



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
 Yēhōvāh – 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)

Our portion for today is Kedoshim means, "holy ones." The Torah portion for Kedoshim is Leviticus 19:1 to 20:27. It is sometimes part of a double portion.

Here are some basics on being God's holy ones. Some say if they believe in God, they are automatically holy. People who say this are self-deceived; what they believe can't be true and what they believe is completely illogical. Being holy is actually acting in a holy manner, by growing spiritually, and keeping God's commandments.

First, in this Messianic age, God is at work in His people to raise them up spiritually. It isn't an all do it yourself process. It is an easier process if we have been raised by parents who know the truth and can impart an understanding of what we need to do. We also need to understand what God does in the life of the Messianic believer in Yeshua.

That is not always the case though and there is a void of understanding in the life of many believers in the Messiah. Proverbs 1:7 NKJV says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." What does it mean to fear Yēhōvāh (the word in all caps is Yēhōvāh in the Hebrew)? Yēhōvāh is the creator and in order to live right, we need to **listen intently to the words of life** that He has imparted to us. They are words for life. God reaches out to mankind with His loving commandments to help us in life.

Sometimes we confuse God's instruction with knowledge that comes to us through medicine or science or some other field of natural study. The knowledge that we learn from God are rules applied to life as we go through our day-to-day life.

The scripture said that fools do not like wisdom and instruction. Also, do not confuse this with school where we learn science or math. This scripture refers to wisdom given in the Torah by the creator, God. God has our best interests at heart and has given us His grace and love through His commandments. Deuteronomy 4:2,6 NKJV says, "Keep the commandments of the

LORD your God which I command you." ... "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.'"

When the Bible talks about wisdom and instruction, it is talking about the wisdom from God and being instructed to do what is "right and good" (Deuteronomy 6:17-18). So, when we are told to be righteous (do what is right) or do good (keeping God's commandments), they should be understood within the context of God's loving advice for us. God's advice it is not just advice. Since He is God, we need to have a deep respect for what He has given us. This is to be such a deep respect that we should fear not listening to an almighty and good God.

Don't confuse God's commandments in the Torah with the man-made commentary of the Talmud, the Jewish writings; the Jewish Talmud are just the thoughts of people; some of these rabbinic writings are beneficial, but some are not and can be harsh and off base. Some rabbis in our modern times don't even believe in God and are not leading people to do what is right. Some people think when I say to keep God's commandments that I am saying that we need to follow the rabbis. That is not true. We need to follow God.

In this Messianic age, we have both the grace given to us through God's commandments in the Torah from Mt. Sinai and the help of the Holy Spirit. John 14:15-17 NKJV says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever the Spirit of truth." Yeshua gave us His commandments at Mount Sinai, and He gives the Holy Spirit and the associated gifts or manifestations as our helper to those who believe in Him (Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; there was also gifting in the Old Testament portion – even for building the Tent of Meeting; God is not limited in how He can empower us).

God says we love God by keeping His commandments in Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always." Yeshua says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Do you see the obvious connection? In this present age, we have grace through God's commandments given at Mount Sinai and through the Holy Spirit given by the Messiah Yeshua (grace upon grace).

We make the effort to keep God's commandments that give us wisdom and understanding and that are right and good. We also are to listen and use the Holy Spirit. In this Messianic age, we are commanded to use the help of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39; 1 Corinthians 14:1).

Years ago, I talked to a pastor who did not believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit even though we are commanded to use them (1 Corinthians 14:37). His unbelief stopped him from teaching truth. I talked to another pastor who had a church of some 400 and she said they had someone in their church who believed in these things. Shaul quotes Isaiah and says, "With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; and yet, for all that, they will not hear Me," 1 Corinthians 14:21 NKJV. It seems people are still self-willed and will not hear what God commands us to do. Also, these same people often do not believe in God's commandments, and

they make up excuses to reject the working of the Holy Spirit (if the Old Testament was wisdom for life back then, it is still wisdom for life).

They are rejecting the goodness of God and they do not fear God. Instead, some think God's gifts are foolishness; or, some fear man rather than God. Only one person out of some 400 believed in God's gifts in that church. In some churches that teach about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, most of the congregation accepts and receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit. So, the ones who reject the goodness of God are the ones missing out. Luke 11:13 NKJV says, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" God is good and His gifts are good.

We tend to inflate our ideals. While it is good to have trust in ourselves; most importantly we must have truth. I once knew someone who said he based his life on faith. He probably meant both in his abilities and in God. Some though base their faith on their own ideas or mistaken or false doctrine.

Many still practice the false doctrine passed down to us from the Roman Empire which changed the day of rest to the pagan sun god (Sunday) and made it illegal to keep God's biblical feasts (instead they make up their own celebrations).

Some reject God's commandments in the Torah which give us wisdom and understanding and are right and good (Deuteronomy 4:6, 6:17-18).

