



#17 Yitro Exodus 18:1-20:26
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)

Yitro – Jethro

Yochanan – John

Terms

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

Yitro – the 17th Torah portion

Get proper rest. God made us to have times of rest both during the day and sleep at night. Even machines break down over time. Isn't it amazing thank God designed us to rejuvenate, refresh, and repair our bodies through rest? God designed our bodies to self-repair. Isn't that amazing!

Since God made us to have times of rest, both sleep and rest have functions. Our body was designed to have periods of sleep and rest. Have you ever exerted yourself hard? We naturally are aware that we need to rest after doing that. So, sleep is necessary and relaxing. Have you ever felt refreshed after a short nap? Science has done tests to try to understand why we need rest. They have determined that rest restores our bodies in many significant ways. Simply put, the body needs to repair itself and build up energy again. Not getting proper rest then does not allow the body to function as well as it could and leaves us in a weakened state.

Some people are constantly on guard in life. Psalms 127:2 NIV says, "In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat – for he grants sleep to those he loves." God's commandments give us peace in life. The context in this verse is about God's Old Testament commandments. Isaiah 26:3 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Just a few verses down it tells us what gives us peace in life and what we are to trust in. Isaiah 26:8 NKJV says, "Yes, in the way of Your judgments, O LORD, we have waited for You." God tells Israel in Exodus 33:14 NKJV, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." If we are not trusting in God and His good counsel, we reject God's offer of peace.

I used to participate in sports and between stressful activities, I needed rest to be able to perform at my best. Professional sports coaches bring in substitutions who are able to play at peak performance because they are more rested. So, make sure you get your proper rest, both sleep and rest between stressful activities and hard work.

Be aware of what you should and should not do. This can refer to both our regular activities and spiritually. Lifting something that is too heavy for us can cause injury. So, use good sense in what we do God expects us to think and decide what is appropriate. Of course, learn and apply God's Good commandments properly. Develop your ability to do that. Hebrews 5:14 NKJV says, " But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Some unbelievers in God know what believers say and believe; be ready to respond and be faithful to the true God. They believe we follow unfounded nonsense and that there are no truths for life. They will think of anything they can to try to support their false theology which can also be called philosophy. They even will use what we believe to promote their atheistic beliefs and manipulate us. One day they will say one thing and even the next day they will contradict what they said. They are like little children trying to get their way. In this case, they are adults that are trying to sway the masses to believe in their false murderous religious system. Remember, any set of ideals can be termed a religion, and it does not mean it has to believe in a god, but often accompanies a philosophy of life. Some call these atheist religious convictions propaganda because it is just made up logic. So, do not be swayed by their false reasoning.

Allow God to speak. We do that through the scriptures in the Bible and by seeking wisdom from God by the Holy Spirit. We are to interpret the scriptures correctly and not make up false doctrine. 2 Peter 1:20-21 NKJV says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." There was no New Testament portion when this was written so it has to be talking about the Old Testament portion. Unfortunately, all we have are copies of the originals and translations. The New Testament scriptures were modified by those who did not want to keep God's commandments. Remember, if a verse seems to say we are to not keep God's Old Testament commandments it is possible either the original was changed by heretics or the translation is wrong. Talking about God's Old Testament commandments, Psalms 119:152 NKJV says, "Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them forever."

Also, anyone who teaches us to not keep God's good Old Testament commandments is a false teacher. Deuteronomy 13:3-4 NKJV says, "You shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments." The Holy Spirit can also inform us, help us, and lead us, but the Holy Spirit will not contradict God's commandments. God's commandments have been founded "forever."

More for us to consider.

We need to think on the portions of the Torah so we can consider what it is teaching us. We often begin our teachings with what I think God wants me to teach on that week. After that, we talk about the Torah portion. It is good to be presented with God's instructions for life so that we remember to keep all that God teaches us. The Hebrew word Torah means instruction.

While we might be very much aware of what the Torah teaches, hearing it again and again can be helpful. Jeremiah 15:16 NKJV says, "Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart."

It is difficult to get to that point if we do not patiently listen week by week to what is being taught. We need to consider what we have been taught so that it digs deeper into our minds and hearts because God's commandments are truths for life. Psalms 19:8 NKJV says, "The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes."

The sinful ideas of the world can be enticing and seem to make sense at times. If they did not, no one would consider them. We talk about how the scriptures have helped people for thousands of years. Countless millions have benefitted from the scriptures of the Bible. People have used the scriptures to help them have direction, purpose, success, enjoyment, satisfaction, good relationships, and so much more. For example, the Bible teaches us that getting drunk is wrong and that includes getting intoxicated from drugs. Lot got drunk and had sinful sexual relations. That tells us that getting intoxicated is a sin. Proverbs also tells us that getting intoxicated is wrong. Proverbs 23:21 NKJV says, "For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags." This is only one of the things that the wrong use of alcohol or drugs causes.

There is a lot of documentation on the problems that abusing alcohol or drugs causes and sometimes it even results in terrible circumstances. My wife had a friend who died including his wife and young children because a drunk driver hit their car. I heard a story of a teenager who had smoked marijuana and opened the door of their car while it was moving because his mind had been altered by its use. People may get away with their abuse and never incur consequences, but drug and alcohol abuse often incurs some type of consequences, and those who get intoxicated on alcohol or drugs will have eternal separation from being in God's future kingdom unless they change. The Old Testament says it is wrong, and that is why Shaul says it is wrong in 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV says, "Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, **nor drunkards**, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." Sometimes people get away with disobeying God, but they will pay the consequences for their sin in eternity. God must judge those who do evil because He is a just and good God. A person can consume low amounts of alcohol without getting drunk but that is not true for marijuana. The sole purpose of using marijuana is to get intoxicated.

Reading the Torah portions has been the standard way that God's instructions have been transmitted for thousands of years. Most observant Messianic parents teach their children from the Torah. It is my understanding that mothers teach their children at home practical applications of the Torah as was my experience. For example, the Torah teaches us that we are to try to find the owner of things that have been lost.

