



#15 Bo Exodus 10:1-13:16 **by Moshe Schwab**

Names

Kefa – Peter

Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Haftarah – reading from the prophets

Christ in the Greek means to be smudged Moedim – God's feasts (Gen. 1:14; Lev. 23:1)

Moshe – Moses

Pesach – Passover

Shaul – Paul

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

Yēhōvāh – God's real name forever (Ex. 3:15) Bo – the 15th Torah portion

Yochanan – John

Yochanan the Immerser – John the Baptist

Terms

Chametz – leavened bread

Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible

Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the

Torah

The Torah portion for this week is *Bo*. *Bo* means, "enter." Moshe and Aharon are told by God to ask Pharaoh how much longer will he not submit to God and not let His people go? That is a good question to ask ourselves. Is there any place in our life where we are not submitting to God?

I would like to begin by talking about, what are we most attracted to or attached to in life? Being attracted to non-sinful ideas, activities, or the other things in life is not necessarily a bad thing. Sometimes these things can become an obsession that controls our ability to follow God the way we should.

I once knew someone that liked to rebuild cars. He told me that he valued doing that more than his family or presumably God. What happens when we value something over the important things of life? He needed to adjust his priorities and work on his ability to spend time with his family and of course the spiritual side of life.

Believe it or not, some people can be very selfish with their time and be consumed with a multitude of worldly things instead of some of the more important things in life. Set appropriate priorities in all of life and have a high spiritual aim in life.

Do things you enjoy but not at the cost of ignoring your spiritual growth and continued spiritual reinforcement. The Bible often repeats itself because of our human tendency to forget. We need this reinforcement. When I wrote computer code (called firmware), a person who had not done it for a while confided in me that it had been a long time since he had done that. What he meant was he did not think he could do it. I encouraged him to work at

it. We get good at what we practice. I once heard of one athlete saying that he practiced basketball 6 hours a day. So also, we need consistent spiritual encouragement, teaching, and application in our life. That is how most of us are able to make the changes in life to do what God says. That is why Deuteronomy 6:6-7 NKJV says, "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 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." There was a saying, "Rome wasn't built in a day." I have committed myself to specific consistent behaviors a number of times in my life. At least a couple of times, after a couple of years, I felt satisfied that I had accomplished what I set out to do.

A lot of times, people give up when they are just about to succeed. Do not give up and keep pressing on. Philippians 3:13-14 NKJV says, "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." I press on, so that I can achieve how God wants me to live and act. 1 Corinthians 9:26-27 NKJV says, "Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."

Often, good things happen on our journey in life when we are faithful to God. God wants us to have things in life that we enjoy. Ecclesiastes 2:24 NKJV says, "Nothing is better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of God." Our God is a good God who wants good things for us. Proverbs 3:1-2 NKJV says, "Let your heart keep my commands; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you." The people who think God is out to take away our fun are deceived and blind. They think the evil they do is good and it is not. Proverbs 17:20 NKJV says, "He who has a deceitful heart finds no good, and he who has a perverse tongue falls into evil." God gave us His commandments to help us in life. There are lots of fun activities we can do without having to sin.

I do not think that any of us want to fall into evil. Yet, that is what people choose when they do not follow our good God's commandments. Isaiah 5:20-21 NKJV says, "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" And, in Isaiah 5:24 NKJV it says about those who do not follow God's commandments. "Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame consumes the chaff, so their root will be as rottenness, and their blossom will ascend like dust." It sounds awful, but a lot of people do not understand the results of sin in life. Instead, God wants to fulfill our good desires and our purpose in life. Psalms 20:4 NKJV says, "May He grant you according to your heart's desire, and fulfill all your purpose."

Be diligent to develop your spiritual life, and that includes the gift of the Holy Spirit in this Messianic age. Deuteronomy 6:17 NKJV says, "Diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you." Just like we will work hard to develop our abilities in life, we also need to develop our spiritual life.

I mention the gift of the Holy Spirit because that is another tremendous gift given to us by God. God's commandments are a gift of God's grace towards mankind and so is the Holy Spirit. We talk about this frequently because people need to understand that what God gives us is meant to help us in life. 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 the Law, God's commandments. The Holy Spirit is another helper. This Bible says the Holy Spirit is a good gift. Luke 11:13 NKJV says, "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!"

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Be organized in life and spiritually.

Most of us have learned to be organized early in life. We learn to take care of ourselves and be presentable, study and successfully learn the basic subjects we need in life, learn how to communicate with others and be considerate of others, how to apply ourselves well and know how to work hard and do good work, and for some of us, we learned to value our spiritual side of life and use some of these good habits to be successful spiritually. If you have not learned these things, you need to begin working on them, so you form good habits in life and of course that includes forming good spiritual habits. It can take time to form habits, so we need to keep doing what we learn and make them into good habits.

This might seem a little daunting, but because God gives us the instructions for life, we do not have to also make up a set of values but follow how God tells us to live. If you realize that you have not had any of this training, you are not alone. Even most children in the United States have only been encouraged in their schoolwork. They have learned a lot of facts that do not necessarily help people to live right. How far the Earth is from the Sun does not give us the values we need for life.

