



#16 Beshalach Exodus 13:17-17:16

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
Yēhōvāh – God's real name forever (Ex. 3:15)
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
Beshalach – the 16th Torah portion
(We also use transliterations from Hebrew)

The portion for today is Beshalach and means, "when he let go." This portion begins with Pharaoh letting Israel go and God leading Israel to the Suf Sea which we now know is the Gulf of Aqaba. Since the rediscovery of where Israel crossed the sea, there have been many videos made about it, and they even include chariot artifacts strewn on the bottom of the sea at the crossing point.

I would like to begin with some reasoning on what motivates us. Most people are drawn to ideas that will benefit them in some way. That is a good thing because what we pursue is often the solution to what we need to do in order to take proper care of ourselves and our other important responsibilities. What we pursue also includes what desires we have or want in life. Sometimes we can deviate from a properly applied focus that we need in life to maintain our life properly. We all have ideas on what we want in life, and sometimes what we want is not in reality all we should be doing or trying to accomplish.

That can lead to dissatisfaction and an endless pursuit of things in life that will never bring true satisfaction. Proverbs 3:1-2 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." I find it particularly interesting that God's commandments help us to have peace in life. I had a cousin who was very intelligent and accomplished in life. He was also very wealthy and had all he wanted in life but was very dissatisfied with life. After he believed in God and began following God's commandments he told me he now loved life. Isn't that amazing!

Another very wealthy person told me that all she had was meaningless. When I entered her home there was a four-foot-wide staircase to the left that was six foot wide at the bottom and life size portraits along the staircase. Why she told me that I do not know. Perhaps it was so I could share this with you. Some people dislike those who have a lot of money and say they are taking advantage of us. As you can see, money cannot buy happiness, but believing in God and keeping His commandments can do what no money can buy. Rich or poor, those who believe in God and keep His commandments can have a more fulfilled life. Believing in God is not the opiate of the masses as some say. Those who say that are deluded.

The word translated "blessed" in the following verses is the word "happy" in the Hebrew manuscript of Matthew.

Yeshua said in Matthew 5:3-10 NKJV,

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

So, happy are the meek and happy are those who want to do what is right (to be righteous is to do what is right).

Many people focus on what most motivates them. They then put all their effort and energy into that and develop themselves along those lines. Their focus tends to lean towards what motivates them and they often do not look for other things in life other than what motivates them. The problem with this line of reasoning and action then results in a very narrow way to achieve what is motivating us, and it often excludes the spiritual matters of life for many people.

Most of our motivation in life concerns the basic needs of life, our friendships and our family, what encourages us whether that be positive feedback from others or personal success. If we do not include the spiritual side of life among our motivational ideals, we then end up with a low spiritual standard for life. Since you are reading or listening to this teaching, I assume you are somewhat motivated to find out more about God or even very motivated spirituality. That is very good because the Bible has been proven to improve our self-worth, our motivational process, and life in general. The principles from the Bible have improved people's lives for thousands of years and have provided a sound basis for how to live life. Psalms 33:11 NKJV says, "The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations."

Perhaps some of you have never considered the fact that God's commandments are good advice to all people forever. God has given us a good plan for life through His good counsel on how to live life. Years ago, some young people realized this and tried to get into biblically based programs in order to get their life going in the right direction. We do not have to get into a special program to accomplish this. We can simply commit our life to doing things God's way and most of the time we will see great results if we do not give up learning and growing spiritually.

Respect for God and His commandments help us to obtain the wisdom we need for life. That is why God's commandments are referred to as wisdom (see Deuteronomy 4:6). Psalms 111:10 NKJV says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments." When we experience the wisdom we learn from following God's counsel for life, we are often extremely grateful for it. Psalms 119:111 NKJV says, "Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart." God's commandments were good in ancient times, are good for our present times, and will always be good. 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."

Are we engrained in our ways? Is what we do in life about being comfortable at the expense of finding truth? Engrained means the person we have become. People tend to get engrained in their own ways. Some people do that at the expense of finding the spiritual things in life. Spiritual verities, (truths for life) are more important than what they realize. I hope that you will be willing to learn and grow in spiritual truth for your benefit and for the benefit of those you care about or know. The following scripture in Joshua tells us to be strong spiritually because it will help us in life. We to keep God's Old Testament commandments so we will have success in life.

Joshua 1:6-8 NKJV says,

Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 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.

No wonder Yeshua told us to keep God's Old Testament commandments! They are for our good. Yeshua said in Matthew 5:19 NKJV, "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Those who keep God's commandments treat God for who He is, the eternal God and creator, and they become part of God's family. Isaiah 63:16 NKJV says, "You, O LORD, are our Father; our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name." Yochanan says that God is the Father of those who keep His commandments. 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." He is quoting Deuteronomy 30:11 NIV which says, "Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you." God's Old Testament commandments are not too difficult because God gave us His good counsel to help us to prosper, have success, and have peace!

