



#9 VaYeshev Genesis 37:1-40:23
Torah Teaching
by Moshe Schwab

Names

Ya'akov – Jacob

Kefa – Peter

Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ in the Greek means to be smudged – anointed

Moshe – Moses

Shaul – Paul

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

Yĕhōvāh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)

Y'hudah – Judah

Yochanan – John

Yosef – Joseph

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

Vayeshev - 9th Torah portion

The Torah portion Vayeshev means "and he settled." This portion of the Torah is about Yosef (Joseph) and his family. His brothers went to a trade route and Yosef followed them there. Trade routes were known for sin because of those who passed by on those routes. Yosef was a good man who heard from God, but his brothers didn't like his interference in their lives. Perhaps Yosef felt compelled to try to help them avoid sin.

Instead of welcoming Yosef's help to do what is right, they became hostile towards Yosef and sold him to foreigners to get rid of him and his interference. Just like Yosef perhaps went after them to help them, Yeshua seeks us in order to help us live right and keep God's Old Testament commandments. Will we send Him away like Yosef's brothers did to Yosef? Or will we accept Yeshua's help?

Yeshua said in John 14:16-17 NKJV, "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — the Spirit of truth." God gave us the Torah as a helper but also wants to give us the Holy Spirit to help us. Notice that God's commandments and the Holy Spirit are mentioned together. Both are intended to help us and the gift of the Holy Spirit is intended to help us in life as well as keep God's Old Testament commandments. So those who do not keep God's commandments are sinning. That is why it says in the book of Hebrews that believers who live in sin will be judged harshly. They "insult the Spirit of grace."

Hebrews 10:29-31 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." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Also, those who misuse the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit are sinning. 1 Corinthians 14:39-

40 NKJV says, "Do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order."

Yeshua said of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8 NKJV, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." Our God wants to empower us through the Messiah Yeshua. God's word and the Holy Spirit brings God's goodness and power into our lives. Many people live like God is not there and they are missing out on a powerful relationship with an almighty God. They are like Yosef's brothers who perhaps believe in God, but do not realize the extent of God's ability to work in our lives.

The book of Jasher (pronounced Yasher in Hebrew means upright) and is quoted in the Bible but is not considered inspired by God. In the last portion, we learned about how the book of Jasher tells us that after Isaac dies, Ya'akov gives Esau the option to either take all of Isaac's possessions or the land of Canaan. I pointed out that Ya'akov probably believed that Esau would choose what he could see. The Canaanites still occupied Canaan so it would seem to be an easy choice. I believe that Ya'akov understood the immense value of trusting in God and what God could give him.

It makes sense that trusting in God and what He can do would be the best choice by far, but that is not how Esau saw it and that is how most people live. They trust more in what they can see than in God. People often pick and choose how they will follow God. Instead, we should be dedicated to doing all God tells us to do.

Chanukkah begins this week. Chanukkah means dedication and is called the Feast of Dedication and also the Feast of Lights. The Jewish historian Josephus who lived in the first century called it the "Light Feast." It is a feast which commemorates the rededication of the 2nd Temple after the Greeks desecrated the Temple. The dedication ceremony takes 8 days (Exodus 29:35-37 describes the seven days of consecration; Leviticus 8 describes the 8th day of consecration when fire came down from the sky). The Old Testament believers took their faith seriously and so should we. It also commemorates the pure oil they found that was only enough to last one day but miraculously lasted 8 days. See our article online on our website about [Chanukkah and Yeshua \(Jesus\)](#) on our "Observing the Feasts" page. We observe Chanukkah because it commemorates the victory over the pagan Greeks who opposed the true God and persecuted the believers. It is not a commanded feast.

Also, we talked a little about the Fruit of the Holy Spirit last week. There are evidences (called manifestations in 1 Corinthians) or gifts (called gifts in Romans and Ephesians). They are evidences or gifts of the Holy Spirit. We talked about some of the issues regarding the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit is from a good God, the gifts and the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit and the Fruit of the Holy Spirit are good (see Luke 11:9-13). There are hundreds of scriptures that tell us God's Old Testament Law is good, so why wouldn't the Holy Spirit and the Fruit of the Holy Spirit also be good? Yeshua said that the gift of the Holy Spirit is good.

In the context of talking about the gift of the Holy Spirit, Shaul says that if people want to be ignorant, let them be ignorant. 1 Corinthians 14:38 NKJV says, "But if anyone is ignorant, let

him be ignorant." I do not think God wants us to be ignorant about His spiritual gifts and the Fruit of the Holy Spirit. So, why does he say if anyone wants to be ignorant, let them be ignorant? He does not say this because he wants some people to be ignorant.