Much to my dismay, I did not learn most of these things from my parents, but I had one important advantage. My mother used to teach me principles from the Torah beginning when I was 5 years old and that changed my entire life for the better. We often can make up for things in life that were not passed down to us but finding God and understanding the principles from the Bible is what some call a godsend. A godsend is considered something that helps us in life, something that benefits us, is a blessing, it assists us, it supports us, and some consider it to mean something that provides relief that aids us and lifts us up.

Many parents have failed to communicate with their children the various attitudes (like a positive, "I can do attitude") and habits they need to form in life. I once heard the story of a young lady who grew up in a family that lived without a home and many of the personal needs we all have. She was able to learn to succeed in life and even wrote a book about it. She found out that her parents were wealthy, but they chose to live like bums. One thing that

most people need the most are the lessons we can learn from the Bible. God has good intentions for us and wants us to have a good life. God knows what is best for us because He is the creator and He gave us the operating manual for life in His commandments. If we want to know how to operate our car or even a flashlight sometimes, we must look at the directions to see the various ways it functions.

I have a flashlight that every time I push the on/off button, it changes how it works. So, I need to know how many times I need to push the on/off button to get it to work the way I want it to. God gave us commandments to help us in life. 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!" Isn't that wonderful! The God of the universe cares about us and gave us instructions so that life may go well with us.

If you are in the position to learn about God and learn how the Bible tells us to live, you are very fortunate. So, make sure you are committed to learning and growing spiritually and remaining faithful to God and His commandments. We can generally make up for some of the habits we lack by applying ourselves well to form good habits in the areas we are lacking. I was never taught how to communicate properly with others, so I was extremely quiet. A kind older believer talked to me about how to communicate better and then spent time talking to me to help me with that. Stay faithful to God and learning about His commandments and truths for life as you develop your abilities for work, for relations, and for all we need to function properly. I was able to succeed in life because I had a good spiritual basis on how to live. Most importantly, we need to succeed spiritually, that is what matters most. Mark 8:36 NKJV says, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" This can be taken two ways. What does it profit a person if they have all they need in life, but die and not get to enjoy it? Also, what does it profit a person if they have all they need in life, but do not receive eternal life and do not make it into God's eternal kingdom.

What are we most attracted to or attached to in life? Set appropriate priorities in all of life and most of all, have a high spiritual aim in life. Do things you enjoy but not at the cost of ignoring your spiritual growth and continued spiritual reinforcement. God wants you to succeed in life and have a purposeful and good life. Be diligent to develop your spiritual life, and that includes the gift of the Holy Spirit in this Messianic age. Be organized in life and spiritually. Develop your abilities both in life and your spiritual life. Developing yourself spiritually is one of the most important things you will do in life.

Proverbs 3:1-4 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.

Let's talk about these concepts some more.

People are often busy staying to themselves and engaging in things they enjoy doing. We

talked last week about how God wants us to enjoy all that He has provided. Some people decide that their life is all about these things and not about making God more a part of their life.

We need to do fun things in life, but it is also important to apply yourself spiritually. Not everyone has the same focus toward their spiritual life, so some people need to raise up their level of spirituality in order to get where they need to be. For example, when a person first joins a sports team, their first focus is on being part of the team. They then work at succeeding as a member of the team and finally they try becoming a key person who contributes to the team.

A lot of people never develop any spiritual aspirations and have a low commitment to God. We want to be like the psalmist who has a high level of commitment. He understood what God's commandments can mean in life.

Psalms 119:44-48 NKJV says,

So shall I keep Your law continually, forever and ever. And I will walk at liberty (proud of God's commandments), for I seek Your precepts. I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed. And I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love. My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on Your statutes.

Strong's Dictionary says that the word in this verse, "liberty," can be translated as proud. He was proud of God's good precepts. We need to be proud of God's good commandments and learn to love them.

We learn to enjoy something by continual practice. When I first began to play catch, it was difficult but after a lot of practice, I became good at it and I enjoy a good game of catch. Being active in life and participating in life can be rewarding in many ways. Watching TV can be fun but if that is all we do, then we are missing out on living life and accomplishing things in life. We can learn to enjoy work and accomplishing something, we can learn to appreciate our family by doing things with our family and helping one another, and we can learn to enjoy our walk with God by applying ourselves spiritually.

Decide that you will appreciate God's commandments and make them an important part of your life. Psalms 119:47 NKJV says, "I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love." When we start to apply what God tells us we then begin to understand the goodness of God. Psalms 119:32 says, "I will run the course of Your commandments, for You shall enlarge my heart." If I had never tried to play catch, I never would have had the opportunity to enjoy it. Perhaps you have heard the saying, "You get out of life what you put into it."

Just like those who compete in sports are committed to work at their sport on a consistent basis, we need to be committed to develop ourselves spiritually on a consistent basis. Here are some things we need to do in our spiritual walk:

We need to view our godly behaviors in life as integral to a proper lifestyle.

