



#8 Vayishlach – Genesis 32:3-36:43
Torah Teaching
by Moshe Schwab

Names

Esav (ěšāv)– Esau

Hevron – Hebron

Ya'akov – Jacob

Kefa – Peter

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

Moshe – Moses

Rivkah – Rebecca

Shaul – Paul

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

Yěhōváh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)

Yitz'chak – Isaac

Yochanan – John

Terms

Cohen – priest

Haftarah – reading from the prophets

Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible

Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah

Vayishlach - 8th Torah portion

The parashah for this week is Vayishlach which means "and he sent." This portion begins with Ya'akov letting his brother Esau know that he is coming back home to Canaan and would like the favor of his brother. Ya'akov's messengers return and tell Ya'akov that Esau is coming to meet him with 400 men.

Today we will begin by talking about the very important gift of the Holy Spirit that we receive through Yeshua the Messiah. Unfortunately, people not only say that God's good law is not for them, but that the Holy Spirit is not for them. Of course, all the writers of the New Testament portion say we are to keep God's Old Testament commandments. From last week:

Shaul said, the law still stands. Romans 3:31 NKJV says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, **we establish the law.**"

Shaul also said in Romans 7:12 NKJV, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good." So those who say the law is not good are lying.

Yochanan said that not keeping the law is sin. 1 John 3:4 NKJV says, "**Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.**" Yeshua said He will reject those who do not keep His Old Testament commandments.

Matthew 7:23 NKJV says, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; **depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!**'" Keep God's Old Testament commandments. Also, keeping civil law will keep us out of trouble with the local authorities. Keeping God's commandments will help us to have a better life and keep us out of hell, "The lake which burns with fire and brimstone," see Revelation 21:8 NKJV.

And the Bible says that God's law is good. We need to qualify this for those who have never heard this. What God does is sure and true and therefore His commandments are sure and true. Therefore, **it makes sense that they would be sure and true forever.** An awesome respect for God helps begin our understanding of spiritual wisdom, the truths we

need for life.

Psalms 111:7-10 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. He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever: holy and awesome is His name. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.

It says that God's commandments are forever and are worthy of praise forever. Do not be thrown off by the word covenant. Covenant means agreement according to Strong's Dictionary. A person does not automatically become a follower of God, but each person has the opportunity to be a follower of God by agreeing to believe and follow God. That is what agreement, covenant, means. So, the person who says they will not make an agreement and not keep His Old Testament commandments that, "stand fast forever," are declining to be in covenant with God. We also are to make an agreement to believe in and follow the Messiah. Theology has made up a man-made belief system to explain away God's truths in the Bible.

We need good judgement, and we can learn good judgement through God's commandments. God is good and His commandments are good. Do not succumb to the lies of those who do not believe in God and do not keep His commandments. Keep His commandments with your whole heart.

Psalms 119:66-69 NKJV

Teach me **good judgment and knowledge, for I believe Your commandments**. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word. You are good, and do good; teach me Your statutes. The proud have forged a lie against me, but I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart.

Yeshua also made available the gift of the Holy Spirit and the associated gifts and fruit of 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 is God's Old Testament commandments, the Holy Spirit is another helper. We are to seek the Holy Spirit, we are to ask for the good gift of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:9-13 NKJV says,

So I say to you, **ask, and it will be given to you**; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give **good gifts** to your children, how much more will **your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!**

The Holy Spirit is good, so ask God for the Holy Spirit. Do not misuse the associated gifts and give them a bad name. In the context of the gifts of the Holy Spirit Shaul says that what he is sharing are commandments of God regarding the use of God's spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 14:37 NKJV says, "Let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the

commandments of the Lord." Shaul then says a couple of verses later in 1 Corinthians 14:39-40, "Do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order." Notice the immediate context. He is giving them commandments regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit, he specifically mentions the gift of Speaking in Tongues, and then says they are to do these things decently and in order. So, those who are practicing weird behaviors with speaking in tongues or for that matter, any of the spiritual gifts are committing sin.

