

## **Introduction**

### **Part 8**

Repentance and the Love of God  
by the Giving of His Torah

What does it mean to study the Bible? Does studying the Bible simply mean to read our Bibles? Unfortunately, in this modern age, it appears this is the approach for the typical believer in the Messiah. It's no secret that those of us who claim to follow Yeshua consistently fall short of living up to the example given by our Rabbi (Yeshua) on the way we should be living our lives. Being a disciple of Yeshua is a life-long journey towards conforming our lives to the image and the way of life that Yeshua taught. However, so often, followers of Yeshua chose to blatantly ignore some of the clearest Torah instructions of our Rabbi and obscure the teachings of the Torah and of Yeshua the Messiah using modern theologies for the purpose of getting "*off the hook*," so one does not need to be accountable before God and His Word. There are instances in modern theologies where the followers of Yeshua are taught something explicitly contradictory to the plain meaning of the Word of God causing one to spend his or her life obeying the theology based instruction they received instead of the commands of God. The



only way to break out of this cycle is to take seriously the study of the Bible, God's Holy Word! While studying God's word, the major premise the Lord appears to be speaking to us is to daily live repentant lives under in the Love of the Messiah Yeshua.

One might ask, *“How are Repentance and the Love of God connected to the Torah?”* The connection is found in the Lord lovingly giving us something to turn towards, to walk in, and to live our lives by. A way to understand what it means to turn from sin and death unto life which are rooted in righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth. The challenge for Christians to consider is in the Church's historical stance toward the Jewish people and the Old Testament (Tanach, תנ"ך) as it is related to two thousand years of developed theologies. According to the Scriptures, the Lord's covenants and promises to the Jewish people are everlasting; they cannot be revoked, as the Lord has staked his reputation upon their fulfillment. According to the Scriptures, in both the Tanach and the Apostolic Writings, the Jewish people will forever be God's people, and the gentiles (non-Jewish persons) are grafted in (*Romans 11*) to Israel.

Repentance, Teshuvah (תשובה) means *“to turn from”* sin. Both historically and traditionally Teshuvah has meant to turn from our sins and do so by turning towards the Lord God, to seek Him and His ways. Repentance is not simply a mental exercise, it is the active choice to believe and follow in the footsteps of the Messiah who lived as our example (*John 13:15*). This is what faith is about, where by our faith we step out and live for Him, and the Lord empowers us to do so. Paul said faith comes by hearing and hearing every word of God (*Romans 10:17*). We are being told by Paul the importance of both being taught and remembering the power of God to deliver us from bondage. As we read in the book of Exodus and throughout the Torah, we learn of the Lord's mercy and grace to sustain His people during the wilderness journey (*Shemot / Exodus 34, and all of Bamidbar / Numbers*), His ability to fulfill His promises (*Bereshit / Genesis 12, 15, 17*), and His plan for the ultimate redemption of His people (*Bereshit / Genesis 3:15*). It is within the context of the act of hearing, remembering, and doing all of these things, that the all of Scripture Paul is referring to in Romans, these things are designed for us to remember what God has promised and what He has done in His son Yeshua the Messiah. In the Torah,

and the Tanach, we learn that in the Messiah (in Christ) we have the future expectation of the power of God at work in our lives! In addition, Yeshua said to the woman caught in adultery, your sins are forgiven, now go and leave your life of sin (*John 8:11*). This is one of the most important messages on repentance (תשובה), whose very definition is to turn, and to leave behind one's life of sin where a truly repentant heart is the one that believes and lives it. Therefore, our faith in the Messiah is coupled to the Lord calling us to repentance, to turn towards, to walk in, and to live our lives according to His word. Without the Torah, we would not know what it means to turn from sin and death unto a life that is rooted in righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth.

When we consider the wisdom of the Sages, we learn that all of Judaism teaches one primary mitzvah, that a sinner should repent and confess his sin before the Lord God of Israel. This mitzvah of Teshuvah (תשובה, Repentance) is a the fundamental principle of faith because without it there is NO FORGIVENESS. This is consistent across both Judaism and Christianity, similar to what Ramabam states in His Mishneh Torah Sefer Madda Teshuvah, chapter 1.

