



### **Names**

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

### **Terms**

Haftarah – reading from the prophets  
 Menorah – 7 candle Israelite lamp  
 Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible  
 Mishkan – tent of meeting in the desert  
 Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible  
 Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah  
 (We also use transliterations from Hebrew)

Today our Torah portion is a double portion, Acharei Mot and Kedoshim. Acharei Mot means after the death and begins with Moshe telling Aharon after the death of his two sons that they are not to come just anytime into the holiest place behind the curtain. It then describes what the high priest must do, sacrifice, and wear. This portion begins with scriptures relating to Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). Kedoshim means, "holy ones." It begins with God telling Israel that they are to be a holy people, revere their parents, keep Shabbat, and not turn to idols. It tells us to be holy three times in this portion.

**At the end of our Torah teaching, we have a special section  
 on how our Bibles were put together. We are not trying  
 to discredit and dishonor God's words as some are, but we seek truth.**

**Because of our special section, our teaching for today is a little longer than usual.**

God knows if we follow Him with our whole heart.

Psalms 139:1-4 NKJV says,

O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.

God knows us to such an extent that He knows how we would act in any situation and at any time. Have we developed good habits so that we know how we will act in any situation?

The Jewish virtual library talks about King Solomon and why he fell into sin: "He who gathered the words of the Torah, who understood them, who later enunciated them, who said to God in his heart, 'I have the power; consequently, I may transgress the prescriptions of the Torah.'"

This is perhaps one of the things that led to King Solomon's sin. It is saying that King Solomon decided to do whatever he wanted. Many think that the reason for his sin is because he married unbelieving women. You would think that someone who was filled with wisdom would not fall into sin. Ya'akov said in James 1:14-15 NKJV, "Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

Have we learned to resist wrong thinking? I was watching a drama on TV which pitted people against each other, and it did not identify who was the good or bad person. A lot of times when we watch something on TV, we root for the good guy. Everyone seemed to have bad behaviors, and I decided to not take sides and support any wrong behaviors. We have to learn how to do that in life so that we do not sin in life. We need to learn to be discreet with our thoughts and actions. Hebrews 5:14 NKJV says, "But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." We must put God's commandments first in our life.

Psalms 119:10-15 NKJV says,

With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways.

We can get led away by wrong thinking, wrong desires, pride, anger, excuses, and so many other things. Do we have the desire to not let anything slip in our life and end up sinning? Do we work at knowing all of God's commandments and make no excuses to disobey them? Do we value them as our key to a good life and work at keeping God's commandments and make them an automatic way to respond to life's situations?

Be willing to set aside our preconceived ideas.

We need to set aside our own ideas and work on doing what God says. I often say that I try to be conservative in my approach to keeping God's commandments. For example, I have formed the good habit of doing anything that needs to get done when I see it needs to be done. So, on the Sabbath I resist this good and unselfish way of acting so that I keep the Sabbath as a true day of rest. That's why I say things like, I will not even empty a waste basket on the Sabbath. It may need to be emptied, but it can wait.

Also, I pray every day that I will do what is "right and good" because I truly want to do what God commands me to do. To do what is "right and good" is to keep God's commandments according to Deuteronomy 6:17-18. But even though we are committed to walk how we should, we need to be open to areas in our life where we are blind to the truth.

Recently, I was thinking about my commitment not to carry anything on the Sabbath. I often refer to the concept that we are not to do any unnecessary work on the Sabbath. I am glad that I try to be careful not to do menial chores on the Sabbath. It is okay to carry things in our home but not carry loads outside of our homes on the Sabbath.

Jeremiah 17:21-23 NKJV says,  
 Thus says the LORD: "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, as I commanded your fathers. But they did not obey nor incline their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear nor receive instruction.

The Bible does not define what it means by a burden, but it would seem to relate to not doing any kind of work. People will make excuses to do work on the Sabbath that they should not be doing. My rule of thumb is that if I can do it tomorrow, then I will let it go until tomorrow.

Some disagree with me and say that absolutely nothing is to be done on the Sabbath. I often do not object to their reasoning even though I understand that they are often referring to keeping laws that micromanage life or sometimes to laws that are nonsense. I encourage you to follow your conscience. For example, Shaul tells the believers in Rome be at peace with those who will not take the chance of eating food that came from a pagan temple and ate only vegetables. That is what Romans 14 is about. Yeshua taught that we are not to eat food that was sacrificed to idols. Yeshua said in Revelation 2:14 NKJV, "But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols."

I do not object to people's scruples, but sometimes they are off base. I once heard a story about a rabbi who said medical care was wrong on the Sabbath. Yeshua taught that it is proper to save life, so we should seek medical care if we need it on the Sabbath; in Luke 14:5 NKJV Yeshua said, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" Also see Hosea 6:6. If we are to help an animal on the Sabbath, it makes even more sense to take care of our needs on the Sabbath.