Many reinterpret the scriptures without their true biblical context and roots. They explain away what they read in the Bible for the purpose of establishing their false doctrine.

Some reject God's loving commandments, and lie and say they are not loving.

Some reject the working of the Holy Spirit and minimize the work of the Holy Spirit to just a person's conscience.

Some make up their own commandments that actually contradict the Bible.

We must reject the lies that contradict the Torah and God. Jeremiah 2:13 NKJV says, "For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water." This scripture tells us that God's people are not keeping the Old Testament portion laws; instead, they are making up their own laws. Since these laws are from an all-knowing God, why would they change except for the sacrificial law and the Holy Spirit in this Messianic time? People have made up their false religions that are broken and worthless. If you are hanging onto false beliefs, you are hanging on to broken cisterns.

God expects us to do what He told us to do and not live by man-made doctrine or our own ideas. Mankind often makes up their own ways instead of following God and are filled with wrongdoing. Jeremiah 2:22 NKJV, "For though you wash yourself with lye, and use much soap, yet your iniquity is marked before Me," says the Lord GOD." People who continue to willfully sin will have to stand before God – their sins remain before God.

Hebrews 10:26-31 NKJV:

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected

Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Some will say that Yeshua covers their sin, but the New Testament scriptures says that no one who willfully continues to sin will be exonerated. Isaiah 59:2 NKJV says, "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you."

God must be a just God. Psalms 7:11 NKJV says, "God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day." So don't be fooled by these false teachers who say it is okay to live a life of sin. They will be the first ones to go to the lake of fire. 2 Peter 2:1,3-4: "There will be false teachers among you." ... "By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. For if God did not spare the angels who sinned."

Kefa also said in the New Testament portion about those who live in sin, "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment;" 2 Peter 2:9 NKJV. The unjust are those who don't live right; they will face God's judgment and punishment.

If you do sin, the Old Testament portion says God is forgiving if we repent and Rabbi Yochanan said that Yeshua the Messiah now gives us forgiveness of sin. The Old Testament portion says that God forgives those who fear Him and want to do what is right; Psalms 103:12-13 NKJV, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him."

Rabbi Yochanan said in 1 John 1:7-9 NKJV, "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Notice it say that those who walk in the light and do what is right will be forgiven for confessing their sin.

Light refers to understanding and keeping God's commandments. Deuteronomy 4:5,6 NKJV says, "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments;" ... "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding." Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." God's commandments are a light and give wisdom for life.

Have a proper spiritual attitude. We may have broken areas of practice but the start of a properly applied spiritual life begins by a proper application of truth. We need to just start applying what we learn. Proverbs 22:17 NKJV says, "Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge." We need to know the scriptures well enough to be able to remember what they teach and apply them. Psalm 119:11 NKJV says, "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You."

We must also be willing to look at what's within us. Do our personal beliefs track with truth? Take the time to discard the lies that have been passed down to us by false religion, by philosophy, by secular humanism, and by those who say the Old Testament is done away with. Discard the lies of those who say Yeshua is not the Messiah, and discard the lies of those who don't believe in the working and gifts of the Holy Spirit or minimize the work of the Holy Spirit.

Jeremiah 16:19 NKJV

O LORD, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in the day of affliction,
The Gentiles shall come to You from the ends of the earth and say,
"Surely our fathers have inherited lies, worthlessness and unprofitable things."

God's word will stand forever, but the ideas of mankind will not. Isaiah 40:8 NKJV says, "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." God's words are good, but watch out for those who teach lies. Proverbs 30:5-6 NKJV, "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and **you be found a liar.**" Will you trust in God? Psalms 56:4 NKJV says, "In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?"

God's words are right and true. Psalms 33:4-5 NKJV says, "For the word of the LORD is right, and all His work is done in truth. He loves righteousness and justice." Righteousness means to do what is right. Justice has a similar meaning; it means rendering to others what is right. Isn't God wonderful. He gives us knowledge and understanding that is true and right. God loves what is right and doing what is right. He is a holy and good God. So be His kedoshim, be God's holy ones.

Torah Study

This portion, Kedoshim, 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 (Leviticus 19:2; 20:7, 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. For example, we should not offer alcohol to an alcoholic. Holding grudges instead of forgiving can lead to anger and unjust retribution. Yochanan (John) 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 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, respect the elderly, not to wrong foreigners, not to be dishonest with measurements, and keep to 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 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 relations during a woman's period. These were the things that the people of the land were doing and the reason God was expelling them from the land. **God detested those works and the land would vomit them out of they 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. 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 (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.