### *Rambam Mishneh Torah Sefer Madda Teshuvah Chapter 1*

*If a person transgresses any of the mitzvot of the Torah, whether a positive command or a negative command - whether willingly or inadvertently - when he repents, and returns from his sin, he must confess before God, blessed be, He as [Numbers 5:6-7] states: "If a man or a woman commit any of the sins of man... they must confess the sin that they committed." This refers to a verbal confession. This confession is a positive command. How does one confess: He states: "I implore You, God, I sinned, I transgressed, I committed iniquity before You by doing the following. Behold, I regret and am embarrassed for my deeds. I promise never to repeat this act again." כל מצות שבתורה בין עשה בין לא תעשה) אם עבר אדם על אחת מהן בין בזדון בין בשגגה כשיעשה תשובה וישוב מחטאו חייב להתודות לפני האל ברוך הוא*

שנאמר איש או אשה כי יעשו וגו' והתודו את חטאתם אשר  
עשו זה וידוי דברים וידוי זה מצות עשה כיצד מתודין אומר  
אנא השם חטאתי עויתי פשעתי לפניך ועשיתי כך וכך והרי  
נחמתי ובושתי במעשי ולעולם איני חוזר לדבר זה וזהו עיי-  
(קרו של וידוי)

The concept here is that *“if a person transgresses any of the mitzvot,”* this suggests that the Lord is looking for His children to live repentant lives and to not live lives filled with sin. Again, the connection to Repentance, Grace, and the Torah is found in the Lord lovingly giving us something to turn towards, to walk in, and to live our lives by, a way to understand what it means to turn from sin and death unto a life that is rooted in righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth. This is the love and mercy of God by giving us His Holy Words. The significance of these statements are found in Yeshua’s words according to *John 15:1-10*.

### ***John 15:1-10***

*15:1 ‘I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 15:2 ‘Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 15:3 ‘You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 15:4 ‘Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 15:5 ‘I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 15:6 ‘If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. 15:7 ‘If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 15:8 ‘My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. 15:9 ‘Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. 15:10 ‘If you keep My commandments, you will abide in*

*My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. (NASB)*

Yeshua speaks of being the vine and of remaining in the vine as pertaining to bearing the kind of fruit that our Father in heaven is looking for. The *vine-dressing-fruit* analogy is designed to illustrate our remaining or abiding in the Messiah which is connected to the Torah command (15:9-10) in the sense that we are to strive to live in righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth, and to turn from sin daily. The reason these things are connected is because of the kind of people the Lord wants us to be, humble, prayerful, righteous, holy, and to live with justice, mercy, and truth. This is what the Torah speaks of according to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:16-19*.

***Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:16-19***

*26:16 'This day the Lord your God commands you to do these statutes and ordinances. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul. 26:17 'You have today declared the Lord to be your God, and that you would walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments and His ordinances, and listen to His voice. 26:18 'The Lord has today declared you to be His people, a treasured possession, as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments; 26:19 and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to the Lord your God, as He has spoken.'* (NASB, טז

היום הנה יהוה אלהיך מצוה לעשות את-החקים האלה ואת-המשפטים ושמרת ועשית אותם בכל-לבבך ובכל-נפשך: יז את-יהוה האמרת היום להיות לך לאלהים וללכת בדרךיו ולשמר חקיו ומצותיו ומשפטיו ולשמע בקלו: יח ויהוה האמירך היום להיות לו לעם סגלה באשר דבר-לך ולשמר כל-מצותיו: יט ולתתך עליון על כל-הגוים אשר עשה לתהלה ולשם ולתפארת ולהיתך עם-קדוש ליהוה אלהיך (באשר דבר)

The verses in *John 15:1-10* are connected to the people Yeshua is speaking of as God's "*Am segulah*," according to Parashat Ki Tavo in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:16-19*. This is consistent with the interpretation of the rabbis on Parashat Ki Tavo which states the following.

