



**#24 VaYikra – Leviticus 1:1 to 6:7 (5:26 in JPS)
Torah Teaching and teaching, Yeshua is the Way
By Moshe Schwab**

Names

Kefa – Peter
Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ
in the Greek means to be smudged
Mishkan – Tent of Meeting in the desert
Moshe – Moses
Shaul – Paul
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
Vayikra – the 24th Torah portion

Today we begin a new book of the Bible. The portion VaYikra means "and He called," and it is also the name of the 3rd book of the Torah.

I would like to begin by talking about walking in the light every day. First of all, we need to understand what we mean by walking in the light or more correctly, what the word light is used for sometimes in the Bible. Proverbs 6:23 NKJV says, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light. Reproofs of instruction are the way of life." So, walking in the light refers to keeping God's commandments. God's commandments are a light because they give us wisdom and understanding and they are right and good. We use God's words to correct how we live because the light keeps us safe so we can see where we are going and what we are doing. We share these scriptures in Deuteronomy a lot because they are important to remember what they say about God's commandments. Make sure that you can refer to them, tell people about them, and explain them.

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.'

Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV says,
You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess.

Wisdom is applied knowledge. Most of the time, a hammer is used to drive a nail into a piece of wood. Wisdom is the know-how of how to apply our knowledge. When I first used a hammer, I

was told how to hold it and told to practice hitting the nail with enough force to drive it in with just a few strokes. The advice makes sense. The fewer the strokes to hit the nail, the less time and energy it takes to get the job done. What the hammer is used for is the knowledge and how to use the hammer efficiently is the wisdom. It took me a while before I could do use a hammer efficiently, but when I was able to improve my ability, I felt a sense of accomplishment. You would think that something as simple as using a hammer would be straightforward. I still grip and use a hammer the way I was taught.

Since God's commandments gives us usable knowledge for life, they are extremely valuable. The understanding that God's commandments give us are amazingly helpful. For example, after I began keeping God's commandments, I saw how they ordered by life and helped me to succeed in life. I no longer had to make up my own ideas on life because my life was ordered by our creator's good commandments who knows what is best for us.

Proverbs 4:18-19 NKJV says, "But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble." Today I am sitting here working on my teaching with the windows open. Earlier in the day, I thought about how wonderful a day it is today as I breathe in the fresh air. It feels like a perfect day. Perhaps God had me experience this because God knew I was going to share this scripture!

A just person does what is right; they keep God's commandments because they are right and good. God's commandments are associated with light because they give us wisdom and understanding for life. People who do what is right can experience perfect days of peace and blessing even if the weather is not so good. These wonderful days come from following God and at times we can experience the peaceful presence of God. We trust in God and believe God is able to work out things for us. And even in tough times, we can have comfort in knowing we did what was right and good.

Those who do not keep God's commandments live in darkness. They do not understand the evil they bring on themselves and others through their lifestyle. Their perfect day is often associated with the purchase of something or some other worldly thing or accomplishment. Their perfect days are often fleeting or temporary. In order to achieve that perfect day, they must keep trying to achieve something worldly.

God cares about us. That is why He gave us His good commandments. God wants what is best for us. God knows us. Our time on earth is short, but we look forward to a future kingdom where things will be different (see Isaiah 65:17-19). In the present, God is compassionate towards His people.

Psalms 103:13-16 NKJV says,

As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.

All the great people of the past who think their legacy will be remembered forever often end up being a line of text in history if at all.

Are we only concerned with worldly thinking? We live in a world that values what we have or do in life. Consider this list of things that people often consider important in life.

Friendship, loyalty, respect, fun, status, wealth, stability, adventure, challenge, determination, and creativity. From Psychology Magazine, 39 Core Values, July 12, 2018.