Most people that believe in God and want truth, they want to have important spiritual information. His statement is most likely intended for those who do not believe in God or do not want important spiritual information. Also, some people think they have all the information they need. This is particularly true for those who follow religions that do not believe in the Holy Spirit or God's Old Testament commandments. Also, some people do not care about anything except what they want to do whether it be making money, a hobby, or what they want out of life. Some people think that the concept of God is all made up, but we know that is not true.

When Yeshua told the early leadership that the Holy Spirit would work powerfully in their life (see Acts 1:8), they knew He was telling them the truth because of all the things Yeshua did. Yeshua even healed every sickness and disease in the towns He visited! Matthew 9:35 NKJV says, "Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people." Didn't anyone ever tell you about this? If the people of Yeshua's time knew that Yeshua did not do this, they would not have believed in Yeshua (Jesus) the way they did when Kefa told them to repent of their sin, be baptized in Yeshua, and receive the gift of 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."

Acts 2:41 NKJV says,

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

3,000 devout believers received the Messiah Yeshua on that Shavuot. Shaul even said in 1 Corinthians 4:20 NKJV, "For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power." Perhaps, Shaul was making a joke about them being ignorant. Perhaps he was thinking that, "If they do not want the power of God at work in their life, it is their loss." Most certainly, he did not want them to remain ignorant, and most probably he was referring to unbelievers in the true God. We talk about the Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit frequently because the New Testament portion says the believers in the Messiah are supposed to receive the Holy Spirit (like it says in Acts 2:38-39).

Yeshua is a true prophet and the Messiah because he kept the law and taught others to keep the law. Yeshua said in Matthew 5:17-18 NKJV, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled." The earth still exists as of this writing, and not all has been fulfilled yet; there is still

a new heaven and earth to come (see Revelation 21:1).

Anyone who does any sign or wonder and does not teach us to keep God's commandments is a false prophet and 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 and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him." No wonder false religions say the Old Testament is done away with!

Shaul said, the law still stands. Romans 3:31 NKJV says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, **we establish the law.**" Shaul also said in Romans 7:12 NKJV, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good." So those who say the law is not good are lying. Yochanan said that not keeping the law is sin. 1 John 3:4 NKJV says, "**Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.**" Yeshua said He will reject those who do not keep His Old Testament commandments. Matthew 7:23 NKJV says, "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; **depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!**'" Keep God's Old Testament commandments.

The reason some of the scriptures contradict keeping God's Old Testament commandments is because we know the Greeks who hated God's commandments changed the scriptures. Jerome in the 4th century AD says they were tampered with. From the Preface to the Latin Vulgate by Jerome: "There are almost as **many forms of texts** as there are copies. If, on the other hand, we are to glean the truth from a comparison of many, why not go back to the original Greek and **correct the mistakes** introduced by **inaccurate translators**, and the **blundering alterations** of confident but **ignorant critics**, and, further, **all that has been inserted or changed** by copyists more asleep than awake?" Unfortunately, all we have are copies that have been tampered with.

We know that no one would have listened to Yeshua or Shaul if they were not teaching the law! Deuteronomy 13 says we are not to listen to false prophets or for that matter false teachers who do not teach us to keep God's Old Testament commandments. These liars will end up in the lake of fire. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and **all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.**" Do not go there with them.

Do not settle for anything other than the truth. Most of us went to synagogues or churches that did not teach the truths of the Bible. But thank God that we who are in the know, can now follow God the way we are supposed to. Keep at it and do not give up. Keep growing spiritually in the truth; keep God's good law which can help you to understand the best way to live in life and have good success in life.

Joshua 1:7-8 NKJV says,

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of

the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Be at peace in your spiritual walk in life and in all you do. Do not allow tension to rule your life. Tension is often counterproductive because it can cloud our mind. Proverbs 25:28 NKJV says, "Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls." It's true, isn't it? People who allow tensions to rule their life can be a mess personally. Also, people who do not have an organized life can also be a mess. Follow God's truths for life so that you have a better life. Things go better with God.

Again, this important scripture demonstrates God's good intentions for us. Deuteronomy 5:29 NKJV says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" Isn't God good! There are hundreds of scriptures that confirm that God Old Testament commandments are good.

God's commandments and the Holy Spirit work in us powerfully and are good. God gives us light for life.