Be a Blessing **(accompanying teaching for the Torah portions for today)**

People need to hear God; reproduce God's glory in our lives; show His good ways.
Let's live a bless life and be a blessing to others. There is so much of our society that has no qualms about what they do. Psalm 95:8-9 NKJV says, "Do not harden your hearts, as in the

rebellion, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, when your fathers tested Me; they tried Me, though they saw My work." It's amazing isn't it. Israel saw God's great power in the wilderness, but some of them still went astray. It's still true today. We have the Holy Spirit and have seen God's power, but some people still want to do whatever they want. We need to stand strong and not sin.

Hebrews 3:12-14 NKJV

"Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 'but exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 'For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence **steadfast to the end.**"

We are told to beware so that we don't sin because our sin can cause pain and destruction and separates us from God. We are to be steadfast to the end. Don't sin, hold on steadfastly. Why not hold fast to doing what is right and good? Why not show others God's good ways instead of the pain and brokenness that comes from sin? Why not live a blessed life and be a blessing to others?

Be stable and faithful in all you do.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 NKJV, "And now, Israel, 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.**" In Leviticus 19:18 NKJV it 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." Yeshua was quoting the Old Testament when He said to love God and your neighbor; as He does over and over. If the Old Testament was done away with as some say, they are saying His words are worthless.

Also, it was the practice of Rabbis to give two answers to questions; most informed people understand that this is what Yeshua was doing; He was acting as a Rabbi. Yeshua said the gate is narrow; the religious leaders of His time were following man-made commandments instead of God's commands from the Old Testament (see Matthew 15). Don't believe the religious leaders of our time who are telling us not to keep God's commandments. What does the Bible say over and over?

It is not much different now for people who have the help of the Holy Spirit. We are to still keep God's commandments, but we also have the Holy Spirit to help us. Hebrews 3:14 said we are to be "steadfast to the end!" The Holy Spirit is our helper to accomplish this. John 15:26 NKJV, "But when the Helper comes." John 16:7 NKJV says, "It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you." Shaul (Paul) said, "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are;" 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 NKJV. We are to be holy; being holy means we are to separate ourselves from sin. We are not to sin; and, we are to do that with the help of the Holy Spirit.

No matter what issues we face, keep trusting God and be at peace; relax.

If we are on good terms with God, we have nothing to worry about even if there are things to be concerned about. I was stuck on a river in the jungle with melted engine hoses from when the intake took in sand. We were stuck on a sandbar in the middle of nowhere. Someone on our team rigged the hoses so we could get to a jungle town. We just had to wait for the tide to come in. We made it! Whew! Not worrying is easier said than done. I knew we were stuck, and we had a big big problem. We were going nowhere without an engine!

Yeshua told us to get control of ourselves. "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." Matthew 6:31-34 NKJV. Everyday can bring good and it can also bring challenges. I had some computer problems this one time and I tackled them one at a time. I didn't need to worry, even if I did a little bit. I got it worked out.

We can be attracted to lots of good things; stand out in the areas God wants to use us.

Better to do that than waste time and energy with our free time. Stand out in the areas of life where God wants to use us. One of our friends is a nurse and she decided to go to New York City to help the sick there during the COVID 19 crisis. What a brave young lady who decided to help out with the disaster there.

We don't have to necessarily take extreme risks like she did, but what a great example she is to us.

1 Peter 4:8-11 NKJV says:

"And above all things have fervent love for one another, for 'love will cover a multitude of sins.' Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Love, be hospitable, don't grumble, serve each other well, and use what God gave you. Years ago, I had my weekends free to do occasional ministry events. I thought, why not use some of my time to serve others. I got immensely blessed just serving others and praying for them.

Using our time for God is part of the believer's life and can bring us blessings when we give. Seeing someone healed is an amazing blessing to the person who gets healed, but it is also a blessing to the person who took the time to serve.

It says in Leviticus that there must be a blood sacrifice for sin. Yeshua (Jesus) came and gave His life as the final sacrifice for sin. He gave up His life; no one took it from Him (see John 10:18). This portion goes over a lot of important commandments. **The Bible talks about keeping God's commandments a lot.** We should be faithful and steadfast to God. If you are not going somewhere where they are frequently encouraging you to keep God's commandments, go somewhere where they are.

We are to “put to death” sin it says in Colossians 3:5 NKJV. These are some strong words. Why not make the effort to do what is right and bring blessing to others instead of sin, and the pain and destruction that can accompany sinful behavior? Be stable in all you do and no matter what, keep trusting in God and be at peace. Worry often just brings extra tension to our situation. There are a lot of good things we can do, but don’t forget to include spiritual things as part of how you use your time. You don’t have to go to extreme risks, but we are commanded to use some of our abilities for the kingdom of God and to also use our spiritual gifts. Live a blessed life and be a blessing to others.

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. Over 2,363 manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה). Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people.

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

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וְיִשְׁמְרֶכָּ
יֵאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיַחְנֶנֶךָ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיִשָּׂם לָךְ 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.