



**#18 Mishpatim Exodus 21:1-24:18
Torah Teaching
by Moshe Schwab**

Names

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

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets
 House – refers to a school or the Temple
 Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
 Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
 Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the
 Torah
 Mishpatim – the 18th Torah portion

The portion for this week is Mishpatim and it means, "judgments." This portion contains more laws. There are more laws than the 10 Commandments. All of God's laws are a demonstration of the goodness and the grace of God. Grace means favor and God's commandments are a blessing from God. I'd like to talk a little about God's goodness.

I would like to begin today by talking about that it is important to understand that God created the world in such a way as to provide for us. 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." God's commandments and the lessons of the Bible are also intended to provide for us just like His creation provides for us; God gave us instructions for life in the Bible.

Some see God's commandments as restrictions and not from a God who gave us commandments to help us. God's commandments are often called words of wisdom, knowledge or understanding in the Bible. This often quoted and important scripture is about God's good commandments. Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for **this is your wisdom and your understanding** in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'"

So, the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in these next verses are about God's commandments. Proverbs 2:10-11 NKJV says, "When **wisdom enters your heart**, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you; **understanding will keep you**, to deliver you from the way of evil." It is not the knowledge of science that this is talking about. Science is derived from observable facts. Anyone can observe and come to factual conclusions and apply them. For example, a long time ago people learned that objects fall to the earth. People then observed the behaviors of what they term gravity and learned how to use gravity. God's commandments keep us from doing evil because the creator God's

commandments help us to do what is right in life and are from an all-knowing God that cares about mankind. We talk about God's commandments given to us to help us in life a lot because people need to understand this.

The word translated preserve in Proverbs 2:11 can also mean to guard or keep. Having the discretion to know what is good or evil will preserve you and will guard you; God's commandments will keep you from the consequences that can come from doing evil.

God gave mankind His commandments to help us in life, and therefore God did not leave mankind alone to figure things out for ourselves. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." The word laws in this verse is the word Torah. Some people say Abraham did not keep the Torah, God's Old Testament commandments, but that is because people added man-made commandments to the Torah, so they think Abraham did not keep their extra man-made laws. It says emphatically that Abraham keep God's laws by using different words to describe that he kept the law. We should understand that the Torah, the Old Testament Law, was originally passed down through the the line of the ancient believers. Noah kept God's commandments. Genesis 6:9 NKJV says, "Noah was a just man, **perfect** in his generations. **Noah walked with God.**" Some say that Noah kept a different set of commandments but **to walk with God means to keep God's commandments**. Deuteronomy 5:33 NKJV says, "**You shall walk** in all the ways which the LORD your God **has commanded you**, that you may live and that it may be well with you." God is a good God and He gave mankind commandments from the inception of time that it might be well for us. So, God did not leave mankind without direction for life; God has not left mankind to be orphans the Bible says.

God gave us commandments to help us in life and God has also now in the Messianic age given those who believe in the Messiah Yeshua the Holy Spirit to help us with life.

John 14:15-18 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, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

So, Yeshua says that God gave us another helper. The **first is God's commandments** and **the other helper is the Holy Spirit**. We have talked about the Holy Spirit in some of our other teachings. It is **the power of God** at work in the lives of those who believe in the Messiah. Acts 1:8 NKJV says, "**You shall receive power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." This power is a witness to the power of God and His goodness just as the Old Testament Law is a witness of God's goodness towards mankind.

God's commandments and the Holy Spirit are intended to help us. Nehemiah 9:13 NKJV says about God, "And gave them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments." How many people understand that about God's commandments? God gave us authentic and credible principles, they are perfect and correct, and inform us on how to best carry out life. The same is true about the Holy Spirit. Also, Yeshua said about the Holy Spirit in Luke 11:13

NKJV, "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!" What God gives us is good. Ungodly worldly values are not credible, not correct, or not properly informed ways to carry out life. Some people think their own values are as good as God's advice, but they are misinformed. They may think they are God, but they are not. A person may think they are George Washington the first president of the United States, but they are not.

Yě-hō-váh (יהוה), is God's real name and He gives the Holy Spirit generously to those who seek it. The reason we talk about the Holy Spirit frequently is because it is God's generous and good gift to us just as His commandments are a generous and good gift. The first step in receiving the Holy Spirit is to repent of sin. Hebrews 6:1 calls them dead works because sin results in spiritual death. Romans 6:22-23 NKJV says, "But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you **have your fruit to holiness**, and the end, everlasting life. For the **wages of sin is death.**"

To be **holy** is to keep God's commandments. We are to be holy it said in Romans. 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.**" We will obtain everlasting life with our good God **if we act like His holy people** but if we do not repent and continue to sin, we will be spiritually dead because, "the wages of sin is death," and we will end up in the lake of fire. 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." Also see, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and Galatians 5:19-21.

