to answer prayers just as He has done for our ancient fathers. God answered prayers in ancient times, and He still answers prayers today. Psalms 44:1 NKJV says, "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, the deeds You did in their days,

in days of old." Hezekiah cried out to God and God healed him. 2 Kings 20:3-5 NKJV says, "Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight.' And Hezekiah wept bitterly. And it happened, before Isaiah had gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 'Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people,' 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: 'I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you.'" Then God gave Hezekiah a sign that he would be healed and God healed him.

God's people can expect God to act at times. Psalms 32:6 NKJV says, "Everyone who is godly shall pray to You in a time when You may be found." Also Psalms 34:17 NKJV says, "The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles." Don't forget to pray. Yeshua said to keep praying. Luke 18:1 NKJV says, "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."

God values each and every believer.

Just as God is merciful to mankind and will answer some of our prayers, God values each of our contribution to the body of believers. Each person can contribute to the body of believers in their own special way. Just like the Bible identified the different ways people served the community in the Old Testament portion, there are different ways that people serve and function as believers in the Bible and the Messiah. Each believer is important to God, and we should not think that some believers are less important than others.

God created mankind and everyone comes from an original people that God created. Genesis 1:26 NKJV says, "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." We have talked about this before a number of times. Since we are created in God's likeness, we have special abilities. We can create, love others, be kind and good, be generous, work, care about others, and so much more. We have so many special abilities because of how God created us. Because we are special, each person deserves respect and to be cared about. The Jews took time to apply principles to the scriptures of the Bible and they are often good applications of the scriptures. It is the rabbinic commandments that micromanage life or are nonsense that are suspect and are not appropriate applications of the scriptures.

God's provision for mankind.

We should understand some basic principles that we learn from understanding the creation narrative. God is the creator of all that is. He created us with special abilities in His likeness. In doing so, God created us with the ability to take care of ourselves, our family, also help those in need, and of course the extensive abilities we need for life. As the creator God, He also provided for us all the physical things we need for life like food and the ability use what God created to care for ourselves, to make things we need, and keep our homes. It does not stop there. From the very beginning, mankind could have a relationship with God. Noah heard from God, walked with God, and was perfect in his ways. Genesis 6:9 NKJV says, "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations." The word "just" according to Strongs Dictionary means, "just, lawful, righteous."

God provided Noah with the way to live, Noah was "lawful," and therefore kept the law. Was he always perfect? No, but that should not diminish from his character. Those who follow God

make mistakes at times, but God forgives us if we repent and are sorry for our wrong doing, our sin. We must also decide to be committed to changing in order to be forgiven. Also, we know Abraham kept the Old Testament laws before they were written down. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and **My laws**." Then in the Book of Exodus, God had Moshe write down the law for us, so we are provided with a way to be just and good. Before God's law was written down, believers passed down God's law verbally. God in His goodness has provided all that mankind needs for life.

God created mankind in His likeness with special abilities and the ability to have a good life, God provided all that mankind needed for life through His creation, and God provided God's good instructions for life. Those who follow God's commandments should understand that God's commandments are an extension of God's goodness towards mankind and of God's provision for mankind. Some see the law as a burden, but that is not God's intention. The law is an extension of God's provision and kindness towards mankind.

As a special people, we have the ability to act as a special people. Just like God is a caring and just God we can be a caring and just people. Genesis 1:27-28 NKJV says "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **Then God blessed them.**" There is a lot that can be understood just from just one scripture at times. In Genesis, it says that God blessed Adam and Eve before they had a chance to prove themselves. This teaches us that God has good intentions for mankind and God cares about mankind.

And we too should care about God's creation and other people. Shaul makes an important assessment from these scriptures in Genesis. Shaul says in Acts 17:26 NKJV, "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." He is making an appeal to the people he was talking to understand that the God of the Bible is the God of everyone if they will accept Him. He probably does this to try to break down the national and ethnic barriers towards the true God that the people he was addressing had developed.