We need to reinforce those godly behaviors by attention and affirmation to the lifestyle

God wants for us. In other words, delight in keeping God's commandments like you would anything else you accomplish.

Just like we must plan life's necessary activities, we need to plan how we will accomplish things spiritually in life.

Psalms 119:66-69 NKJV says, "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." Notice that changing our life is not always without some tension or opposition. We need to be committed to change and to God. Do not allow others to stop you from engaging in your spiritual journey. The Psalmist learned from keeping God's commandments that they are lifesaving and good for us, and they lead to a more satisfying life.

We talked about this last week. Joy, satisfaction, and happiness in life begins by following God and keeping His commandments. Without that, we are living like the atheists or unbelievers to just please ourselves, and we do not understand the basics we need to have for true joy and satisfaction in life.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 NKJV says,

Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

People who help others spiritually or in some other way often feel a sense of satisfaction from doing it. The most satisfying thing in life is to please our creator by doing what He says to do and keep His commandments. There probably is no better thing to do in life than being able to look back on our life and be able to acknowledge that we pleased our creator.

King Solomon saw that all the works of mankind can be tedious and do not last. We should enjoy life but also enjoy our spiritual activities and that includes keeping God's commandments. When I caught the ball for the first time, I felt I accomplished something, and I wanted to excel at doing that. We should also want to excel at keeping God's commandments and our spiritual activities. I take a considerable amount of time each day to pray. Not all of us are able to do that but I know God uses my prayer and will answer them at times. I believed at times that someone was praying for me and then someone told me they were praying for me. We are not praying just to make us feel better. We are praying to the creator God who is able to do great things for us. For help on praying for others see our, "Divine Healing Prayer Class." Our spiritual activities are important both for ourselves and others. I have both witnessed and experienced the power of God. There is even a two-volume book on the existence of miracles and healing. It is not true that God is far from us; God is not far from each of us if we are willing to make God more a part of our life.

The worship of things and activities more than God.

What things in life do we hold near and dear? Church, country, children, what we own. While these can be important in life, they are not to be worshipped. A lot of people make their life all about some of these things. Of course, our lives are not to revolve around doing evil. That

would be tragic for a number of reasons. One of those is not just a separation from God, but eternity in the lake of fire (see Revelation 21:8). Yochanan tells us to value our spiritual life over the things and activities of the world.

1 John 2:15-17 NKJV says,

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Engage with spiritual things in life and not just activities we enjoy doing. I remember a story by Denis Prager who said that he gave up an important baseball game to keep how he felt he should keep Shabbat. He also relates that his Christian friend gave up going to the same game because he had a spiritual activity planned. It is not worldly things that need to drive us in life and not so much the physical because this present world is passing away. We need to keep God's commandments and be His holy people. When my cousin first believed in God, he told me that he wanted to be holy. What a great attitude. 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." Kefa talks about this in 2 Peter. He puts it in good perspective. We need to be a holy people while waiting for the new heavens and earth.

2 Peter 3:10-13 NKJV says,

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

This life is not all there is. God is able to raise the dead because He is God. The Torah tells us that there is a future life. Genesis 35:29 NKJV says, " So Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people, being old and full of days." You do not go to be with dead people. "Gathered to his people" is an idiom for joining God's people in the future kingdom. They believed in the resurrection. For example, see Daniel 12:2-3 NKJV, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever."

If you have ever had the opportunity to see the stars outside of the city, they can be amazing and beautiful. You will either raise from the dead to everlasting contempt and being repulsive for eternity or raise from the dead and be amazing and beautiful. God must judge those who do evil. They think they will get away with what they are doing, but they will not. People will put a lot of effort into looking good to others, why not look amazing for eternity? Believing in eternal life is not just something to make us feel good. God is able to do that because he is

God. I take comfort in there being a reckoning for how we live life. This scripture in Revelation gives us more information on what is coming. 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." Those who do not keep God's commandments will go to the lake of fire for eternity.

Those who follow God's commandments will be in His wonderful and amazing future kingdom where even the streets are made of gold. Revelation 21:21 NKJV says, "And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass." Also, God will make all things new. It will be the ultimate environmental restoration of everything. Revelation 21:4-5 NKJV says, "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'"

Be ready to engage with life spiritually. We began to talk about this some earlier. Again, here are some of the things we need to do in our spiritual walk:

We need to view our godly behaviors in life as integral to a proper lifestyle.

We need to reinforce those godly behaviors by attention and affirmation to the lifestyle God wants for us. In other words, delight in keeping God's commandments like you would anything else you accomplish.

Just like we must plan life's necessary activities, we need to plan how we will accomplish things spiritually in life.

Just like we need to eat and have a home, we need to think of our spiritual life and activities as important. Deuteronomy 8:3 NKJV, "He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD." They learned that they needed God as much as anything else and we need to understand that too.

God is the creator and our provider. His commandments help us and the world He created provides for us.

Psalms 19:8-11 NKJV says,

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.

Psalms 104:10-13 NKJV says,

He sends the springs into the valleys; they flow among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. By them the

birds of the heavens have their home; they sing among the branches. He waters the hills from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works.