God will judge those who do these weird things with God's gifts and also those who live in other sins (see Hebrew 10:29-31). Hebrews 10:30 NKJV says, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." Do not fall short of God's grace. Hebrews 12:14-15 NKJV says, "Pursue peace with all people, and **holiness**, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone **fall short of the grace of God.**" Remember we are in a time of testing just like Israel was to see if we will keep the commandments of God. They received God's blessings and goodness in the desert! They may have thought they were okay with God no matter what. Deuteronomy 8:2 NKJV says, "And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, **whether you would keep His commandments.**"

We make an agreement to keep God's good Old Testament commandments by our own free will, and we also make an agreement to receive God's blessings and goodness through the Holy Spirit. The law brings "good judgment and knowledge." The Holy Spirit is another helper (John 14:15-17) that the believer can obtain in this Messianic era.

Allow the fruits of the Holy Spirit to work in you. Kefa talks about the virtues we should have in life.

2 Peter 1:5-9 NKJV says,

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness.

Of course, the bases for what Kefa is saying comes from one of God's Old Testament commandments. Leviticus 19:18-19 says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes." It makes sense, since God's Old Testament commandments are good, one of the best ways to love your neighbor is to keep them. We are also supposed to also treat others how we want to be treated and that is the purpose of practicing godly virtues.

The Holy Spirit can also help us to treat others right and will inspire us with godly virtues as we try to do them. If we resist these virtues, these fruit of the Holy Spirit, we will be resisting the work of the Holy Spirit. Here are the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." We will talk more about them. We also need to understand that by opposing the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the fruit of the Holy Spirit, we will also be opposing what Yeshua provided for us. That's why it says in Luke 12:9-10 NKJV, "He who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven." Saying disrespectful things about the Holy Spirit is on the same level as rejecting the Messiah. After all, Yeshua asks the Father to give us the Holy Spirit. I would be very careful about how you feel and what you say about the Holy Spirit and any of the spiritual gifts. Why oppose the good gifts of God. If someone gave you a beautiful house and car, wouldn't you appreciate what they gave you?

The Holy Spirit can even save your life. I woke up in the middle of the night for no apparent reason and realized that the Holy Spirit was calling my attention to me that my house was on fire! I saw a little trickle of smoke, but by the time the fire department came (3 minutes) to put the fire out, an entire section of my 3-story home was filled with smoke so I could not see a thing. God saved my life and the life of my family.

I would like to qualify Yeshua's statement about blaspheming the Holy Spirit. The blaspheming of the Holy Spirit can mean in an active sense. Just like living in sin will keep us out of God's future kingdom, a person with a negative attitude towards the Holy Spirit, or who is telling others negative things about the Holy Spirit, or to reject the Holy Spirit are sinning. The Bible tells us we can be forgiven if we repent. If a person repents of their negative attitude and saying wrong things about the Holy Spirit, they are forgiven. Isaiah 1:18-19 NKJV says, "'Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient.'" If we are willing to repent of any sin, we will be forgiven.

I once thought that Speaking in Tongues was just made up. I was told that it is God that gives the words and it is prayer and most of the time it is not understood (but sometimes it will be in the language of someone present). So, I wanted this spiritual gift and repented of my wrong idea. When I first spoke in tongues and went home, I sat in front of a mirror and spoke in my God given language. I was amazed. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are proof that Yeshua is who He says He is and is the Messiah.

As believers in the Messiah, we are to ask for the Holy Spirit, and we are expected to receive the Holy Spirit when we accept Yeshua. Acts 2:38-39 NKJV says, "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'" The promise includes all those who are afar off. So, we who are now alive some 2,000 years later are promised the Holy Spirit as well.

Let's take some time to talk about the fruit of the Holy Spirit. What do these words mean? Understanding what they mean would be a good way to begin to apply them. I used Strong's Dictionary for the meanings of these words (They are in quotes when using the wording in

Strong's Dictionary), and I used a dictionary to further understand the words Strong's Dictionary used. These words are also used in the Bible and often have a biblical meaning that can be derived from their biblical context. That is why I used Strong's Dictionary because it is giving the meaning of the Greek word that was translated into English.

The Fruit of the Spirit is something God gives us. If we oppose how God wants to help us, then we will be opposing the work of the Holy Spirit. For example, making a negative vow can keep us from having certain fruit of the Holy Spirit. I once heard about a person who vowed they would not be controlled by their spouse. This closed them off to the work of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their marriage. I once read about the advice given a son by his mother. She told her son, 'Do not let anybody tell you how to live.' What if the person talking to him was giving him good advice! She was setting him up to be stubborn, rebellious, and selfish. Be careful with the vows you make. Make sure they are good ones like telling God you will keep His commandments.