God is the creator of the heavens and earth and all that exists. All the beings of the universe worship Him. Nehemiah 9:6 NKJV says, "You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all. **The host of heaven worships You.**" God is the God of all that exists, but only those people who make God their God are His treasured people. Leviticus 20:7-8 NKJV says, "Consecrate yourselves therefore, and **be holy**, for I am the LORD your God. **And you shall keep My statutes**, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you." God sanctifies holy or sets apart **His special people who keep His commandments**. True believers are those who act as a God's special people and use their abilities properly to be God's special created beings. 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."

When people do things their own ways instead of how God tells us to live, they are rejecting the goodness and caring intentions of our God. God made us in His likeness, and we most certainly have the ability to be God's people. God created us to be His special people if we will only

accept Him and His commandments instead of the philosophies and ideals of the worldly. Psalms 8:3-5 NKJV says, "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor." God gave us the ability to be His honorable and truly good people through Him.

God is over all believers, and His people are to follow Him.

There are some identities that are not biblical. Saying that you are a Gentile believer is probably an Oxymoron. The identity of a believer has more to do with joining a spiritual family or being a believer in the true God. Let's talk again about Abraham and Noah in this context.

The Jews identified with being the children of Abraham, but Abraham was not an Israelite or Jewish. Abraham was their father ancestrally but also in the sense that Abraham believed in the true God and kept God's commandments and law. Again, Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Some say that Abraham did not keep the law because he ate meat with milk, but that commandment is nowhere in the Bible, and neither is it specifically implied as some say.

It is not true that there was an evolution of faith in God and that the ancient believers did not keep God's law. The word laws in that verse about Abraham is the Hebrew word Torah and the law is emphatically implied from the repetition of similar words in that verse. Abraham **kept, "My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."** Abraham kept the Torah. Again, at the time of Abraham, believers passed down God's law from generation to generation.

Noah kept God's law. The Bible says he walked with God. We repeat this to show that the God of the Bible is the God of all true believers. He is also the God of the Cherubim who believed or perhaps they always believed. We do not know all there is to know in the present. God was the creator God for Adam and Eve, for Noah and Abraham, for Israel and all those who believed in the true creator God, and also for those who believe in the Messiah Yeshua and keep God's commandments.

Genesis 6:8-9 NKJV says, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. **Noah walked with God.**" Again, being just and perfect implies that he kept the law and will be in the future kingdom of God. In this verse in Psalms, the **righteous, the just**, will not be blotted out of the book of life, but the unjust will be blotted out of the Book of Life. Psalms 69:28 NKJV says, "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous." The word just which is used to describe Noah is sometimes translated as righteous as in this verse in Psalms 69. Psalms 119:137 NKJV says, "Righteous are You, O LORD, and upright are Your judgments." It could be translated as, "Just are You, O Lord, and right are your judgments, Your ordinances;" (see Strong's Dictionary). Noah was perfect it says in Genesis. Psalms 19:7 NKJV says, "The law of the LORD is perfect."

Also, to walk with God is a common way to say that a person keeps the law, the Old Testament commandments. Deuteronomy 5:32-33 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the

LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. **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." God had Moshe write down God's commandments for future generations.

God did not leave mankind without the instructions for a good life from the inception of time. God gave us the law to help mankind, "That it may be well with you," it said in Deuteronomy 5:33. God is a good God and has always been a good God. God is still the good creator God who also gives the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua as another helper.

Some say that circumcision is a commandment for the Jews, but God instituted the ritual with Abraham who was not Jewish. Those who wished to be associated with Abraham and the true God and follow Abraham's God were told to be circumcised (see Genesis 17:9-14). Shaul says that he taught circumcision in the New Testament portion. Galatians 5:11 NKJV says, "I still preach circumcision."

A problem arose when Gentile unbelievers became believers in the true God. Circumcision was dangerous for adult males, and we are to protect life because life is precious. Genesis 1:26 NKJV says, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." So, adult males who become believers do not have to be circumcised because a person could die from the procedure. That was the issue in the 1st century. Some new believers were dying because some were insisting that the adult men be circumcised. Those who insisted that adult Gentile believers be circumcised when they joined the people of God were Torah breakers because they did not apply the Torah correctly.

A word about circumcision.