God does not take any of these things from us but God and the lifestyle He gives us can enhance life. These things that people consider important to life are often peoples' desires and goals. We could go through this list and talk about how each one of these things can be achieved by also having a relationship with God. For example, as believers, we can have a lifelong relationship with the God of creation and also have great relationships with good people who also love God. Isaiah 41:8 NKJV says, "But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the descendants of Abraham My friend." Abraham and his descendants are God's friend because they are in relationship with Him. They listen to God and keep His good commandments just as Abraham did. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

This is a good scripture in Genesis to remember because some false theologies teach there was an evolution of God's relationship with mankind. They say mankind was far from God initially. That is not true. Adam had a close relationship with God. God's commandments were initially passed on through believers. Also, there was no oral law of extra commandments in Abraham's time. God gave us His commandments at Mount Sinai so they would be written down and we could always have them.

What has been going on since the time of creation and the fall of mankind? Genesis 6:5 NKJV says, "The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Some people were influenced by the devil and decided not to follow God. Isaiah 14:12 NKJV says, "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!" So, the Old Testament portion refers to an adversary that is against God and mankind. It goes on to say in Isaiah 14:13 NKJV, "For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God."

This refers to an ancient being who God created that decided to be God and he is responsible for many of the problems of this world. People may also do things their own way instead of what is right and good, but Satan and the devil spirits that follow him also influence people into doing what is wrong.

The powers of darkness work behind the scenes. That is just like some of the people out there who deceive people for their own purposes. They may say that they care about us, but they have a personal agenda that is at odds with those whom they are fooling. These powers of darkness that are often referred to as devil spirits work the same way. In Genesis, we see a story that is similar; a devil spirit is speaking through a serpent. We should take some time to talk about this story.

Genesis 3:1-6 NKJV says,

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

The New Testament refers to this as an act of the devil. Rabbi Shaul says in 2 Corinthians 11:3 NKJV, "But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted." So the Jewish leader Shaul from the time of Yeshua understood that people could be influenced by devil spirits. People understood that Yeshua was casting out devil spirits. Matthew 8:16-17 NKJV says, "When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.'" The book of Matthew was written in the middle 1st century sometime.

The following is a common Jewish teaching on this section of scripture from Genesis Chapter 3. The devil questions what God said and God's integrity, "Has God indeed said?"

The woman replies by adding to God's commandments, "nor shall you touch it." And she also changes what God said to a maybe, "lest you die."

The devil then says she will not die, but instead they will be all-knowing and be like God. Just as the devil had rebelled and wanted to be God, the devil was trying to get Adam and the woman to believe they could be like God.

We learn from this that we are not to take away, add, or change, what God said. We are not God. 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." Mankind has been adding, taking away, and changing God's commandments since the inception of time. From this we learn that it is never okay to question God and make up our own way to live, but we should follow God and His good commandments.

Where are we going in life? What are we doing with our lives? Since we know that God's commandments give us wisdom and understanding and are right and good, why would we want to disobey God? Now that you know what is going on, I hope you will be more dedicated to keep what God said. Someone may say it is okay to do this or that, but is what they are saying truth or a lie. Pro 23:23 NKJV says, "Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding." Wisdom and understanding refers to God's commandments. Psalms 138:2 NKJV says, "I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name

For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; for You have magnified Your word above all Your name." God's word is truth and you can count on God's word.

Why would you consider lies when you can have truth? Is that how you want to live? Years ago, there were people who sold fake cures just to make money. They were called "snake oil" salesmen. People actually bought these worthless elixirs from them. Do not listen to people who are telling you lies instead of truth. Do not listen to the "snake oil" salespeople who oppose God. God will hold them accountable. Do not end up in the lake of fire with them. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone."

I tell you this for your own good. I want you to make it into the future eternal kingdom of God. Have you ever had missed opportunities to let people know these things? I had a very good friend who had a family and two children and was prone to drinking too much. Perhaps if I had understood the things I am sharing with you now, I could have saved his life and talked to him about what I am sharing with you now. I asked God to forgive me, and I know God has forgiven me, but that does not bring my friend back. We need to get the word out to the world. If we could save one person, it would be worth it.

More Encouragement to Consider

God's ways bring blessings; sin entangles people in pain and traps them. (LORD is the Hebrew name for God, Yĕhōvâh).

Jeremiah 17:7-10 NKJV says,

Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.

The person who trusts in God will prosper and be at peace. People's innermost thoughts can be wicked; and their thoughts and intentions are not hid from God. God will bless those who trust in Him, and the wicked will not get away with what they are doing in the sight of an almighty and all-knowing God.

