



Seek God's Blessing and Be at Peace
by Moshe Schwab
(A Teaching to Accompany the Torah Portion Toldot, 2020)

Names

Esav – Esau
 Hevron – Hebron
 Ya'akov – Jacob
 Kefa – Peter
 Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ in the Greek means to be smudged – anointed
 Moshe – Moses
 Rivkah – Rebecca
 Shaul – Paul
 Yeshua – Jesus' real name
 Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)

Yitz'chak – Isaac
 Yochanan – John

Terms

Chayei Sarah – 5th Torah portion
 Haftarah – reading from the prophets
 Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
 Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
 Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah

The fact that God told Rivkah that Ya'akov should get the blessing should have been enough for Yitzchak to give Ya'akov the blessing and not Esav. Perhaps, God told her again and that's why she had Ya'akov fool Yitzchak. It seems that Yitzchak didn't want to adhere to the word that Rivkah heard from God because he liked that Esav was a hunter.

Ya'akov had to flee for his life after taking the blessing and on the way, he makes a commitment to God. He says if God will bring him back safely, he will accept God. How many of us have made deals with God? Make sure you keep your end of the agreement just like Ya'akov did. God not only kept His part with Ya'akov, but God made Ya'akov a great and influential person because Ya'akov kept his part of the agreement. Esav was only interested in worldly things so the promise to bless the world ended up coming through Ya'akov. Ya'akov represents the person who was spiritually minded, and Esav the person who is worldly minded.

Seek God's word and what is right and good; be blessed. (Having a worldly view keeps us from having a heavenly view).

What does it mean to seek God's word? We can go to YouTube and search for teachings on the Bible and listen to someone's idea on what the Bible says. Sometimes they are teaching truth, but there are some who don't. Don't be like them; they are just making things up and leading people the wrong way. I went to a church years ago where the pastor taught his personal good advice. Some of it wasn't so good. Personal advice is not all that bad, but we want biblical truth.

Some teachers use a scripture to launch into a teaching on their personal advice. Some teach interpretations from books they are reading. There are some talented teachers out there. Also, some churches or congregations rely on entertainment to draw people in. I have gone

to some places that really don't teach very much and they rely mostly on sensationalism to draw people there. Some get people wound up on lies that are made up. I talked to this one person years ago who went to a mega church; he said they don't share much, but they are doing a great job of drawing people there. Then strangely he said they know their Bible. He thought that by drawing people there, his church was giving them the opportunity to grow spiritually. I know we are each responsible to grow up spiritually, but aren't we supposed to learn something or be encouraged to follow God while we are at congregation?

Do we go to congregation just to learn opinions?

What do you think about that? Do you just want entertainment. I've been at some congregations where they are taught interesting information. I've even had people tell me they were encouraged by all the non-scriptural nonsense they were learning.

What do you think of that?

- Some go to congregation just to socialize.
- Some go just in case there is a God.
- Some actually want to learn and grow.

There is often something that draws us to where we are attending. For myself, I don't want good advice; I can read Don't Sweat the Small Stuff and skip listening to someone tell me about their personal experiences. I don't want to get my ears tickled with catchy phrases and jokes (or for that matter with tons of interesting information that does nothing for my spiritual life); sure it's great to hear interesting points and have a laugh occasionally. Will God say to me on judgment day, on judgment day, "Were you seeking my truths or someone's good ideas?" We are to be diligent to learn how to live right.

Shaul said in 2 Timothy 2:15-17, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. 2 Timothy 2:15-17 NKJV. I used to take notes on my pastor's babbling. I was hungry for God and they were teaching me their personal advice. Advice can be good; but aren't we going somewhere to actually grow spiritually? By the way, the pastor who used to teach his personal advice said he believed in the Bible, so don't be deceived by that. What are they doing? Didn't Yeshua teach us that we'd know them by their works?

I thought at this time that I would share some information about Bible manuscripts. Manuscripts are copies of the originals; we have no originals.

There are no verses or punctuation marks, and there are no subject headings.

Word for word translations like the KJV or NKJV are best because they allow us to try to work out the original context; what was originally intended.

The Greek text is made up of a consensus formed from thousands of deviations in the manuscripts. They did a good job putting together a text from the manuscripts.