Deuteronomy 22:1-3 NKJV says,

You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep going astray, and hide yourself from them; you shall certainly bring them back to your brother. And if your brother is not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it to your

own house, and it shall remain with you until your brother seeks it; then you shall restore it to him. You shall do the same with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment; with any lost thing of your brother's, which he has lost and you have found, you shall do likewise.

My mom and I then had a conversation about how to do that and my mom answered my questions. I asked her about finding small amounts of money and she said I could keep it. If I found a considerable amount of money, she said I needed to try to find who it belonged to perhaps by contacting the police. If I saw someone drop some money no matter how small, I should call it to their attention or pick it up and give it to them.

We as individuals each have the responsibility of applying the Torah to real life. We each need to have the humility to learn God's commandments. Humility towards God means that we are willing to be open to what the Bible teaches us. We are to especially willing to grow spiritually and maintain an openness to God's truths. Proverbs 22:4 NKJV says, "By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life." We are to fear God; that means we are to have great respect for our creator God and what he teaches us in the scriptures. So, we need to lay aside our feelings and make an effort to hear and obey everything we learn from the Bible even if we have heard it a thousand times. God is worth the respect. Micah 6:8 NKJV says, "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."

Blaming others for our sin will not help us to keep God's commandments. People can have insatiable desires; some people can quit before they succeed. I remember someone teaching how people will stop trying to accomplish something at just the time they were about to succeed. Isn't that a shame? Our minds can work for us or against us. So, we need to be determined to follow God and keep His good Old Testament commandments. The New Testament portion can be helpful too because it often contains applications of the Old Testament commandments. I will often tell God that I am completely committed to following Him and His word. It is a good thing to affirm your desire to do what is right; it sets us on the right course over and over. 1 Kings 8:61 NKJV says, "Let your heart therefore be loyal to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day."

The discipline to do something often does not come in just one day. I remember being a little disappointed by a teacher I had who had us work on simple formulas and calculations over and over. After I began work in this area of study, I found myself using those simple formulas frequently and I appreciated the work he put me through. Be disciplined to practice and keep God's commandments. Rabbi Shaul talks about being disciplined in our spiritual life.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 NKJV says,

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Rabbi Shaul was a Pharisee and studied under Gamaliel in Jerusalem (see Acts 22:3, 23:6 and Philippians 3:5). I understand that a young boy in his time often memorized the first five books of the Bible before he was 12. I have heard that the leaders of that time like the Pharisees memorized the whole Old Testament portion of scriptures. Rabbi Shaul disciplined himself to keep God's commandments. He is a person who obviously made a tremendous effort to follow God, but he was not willing to think he had arrived spiritually, and he made the decision to not let down but push himself spiritually. He disciplined himself to obey God's commandments so that he would not be disqualified from the future eternal kingdom of God.

This next section is from a previous teaching and applies well to this topic. Make God so part of your life that it becomes natural. I remember when I first tried to put a basketball into the basket. It took me some time just to get the ball high enough so that it would go in. I kept practicing though. It took a lot of practice on my part to get the ball in the basket on a consistent basis. My dad taught me to try to make a number of shots in a row. I started with 5 shots and then 10 shots and so on. I understand that basketball teams now have automatic ball returns so that the players can shoot 200 shots every day at every position.

Imagine how automatic their shot can become. In the same way, keep God's commandments in mind for life so that we do them over and over and they become automatic. Hebrews 5:14 NKJV says, "But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Do not stay a baby spiritually. Grow up.

When Shabbat comes, I automatically resist working and I relax. When tempted with any sin I automatically resist the temptation and put that thought out of my mind. We should not dwell on temptation. We need to resist those thoughts. We all have temptations, but sin occurs when we begin to consider that temptation and do not correct our thinking. Proverbs 7:25-27 NKJV says, "Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths; for she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men. Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death."

We need to correct our intentions everywhere we go and in everything we do. Remember, God knows our intentions and what we are willing to get away with. In Genesis 6:5 NKJV it says, "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." The people back then were evil and allowed their intentions to lead them, so they did evil. James 1:14-15 says, "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death." Do not let your thinking get out of hand. Make the decision now that you will keep God's good commandments which are able to give us life.

Sometimes people will add fences around God's commandments in the Torah in order to keep them. We have talked about this before. We all put limits on what we do so we can accomplish things in life. For example, we often set the time we go to bed so we can get up the next day and work or be productive. There are those who have not learned to set boundaries in life so that they succeed. We do not necessarily sin by going to bed at a certain time. The sin comes

from not performing our expected work duties. When we perform at a low level, we cheat our employer and therefore steal from our employer. If we take care of our children, perhaps we lapse at our duty towards them by not getting the proper rest.

So, we also need to apply personal limits to our spiritual life to help us keep God's commandments. For example, do we prepare properly before Shabbat, so we do not have to work on Shabbat? Do we prepare our attitudes, so we are kind and good towards others? I practice being good and kind so that at every opportunity I can behave appropriately. I should qualify this concept of fences around God's commands. The Bible says we are not to add or take from God's commands. Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV says, "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." Is practicing your gentleness, kindness, humility, and goodness a good thing? Yes, it is, but that is not a commandment of God.

Watch out for commandments that micromanage life and that are not in the Bible. Some commandments can naturally apply to other things. Take for example the commandment to put a barrier around the top of a building that people walk on (see Deuteronomy 22:8). This commandment can easily apply to using safety in how we do things or make things. Some say you cannot even turn on a light on Shabbat because that breaks the commandment to not kindle a fire on Shabbat. I know the difference between starting a fire and the spark a switch makes. A spark is not a fire.

I tried starting a fire without a match when I was camping (not on Shabbat), and I could not do it. It is a lot of work to kindle a fire. Starting a fire in ancient times was a lot of work. They just make up nonsense evidently just to make people do it. All their nonsense sounds like work to me. I knew someone who walked 5 miles to synagogue with their children because they followed the commandment not to drive on Shabbat because somehow driving a car is also kindling a fire. What is work in this case? Is driving a car work or making their children walk 5 miles? They disobey God by their man-made commandments. Idols are also made by hand, and we are not to worship idols. Do we make these extra commands an idol? Isaiah said that these people are following other people 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."