Also, I'd like to digress some here. Never forget that God has created mankind in His image and people deserve dignity. We are to treat all people with respect and do what is "right and good" towards everyone.

Yeshua said in Matthew 5:44-48 NKJV,

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the

same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

So be consistent in your behaviors and do what is right.

Fight spiritually to depart from evil and do what is "right and good;" see Deuteronomy 6:18. Psalm 43:14-16 NKJV says, "Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry. The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." We are to stop doing anything that is wrong and do what is right. When it says to seek peace, it also means to live right. After all, doing what is right helps us to have peace in life. Those who do evil do not bring peace. Instead, evil often brings hurt and pain. Malachi 4:5 NKJV says, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." There is a coming day of tribulation and there is also a day of judgment. Revelation 21:8 tells us that no one who is living a sinful life will be in the future kingdom.

God is at work in our lives through the Holy Spirit and knows us deeply. He will not lead us astray. We just read some scriptures that taught us that God knows what we do. People may think that are getting away with their wrong behaviors, but those who do what is wrong will receive the fruit, the results for what they do. There is no hiding from God. We should understand that the consequences of our sin can not only be in the present. Those who do not change and do not do what is right will also stand before God someday and be punished for their sin.

Through the Messiah Yeshua we are commanded to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. God knows us better than we know ourselves and the Holy Spirit can lead us and help us to keep God's commandments. The Messiah brought peace to mankind through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us to live right and have peace in our lives. Some say Yeshua did not bring peace, but **yes He did**. We should understand that the Holy Spirit does not teach us to do sin or do evil. God will never lead us to stray.

This next section of scripture shows us that God is loving, faithful, and merciful.

Deuteronomy 7:7-11 NKJV says,

The LORD did not set **His love on you** nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because **the LORD loves you**, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

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; and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. Therefore you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments which I command you today, to observe them.

God is a faithful God who extends His mercy and love. He does not bring evil into our lives. He gives us the Holy Spirit as our helper, so accept God's help. 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!"

Bread was often cooked on stone so it could take the appearance of a stone. There are serpents that swim in water, and scorpions also have eggs. Fathers would not give something bad to their children. So Yĕhōvâh gives the Holy Spirit, and it is a good gift. Shaul said we are to seek God's gifts. 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Pursue love, and **desire spiritual gifts**, but especially that you may prophesy."

Keep your life together; don't let it fall apart. God does not take over our lives. We need to take care of ourselves in all areas of life. Proverbs 6:6-8 NKJV, "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest." Even an ant has the sense to take care of itself!

Proverbs 4:14-19 NKJV says:

Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on. For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

The scriptures often talk about our need to stay away from evil; God knows what we are doing. So don't do what is wrong. The scriptures also often use dichotomy by contrasting a subject and it is used to tell us the benefits of doing what is right and good.

Don't do what is wrong. Some actually take pleasure in misleading you. Some actually devise ways to trap those who want to follow God. Instead shine bright and live out good and perfect days. Those that do evil stumble in their own darkness; they don't know what's going on. Proverbs 23:19 NKJV says, "Hear, my son, and be wise; and guide your heart in the way." Proverbs 13:20-21 NKJV says, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed. Evil pursues sinners, but to the righteous, good shall be repaid."

People in our era are sometimes living in the alternate realities of movies, TV, and sports. While having fun and entertainment can be good for us, making alternate realities the goal of life is fooling yourself. I sometimes tell the story of a lady who did not have time to fellowship with believers because she watched TV. It sounds ridiculous to be so wrapped up in fantasy.

God is real and this is a time of testing for mankind. Will we honor God and keep His commandments? We value passing exams and doing well in worldly ways, but why not value

God as equally? Genesis 1:1 NKJV says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Everything we have come from a good God. James 1:17 NKJV says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights." God continues to sustain the universe and give us gifts.

Where are we situated in life? Are we on the outside of true life and not looking in? Have we formed barriers that keep us in a place of illusion? Do we make processes and lofty goals to replace God? Proverbs 8:12-14 NKJV says, "Find out knowledge and discretion. The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding."