They are words given to us by a good God. To fear God means to give Him the respect He deserves as creator and provider. Deuteronomy 10:12-13 NKJV says, "Fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good. God is looking out for your good! God the creator did not leave us on our own to figure out things for ourselves. If only people would listen to God and obey Him. This is one of my favorite scriptures. 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!"

God's commandments are a light for a dark world and a light for every individual in the world. 2 Peter 1:19-21 NKJV says, "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 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." God's scriptures were given to holy men who wrote down what God told them to write down. They were not made up by people but given by God to help mankind, 'for our good.' Why has the Bible been the most popular book ever written? It is because it really has helped people to have a better life.

We need to be open towards the truths of the Bible and a better way to live. Why keep pursuing only the things we are attracted to when we might be most benefited by changing how we live through the scriptures that have been documented to help people and even save lives for thousands of years. Wouldn't it be worth your while to improve your life and wellbeing? What if doing things God's way results in more satisfaction and happiness? Isn't it worth a try? I have experienced the goodness of God through His Old Testament commandments, and you can too. If I can do it, you can do it. Learning and growing spiritually can lead to a lifelong process of personal satisfaction and finding truth in life.

God's counsel are His lovingkindness and truths for life. Psalms 40:11 NKJV says, "Do not withhold Your tender mercies from me, O LORD; let Your lovingkindness and Your truth continually preserve me." Desire to keep God's truths. Psalms 86:11 NKJV says, "Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth." Choose God's good ways for life. Psalms 119:30 NKJV says, "I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me." God's law contains the truths we need for life. Psalms 119:142 NKJV says, "Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth."

Growing and learning the spiritual ways of life.

Examine our lives on a regular basis to make sure we are living right. People can have many different ideas and opinions on what is right. So, we need to qualify what we mean. The Bible says that God's commandments are "right." Let's look at this often-quoted scripture again.

Deuteronomy 6:17-18 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.

So, it is God's commandments that are what is right to do, and they are good.

When we see the word diligent, some of us may think of the scriptures in Psalms where it appears to refer to Deuteronomy 6:17-18.

Psalms 119:1-4 NKJV says,

You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently. Oh, that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes! Then I would not be ashamed, when I look into all Your commandments.

Of course, we then must probably think that is what Shaul is referring to in his letter to Timothy.

2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV says,

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Shaul is referring to the scriptures in Deuteronomy and Psalms and is telling Timothy that he is to remind the believers to teach the Torah, the Old Testament commandments. In order to be approved to God and not be ashamed, we must be diligent to keep the Torah. The term for rightly dividing could refer to reading the Greek correctly as in the old Greek manuscripts, the

words were run together. In the Hebrew, the words are separate. For example, even the Dead Sea Scrolls show the Hebrews words separately and not run together. So, it has been speculated that to rightly divide the word of God is to understand the scriptures properly. That is probably the intention of Shaul.

That fits with what Yeshua taught about the Torah, the Old Testament law.

Matthew 5:17-20 NKJV says,

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. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Yeshua says that the law will not be done away with until the earth passes away. The earth still exists. And Yeshua said that those who do not teach people to keep God's Old Testament commandments will be worthless compared to those who teach the law. Some of the leadership in Israel at that time was making up man-made commandments (most notably, the Sanhedrin which was the governing body in Israel). They were making exceptions to God's commandments at that time and Matthew 15 is a record of that. At the conclusion of Yeshua's argument in Matthew 15:9 NKJV Yeshua said, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

Yeshua could even be cryptically saying in Matthew 5 that the little Hebrew decorations on the letters (the jot or tittle He refers to) are therefore worth more than those who do not teach people to keep the law. Therefore, those who do not teach the law will not exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees and will not enter the kingdom of heaven. The Sanhedrin and the judges in each city were responsible for hearing cases at both the local levels and at Jerusalem. They formed man-made laws to define things such as what could be done on the Sabbath and on other issues. They made God's commandments difficult to follow and overreached their responsibility in doing so. 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." In Matthew 23:1, some of the Hebrew manuscripts of Matthew says to follow Moshe (namely, God's laws) and not all the extra religious laws of those who impose them.

We are not to contrive what we think is right but keep God's good commandments. Proverbs 12:15 NKJV says, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise." The Bible tells us what is wise. This is a foundational scripture. Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' So, Proverbs is not talking about the wisdom of those seemingly worldly wise, but the wisdom of God's commandments. It is not talking about following your own wise thoughts or your heart. Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Sometimes our heart is right, but at other times it can be

desperately wicked. We are to follow God's commandments and not what someone thinks is right unless it is what God says we are to do.