Think on the portions of the weekly Torah portions so we can consider what it is teaching us. People have used the scriptures to help them have direction, purpose, success, enjoyment, satisfaction, good relationships, and so much more. Also, have the humility and desire to apply the Torah to real life. Do not let worldly desires or bad attitudes keep us from following God properly. Keep God's good commandments. Do what is sensible and do not make up commandments that do not apply. Just like most things in life require we properly prepare, use good sense in all we do. Do not make up commandments with all kinds of man-made ideals, concepts, or extra poorly thought-out commands. Instead, follow the commandments that God gave us through Moshe.

Torah Teaching

The name of this portion is Yitro. Yitro means, "Jethro." This portion begins by saying that Yitro, the father-in-law of Moshe heard about what God had done, and He brings Moshe's sons and wife to him. Perhaps Moshe did this to keep them safe. We all have to make sacrifices sometimes in life. Moshe bows low to Yitro. He could have come as a king to Yitro but instead decides to show Yitro honor and respect. Children should take Moshe as an example and show respect to them. It is one of the 10 Commandments. Yitro rejoices at the kindness of God and blesses God using God's real name for delivering Israel from the Egyptians.

Yitro confesses that the God of Israel is the true God. He becomes a believer. Moshe, the leaders of Israel, and Yitro make a sacrifice to God and eat together. Yitro sees Moshe administering all the judgments and he tells Moshe that he needs to set up a justice system and hear only the difficult cases. Moshe is judging the people by God's commandments. Exodus 18:16 NKJV says, "When they have a difficulty, they come to me, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of God and His laws." Moshe listened to Yitro and must have set up a teaching system. Yitro goes back home.

Listening to advice.

Those who are more successful in life often listen to others' advice. For example, for legal matters, I get the advice of a lawyer. For carpentry work, I find someone who knows how to do carpentry.

Be open to what others say and do not be offended by what they say. Allow others to contribute their thoughts. Find people you can trust, who respect God, and are not seeking to gain something (see Exodus 18:21). Even learn from people who do not like you – examine what they have to say to see if it is valid. Do not take what these people have to say too hard.

I remember hearing a story of a communist dictator who did not listen to others (which is true of most communist dictators because they are entrenched in the Communist Religion). There was a shortage of food because some of the crops failed so one of his leaders told him about it and he had him imprisoned for sedition and murdered. Because he did not listen to others, many people in his country died of starvation at that time.

Moshe then goes up to the mountain and God calls to him and God tells him what he is to say to Israel. If they keep His commandments, they will be a kingdom of priests for God. Exodus 19:5-6 NKJV says, "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

God cares about us.

God instilled a caring nature into us. We are created in God's image, and we have the ability to be caring people. God gave each of us a chance to believe in His goodness and keep His good commandments. He offers those who want to follow His good ways eternal life, and we decide whether to accept what is good and be in His future kingdom or do evil. If we obey God, we can be His treasured people and be part of His future kingdom.

God did not give them a caste system where only some were to be the privileged. Anyone can learn God's commandments and keep them and be treasured by God. To be holy is to separate ourselves from evil and be a good people who keep God's commandments. 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."

Moshe tells the people what God told him, and the people agree to obey God. Kefa refers to this verse from Exodus in 1 Peter 2:9 NKJV, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." God has not changed; His people can still be God's holy people. Isn't that great! If you want to be close to God, believe in Him, keep His commandments, and accept the Messiah Yeshua and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

God tells Moshe that God will speak to him and the people. The people were not to touch the mountain until the shofar sounds, and they were to prepare for their meeting with God by washing their clothes. Washing their clothes must be symbolic. We are to be a clean people (from sin) who are not stained by sin. God then give them the 10 commandments. The people prepared to meet with God. As believers in Yeshua, we can meet with God every day because we have the Holy Spirit.

Some people are very lax about their relationship with God and do not keep God's commandments. The Bible says we are to take God's commandments seriously. Hebrews 10:29-30 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? For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. And again, 'The LORD will judge His people.'"

Decide you will honor God and keep His commandments; it is not hard. Deuteronomy 30:11 NIV says, "Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach." Those that say it is too hard are not telling the truth. The Bible says it is not hard. The thousands of extra miniscule man-made laws that we **do not** have to keep are too hard to keep. Christianity and Judaism has added and changed God's commandments in some instances. Some of these man-made laws are against God's commandments.

On the third day Moshe brought the people to the mountain and there was thunder and lightning, a thick smoke, and a shofar kept blasting louder and louder. God called Moshe up the mountain and God also told Moshe to tell the people that no one was to go up the mountain after Moshe and Aharon.

Then God, Yĕhōvâh, gives the people the ten words (Ten Commandments). Yĕhōvâh is God's name as seen pointed in 2,363 different manuscripts. Yĕhōvâh is used over 6,000 times in the Bible. Exodus 3:15 NKJV says, "The **LORD** God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. **This is My name forever**, and this is My memorial to all generations." **LORD** in all caps is the Hebrew word Yĕhōvâh. If someone gave you their name, would you purposely never use their name?

The 10 Commandments are then given. There are more than 10 commandments but even doing these can be life changing. For example, if people decided not to murder and not want what others have (covet) there would be fewer wars. These commandments are important so learn them.

In ancient times, commands that came from the king were often to make sure the king got what he wanted. God's commandments are not given to us so God gets His way, but to help mankind. That speaks to the validity of the Torah and God as the creator. Our creator God wants to help mankind and not impose His will on us.

Let's take the time to read Exodus 20:3-17 NKJV; the Ten Commandments:

1st Commandment

Verse 3, "You shall have no other gods before Me."

2nd Commandment

Verses 4-6, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image —any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

3rd Commandment

Verse 7, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

4th Commandment

Verses 8-11, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."

5th Commandment

Verse 12, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you."

6th Commandment

Verse 13, "You shall not murder."

7th Commandment

Verse 14, "You shall not commit adultery."

