



Passover Shabbat Exodus 33:12-34:26
Torah Teaching and teaching, The Solution for Life
by Moshe Schwab

Names

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

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
Mishkan – tent of meeting in the desert
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the
Torah

One of the more obvious things about Israel leaving Egypt is the problem with relating with what happened. Then there is the problem of unbelief. Think about this. If God is able to free about 2 million people from Egypt, let them pass through an enormous Sea, and supply food for them in a desert, then He is truly God. We must conclude that what He says He will do and is able to do.

What God did many years ago is relevant for us today. It is only our inability to believe in an almighty and powerful Creator that creates dichotomy. As believers in the true God, we must mentally ascend in our thinking. Perhaps like Moshe ascended the mountain. Another way of thinking about this is to resist any negative thoughts and tell yourself you are fully committed to God and you will keep His commandments no matter what. God is the creator; His ways are the solution to life because He knows what best for us.

We all have to come to grips with our faith or lack of faith. We must decide to be committed completely to God. It is not a bad idea to commit yourself to God on a regular basis. I felt like doing this for 2 years, years ago. It wasn't because I lacked faith as much as I wanted to be fully committed to God. I didn't have to do it nor was I feeling insecure. I just wanted to do it.

The portion we are using today is the Passover Shabbat portion. The people had just worshipped the golden calf and God said that those who had done so would be blotted out of God's book (Exodus 32:33). It is a scary thought to be removed from the book of eternal life. We should always endeavor to stay in faith. Why were they judged so harshly? Perhaps it was because they had witnessed the power of God and were a bad example. Perhaps that is why Ya'akov says in James 3:1 NKJV, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."

If we sin, we can have forgiveness. In this Shabbat portion for Passover, it says in Exodus 34:5-7 NKJV, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." In Isaiah 1:18-19, God offers complete forgiveness to the Jews for repentance. Also, God has not changed; He still is merciful and forgiving.

In this Messianic age we can have forgiveness through Yeshua. 1 John 1:9 NKJV says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If we do not repent and continue living in sin, the Bible says we will be judged for that just like they were at Mt. Sinai. Hebrews 10:29 NKJV says, "Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"

God is a God of love because He first gave us His commandments as an act of love and then sent the Messiah Yeshua who gave Himself for us so we could receive another helper, the Holy Spirit to help us. Yeshua said, "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;" John 14:15-17 NKJV.

In this portion, Moshe took his tent and pitched it outside the camp and that became the Tent of Meeting until the actual Tent of Meeting was put together. Moshe would go out there to talk to God. God tells him to cut two pieces of stone like the first ones and God would write the commandments on them again. Then God pronounces His goodness and mercy. God again promises the land to Israel and God gives Moshe God's feasts to keep (including Passover).

Shaul clearly says we are to keep God's Passover and relates the Passover to Yeshua. 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 NKJV says, "Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 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."

Do you have any tips for observing God's feasts?

Start keeping God's feasts and develop ways to keep them.

Celebrate and enjoy God's feasts; make them a special time.

Decide you will not do work on days of rest.

Learn from your experiences keeping God's feasts; find out what works for you.

Understand what God tells us to do on each of God's feasts.

The Haftarah for Passover Shabbat is Ezekiel 37:1-14. Ezekiel has a heavenly vision and God tells him that He is sending him to speak to a rebellious people. God tells Ezekiel He will give Ezekiel what to speak in chapter 2. We see what happened to those who worshipped the golden calf. God blotted them out from His book. Yeshua tells us to remain faithful **so we will not** be blotted out of the book of life. Revelation 3:5 NKJV says, " He who overcomes shall be clothed

in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life." Be faithful so that you will receive eternal life.

The Solution for Life

(a teaching to accompany the Torah teaching)

People are looking for solutions for relationships, solutions for finances, and solutions for peace and harmony. God gave us wisdom and understanding through His commandments (Deuteronomy 4:6). Perhaps we should be listening to the creator God for the best solutions for life. God has also given the Holy Spirit to help us.

God wants to pour His truth into us. It is a steady stream of blessing.

Contrary to what worldly people think, God brings blessing into life. People often get brainwashed into thinking that the material world and the desires of mankind are the key to having a good life. God says His commandments are the key to a life worth living. Deuteronomy 4:6-8 NKJV: "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. For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?' And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day." Deuteronomy teaches us that God's commandments bless us. Some twist the scriptures to say just the opposite. How do you think God will deal with them on judgment day?