So, we should work on these various virtues so we will cooperate with the Holy Spirit and receive the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our life. Remember what Kefa said about having virtues in 2 Peter 1:9 NKJV "For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness."

Love means,

"Brotherly love, affection, good will, love, benevolence." So, we are to care about others and do good things for them. The best way to learn these fruits is to try to do them. I wonder if "to eat them" would also be a way to understand that (think about the Garden of Eden)? We should think about being good to others and doing good things for them. Show that we genuinely care about them and demonstrate that by our actions. For example, when my wife asks me to help her, I drop what I am doing and will do even more than she asks of me.

We love God by respecting His commandments and keeping them. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "You shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always." Our loving God gave us His good instructions for life. The same is true for loving others as ourselves. Keeping God's Old Testament commandments is a good start. Leviticus 19:18-19 NKJV says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes."

Joy means,

'The joy received from you, the cause or occasion of joy, or of persons who are one's joy.' Think about what gives you joy and show appreciation for how others give you joy. You can show appreciation for others by how you treat others, so treat others well and with respect. You can express to others how they give you joy and be thankful. You can tell them specific ways that you appreciate them. Think about how you can give others joy and how they might appreciate you for it. Do not have a, "I will help you if you help me attitude." Be willing to help others without expecting anything in return.

Take time to celebrate life and the best time to do that is during God's feasts. God's feasts are holy days. Nehemiah 8:9-10 NKJV says, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. Then he

said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.'"

Peace means,

'Exemption from the rage and havoc of war, peace between individuals, harmony, concord, security, safety, prosperity, felicity, and the tranquil state of a soul.' When people think of peace, they often think of the absence of war. Peace as a virtue means something different.

Peace often refers to the peace in life we get from keeping God's Old Testament commandments and that God's commandments help us to have peace with one another. Isaiah 26:3 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." It should be obvious that when we trust in God's good Old Testament commandments, they can bring us good things in life. The Bible tells us hundreds of times that keeping God's Old Testament portion commandments help us in life. Psalms 37:37 NKJV says, "Mark the **blameless** man, and observe the upright; for the future of that man is **peace**. Psalms 119:165 NKJV says, "**Great peace have those who love Your law**, and nothing causes them to stumble. Proverbs 3:1-2 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**."

So, keep God's commandments because they help us to treat others right and give us and others peace in life. Again, Leviticus 19:18-19 says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes." Teach others to keep God's commandments so that others can treat each other right. Doing what is right can bring peace into a society.

One economics teacher at Harvard said that keeping good and fair laws creates confidence in a society that their work will not be stolen and that they will be treated fairly. I am not talking about non-biblical religion like religious communism that takes away people's property and does not allow for proper payment for services. Those with good and fair laws creates wealth, protection, and security. These are some of the things that give us peace of mind. Wouldn't we want to live in a country like that? God's commandments can help to do that. The United States used some of the concepts from the Bible to create a just and fair society. That is why the United States has been called the land of opportunity, and more than 100 nations tried to copy its concepts and the last I heard over 80 nations still try to copy the United States' model.

Whether poor or rich, people are treated the same. The Bible says in Acts 17:26 NKJV, "He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." The poor can improve their lives, and the rich can retain their wealth. Statistics prove that people who were poor improve their lives and some even get rich. Also, just because a person is rich does not mean they automatically retain their wealth unless they continue to earn their wealth. Most societies before this had unjust and unfair societies that kept most of the people poor.

Longsuffering means,

Being persistent and continuing in thought or deed, stability without changing, doing what we

are supposed to do, not quitting when things get difficult, patience, to do things without complaining, accepting difficulties without complaint, not being vengeful. Did you ever notice that people that lack the ability to be longsuffering are often very negative and self-centered? It can be difficult to be around these people at times because of their negative actions or negative words. There doesn't seem to be anything that can make some of them happy or appease them. Don't be a difficult person. Bring good virtues to bear on your life. God is able to turn things around for us, so trust in God and ask God for help in life. It says about God in Psalms 30:11 NKJV, "You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness."

Our life can turn around for the better. God gave us His good commandments to help us in life. God pleads with us. 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!" Stay positive and find godly ways to change your challenging situations.

The virtue of kindness.