Fearing God means to honor and respect God. Life is not about living a fantasy life or only living for worldly things. God is the creator; He gave us His word in the Bible; the Bible and the Holy Spirit through the Messiah can give good counsel, wisdom, and understanding. In fact, the Bible says we bring curses on ourselves by doing things our own way and not being a person of understanding. Galatians 3:10 quotes Deuteronomy 27:26 NKJV. It says in Deuteronomy, "Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law by observing them." That is what Shaul meant when he quoted it; people bring curses on themselves by not keeping the commandments of the creator God. God knows best. Theology says the opposite about that scripture in Galatians 3:10 and it is a disgrace to their intellect. Theology sometimes explains away biblical truths; do not change God's word. 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."

Where are our thoughts and desires? Do they have substance or are we living a fantasy life? Learn and grow spiritually, find out about God, and do what is "right and good" (Deuteronomy 6:18). Pass the test of life. God is good and He provided His commandments to show us the way to live, and He provided the Messiah Yeshua who also came to help us and show us how to live.

Torah Study

VaYikra means "and He called." VaYikra begins with God calling to Moshe from the Tent of Meeting to speak with him about various offerings the Israelites were to make. "Tent of Meeting" is the literal name for the Mishkan in the desert. The word "meeting" from The Tent of Meeting is the Hebrew word *moed*. It is translated seasons in Genesis 1:14 (there it is *moedim*, the plural form of *moed*). God gave us the sun, moon, and stars to know when to meet with God. That would be on the Sabbath, Friday night at sunset to and Saturday at sunset. Biblical days go from evening to day. Genesis 1:5 NKJV says, "Evening and the morning were the first day." God rested on the 7th day and made it holy (see Genesis 2:2-3). Observing Shabbat recognizes God as the true God and creator. There are also other days of rest associated with God's feasts. We got Sunday from pagan sun god worship.

This is under the title, Lord's Day on Wikipedia: "On 3 March 321, Constantine I decreed that Sunday (dies Solis) will be observed as the Roman day of rest [CJ3.12.2]: **'On the venerable day of the Sun** let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed.'" The quote of Constantine clearly shows that Sunday worship was instituted **for the**

Sun god and to be on the day of the Sun god Mithras. Christianity inherited this false observance from the pagan Roman Empire. Deuteronomy 12:31-32 NKJV says, "You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. "Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

This is a good article:

https://www.the-ten-commandments.org/did_constantine_change_sabbath.html.

God made Shabbat holy in Genesis.

The animal offerings were to be animals without defect; the person making the offering was to lay hands on the head of the animal and it would be accepted on behalf of the person for their sins; namely, for missing the mark of keeping God's commandments. The priest was to sprinkle the blood of the animal on them and then sacrifice it. God does not need our offerings, but we need to make some tangible evidence of our sorrow for disobeying God.

The Hebrew word for offering is korban. A person was to lay hands on the head of the animal as an act called semichah. Then to complete the act of transference, they would say the viduy (וִידוּי), pronounced vee-doo-ee) which is a confession of sin. They would say that they deserved to die instead of this innocent animal. Yĕhōvâh would accept their act and korban (sacrifice) based on their faith and teshuvah. Teshuvah is a turning away from sin with a commitment to not do it again.

We should note that laying on of hands was also used to transfer blessings, healing, and anointing in the Old Testament. It is still Jewish practice in our era to lay hands on the head of their children and bless them. We see this Jewish practice of laying on of hands in Acts 4:29-30 NKJV, "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." We stretch out our hand to transfer healings, signs, and wonders from God. Remember it is not us but God doing what is supernatural.

If they offer birds, they should be a dove or young pigeon. For the grain offerings, choice flour was to be used; no leaven or honey was to be used for a burnt offering; they were to make sure to use salt for all the offerings. If anyone sinned both in ignorance or not, they could be forgiven. A person can also sin by not giving testimony when they should. A person could sin in the treatment of holy things, or by being deceitful, by stealing, or by lying.