8th Commandment

Verse 15, "You shall not steal."

9th Commandment

Verse 16, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

10th Commandment

Verse 17, "You shall not covet your neighbor 's house; you shall not covet your neighbor' s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor 's."

Perhaps take some time to think about how you could apply these commandments. For example, the 2nd commandment tells us not to bow down to anything made. Some people actually set up statues or pictures and kneel before them. It says we are not to make anything and bow down to it. Some people tell me that they are praying to God when they do this. God says not to do it. Some denominations change this commandment to reflect their wrong beliefs.

How do you honor your parents? I would listen to my parents and respect them even as an adult. You can always weigh what they have to say. When I was in Jewish neighborhoods, sometimes an elderly man would walk up to me and give me advice. I would respectfully listen to them. That is something that Jewish people do for their young generation. They were someone's parent. I gave them honor and respect. Even though these laws seem self-explanatory, in Jewish thought, there are many valid ways that we can apply God's commandments without making up extra commandments.

Before closing, we will have a special section of the 10 Commandments.

Not using God's name in vain has to do with not using God's name inappropriately. *Hashem* means, "the name;" that is how some people address God. Would you call someone you respect, "the name?" That is inappropriate. Saying God's name, Yĕhōvāh, honors Him. The Bible says not to steal; I will not even take a pen that is not mine. Didn't Yeshua say that those who are faithful in the little things are also faithful in much (see Luke 16:10)? Look for ways you can be faithful. Notice how the commandment to keep the Sabbath quotes Genesis 2:2-3 so people who say God's commandments or the Saturday Sabbath are just for Israel are wrong. They are God's commandments. Why would something that God gave us not be good for us in our time as well. Those who say God's commandments are done away with are deluded. I would not want to stand before God and tell God I did not agree with Him. I do not think you will win that debate.

The people experienced all that was going on at the foot of Mount Sinai and they were afraid, so they asked Moshe to speak to God for them. Moshe approaches the thick darkness while the people stood back. God tells Moshe that the people are not to make any idols and that they are to make an altar of earth or of uncut stone and also not build steps up to the altar so no one will be indecent. They are to make their offerings at the place where God chooses.

This portion begins with Yitro, Moshe's father-in-law, coming to see Moshe. He was a gentile priest of Midian where they practiced idolatry, and some despicable practices associated with idolatry. Yitro believes in the God of Israel and is fully accepted among the Israeli leadership. We should remember that it was always God's intention that the nations should believe in the true God through Israel. Israel was unable to accomplish that until the coming of the Jewish Messiah Yeshua who has spread the message of the true God, the teachings of the Torah, and the messianic message of Yeshua around the world.

The symbolic teaching about Israel at Mount Sinai.

In this portion, God promises that He will make Israel a holy nation and the people respond that they will do what God tells them to do. We could liken the account to a marriage ceremony between God and Israel where God enters into a relationship with them as their husband (see Isaiah 54:5). Mount Sinai acted as the chuppah (canopy) and the Ten Commands as the ketubah (marriage contract). The Jewish writings say that it had rained so that the desert was in bloom and Israel was surrounded by flowers. The giving of the Ten Commandments occurred on Shavuot and the giving of the Holy Spirit also occurred on Shavuot.

There is thunder and lightning, a thick smoke, and a shofar that kept getting louder and louder. Perhaps Yeshua was blowing the shofar. The people were afraid and so God allows Moshe to speak for the people. Moshe becomes an advocate who speaks on behalf of the people just like the Messiah Yeshua is our advocate that speaks on our behalf (see 1 John 2:10). Although the Ten Commandments are important, it should be remembered there are other commandments that are also important that we should keep.

The Haftarah for Yitro is Isaiah 6:1 to 7:6, 9:5-6. Isaiah had just written a prophetic song about Israel's demise. Then, this portion begins with Yĕhōvāh Tsava'ot (the "Lord of Hosts" which is implying warfare) sitting on His throne with seraphs worshipping God and saying, "holy, holy, holy," that is "kadosh, kadosh, kadosh." It says that the door posts shook, and the House (referring to the heavenly Temple) kept filling with smoke. The heavenly vision reminds us of Israel's encounter with God at Mount Sinai. In this portion, God is sitting which is an attribute of a man. So, Isaiah probably sees God in the shape of a man just like Ezekiel did in one of his visions. Isaiah is sent to Israel even though they will not hear and will not repent. Isaiah is told by God to say to Ahaz to not be afraid; the invaders this time will not succeed against Judah.

Also, Isaiah 9:5-6 is part of this portion which prophetically talks about the coming of God as King. **The attributes in these scriptures can only be attributed to God.** Israel's mission was to bring the true God to the entire world. That has been accomplished in part through God coming as a man in the person of the Jewish Messiah Yeshua. Someday Yeshua will return and complete His mission and establish peace and His kingdom forever. In the present, Yeshua gives those who believe in Him personal peace through the Holy Spirit. All the millions of those who have the Holy Spirit can have the peace that Yeshua gives.

Isaiah 9:5-6 CJB is about the Messiah:

"For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; dominion will rest on his shoulders, and he will be given the name Pele-Yo'etz El Gibbor Avi-'Ad Sar-Shalom [Wonder of a Counselor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace], in order to extend the dominion and perpetuate the peace of the throne and kingdom of David, to secure it and sustain it through justice and righteousness henceforth and forever. The zeal of ADONAI-Tzva'ot (Yĕhōvāh of Hosts) will accomplish this."
ADONAI in all caps is Yĕhōvāh, God's real name.

Our ancestors experienced the awesome power of God at Mount Sinai so that they trembled. Through our Messiah Yeshua we have been made part of a heavenly community and as we talked about earlier, we need to take that seriously. Hebrews 12:22-25 CJB says:

"You have come to Mount Tziyon, that is, the city of the living God, heavenly Yerushalayim; to myriads of angels in festive assembly; to a community of the firstborn whose names have been recorded in heaven; to a Judge who is God of everyone; to spirits of righteous people who have been brought to the goal; to the mediator of a new covenant, Yeshua; and to the sprinkled blood that speaks better things than that of Hevel (Abel). See that you don't reject the One speaking! For if those did not escape who rejected him when he gave divine warning on earth, think how much less we will escape if we turn away from him when he warns from heaven."