Take comfort in God's goodness and help. As believers in the true God, we are to keep God's commandments because He is a good and all-knowing God who knows what is best and has His best intentions for mankind. Therefore, to reject God's commandments is to reject God and what is best for us. So, take comfort in God's commandments that He has provided for us.

God is good; therefore, His commandments are good. Psalms 34:8 NKJV says, "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" Since God's ways are good and what is best in life, those who keep His commandments experience good things in life. Psalms 34:12-14 NKJV says, "Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." Also, Psalms 37:3 NKJV says, "Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness." Often, people think that they can define what is right and good, but it is our all-knowing creator God who knows what is "right and good" and what is best for us. Again, Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV is an important scripture to remember: It 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.**" God wants things to go well for mankind and that is why He gives us instructions to follow. God's laws are not meant to be a burden. If we run a red light while driving, we could end up in a terrible automobile accident. It is the same with God's commandments. Not following them can lead to terrible consequences.

Be open to God's power and allow God to use you. God is the creator and has given us good commandments and the help of the Holy Spirit. Luke 11:13 NKJV says, "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!" Since God is the creator, is there anything too difficult for Him? So, when Rabbi Shaul talked to people about God, he also told them about the power of God. The same God who gave the ancient believers food and water in the desert is also able to help us. 1 Corinthians 2:4-5 NKJV says, "And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

We do not believe in God because we need a father figure or believe in God just to be at peace in an uncertain world. Since the inception of time, God has always wanted us to be in relationship with Him and receive His blessings. God placed man in the garden, but man went his own way. God reached out to man and made promises to mankind and to Israel. In this Messianic scripture we see God's love for those who love Him. Zephaniah 3:17 CJB says, "The Lord your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing." In Exodus 15:26 NKJV God tells the people of Israel: "I am the Lord who heals you." In the scriptures

we see God healing and also Yeshua healing people miraculously. At times it says that Yeshua healed all the people there (see Matthew 15:29-31)! Yeshua cared about people. God cares about us.

Yeshua sent out 12 Rabbis and He was also training others to go out and pray. He trained and sent 70 others out too (see Luke 10:1). Rabbi Shaul was not one of the 12 or 70 and he prayed with power. We are also sent out to pray for others, and we too can experience God's power. Mark 16:17-18 NKJV says, "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; ... they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." A couple of months after my friend Dave came back from doing ministry in India, he told me that he prayed for a blind man and all this stuff began oozing out of the man's eyes and the blind man was healed instantly. My friend Larry prayed for a teenage boy in Russia whose one leg was shorter than the other. He put his hand on the boy's leg and while he had his hand on the boy's leg, the leg grew to the same length as the other leg. Larry is a medical professional! My friend Harold prayed for a young man with the same problem and God healed the young man. Only God can do that.

In praying for people God will sometimes answer our prayers. Sometimes the answer is yes, and sometimes it is no. Sometimes the answer is not yet, but no matter what - God loves us. Ultimately, we will be completely whole in the new heaven and earth. In the meantime, God gave us the Holy Spirit as another helper in life along with the law. 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."

Kefa tells us in the Book of Acts that we are supposed to receive the Holy Spirit when we believe in the Messiah. Acts 2:38-39 NKJV says, "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 Holy Spirit is good and is for all those who will believe in the Messiah Yeshua even to those who are far away in time. That includes us. The Bible is not just a bunch of words on a page but is about the real and true powerful God who cares about His creation. Rabbi Shaul writes in 1Corinthians 4:20 NKJV, "For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power."

The Torah Study.

The Torah portion for this week is *Bo*. *Bo* means, "enter." Moshe and Aharon are told by God to ask Pharaoh how much longer will he not submit to God and not let His people go? If someone said to me, "How much longer will you not submit to God," it would sure get my attention. How about you? Will you submit to God, or will you keep doing things your own way?

Some people contradict the Bible.

At one time, I posed a question to someone. Did Yeshua really get rid of the law? Matthew 5:17 NKJV, "Yeshua said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets." The

fact that He had to say that speaks volumes prophetically. Many of these people were committed to keeping God's commandments; so, in a way, Yeshua didn't need to say that at all. Perhaps Yeshua meant that for people who needed to hear that the Old Testament commandments are not done away as some mistakenly say.

People sometimes reverse what Yeshua said. If a person told you that they believed in God, would you go around telling people that they didn't? That is the logic somehow people use to reverse what Yeshua said. Kefa said in 2 Peter 3:15-16 NKJV, "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." What are they untaught in? There was no New Testament at the time, so it had to be the Old Testament commandments. What kind of destruction do you think he is talking about?

Back in Yeshua's time and Shaul's time, many people thought they were in relationship with God by only keeping laws or rituals instead of believing in God. Shaul had to correct that idea in His letters. Then people take that the wrong way and say that it is only by faith that we are in relationship with God. So, Ya'akov told us that it is not just by faith but by faith and works. James 2:19-20 NKJV says, "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."