People can have all kinds of ideas on life. They may think they are above accepting God and God's good commandments. They may think they cannot change or simply refuse to change. Some people just do whatever they want to do as long as they do not get thrown in jail. Some think there are no truths for life. People can come up with all kinds of excuses to not accept truth or change their life for the better.

I have been in the car with people who thought they could get away with driving fast. They were taking our lives at risk. One time I got passed up by someone who was driving recklessly fast on the freeway and everyone on the freeway had to drive around him after he capsized. The Bible tells us that we are created in God's likeness (see Genesis 1:26), namely with the ability to be creative, to care about others, to do good work, and so much more. Therefore, we are supposed to value life and being reckless is wrong. His truck had turned over, and he was hanging upside down in his truck. You might think you will get away with what your heart tells you to do, but that is not always true. But living how God says we should live is always the best way to live.

We need to view God for who He is. Since God is the creator, we need to follow how He says is the best way to live. People tend to come up with all kinds of ideas on life. We could think of this as a filter. Perhaps someone is the kind of person who enjoys being reckless so they will think that following the norms in life and following God's commandments are not for them because they apply their reckless identity to life. They do not realize that they could be the person who got hurt and was hanging upside down in his truck. People can tend to make vows to themselves and apply them to their life.

One person I know of was dominated by his mother and vowed that no woman was ever going to run his life. That ended up being a big problem after he got married. People will learn cultural norms and apply them to life, to their marriage, and other things in life instead of how God tells us to live. What kinds of vows, ideas, or values do you hold onto that keep you from treating others right and the way God wants us to treat others? We have to learn how to form godly behaviors and discipline ourselves in order to treat others right. The Holy Spirit will help us, but we can be overriding the help of the Holy Spirit if we do not discipline ourselves or let wrong ideas control us. Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."

What keeps you from accepting the Creator's commandments? Of course, wrong teaching is a big part of not accepting God's commandments. For example, no sooner do some read that Yeshua said God's Old Testament commandments are not done away with than these false teachers contradict what He just said. The context of the scripture even says the lettering will not be done away even to the smallest detail; it will not be done away with while the earth exists and will not be done away with until all is fulfilled. Not everything has been fulfilled yet and by the way, the earth still exists.

I sometimes will say, why would God's good commandments be done away with as some think? Is God a liar or has He changed His mind? Numbers 23:19 NKJV says, "God is not a man, that

He should lie." God is a good and God has our best intentions at heart, so His commandments are not done away with. Deuteronomy 10:12-13 NKJV says, "Fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good." God's commandments are for our own good!

It says there in Deuteronomy that we are to walk in His ways and keep His commandments. Ephesians 4:1 NKJV says, "Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called." How are we supposed to walk? What did it say in Deuteronomy? We are to walk in God's ways, His commandments. Shaul knew the Torah and when he taught people about God, he was teaching them concepts from the Torah. God does not change, and He is still good, and His commandments are still good. Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." God did not have to teach us observable science because he gave us eyes, ears, and brains. We need His commandments for life. They are like the operating manual for life.

Light clarifies our thinking, corrects our thinking. And can give us direction in life.

Shaul says in Ephesians 5:8 NKJV, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." We are supposed to walk as God's people. We are to keep His good commandments which are truths for life. We have God's light to help lead us in life.

Psalms 43:3 NKJV says, "Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me." Psalms 119:151 NKJV says, "You are near, O LORD, and all Your commandments are truth." God's commandments are good and demonstrate His lovingkindness towards mankind. Psalms 26:3 NKJV says, "For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth." Remember, we said that our walk refers to keeping God's commandments. It says that he walked in God's truth.

Because God's commandments are truths for life, they give us good direction on how to live. Proverbs 6:23 NKJV says, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light." So, they keep us on a better path in life. Psalms 119:105 NKJV says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Proverbs 3 has a lot of good things to teach us.

Proverbs 3:1-8 NKJV says,

My son, 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.

Proverbs 3 tells us to not to forget God's laws.

Instead of following our own heart, follow God's commands.

God's commands can lead to a longer life, and a more peace filled life.

Others will appreciate our godly lifestyle when we follow God's instructions.

Trust in God and not in our own ideas or understanding.

Acknowledge who God is and accept what He teaches us.
 Do not think we know better than God.
 Understand that God the creator knows what is best.
 Trust in God's wisdom and turn away from evil.
 Trust that God will give you healing and refreshment in life through His law.

We aim at good fruit in life, so we emulate (imitate) the behaviors and actions that our good God wants for us. Fruit in the Bible is often used for the results that our life produces. Just like the product of a tree is its fruit, our life produces fruit of some kind. We want our life to copy the goodness of God and produce good fruit. We can see the goodness of God through what He has done for us. God showed His love for us through His good commandments and wants us to return His love by keeping His commandments. He is like a good father who wants us to succeed in life. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always."