When a people do what is right and keep God's commandments, their country is also a place of blessing and peace. We have seen what happens when there is a lack of self-control and rampant evil. Even people in our country are suffering terribly in some areas because of people who are hurting others. Where will it all end? It is like a sickness. People do not say, "Let's get sick and stay sick;" that is somewhat the pervasive thought when no one gives a viable solution. Selfishness and thoughtless self-seeking are not the solution for life.

How can we change our perspective?

Decide to accept God's wisdom.

Realize that sin often brings hurt and pain.

Have joy in living God's ways.

What God does in our lives is worth more than all the money that is printed.

I have heard people talk about the almighty "buck" (dollar bill). People say that money is the key to accomplishing things and having power. They will say that money increases the ability to influence and lead people.

So, what mankind does is squabble over money and try to increase their worldly footprint. In essence, they are worshipping paper money and things that continually need upkeep or the things they have that will degrade into nothingness. There is no everlasting currency or piece of worldly life that retains value.

Even the fleeting pleasures of life are no more after they are over. People can only remember them or talk about them. They are memories that are gone someday no matter how much people try to indulge themselves in worldly things.

It says in Psalms 90:10-12 NKJV "The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

What does it matter if we have lots of earthly things but are not around to enjoy it?

Yeshua said in Matthew 16:26 NKJV, "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" The word soul in the Greek is the word for life. If a person has great wealth but they die, the wealth they had is of no more use to them. In the same way, not keeping God's commandments with faith causes us to lose eternal life. Eternal life is something that will never fade away or deteriorate. Ya'akov said in James 2:18 NKJV, "Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works." Our faith that results in what we do is important. Are we believing and trusting in God when we do not do what He tells us to do?

God calls us to Him, and we get to celebrate His goodness and His right and good ways.

I remember going for a walk in this swamp and hearing a horn honking in the distance. When I got back home, I was talking to someone who went hunting there and he said some people get lost for 2 or 3 days in that swamp. I figured then that the horn was to orient anyone who might be lost.

In the same way, mankind is lost in life without God, and God's ways get us back to where we should be in life. We read earlier in Deuteronomy that God gives us wisdom and understanding. God's commandments help us. God says in Proverbs 1:24-26 NKJV, "I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, because you despised all my counsel, and would have none of my rebuke, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes."

My wife and I like to go for walks. You get a sinking feeling when you get lost in a swamp (maybe not terror right away). We ended up getting lost on our walk in that swamp and had to retrace our steps. We were exhausted by the time we got back to our car. Relating this to God, instead of living a life where we are lost, God wants to rescue us and give us rest. God is a wonderful and good God who desires good for us. Psalms 23:6 NKJV says, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." Do not stay lost. Seek God's goodness.

Stay faithful and pure. Live life in God and not our own ways.

Some people have the mistaken idea that life happens automatically with God; they say a prayer and think that is all they need to do. What we put into our lives is what we get out of it.

Galatians 6:8 NKJV says, "For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."

In the same way in the physical, a person is rewarded by what they have to offer and accomplish. If they do nothing, they get nothing. You do not make a house or a building by just looking at the ground. You have to actually build the building.

You do not accomplish something by doing nothing.

Our spiritual lives result in what we develop and put into our spiritual lives. If all we do is live a worldly life, or if all we do is live by man-made misapplied doctrine, then we are not developing ourselves spiritually. We need to stay faithful and pure to keeping God's commandments and not made-up doctrine. We need to do things God's way and also believe in the Messiah Yeshua. The Messiah has come so we must respond and receive the Holy Spirit. We are commanded to receive the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was given on Shavuot. The next major feast is Shavuot and is also known as Pentecost. The law was given on Shavuot to help us live right and so was 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." Will we listen to God's call or stay lost in the swamp?

We see what happens when there is rampant evil. All the senseless evil in the world is so sad. God's ways are the solution for life. Paper money is just a piece of paper that will degrade; so are the things of the world. Don't look to increase your worldly footprint and forget about your spiritual footprint. Live a life of wisdom and goodness through God's word. God is reaching out and calling us to Him to help us. Stay faithful to God's good ways; God is the solution for life.

The Aaronic Blessing

ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yě-hō-váh. Yě-hō-váh is used over 6,000 times in the Old Testament portion. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name.

According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name.

The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. Over 2,363 manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. 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.

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶכָּךְ

יְאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְךָ

יְשֵׁא יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

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

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