Since there are no verses, punctuation, or subject headings; these are all interpretations of the translators. All these things were added by man and can mislead our understanding. The thought in John 7:53-8:1 NKJV is divided by a new chapter. "And everyone went to his own house. ¹ But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives." Perhaps they did this so we would know that these things are not inspired by God. In fact, sometimes what the translators did can mislead us or even change the interpretation. One of my heading says the Old Testament has been done away; that contradicts what the Bible says. Don't be fooled.

The New International Version (NIV), Complete Jewish Bible (CJB), and The Message (MSG) among other versions of the Bible interpret the text and can sometimes be a good rendering; at other times they are wrong. Be cautious with these translations. The word for word translations like the King James Version (KJV) and the New King James Version (NKJV) give us a better chance of figuring out the original context; that's what we want. The other versions often decide the context for us. That's why I use the New King James Version. The Complete Jewish Bible is wonderful and I've read it, but I end up checking their interpretations in my New King James Version. So, I figure why not just use the New King James for my teachings?

As I pointed out, we don't have any originals and also there are thousands of deviations in the Greek manuscripts. I have a copy of the Greek text which shows some 5-10 deviations in the manuscripts for just one verse!¹ The translators do a great job deciding what the originals said and try to make the translation flow well. Hardly any Greek word is translated only in one way! A Young's Concordance lists the ways a Greek word is used. A Greek word can sometimes be translated more that 5 ways. For example the word for "end" in Romans 10:4 can also be translated "goal." So you could end up with the Messiah is the goal of the Law (Torah) toward (*eis*) living right (righteousness) for all who believe, for Romans 10:4. That is a far cry from the current devilish translation. Yochanan said that sin is not keeping the Torah and that sin is of the devil (1 John 3:4-8). The Greek word *anomia* is used in these verses and means to not keep the Torah. *Nomia* is the Greek word used by the ancient believers for the Torah.

Sin is not keeping the Torah the Bible says.

I went to a translation seminar and they said they can't change how some verses are translated or they won't sell their Bible translation. We have to understand this. Of course, I learned lots of information at this seminar. They use all kinds of sources and good logical ways of coming up with a good text to make our translation. Beware of people who hate the Hebrew scriptures of the Old or New portions. They are obviously Jew haters or could just be going along with Jew hater rhetoric. The translators used the Hebrew New Testament at times and included some of these sections in their New Testament text (e.g., John 8).

A lot more needs to be done to include the Hebrew New Testament scriptures in the text. I have studied most of the New Testament in the Greek and for the most part, they did a good

¹ It is called, Novum Testamentum Graece. By the way, it is in Greek.

job. I have to concede that even the NIV does a good job at times. Also, the Greek text contains an anti-Jewish element and even some verses of the text insinuates to commit murder. The word Jew would not have been in the originals; they were Jewish and wouldn't need to put that word in their writings. Everybody they talked to knew they were Jewish!

Also, Jewish portions of the Tanakh separate the text by spaces in the manuscripts and the Jews have a different book order and names for the books in some cases. Why am I sharing this? Some have told me understanding these things has helped them tremendously.

Let's continue by talking a little about an important set of scriptures that Shaul shared in 2 Timothy. First of all, Shaul tells Timothy to continue in the scriptures he has learned since he was a child. There was no New Testament at the time, so what did he learn? Acts 16:1 NKJV says, "And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed." People naively think he learned the New Testament scriptures. Isn't that crazy. 2 Timothy 3:14-15 NKJV: "But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

*Timothy's mother was Jewish; she taught him the Old Testament portion.
There was no New Testament at the time.*

It goes on to say that all scriptures of the Old Testament portion come from God. Let's stay with the context. They are profitable. So, the people who say they are not profitable are lying. They are doctrine, reproof, and instruction on how to live right (righteousness). Wait a minute, the Bible says that the Old Testament is doctrine! It helps us to live right. Wow, what planet did some of these Bible teachers that say the opposite come from? 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Now Shaul is going to be a little harsh so don't get too upset. Shaul said that God is going to judge us by the Old Testament law. We need to understand what Shaul originally meant. Stop making things up. People are not teaching sound doctrine and its been my experience that people are not listening to the truth. So please listen; your eternal life is at stake.