In the Old Testament portion, someone who was not circumcised denied their faith (Genesis 17:14). Circumcision was a reminder to the male child that they are a believer in the true God. Therefore, it is a serious offense for believers to not have their male child circumcised. Yeshua said He will reject those who do not keep God's law. Matthew 7:23 NKJV says, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" All the early leaders of the Nazarene Jewish faith were Jewish believers in the Messiah Yeshua, and they kept God's law of commandments.

Yochanan (John) said that not keeping the law is sin. 1 John 3:4, 8 NKJV says, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." Verse 8 says, "He who sins is of the devil." The first leader of the Messianic believers in Yeshua said that faith is not enough, we are to still keep God's law. James 2:18-20 NKJV says, "But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 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?" Shaul (Paul) said that the law is certainly not done away with. Romans 3:31 NKJV says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

The baby is not hurt badly during circumcision. They may cry briefly but that is usually all that happens. It has not impaired the sexual function of millions of men. It is not the same as the

circumcision, the mutilation that women get where they lose sexual function. The circumcision of woman is a sin because it is a mutilation of the body.

We are a special people that God values because we value God and what He says.
Our thoughts and actions reflect what God taught mankind instead of just doing what we please or what we think is right.

We are not to follow our own heart. We are supposed to accept that God knows what is best for us want to do what is "right and good," see Deuteronomy 6:17-18 where it says God's law is "right and good." Some people think that they can get away with the evil they do but they will not. Psalms 10:13 NKJV says, "Why do the wicked renounce God? He has said in his heart, 'You will not require an account.'" Some people will only do what they want because they think there are no consequences. 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." Evil must be punished because God is a good and just God.

Our thoughts are to be on keeping God's commandments. Then our heart will be right, and we will be ready to keep God's commandments. Psalms 26:2 NKJV says, "Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my mind and my heart." Those who do what is right have something to be excited about and to have joy in life. Psalms 32:11 NKJV says, "Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!" When our hearts are in line with God's commandments, we do better in life. Psalms 37:31 NKJV says, "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." God's law is sure, is truth for life, and is forever for all. Psalms 111:7-8 NKJV says, "The works of His hands are verity and justice; all His precepts are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness."

God's law is perfect, helps us to be wise in life, are right, enlightening, are extremely valuable, and can make life pleasant.

Psalms 19:7-11 NKJV says,

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever. The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

Seek God's commandments with your whole heart, be committed to God, and be thankful for God's commandments.

Psalms 119:10-16 NKJV says,

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.

Our life is controlled by times and seasons of the year and life.

Just like our day-to-day activities are influenced by the time of day and the different seasons of the year, life reflects our age, abilities, and choices. No matter if you are old or young, rich or poor, American or Lithuanian (a country near Poland), you can become a son or daughter of God. So, do not choose to live by your own heart but by how God tells us to live. These scriptures in Proverbs chapter 3 are about God's good commandments.

Proverbs 3:1-8 NKJV says,

Do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.

Many people just quote part of this where it says to trust God. They do not realize it is talking about God's commandments. So, do not choose your own wisdom, but choose God's wisdom and His commandments and depart from evil.

Since people for the most part have learned a philosophy, a religion that replaces truth with man-made doctrine, they do not understand the Bible and cannot see the truth. Yeshua said in John 9:39 NKJV, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." People "see" their own version of the Bible even though all the early leaders of our faith in one way or another said that the Old Testament law is not done away with. We talk about this over and over yet they will not "see." When you begin believing in the true God the way you are supposed to, they quote the false doctrine they have learned and expect you to "see" they are right.

The need to talk about difficult issues.

We talk about how the scriptures have been changed so that in some places it seems to say we do not have to keep God's Old Testament commandments. We give examples, but people refuse to "see" correctly. Well did Yeshua say, that those who say they "see" are blind. Since all the early leaders of those who believe in Yeshua, they taught that we are to keep God's Old Testament commandments, don't you think it is strange that there are scriptures that seem to say differently? We have shown you how this happened. Jerome said they were altered. That is why we have some scriptures that say the opposite of what Yeshua (Jesus), Shaul (Paul), Yochanan in John, and Ya'akov in James said.