This is another virtue where we demonstrate our ability to care about others. It is similar to loving others. It also carries with it the virtue that we care about others in spite of their behaviors at times. It does not mean we let people take advantage of us, but are willing to react in a proactive way, are perceptive of the need and have a deeper understanding of the need to treat others well in spite of the way they treat us, and understand that we all can make mistakes at time. It is rooted in the Old Testament command to not hold onto a "grudge" (see Leviticus 19:18-19). That's why Shaul refers to this Old Testament commandment by telling us to be kind. Ephesians 4:31-32 NKJV says, "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. and **be kind** to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another**." Notice that being bitter, angry, and speaking evil are tendencies of those who are unkind.

Goodness means,

Having a good heart and a heart that is rooted in following what is "right and good." Doing what is "right and good" refers to keeping God's Old Testament commandments. This is an important verse in Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV which 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**." So, to do what is "right" or "good" means to keep God's commandments. Therefore, goodness has to do with a person who is well rooted in following God's good commandments which are "right and good." God knows the best way to live because He is an all knowing and good God and we should want to do what He says to do. Psalms 119:11 NKJV says, "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." The opposite of goodness is wickedness. Psalms 141:4 NKJV says, "Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men who work iniquity." We keep God's good law which is doctrine. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law."

Faithfulness means,

Being a person that believes in God, follows truth, and is loyal to God and God's

commandments in life. A faithful person believes in who the creator God is and chooses to be faithful to His commandments. They consider how God wants them to live in life and values God's good commandments. Psalms 119:30 NKJV says, "I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me." At every opportunity they keep God's commandments because they trust in God's good instructions for life and could not imagine living any other way. Psalms 119:43 NKJV says, "And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in Your ordinances."

Gentleness means,

A kind approachable manner and a person who listens and is considerate towards others. They are not overly assertive, does not put on a show, and cares about others for their own good. Shaul tells us to be gentle when restoring someone to God. Galatians 6:1 NKJV says, "If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted." We should especially be gentle towards those who are suffering, have need, and be sensitive to the emotional needs of others. Being gentle does not mean we accept sin as a viable way of life. We are firm yet caring, and wish that all people will repent of their sin.

Self-control means,

Able to control oneself, their feelings, desires, and their way of life. They are a person who is not out of control in an area or areas of their life. They avoid extremes in actions. They especially are able to master their behaviors so that they do not live in sin and resist sin. Ya'akov tells us to resist the temptations of the devil.

James 4:7-10 NKJV says,

Therefore submit to God. **Resist** the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. **Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts**, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord**, and He will lift you up.

We should also be willing to resist any behaviors the Bible says is wrong. Proverbs 5:22 NKJV says, "His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, and he is caught in the cords of his sin." Do not be controlled by sin, be set free from its bondage. Romans 6:22-23 NKJV says, "Having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life."

Perhaps you could write out how you might keep each of these virtues in your life. In that way, you will allow the Holy Spirit to help you and to inspire you in these areas. The Holy Spirit will help you in real tangible ways if you are working on these virtues/fruits in your life.

I am sure there are many times the Holy Spirit inspired me to use the fruits of the Holy Spirit. That is the common way I believe the fruits of the Spirit work. God can also give you the spiritual gift of knowledge or the spiritual gift of wisdom so you will use one of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. For example, I saw someone whom I had not seen for a while, and as I was walking over to say hi, God told me they also had the gift of the Holy Spirit. Because of that, I was especially kind to them. The information came by a word of knowledge and then what to do, which is a word of wisdom, came by inspiration and was also a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Someone at work years ago was treating me very badly and I asked God what was going on. God told me they were having a difficult time. So, I responded with kindness; they noticed that I responded with kindness. The result of the word of knowledge led to the wisdom of what to do, namely the fruit of kindness. This may sound a little complicated but just know that the fruit of the Spirit often comes through inspiration. This inspiration which occurs in the very moment it is needed can result in us taking action or no action at all. Respond how God leads you.

What are we working towards in life? Make sure your goals are headed in the right direction. Be careful what we allow our minds to consider and explore. We are to first and foremost love God. Yeshua said in Matthew 22:37-38 NKJV, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment." Strong's Dictionary says that the word "mind" in that verse can mean, "deep thought." We are to work our minds so that we follow God the way we are supposed to. Of course, Yeshua is quoting Deuteronomy 6:5.