After we repent of sin and accept the Messiah Yeshua, we can then ask to receive the Holy Spirit. 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." Yeshua tells us to ask for 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!

God's want us to be endued with the Holy Spirit. In Luke 24:49 NKJV Yeshua says, "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are **endued with power from on high.**" The word endued can also mean to be clothed. We are to look different to others because the power of the Holy Spirit is at work in us. Shaul tells us to desire the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit and it is a commandment of God. 1 Corinthians

14:1 NKJV says, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts." In the context Shaul says desiring the gifts of the Holy Spirit is a commandment of God. 1 Corinthians 14:37 NKJV says, "Let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord." So, if you are a believer in the Messiah Yeshua, ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

God pours out pure water, living water. God continues to give mankind good things. Romans 15:13 NKJV says, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may **abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**" We experience God through His good commandments and the work of Holy Spirit. When we keep God's commandments we often see the value and insight that God's commandments give us. The Psalmist understood this. Psalms 119:66-68 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."

God gives us good things because He is God and is a good God. God can also do supernatural things in the present like give us the gift of the Holy Spirit through which we can also see the goodness of God. Did not Israel experience God every day while they were in the Sinai wilderness after they left Egypt. God put a cloud during the day and fire at night over the Mishkan (the Tabernacle) every day and also fed them manna and gave them water. In the same way, the Holy Spirit can be an amazing experience. Acts 1:8 NKJV says, "**You shall receive power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."

John 7:38 NKJV says, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." Many believe this to be the gift of speaking in tongues through the Holy Spirit. **God gave us this gift to give us rest.** Isaiah 28:11-12 NKJV says, "For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, to whom He said, 'This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest,' and, 'This is the refreshing;' Yet they would not hear." The spiritual gift of speaking in tongues is also praise to God. 1 Corinthians 14:17 NKJV says, "For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified." This gift is not intended for others but to give thanks and rest, as well as to give us faith and a number of other things according to the Bible. We are to give God the sacrifice of praise. This scripture in Hebrews seems to be an obvious reference to speaking in tongues. Hebrews 13:15 NKJV says, "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name."

It is good to give thanks to our good God. Psalms 107:21-22 NKJV says, "Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing." Speaking in tongues is a good way to do that according to the scriptures. Some misuse this gift and they will not go unpunished. 1 Corinthians 14:39-40 NKJV says, "Do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order." Speaking in tongues and God's gifts are to be used appropriately, decently, and in order. It is important to think of God's gift of the Holy Spirit and the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit as good and from a good God. After all, Shaul considered it important to give thanks to God by speaking in tongues. 1 Corinthians 14:18 NKJV says, "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all."

We do not know how long we have. The darkness abounds in this world. We need to accept what God is giving us while we can. Matthew 24:6-8 NKJV says, "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." Yeshua said these things will happen but there will be an end time sometime in the future.

2 Peter 3:8-13 NKJV says,

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 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.

There are some people who think that they know how all will come to an end but in reality, only God knows. Some think it will be a great war on earth and others think that everything melting refers to the earth warming. Perhaps a nearby star will explode and destroy the earth. It says that God will create a new heavens and earth. So, what is going to happen, a war, global warming, or something else? Matthew 24:35-36 NKJV says, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only." Yeshua said that our current heaven and earth will pass away but no one knows when that is. There is no use in thinking that anyone has the answers to this question. The important thing is that we have been given the opportunity of a lifetime to be in God's future kingdom. Also, there are still things that need to occur before the end times.

There are a lot of people selling a lot of different ideas on life. They think they know all the answers, but what is important to understand? God has given us His kindness and truth. We may think that things will not change but they can. I used to talk about how the country of Yugoslavia, which existed for over 70 years, fractured into six separate nations in just a short period of time. It did not seem possible to me, but that is how fast things can change sometimes. Do not follow made up ideas on how to follow God, political or ethnic concepts, other religious systems, or philosophies on life etcetera. Follow God and be satisfied with God's concepts for a good life, His commandments, and His truths.

Often, people do not understand how to repent of their sin. The Bible says that we need to make a sacrifice for the things we did in ignorance at the Temple. So, how do we do that in this special Messianic age before the coming of the final Messianic kingdom? What are some of the details we need to understand? Historically, we know the Sanhedrin took over the Temple and threw Ya'akov (also known as James) off the Temple and killed him. It was at this time that it has been speculated that the Messianic believers were prevented from making sacrifices for their sins done in ignorance. They were also prevented from giving thank offerings. We know that the Temple still wasn't destroyed yet when this all happened because the book of Hebrews was written before the Temple was destroyed. Sin done in ignorance is still sin and it required a sacrifice at the Temple before this present temporary Messianic age.