2 Timothy 4:1-4 NKJV:

"I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers. and they will turn their ears away from the truth." What word is Shaul talking about; he is talking about the Old Testament portion.

Walk in the power of God; when God is with us, we walk above what is earthy.

Doesn't it feel great to know God and understand the truth! Pray and expect some answers to prayer. God may not answer all our prayers, but He will answer some. If you keep praying you will experience some amazing healings or miracles. The Bible is filled with healings and miracles. The philosopher Hume said there are no miracles. When people confronted him with his ignorance, he quoted himself and said there are no miracles. What an idiot. Am I starting to sound like Shaul?

Colossians 3:2 NKJV says, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." If you are spiritually minded, you are living above the standards and lies of this world. You have begun to live in your new kingdom to some extent. We are not there yet, but someday we hope to be there. God wants us to come to a full knowledge of God's laws and do good works. In Jewish thought keeping God's commandments are good works. So when Shaul tells us to do good works, he means keep God's commandments (Deuteronomy 6:18). Also, allow the Holy Spirit to work in you and strengthen you. Have joy because God's holy ones who actually keep His commandments (saints) will have an eternal inheritance. How wonderful it will be. God wants us to live as His kingdom people. We no longer have to live in darkness.

Set your mind on spiritual things like Ya'akov did.

Make sure you understand that the good works talked about in the New Testament portion are about keeping God's commandments. Some say God's commandments are not good; even so-called believers. It says God's commandments in the Old Testament portion give us wisdom and understanding (Deuteronomy 4:6), they prolong life (Deuteronomy 6:13), and they are good (Deuteronomy 10:13). What does the Bible say? Who are you going to believe, God or a person?

Colossians 1:9-14 NKJV:

"For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." We no longer live in the dark, but by God's truths.

Our presence can break through evil; stay spiritually minded.

Did you ever wonder if your presence mattered. Sometimes we think that we are in our own little world, but that is not true. We are part of an environment. Just because of my presence, some people have believed in God. I can't say I did anything special, but people know us and at times, people are searching for truth or meaning in their lives. Moshe said that who we are

and what we do matters and we can either bring blessing or cursing because of how we live.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 NKJV says, I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days." This is really something. We bring the power of God with us as we live for Him and even unbelievers benefit from our presence because we bring life.

What we think matters so keep you mind in the right place. Proverbs 4:23 NKJV, "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." We've shared this scripture many times and when I need more light in my life, I apply this scripture. "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you;" James 4:7-8 NKJV. We need to be reminded of these things. How many of us have read the following scripture and understand how true it is?

Psalms 119:105 NKJV, "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." I've known people who have obsessed over things in the past; they were things that were over and done with. Were they allowing God to light their path?

We search for peace as though it is only part of life.

We need God's light; there is no better way to live. Break the strongholds in your life that are taking away your peace. If you need to do some things to help that out, do it. At one time I was struggling with only teaching Bible classes and going around the region on trips to pray for people in other congregations. I think I was being oppressed by the devil. My pastor came over to me just after I thought about this again and my pastor asked me how I was doing. I was embarrassed and decided right then and there I was going to stop allowing that thought to oppress me.

What will you do? Will you keep allowing things to take away your peace? Will you keep allowing these false prophets who make up stuff to keep us in a worried state? We don't have to put up with it. God is over all and when we resist these things or thoughts, God will help us overcome whatever is bothering us no matter what it is. Yeshua said in Revelation 2:7 NKJV, "To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life."

Think about what it says in Hebrews 11:11-12 NKJV, "By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore." Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 before they had their child. Never give up. "Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out;" 1 Timothy 6:6-7 NKJV.

Having a worldly view keeps us from living in the blessings that God wants for us. Yitz'chak prayed for Rivkah's healing and they had Ya'akov and Esav. Walk in the power of God and live above what is earthly. God blessed Ya'akov exceedingly for his faithfulness.² Have a spiritually minded presence. Keep your heart and mind and keep your peace. God can and will finish His work for this world and for you; be content and continue to live the way you should.

² Note that Ya'akov was led by God. He is an example for those who have the gift of the Holy Spirit. Use what God has given us.