The Greek scriptures got changed by heretics and some even changed the Hebrew scriptures so we see obvious deviations in them as well. Jerome translated the Greek New Testament into Latin, and it is called the Latin Vulgate. In Jerome's introduction to the Latin Vulgate written in about 382 AD **Jerome said**, "Why not go back to the original Greek and **correct the mistakes introduced by inaccurate translators, and the blundering alterations of**

confident but ignorant critics, and, further, all that has been inserted or changed by copyists more asleep than awake?"

The most important thing to consider when reading the New Testament portion is the alteration of the scriptures that tell us not to keep the Old Testament commandments. When it seems to say in our Bibles that the Old Testament law or a particular Old Testament law has been done away with, we know that it was probably due to the alteration and insertions made by those who did not believe in God properly. At times, we may be misunderstanding Shaul. 2 Peter 3:15-16 NKJV says, "As also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are **some things hard to understand**, which untaught and **unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.**" Do not throw out your Bibles, just learn to be discerning about what you read in the Bible.

Choose what is right and good for life. 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** in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you." Decide that you will serve the true God and not made-up religion. Joshua 24:15 NKJV says, "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**"

Yeshua said that we are to seek God and the righteousness of His commandments. Matthew 6:33 NKJV says, "But **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness**, and all these things shall be added to you." I should also add that God wants to also give us another helper for life in this Messianic age, the Holy Spirit. John 14:15-17 NKJV says, "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." The first helper are God's Old Testament commandments, and the Holy Spirit is another helper.

God wants what is best for us. He does not want us to follow evil ways and the consequences that go with that. Won't you start by accepting His grace through His commandments and also the Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit? Jeremiah 29:11 NKJV says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." Even though this scripture refers to Israel, it is God's intention that all believers should accept His grace through His commandments and believe in the true God and receive the blessings of life through the truths of the Bible and the Holy Spirit. God wants us to have a future and a hope no matter what age we are or in what circumstances we find ourselves.

Finally.

God values each and every believer. And each person is a valuable part of God's spiritual family. God is over all believers, and His people are to follow Him. The identity of a believer has more to do with joining a spiritual family or being a believer in the true God. We are a special people that God values because we value God and what He says. Our thoughts and actions are to reflect what God taught mankind instead of just doing what we please or what we think is right.

Our day-to-day activities are influenced by the time of day and the different seasons of the year, our age, abilities, and choices. No matter if you are old or young, or rich or poor you can become a son or daughter of God. So, as you live life, do not choose to live by your own heart but by how God tells us to live. Also, do not follow the misguided doctrines made up by people, resist them. The Bible tells us what doctrine is. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." Decide in your heart that you will serve the Lord God.

We will now begin our Torah study for today.

The portion for today is Chukat and means, "ordinance of" or "decree." In this portion, God tells Moshe to speak to a rock. Does mankind come from a rock as some say? Atheists would have you believe that we all came from a rock originally. I find it interesting in this portion of the Bible that God told Moshe to speak to the rock so that water would come from it. Numbers 20:7-8 NKJV says, "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water.'" Moshe was supposed to speak to a rock as though it was alive. We all know that rocks cannot understand us and so did the people back then. So, can a rock do anything but be a rock? Water can come from the rock because the creator God can do that.

I believe that God wanted the people to get the point that God is able to do all things including create the world and mankind. Atheists miss this completely because they do not believe there could be such a being as the creator God. Years ago, I was talking to an atheist lady, and I told her the story of a young man's leg growing instantaneously to the length of his other leg while being prayed for. My friend Larry who was praying for him is an RN which is considered one step below being a doctor! The lady said to me, "There must be an explanation," meaning that it could not have happened, but it did happen and a trained professional experienced what God did. Can a leg grow instantaneous? No, but God can do that because He is the creator God.

Many people believe that God is an imaginary being that was made up to give us comfort. They will say that people who believe in God just need a father figure. The Bible uses the word "father" to describe the relationship God has with His people. God uses that of Himself to communicate his caring nature towards humanity. It is a figure of speech. People use figures of speech all the time and there are over 100 different figures of speech used in the Bible. For example, "It is like an oven outside," compares the heat of a stove to how it feels outside.