**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.)**

This is a special section on the 10 Commandments.

Let's talk about the 10 Commandments. Remember, there are more than 10 commandments in the Bible, but we will talk about a few of these commandments today. First, we should talk about how to interpret and use God's commandments. Deuteronomy 4:2 tells us not to add or subtract from God's commands. God's commandments are simple, but we also have to apply them to life and new situations. I like to use some of Shaul's examples on how to apply the Torah.

He uses the doctrine of the Old Testament portion to explain that leaders may need to be supported. 1 Timothy 5:17-18 NKJV says, "Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.'" In another place Shaul says that he worked (see Acts 18:1-4) to support himself, but in some cases a leader needs to do a substantial amount of work for the people he is helping to follow God and needs support.

All the scriptures in the New Testament portion are applications of the Old Testament portion. That is why we have some 1,050 laws in the New Testament portion according to some who have counted them, but only a few hundred currently applicable laws are in the Old Testament portion. For example, here is an application of the Old Testament law in the New Testament portion. Ephesians 4:32 NKJV says, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." We are to be kind to others and forgive them. Leviticus 19:18-19 NKJV says, "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes." Leviticus tells us to love others and to forgive by not holding onto grudges. Shaul uses other wording to explain that we are forgive and how to love others, but it is the same message.

Most of the virtues and encouragement to love and treat others well in the New Testament portion are applications of Leviticus 19:18-19. Those who count commandments say that to be

kind and tenderhearted are additional commandments in the New Testament portion, but they are just appropriate applications of Leviticus. Shaul is trying to help us to follow God's commandments. He provides proper applications. Philo of Alexandria, a first century Jewish Philosopher, called synagogues "schools of virtue." This most likely comes from teachings on the practical applications of the Torah, the Old Testament portion. Note, we also see that these scriptures in Leviticus 19 tell us that to love others is to keep God's Old Testament commandments, "Love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes."

The commands in the Old Testament portion have good applications to life. The problem arises when we make up commands that do not apply properly. It is easy to understand that turning on a light switch is not the same as kindling a fire, namely starting a fire. Years ago, that was a difficult task. Ask anyone who tried to start a fire without matches. Here is another example, let's talk a little about the command about keeping Shabbat holy (Shabbat means rest). In my writings, I have explained a number of times that the pagan Roman Empire changed the day of rest (Shabbat) to the day of the pagan Sun god and that has been passed down into Christianity.

The following is a quote from The Sabbath Truth online:

The Roman emperor Constantine, a former sun-worshiper, professed conversion to Christianity, though his subsequent actions suggest the "conversion" was more of a political move than a genuine heart change. Constantine named himself Bishop of the Catholic Church and enacted the first civil law regarding Sunday observance in A.D. 321.

On the venerable day of the sun let the magistrate and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country however, persons engaged in agricultural work may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain growing or for vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. - Schaff's History of the Christian Church, volume 3, chapter 75.

So, some additions or changes to God's commandments are absolutely wrong. In fact, God considers adopting any pagan practice as disgusting, an abomination. Deuteronomy 12:31-32 NKJV says, "You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it." You will have to stand before God someday. Will you keep doing things that are disgusting to God?

So, we must try to apply proper applications of the Torah. For example, the Old Testament portion tells us to return an ox to its owner, namely what belongs to others (see Deuteronomy 22:1). An ox can be very costly to replace. My mom explained this commandment to me and told me that we should try to find the owner of something that was lost, but if it was just a small amount of money and we did not know who lost it, we could keep it. That is a proper application of the Torah. So, if someone loses a quarter and I see it happen, I give it to them, but a quarter just laying on the ground is okay to keep. One time I found a huge sum of money

and found the owner of the money and gave it back. Sometimes people will report losses to the police, and we can let the police know what we found. If they cannot find the owner, the police should give the money back to us.

It is generally agreed that God's commandments often need explanation and need to be applied to life. In what ways can we make sure we do not put other gods before the true God? How do we apply the law not to steal or the law not to covet? Let's cover some appropriate understandings for the 10 Commandments. Remember, we are looking for proper applications. Some applications make keeping God's commandments difficult and God's commandments are not supposed to be difficult to apply. We do not have the time to talk about all the possible applications, but we can talk about some of them. Deuteronomy 30:10-11 NIV says, "Obey the LORD your God and keep his commands and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law and turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach." God's Old Testament commandments are not too difficult. Also, some people or denominations number the commandments differently than they appear in the Bible and even change the ones they do not want to keep! Read the Bible.

The first commandment, Deuteronomy 5:6-7 NKJV says,

"I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me."

When Israel was in Egypt, they were in bondage to a people who were slaves to false God's. Instead of being slaves to false ideals and gods, followers of God are to follow what the creator God says. This commandment therefore also references God as the creator because it talks about the power of God. The first commandment does not mention idols that some lump together with this command. That causes some to think it is all about idols and nothing else. So, how could we apply this commandment?

Since it says we are to have no other gods before God, we should have nothing in our lives that supersedes the true God. Yeshua said that loving God is the first and great commandment (see Matthew 22:38). It says in Deuteronomy that to love God is to keep His commandments. We show God the respect that is due the creator God by listening to Him and keeping His commandments. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV say, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always."

People may think this command only refers to idols of wood and stone, but it should remind us to respect God for who He is and not make ourselves God of our own lives and do what we think is right instead of what God says. Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." We are not to value other things, people, or activities more than we value God. These other things, people, or activities instead of God then become more the reason for our values than for doing what God says to do.

People can make a god out of love and think that is the way to live. Their own ideas on how to love then lead them in life instead of what God says. People can make a god out of science.