When the rabbi who opposed medical care on the Sabbath needed medical care on the Sabbath, he asked another rabbi if it was okay for him to get medical care. The other rabbi said that it was okay for people to get the necessary medical care on the Sabbath they needed, but for him, it was not okay. Some people can take extremely hard lines. Use good sense and do not do just anything you want on the Sabbath. The rabbi that said it was not okay for the rabbi who needed medical care on the Sabbath said that because of the scruples of the rabbi who taught that it was wrong to get medical care on the Sabbath. If the rabbi that needed medical care did something he felt was wrong on the Sabbath, he could end up condemning himself or becoming despondent.

This one time I had a plumbing emergency that could not wait, but I still took time to think about whether I should put it off until the next day. I asked God about it and told God I could not do it on the next day and it needed to be done. I thought the Holy Spirit told me it was okay to do for that reason, but I did not proceed without thought.

Learn and grow spiritually. Take a patient and pursuing attitude towards your spiritual growth.  
 I am open to concepts and ideas that will make me the person I should be. I am open to changing my life and following God the way I should. Our spiritual growth can take time, but by

all means, be patient and continue to grow spiritually. I once knew someone who gave up early in their spiritual walk because they had to learn new concepts, ideas, and even different wording. They seemed confused. We should not give up. Learning how to follow God can lead to a whole new way of life and thinking and that can take years. Rabbi Shaul probably memorized the entire Old Testament portion. I understand the ancient rabbis used to do that. He pressed on he said in Philippians. He did not take his spiritual life for granted even though he was a Pharisee and a spiritual leader. Philippians 3:14 NKJV says, "I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God."

Sometimes people can be intimidated by Hebrew words. You do not have to learn Hebrew to be a messianic believer. Learning Hebrew and reading the scriptures in Hebrew though can be enjoyable and give a person additional insight into what the scriptures are saying. For example, the word that is translated keep in our Bibles sometimes means to guard. We are to guard our life so that we especially keep the commandments of God.

Do not be intimidated by anything that might impair you from moving forward spiritually. I know of some people who were very well versed in the Bible and began to understand the truth but were also somewhat confused at first, but they were willing to move on and they were glad they did. When I had to drive in another country that drove on the left side of the road, I had to make a special effort to make sure I stayed on the left side of the road. We drive on the right side of the road in the United States. Crossing the street was scary at first because we tend to look the wrong way for traffic, and I almost stepped out in front of traffic. My wife held me back.

We need to understand that spiritual growth can take time. Do not give up. Your life and eternal life depends on our learning, growth, and the persistence to be reminded to follow God, and seek truth.

Seek the goodness of God, do not let worldly nonsense get you upset. Continue to be at peace. Worldly nonsense can take all forms and some of the things we think were so important yesterday do not seem to be such a big deal now. Also sometimes we do not consider the things we have overlooked both in our day-to-day life as well as in our spiritual life and that can take away our peace.

I have done some work on our house that I have been extremely fortunate to have accomplished. One time I fixed our water line, and I told God I will try one more time after several tries and I got it fixed. Thank you Yě-hō-váh for helping me. The point is that we can overcome the difficult problems of life, and we can also overcome sin. I remember someone once told me that he could not keep the Sabbath. The things of life and other people were preventing him from doing so. Do not give up. Be strong and keep pressing forward.

I know of someone who told a family member that he could not help them on the Sabbath, and the person who asked for help on the Sabbath broke off their relationship. That was not his fault. He would have helped him on any other day. They were being unreasonable; some people can't understand that we cannot always accommodate all that is expected of us. In our society, people often do not understand our commitment to God on the Sabbath. We cannot

please everyone. We are not to follow the sinful ways of the world but be committed to God's commandments. Yeshua said in John 15:18-19 NKJV, "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own." They do not like us because we want to be good people who follow God the way we should.

Seek those things that align yourself with God. Walk in the truth.

We can have pressures in life especially in a world that does not understand our commitment to God. Psalms 55:3 NKJV says, "Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked; for they bring down trouble upon me, and in wrath they hate me." I have seen people laugh at those who are trying to change and keep God's commandments. I know of someone who is fully committed to the Sabbath but has to do emergency work because people's lives depend on him to help them. I know that he wishes that he did not have to do these things on the Sabbath, but he also knows that he is doing something that is important for their wellbeing.

Hosea 6:6 NKJV says, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Saving life takes precedence over Shabbat. Deuteronomy 22:4 NKJV says, "You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him lift them up again." If we are supposed to help animals in need, how much more should we help people who are in need? We should do good on the Sabbath and not evil.

Stay in the light. Religion may give you comfort but they do not always teach truth.

Light helps us to see where we are going. We need spiritual light in life, so we know how to live. Psalms 119:105 NKJV says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." God's word and His commandments give us light for life. People will quote this scripture in Psalms about God's word and then say His word is done away. Don't you think that is a little strange?