In this portion we see that sin in ignorance was still sin and a sacrifice had to be made for those sins. Also, sins not done in ignorance were forgiven too. One must repent of the sin and ask God for forgiveness (see numbers 14:19 and Psalm 51:16-17). It has always been understood that forgiveness involves repentance whether the sin was done in ignorance or not. Repentance means true sorrow and the determination not to repeat the mistake (the sin) again. Sometimes

after they repented, they would be immersed, be baptized. The Hebrew word for immersion is *mikvah*. Immersion came after repentance.

Who has not sinned in ignorance and most people have sinned knowing they were doing something wrong; so, we all sin. With the coming of the Messiah, reparation to God is only possible through the Messiah. It is not enough to simply repent without coming before God for forgiveness. Yochanan said God hears our heartfelt confession (see 1 John 1:7-9).

The ingredients or lack of ingredients in the offerings in Leviticus could point to spiritual things. Sometimes what God has believers do or what rituals God has believers do, conveys important spiritual pictures for us.

Consider these spiritual pictures of the sacrificial system:

- *Animals without blemish and using choice flour – could be a spiritual picture of purity of life; or giving of best.
- *Adding salt (to be added to all offerings) – could also be construed as trusted fellowship.
- *No honey (in the meal offerings) – could mean no spiritual gladness (perhaps because the Messiah Yeshua had not yet come)
- *No leaven (in the meal offering) – could refer to the absence of sin as in a return to purity. Judaism understands that leaven is referring to sin. Shaul says in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 NKJV, "Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." This scripture also commands us to keep God's feast of Passover.
- *Adding oil (in the meal offering) – could mean anointing, making holy or separate.
- *Adding of frankincense (in meal offering) – could be a picture of spiritual goodness.

The thanks offerings are:

The Minchah (is the meal offering) and the Shelamim (is the peace offering); part of these offerings were to be eaten.

The sin Offerings are:

The Olah (it is an ascending offering), Chatat (is a sin offering), the Asham (is a guilt offering); these offerings were to be burnt up completely.

The miracle of the fire that descended from heaven for the offering is recorded in The Talmud; in Yoma 1 it says, "Five things have been said of the fire on the altar: It had the form of a lion, it was clear as the sun, it was palpable, it consumed moist things as dry ones, and never emitted any smoke."

In our present Messianic age, Yeshua gave Himself for us and it is no longer necessary for an animal sacrifice for sin; Yeshua is the final sacrifice for sin. Hebrews 10: 14 NKJV says, "For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified." We are in the process of becoming holy (set apart from sin, sanctified) through the Holy Spirit and through our

obedience to God's commandments. Notice the similarities to the fire on the altar. Yeshua was the light of the world from the tribe of Judah, and the tribe of Judah's symbol is a lion. God as Yeshua came as a person and not a spirit; He was palpable.

When we sin, we ask Yeshua for forgiveness. 1 John 1:7, 9 NKJV says, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. ... If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Our confession of sin should be understood within a Jewish context. Remember, Yeshua Messiah was Jewish and so were all the early believers. Confession according to Yochanan in 1 John is an act of viduy (וידוי) where we confess that Yeshua has taken our place. We need to make an act of sorrow and repentance for our sin just as Israel did. Yeshua was innocent and without sin according to Hebrews 4:15. By our faith and teshuvah (our turning away from sin) we are forgiven. We turn away from sin and towards God and keep His commandments.

Modern Judaism says that since the destruction of the Temple, sacrifice has been replaced by prayer, Torah study, and acts of charity (chesed). They cite Hosea 6:6 NKJV, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Hosea actually means that God would rather that they stop sinning. Their false theology is just like some of the false theology of Christianity that contradicts the Bible. Leviticus 17:11 NKJV tells us that there must be a sacrifice for sin: "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." Yeshua is the final sacrifice for sin.

In the same way, when we confess Yeshua as God (Romans 10:9), we are making a similar association. In Jewish context, our confession is a sort of viduy with the understanding that we know who Yeshua is and that He died for our sins. Romans 10:10 NKJV tells us, "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." All the components for a Jewish confession are there which requires faith in God and in this case, a turning toward the Messiah Yeshua (teshuvah). We then establish our relationship with God because we do what is right and keep God's commandments.