Science is concerned with facts that we can learn by observation. God's commandments come from an all-knowing creator and good God who wants to help us live with and not with facts that just anyone can learn. Some people make a god out of being smart. People often think that if they have a lot of information, they will know how to live life. Again, they are just learning facts and not how to live right. In the United States, people often talk about how smart their children are, but not about how they are committed to living right. Therefore, they lack the ability to live the way they should, and our society is deteriorating.

The second commandment, Deuteronomy 5:8-10 NKJV says,

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image – any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

This command tells us not to bow down to anything other than God. While we can show others the respect that is due to them, we are not to treat them as we would treat the creator of all things. This also would include treating anything material as though it was God.

There is a danger in making any representation of God and people then treating objects as though they were God. Over the ages, people have done this and have bowed down before these representations of God and prayed to them. That breaks this commandment. We are not to make anything or obtain anything that we might pray to or bow down to. These things would include pictures, art, or objects that we might pray to, bow down to, or treat as though they were God or any representation that replaces God. A good luck charm is something that replaces God. Of course, any object that is presumed to have special powers replaces God. Sometimes people can even make what their actions or their home a god.

Some people worship those who are accomplished, their building where they go to meet, art, nature, or other objects. Beauty is not bad, and God gave it to us to enjoy, but it can be used to replace God if viewed the wrong way. People can follow things that are eye catching or the accomplished music they hear. That is why concerts are often popular. These things can draw people to them, but they are not God. Some people are so drawn to entertainment type congregations. They will not go anywhere that does not have this. Seeker friendly congregations often have entertaining meetings to draw people and ignore teaching people the truth from the Bible.

The sins of the parents are often passed onto succeeding generations. Their children often follow the traditions of their parents and so continue sinning. We should understand that the Bible says that the parents are not to be punished for the sins of their children and the children are not punished for their parents' sins. So, the curse mentioned does not apply to those who keep God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 24:16 and Ezekiel 18:20). Notice that the blessing is much bigger than the curse. Deuteronomy 5:10 NKJV says, "Showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

The third commandment, Deuteronomy 5:11 NKJV says,

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

The word "take" can also mean to bear or carry according to [Strong's Dictionary](#). The word for vain can mean, "emptiness, vanity, falsehood" according to [Strong's Dictionary](#). This presents a problem for those who think this; commandment only applies to swearing or not using God's name properly. The verse could actually be translated, 'You shall not bear the name of the LORD your God falsely.'

A person who says they believe in God and lives in sin is living a false life. In America, we call these kinds of people two faced. Some say they are hypocrites. Most often, a hypocrite is someone who is leading a double life. Sometimes people believe someone who has sinned and then repents is a hypocrite. They are technically not a hypocrite but are trying to change and do what is right. At least they are trying to do what is right unlike some who do not care how they live and are okay with doing wrong. Most people sin at times and then repent and commit themselves to not do that again. Then God forgives them.

Psalms 103:10-12 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." Those who deliberately live in sin and say they are believers are the true hypocrites. The commandment says that God will not hold them guiltless. They may fool people into thinking they do what is "right and good," but they do not fool God. Yeshua's depiction of these kinds of people is very graphic. Matthew 23:27 NKJV says, "For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." Unbelievers often live a double life and deliberately appear to be good people, but they are not. They may even see themselves as good people, but only by their own standards which are sometimes evil.

People sometimes use God's name in an empty negative way, inappropriately, to cuss with, or to fool others into thinking they will follow through in what they say. They are also bearing God's name inappropriately.

Some people say they cannot say God's real name and instead call God, "The Name." 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 and is pointed as Yě-hō-váh in the Hebrew manuscripts in over 2,300 different manuscripts and can be pointed that way as many as 50 times in just one manuscript. Since God's name is used as Yě-hō-váh 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 believe it is disrespectful not to use God's real name at times and I think Yě-hō-váh honors God for who He is. I do not use Hashem for that reason.

The fourth commandment, Deuteronomy 5:12-15 NKJV says,

"Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day."

The word "observe" in this commandment is the Hebrew word *shamar* which mean to keep or to guard. We are to guard the Sabbath. In our era, there are many people who do not guard the sabbath. Holy means to set it apart. We are to get our work done on 6 days, set the Sabbath apart, and make the Sabbath a day of rest.

Notice that it says that it is a day of rest for everyone, even those who serve us and for our animals. The scripture here qualifies keeping the Sabbath by referring to God's power when God brought them out of Egypt. God's power refers back to God's creation of the heavens and earth in Genesis.

The weekly day of rest or Sabbath is the 7th day, our Friday evening at sunset to Saturday evening at sunset. The biblical day begins in the evening at sunset. Genesis 1:5 NKJV says, "Evening and the morning were the first day." The Sabbath, also known as Shabbat, was instituted at the time of creation. The creation is cited in the commandment in Exodus. Exodus 20:11 NKJV says, "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." Some say that the Sabbath is a Jewish observance, but obviously, the Sabbath was instituted for mankind as a day to set apart at the time of creation.

We need to talk about this frequently because some have been misguided by pagan religion that was passed down into Christianity. Genesis 2:3 NKJV says, "Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." Notice that the commandment in Exodus Chapter 20 references the day of rest that God made holy at the time of creation. Sunday was made a day of rest by Constantine to the pagan Sun god Mithras and passed down into Christianity. God does not want us to mix pagan practice with our faith. Deuteronomy 12:31 NKJV says, "You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods." The word abomination means disgusting. If it is disgusting to God, it should be disgusting to us. We should have a heart for what God says and not do things our own way.

The fifth commandment, Deuteronomy 5:16 NKJV says,

"Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you."

We are to honor both our father and mother. According to Wikipedia, "Honor manifests itself as a code of conduct, and has various elements such as valor, chivalry, honesty, and compassion. It is an abstract concept entailing a perceived quality of worthiness and respectability that affects both the social standing and the self-evaluation of an individual."

So, honoring our parents can mean that we stand up for them, treat them well, are loyal and sincere with them, care about them, give them respect, and affirm them. Most parents deserve some of these things or all of these things unless they are evil. Even parents that are unliked should be treated well to some extent if possible. Discontinuing a relationship with parents because of non-sinful behavior is therefore wrong. Adult children can learn to have a relationship with even difficult parents and honor them.