Why do we believe what we believe? Is it because we want the truth of what the Bible says, or do we believe in something because that is what we would rather hear and do? There is a big difference between God accepting me as I am, and that God is a loving God who knows what is best for us. Because we believe that God is a loving God, we will keep His commandments knowing that God has our best intentions at heart.

Those that believe God accepts them as they are often put a low value on living right. They want the blessing of God without putting in the effort to believe in what God says and do what is right. They often value acceptance over rules and being free to do what they want instead of what God says is right. It is like saying I want to be paid for the job I do, but I do not intend to actually work. Or another way of looking at it is to say, "I want good relationships, but I do not want to put in the effort to have a good and caring relationship."

Now, you may object to my assessment because you have been told that God does not expect anything of you. In fact, if we love God, we are to keep His commandments. We care about what God has to say and therefore show God we care about Him. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always." Basically, we love God by keeping His commandments. Those who do not think that God expects anything of them are in serious trouble. They have not thought through the implications of their reasoning.

Perhaps you believe God loves you. You therefore trust God and want to love Him and keep His commandments. You put a high value on doing what is right and keeping God's commandments. Therefore, you do not belong in the camp that believes in themselves, in doing things their own way. Instead, you actually believe in God. The people who do not accept God's commandments therefore do not believe in God.

I will sometimes look at something from different viewpoints, but do not be fooled by wrongly thought-out ideas. I once heard someone say that doing what is right in your own eyes means they kept God's commandments. Proverbs 26:12 NKJV says, "Do you see a man wise

in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him." This scripture contradicts their premise. Also, Jeremiah 13:10 NKJV says, "This evil people, who refuse to hear My words, who follow the dictates of their hearts." Our hearts can be deceitful, and it says these people who follow their heart can be evil, so we need to work at understanding the truth about life from our all-knowing God.

Doing things God's way helps us to be who we should be and become. Be refreshing in your impact. Becoming what we should become is something that most people aspire to but cannot get there because they have gone after things that are against their nature. It is impossible for them to land where they should if they are not following the truth. Instead, they become something that works against who they can and should be.

Some people think they are bastions of knowledge, but who really knows the truth? The creator God is real, and He knows what is really true. When we accept God, we accept reality. Isaiah 40:13-14 NKJV says, "Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or as His counselor has taught Him? With whom did He take counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of justice? Who taught Him knowledge, and showed Him the way of understanding?" Some people think they know more than God, but we are not the creator of the universe. Therefore, God knows what is best, what is right, and what is good. Our very being then was designed and defined by God and thinking we know better is just plain foolishness.

Thinking we know better than God would be like telling one of the greatest soccer players in the world how to play soccer; or it would be like us telling a great musician, singer, or accomplished physicist that we know how to do what they do better. But God is so much bigger than that! Jeremiah 10:12 NKJV says, "He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens at His discretion." We can do very little compared to what God do, so He knows how we should live. God made us, we are not God even if you think you are. Some people think they are George Washington the first president of the United States, but that does not make them George Washington. Isaiah 64:8 NKJV "But now, O LORD, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand."

God created mankind and knows how best we should live. It is through God's good ways that we are refreshed in life. Isaiah 40:31 NKJV says, "Those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Be a person who brings good to others.

Isaiah 55:11-12 NKJV says,

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

More to consider.

We have the chance to be at peace in life or fill our life with turmoil.

Perhaps we come up with some crazy idea that if we have more electrical power at our disposal, we can perhaps create something amazing. But putting more electricity on our light

bulbs, refrigerator, or TV will probably burn them up. They are designed to accept a certain level of electricity. So, it is with life. God created us a certain way and that is the way we function the best.

That is why when we follow God's good commandments, we have more focus and peace. Psalms 29:11 NKJV says, "The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace." That was true for me. Years ago, when I decided to change my life and do things God's way, my life became more organized, I accomplished more, and I had more satisfaction in life. Satisfaction is an important element to life and doing things God's ways can help you with that. Psalms 145:16-18 NKJV says, "You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. The LORD is righteous in all His ways, gracious in all His works. The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth." God created everything that is, and it is through Him that we can realize true satisfaction.

Do we fill our heads with false belief systems or truth?