***Maarechet Heidenheim on Pesach Haggadah Magid,  
Four Questions 1***

*I will take you to be My people - Finally to the fear that they would carry the illness and injuries that were inflicted on them during their years of slavery, God reassured them by saying, "I will take you to be My people." This is a reference to the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. Rashi proves that God healed the Israelites of all their afflictions at the time of the revelation. Also we find the following verse in Exodus 15:26 - "I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians..." We see then, that the first two promises are promises of safety from the sea and the wilderness, while the second two promises in Exodus 6 are promises of freedom from slavery and from illness. Since these are the four things for which we give thanks and offer praise, the sages decreed that we should toast our redemption with four cups of wine.*

***Tosefta Berekhot 6:11***

*Rebbi Meir used to say, 'It says [in the Torah], "And you should love Hashem, your God, with all of your heart ..." (Deuteronomy 6:5) [That means that you should love God] with both of your inclinations, with the good inclination and with the evil inclination. "... and with all of your soul ..." (Deuteronomy 6:5) [That means that] even if He takes away your soul [you should still love Him]. And so also it says, "Because for Your sake we are killed all the time ..." (Psalms 44:23) [But there is also] another explanation. "With all of your soul" [means] with the soul that He created within you,*



*as it says “Let my soul live and I will praise You ...” (Psalms 119:175) And [also] it says, “All my bones will say, ‘Hashem, Who is like You?’” (Psalms 35:10) Ben Azzai says, “‘With all of your soul’ [means that] you should give over your soul to [the performance] of the commandments.”*

The rabbis say the love of God is connected to the giving of Torah because we are a treasured people (*Am segulah*). What does it mean to walk in God’s ways? The Midrash on *Tehillim / Psalms 102, Part 3* may shed some insight on this topic.

Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*He will regard the prayer of the destitute man, and not despise their prayer (Tehillim / Psalms 102:18).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Samuel son of Hahmani said in the name of Rabbi Judah, Should not Scripture have said, He will regard the prayer of the destitute man, and not despise his prayer, or He will regard the prayer of the destitute men, and not despise their prayer?*” The rabbis in the Midrash discuss whose prayer does the Lord despise? The rabbis speak in terms of the Lord hearing the prayer of the destitute. Why would the Lord hear the prayer of the destitute? Would it be because the prayer from such a person is motivated by innocence? The rabbis say that this prayer of the destitute man “*refers to Manasseh who was destitute in good deeds*” whereas the psalm states, *פָּנָה אֶל-תְּפִלַּת הָעֲרֵעָר וְלֹא-בָזָה אֶת-תְּפִלָּתָם: 102:17 He has regarded the prayer of the destitute And has not despised their prayer. (NASB)* Why would the Lord regard the prayer of the man or tribe that was destitute of good deeds? This seems to be the opposite of what we find elsewhere in Scripture. This contrast of opposites may be designed to cause us to think about these things, in regard to sin and righteousness, and that the Lord expects us to be repentant and patient to wait upon His timing, which is the way of a righteous man, as opposed to the unrighteous who wants answers now. *Hebrews 10:36* states, “*For you have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise.*” Notice how the author of Hebrews writes “*after doing the will of God*” follows the “*Receiving of the promises.*” Note how this is a very Torah centric teaching. The prophet Habakkuk

Understanding the Covenant — Repentance Series  
and David write the following:

***Habakkuk 1:2***

*1:2 How long, O Lord, will I call for help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You, ‘Violence!’ Yet You do not save. (NASB)*

***Tehillim / Psalms 37***

*37:7 Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. 37:8 Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing. (NASB)*

*37:25 I have been young and now I am old, Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken Or his descendants begging bread. 37:26 All day long he is gracious and lends, And his descendants are a blessing. 37:27 Depart from evil and do good, So you will abide forever. (NASB)*

*37:34 Wait for the Lord and keep His way, And He will exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you will see it. (NASB)*

The Scriptures speak of prayer and waiting upon the Lord when seeking the desires of the heart. The Scriptures also speak of doing what is right, departing from evil, and trusting in the Lord God of Israel for his graciousness and mercy. The reason the Lord God does not answer prayer immediately may be that we are asking for the wrong reason, asking for something that is not God’s will for our lives, or asking for selfish reasons. This is why James wrote what he did in *James 4:1-5*.