The sixth commandment, Deuteronomy 5:17 NKJV says, "You shall not murder."

According to Wiki, "Murder is the unlawful killing of another human without justification or valid excuse committed with the necessary intention." There are whole societies that follow foolish ideals and make murder part of the political and religious system. Psalms 73:7 NIV says, "From their callous hearts comes iniquity; their evil imaginations have no limits." In communism and other abusive cultures, they must murder their own people to maintain control. Murder and coveting are the cause of many wars. If people decided not to murder and not want what others have (covet) there would be fewer wars. These commandments are important so learn them. In ancient times, commands that came from the king were often to make sure the king got what he wanted. Instead, God's commandments are given to mankind to help mankind.

Genesis 9:6 NKJV says about murder, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man." Those who murder are to be held accountable. Murder is wrong because people are special and have special abilities given them by God like the ability to create, to think and decide, to learn, to be good and kind, and of course many many more abilities. It makes sense that murder is wrong in the natural for many reasons. Isn't it enough that people are special and deserve dignity and life?

Exodus 21:12-14 says, "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." Those who commit premeditated murder are to be put to death. Even if they go to a safe place (as what the reference to the altar means) they must be taken from there and put to death. Deuteronomy talks about someone fleeing for safety. Deuteronomy 19:11-13 NKJV says, "But if anyone hates his neighbor, lies in wait for him, rises against him and strikes him mortally, so that he dies, and he flees to one of these cities, then the elders of his city shall send and bring him from there, and deliver him over to the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. Your eye shall not

pity him, but you shall put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with you."

The foolish ideals of the Communist Religion.

First of all, any set of ideals is a religion, so Communism is a religion. The basic tenets of Communism were taught by Karl Marx. There are other religions based on how a person acts, but do not believe in a God, for example Taoism. One of the beliefs of modern-day religious Communism is to focus on intentions. They will pick issues that sound like good things to support so people think they are doing good. For example, they will say they can bring equity. It sounds good, but how do they end up doing that? One of their tenets is to create dissatisfaction and revolt. After they murder everyone who does not like their abusive religious system, they have forced equity.

Humanists and atheists often support communism. For example, humanists say they want to improve society. So, in religious atheist countries they suppress and murder people that believe in God because they wrongly believe that atheists make a better society. Like communism, their ideas come at the expense of others. They believe in everyone having all things in common, so people live for the religion of their country.

Communist societies have turned out to be the most murderous people that ever lived, and it is still going on in our era every day. Just 2 atheist countries, Russia and China, murdered some 90 million in the 1900s. By far, their evil has been greater than any good they think they accomplish. When they evangelize others, they will say things like Christians killed people during the Crusades, but that happened some 900 years ago. Christianity only did that for about 200 years of their 2,000-year existence. Atheists will exaggerate and say that millions were killed in the Spanish inquisition. I have read that it was about 32,000. While that is terrible, it does not compare to the millions killed by religious atheist countries. Even atheists would do better in a society that follows the truths of the Bible. Also, atheists and humanists that support communism are not exempt from the persecution put on their society by Religious Communism.

Defending oneself.

People are allowed to defend themselves. Exodus 22:2 NKJV says, "If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed." Countries are allowed to defend themselves against evil murderous aggressors. Sometimes as in the case of World War 2, countries may go up against murderous countries and murderous dictators like Hitler. The United States was able to stop the murderous aggressors of North Korea and Iraq. Iraq was killing its own people with poisonous gas, and North Korea is communist and kills its own people to keep them in line, but the United States was unable to stop the murderous regime of North Vietnam mostly because of communist sympathizers in the United States.

I do not believe most people knew what was going on and why the Democrat, President Kennedy, tried to help the people of Vietnam stave off the evil of the communist regime of North Vietnam. President Kennedy was assassinated by a communist. I once heard a pastor say that the Iraq war was unjustifiable, but he was ignoring the terrible murder that was going on in the country of Iraq. For some reason, a lot was made in the news about weapons of mass destruction instead of the real reason a lot of countries felt Saddam Hussein should be stopped,

namely his murderous agenda. Also, the news fails to report the murderous agenda of communist regimes. When 2 million people were being killed by the communist regime in Cambodia, I did not hear anything about it on our news. The murderous regimes of Russia and China seemed fine with the murder of 2 million people for the sake of communism.

Capital punishment.

Some say that a good God would not keep anyone out of His good future kingdom. I once heard a story about a man who survived the killing of his wife and children and the rape of his daughter by escaping from his house. If you were the one who had to experience the terrible pain and loss caused by this callous killer, would you give the murderer a pass to God's kingdom? God must hold everyone accountable. God has given us each the choice on how we will live and act. Those that do evil must be held accountable for their actions. A good God would not leave those who inflict pain and evil without any consequences. He will accomplish this through a future time of judgement. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "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."

A person can repent, but it must be a true repentance. I once talked to a murderer who blamed his victims. He had not repented of his murder. I heard a story once about a murderer who said, 'I feel terrible about what I did, but not as bad as the family who had to endure the pain for what I did.' I believe he was on death row and to be executed for the murder, so he had nothing to gain by being defensive. It seems he repented; God is the judge.

Murderers were to be put to death, but there had to be more than one witness to a crime. The commandment to put to death the murderer helps prevent murder. Deuteronomy 19:13 NKJV says, "Your eye shall not pity him, but you shall put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with you." Those who oppose capital punishment are opposing good justice. The Bible says we are to protect life (see Genesis 9:6) and in opposing just punishment, they are encouraging murder. A weak justice system is an evil to society. Also, the Bible says we are not to support murderers. Proverbs 28:17 NKJV says, "A man burdened with bloodshed will flee into a pit; let no one help him." While all this may seem like a lot to digest, it is important commandment.

The seventh commandment, Deuteronomy 5:18 NKJV says, "You shall not commit adultery."