Through the Messiah and the Holy Spirit, we are to escape (we are saved from) the ways of this world. Saved always means *to escape* as in Joel 2:32 and is the Hebrew word *Malat*. *Malat* always means, escape. In Joel 2:32, the Hebrew word *malat* always means to escape. We should understand that the Greek word in the New Testament portion often translated saved has this meaning. (h4422. מָלַט *mâlat*; "a primitive root; properly, to be smooth, i. e. (by implication) to escape." Reference is from Strong's' Enhanced Dictionary.) If you see *malat* translated as saved in Joel 2:32, it was done to deliberately mislead.

Saved should be understood as escaping sin by keeping God's commandments. In our Messianic age, we do that with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Yeshua the Messiah came from heaven in the form of a man to be an example for us, to bring us back to God (teshuvah), and to die for our sins. In Philippians 2:7-8 NKJV it says that Yeshua (Jesus), "Made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the

likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." Kefa talks about the prophecy of King David concerning the Messiah: Acts 2:30-33 NKJV says, "He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses." King Dave prophesied in Psalms 16:9-10 NKJV, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption."

It was always determined by God to provide a blood sacrifice for us. Kefa also said about Yeshua in Acts 2:24 NKJV, "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it."

The Haftarah for VaYikra is Isaiah 43:21 to 44:23. Isaiah talks about how God had taken care of Israel, but Israel had not been faithful to the sacrificial system and had been a sinful people. So, God has allowed destruction and scorn to come upon them. Someday though God will pour out the Holy Spirit on them. The redeemer God and Rock is the first and the last; there is no God, but Him. Also, it says that those that worship idols are deceived.

Here in Isaiah God refers to Himself as the first and last. In Revelation Chapter 1, we see God appearing as a man to Yochanan (John) and referring to Himself as the first and last; we find out that it is Yeshua who is speaking to Yochanan there in Revelation. He is our redeemer.

Isaiah 44:6-8 CJB says,

"Thus says Adonai, Isra'el's King and Redeemer, Adonai-Tzva'ot: "I am the first, and I am the last; besides me there is no God. Who is like me? Let him speak out! Let him show me clearly what has been happening since I set up the eternal people; let him foretell future signs and events. Don't be frightened, don't be afraid — Didn't I tell you this long ago? I foretold it, and you are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? There is no other Rock — I know of none."

Yeshua said in Revelation 22:12-13 NKJV, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

If you do what is right and good, you will have a good reward.

**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 olah offering describes the burnt offering. Leviticus 1:3.

Leaven and honey are not to be part of an offering. Leviticus 2:11.

Offerings are to include salt. Leviticus 2:13.

If the leaders of Israel sin unintentionally, they are to make an offering. In verse 15, the leaders make the offering. Leviticus 4:13-15.

When sin becomes known to someone they are to make a sacrifice for it. Leviticus 4:27-29.

A person who witnesses a crime must make testimony for the crime that has been committed or be guilty of the crime before God. Leviticus 5:1

Those that make any unintentional sin will make a sacrifice according to their financial ability. Leviticus 5:7, 11.

The priest is to pinch the head of a bird brought for an offering by its neck, but not divide a bird. Leviticus 5:7-8.

They were not to put olive oil in the unintentional sin offering. Leviticus 5:11.

They were to add 1/5th value to things mistakenly taken from the offering. Leviticus 5:15-16.

For an unknown sin they will make an offering. Leviticus 5:17-18.

A person is to give an offering when guilty of something. Leviticus 5:21-25.

A person is to return something they have taken. Leviticus 5:23.

Yeshua is the Way **(a teaching to accompany the Torah teaching)**

In order to avoid sin, we need to keep our focus on God and be attracted to the things of God. We should have a God centered life. This portion talks about various offerings, what they were for, and how they were to be done. We see Cain and Abel making offerings in Genesis, so after the fall of Adam and Eve, they must have been instructed by God to make offerings. In fact, offerings were made by Abel in Genesis Chapter 4, by Noah Genesis Chapter 7, by Abraham in Genesis Chapters 12,13, and 22, by Isaac in Genesis Chapter 26, and by Jacob in Genesis Chapters 33 and 46. Contrary to some theological thought, Adam and Eve were close to God and their descendants who followed the true God were also close to God. Noah, who did what was right, was in communication with God and God had him build an ark to save mankind.