Leviticus 5:17-19 NKJV says,

If a person sins, and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD, though he does not know it, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity. And he shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance in which he erred and did not know it, and it shall be forgiven him. It is a trespass offering; he has certainly trespassed against the LORD.

There was always a sacrificial system in place. We see Job making sacrifices for his children before the Temple was built. It is thought that the book of Job predated the Torah. As we have talked about many times, the ancient believers passed down God's commandments verbally. For example, Abraham kept all of God's commandments. They were written down for the first time at Mount Sinai. Both Christianity and Judaism hides this fact with their made-up theology. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." The word laws is the word Torah which stands for all of God's commandments. We see this verse emphatically tells us that Abraham kept the Torah. The theology that Abraham did not keep the Torah is wrong.

Sins done in ignorance are still sins so when we realize we have broken any of God's commandments we must repent, be sorry for our sin, stop sinning, and confess that sin to God and we will be forgiven through the Messiah Yeshua. God made a way for us through the Messiah to be forgiven. The book of Hebrews was written and then translated into Greek by Luke to help the Messianic believers to understand that Yeshua gave Himself for our sins done in ignorance. Because the Temple still stood, God prepared a way prophetically for us to be forgiven through the Messiah Yeshua. Hebrews 10:9-10 NKJV says, "He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

What about the sacrifices of thanksgiving. 1 Corinthians 14:17-18 NKJV says, "For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all." It also stands to reason that we can give thanks to God in our native tongue. 1 Corinthians 14:15 NKJV says, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." Just like we can pray in speaking in tongues, give thanks in tongues, and sing in tongues, we can also

do that in our own language. The gift of speaking in tongues is prayer and praise to God (and some other things), and we can give thanks well by accepting and using this gift in such a way that honors God. 1 Corinthians 14:39-40 NKJV says, "Do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order." Speaking in tongues is to be done decently and in order in the presence of others. These are commandments of God regarding the use of the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. We should understand that Shaul is especially talking about speaking in tongues in the context, but that should also include the proper use of the other gifts. Those who misuse God's gifts will be held accountable and must ask for forgiveness for misusing them.

The whole reason I bring this up is to point out an important verse in Hebrews. Hebrews 13:13-15 NKJV says, "Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." This could be referring to Messianic believers of that time being able to give thanks just like Shaul said he did, Shaul thanked God he spoke in tongues "more than you all." They could not go to the Temple any more to give thank offerings, but were kept "outside the camp." This would have also prepares the early believers in the Messiah Yeshua for the destruction of the Temple.

I should also talk about the sins committed with full knowledge they were wrong. We must also repent, be sorry for our sin, stop sinning, and confess that sin to God and we will be forgiven. There is no forgiveness without a turning away from our sin. Each time we sin in this way, we must be completely repentant, and we will then be forgiven. This is an example of that kind of repentance. King David had committed a deliberate sin, and this is what he did. Notice that God requires a true turning away from the sin and not a sacrifice. Sin done in ignorance required a sacrifice.

Psalms 51:1-17 NKJV says,

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight – that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.

For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are **a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart -- these, O God, You will not despise.**

I will repeat this section in our Torah study after the difficult topic of abortion for those who went directly to the Torah study.

God created the world in such a way as to provide for us. Psalms 145:16 NKJV says, "You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing." God has also provided His good commandments. And, in this present Messianic age, God has provided the Holy Spirit to help us in life. The end will come, and things can change fast, but do not be fooled by those who preach dooms day doctrines. Use good sense, do not jump to conclusions quickly, and most of all, stay faithful to God and His good commandments.

Torah Study

Mishpatim means, "judgments" and this portion contains more laws. There are a few hundred applicable laws in the Torah. There are more than 10 commandments. In this portion, our loving God was giving them laws they needed for life. They were being reminded to live a new and good life through God's commandments that was passed down to them by Abraham (see Genesis 26:5) and given again at Mount Sinai. Just like Israel lived a changed life through God, we are to live a changed life through God's commandments and the Messiah Yeshua.

Mishpatim begins with the laws regarding a Hebrew male slave. He is to be set free after six years and his wife with him unless his wife was given him by his master. The slave may choose to remain under his master. A daughter who is sold as a slave if married to her master must be treated well and if not, she is to be set free. If married to the master's son, she should be treated as a daughter. If divorced she cannot be sold to a foreigner, and she can be redeemed. We should remember that slavery for Israel was not like the abusive slavery of our world. If they were mistreated, they would be set free. The slaves were to be treated well and set free after 6 years. A slave could choose to work for their masters indefinitely. Shaul says that he has chosen to be a slave, for the Messiah Yeshua in Romans 1:1.