Adultery refers to extramarital sex. Single people who engage in extramarital sex undermines the establishment of marital relations. It is rampant in our society. Those who are engaged in this behavior or who have done this in the past can repent and be forgiven. Psalms 103:10-11 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."

Sexual relations with those who are not your spouse cheapens marriage and often destroys the feelings one has for the person who committed the adultery. It can cause the breakup of the

family unit. This brings harm to both husband and wife as well as any children and is detrimental to society. Both in Jewish and Christian circles, the troubles encountered by multiple wives and stepbrothers and sisters has led many Jews and Christians alike to believe that the Bible teaches that having multiple marriage partners is wrong.

I should add that some think this commandment only applies to the extramarital affairs of those who are married. As you can see though, any extramarital sexual relations weaken the family unit.

**The eighth commandment, Deuteronomy 5:19 NKJV says,
"You shall not steal."**

To steal means to take from others what belongs to them, often by stealth. We often think of stealing as done by an individual, but it can be done by businesses and other entities as well as countries who take what belongs to the people. Another word for stealing is the word theft. Wikipedia says that, "Theft is the act of taking another person's property or services without that person's permission or consent with the intent to deprive the rightful owner of it." A person can not only steal personal property but can steal things others provide such as claiming other's work, ideas, writing, etcetera as their own for the purposes of their own personal gain. A person can also steal by deceitfully making themselves look good and others as bad. They are stealing the other person's character.

Some societies can impose themselves on their people and treat people unjustly. The Bible says that those who work are to be given a wage for their work and that they can have their own property, house, and belongings. People are allowed to have the dignity of having a family and raising their own children. Communism tries to enforce equity and takes away people's rights, land, and belongings.

People's lives can be stolen as in the case of kidnapping. The penalty for kidnapping in the Bible is death, and the Bible says that will stop this evil in society. Deuteronomy 24:7 NKJV says, "If a man is found kidnapping any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and mistreats him or sells him, then that kidnapper shall die; and you shall put away the evil from among you."

**The ninth commandment, Deuteronomy 5:20 NKJV says,
"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."**

"Bear" is the Hebrew to speak or testify as a false witness. Some say this only refers to making false testimony about someone, but it should be understood to apply to slandering others. Slander damages a person's character whether it is their work or reputation. Libel is the word used for slander that written in some form whether that is on paper or electronically posted. Speaking falsely about someone or giving false testimony can cause others damage financially, personally, emotionally, and many other ways. Lying is a form of false testimony. Sometimes people will say that it is not a big deal that they lied, but it can cause the above damage and is wrong.

I should note that it is okay to lie in some circumstances in order to save life. Many believers lied in order to save the lives of those endangered by Hitler. Genesis 9:6 NKJV says, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man." Life is special and God created mankind in His "likeness" with special abilities such as the ability to be creative, think and decide, be kind and good and a lot more. In lying to protect life we are protecting people who are special just by the virtue that they are human. The Bible says we are not to protect the life of a murderer though. See the commandment on murder.

**The tenth commandment, Deuteronomy 5:21NKJV says,
"You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."**

To Covet means to want what someone else has, to desire what they have. It does not refer to wanting to work and obtain things legally. We may like what someone else has and go and work for it. Coveting what others have has led to war, various forms of stealing, lead to deceitful behaviors, or taking advantage of others. It can hurt others emotionally when they realize a person's intentions. A testimony to the wisdom of God's commandments is that if people did not covet and did not murder, that would lead to the elimination of most wars.

In Closing,

Also, it is important to understand that the New Testament writers of the Bible including Yeshua said that the Old Testament law was not done away with.

Shaul (Paul) said in Romans 3:31 NKJV, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law."

Yochanan (John) said, in 1 John 3:4 NKJV says, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And in 1 John 3:8 NKJV it says, "He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning."

Ya'akov (James) says in James 2:23-24 NKJV, "And he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only."

Yeshua (Jesus) said in Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

Shaul said that the Old Testament law was not done away with and that it was established, immutable and unvarying. Yochanan said the those who do not follow the law are sinning and that those who do not follow the law are doing the works of the devil. Remember, there was no

New Testament portion when he wrote what he wrote so he must be referring to the Old Testament scriptures. Therefore, when Kefa (Peter) refers to the holy scriptures he is referring to the Old Testament scriptures. knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 2 Peter 1:20-21 NKJV says, "For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Ya'akov said that we must not only have faith to be justified, but the works that go with faith. Yeshua seemingly is talking about the New Testament era when he talks about those who prophesy and do wonders in His name. He tells them that he will tell them to go away from him, those who do not keep the law. Yeshua says in Matthew 7:13 NKJV, "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it." Those who are teaching that God knows my heart, just love, just follow the Holy Spirit, or they are saved by faith will have a difficult awakening when they have to stand before God and He turns them away for not following the law.

More can be said about God's 10 Commandments, and they need to be taught and explained and not just memorized. Start by memorizing them and then learn how to apply them. If the world just followed the 10 Commandments, the world would be a better place. We also need God's other commandments as well. The made-up commandments can make following God difficult. God's Old Testament portion commandments are not difficult the Bible says. Again, Deuteronomy 30:10-11 NIV says, "Obey the LORD your God and keep his commands and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law and turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach." May God enrich your life and keep you, and help you in your endeavors to follow Him.

More commandments from this portion.

Do not make any representation of God.

You shall not make anything to be with Me gods of silver or gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves. Exodus 20:23

An altar of earth you shall make for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep, and your oxen. Exodus 20:24

In every place where I record My name, I will come to you, and I will bless you. Exodus 20:24

And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it. Exodus 20:25

We are to practice modesty, especially at God's altar and at our meetings. "Nor shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it." Exodus 20:26

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

We need to explain why we use God's real name in the Aaronic blessing. Some believe we are not supposed to use God's name, but they are mistaken. 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. Won't you also honor God's name and use His true name with respect at times. The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. Over 2,000 different 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. It is a commandment to put God's name on His people and by not using God's name, some are not keeping this commandment. What an honor it is to be a people of the creator and true God.

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

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ
 יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְךָ
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, 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.

Thank you for being with us today.