Romans 2:23 NKJV says, "You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?" So, people dishonor God when they break the law. Shaul is trying to explain in his letters that it is important to have faith in the Messiah Yeshua. We are to believe in the Messiah Yeshua, but not to forget to keep God's commandments.

In Romans 10, Shaul makes several points for faith in Yeshua:

Verse 1, Shaul (Paul) expresses a deep desire for Israel.

Verse 2, Israel has zeal, but needs to know more.

Verse 3, God has a way to help Israel to be righteous (righteous means to live right).

Verse 4, the Messiah will help us to live right – a better understanding of the verse.

Verses 5-8, uses a Jewish comparison with Deuteronomy 30:11-16; the Messiah is here, believe in Him.

Verses 9-10, the Messiah is Yeshua; He is both God and Messiah who was raised from the dead.

Verses 11, says they will not be humiliated for believing in the Messiah.

Verse 13, all who call on Him will be delivered; a reference to Joel 3:5.

Verse 14, trust in the Messiah.

Verse 15, you've now heard about the Messiah, so believe.

Verse 16, this is the announcement to you about the Messiah, so believe.

Verse 17, again they have heard, so they should trust in the Messiah.

Verses 18-21; 11:5, not all have believed, but as in the past, some have endured and believed; all have the choice to believe; that has always been God's way.

Verse 11:1, God has not cast away Israel.

In Romans 10:4, Christ refers to Messiah, end can be translated goal as in other places in the Bible, and law could be translated as Torah. Therefore, Romans 10:4 could be translated, "The Messiah is the purpose (the goal) of the Torah toward (*eis* in the Greek) righteousness." One of the key words is "*eis*" in the verse which means toward something. In this case, toward righteousness should be understood as to live right, keep the law. 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." Keeping God's good commandments helps us in life. How do you live right? By keeping God's commandments.

Yochanan says that not keeping the law is sin and of the devil. 1 John 3:4 NJKV says, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness;". He goes on to say in verse 8, "He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning." Those who are teaching that the law is done away are of the devil according to John and that is also implied in the Epistle of James. Again, some say that it only by faith we are saved. James 2:19-20 NKJV says, "Even the demons believe – and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?"

The unbelieving rabbis also change God's words. For example, the ancient rabbis considered Isaiah 53 to be about the Messiah. Even Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah is an obvious symbol of the Messiah providing a sacrifice for us, but they reverse the scriptures in order to manipulate what they refer to. God provided a sacrifice on Mount Moriah instead of Isaac. Some rabbis say Isaiah 53 is about Israel. Some Christians reframe the entire Old Testament portion without Israel being part of it, but the entire Old Testament is mostly about Israel. It seems people have gone overboard with their man-made interpretations.

In this portion, we read about the amazing power of God and about Israel being set free so they could be free to keep God's commandments and serve God. In this era, we also have the opportunity to follow God if we so choose.

The Egyptians and Pharaoh were trusting in their false gods – the river god, the frog god etcetera. God brings the last three plagues on the Egyptians: locusts, darkness for three days, and death of the first born. In order for Israel to avoid their first born dying, they had to take a lamb or goat, kill it, put its blood on the lintel and door posts, and roast it and eat it. From then on, they were to remember Pesach every year on the 14th of Nisan at twilight and eat unleavened bread for the next 7 days.

It is important to remember.

Before we get to the details of this portion, the portion begins by telling us to remember what God did. I used to think that remembering was just about what God did back then and what He is still doing today. I have seen many miracles and have been healed a number of times.

But we should also remember that God cares about us and has given His people His good commandments and His good gift of the Holy Spirit to help us (see John 14:15-17). God also created everything that is and is therefore the provider of everything we need for life. We

learn about the goodness of God in both the Old Testament and New Testament portions. We need to remember to be thankful to God for all that He has done, is doing, and will do.

On a side note, there is a movement in the United States to defame what our country has stood for. So, some are reframing our country as an evil entity, but nothing is further from the truth. We should remember that our country was made to bring freedom and equality to its people and has done a lot to promote freedom around the world. I think over 100 nations have tried to put the principles of our country into practice because of the success we have had. Although it is not a perfect country, it has changed at times to create a better society.

Our country is unlike some countries that impose the Communist Religion on its people. I recently heard that the leaders of Russia years ago were stunned by our success. Countries that impose the Communist Religion on their people must subvert and kill those in their country who object to their government religion. Our country and its people try to make changes to keep our country free and make it a better place to live. Note that the term used by the Communist Religion, "equity to all" means we are all no different from one another and they impose that on their people so the people must conform or else. Equality means we are free to pursue good things and grow and mature, and we do not have to do it just the way the government tells us. Consider this, if we were all the same, then you would probably not object to a ditch digger doing surgery on you. We are equal but we do not all have the same drive and abilities. Having freedom and a free market promotes the freedom to be innovative and skilled. Those who believe in the Communist Religion are motivated to serve their government.