Psalms 27:1 NKJV says, "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" How did God help the believers back then? Obviously, this has to be referring to God good Old Testament commandments. It is God's Old Testament commandments that are light and truth. Psalms 43:3 NKJV says, "Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me." God's commandments help us to stay on the right path in life. Psalm 119:105 NKJV says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Many people do whatever they think is the right way to live instead of relying on what God the creator told us is best. Isaiah 40:8 NKJV says, "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." Every year, most of the vegetation turns brown and dormant in colder climates, but God's word and His commandments are good forever. There is no season of life or no era of mankind to which they do not apply. God's commandments were good in ancient times and will stand forever. They were words of truth given to us by a good God. Psalms 119:151-152 NKJV says, "You are near, O LORD, and **all Your commandments are truth.** Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that **You have founded them forever.**"

Since God commandments are truths to live by, they help us in many ways in life. God's commandments can be applied to many different situations. For example, just three commandments of the 10 commandments demonstrate that they are from God. If people practiced the 6th commandment, "You shall not murder," the 8th commandment, "You shall not steal," and the 10th commandment, "You shall not covet," there would be fewer wars.

Also, religions that teach murder like the Communist leftist religion are false religions since they break the 6th commandment. The Communist religion is not biblical. The Bible says that people are not to move landmarks (so we are to be allowed to own our land) and are due a

proper wage for what they do. Since everything belongs to the collective people in Communism, the Communist religion steals from the people and does not pay the people properly. Any ideal can be termed a religion, especially those ideals that think the world needs their ideals and radically enforces them. The Communist religions of the 20th century murdered over 100 million of their own people to enforce their religions. Watch out for this religion! Let people know the Communist religion is not biblical and therefore a false religion.

Since God's Old Testament commandments were given by a good God who knows what is best for us, they enlighten us on how to live right, they are truths for life that are better than all the things that money can buy, and warn us so we will have success in life.

Psalms 19:8-11 NKJV says,

The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, **enduring forever**; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

Since God is a just God, He will reward those who want to follow His good commandments with eternal life in His future kingdom. There will be a day of reckoning. To be upright is to keep God's Old Testament commandments. Psalms 37:18 NKJV says, "The LORD knows the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever." So, trust in our God.

Proverbs 3:1-8 NKJV says,

Do not forget my law, but let your heart **keep my commands**; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.

Do not think that your own ideals or the ideals of the worldly will give you satisfaction in life. God knows best, and He wants us to direct us in life with His good ways. They will help you in life.

Here is some more to consider.

Sometimes our impact is more than we think. It can appear to be a drop in the bucket to us, but it can sometimes have a genuine impact on the lives of others and make them stronger spiritually.

Years ago, I met a young man and encouraged with just a few words. Then years later, I met the person again and he told me that the few words I gave him helped him to pursue God and become a faithful believer in Yeshua. I had no idea of the impact I had on his life. So never give up trying to help people to do what is right and good.

There are scriptures in the Bible that can be life changing. We often memorize them and remember them at crucial times in our life. This scripture in Deuteronomy is one of the many

great scriptures that we need to memorize.

Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV says,

You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you.

It tells us to be diligent to keep God's commandments. They are right and good, and God sees if we are keeping them. God's commandments benefit us, they help us to live well.

Just a short verse like this can help us to move forward spiritually in several different ways. We are not to be lazy with our spiritual life but to be diligent, and not take our spiritual lives for granted. We know that at any time in life we may encounter difficult circumstances, or we may need to take a stand and do what is right no matter how we feel. Some people are willing to compromise, but we should be strong and have an actively engaged spiritual life.

The Bible says that God's commandments are right. There is a tendency to define what is right by our own terms instead of how God says to live. Some people think there is nothing wrong with their thinking even though they are okay with disobeying God. They think that there is nothing wrong with the way they act or think instead of valuing what our all-knowing and good God wants us to do. God is right because he is the creator and knows what is best for us.

Since God is good, His commandments are good. Some people value how they treat others and want to do what is good. We know what is good because God told us what is good. We have a value system that is above our ordinary thought process to rely on that holds us to higher standards.

Being invested in doing what is right helps us to avoid personal failures in life. Desiring what is truly good leads us in the right direction in how we process what we think and do, or at least it should do that. Because of that, God's commandments can benefit us greatly. Regardless, doing what God says is important spiritually.