Over thousands of years, mankind has had the choice whether to be attracted to the things of God or to do things their own way. We live in a time of testing. How will we live; how will we react; what are the motivations for our plans? Will we pass the test? The Bible says God knows our thoughts. Psalm 139:2-3 NKJV says, "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." God knows all and He knows what motivates us.

People are in general more concerned about passing their tests at school or at work, or following man-made commandments that they think please their denomination instead of pleasing God and keeping God's commandments. Even most observant Jews are more concerned about following the added man-made commandments of the rabbis than the Bible. Keep 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."

Every day our focus should be on doing what God says in the Bible and not doing things our own way. That is how we pass the test. Every day we need to be attracted to the things of God like a person who loves chocolate or sweets. Psalm 119:103-104 NKJV says, "How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way."

The word false there in Psalm 119 can also mean "to sham" according to Strong's Enhanced Dictionary. To sham means to give someone false or misleading information that tricks them. Don't we all hate shams that try to deceive us. I remember ordering something through the mail that looked great in the ad, but when I got it, it was more toy like than what was depicted, and it was worthless. I was fooled; I was shammed! God's commandments are good for us. Stay away from the false ideas and shams of mere people. The Bible says that the lies and false doctrine of mankind are just shams and false information; they are often worthless or can even lead people into destructive sinful ways and even the lake of fire mentioned in the Bible (see Revelation 21:8).

Some of the false doctrines include that circumcision is abolished. Shaul said he taught circumcision. Galatians 5:11NKJV says, "If I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution?" Adults were not required to be circumcised because it was life threatening at the time. Those who were teaching adult circumcision were Torah breakers because the Torah teaches us to value life. Yeshua refers to Deuteronomy 22:4 when He says in Luke 14:5 NKJV, "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?" Saving and valuing life is important, especially peoples' lives. Also, mankind is created in God's image. Wrong teaching has caused people to disobey God and not understand the scriptures properly. In this case the Torah breakers were causing people to die.

Another insidious doctrine is the supposed validity of a church or denomination by association with the 12 Apostles. Shaul (Paul) is a messenger for God (apostles are messengers) like the many previous messengers God sent out in the Old Testament portion like the prophets Isaiah or Jeremiah etcetera. In the Gospels, Yeshua sends out 12, then 70, and also Shaul (Paul) says that he is "sent out," he is an apostle. Also, Shaul says that being sent is a common gift ministry in Ephesians 4:11 NKJV: "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." There are perhaps thousands of apostles over the ages and also other ministries. For example, Shaul mentions two more apostles in Romans 16:7 NKJV, "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles." Junia is a woman's name.

Churches or denominations that claim authenticity through the apostles or have people who claim to be apostles are often trying to claim that they are special; they are proud. Proverbs 16:5 NKJV says, "Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; though they join forces, none will go unpunished." Using the word apostle has been tainted by its improper association. Wrong teaching about apostles has intentionally controlled people and kept them in false belief systems.

Also, when Shaul says that our faith is based on the apostles and prophets, he means the Old Testament apostles and prophets who wrote the Old Testament. Without the Old Testament, we would have no Messiah and nothing to base our faith on. Remember, there was no New Testament at the time he wrote his letters so he is talking about the sent ones, the apostles of the Old Testament. Someone could write a book on all the false doctrines that have been developed both intentionally and by not understanding the biblical context.

*Kefa warns us in 2 Peter 3:16 NKJV, "Untaught and unstable people **twist to their own destruction.**" What were they untaught in? They were untaught in the Torah and the Old Testament portion scriptures; **there was no New Testament portion at the time.***

Put good and godly thoughts in your mind. Use the scriptures to focus your thoughts appropriately.