In this portion, God made locusts to cover the land and Pharaoh's servants told Pharaoh that he should let Israel go. Pharaoh briefly considers letting Israel go, but he relented and didn't let them go. Then God told Moshe to raise his hand toward the sky and there was darkness over the land for three days. It says in John 3:19 that mankind has preferred darkness and sin. There was light in the homes of the Israelites though. Isn't that amazing! That's where the light was; it was with and in the believing community. Then Pharaoh said they could go, but they had to leave their flocks. Exodus 10:24 NKJV says, "Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, "Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back." Moshe said they needed them, and Pharaoh changed his mind and told Moshe that they couldn't go and if he saw Moshe's face again, Moshe would die.

Note that in Exodus 10:24 that Pharaoh tells Moshe to go and serve Yē-hō-váh. Yē-hō-váh is the word translated LORD in that verse. It seems that Pharaoh has now recognized that Yē-hō-váh is God but we must understand that He has adopted Yē-hō-váh as one of the pagan gods that he believed in instead of the one true God. The Emperor Constantine of the Roman Empire appeared to do the same thing. He seems to have accepted the true God, but we see him dedicating a day of rest to the Sun god Mithras. People pose the question that if Constantine was a Christian, how could he also worship a pagan god. The answer is that he believed in lots of gods evidently like Pharaoh did.

In case you have not heard how Sunday worship began in Christianity here is the record:
On **the venerable Day of the sun** let the magistrates and people residing in

cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits: because it often happens that another Day is not so suitable for grain sowing or for vine planting: lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. (Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, volume 3 [Edinburgh: 1884]: page 380).

Christianity adopted the pagan day of the Sun god Mithras as its day of rest. Then, Christian philosophers needed to find a reason for changing the day of rest to Sunday and said it was the day Yeshua rose from the dead. The gospel of John has Mary Magdalene going to Yeshua's tomb and meeting Him there early the first day of the week. Early the first day of the week in Israel began on our Saturday evening in that era. The women go back to the tomb at or near sunrise our next day (still the first day of the week in Israel) in the other 3 gospels and Yeshua is no longer there. So, Yeshua rose from the dead on our Saturday before Mary Magdalene got there. The days at that time went from evening to morning like the scripture says in Genesis 1:5 NKJV, "So the evening and the morning were the first day." So, Yeshua actually rose on a Saturday. Also, Mark has both visits by Mary Magdalene. He first tells the story of the women coming at sunrise the next morning and then mentions that Mary Magdalene was the first to see Yeshua risen (see Mark 16:1-9).

Christianity continues to call Sunday a day of rest even though it is the day of the pagan Sun god. While Moshe is up on Mount Sinai getting the 10 Commandments from God, some in Israel engage in pagan ritual. We could say that God helped Israel to get out of Egypt, but some in Israel did not get Egypt out of their life. In the same way, Christianity for the most part has failed to get pagan practice out of their lives. God considers mixing pagan practice into our life as an abomination, namely, as disgusting.

Deuteronomy 12:30-31 NKJV says,

Take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every **abomination** to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

It is too bad Christianity does not listen to its good scholars.

Next is the death of the first born. It is then that Pharoah lets Israel leave Egypt. The Israelites were to ask for their neighbor's gold and silver, and it says the people were favorably disposed toward Israel and considered Moshe a great man. Israel was to begin their year on the month of Nisan every year and on the tenth of Nisan they were to select a lamb without defect in its first year. They were to kill it at dusk on the 14th of Nisan and observe Pesach (Passover) from the evening of the 14th to the evening of the 21st and also eat no chametz (leavened bread). **In order to keep God's feasts appropriately, we need to know the Jewish calendar** and when the Jewish months begin. The real first day of Jewish months is the reappearance of the Moon. The calendars of Israel are set calendars much like the pagan Gregorian calendar. Since they use a set calendar, they often show God's feasts on the wrong day. They can even be a couple of days off. The Gregorian calendar is a pagan

oriented calendar. It does not help us to know when to observe God's feasts. So, for God's feasts, we need to know when the Moon reappears and observe God's feasts on the correct date that the Bible says it is to be celebrated.

The Biblical Calendar is different than the Gregorian Calendar.

We are to guard God's feasts.

Exodus 12:24 NKJV says, "And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever." The word "observe" means to keep or guard; it is the Hebrew word *shamar*. We are to guard the Passover and God's feasts. They are God's *moedim* which means meetings. In Genesis 1:14, the word seasons is *moedim*. The lights in the heavens are to determine our meeting times with God. In Leviticus 23:1, *moedim* refers to God's feasts. So *moedim* in Genesis refers to God's feasts. The stars and moon were created in the sky for signs and so we could observe God's feasts. Shaul says we are to keep the Passover.

1 Corinthians 5:8 NKJV says, "Therefore let us **keep the feast**, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Shaul expects believers to be keeping the Passover and God's other meeting times that were instituted at creation; they were for believers in the past and they are still God's feasts. Shaul says "keep the feast." The Hebrew word for keep can mean either "keep" or "guard." We should not only be keeping God's feasts but guarding God's feasts.