We are to aspire and struggle to please God. Since God cares about us and is a good God, we can form a loving attachment to our Creator. If someone treats you with kindness, you are often aware of their goodness. Even now I recall a dear sweet aunt of mine holding my hand when I was little and encouraging me on with kind words. God also wants us to succeed. Isaiah 41:10 NKJV says, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

There are many good approaches on to how to proceed in life. Some take a little longer to arrive at a good process for life, but it is important that we stay dedicated to God and truth to achieve a godly lifestyle.

Not all is straightforward in life, but the root of our life needs to be established in truth.

Psalms 1:1-3 NKJV says,

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a

tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season.

Happier is the person who does not live by His own standards instead of God's truths in the Bible. They do not live in outright rebellion to God, and they do not ridicule what is right and true. They consider God's law in all that they do. Their lives produce what is godly and good.

I have done many different things in my life, but at the core of my life was following God and His word. I started out working in research, then robotics, and then seismology which involves the surface movement of the earth. What a strange path, but no matter what we do, we need to have a good basis for life. After my one cousin became a believer, he successfully became a mainframe computer expert and would pray before each job. One time he was called on to help two computer experts who had been working on a large computer system for 24 hours straight. He prayed and it was fixed in 10 minutes. Our paths are not only better because God's ways are best, but God can empower our lives.

Often, we think that we achieve something by listening, but it is not just by listening that we truly become accomplished.

We often study hard at our jobs in order to do a great job for our customers or the company we work for. Our study was not meant to just be head knowledge but so we could know how to do our work and do it best. When I began my seismology work, that was only the beginning of working at and studying for my job. I even had to write an important study on the work I did. So, I had to know what I was doing, and the other nuances and effects of the ways rock and soil are affected.

Most of all, do we work at doing what is right and good? Are we accomplished at walking in God's ways? Deuteronomy 8:6 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him." We are to commit our lives to do what God says, to do that in all we do, and we walk in His ways. It says we are to fear God. There are a lot of people who do not fear the consequences of their actions. They do not care how they affect others. The reason we need police is so people will not cause others harm. The people who do not want police around are often those who will cause others harm if no one is around to stop them. But God is not the police. He asks us to do what is right and good for our own well-being and the well-being of others. He must be just though, and those who cause pain to others through sin will have to stand before Him and be judged someday. 2 Peter 2:9 NKJV says, "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment." God does not want people to fail and live in sin. He will help you overcome, but you need to be committed to be led by God's commandments.

The picture or direction we need to follow becomes more clear when we apply ourselves.

Some people say they cannot keep God's commandments, but the Bible says God's commandments are not hard or burdensome. Deuteronomy 30:11 ESV says, "For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off." Yochanan also says the same thing. 1 John 5:2-3 NKJV says, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." We are part of God's family if we act like His children.

When we first try doing something that requires skill, we have to develop our ability to do the task. When I first began shooting the basketball when I was young, I had trouble getting the ball over the rim to make a basket, but I kept at it. By the time I was a young man, I could make quite a few basketball shots in a row. In the same way, we have to keep working at doing what is right. When we fail, we commit ourselves to doing what is right again. When a baby starts to walk, they fall down over and over. They do not stay down and crawl for the rest of their life.

We do what is right and then we see the good results. For example, those who hurt others are put in jail. That is the consequence of doing evil. As we keep God's commandments, it will become clearer that doing what is right and good is the best way to live, but we have to be committed. Every time we fail, we need to commit ourselves to doing what is right. We should have contempt for our sin and a desire to do what is right and good. Mostly, we need to focus on ourselves and not others. We cannot always help others. When we try to help others, we need to be patient and kind. We also will fail at times. Psalms 119:104-105 NKJV says, "Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." God's ways light our path and help us in life. Won't you make a decision this Chanukkah season to be more committed than ever.

Torah Teaching

VaYeshev means, "and he settled." This portion begins by telling us about Ya'akov's love for his son Yosef and the long-sleeved coat he made for him when he was seventeen. One time, Yosef reported on his brothers and also his brothers became jealous of their father's favoritism. Yosef also had a couple dreams where his brothers prostrated themselves to him and they hated Yosef even more.

Jealousy can cause sin.

His brothers could not even speak peaceably to him because of their feelings toward Yosef. The Bible in this portion teaches a valuable lesson to parents about favoritism. Children will get jealous if parents show favoritism. Often there is rivalry between the children in a family even without favoritism. So, try not to show favoritism towards your children.