In this verse in Proverbs, God is like a father who corrects his son because He is a caring and good God. Proverbs 3:12 NKJV says, "For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights." That God is a caring and good God is one of the main principles of the scriptures that we frequently talk about. God gave us good commandments to help us in life. That's what the Bible says over and over. Deuteronomy 12:28 NKJV says, "Observe and obey all these words which I command you, **that it may go well with you** and your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God;" also see, Deuteronomy 4:40, 5:16, 5:29, 5:33, 6:3, 6:18, 12:25, 19:13, and 22:7. As we can see, the Bible tells us frequently that God' commandments are good and God has good intentions for us, if only we would follow His commandments. Deuteronomy 5:29 NKJV says, "Oh, that they had

such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, **that it might be well with them and with their children forever!**

God repeats himself over and over because we need that. God tells us to teach His truths for life frequently. Deuteronomy 6:7 NKJV says, "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." We repeat ourselves in our teachings for our own good so that we will not forget what the Bible says about God.

The portion begins.

This portion begins with God telling Moshe (Moses) the details about the sacrifice of the red cow. It is to be without blemish and never to have had a yoke on it. Not having a yoke on it probably means it was not to be used for work or used inappropriately (it is a cow, not an ox). It is to be sacrificed outside the camp. The ashes are to be kept for the water of purification. When anyone touches a corpse, they are to be sprinkled with the ashes mixed with water. Anyone who comes in contact with a corpse is unclean for 7 days. Miriam dies in this portion in the desert in Kadesh.

There are many symbolic things in the Old Testament portion that the people back then could understand as being symbolic. There are also things done in the Old Testament portion that symbolically refer to our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ). The offerings were to be without blemish so also the people understood they were to stay away from the blemish of sin. Yeshua sacrificed himself for our sins as an offering without blemish. 1 Peter 1:18-19 CJB says, "You should be aware that the ransom paid to free you from the worthless way of life which your fathers passed on to you did not consist of anything perishable like silver or gold; on the contrary, it was the costly bloody sacrificial death of the Messiah, as of a lamb without defect or spot." "Lamb" is a reference to Yeshua in Isaiah 53:7 NKJV; "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter."

Just as the offerings at the Mishkan (the Tabernacle in the desert) were to be pure, we are to be pure. Rabbi Shaul (Paul) said in Romans 12:1 NKJV, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God." Shaul was Jewish so his writings have their basis in the Old Testament portion. We are to be holy and pure.

Also, we see another symbolic shadow picture of Yeshua in the red cow. Just as the red cow was to be killed outside of the camp, Yeshua gave His life outside the gate to make us holy. Hebrews 13:12 NKJV says, "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered **outside the gate.**"

We should talk a little about the example and substitution that God instituted in the Bible. As we can see, there are some definite spiritual pictures that God made. God gave us spiritual pictures so that we do what is right; there are also some spiritual pictures that are about the Messiah Yeshua. Some people go to extremes though and look for things that God never intended to be used symbolically. They produce symbolic applications of the Bible that cater to our "itching

ears." I had to read a book for my doctorate that applied extra meanings to everything; you would not believe how crazy this person sounded.

Watch out for people who go to extremes with insights.

These extensive applications divert us from working on living out God's commandments and instead focus on satisfying our curiosity. 2 Timothy 4:1-2 NKJV says, "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."

We are to teach the scriptures and learn how to apply them. There was no New Testament at the time the New Testament letters were written; so, this scripture tells us that we will be judged by the Torah, the Old Testament scriptures! There are consequences for getting off track. Some have told me they do not have to know what the Bible says because they can just look at the Hebrew letters and their ancient meaning. Some of what they share may be interesting, but some of what they share is off track or wrong. The purpose of God's word is to help us in life and to teach us the truths we need for life.

We are not to change what the Bible teaches us. 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." They are not to be added to subtracted from or changed because they are words from God. 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."

Instead learn to keep God's commandments and be a productive person. Help others; be a blessing; actually, do something. Some read only the New Testament and then take it out of its original Jewish biblical context. God gave us commandments in the Old Testament; why wouldn't they still be good for mankind? They are from God; Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." Some of you are going to have a nasty awakening when you stand before God.