I was talking to someone years ago about how the Christian religion often tries a friendly approach to drawing people to God. Being friendly is a good thing and God is a good God and wants what is best for us but avoiding the important issues that we need for life is not being someone's friend. There is a saying. If someone told you to jump off a cliff, would you do it?

People need concrete direction in life. This is especially true because there are so many different ideas on how to live life. People often believe that their personal beliefs are acceptable behavior, and they believe there are no truths for life. One popular belief is that we are just to be good and kind people, and love others. Their ideas for life though are generally their own beliefs and not what God teaches. Also, any beliefs they have can be filled with compromise and excuses because they do not believe in the truths of the Bible. These people may think they have concrete ideas on life, but they do not.

Many Christian churches believe that God accepts everyone just the way they are. God will accept anyone who wants to follow Him, but they must actually follow what He says. A good example of the problem with such a generalization as God accepts us the way we are is of those who follow the evil ideals of the Communist religion. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, over 90 million people were murdered by communist governments. That does not include the deaths from wars

during that era. Essentially, communist governments wage war on their own people and use what they may call progressive terms or some other terms to indoctrinate their people and exert control on them. No political association is intended here. Communism is obviously a religion. Anyone who does not comply to their Communist Atheist religion is murdered. A person's beliefs are essentially a person's religion. Not all beliefs are good beliefs.

The Bible teaches that we are not to commit murder and those who do, will be held accountable to God in a future time of judgment and be punished for their evil. For example, Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "The cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." People who believe it is okay to commit murder are going to the lake of fire.

Yeshua taught that the way to God is not through believing in just anything we think is okay, but what our all-knowing and good God says is okay. The way to God is specific and it is how God told mankind to live. It is a narrow way. Matthew 7:13-14 NKJV says, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."

In case there is any doubt about what Yeshua is saying, He says just a few verses later in Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" It says that those who do not keep God's good law will be rejected by God. The laws in the Old Testament portion are meant to give us wisdom and understanding (see Deuteronomy 4:6) and they are right and good (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). That is what the Bible says. Those who say otherwise are contradicting the Bible.

#### False religion has developed a doctrine to fight against truth.

I can hardly believe the doctrines that have developed that so generalize how we are to live. Some say, just love God and your neighbor. Those are just two of the commandments in the Old Testament portion but that is not all God told us to do. In fact, loving God involves keeping all His commandments and not just the 10 Commandments. 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." It is plain, loving God means we keep all His good commandments.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> century, they had some of the same problems with false doctrine. Some must have been teaching that all we need to do is have faith. James 2:19-20 NKJV says, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?" It goes on to say in verse 24, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." The, "it's all about faith doctrine," is false doctrine. There were people who were justifying their behaviors and not following God's commandments in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. It says in 2 Peter 2:13-14 NKJV, "They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, having eyes full of

adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children." They are accursed people because they are not following the right and good law of God but are bringing evil into the world. God must punish evil because He is a good God. The angels who sinned are no exception. 2 Peter 2:4 NKJV says, "For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell."

Do not trust in the false sense of security that some religion teaches.

They may say that all we have to do is believe in God and you will be saved. That is not what the Bible teaches. It should be obvious from the scriptures we just shared. They will take scriptures out of context and teach what they want to teach and avoid the truths of the Bible. They twist the scriptures, and they were doing the same thing in Shaul's time (in Paul's time) in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. 2 Peter 3:15-16 NKJV says, "Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures." It is not a wide path to the future kingdom of God. We must do what God teaches us to do and not make up our own doctrine. The good law in the Old Testament is doctrine. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law."

God's law gives us wisdom and understanding according to Deuteronomy 4:6. So when the Bible talks about wisdom and understanding, it is talking about God's Old Testament law.

Proverbs 4:4-9 NKJV says,

Let your heart retain my words; keep my commands, and live. Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; love her, and she will keep you. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she will promote you; she will bring you honor, when you embrace her. She will place on your head an ornament of grace; a crown of glory she will deliver to you."

Keep God's commands, get His wisdom, love God's wisdom, get understanding, embrace God's wisdom.

I heard someone once say that when a person rejects God's commandments, God lets them go their own way and they become blinded to the truth. When we accept God's law, we become a people of light and love and are no longer blinded to the truth. Loving others is helping others to see what is right and good.

Ephesians 5:2-6 NKJV says,

And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

God must punish those who do evil because they bring pain and error into the world. Loving others or walking with God is to keep God's commandments. It says that in Leviticus 19:18-19 NKJV, "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." Also, Deuteronomy 5:33 NKJV says about walking with God: "You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you." Walking with God is to keep His commandments.

People are taking chances with their spirituality. (Stay bolted to the truth.)