In this tragic portion we see the destructive nature of sibling rivalry, jealousy, and worldly thinking. We also see a lack of trust by Yosef's (Joseph) family in God's leading through Yosef's dreams. Ya'akov kept what Yosef said in mind. We also see how God favored and protected his prophet Yosef. This should remind us that God can protect His people and give them favor even in difficult situations, and that the prophetic can be instrumental in helping God's people.

I have been amazed at what God will do for us if we will follow how He is leading us. Perhaps we are making every effort to live right. If things are not going well, God can turn that around for us and can bless us in many different ways just like God did for Yosef. Sometimes I just think of something, and it just happens. This one time I was at the store, and I was looking at an expensive jacket that was marked down from \$500 to \$250. I thought to

myself, "Too bad it's not \$50." Two months later I was at the same store, and it was marked down to \$50. My wife was with me, and she bought the same style of jacket too for \$50. There were only a few left and they just happened to have ones that fit us, and they were in the colors we wanted! My size is difficult to find because I am tall. It was no coincidence to me. I knew it was God.

Ya'akov sends Yosef to see how his brothers are doing and when his brothers saw him in the distance, they plotted to kill him. When he arrived, they threw him into a cistern and took his long-sleeved coat. A caravan was coming at the time, so instead of killing him, they sold Yosef to them, and the caravan went on toward Egypt. His brothers concocted a lie and took his coat and put goats' blood on it, and they let their father come to the conclusion that he must have been killed by a wild animal. Ya'akov was devastated.

Then the portion talks some about Y'hudah and his children. Tamar was not given proper treatment by Y'hudah's family, and she entices Y'hudah to sleep with her and she has a child by him.

In the meantime, Yosef becomes a servant of Potiphar, who was a captain of Pharaoh's guard. God favored everything that Yosef did, and he was appointed to manage Potiphar's household. Since he was so closely attached to the leadership of Egypt, he must have also been known by Pharaoh. Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Yosef, but he would not comply, so she pulled off his garment when he fled and accused him of trying to sleep with her. Yosef ends up in prison, instead of being put to death. So, it seems Potiphar probably did not believe the accusations being made. God gives favor to Yosef, and he is put Yosef in charge of the prisoners. God just keeps blessing Yosef even in difficult times.

Pharaoh became angry with his baker and cup bearer and put them in prison. They had dreams that Yosef interpreted for them. He told the cup bearer that his position would be restored and the baker that he would be put to death. Yosef asked the cup bearer to remember him. Yosef's predictions turned out as expected, but the cup bearer forgot about Yosef's interpretation of his dream. The cup bearer eventually remembers Yosef.

Remembering is important.

There are things in life we need to remember and that is why we have history. For example, at one time, the colonies of the United States were being taken advantage of by the King of England. The founders of the United States tried to set up a form of government where the people would not be taken advantage of by its leaders. It is important to remember our beginnings and how the United States has tried to treat each person, equally and justly. Otherwise, we might be confused by those who would lie about our country. We learn important things from history so we do not make the same mistakes over and over again. The United States was formed to protect the rights of the people. Although not perfect, the United States has tried to create an environment of safety, justice, and prosperity.

These are the introductions to our Declaration and Constitution.

Preamble to the United States Declaration of Independence

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that

they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Preamble to the United States Constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America. (from Archives.GOV)

We find out in the subsequent portions that God works out Yosef's situation, and Yosef even becomes second to Pharaoh, the leader of Egypt. Absolutely amazing, isn't it! It took time for all this to evolve. It must have been difficult for Yosef, but he remains faithful to God. He had a relationship with God, and he must have trusted that God would work things out. He must have also thought that the dream he had from God about his brothers would come to pass.

The associated gifts of the Holy Spirit are important.

That just goes to show you how important the gifts of the Holy Spirit are. That is why we talk about them. One of the gifts that Yosef received was a word of knowledge that is also a gift of the Holy Spirit. Shaul tells us that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are very important. 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Pursue love, and **desire spiritual gifts**, but especially that you may prophesy." Some say we are not supposed to hear from God, but Shaul says that what he is saying is a commandment of God in the context. 1 Corinthians 14:37 NKJV says, "Let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord." So, the people who are saying we shouldn't hear from God are disobeying God.

We are supposed to be having words of prophecy in our meetings. That's what they did in the early Messianic congregations; 1 Corinthians 14:26 NKJV says, "Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification." The reason Shaul says that all things are to build up the believers is because it seems some were making the meetings laborious; in the context, Shaul puts limits on what they do, and we also need to have meetings that divide up time between activities and that are orderly. 1 Corinthians 14:39-40 NKJV says, "Do not forbid to speak with tongues. **Let all things be done decently and in order.**"

What God tells us through the prophetic should not go against the truths of the Bible. The Bible tells us to test what is spoken. 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 says, "Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil." Evil is not keeping God's commandments. Prophecies should encourage us. 1 Corinthians 14:3 NKJV says, "But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men." The people who think prophecy is just for telling the future are wrong.