God wants us to be His people and wants what is best for us. Perhaps this next scripture also refers to us being his blessed people forever. 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!" We see the goodness of God in this scripture of hope. Since God wants what is best for us, we should also want what is best for others and want what is good for others.

God is faithful, keeps His word, is forgiving, and rewards those who do good and keep God's commandments. Deuteronomy 7:9 NKJV says, "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments." Daniel 9:4 NKJV says, "And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, 'O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments.'" God is caring and we should also be a caring person who keeps our word. We should seek reconciliation when possible, just as God wants us to reconcile with Him. God wants what is good for us and we should want what is good and best for others and if possible, help others who can use our help in life both with the things of life or spiritually.

God gives us blessings in life through His commandments, the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua, and as the world's provider. We are a blessed people. Psalm 112:1 NKJV says, "Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments." We have good judgment and knowledge through God. Psalms 119:66 NKJV says, "Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe Your commandments." What God has given us is wonderful and God gives us understanding for life. Psalms 119:129-130 says, "Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." The creator God is our provider. Psalms 104:10-13 NKJV says, "He sends the springs into the valleys; they flow among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. By them the birds of the heavens have their home; they sing among the branches. He waters the hills from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works." God brings blessings to the world, and we should want to be a people who are a blessing to others and bring blessings by how we live.

God's commandments teach us how to be good. Leviticus 19:18-19 NKJV says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. You shall keep My statutes." As we learn and keep God's commandments, we learn to love others as ourselves. Psalms 107:9 NKJV "For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness." Most people long for goodness to triumph. That is why people are attracted to movies that have a hero in them. In a way, God is our hero who helps us to do what is right and good. So, as believers, we want other people to also have personal and spiritual success. God wants us to succeed. Isaiah 48:18 NKJV says, "Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea." There are probably thousands of scriptures that demonstrate the goodness of God. We should be willing to learn how to be a people who follow God and emulate the goodness of God.

The 13 Attributes of God.

The ancient Rabbis have given us a good way to understand the goodness of God through what they term as, The 13 Attributes of God. These are not the only attributes of God, but they can show us the goodness of God. The Rabbis recognize the 13 attributes of God from:

Exodus 34:6-7 NKJV which says,

The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.

There are different interpretations of these scriptures. The ancient Jewish Rabbi Rashi also gave us an interpretation of these scriptures. This scripture begins with the name of God which is Yě-hō-váh. Some say we cannot use God's real name that is used over 6,000 times in the Bible. God's name is pointed in over 2,000 different manuscripts as Yě-hō-váh. So, it is used a lot in the Bible, and we see people greeting each other in the name of Yě-hō-váh in the Bible. The ancient rabbis also say that is the way to pronounce God's name. Also, we are to put God's name on His people according to Numbers 6:27. If we are not using God's name then we are not putting God's name on His people. I have numbered each word that pertains to The 13 Attributes of God. My thoughts on the attributes of God are not the same as Rashi's understanding. Like I said, there are a number of ways these scriptures have been understood. Again, these words are taken from Exodus 34:6-7.

(1) Yě-hō-váh, (2) Yě-hō-váh

They are the first two words of these scriptures. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym from the Hebrew verb to exist and means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. This demonstrates the all-powerful and creator God who has provided all we need for life through His creation, His commandments, and the Holy Spirit that is given to believers in Yeshua. By knowing God's name, we can know the goodness of God through what His name means. Perhaps it shows us that He is a benevolent and good King of the universe and perhaps God's name is repeated to demonstrate unequivocally who God is, the creator and king of the universe. Because of who God is, this could refer to any of God's

characteristics. Since the context has to do with God's mercy, we would assume that these scriptures in Exodus have mostly to do with God's mercy.

(3) God (4) Merciful (5) Gracious

The one God and creator, "who was, is, and will be", gives mercy and grace to mankind. God has always wanted mankind to be blessed and benefit from His goodness. So, God gives mankind mercy to grow spiritually and get back on track when we fail. Isaiah 1:18-19 says, "'Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient.'"

God has given mankind His grace, His favor since the inception of time. We see the ancient believers passing down God's commandments and following God's commandments. Noah who walked with God (see Genesis 6:9) and Abraham kept the Torah according to Genesis 26:5. To walk with God is to keep His commandments. Deuteronomy 5:33 NKJV says, "You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you." Those who accept God, His commandments, and the Holy Spirit through the Messiah in this present era follow the ancient believers like Noah and Abraham and the ancient believers of Israel and accept His help and favor. Saul sees us joining the ancient believers. Ephesians 2:19-20 NKJV says, "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."