We can learn something about how they applied these laws from the ancient Jewish writings. Jewish slaves were mostly what we call indentured servants. They could have been paying off the debt that they owed the person, they could be paying off the debt from theft they had done, or other debt. The poor also would become slaves for room and board.

*The United States gave everyone equal rights,
so, it is not a caste system or rule by only the privileged.*

Slavery in the United States.

I share this to show how sinful ownership slavery started in the United States, who the participants were, and the issue at stake. It is history, nothing else. In The American Story by David Barton, He says that wrongful slavery began in the United States with a Black slave owner in 1654 by the name of Anthony Johnson who went to court and won his case for

slavery. He eventually owned many slaves and owned 250 acres. Before then, there were mostly only indentured servants, and they were set free after they had served for a period of time when their debt was paid off.

Only 3% of the world's slaves went to the United States. So, 97% of the world was engaged in slavery more so than the United States. Also, there were many slave owners in the Southern United States who were black. So not all slave owners were White or Indian. Many Indians also had slaves. In 1830, a Black historian by the name of Carter Woodson did a study and found that 43% of free black households in South Carolina owned slaves. Almost half of the black households had slaves! The United States gave everyone equal rights from its inception. Ownership type slavery developed in the South backed by the Democratic party.

Although the Democratic party seems to stand up for the rights of the people, they often engage in political power grabs to enslave society to their ideals instead of helping people to live right. The Ku Klux Klan was started by the Democratic party back in the 1800s as a terrorist effort to keep this ungodly slavery going. Even to this day, the Democratic party in the United States supports giving out money to people that keeps them poor. The people living off the government lose their incentive to work and instead of working, they must continue to live off the state.

Lincoln was a Republican and not a Democrat. The civil war in the United States was fought to free slaves who were being mistreated. The original settlers of the North were mostly white people who believed in the Bible and did not believe people should be treated as property. Instead, they believed in working for themselves. The people in the South held incorrectly to the idea that the Bible taught that slaves could be mistreated **merely as property**. The Bible does not teach the kind of slavery the South practiced.

As we can see, there is more to the story of slavery than some so flippantly give us. Also, prejudice was practiced toward every people group no matter whether White minorities, Irish, Jewish, Black, or other various people groups. People groups often overcame their stigma by living as good citizens. Like other people groups, Jews often had to form their own settlements because of prejudice, and they provided their own services for each other in order to get by. Sometimes their services were used outside of their community. The problem of unjust slavery was eventually corrected in the United States because the system of government in the United States allowed the people to correct problems within the system and not keep them going.

This portion goes on; the person who kills someone is to be put to death unless it was an accident. If a person attacks or curses their mother or father, or is a kidnapper they are to be put to death. Notice that kidnapping is considered a serious crime, and the death penalty is incurred. Any religion that practices kidnapping is a false religion according to the Bible. Also, this cursing of their mother or father could not be just spurious occasional words, but some form of abuse or the use of God's name in a curse or a form of witchcraft. A curse in the form of witchcraft is punishable by death according to Exodus 22:18. Also, as far as we know it, no Jewish child was ever put to death for cursing their parents. The Jewish writings also say that children must have attacked and injured their parents. There must be grounds for being put to

death. Also, a person who injures someone is to care for them until they are well. A person is to be put to death for killing his slave. The Hebrew word for retribution for murder means to put to death. A person is to be put to the death for causing the death of an unborn child; again, the word in the Hebrew is for that is retribution.

A note about abortion.

This is a difficult topic for many because of the differing opinions and the mistranslation of the following scriptures. The NKJV got it right. The Bible enforces a death penalty on those who cause the death of an unborn child.

Exodus 21:22-25 NKJV says,

If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. **But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life,** eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

The Hebrew word for harm in this verse according to Strong's Dictionary means: "evil, mischief, harm, hurt." If a fetus aborts, the death penalty is required, "life for life." The penalty is just as severe as someone who commits premeditated murder. Perhaps even more so because in some cases, accidental death of a fetus results in the putting to death of the assailant. In some other translations, this scripture appears to be deliberately mistranslated.

Forgiveness.