We began by saying that we need to be careful with some of the things we accept and believe in. Those in Russia probably never thought that someone would take over their country and kill some 20 million people in order to establish the Communist Religious doctrine in Russia. Life under the Russian Czar was not perfect, but they traded what was imperfect for a murderous religion.

We sometimes think that what we consider does not matter, but it does. We need to make sure we have a sure founded doctrine to follow. The Bible actually tells us what doctrine is. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." Even Shaul (Paul) tells us that the doctrine he learned has not been 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."

We are to be God's set apart holy people who keep the law. Deuteronomy 28:9 NKJV says, "The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways." The Bible says that to be God's holy people, we must keep God's commandments.

We are to keep God's commandments and should continue to learn and grow spiritually in life. Theology tends to replace the truth of the Bible by substituting holiness with man-made ideas such as righteousness without being a holy person. The book of Hebrews says something to the contrary. Hebrews 12:14 NKJV says, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." Those who do not pursue holiness will not be in God's future kingdom. Think before you jump on the bandwagon of nonsense. Pursue truth and work at being a holy person who does things God's way.

Torah Teaching

The prophets, possibly Nehemiah, divided the Torah into weekly readings. The prophets did things that God commanded them to do. Our weekly readings help us to concentrate on different sections of doctrine and learn from them. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you

good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." God's law is good and gives us wisdom (see Deuteronomy 4:6); so, let's learn and grow in God's Torah. The word Torah means instruction.

After Ya'akov leaves the land of his ancestors with his wife and family and approaches where he grew up, he sends ahead a message to Esau (esav, ěšäv), his brother, that he is coming home. He sends gifts for his brother ahead of him and Esau receives Ya'akov favorably. Ya'akov wrestles with an angel who names him Israel and he identifies the angel as God (Elohim), and he says that he has seen God's face.

The meaning of the name Israel comes from the verse where Jacob is named. Genesis 32:28 NKJV says, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God." Presumably, it is God that gives Jacob the name and not just an angel. The name Israel, "struggle with God," has a deep meaning to those who follow the true God. Our life is a struggle to stay faithful to God the creator, the giver of God's instructions for life (the Law), the provider of all and the provider of the Messiah Yeshua, and the giver of the Holy Spirit through the Messiah.

God demonstrates His ability to rule and reign, and He protects Ya'akov. That point seems interesting. Ya'akov has everyone in his camp get rid of their idols and God confirms his promised blessings to Ya'akov. In this portion, both Rachel and Yitzchak die. Yitzchak was 180 years old when he died.

Esau's descendants settled in the land of Edom which is south of Israel. *Edom* means red. It is apparent that God has blessed and protected Ya'akov. It says that he was rich while working for Laban and he sends Esau many gifts apparently to try and placate any anger that Esau may have held onto because Esau wanted the blessing that Yitzchak gave to Ya'akov.

It should be apparent that Ya'akov was blessed by God both materially and spiritually. He had a relationship with God and wanted to do what is right. Amazing blessings can come from our creator God. Ya'akov seems to not care about all that he is sending to Esau. He saw how God prospered him and blessed him when he worked for Laban. We should probably understand that he trusted in God; especially since he had gone through so much with greedy Laban who changed his wages 10 times to try to defraud him. Ya'akov and Esau end up greeting one another and agree to live in peace.

There is a standard Jewish teaching about the lesson of Ya'akov that has to do with the idea that we are to do our part, and God will do His part. I learned about this as a child. It makes sense that we need to trust God and do what He says. Just sitting around waiting for something to happen is not really trusting in God. Not acting, is actually not believing. When God asked me to go to the jungle to serve there, I immediately began investigating how I could do that. Doing nothing would have meant I didn't trust God. Ya'akov acts like God will prosper him since he is so generous towards Esau.

Ya'akov seems confident in God. Too bad mankind isn't also confident in God. This important Bible verse in 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.'" God's commandments give us the knowledge and understanding we need for life.

The problem of not understanding the Bible correctly.

God's ways are wise and good, but mankind seems to want to do things their own way. The lesson of trusting in God and believing in God and His commandments is a lesson that we learn over and over when reading the Torah or for that matter, any of the Old Testament portion books. But instead of trusting God, people add to God's commandments inappropriately. Also, some people take the scriptures out of their Jewish context and change their meaning. The biggest problem we have in our time are those who take the New Testament portion or the Old Testament portion out of its biblical context and don't understand the Bible properly. The society was Israelite or Jewish and the Bible needs to be understood within that context.