You are probably thinking that some people are taking more than just a chance with their spirituality. It is very unfortunate what they are bringing on themselves for their evil. They are not only giving up their chance for a future life in the wonderful eternal kingdom of God, but their sin is messing up the good life of wisdom they could be having in the present. Romans 1:24-25 NKJV says, "Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie." People are believing lies instead of truth. God gives mankind free will and instead of using it for good, some are using it for evil.

This scripture in Daniel is important because it shows us that believers in the Old Testament portion expected a just God to judge mankind. 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." Help people to do what is right. Righteousness means to do what is right and keep God's commandments. Isaiah 51:7 NKJV says, "Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, you people in whose heart is My law: Do not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their insults." Get with it and start walking with God the way you should.

Others may be deluded but you do not have to be. Do not be afraid of their evil attitudes. You can do what is right and good. Do not go along with those who have exchanged truth for lies. God has good intentions for mankind through His commandments so do not be shamed by those who are deceived. Deuteronomy 10:12-13 NKJV says, "What does the LORD your God require of you, but to 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." Deuteronomy 4:40 NKJV says, "You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days."

Psalms 119:171-175 NKJV says,

My lips shall utter praise, for You teach me Your statutes. My tongue shall speak of Your word, for all Your commandments are righteousness. Let Your hand become my help, for I have chosen Your precepts. I long for Your salvation, O LORD, and Your law is my delight. Let my soul live, and it shall praise You; and let Your judgments help me.

Learn God's commandments and keep them. God gives us "right and good" ways to live. God's commandments are intended to help us in life. They are able to deliver us from evil so delight in them and thank God for them.

### In Conclusion.

God knows if we are following Him half-heartedly. Follow God with your whole heart. Do not follow any preconceived ideas that contradict the Bible. Patiently learn and grow spiritually. Do not give up. Seek God and do not let worldly ideas and ideals get you upset. Line up your life with truth. Learn what is true spiritual light and seek truth. Not all churches have your best interests at heart, but God does, and He wants to help us, and He cares about us. False religion has doctrines that oppose what the Bible teaches. Do not be tricked by the way some twist the scriptures. What really makes us okay spiritually is to follow God and keep His commandments. Do not take chances spiritually but stick to the truth.

### **Torah Study**

Today is a double portion, Acharei Mot and Kedoshim. Acharei Mot means "after the death." Moshe is to tell Aharon after the death of his two sons that they are not to come just anytime into the holiest place behind the curtain. It then describes what the high priest must do, sacrifice, and wear. This portion begins with scriptures relating to Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). The Bible at times is very specific about what we are to do. We should have a deep respect for God and do what He says. The Bible says we are to fear Him, after all, He is the creator of the universe. Philippians 2:12-13 says we are to work out our rescue with fear and trembling. We have been rescued so we could work out our lives with fear and trembling (Rescue is a better rendering at times instead of salvation. For example, Joel is quoted in Romans and translated saved, but it is the Hebrew word in Joel for rescue. The Hebrew word מִלָּט *mālaṭ* in the Old Testament portion always means "rescue.")<sup>1</sup>.

Deuteronomy 6:2 NKJV says **we are to fear** God so we can have a prolonged life, "That you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and **that your days may be prolonged.**" God's commands are good for us; they can prolong our life. If not in this life, most certainly in eternal life. The reason we talk a lot about keeping God's commandments is because the Bible tells us over and over to keep God's commandments both in the Old and New portions. We need the encouragement.

No one was to be in the tent of meeting while the High Priest makes atonement for himself, his family, and all Israel. He is to lay hands on a goat confess the sins of Israel and send it into the desert. Then the priest is to go back into the tent of meeting and make a sacrifice for the sins of the people. They are to take the bull and goat ashes and the remains outside the camp and finish burning them up. This is to be done every year on the tenth day of the seventh month (also known as Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement), and they were also to fast that day and it

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<sup>1</sup> "h4422. מִלָּט *mālaṭ*; a primitive root; properly, to be smooth, i.e. (by implication) to escape (as if by slipperiness); causatively, to release or rescue; Strong's Enhanced Dictionary. The word salvation in the Old Testament uses the Hebrew word for escape or rescue. In other words, we have been rescued so we could do what is right; see the Hebrew word for saved in Joel 2:32 which quotes the New Testament.

is to be a day of rest. The people were to only bring their sacrifices to the Cohanim (Priests). They were to no longer sacrifice to demons and those who do this, or drink blood will be cut off from the community.

In this portion, it says that the life of creatures is in the blood and the blood sacrifices are for our atonement. Leviticus 17:11 NKJV says, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul." The Torah says that it is blood that makes atonement, and we need atonement for our sin; Yeshua (Jesus) sacrificed His blood as the final atonement for sin. The Jews say there is no longer a need for sacrifice because God does not want sacrifices. That is not what it means. God does not want sacrifices because He want people to stop sinning. It has nothing to do with not needing a sacrifice for sin.