I want to digress to the subject of forgiveness because God will forgive us our sins if we repent, are sorry for our sin, stop sinning, and confess that sin to God. Often, people do not understand what it means to repent of their sin. Also, the Bible says that we need to make a sacrifice for the things we did in ignorance at the Temple. So, how do we do that in this special Messianic age before the coming of the final Messianic kingdom? What are some of the details we need to understand? Historically, we know the Sanhedrin took over the Temple and threw Ya'akov (also known as James, the 1/2 brother of Yeshua) off the Temple and killed him. It was at this time that it is believed that the Messianic believers were prevented from making sacrifices for their sins done in ignorance. They were also prevented from giving thank offerings. We know that the Temple still wasn't destroyed yet when this all happened because the book of Hebrews was written before the Temple was destroyed. Sin done in ignorance is still sin and it required a sacrifice at the Temple before this present temporary Messianic age.

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talked about many times, the ancient believers passed down God's commandments verbally. For example, Abraham kept all of God's commandments. They were written down for the first time at Mount Sinai. Both Christianity and Judaism hides this fact with their made-up theology. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." The word laws is the word Torah which stands for all of God's commandments. We see this verse emphatically tells us that Abraham kept the Torah. The theology that Abraham did not keep the Torah is wrong.

Sins done in ignorance are still sins, so when we realize we have broken any of God's commandments we must repent, be sorry for our sin, stop sinning, and confess that sin to God and we will be forgiven through the Messiah Yeshua. I should note that confessing to another person is not confessing your sin to God. God made a way for us through the Messiah to be forgiven. The book of Hebrews was written and then translated into Greek by Luke to help the Messianic believers understand that Yeshua gave Himself for our sins done in ignorance. Because the Temple still stood, God prepared a way prophetically for us to be forgiven through the Messiah Yeshua. Hebrews 10:9-10 NKJV says, "He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

What about the sacrifices of thanksgiving? 1 Corinthians 14:17-18 NKJV says, "For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all." It also stands to reason that we can give thanks to God in our native tongue. 1 Corinthians 14:15 NKJV says, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." Just like we can pray in speaking in tongues, give thanks in tongues, and sing in tongues, we can also do that in our own language. The gift of speaking in tongues is prayer and praise to God (and some other things), and we can give thanks well by accepting and using this gift in such a way that honors God. 1 Corinthians 14:39-40 NKJV says, "Do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order." Speaking in tongues is to be done decently and in order in the presence of others. These are commandments of God regarding the use of the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. We should understand that Shaul is especially talking about speaking in tongues in the context, but that should also include the proper use of the other gifts. Those who misuse God's gifts will be held accountable and must ask for forgiveness for misusing them.

The whole reason I bring this up is to point out an important verse in Hebrews. Hebrews 13:13-15 NKJV says, "Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." This could be referring to Messianic believers of that time being able to give thanks just like Shaul said he did, Shaul thanked God he spoke in tongues, "more than you all." They could not go to the Temple any more to give thank offerings, but were kept "outside the camp." This would have also prepared the early believers in the Messiah Yeshua for the destruction of the Temple.

I should also talk about sins committed with full knowledge the sin was wrong. We must also repent, be sorry for our sin, stop sinning, and confess that sin to God and we will be forgiven. There is no forgiveness without a turning away from our sin. Each time we sin in this way, we must be completely repentant, and we will then be forgiven. This is an example of that kind of repentance. King David had committed a deliberate sin, and this is what he did to ask for forgiveness. Notice that God requires a true turning away from the sin and not a sacrifice. Sin done in ignorance required a sacrifice.

Psalms 51:1-17 NKJV says,

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight – that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, **a broken and a contrite heart – these, O God, You will not despise.**

God will blot out your sin if you are truly sorry and repentant. Psalms 103:10-13 NKJV says, "He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him." This is an important topic to understand and so is the issue of abortion.

Back to the topic of abortion.

There are very few just reasons for putting a fetus to death. People will have to stand before God for what they do and explain themselves to God. Surely, aborting a child for birth control is wrong. Abortion for conveniences sake is wrong. Children in the womb are human beings in their most needy state; it is the same for babies who would not survive without someone caring for them. They need to be protected and taken care of. Taking their lives through abortion is murder unless the mother could die. In that case it is permitted to save a life if both would die. Yeshua talks about the importance of saving life in Luke 14:5 NKJV which says, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" Even saving the life of an animal is important and so much more a human being.

The ancient rabbis said that life must be protected even if the priest was making a sacrifice, he needed to stop and save the life. Yoma 85b says, "To preserve a life, e.g., if the priest can testify to the innocence of one who is sentenced to death, one removes him even from on top of My altar, even while he is sacrificing an offering."

Saving a life can also be applied to the great emotional trauma that comes through rape. It can be done to save the mother's life in the case of great emotional trauma. There is never an insignificant reason where abortion is right. Abortion is not a matter of personal preference as in "my body."