***James 4:1-5***

*4:1 What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? 4:2 You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so*



*you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 4:5 Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: 'He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us'?* (NASB)

James speaks of quarrels and conflicts being sourced on the inside (*lusts, murders, envious, covetousness, wrong motives, etc*) which result in asking the Lord for things with the wrong motivations because one would spend the gift of God on sinful pleasures. Notice the connection to having friendship with the world which stands against the Lord God in heaven, and to what we do in our lives and how we live. James says, *4:4 ... Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (NASB)* The Lord God is sovereign and He knows what is best, and holds our best interests in mind for our future (*Jeremiah 29:11 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. 29:12 'Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 29:13 'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. 29:14 'I will be found by you,' declares the Lord, 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the Lord, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.'* NASB). The Lord God does have a plan for our lives and thus we should be actively seeking what the Lord has planned for us to do. King Solomon wrote on what will happen to the one who does not listen to the Lord according to *Mishley / Proverbs 1:24-2:9*.

***Mishley / Proverbs 1:24-2:9***

*1:24 'Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention; 1:25 And you ne-*



*glected all my counsel And did not want my reproof; 1:26 I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes, 1:27 When your dread comes like a storm And your calamity comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you. 1:28 'Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently but they will not find me, 1:29 Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the Lord. 1:30 'They would not accept my counsel, They spurned all my reproof. 1:31 'So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way And be satiated with their own devices. 1:32 'For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them. 1:33 'But he who listens to me shall live securely And will be at ease from the dread of evil.' 2:1 My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you, 2:2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; 2:3 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; 2:4 If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; 2:5 Then you will discern the fear of the Lord And discover the knowledge of God. 2:6 For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. 2:7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, 2:8 Guarding the paths of justice, And He preserves the way of His godly ones. 2:9 Then you will discern righteousness and justice And equity and every good course. (NASB)*

King Solomon speaks to everyone who does not believe in Him and gives a warning to those who do not listen to the word of the Lord. Calamity and distress will come and the Lord will not hear the prayer of the person who disregards the word of the Lord because they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord. Solomon however speaks of such a person returning from their evil ways saying that the Lord God of Israel is the giver of wisdom, knowledge, and understand-

ing and is a shield to those who walk in integrity, and to those who seek the Lord and His ways. Note the theme of Repentance in Solomon's words. This is why the Midrash continues on a different interpretation saying the following.

*In a different interpretation of He will regard the prayer of the destitute, Rabbi Isaac said, David had in mind the generations in exile that will have neither prophet, nor priest, nor teacher of righteousness, nor Holy Temple to atone for them; that will have left to them but one prayer which they will say on New Year's Day or on the Day of Atonement. Do not despise the one prayer that they say, as is said, And not despise their prayer. This will be written for the generation to come; and a people that will be created will praise the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 102:19). And a people will be created will praise the Lord, Is another people still to be created? Rabbi Judah son of Simon explained, The words refer to the generation of Mordecai who, as it were, created anew. The Rabbis said, however, These words refer to those generations that are guilty because of their wicked deeds, but who come and repent and pray before You on New Year's Day, and on the Day of Atonement, and thereby scour off their deeds, so that the Holy One blessed be He, creates them anew, as it were. (Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 3)*

Midrash Tehillim 102 Part 3 opened with the contrast of opposites and in the second half of the Midrash speaks of the prayer of the destitute the Lord hears, is a reference to the wicked, who repent of their evil deeds and pray before the Lord seeking His forgiveness. This is consistent with what Peter wrote in *1 Peter 3:12* which plainly states that God will hear a believer's prayer but not those of the unsaved saying, *"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."* A life lived with a repentant attitude is what the Lord is looking for in His people and this is why the Midrash Tehillim 102 Part 1 speaks of

the Lord looking for the prayer of righteousness from the wicked. The Lord God our Father in heaven and Yeshua His Messiah are looking for those who seek repentance and seek to turn from evil. Can you see how the mitzvah of Teshuvah (תשובה, Repentance) is a the fundamental principle of faith according to Judaism?

Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 3 concludes saying, *“And what are they to do then? They are required to take into their hands their citrons and their palm branches, the willows of the brook and the myrtles, and praise You. Hence, And a people that will be created will praise the Lord.”* The Midrash concludes with reference to the feast of tabernacles which draws to memory of the glory of God dwelling in our midst. Note the last words speak of *“a people that will be created will praise the Lord.”* This is the whole point and purpose of the descriptions of the Lord God being involved in the cutting away of the dead parts of our hearts, that the Lord is working in our lives to change us from the inside out. It is the Lord God who causes us to have the desire to draw near, to walk in His ways, and to seek His holiness, righteousness, justice, and truth. These are the things that are found within the details of the Salvation of God for His people as it is written according to the Apostolic Writings (NT). The Lord is looking to produce an inward change, He is looking for a people that seeks Him and seeks His will in their lives. In Parashat Vayelech, the circumcision of the heart is brought into the context of the uncircumcised heart, and the salvation of God. The uncircumcised heart is closed off to the Lord’s calling, has no desire to serve the Lord, and no interest in God’s Word. On the other hand, the circumcised heart is found within the covenant relationship and the promises the Lord had given us, that He will work in our lives to change us. As a holy people, as the children of God by faith in the Messiah, these are the things we need to seek from our Father in heaven.

The very concept of repentance, as it is connected to the love of God and the giving of Torah, is the very definition to imitate the ways of God in our lives. Moshe said, *“Now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways ...”* (Devarim / Deuteronomy 10:12). The commandment to imitate God is the fundamental principle of godliness, and is foundational to the teaching of Repentance according to the Scriptures.

Yeshua expressed this idea, encouraging us to imitate God saying by doing so “*you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven*” (*Matthew 5:45*). A passage from the Talmud is consistent on these things is found according to Sota 14a.

### ***Talmud Bavli Sota 14a***

*A broken clay vessel of Beit Pe'or.* הראנו היכן משה קבור עמדו למעלה נדמה להם למטה למטה נדמה להם למטה עלה נחלקו לשתי כיתות אותן שעומדים למעלה נדמה להן למטה למטה נדמה להן למעלה לקיים מה שנאמר (דברים לד, ו) ולא ידע איש את קבורתו ר' חמא בר' חנינא אמר אף משה רבינו אינו יודע היכן קבור כתיב הכא ולא ידע איש את קבורתו וכתוב התם (דברים לג, א) וזאת הברכה *And Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina said, “Why was Moshe buried next to Beit Pe'or? So as to atone for the deed of Pe'or. And Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina said, “What is the meaning of the verse, ‘After Hashem, your G-d, shall you walk (Deuteronomy 13:5)’? Is it possible for a man to walk after the divine presence? And isn't it already stated, ‘For Hashem your G-d is a consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24)’? Rather, To follow the character traits of G-d. “Just as he clothes the naked, as it is written, ‘And the Lord G-d made for Adam and his wife cloaks of leather, and he clothed them (Genesis 3:21);’ so too you shall clothe the naked. The Holy One, Blessed be He, visited the sick, as it is written, ‘And he appeared in Ailonei Mamrei [while Abraam was in pain] (Genesis 18:1);’ so too you shall visit the sick. The Holy One, Blessed be He, comforted mourners, as it is written, ‘And it was, after the death of Abraham, and G-d blessed his son Isaac (Genesis 25:11);’ so too you shall comfort mourners. The Holy One, Blessed be He, buried the dead, as it is written, ‘And he buried him in the valley (Deuteronomy 34:6);’ so too, you shall bury the dead.” “Cloaks of leather (alt. skin)-” [It is an argu-*



*ment of] Rav and Shmuel. One said, "Something that comes from leather." The other one said, "Something that the skin benefits from." Rabbi Simlai expounded, The Torah begins with loving-kindness and ends with loving kindness. It begins with loving kindness, as it is written (Genesis 3:21), "And God made for Adam and his wife coats of skin, and he dressed them." It ends with loving kindness, as it is written (Deuteronomy 34:6), and He buried him in a valley."* דרש רבי שמלאי מפני מה נתאוה משה רבינו ליכנס לא"י וכי לאכול מפריה הוא צריך או לשבוע מטובה הוא צריך אלא כך אמר משה הרבה מצות נצטוו ישראל ואין מתקיימין אלא בא"י אכנס אני לארץ כדי שיתקיימו כולן על ידי אמר לו הקב"ה כלום אתה מבקש אלא לקבל שכר מעלה אני עליך כאילו עשיתם שנאמר (ישעיהו נג, יב) לכן אחלק לו ברבים ואת עצומים יחלק שלל תחת אשר הערה למות נפשו ואת פושעים נמנה והוא חטא רבים נשא ולפושעים יפגיע לכן אחלק לו ברבים יכול כאחרונים ולא כראשונים ת"ל ואת עצומים יחלק שלל כאברהם יצחק ויעקב שהן עצומים בתורה ובמצות תחת אשר הערה למות נפשו שמסר עצמו למיתה שנאמר (שמות לב, לב) ואם אין מחני נא וגו' ואת פושעים נמנה שנמנה עם מתי מדבר והוא חטא רבים נשא שכיפר על מעשה העגל ולפושעים יפגיע שביקש רחמים על פושעי ישראל שיחזרו בתשובה ואין פגיעה אלא תפלה שנאמר (ירמיהו ז, טז) ואתה אל תתפלל בעד העם הזה ואל תשא בעדם רנה ותפלה ואל תפגע בי