Yeshua also said that going to extremes by reading in between the lines was wrong. John 5:39 NKJV says, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." They were reading between the lines instead of understanding the scriptures properly. God expects us to live out His instructions and not just look between the lines for things that God never intended for us to understand. Some of these things can also be instructive and fun and were intended by God but be careful you don't take between the lines too far.

The Israelites then complained that they had no water and God tells Moshe to speak to the Rock and tell it to bring forth water. Instead, Moshe speaks to the people and then strikes the rock twice. Water pours out of the rock even though Moshe disobeyed God, and the people drink and water their livestock. God told Moshe and Aharon they would not be allowed to enter

the land because they did not trust Him and hit the rock instead of speaking to it. Some say that Moshe hit the rock and that is why water came out of it. Try that in your back yard and see if you can get water to come out of a rock.

God can do things for us even if we do not have the right motive. He is a merciful and good God. Parents do not withhold their love from their children. In the same way, God will do things for us even though we are not perfect or always have the right intentions. It is best to seek the right motives in all we do.

Hitting the rock the first time back in Exodus 17:6 was symbolic of Yeshua dying for us. The rock provided water and rescued their lives. Shaul (Paul) refers to this symbolism in 1 Corinthians 10:4 CJB, "For they drank from a Spirit-sent Rock which followed them, and that Rock was the Messiah." The second time, Moshe was to speak to the rock because when Yeshua comes again, he will not suffer but be among us (see Revelation 21:3). Yeshua the Messiah rescues¹ us because He died for the forgiveness of our sins. And through Him, we can receive the Holy Spirit; those who trust in God and work at keeping His commandments, will receive eternal life. Faith requires action the Bible says (see James 2:17). As we can see by this Torah portion, God expects us to actually do what He tells us. Some say we do not have to; that is false teaching. God expected Moshe to do exactly what He said.

Moshe then asks Edom if they may pass though, but Edom refuses. So, they traveled to Mount Hor where they made El'azar high priest because Aharon was about to die. Aharon died there at Mount Hor, and they mourned him for 30 days. Some of the Kena'ani in the Negev attacked Israel and God allowed Israel to attack them and destroy their cities.

Israel went around Edom. Then some of the people complained, so God sent venomous snakes. God had Moshe make a bronze snake and put it on a pole and anyone who was bitten looked on it and was healed. About 900 years later, the Bible tells us in 2 Kings 18:4 that Hezekiah had the bronze snake destroyed because people were worshipping it. 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. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations." Even in our era, so called believers pray to statues, crosses, pictures, and so-called saints (dead people) instead of God. This abomination, this disgusting practice, is passed down from generation to generation. Shaul (Paul) said no idolaters will be allowed in the kingdom of God (see Galatians 5:19-21).

The snake being lifted up for the healing of the people is also symbolic (a picture) of what Yeshua did for us. Yeshua explains to Nicodemus that he must die for us. Yeshua says of Himself, in John 3:14-15 NKJV, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." (Also see John 12:32)." Yeshua also was lifted up to the heavens and is there now waiting for the final era when He will return. Yeshua went away perhaps like Israel had to wait

¹ The Hebrew word malat used for saved (sozo) in the New Testament always means to escape. "h4422. מָלַט mālat; a primitive root; ... to release or rescue." – Strong's Enhanced Dictionary. See Joel 2:32; although translated saved in Joel, מָלַט always means escape.

in the desert for 40 years to enter the promise, the promised land. This will not go on indefinitely, so do not wait to accept truth and the Messiah Yeshua and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Israel then went through the desert with Moav on the east. Israel came to the land of the Emori (Amorites) and Israel asked them if they could pass through, but Sichon, King of the Emori would not let them pass. Instead, the Emori attacked them. Israel defeated them and took control of the land. Sichon was a Nephilim and the brother of Og also a Nephilim (see Deuteronomy 3:11). Because of this, Og the king of Bashan came to fight Israel. God said He would be with Israel, and they defeated Og and took control of his land. After that Israel camped opposite the Yarden (the Jordan) River near Jericho.