Appropriate retribution must be made, as an eye for an eye relative to the damage. It was always understood that "eye for an eye" would be some sort of equal proper remuneration for damages depending on what happened. That is the understanding of the scripture "eye for an eye." Exodus 21:23-25 NKJV says, "But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound." It was never understood that we are to actually put out someone's eye as retribution. Some people don't know what they are talking about. Life for life obviously refers to the penalty incurred for committing some form of murder as in the murder of a fetus.

The Mishna and the Talmud are not God's word as some treat them. They should be thought of as commentaries.

Differing opinions in Jewish thought.

Some things in the Talmud are extreme. The rabbis had differing opinions. For example, the house (school) of Hillel taught if a person had stolen a beam, they should make remuneration. The house of Shammai taught that the house had to be torn down and the beam removed and given back. The Jewish writings were commentaries and not God's word. They may have some good things to say, but they are not God's word as some treat them. In this case, I think the house of Hillel had a better approach. If it was an expensive beam, the reparation would be higher than that of a less expensive beam.

I should say something about the Talmud at this time. The Talmud is a commentary put together by rabbis that some Jews consider to be biblical truths, but they are not. At times they have good advice, but advice is not a commandment of God. Sometimes they are a proper application of the Torah, but just like any commentary, we must weigh what they have to say with what the Bible says and get our best sense of understanding from the scriptures. The Jerusalem Talmud was written around 350 AD, and the Babylonian Talmud was written around 500 AD.

Moshe did not say to put a fence around the Torah with extra commandments.

The Bible says you are not to add improperly to God's commandments, so the thousands of extra commands made primarily by the Sanhedrin are frequently wrong applications of the Torah or just their personal beliefs. The Sanhedrin made up rules so they would know how to

apply God's commandments and how to judge, but that included extra misapplied laws. Pirkei Avot 1:1 (Chapters of the Fathers) says that Moshe and Joshua told us to put a fence around the Torah – namely, through extra laws. **Moshe said just the opposite.** Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." Isaiah said that the extra man-made laws that the Sanhedrin came up with were causing people to follow man instead of God. Isaiah 29:13 NKJV says, "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed **their hearts far from Me**, and their fear toward Me is taught by **the commandment of men.**"

The many misapplied commandments of mainstream Christianity are also wrong. For example, God told us to keep His feasts. Leviticus 23:2 NKJV says, "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." God said they are His feasts, and some mere humans say they are not. Who is right? They do not fear God. Malachi 3:5-6 says, "Because they do not fear Me, 'Says the LORD of hosts.' For I am the LORD, **I do not change.**" God does not change; they are still His feasts. These false leaders fear that people will reject them instead of following God correctly. Religion often explains away truth. Let us do our best to keep God's commandments properly.

The death penalty.

As we have mentioned at other times, the reason for the death penalty is to prevent murder. Numbers 35:33 NKJV, "So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it." People who oppose the death penalty cause that nation to be polluted (defiled) by murder. A country that acts unjustly in the way it operates is not a just country.

We continue with the portion; a slave is to be set free as compensation for personal injury from their master. An ox that gored someone is to be killed and not eaten. If has been known to gore, the owner will be put to death too; or the owner can be redeemed. Retribution should be made for a slave that is gored. A person is to make retribution for the loss of another's animal. A person that steals an animal is to make retribution even if the animal is recovered. Remember, retribution is to be done according to the offense. We are mentioning some of the commandments in this portion and not all of them.

A thief caught in the act at night that is killed is not considered murder. A person is to make restitution for another person's loss that they have caused. If a dispute arises over the ownership of an animal, they are to come before God and the one found not to own the animal will pay double. I remember my dad being flustered over our neighbors not returning things he lent them. Perhaps they should have paid double for not returning them. At the very least they should have given my dad something extra to show their appreciation. That could be a good application of the Torah.

If something happens to an animal that is being cared for by another and it is not stolen, then the owner can swear it was not his fault. If it is his fault, he should make restitution unless he

had paid a usage fee. A man who seduces someone who is not engaged must pay retribution – the bride price. He may marry her unless not accepted. There are a number of laws in the Bible that protect women. A sorceress, someone who has sexual relations with an animal, or someone who sacrifices to another god is to be put to death.

They are not to abuse or oppress foreigners, widows, or orphans. It should be noted that in some countries, they consider some people to be a burden, and they will mistreat them. We are not to oppress others, especially those who are most vulnerable. I remember someone telling me that Israel oppressed Gaza. It was just the opposite. Gaza would send rockets into Israel and Israel would send food and supplies into Gaza to help them. Gaza's mission is to kill others and Israel's mission is to help those in need anywhere there is need. Israel sends people all over the world to help those in need.