The command to *"walk in the ways of God"* includes clothing the naked, visiting the sick, comforting mourners, and burying the dead, but the commandment is not limited to those five deeds of loving kindness. He is also the God who feeds the hungry, assists the poor, has mercy on the sinful, rescues the perishing, heals the brokenhearted, restores homes and families, and does good to all. He is the God of absolute integrity, truth, holiness, and justice. He is righteous in His every deci-



sion. Found within the concepts of repentance, the love of God, and the giving of Torah, we are called to imitate the ways of God in our lives, this is why the Lord lovingly gave His Torah at Sinai. Yeshua lived out this principle, he walked in the ways of God, and in doing so he brought glory to our Father in heaven. His life glorified God in the sense that he represented the Lord God of Israel. This is how he could make the claim, *“He who has seen Me has seen the Father”* (John 14:9). We are called also to imitate the ways of the Messiah and as we learn the ways of God and keep the commandment we learn more about the Lord God of Israel and His Messiah Yeshua.

These are the reasons why we are called to study our Bibles. The reality of the Christian Church is that we are taught a philosophy (a speculative theosophy at that) from the pulpit, coupled with cherry-picked out of context Scripture to reinforce the theologies of today. The basic historical details of biblical narrative and its application go for the most part overlooked. This is why today many claim the Bible is confusing to read, or boring, because there is nothing to which they can relate. There is no practical application that is connected to the significance of living our lives according to God’s word and to our Salvation. Both of these statements reflect the fact of what is being taught and what we learn from church pulpits are *“other”* than what is written in the Scriptures. The biblical record of Israel, the Creator God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Lord’s protection, love, mercy, and grace, there is nothing about dispensations, or covenants that are outside of involvement with Israel. As Moshe described the final redemption to come (i.e. entry into the Promised Land), he told Israel that God will circumcise their hearts. He said, *“God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live”* (Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:6). This circumcision of the heart enables us to fulfill the command of loving God and loving one another. A circumcised heart refers to having a repentant heart which is submissive to the will of God. The interesting thing is that in Jewish eschatology, the rabbis teach when the Messiah comes, the Lord God of Israel will circumcise our hearts by removing the Yetzer Hara (evil inclination). The Messiah is the circumcizer of hearts, exactly what we read according to the NT. The result of this circumcision of heart is obedience to God that is a

function of our faith. This again is how repentance is connected to the love of God and the giving of His Torah. Moshe said that when God finally circumcises the heart of His people, they will *“again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments”* (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:8*). In other words, God is going to enable us to keep His Torah (*Jeremiah 31:31-36*). He has set us free from sin in Christ and with the newness of life within causes us to want to walk in righteousness. Keeping the Torah is one of the promises of the Messianic Age. This is how Paul explains that we become partakers of the Messiah entering into a new covenant which is something he calls the *“circumcision of Messiah”* when he says, *“In Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Messiah”* (*Colossians 2:11*). This illustrates also the significance and need to believe in Yeshua the Messiah that is coupled to how we live our lives, repentant (Teshuvah) lives, and in seeking to do the will of God each day. For in the Messiah we receive the forgiveness of sins because it is in the spirit of Messiah that we receive the Holy Spirit of God which transforms us and confirms the covenant of peace, love, mercy, and grace, in our lives as it is described according to the Apostolic Writings (NT).