Kefa talks about how people are deluded and go to the lake of fire because they do not understand Paul properly. 2 Peter 3:15-16 NKJV says, "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." There was no New Testament, so what were they untaught in? We are to keep the Old Testament scriptures. They were twisting what Shaul taught and contradicting the Old Testament scriptures.

They were taking Shaul's teachings out of its proper biblical context. Don't go to the lake of fire with those who do that. Both Kefa and Shaul were Jewish. The ancient Jews believed in and taught that there is a future kingdom of God for those who follow God, and a lake of fire where those who do evil will be punished. God is just, so He must act in a just way. God must judge those who do evil and live in sin. Some have been lied to about this important understanding. Even some Jewish rabbis have lost touch with their ancient truths. Of course, we also need to believe in the Messiah Yeshua and receive the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:38-39).

Rabbi Kefa talked about people twisting the Bible. **Just before he says they twist the scriptures to their destruction he says** in 2 Peter 2:4-7 NKJV, "For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly." Why did God give Noah grace? It is because he kept God's commandments. Rabbi Kefa says there is a future judgment. Noah taught people to do what is right; to keep God's commandments. That's what righteousness means. Noah was saved because he did what was right. We are to live godly lives by God's standards and not our own.

Noah taught God's commandments.

The book of Jubilees tells us that Noah taught God's commandments, so he knew them. Jubilees 7:20-21 says, "And in the twenty-eighth jubilee Noah began to enjoin upon his sons' sons the ordinances and commandments, and all the judgments that he knew, and he exhorted his sons to observe righteousness, and to cover the shame of their flesh, and to bless their Creator, and honour father and mother, and love their neighbour, and guard their souls from fornication and uncleanness **and all iniquity**. For owing to these three things came the flood upon the earth."¹ Remember, short lists can be representative for larger lists; they are not a complete list. **It says, "all iniquity;"** what is "all iniquity?" It is any and all sins. Before the written commandments given at Mount Sinai, believers passed on God's commandments. Remember, Abraham kept the law, the Torah (see Genesis 26:5).

Did the Jews reject God's commandments because they came from the Gentiles?

Much of Christianity has rejected the good commandments of God given by the Gentiles and written down by Moshe at Mount Sinai. Noah kept God's commandments. Genesis 6:8-9 NKJV says, "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." Walking with God is to keep His 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, and that you may prolong your days." So, the ancient believers passed down God's commandments verbally. Noah walked with God and therefore kept God's commandments.

The Bible says that Abraham kept God's commandments. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Believers keep God's commandments. There are some people who teach that Abraham and other ancient believers did not know God's commandments, but as we can see, that is not true. In fact, this scripture about Abraham emphatically states that Abraham kept God's commandments by repetition, namely that Abraham kept God's charge, commandments, statutes, and laws.

For example, why did Moshe have his sons circumcised when he went back to Egypt to free Israel? It is because the Israelites kept God's commandments that was passed down to them from the Gentiles. So, it makes no sense that modern Christianity says they do not need to follow Jewish commandments. They are God's commandments that were passed down to the Israelites from the Gentiles. Moshe then wrote them down how God wanted them written at Mount Sinai. They are God's commandments given by a good God to help all of mankind with life.

Continuing on with the portion. After Ya'akov and Esau work things out. Ya'akov settles near the city of Shechem in Canaan. Dinah, Ya'akov's daughter, is raped and her brothers make an agreement that if the men of the city get circumcised, they will give them Dinah and form an agreement with them. When the men of the city are in pain Dinah's brothers kill the men of the city. What we are not told is that in the book of Jasher, the people of Shechem planned to attack Ya'akov and his family after they recovered and that the brothers became aware of the

¹<https://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/jub/jub21.htm>

plan. Ya'akov did not agree with how the brothers handled the situation. Perhaps he thought that God would have worked out the situation without having to resort to violence.

God then tells Ya'akov to move away from there and go to Bethel and God promises Ya'akov and his ancestry the land of Canaan and tells Ya'akov that his name is now Israel. Ya'akov goes on past the tower of Eder which is thought to be near Bethlehem. Rachel dies in childbirth on the way there. Isaac then dies at the age of 180. The genealogy of Esau is then given. Esau and his descendants then lived south of Israel in the land of Edom.