They were not to charge the poor interest. If they take someone's clothes as collateral, they are to restore them the same day. They are not to curse God or their leader, they were not to delay their offerings, their firstborn sons and animals belonged to God, they were not to eat dead animals, and perjury is wrong. They are not to pervert justice, they were to return what belongs to others, and to help others regardless of their feelings for them. Fraud is wrong and so is the oppression of the innocent, oppression of the righteous, and oppression of foreigners.

The issue of bribery.

Bribery is wrong. This is another example of the Bible standing up for justice. A number of countries remain poor because of bribery. Those in power control the resources of that country through bribery and keep that dishonest system going. Those with more money can also take advantage of those who cannot afford to bribe. That is another form of oppression. I remember my one friend telling me that in one country he was in, there were people at keys places taking bribes in order to allow people to proceed to where they were going. It is also a form of stealing and breaks the 8th commandment, "You shall not steal."

In the seventh year, the land is to be fallow, they are to keep Shabbat, they are not to talk about other gods, and they are to keep the three feasts (of Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot). They are to follow the rules for the feasts; they were not bow down to other gods. If they obey God, He will protect and bless them. They were not to boil a goat in its mother's milk is a reference to a fertility ritual done by the Canaanites. Some say it was not, but there is evidence that it was a pagan ritual. Why would this command be so specific? It has nothing to do with not eating meat with milk. Since this is mentioned more than once (Exodus 23:19, 34:26; Deuteronomy 14:21), the rabbis said there must be a reason, so they made up an inappropriate extra man-made law about not eating meat with milk.

In this portion, God says He will send the His angel before Israel. Joshua meets the angel of Yēhōvāh in Joshua 5:13-15, and he is told to take off his shoes because it is holy ground. Moshe met God (Exodus 3:4) in the burning bush and is told to take off his shoes because it is holy ground. Messianic believers believe that God's angel that goes before Israel is Yēhōvāh in the form of the preincarnate Yeshua.

Moses then reads the covenant to the people, offers a sacrifice, and sprinkles the people with blood. Moses and the elders then ascend the mountain, and they all see God and they eat before Him; **His feet are standing** on blue sapphire. So, God appears as a man before all the elders of Israel and Moshe. Moshe then goes up the mountain for 40 days and nights to receive the tablets with the commandments from God. There is a lot more that can be covered from the portion.

There is so much that you can apply from the law.

Respect everyone.

Trust in God and His food laws first before trusting in food fads or diets.

Keep the day of rest on the right day, Friday at sunset to Saturday at sunset.

Perhaps we should have insurance so we can make quick restitution for accidents.

Be careful not to cheat others; it is a form of stealing.

Try to return anything of value that others have lost.

Have honest weights and measures.

These in themselves are important for society. And there is much much more. The New Testament portion has some 1,053 applications of the Torah in it from which we can learn, but watch out for scriptures that were modified by heretics to say the law is done away with. For example, the Hebrew James says the Torah of the Examiner and the heretic Greek says law of liberty. Just one word can change the meaning of a verse. In this case the word liberty was added by heretics.

There is so much value in following God's commandments. There are 53 commandments in this portion. This portion begins with various rules or commandments. Rules for slaves, murder, abusing parents, reparation and restitution, accidents, self-protection, some sexual sins, not oppressing others, treatment of other believers, giving of the first born to God, dietary laws, lying and perjury, returning property, bribery is wrong. We are to only work six days and rest on seventh, on Shabbat. We should note that a number of these laws are not mentioned in the New Testament portion; some say they can be implied by spurious statements in the New Testament. Without the Tanakh we do not have a complete or best understanding of how to live right.

*We need the Torah to treat
others properly and lovingly.*

For example, bribery which is mentioned in this portion is not mentioned in the New Testament portion. We know that bribery subverts justice and is wrong. We need the full revelation of the Bible as instructions for life. Some people say we only need the New Testament, but they are mistaken. The New Testament portion is based on the Old Testament portion of the Bible. The New Testament does not include all the pertinent laws for life because they already had the Old Testament to refer to. They did not need to be rewritten.

It says in Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV about God's Old Testament laws, "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.'" Perhaps some of these laws do not apply in our culture. We should take some time to think about how these laws might be applied in our modern times and how they could apply to us. I was taught some of these laws as a child and learned how to apply them. Many of these laws are important for a peaceful society. Keeping the law is the proper way to treat and love others. God says He will judge those who break His laws because they are bringing pain and trouble into this world. Isaiah 61:8 NKJV says, "For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery."