We are no longer foreigners to the believers of Israel and the ancient believing Gentiles like Noah and Abraham etcetera. Without the ancient "sent ones" (the word apostle means sent one), prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel to bring God's people back to God, we would have no Bible or Messiah. Yeshua is that "sent one" referred to by Moshe. He came to help us come back to God and His Old Testament commandments. Deuteronomy 18:15 NKJV says, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear." Moshe taught the people the Law and so did Yeshua.

(6) Longsuffering

God is slow to anger unlike many people who react rashly or harshly. Rabbi Kefa describes God's longsuffering. 2 Peter 3:8-9 NKJV says, "But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

(7) Abounding in Goodness

The Hebrew uses the words great kindness for "abounding in goodness." This could be thought of as great lovingkindness. God has graciously given us His commandments to help us in life. We should feel encouraged to make every effort to do things God's way and keep His commandments which can bring blessing to our lives. God has shown His

great goodness towards mankind and will also forgive us if we repent and do things God's good ways.

Also, we should want to accept the Messiah Yeshua and His good gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is another way that God has shown great kindness towards mankind. Yeshua tells us we can trust God to give us a good gift. Luke 11:11-13 NKJV says, "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" God abounds in goodness, and we should be a people who abound in goodness. Doing what is "good" is to keep God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). In this Messianic era, we are to also listen to the Holy Spirit. Remember, the Holy Spirit will not tell you to disobey God's commandments.

(8) And Truth

Because God is the creator, He knows what is best for us and has given us good truths for life. God has our best interests at heart because is a good. Again, Psalms 26:3 NKJV says, "For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth." To walk in truth is to keep God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 5:33). God's commandments have been applied by believers for thousands of years and will always be what is best for us and always be truth. Psalms 119:160 NKJV says, "The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever. We can trust in God and His commandments. Isaiah 26:3-4 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever." Through trust in God's commandments, we can have greater satisfaction in life and peace. We can trust in God's truths for life.

(9) keeping Mercy for Thousands,

The word for keeping here is the Hebrew word to preserve. God has lovingkindness for all who guard His commandments. This scripture refers to the ability of God. God is not limited in ability like mankind is. So, we can count on God's blessings. Nehemiah 1:5 NKJV says, "And I said: 'I pray, LORD God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments.' Covenant is another way of saying agreement. People misunderstand that word. We make agreements all the time, but the most important decision we will make is to make an agreement with God to believe and follow what He teaches us. God can do what He says He will do and is able and willing to do what he says He will do, unlike mankind that has limited patience and ability.

(10) Forgiving iniquity (11) Transgression (12) and Sin.

God will remove the eternal punishment due for sin. We may still have to deal with the consequences for our sin in life, but if we turn our life around, God will forgive us.

Psalms 103:11-13 NKJV says,

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He

removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him."

We are to have a deep respect for God. Those who fall into sin often have a high opinion of themselves instead of having a deep respect for God and who He is. God is the only creator and God, and we are not.

When we do not keep God's commandments we commit transgressions against the goodness of God. Sin is evil because it is the rejection of God's all-knowing goodness through His commandments. God's commandments are truths to live by. God wants what is best for us. This is another foundational scripture. Deuteronomy 10:13 NKJV says, "Keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good."

(13) By No Means Clearing the Guilty.

Some do not like that God holds those who live in sin accountable. God would not be a just God if He did not hold people accountable for their evil. Job 34:17 NKJV says, "Should one who hates justice govern?" The answer should be of course not. We do not want to be treated badly whether that is verbal, physical, or mental abuse. In order to stop the abuse of others, those who govern will impose rules to protect life and stop violence. A country that does not have a godly system of justice is an unjust nation. In the same way, God must hold accountable those who do evil. There is a right way and a wrong way to live. It is inherent in our nature to understand this, but some define evil as good, and they will not go unpunished when God judges them at the end of time.

Daniel 12:2-3 NKJV says,

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

We have a choice. Do we want to be despised forever and end up in the lake of fire (see Revelation 21:8) or shine like the glory of the stars forever? God wants to help us, forgive us, and wants us to be in His future kingdom forever with streets made of gold (see Revelation 21:21). This present world is not all there is. So be faithful and true to God.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NKJV says,

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Again, these are some of the attributes of God. We all have the choice in life to either follow the true God or make up our ideals for life. It makes sense that we follow our good and all-knowing God who wants what is best for us and mankind.

The Torah Teaching.

Beshalach means, "when he let go." This portion begins with God leading Israel to the Suf Sea (which we now know is the Gulf of Aqaba) instead of through the land of the P'lishtim in order to avoid conflict. We should understand that God knew they were not ready to fight. Also, Israel picks up Joseph's bones from Succoth on the way as they had agreed. Joseph was 110 years old when he died (Genesis 50:24-26), so according to the timing of Israel's time in Canaan and Egypt by the historian Josephus, Joseph had been dead for nearly 200 years.