If God says to be strong in His prophecy, that is a word of encouragement. If it happens that some testing comes after that, it was meant as a prophecy for something we would have to face. In either case, it was encouragement. Making up prophecy or making up what will happen **is wrong**. If we are speaking prophecy, we are to speak what God says and **NOT**

what's on our mind.

Look what the prophetic did in the case of Yosef. He saved the lives of his family and the lives of the people in Egypt and all around that area. The prophetic is powerful. God worked out things for all the people of that region through his prophetic gifting.

Shaul tells us that God can work out things in our lives. Just like God worked out things for the good of Yosef and eventually for his whole family. We know that God can also work out the situations in our lives and bring good. Romans 8:28 NKJV says, "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Stay faithful and seek all of God's spiritual gifts (see Romans 12:4-8, Ephesians 4:11, and 1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

The Haftarah for VaYeshev is Amos 2:6-3:8. Amos was from Judah but prophesied to the northern kingdom of Israel. Amos predicts doom for the northern kingdom's neighbors in the beginning of the book of Amos. Then, he predicts God's judgment on the northern kingdom of Israel.

Northern Israel is treating good people badly and the poor badly, they are committing sexual sins, and they are drinking wine in their meeting places. God destroyed the Emori and brought Israel out of Egypt and into the Emori's land. Those who were not keeping God's commandments caused the Nazirites to sin and silenced the prophets. Instead, they should have valued their relationship with God. Their own strength will not save them. Then God uses some examples of cause and effect to show why they are doomed.

They would not listen to the prophet of God, just like Yosef's brothers did not listen to Yosef. So, northern Israel would bring trouble on themselves for not obeying God. We should always remember that God will restore and forgive us if we will change and do what is right and good.

It says in Amos 2:12 NKJV, "But you gave the Nazirites wine to drink, and commanded the prophets saying, 'Do not prophesy!'" It says in 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." It is the same for some in our time, isn't it? People say you cannot prophesy. Guess what, they are contradicting the Bible and deciding they do not need the timely encouragement of God. 1 Corinthians 14:3 NKJV says, "But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men."

In this portion we see the destructive nature of worldly thinking and the end result of pushing away of God's words given through the prophetic. Ya'akov and his family suffered because they did not trust Yosef's words from God. Northern Israel did worse and was completely destroyed because they did not listen to the prophets. God will work out His will. We each have the opportunity to decide that we will be part of what our good God wants and stand strong for our faith. If we do not do it, God may have to find someone else to do His work if we will not do it. In this portion, through the prophetic, God saved a whole region from disaster; God was able to do that because Yosef was willing to stand for God, do what is right, and be bold enough to trust in what God told him.

**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.)**

Parents are to avoid favoritism and cause jealousy. Genesis 37:3.

Jealousy can lead to sin. Genesis 37:18-25.

Selling a person into slavery is wrong. Exodus 21:16.

Lying can cause great pain. Genesis 37:33-34.

God knows what will happen and can warn us. We should use what God tells us with wisdom. Perhaps Yosef's dreams helped him to get through the terrible situations that he faced. Genesis 37:5-11.

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

ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God, which is pronounced, Yě-hō-váh. Yě-hō-váh is used 6,521 times in the Old Testament portion according to Strong's Dictionary. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name. So, why not use God's real name? According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. In that verse and everywhere we see a name for God in all capitals (in some of our Bibles) it is this exclusive name for God, Yě-hō-váh. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah which means to exist. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. He is our eternal God and creator. I want to honor God's name. Will you also honor God's name?

Some people call God Hashem which means "the name." They dishonor God's name by not using His name (see Deuteronomy 29:20). When we honor someone, we use their name in an appropriate way. Christians for the most part do not use the true name of God. Why not begin using His true name and honor Him? Do not be afraid to use God's real name with respect. I say this in order to encourage you to use God's real name because it points to God being our eternal creator.

The ancient rabbis say that is God's name. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. I have seen God's name pointed as Yě-hō-váh in the Aleppo Codex. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה).

Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people. So, let's put God's name on His people.

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ
יְאֹר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחֲנֶךָ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׁם 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.