Yeshua the Messiah took away the sacrifices of bulls and goats and gave Himself as the final sacrifice for sin. So, we must believe in the Messiah Yeshua to atone for us. Hebrews 10:4 NKJV says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins;" then in Hebrews 10:9-10 NKJV, God, "He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Yeshua HaMashiach laid down His life for us and we need to accept what the Messiah did for us. We learn in this portion that there are consequences for not doing things God's way. This is how God chose to give us forgiveness. Isaiah 53 is clear. The Messiah came to be a sacrifice for us. Some sick people say that Isaiah 53 is about the suffering of Israel. God did not allow all the innocent people of the Holocaust to suffer and die for humanity. It was evil socialist atheists who killed innocent people.

This portion continues; anyone who eats an animal that has died naturally must wash himself and his clothes. They were not to do what the Egyptians did or what the Canaanites did, but they were to do according to God's laws; a person will have life through God's commandments. Think about it. If they were good for God's people in the Old Testament, why wouldn't they be good for us now. **They were intended to prolong our lives.** People just want to make up excuses so they can do what they want. They won't make it into God's kingdom at the end of time by doing things their own way. God is the judge, and His commandments are His commandments. Our ideas on life are not necessarily God's ways. Isaiah 55:8-9 NKJV says, "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.'"

No one is to have sexual relations with any of their family or close relatives or a neighbor. No one is to have sexual relations with anyone, except a man and a woman as husband and wife. The laws about sexual sin are spelled out. Homosexuality is wrong and having sex with an animal is wrong. They were not to kill their children by offering them to a pagan god. The people of the land that God is expelling did these despicable things and that is why God is giving Israel the land. If Israel does these things, the land will vomit them out too it says. They were not to follow any of these abominable customs of the pagans it says. Rabbi Shaul (Paul) gives us a stern warning in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; the people who don't seek to do what is right

and don't follow God's commandments will have no share in the Kingdom of God. Shaul mentions some of the sexual sins that our Torah portion mentions.

In this portion, Moshe gives instructions to Aharon about how He is to conduct himself in the Mishkan (the Tabernacle), and more specifically at the time of Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement). We should always remember to come before God with respect and awe. Israel was not to do the despicable things that the Egyptians and Canaanites did. It was the reason that God was expelling the Canaanites from the land. We should also remember that not keeping God's laws can incur grievous circumstances. This portion says that the land will "vomit" out Israel if they end up doing these abominable things. Improper sexual practice is talked about in Leviticus 18 of this portion. Lands are destroyed because of wrong sexual practice. It perverts, degrades, and cheapens society. For example, people who practice these things perform sexual favors to get ahead. The people who should be honored for their merit are then passed by. Sexual sin treats people as objects instead of giving people the dignity and respect they deserve, and sexual sin can lead to the sexual abuse of others.

The Haftarah for Acharei Mot is Ezekiel 22:1-19. God will destroy the Negev and Jerusalem; the people of Israel have shed blood and made idols; and because of this, God has caused them to be scorned. They were using their power in order to kill others and to oppress others. They were committing perverted sexual acts and not keeping Shabbat. They were taking bribes and committing extortion. It says in this portion that God is going to deal with them and disperse them into other lands. God will pour out His fury on them.

This was a hard lesson for Israel, and this should be a lesson for us. Most ancient nations never wrote about their mistakes and losses. The scriptures were not modified to make Israel look perfect. This adds to the validity of the scriptures. It does not mean Israel was all bad. Most Christians today seem to be living in sin because of false beliefs, but they are not all bad. Since we want to be God's people, we should behave like God's people. Sin has a negative impact on us and others. For example, taking bribes subverts justice; those bribing others may get away with crimes against others. All sin is destructive and is wrong. Even small sins can cause harm.

The other portion for today is Kedoshim and means holy ones. It begins with God telling Israel that they are to be a holy people, revere their parents, keep Shabbat, and not turn to idols. It tells us to be holy three times in this portion (see Leviticus 19:2; 20:7, and 20:26). Holiness is the act of separating yourself from sin. It is not a stamp of holiness as some say, we are to actually be holy. How ridiculous is it for some people to say they are holy when they are not actually acting holy.

The peace offering is to be done in a certain way and when they get to the land, they are to leave the corners of their field for the poor and foreigner. They were not to steal, defraud others, not to swear by God's name falsely, not to keep back wages, not to curse a deaf person or put an obstacle (a stumbling block) in front of a blind person. They were to be just, not slander, look out for each other, not to hate or take revenge, and to love your neighbor as yourself. They were not to let their livestock mate with different species, not to mix their crops, and there is a specific command to not mix some different kinds of thread for clothing. Presumably, there could be some disease issues with some types of clothing.