In the book of Jasher, after Isaac dies, Ya'akov offers Esau the land of Canaan or all the belongings of Isaac and the animals. At the time, the Canaanites were still in the land of Canaan and Esau took the belongings of Isaac. The decision of Ya'akov was most likely influenced by his encounter with God at Bethel where God promised Ya'akov the land of Canaan. Ya'akov, now named Israel, must have believed God's promise so he was satisfied with what God promised. May we too be happy with God's promises in our own lives and God's promise of eternal life to those who keep His commandments. Israel, Ya'akov looked forward to what he could not see. May we all have faith like Ya'akov.

Faith in this present era.

Faith is an important part of our Messianic belief. Faith must include faith and trust in God in a number of ways. We trust in who God is, in His good commandments, in the gift of the Holy Spirit in this Messianic era, in the resurrection of Yeshua, in eternal reward for those who keep God's commandments, in eternal punishment for those who do not keep God's commandments, and that Yeshua is the Messiah who died for our sins and will come back at a future time for those who keep God's commandments and accept the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:38-39).

Faith in God by itself without actually trusting in God is not good enough to be part of God's future kingdom. James 2:19 NKJV says, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe." The devil is going to the lake of fire and brimstone. Revelation 20:10 NKJV says, "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. The devil believes there is a God but demonstrates no actual trust in God. We are to trust in God by keeping His Old Testament portion commandments. James 2:18 NKJV says, "Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works." So, be faithful to keep God's commandments.

The Haftarah for Vayishlach is Obadiah 1:1-21. This prophecy is over Edom (Esau's descendants) for rejoicing over the misfortune of Judah. Edom stole from Judah and turned over those who were fleeing the Babylonians. God says He will bring on them what they did to Judah. We should be especially careful about how we treat others. God can turn the tables on us too if we don't treat people right. In the Torah portion God turned the tables on Laban for trying to cheat Ya'akov.

In Closing.

God works out everything for Ya'akov. It is really amazing. It seems like Ya'akov is in trouble

at times, but everything just keeps working out for him. Shaul tells us in Romans that God is able to work out everything; perhaps He was thinking of Ya'akov, but most certainly, God is in control and even if things don't seem to work out at times, our good God can restore us even as He has done so for believers in the past. God is good and His commandments are good. God has good intentions for us, so stay faithful and don't be tricked by people who don't understand the Bible properly. God is for us just like God was for Ya'akov. Psalms 118:6 NKJV says, "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" If we do our part, God will do His part. If we keep His commandments and believe on the Messiah Yeshua, we will be with God for eternity.

People sometimes think that God is far from us and our lives, but the Bible shows us otherwise. Because of that, believers in God who trust in His commandments and the Holy Spirit make this world a better place for all and we bring God's goodness with us. We can rely on God just as Ya'akov did.

**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.)**

God may hear our prayers, so it is important to pray. Genesis 32:9-12

Murder is wrong even if we think it is justified. There may have been a better response to the rape of Dinah than to attack the town. The penalty for rape in the Bible is death and the town made no appropriate response to the rape of Dinah (see Deuteronomy 22:25-27) and was perhaps complicit because of that. Ya'akov believed the actions of the brothers were wrong. The book of Jasher complicates the matter with the town's plot to eventually kill Ya'akov and his family. I believe God must have told Ya'akov that what they did was wrong because of his response to the brothers. Genesis 34:30-31

God's promises are faithful. In turn, we must be faithful to God. Ya'akov returned to the land of Canaan based on God's promise and God changes his name to Israel and again promises him the land of Canaan. Genesis 35:9-14

Last week we shared the introduction to our Divine Healing Prayer Class. There is a lot more online. Please take the time to learn and grow spiritually. Select "More," on our website heading and then the Devine Healing Prayer Class from the drop-down menu.

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

ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God, which is pronounced, Yě-hō-váh. Yě-hō-váh is used 6,521 times in the Old Testament portion according to Strong's Dictionary. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name. So, why not use God's real name? According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. In that verse and everywhere we see a name for God in all capitals

(in some of our Bibles) it is this exclusive name for God, Yě-hō-váh. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah which means to exist. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. He is our eternal God and creator. I want to honor God's name. Will you also honor God's name?

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

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

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

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ
יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיַחַנֶּנָּה
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.