I use the scriptures to help me all the time. Get to know key scriptures that you can use to guide you. Isaiah 26:3 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." When I am not at peace, this is one of several scriptures that comes to my mind. I trust in God and I give Him what is bothering me and confess my trust in His ability to heal me or help me, or whatever is the issue. This scripture in Isaiah is one of the many scriptures I have memorized and apply to my life. I have some 9 pages of scriptures printed out that have been key to my walk with God.

That is how you get control of your thoughts. You replace the wrong thinking with right thoughts. Regardless of how others deal with issues, we need to get our thoughts in the right place; so, get control of your thoughts.

Be appropriate in what you understand to be true. Act reasonably.

We need to be a people who have a conscience. Does what I do please God; am I leading people to do what is right or to what is wrong? I once knew a lawyer who worked for a law firm that was somewhat unscrupulous. He told someone at work that he could not in conscience agree with their practice in regards to a particular issue and when his boss found out, they fired him on the spot. His coworker told the boss what he said.

Because he got fired, he had trouble finding another job. God blessed him though and what he does now has impacted perhaps hundreds of thousands of people. It is truly amazing the impact he has had. He probably thought at the time, "How will I take care of my family," or "Why is this happening to me.?" One person taking a stand has led to the blessing of thousands. So, stand and be faithful. Someone once told me that people give up at times just before God is going to use them. So, do not give up.

Will we look back on our lives and see the good we have done or the destruction we have left in our wake, the destruction we have caused by our wrong speech or actions. 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." It says God's commandments are for our good!

I was watching a story about some guy who was supposed to be smart and educated. His idea of progress was to commit murder. I am not kidding you. He is like another Hitler spreading his doctrine of getting rid of anyone he thought was a burden on society. He is the burden on society.

Fortunately for us, we have a better group of people that we belong to; we are a people who have a conscience and care about others. The thinking of the world and the thinking of mankind can be so much different than what God wants for us. Look at what it says in Romans 12.

Romans 12:10-19 NKJV:

"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord."

The message from God and Yeshua (Jesus) is so much different than the world's message, isn't it. God tells us to be kind, have hope, be patient, pray (because God can answer prayers), help each other financially, rejoice, and don't think you are too smart to listen to others. Do not do evil, and we are to live peaceably. That is the message of our Messiah Yeshua. He is the Head of His people, and we are part of his body of believers.

God has put together His body of believers with Yeshua as the head.

Shaul refers to believers in the Messiah as being part of a body of believers. Each part is necessary to be a functioning body. For example, our body needs its various parts like hands, feet, and head.

Shaul said that Yeshua is the head of the believers and not anyone or anything else and that Yeshua is at work in His people. Colossians 2:19 NKJV, "Holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God." Yeshua is the head of the believers and not a denomination.

We hold fast to the Messiah and not to the shams and fake doctrines of man.
Ephesians 4:14-16 NKJV says,

"That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ — from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

Shaul says we are to each do our part and build up the body of believers. We are to no longer be deceived by everything we hear but speak God's ways in a loving and caring way. He says that each part of the body is effective and helps the body of believers to function. This is amazing, isn't it! We have something to celebrate and something wonderful to be part of.

Have joy in being part of His body of believers.

Shaul said in Philippians 4:4-7 NKJV, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

We have so much to be thankful for. God has given us His commandments and the right way to live, and it is a good way to live. Why not have joy! Why be anxious? Keep praying and allow God's peace to fill you up. Allow God to guard your mind through the Messiah Yeshua (Christ Jesus). God tells us to be thankful for what we have been given. Hebrews 13:15-16 NKJV says, "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

God requires a sacrifice for our shortcomings (our sin); Leviticus 17:11 NKJV says, "It is the blood that makes atonement." God made a way for all to come to Him through the Messiah Yeshua. People are prone to sin and doing things their own way instead of doing what is right. Have a God centered life. Do not be shammed or fooled by mankind's ideas. Instead, put godly (good) thoughts in your mind. Control your thoughts with the help of the scriptures. Have a proper understanding of things and act reasonably. We are part of a wonderful body of believers in the Messiah so be filled with joy and be thankful.

The Aaronic Blessing

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

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

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

said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יְהוָה). Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people.

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶכָּ
 יְאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְּךָ
 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.