In Leviticus 19:14 NKJV it says, "You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the LORD." There are a lot of things that this scripture can apply to. We shouldn't cause another person to sin because of our actions; we shouldn't be a stumbling block to them. For example, we should not offer alcohol to an alcoholic. Holding grudges instead of forgiving can lead to anger and unjust retribution. Yochanan said that loving others includes not causing others to stumble and sin. "He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him;" 1 John 2:10 NKJV.

A man was to make reparation for sexual relations with another man's slave. They were not to eat from a newly planted tree until the fifth year; they were not to eat blood; they were not to practice any spiritualism (like fortune telling or any curious arts; there are often devil spirits behind these activities), not to gash their flesh, get tattoos, and not to make their daughter become a prostitute. They were to keep Shabbat, not to turn to mediums, to respect the elderly, not to wrong foreigners, not to be dishonest with measurements, and to keep God's commands.

They were not to sacrifice their children to an idol and God will set Himself against those who consult a medium or a sorcerer. They were to be holy and observe God's commands. They were not to curse their parents. A number of sexual sins are listed. Adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, and incest are all wrong. Men were not to have marital relations during a woman's period. All these were the things that the pagan people of the land of Canaan were doing, and that is the reason God was expelling them from the land. God detested those works and the land would vomit them out if Israel did them. They were to eat only clean animals and not make themselves detestable with unclean animals. They were to be set apart from sin (holy); they belonged to God. Mediums and sorcerers are to be put to death.

This portion talks about the many traps of sin that keep us from a relationship with God. For example, sexual sins often keep a person distant from God. We belong to God, and we are to be a holy separate people (and not sin). Also, this portion talks about loving our neighbor as ourselves. 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." We love others best when we keep God's commandments. Sin not only keeps us from God, but also keeps us from loving others and treating others right.

The Haftarah for Kedoshim is Amos 9:7-15 (it is the Ashkenazi Reading). In this portion, the Lord sees Israel's sins, but He will not completely destroy them. God will restore them and someday they will rebuild their cities. God will plant them, and they will never again be uprooted. This is a picture of our restoring and good God.

### **Special Section on how our Bibles were put together.**

Do not confuse what we are sharing with those who do not believe in the Bible. Some critics say that because Daniel's prophecy came to pass that it must have been written after it happened. It would not have been a prophecy then. We believe that God can reveal what will happen if He

so desires. Also, some say that there are additions to the Bible. For example, they say there are two creation stories and one of the stories was added later. That was the style of writing back then and that style of writing changed shortly after Israel entered the land of Canaan. That is one of the reasons how we know for sure that Moshe did in fact write the Torah. God told Moshe what to write down and he wrote it down in his own words. 2 Peter 1:20-21 NKJV says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Critics have come up with all kinds of ideas in order to discredit the Bible. **We are not trying to do that.**

I would like to talk about understanding how we got our Bibles and some of the problems scholars encountered when putting together our Bibles. I hope this will help you understand the Bible better. We are not trying to discredit and dishonor God's words as some are, but we seek truth. Most people have access to the Bible through printed translations. So, we then absolutely must understand the Hebrew culture and the cultural issues that are being presented because that was the culture that was trying to preserve and observe what the Bible says. Much of the scriptures took place in an Israelite or Judean culture. Sometimes what is being said is clear, at other times there may be a cultural issue behind what is being presented.

We have no original manuscripts of the Bible, but thousands of manuscripts and fragments. A standard text from the Greek manuscripts has been put together for both the Old and New portions of the Bible by scholars. We have both Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Old and New Testament portions.

Older translations of the standard text which was put together from the manuscripts have tried to give us a word for word translation. For example, the New King James Version is a word for word attempt to translate the text they put together. Whereas, the newer translations often try to reinterpret the standard text. One translation uses a car instead of a chariot. This reinterpretation in some versions can sometimes change the intended meaning of the original. I use the New King James Version because it is based on a word for word rendering and therefore easier to try to understand if there are any cultural issues to decipher.

No translation is perfect. Translations present a hurdle for those who wish to understand the scriptures because they are prone to human error. People will call their translation perfect and vilify anyone who says otherwise, but we must seek and follow the truth, or we will just have made-up religion. We must also understand that no standard text that is put together from a compilation of the manuscripts is perfect and therefore, no Bible translation is perfect.

Both Greek and Hebrew manuscripts in ancient times have been altered or mistakes have been made when copying the manuscripts. Scholars use multiple manuscripts to determine what the standard text should be, but since we have no originals, we can only do the best we can. I know of some 84 manuscripts of the Hebrew New Testament portion as of this writing. It is obvious that there is some altering of the Hebrew manuscripts because there are minor differences between them. Some copyists were trying to correct what they thought were errors in the Hebrew and also there are copying errors. The Hebrew has a lot less errors than the Greek historically and it was used to help modify the Greek manuscripts over the centuries.

Jerome even quotes some of the Hebrew scriptures of the New Testament and they match the Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament that we have.