God hardens Pharaoh's heart while Israel is on their way to worship God and Pharaoh then chases after Israel with more than 600 chariots and men, but Moshe says that God will fight for them. God tells Moshe to lift up his rod and hand over the sea, the sea parts, and the pillar of cloud that led them is now behind them, protecting them from the Egyptian army. The Jewish writings say that a man from the tribe of Judah took the first step into the sea that God parted. The tribe of Judah also led the way in the wilderness. Yeshua was from the tribe of Judah and a descendant of King David. The Messiah Yeshua now helps lead our way through life with the messianic gift of the Holy Spirit.

Israel went through the Gulf of Aqaba on dry ground between walls of water. The Egyptians tried to follow them through the sea the next day, but Moshe held his hand over the sea, and it covered the Egyptians. Why did God part the Sea with a wind? He could have just stopped the flow of water. The Egyptian army must have thought it was something natural, but who would not suspect it was something else seeing that there were walls of water on each side.

The Egyptians eventually figured out what was happening, but it was too late. Exodus 14:25 NKJV says, "The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them." Those who do not believe in the true God are oblivious to the spiritual battle that is going on in the world. They will die in their unbelief and will have to stand before God who will judge them. It will be too late for them also. It is very sad that so many reject God's goodness in our era.

Then the people of Israel sang a song of victory to the Lord. In the song they exalted God and praised God for saving them. Also, Miriam the prophet and sister of Aharon sang a song, and the women joined her with tambourines and dancing.

There are a number of videos now that show the route that Israel took to the Gulf of Aqaba to the real Mount Sinai in Midian of Arabia. You can do a search. My favorite is the one by Ron Wyatt. In the videos, you can see the route that Israel took through the Wadi with mountains on either side. That is why the Egyptians couldn't proceed to attack Israel because they were trapped in the wadi by the dark cloud until Israel made it to the other side. There were pillars put up where Israel crossed the sea by King Solomon. Saudi Arabia took their pillar down probably because there was Hebrew writing on it.

God provided miraculously for Israel.

Now on the other side of the sea, the people grumbled, and the Lord provided water for them at the bitter waters of Marah. God told Moshe to put a piece of wood in the water and so

miraculously made the water okay to drink. Think about it. If the water was bad, how could a piece of wood make the water okay? It was a miracle.

God tells Israel in Exodus 15:26 NKJV, "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you." What a wonderful promise for believers in the true God. Perhaps the Egyptians had diseases that are associated with sin. HIV/AIDS is a deadly disease that has been known to be passed on mostly by homosexuals. About 10 years ago, I read that about 31 million people had died from AIDS. Perhaps the diseases of the Egyptians also included this terrible disease.

The Fallacy of Doing Nothing and Expecting God to Heal.

There are some people who say that there must be something wrong with the person that suffers, but that is not biblical. Shaul says that tribulations produce character. Romans 5:3-4 NKJV says, "We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope." Whatever troubles we face, we are to endure. James 1:2-3 NKJV says, "Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."

Some people believe in making a positive confession and doing nothing about their situation. I am all for faith in God and God will answer some prayers, but we should try to do something about our situation. This one person I know was experiencing pain in their shoulder, so they went to the doctor, and the doctor sent them to a therapist. After doing some exercises, the pain went away. If they had continued to do nothing, they could have languished in their pain. Of course, God could have healed them, but why not do what we can do and also pray to God about our problem. Also, I heard of someone who refused to say she was experiencing any pain, and she did not do anything about it. She ended up in a wheelchair instead of getting the help she needed. Use good sense.

Do not be afraid to do something about your situation. If God takes care of the situation supernaturally, you are then delivered or healed. The doctor can confirm you are healed. Do not stop taking medicine that you need unless you are healed. I had a friend tell me that he was having trouble thinking. He had stopped taking his medicine. When he started up his medicine again, he felt better. Doing nothing is a negative decision.

Here are some more things that can help us. When we have difficult times there can be a temptation to sin. Do not let anger control you or do not let intense pain cause you to react in a sinful way. Find ways to do something about what you are going through. Make the effort to resolve the problem. For example, if someone has hurt you, do not be an angry and spiteful person, but be just the opposite. 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."

Of course, believe in God's help and pray. I have been healed a number of times through prayer and know of many others who have been healed by God through prayer or who have been delivered from the situations they were in.

Then they came to Eilim which had 12 springs and 70 palm trees. The number 12 causes us to think of the 12 tribes of Israel and 70, the nations of the world. The route that Israel took has been authenticated. The place of the wells and where Moshe struck the rock have been found.