The Haftarah for Mishpatim is Jeremiah 34:8-22; 33:25-26. We read here essentially that just as God has established day and night, He will bring back Israel to their land and show them compassion. God could have used another way to describe bringing back Israel to their land, but in using "day and night" we can say that the passage definitely alludes to the idea of something permanent in the future; and perhaps that final future time is drawing near.

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.)

Laws regarding servants. Exodus 21:2-11.

If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing. If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever. "And if a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. If she does not please her master, who has betrothed her to himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt deceitfully with her. And if he has betrothed her to his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters. If he takes another wife, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights. And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out free, without paying money.

Laws regarding violence. Exodus 21:12-27

"He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death. However, if he did not lie in wait, but God delivered him into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place where he may flee. "But if a man acts with premeditation against his neighbor, to kill him by treachery, you shall take him from My altar, that he may die. "And he who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. "He who kidnaps a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall surely be put to death. "And he who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. "If men contend with each other, and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist, and he does not die but is confined to his bed, if he rises again and walks about outside with his staff,

then he who struck him shall be acquitted. He shall only pay for the loss of his time, and shall provide for him to be thoroughly healed. "And if a man beats his male or female servant with a rod, so that he dies under his hand, he shall surely be punished. Notwithstanding, if he remains alive a day or two, he shall not be punished; for he is his property. "If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

"If a man strikes the eye of his male or female servant, and destroys it, he shall let him go free for the sake of his eye. And if he knocks out the tooth of his male or female servant, he shall let him go free for the sake of his tooth.

Laws concerning animal regulation. Exodus 21:28-36

"If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall surely be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be acquitted. But if the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to his owner, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death. If there is imposed on him a sum of money, then he shall pay to redeem his life, whatever is imposed on him. Whether it has gored a son or gored a daughter, according to this judgment it shall be done to him. If the ox gores a male or female servant, he shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned. "And if a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls in it, the owner of the pit shall make it good; he shall give money to their owner, but the dead animal shall be his. "If one man's ox hurts another's, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the money from it; and the dead ox they shall also divide. Or if it was known that the ox tended to thrust in time past, and its owner has not kept it confined, he shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal shall be his own.

Laws regarding property. Exodus 22:1-15

"If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep. If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed. If the sun has risen on him, there shall be guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double. "If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. "If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, standing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution. "If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbor's goods. "For any kind of trespass, whether it concerns an ox, a donkey, a sheep, or clothing, or for any kind of lost thing which another claims to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whomever the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor. If a man delivers to his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt, or driven away, no one seeing it, then an oath of the LORD shall be between them both,

that he has not put his hand into his neighbor's goods; and the owner of it shall accept that, and he shall not make it good. But if, in fact, it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner of it. If it is torn to pieces by a beast, then he shall bring it as evidence, and he shall not make good what was torn. "And if a man borrows anything from his neighbor, and it becomes injured or dies, the owner of it not being with it, he shall surely make it good. If its owner was with it, he shall not make it good; if it was hired, it came for its hire.

Moral and miscellaneous observances. Exodus 22:16-31

"If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins. "You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

"Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death. "He who sacrifices to any god, except to the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed. "You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. "You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. "If you lend money to any of My people who are poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest. If you ever take your neighbor's garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down. For that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin. What will he sleep in? And it will be that when he cries to Me, I will hear, for I am gracious. "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people. "You shall not delay to offer the first of your ripe produce and your juices. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me. Likewise you shall do with your oxen and your sheep. It shall be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me. "And you shall be holy men to Me: you shall not eat meat torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

Laws regarding fairness. Exodus 23:1-9

"You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice. 3 You shall not show partiality to a poor man in his dispute. "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it. "You shall not pervert the judgment of your poor in his dispute. Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked. And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous. "Also you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Law of times of rest. Exodus 23:10-12

"Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove. Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed.

Do not talk about the pagan gods. Exodus 23:13

"And in all that I have said to you, be circumspect and make no mention of the name of other gods, nor let it be heard from your mouth."

Laws regarding keeping the three feasts. Exodus 23:14-19

"Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field. "Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD. "You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor shall the fat of My sacrifice remain until morning. The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.

Do not do the things that pagans do regarding their gods. Exodus 23: 19

"You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk." This is something the pagans did. It was a fertility ritual.

Do not provoke the angel of God that is being sent into the land with Israel. Exodus 23:20-21

"Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him."

Do not bow down to idols or serve them. Break them apart. Exodus 23:24-25

"You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works; but you shall utterly overthrow them and completely break down their sacred pillars. So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water."

Do not make covenants with pagans and they are not to live in Israel. Exodus 23:32-33

"You shall make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me."

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

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

Yě-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Yě-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace. Amen.

Thank you for being with us today.