On the first and last days of Unleavened Bread, they were to have a holy assembly, and they were to not work except to prepare food. There is typically a holy assembly for a Pesach meal. Exodus 12:16 NKJV says, "No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat —that only may be prepared by you." It is okay to prepare food for our families on Shabbat, but we shouldn't do any cumbersome laborious celebrations on Shabbat – that would be work. Don't do unnecessary work for yourself on Shabbat or do anything difficult. Also, they were to explain to their children that God spared their houses from the death of the first born.

We are allowed to do the necessary activities of life on God's Sabbaths.

Based on Exodus 12:16, we are allowed to prepare food and to eat on God's Sabbaths. This should include the things we need to do on a regular basis to sustain life, but no work, no talk about work or anything causing tension, especially nothing that is done as a job, a difficult project, or anything taxing or difficult unless it is to save life. No one is to work, not our children, servants, the stranger, or even our animals. We are to save life based on Hosea 6:6 NKJV which says, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice." Also, the Bible tells us that God's commandments give life. Talking about God's commandments, Proverbs 3:16-18 NKJV says, "**Length of days** is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. **She is a tree of life** to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her." The Sanhedrin (the ruling body in Jerusalem) had made up extra inappropriate laws to keep the people in line and in doing so made the people to work to keep God's Sabbaths.

They observed what Moshe told them to do, and they were to put the lamb or goat's blood on the doorposts and lintels. They were to roast it and eat it in a hurry with matza. The blood

on their homes was to mark the houses that God passes over and their first born would not die. That's why it is called the Passover. The Jews see salvation occurring on Pesach. Yeshua, whose name means salvation, gave Himself on Pesach some 1,447 years later after the first Pesach. Yeshua came to rescue us. Recent research places Israel leaving Egypt in 1447 BC and not 1305 or 1285 BC.

In the middle of the night, God allows the destroyer to kill all the first born of Egypt. The ancients considered the first born to be important. We see the believing line following true believers who followed God and not necessarily the first born. Being the first born doesn't make a person a believer. God plays no favorites the Bible says, believing and behaving like we believe pleases God. Authentic spiritual leaders follow God's commandments.

Pharaoh tells Moshe, Aharon, and the people of Israel to leave along with their herds. The people of Egypt gave the Israelites silver and gold jewelry and clothing and gave them whatever they requested. Israel went up from Ra'amses to Sukkot with 600,000 men. It was a mixed crowd, and they baked matza from the dough they brought from Egypt.

A mixed group refers to people from Egypt and other nations who joined Israel in faith as they left Egypt.

The mixed group (see Exodus 12:38) was perhaps about 2 million people when women and children are included. They left so they could be set free from the sinful idolatry of the Egyptians and serve God. God dealt with the idols of Egypt the Bible says in Exodus 12:12. They spent 430 years in Canaan and Egypt (215 in Canaan and 215 in Egypt – some say it is 210 and 220). It was 430 years to the day that they began their journey back to Canaan. God was giving them the land of Canaan because of the terrible sin in the land of the Canaanites; the pagans even sacrificed their children to the pagan gods.

We should note that believers in Messiah are also a mixed group. It seems the giving of the Holy Spirit returned the Jews to their own roots where all who accept the true God can be part of the believing community. A mixed group of Jews and Gentiles left Egypt, and the Gentiles were assimilated into Israel. It had to be both Jews and Egyptians because of the number of people who left Egypt. It would have been impossible for the Israelites to have had that many offspring in only 215 years. For example, the Bible tells us Caleb was not Jewish but was assimilated into the tribe of Judah. His genealogy is in the Bible. Numbers 32:12 NKJV says, "Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite." He became Israelite and he represented Judah as one of the twelve spies. He joined the tribe of Judah. The rabbis say "mixed group" means it was people who had different jobs. This obviously is not true. The rabbis also say Caleb was Jewish. This is obviously only true in the sense that he became Jewish. If people don't like what the Bible says, they change what it is saying or means. When we change God's word, we don't have God's word anymore.

The believers in Messiah too are a mixed group of Jews and Gentiles who are set free from sin by the Messiah. We should remember that it is through God's hand and sacrifice we become heirs of salvation through Yeshua. Just as Israel was set free from sin to serve God, we are also set free to live for Yēhōvāh. Yeshua's sacrificial act of humility resulted in God

giving the Holy Spirit so that the power of God would work in us through the Holy Spirit and help us live right. The Pesach meal foreshadows the time when the Messiah Yeshua gave up His life sacrificially for us so that we can be forgiven of our sins, live by the power of God, and obtain eternal life through the help of God's commandments and the Messiah.

Yeshua is referred to as God's lamb by Yochanan the Immerser.

The Jews back then clearly understood that the Messiah was to die for our sins as it prophesies in Isaiah 53 about the Messiah.

Israel had lived in Canaan and Egypt for 430 years to the day. No foreigner was to eat the Pesach lamb, but a circumcised servant could or a circumcised foreigner that lived in the land could. In John 1:29 CJB, it says that Yochanan identified Yeshua as our deliverer, as "God's lamb. "The next day, Yochanan saw Yeshua coming toward him and said, 'Look! God's lamb!"