The Haftarah portion is Judges 11:1-33. In this Haftarah portion, Amon had attacked Israel so the leaders of Gil'ad went to get Yiftach (Jephthah) and asked him to lead them and told him if he did that, he could be their leader. He had been banished because he was the son of a prostitute. They made Yiftach their leader and Yiftach told Amon that God had given them the land and that they should go home. The people of Amon didn't listen to Yiftach and Israel ended up defeating Amon.

Yiftach said if he won, he would sacrifice the first one to come out of his house when he came back. His daughter came out first. Some say he did not sacrifice her, but the Bible does not talk about the matter any further. We know that killing others is forbidden in the Torah and is murder. He should have known better; after God helped him, he possibly failed miserably. Sometimes God heals people, and they go back to their old sinful ways afterwards; and similarly, they fail miserably.

Yeshua's death was different. God allowed Yeshua to be crucified by the Romans (all the Jewish leadership were appointed by Rome and they didn't want to lose their Roman appointments; both Herod and the Chief Priest were appointed by Rome)² and since He was not due punishment for anything He did, God rose Him from the dead. Kefa (Peter) said in Acts 2:24-25 CJB, "But God has raised him up and freed him from the suffering of death; it was impossible that death could keep its hold on him. For David says this about him;" In Psalm 16:10b NKJV David said prophetically, "Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption." This proves the Messiah was to give Himself for us (also see Isaiah 53).

Some people will make up anything to try to prove that Yeshua is not the Messiah.

Deceitful people explain Yeshua's death as human sacrifice; Yeshua rose from the dead, is still alive, and the Bible says He will judge those who do not believe in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:10 NKJV says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." If you have

² Even those who were accusing Yeshua were paid to do that by the Roman leadership in Jerusalem. The Romans turned the tables on what the scriptures say and accused the Jews. It was the Romans that killed Yeshua and not the Jews. Their religion is steeped in idolatry; Shaul said no idol worshipper will enter the kingdom of God (see Galatians 5:19-21) and perhaps Rome is still paying for its killing of the Messiah Yeshua and the killing of the true believers at that time to create their false religion and its lies. Revelation 21:8 says all liars will end up in the lake of fire and brimstone.

not accepted Him as the Messiah, do not wait. The word translated "seat" from the Greek is the word "bema." The Bema is where the Torah is read in Jewish synagogues. The Bible was written by Jews who read God's commandments from the Bema. Notice it says we will be judged for the good and the bad. Those who live in sin will not be in God's future kingdom. The Bible says, "Do not be deceived"(see 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Have we done what is "right and good" according to Deuteronomy 6:17-18 and kept God's good commandments? Have we kept the Torah, the laws of our good God?

Joshua 1:8-9 NKJV says,

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it.

For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage.

**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.)**

The Commands associated with the Red Heifer, Numbers 19:2-3, 13, 19.

Numbers 19:2-3 NKJV, "This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD has commanded, saying: 'Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring you a red heifer without blemish, in which there is no defect and on which a yoke has never come. 3 You shall give it to Eleazar the priest, that he may take it outside the camp, and it shall be slaughtered before him."

Numbers 19:13 NKJV, "Whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the LORD. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He shall be unclean, because the water of purification was not sprinkled on him; his uncleanness is still on him."

Numbers 19:19 NKJV, "The clean person shall sprinkle the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, wash his clothes, and bathe in water; and at evening he shall be clean."

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

Some people call God Hashem which means "the name." They dishonor God's name by not using His name. Not using someone's name is to curse them. Deuteronomy 29:20 NKJV says, "The anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and **the LORD would blot out** his name from under heaven."

When we honor someone, we use their name in an appropriate way. Christians for the most part do not use the true name of God. Why not begin using His true name and honor Him? Do not be afraid to use God's real name with respect. I say this in order to encourage you to use God's real name because it points to God being our eternal creator.

The ancient rabbis say that is God's name. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. I have seen God's name pointed as Yě-hō-váh in the Aleppo Codex. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה).

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

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמְרֶכָּ
 יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְךָ
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹמִים

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.