There is evidence that the Hebrew manuscripts are of a better quality than the Greek manuscripts and even Jerome in the 4<sup>th</sup> century attests that the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament portion had lots of errors. We do not necessarily need his proof because the alterations are listed in the Greek text which is put together from the various Greek manuscripts. Jerome is another witness to the many changes made to the Greek manuscripts. In his preface to the Latin Vulgate Jerome says, "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?" (from Vulgate.org). Jerome says there were deliberate alterations! There were insertions and changes made to the originals, and he also says that the Greek manuscripts had inaccurate translations of the Hebrew originals.

For example, the Greek manuscripts have consistent errors. In some Hebrew manuscripts it says in Matthew 1:16, "And Jacob begot Joseph the father of Mary" and not the husband of Mary. If you count the names there in Matthew, you come up one short the number of generations when Joseph is the husband of Mary in the Greek translation. Matthew 1:17 gives us the number of generations. When Joseph is the father of Mary the number of generations matches correctly. All the Greek manuscripts contain the error that Joseph is the husband of Mary. So, someone changed some of the Hebrew manuscripts to match the error in the Greek manuscripts. A man by the name of Joseph was Mary's father. Another man by the name of Joseph was her husband. The copiers of the Greek manuscripts evidently could not understand this.

Mathew has the genealogy of Yeshua through Mary, and Luke contains the genealogy through Mary's husband Joseph. They are entirely different genealogies. Theology says they are two genealogies of Joseph. Why would we need that? They are not as smart as they might seem. We most of all need a genealogy of Yeshua that links Him through Mary going back to the kingly line of David. Joseph was not Yeshua's actual father, but God created Yeshua in Mary miraculously.

The scholars did a great job with the thousands of manuscripts of the Greek. But there are sometimes up to 10 deviations of just one verse between the manuscripts and there are almost 8,000 verses in the New Testament portion. I have a copy of the standard Greek text put together from the manuscripts and it is called, Novum Testamentum Graece. If you look at a page, you may see just a few verses at the top of the page and the rest of the page is filled with small print containing the deviations for those verses between the manuscripts. If we use a small number such as 3 deviations as the average number of deviations in the verses of the New Testament, we end up with 24,000 deviations that the scholars had to deal with in order to come up with a standard text from the Greek manuscripts. Even if we say the average is one, 8,000 is a lot of deviations!

I sometimes tell the story of this Bible teacher who said to someone, "How dare you say there is anything wrong with the Greek manuscripts!" There are some people who do not want the

truth, but only want others to believe what they believe. God will judge them for their lies. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." Think twice before contradicting what the Bible says.

We should also mention that the Roman Empire intended to make Christianity entirely Roman, and they hunted down the Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament portion and killed anyone who had them. This accounts for the fewer number of Hebrew manuscripts that we have available. Their false doctrine then got passed down into Christianity. We now have found a lot of Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament portion.

Some of the deviations in the Greek manuscripts occurred over time, but some were on purpose. It is evident that the Roman Empire wanted to make the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament portion into a religion of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was anti-Jewish and anti God's commandments. They even added words to make the Greek sound anti-Jewish or make it sound like the law had been done away with. We know this because the Hebrew New Testament is worded without these anti-Jewish insertions. For example, it says in John 1:11 in the Greek that Yeshua came to His own, meaning the Jews, but they did not receive Him. In the Hebrew it says that Yeshua came to the world and the world did not receive Him. So, it is His creation, mankind, who did not receive Yeshua.

Many of the insertions of the word Jew in the New Testament Greek was meant to be anti-Jewish. There is even one insertion in Luke that insinuates that people should kill the Jews. God said you shall not murder. Murder is a direct contradiction of the Bible and the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment of the 10 Commandments. The Roman Empire made it illegal to keep God's feasts (See Leviticus 23:2, where it says they are God's feasts.) and they replaced God's feasts with their own feasts. We should also understand that they tampered with the meaning of the scriptures to specifically distance the true faith of the believers that was passed down from Noah, Abraham, and Israel. The Roman Empire wanted to make the New Testament scriptures more palatable for the pagans. For example, in the Hebrew James 1:25 it says we are to keep the Torah which are the first 5 books of the Bible. In the Greek it says we are to keep the law of liberty. This one added word makes it sound like God's commandments are done away with.

Much of James talks about keeping God's commandments. For example, James 2:24 NKJV says, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." The heretic insertion of "law of liberty" changes the whole idea that Ya'akov is trying to make. We do not know the extent of the modifications that were made to replace the true Christianity of our Messiah. Whenever something seems to be saying that we are not to keep God's commandments there must be some suspicion of tampered wording by heretics.

Do not throw out your Bibles. But you have to go by the clear verses and not by verses that are not clear or that say not to keep God's commandments. Shaul said in Romans 3:31 NKJV, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." He said that the Old Testament law was not done away with and that it was established!