Back to our portion. Then as they proceeded in the desert, the people grumbled again, and God provided *man* (manna) and quail for them to eat. When the Israelites saw the manna, they said, "*mahn hu*" which means "what is it." The manna (*mahn* in Hebrew), "was like coriander seed and it tasted like honey cakes," it says in Deuteronomy 16:31 CJB. They gathered only enough manna for every day, except the sixth day they gathered two days of manna. The people rested on Shabbat. They put away some manna to be kept through the ages, and they ate manna for forty years.

Being prepared for the Sabbath.

The Bible talks about not gathering the manna on the seventh day. The seventh day is our Friday night to Saturday night. Their day began in the evening not in the middle of the night. We have clocks to help us with that; they used the Sun. Genesis 1:5 NKJV says, "Evening and the morning were the first day." It is better to use the Sun for biblical timing.

Based on Exodus 12:16, we are allowed to prepare food and to eat on God's Sabbaths. This should include the things we need to do on a regular basis to sustain life, but no work, no talk about work or anything causing tension, especially nothing that is done as a job, a difficult project, or anything taxing or difficult unless it is to save life. Sometimes people have to work on the Sabbath for emergencies or to sustain life. Make sure you are not making up an excuse to work when you do not have to. No one is to work, not our children, servants, the stranger, or even our animals.

We are to save life based on Hosea 6:6 NKJV which says, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice." Also, the Bible tells us that God's commandments give life. Talking about God's commandments, Proverbs 3:16-18 NKJV says, "Length of days is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her." We are to value life and therefore life threatening emergencies need to be taken care of. The Sanhedrin (the ruling body in Jerusalem) had made up extra inappropriate laws to keep the people in line and in doing so made the people to work to keep God's Sabbaths.

In the last portion it told us that it is okay to prepare food on the Sabbath. Because we can warm food without it being a lot of work in our era, it is not work to warm our food but be careful with this. Doing work is forbidden on the Sabbath and therefore making some foods can be a lot of work. Baking often requires a lot of work, we should not butcher on the Sabbath, or harvest food. We should buy or harvest our food ahead of time. These things and a number of other things should be done in preparation for the Sabbath. Exodus 16:23-24 NKJV says, "Then he said to them, 'This is what the LORD has said': 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.' So they laid it up till morning, as Moses commanded."

There are some verses that we do not fully understand. Did they boil and bake the manna ahead of time because it spoiled and therefore, we do not have to prepare our food ahead of time? I think we need to be thoughtful with this. Why not make the Sabbath a day of rest for everyone? We can make tasty food ahead of the Sabbath and still have a day of joy and celebration. This took place on Yom Teruah, a day of rest (also known as Rosh Hashanah). Nehemiah 8:10 NKJV says, "Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.'" We might think, how can we have a day of celebration without making food? We can have a wonderful feast prepared ahead of time for Friday night and Saturday.

Also, in this portion, the people are told to stay in their place. Exodus 16:29-30 NKJV, "See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." This must refer to doing daily chores associated with going out to work and not the everyday things of life. For example, they would leave their place to go to the bathroom. The Sanhedrin made an exhaustive list of things prohibited on the Sabbath and broke the commandment to not add or subtract from God's commandments. 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."

The Sanhedrin based their extra commandments on God resting on the Sabbath. Nehemiah 9:6 NKJV says, "You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all." God still preserved the earth and all living beings on the Sabbath, so it makes sense that we are to still take care of ourselves and the necessities of life on the Sabbath.

Also, Jeremiah tells us not to carry things on the Sabbath. We carry things everyday so this cannot be referring to not carrying things that are necessary for life. People will "carry" this too far and so break the commandment not to carry things on the Sabbath. This must have had to do with bringing in goods to the city to buy and sell on the Sabbath. Jeremiah 17:21-22 NKJV says, "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; nor carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do any work, but hallow the Sabbath day." Since people did not have to work on this day, it would be a convenience to buy and sell goods then. Do not bring burdens out to sell and so do work. We also should not buy things or go out to eat on the Sabbath; that encourages people to work on the Sabbath.

Also, most of us live with modern conveniences that do not require work. We are not supposed to start a fire on the Sabbath. Turning on a light switch is not starting a fire. You will argue about carrying your house key, using the right spoon, and the list goes on and on for all kinds of nonsense made up by people. If it seems like nonsense, it is nonsense. The Bible tells us not to argue with people about the scruples they have regarding God's commandments. I always admire the person who wants to follow God the best they can. So, be kind to those who you think are following man-made commandments 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." Most of these

people are more concerned about following people. I tend to be conservative and careful to keep God's commandments. We tend to only take care of the necessities of life on the Sabbath. There are other issues not talked about here like emergencies, having to do your job on a Sabbath, medical care, or a more in depth study about saving life on the Sabbath. The Sabbath should be like no other day.