They also were not to break any bones of the Pesach lamb. That is also a fulfillment of prophecy about our righteous Messiah Yeshua (see Psalm 34:19-20). The soldiers pierced Yeshua instead of breaking His bones. John 19:33-34 NKJV says, "They did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear." Zechariah 12:10 NKJV is a prophecy about Yeshua being pierced; "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn."

Yeshua was from the line of David. The Greek manuscripts **do not** show Yeshua being from the line of David. Some of the Hebrew manuscripts of Matthew 1 put Yeshua in the line of David. Often, the Greek manuscripts were corrected by the Hebrew manuscripts. For example, the story about the woman caught in adultery was **not** in the Greek manuscripts for hundreds of years but was finally put in John 8 because it was in the Hebrew manuscripts.

But not everything in the Greek manuscripts got corrected. Words in the Greek scriptures were changed to disassociate the Bible from its Jewishness or to even persecute the Jews. Yeshua was Jewish and so were all the early believers. We now have lots of Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament portion. The reason there are more Greek manuscripts is because the Roman empire secretly stole the early faith and made it illegal to have the Hebrew scriptures. They killed the early believers and burned the Hebrew manuscripts wherever they found them.

Their Greek manuscripts were intended to change the scriptures in order to disassociate the scriptures from their Jewish context by changing the meaning of some scriptures and commanding the people not to keep God's feasts. There are still people today who wrongly oppose the Hebrew New Testament manuscripts. They are those who follow in the footsteps of those who killed the early believers and burned the Hebrew scriptures of the New Testament. Because of this, when you tell people about the Hebrew scriptures of the New Testament make sure you qualify that by including the murder and persecution of the early believers, the replacement of true doctrine by the Roman Empire, and the burning of the Hebrew New Testament scriptures that took place by anti-Jewish so called Christians. Those

who commit murder in the name of their god do not follow what God says in the Bible and therefore they are not true Christians.

There are still people today who oppose the Hebrew origins of the Bible and persecute those who believe in the true God.

When Israel gets to their land, they were to set aside the firstborn men and animals and redeem the men; they could also redeem a donkey with a lamb. It would be a sign on their hand and frontlets between their eyes that God brought them out of Egypt with a mighty hand. This reference to a sign on their hands and frontlets between their eyes was never meant to be physically done as some say (by using a tefillin). That was something they were to do mentally. A phylactery or tefillin was not worn in Judaism until the first century AD.

The Haftarah for Bo is Jeremiah 46:13-28. This portion begins by saying that Egypt will be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; Babylon are more than locusts it says obviously referring to one of the ten plagues. Egypt will be handed over to Babylon. Israel also would have to suffer for their sin, but God promised to return Israel from their exile in Babylon.

We see a God in this portion who wants us to do what is right and He wants to restore His people. We see in the New Testament portion that God provides a way through the Messiah to also restore us to Him. In addition to God's commandments, we need the Messiah and the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us. Yeshua gave us the Torah and He gave us another helper, the Holy Spirit. John 14:15-17 NKJV, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth."

**Commandments, Implied Commandments, Permissions, and other Concepts.
(We can also understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible. There are other possible concepts than what is shared here.)**

We are to remember what God did. Remembering helps us understand that God is a good, caring, and loving God who wants what is best for us. Exodus 10:2.

Moshe and Aharon were obedient to God's revelation. We too need to be obedient to what God tells us to do.

The actual first Jewish month is the month of Nisan and not Tishri. Exodus 12:2.

We are allowed to prepare food on God's days of rest. Exodus 12:16.

The Feast of Passover is to be kept along with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The 14th at dusk, just before the 15th of Nisan is when the Passover ritual begins. Remember, in God's reckoning, the day begins in the evening; it says in Genesis 1:5, "Evening and the morning were the first day." The Passover meal extends into the 15th of Nisan which begins the Feast

of Unleavened Bread and is a day of rest and so is the 7th day, the 21st of Nissan. We are not to eat any leavened bread during this time. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is also referred to as the 1st through the 7th day of Passover by some. No foreigner or uncircumcised person is allowed to eat the Passover meal that begins on the 14th of Nissan. There is an exception to this. Adults who become believers do not have to be circumcised because of the danger involved with circumcision. The Torah teaches that we are to protect life and that supersedes other commands (see Deuteronomy 22:4 or Luke 14:5). Those who do not protect life are Torah breakers. Male children are to still be circumcised. Galatians 5:11 NKJV says, "I still preach circumcision." No bones were to be broken, and no meat is to be removed from the house. Exodus 12:14-20, 43-49, 13:6-10.

The first born of both man and animal is to be consecrated to God. Exodus 13:1, 12-16.

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 (יהָה).

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:

יבְּרַכְךָ יְהֹוָה, וַיִּשְׁמַרְךָ
יָאֵר יְהֹוָה פָּנָיו אֲלֵיכָ, וַיִּתְּבָנֵךְ

ישא יהוה פניו אליך, וישם לך שלום

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.