Theology comes along with its man-made ideas and says the Old Testament has been done away with. People have made up a false understanding of the scriptures based on either a

misunderstanding of the Bible or from these heretic insertions. You are not following God if you are following the made-up theology of the theologians. Following God means you are doing what God says to do. So, keep His commandments. Malachi 3:6 NKJV says, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." God did not change His mind about His commands in the Old Testament. If they were good back then, they are still good. Yeshua said in Matthew 15:9 NKJV, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

People think they are following Yeshua, but instead they are following the false doctrines of theology. Do not be fooled by their blind assertions. 2 Corinthians 11:3 NKJV says, "But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Eve subtracted and changed God's command. Then the devil said, they will not die. Theologians say that we do not have to keep God's commandments just like the devil did through the serpent. They preach a different Jesus and not what Jesus taught.

Take for example what Yeshua said in Matthew 5:17 NKJV, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." Yeshua as God who gave us the Old Testament commandments tells us to keep His commandments in the Gospels and attests that He is not doing away with the Old Testament commandments. Strong's Dictionary says that the Greek word for destroy here in Matthew can mean demolish which would mean He said that He did not do away with them in a very strong way. Yeshua is emphasizing that He is not doing away with the Old Testament portion commandments. Yeshua said the law would not be done away with while the earth exists in the next verse. Matthew 5:18 says, "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." The earth still exists so the law of commandments still stands. Do what the Bible says to do.

Theologians say that the Old Testament portion commands are done away because Yeshua fulfilled them; they are subtracting 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." Strong's Dictionary says that the word fulfill there in Matthew is to fill up. So, it has more to do with completing the commandments than taking away. If we have half a glass of water, I can add more water and completely fill it up.

New Testament believers are commanded to receive the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:38-39) and also be filled with the Holy Spirit. Shaul says in Ephesians 5:18 NKJV, "Be filled with the Spirit." We are filled up with the Holy Spirit or we could say that we are completely filled up. Colossians 2:10 says, "You are complete in Him."

Theologians are not trying to find truth but to get us to believe in their belief system and explain away anything that contradicts what they have already decided to believe. Again, I hope this helps you understand the Bible better. We are not trying to discredit and dishonor God's words as some are, but we seek truth.

**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.)**

**The High Priest was not to come into the holy place inside the veil but only when performing his duties.** The word Mercy seat is the word *kaporet* in Hebrew and means, cover. So, he was not to come before the Ark with its cover on at will.

"And the LORD said to Moses: 'Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.'" Leviticus 16:2 NKJV.

**This is the High Priest's service on Yom Kippur.**

"Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with the blood of a young bull as a sin offering, and of a ram as a burnt offering. He shall put the holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body; he shall be girded with a linen sash, and with the linen turban he shall be attired. These are holy garments. Therefore he shall wash his body in water, and put them on. And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering." Leviticus 16:3-5 NKJV.

**Sacrifices were to be brought to the God's sanctuary.** See Leviticus 17:3-4.

**Blood is the necessary atonement for sin. Yeshua as God came and gave Himself for our sins.**

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul." Leviticus 17:11 NKJV. Hebrews 10:9-10 NKJV says, "He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

**When an animal is killed while hunting, a person is to drain its blood and cover the blood.** See Leviticus 17:13

**No one is to have sexual relations with anyone within their close family relationships.**

**The husband is not to have marital relations when their wife is menstruating.**

**No one is to commit adultery with their neighbor.**

**No one is to do any type of idolatrous ceremony that involves their children.**

**Men are not to have sexual relations with other men.**

**Women are not to have sexual relations with other women.**

**People are not to have sexual relations with animals.**

**The land vomits the people of the land because of these things.**

Leviticus 18:6-30 NKJV,

None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I am the LORD. The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She is your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it is your

father's nakedness. The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, whether born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover. The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs is your own nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father—she is your sister—you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is near of kin to your father. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is near of kin to your mother. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law—she is your son's wife—you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness. They are near of kin to her. It is wickedness. Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive. Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as long as she is in her customary impurity. Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, to defile yourself with her. And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion. Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that you do not commit any of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I am the LORD your God."

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

We need to explain why we use God's real name in the Aaronic blessing. Some believe we are not supposed to use God's name, but they are mistaken. ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yě-hō-váh. Yě-hō-váh is used over 6,000 times in the Old Testament portion. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name.

According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah.

Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name. Won't you also honor God's name and use His true name with respect at times. The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. Over 2,000 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. God's true name is pointed as Yě-hō-věh sometimes 50 times in a single manuscript. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh.

Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה).

Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people. It is a commandment to put God's name on His people and by not using God's name, some are not keeping this commandment. What an honor it is to be a people of the creator and true God.

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ  
יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחֲנֶךָ  
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

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

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

Thank you for being with us today.