Back to the Torah. While camped at Rephidim, the people grumbled about having no water, so Moshe struck a rock and water came out from it. Amalek's army came up against Israel and Israel prevailed while Moshe's arms were raised. Aaron and Hur held up Moshe's arms and Israel defeated Amalek. The Lord said he will blot out the memory of Amalek.

Israel left Egypt by the power of God and God protected them and provided for them. Now that they were on the other side of the sea there was no turning back. It was an impassible barrier. In a sense, they died to their old lives when they passed through the sea. In the same way, we are immersed with the Holy Spirit after we believe in Yeshua the Messiah and experience the powers of the age to come to some extent.

*We receive the power of God through the Holy Spirit
Yeshua said. Acts 1:8 NKJV says, "But you shall receive
power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."*

Receiving the Holy Spirit is a defining moment in the lives of believers in Yeshua the Messiah because there is no turning back from the truth that God is present in our lives. We experience the power of God. Rabbi Shaul tells us in the New Testament that we are to die to our old selves in Romans 6:6 and so leave our old lives behind much like Israel had to die to their old way of life after they crossed to the other side of the Gulf of Aqaba.

The place where Israel crossed the Gulf of Aqaba is very imposing to see. At the end of the wadi that Israel took on their way to the sea, there is an enormous beach that could hold a couple of a million people. Solomon had marked the crossing point with two pillars, one on each side of the sea. Interestingly, in one of the videos online, there are shells plastered onto the side of the seashore that Israel had fled to as though a great wind had pushed them there. There are also videos of chariot parts on the bottom of the Gulf of Aqaba where Israel crossed.

The Haftarah for Beshalach is Judges 4:4 to 5:31. In this portion, D'vorah (Deborah) the prophet tells Barak to take 10,000 men to fight against Sisra and his army. Because he asks D'vorah to go with him, D'vorah says a woman will get the credit for Sisra's death. Israel defeats Sisra's army, and a woman kills Sisra. They then sang a song extolling those who volunteered, praising God, and praising the woman who killed Sisra.

Just as God defeated the Egyptians at the Gulf of Aqaba, God continues to help Israel to defeat its enemies after they enter Canaan. Also, we should consider that although we seem to be at risk in the present, God is at work on our behalf. In the end, God will be victorious even though the people of this world can be so against the things of God. Judges 4:23 CJB says: "Thus God on that day defeated Yavin" (Jabin) "the king of Kena'an" (Canaanites) "in the presence of the people of Israel."

God is for His people and helps His people both in the Old Testament portion and our present era. God is the same today as He was years ago, a caring and good God. Some 2 million people left Egypt in faith and God provided for them. What an amazing act of faith for so many people. We should understand that there is always a remnant of believers. The scriptures suggest that those who did not remain faithful did not make it to the land of Canaan, instead the entire present generation of 2 million people made it there and was faithful. God only knows for sure. Those who trust in God will be blessed; Psalms 84:12 NKJV says, "Blessed is the man who trusts in You!"

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.)

It is good to sing to Yēhōvāh and praise Him. Exodus 15:1-18.

It is permissible to dance and play music before Yēhōvāh. Exodus 15:20-21.

We are to keep God's commandments for protection; He is Yēhōvāh who heals us. Exodus 15:26.

Israel is commanded to collect food for consumption before the Sabbath. This implies we should not do harvesting on the Sabbath but be prepared to keep the Sabbath. See our section in the Torah study on being prepared for the Sabbath. Exodus 16:25-26.

Yēhōvāh has given us the Sabbath as a day of rest. Exodus 16:29-30.

Some of the people tempted God by their attitude. We should watch our thoughts, attitudes, and words. Be thankful and gracious towards God and ask our all-knowing God for help. He is a good God and cares about us. Exodus 17:3-7.

We are commanded to blot out the name of Amalek as a memorial for them attacking Israel. Perhaps this is reminder to us that God is for us in every generation. Also, this can be construed as a warning to those who oppose us and mistreat us. Yeshua suggests that those who do wrong will be removed from the Book of Life and not be in God's future kingdom. Revelation 3:5 NKJV says, "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life." Exodus 17:14-16.

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, Yē-hō-vāh. Yē-hō-vāh 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, Yē-hō-vāh 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, Yē-hō-vāh. 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 (יהֹה).

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:

יבְרֹכֵךְ יְהֹוָה, וַיְשִׁמְרֶךְ
יָאֵר יְהֹוָה פָנֵינוּ אֲלֵיכָ, וַיִּתְבָּנֶה
יְשָׁאֵר יְהֹוָה פָנֵינוּ אֲלֵיכָ, וַיִּשְׁמַע לְךָ שָׁלוֹם

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.