

# פרשת בשלה / Parashat Beshalach

Shabbat Shevat 13, 5769, February 7, 2009  
32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d  
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5

## Are we spiritually better off today?

### השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Exodus 13:17-17:16  
הפטרה: Judges 4:4-5:31  
הברית: John 6:15-71  
החדשה

10 In this week's Torah portion, Parashat Beshalach, we are reminded on the topic of "assumptions." The topic "assumptions" are related to the title "Are we spiritually better off today" than back in the day prior to Yeshua's coming. In *Shmot / Exodus 16:4* HaShem answers the people's grumblings by providing bread from heaven to fill their stomachs. The people had not yet realized the true meaning of Torah thus HaShem was planning on testing them to see if they would follow His Torah or not. After seeing so great a miracle, the people falling away like this has led many scholars to speculate on the reasons behind their unfaithfulness. Some speculate they did not know the true meaning of Torah, others suggest the role of the Spirit is absent in their lives. Classic Christian interpretation has lead to development of covenant theology, dispensationalism, etc. to explain these minor issues of sin and rebellion. This week I want to discuss the topic of whether our spirituality is better today and its relation to these belief systems which have been developed in classical hermeneutics.

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### שמות 16:4-10

4 בָּרַעֲבָ: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הֲנִי עֹ  
מִמַּטִּיר לָכֶם לֶחֶם מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֵּצֵא הָעָם וּלְקַטְוֵי דְבַר  
5 יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ לִמְעַן אֲנַסְנוּ הוֹלֵךְ בְּתוֹרַתִי אִם־לֹא: וְהָיָה  
בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי וְהִכִּינוּ אֶת אֲשֶׁר־יִבְיֵאוּ וְהָיָה מִשְׁנֵה עַל  
6 אֲשֶׁר־יִלְקְטוּ יוֹם אֶחָד: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶל־כָּל־  
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲרֹב וַיִּדְעוּם כִּי יְהוָה הוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ  
7 מִצְרַיִם: וּבִקֶּר וּרְאִיתֶם אֶת־כְּבוֹד יְהוָה בְּשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־  
8 תְּלִנְתֵיכֶם עַל־יְהוָה וְנִחַנוּ מָה כִּי תִלְוְנוּ עָלֵינוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר  
מֹשֶׁה בְּתַת יְהוָה לָכֶם בְּעֶרֶב בָּשָׂר לֶאֱכֹל וּלְחֶם בְּבִקְרָךְ  
לְשִׁבְעַת בְּשָׁמְעַת יְהוָה אֶת־תְּלִנְתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם מְלִינִים  
9 עָלָיו וְנִחַנוּ מָה לֹא־עָלֵינוּ תְּלִנְתֵיכֶם כִּי עַל־יְהוָה: וַיֹּאמֶר

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### Shmot / Exodus 16:4-10

16:4 Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction. 16:5 'On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.' 16:6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, 'At evening you will know that the Lord has brought you out of the land of Egypt; 16:7 and in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord, for He hears your grumblings against the Lord; and what are we, that you grumble against us?' 16:8 Moses said, 'This will happen when the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the Lord hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the Lord.' 16:9 Then Moses said to Aaron, 'Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before the Lord, for He has heard your grumblings.' 16:10 It came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. (NASB)

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30 Dispensationalism is the believe in a system of historical progression, as  
revealed in the Bible, consisting of a series of stages in G-d's plan taught the  
history of the bible can be described as a number of administrations called  
dispensations each of which emphasizes the discontinuity of the covenants G-d  
made with His people. The central beliefs or core tenets centers around the idea  
of an "old covenant" and a "new covenant" and role of the Torah is that it has  
passed away completely with a new covenant we have in Yeshua. The response  
of a community held position, one I have heard quite often, is related to the  
35 differences between the "old covenant" and the "new covenant" in the sense of  
what is "old" and "new" is today we do not need the Torah because of the new  
covenant in Yeshua. A common reply from proponents of dispensationalism is  
"the spirit works now in ways He never did before" with some proof texts such as  
what we find here in this week's Torah portion the people had a lack of faith,  
40 grumbled, was discontent, etc. The argument goes along the lines that He, the  
Holy Spirit, equips every saint, every believer, He indwells every believer not on  
a temporary basis as He did with a few select individuals in ancient Yisrael, for  
the Spirit now indwells all believers eternally. He fills the believer with His  
presence and equips each person to function in the body of Messiah by drawing  
45 each of us together in a community that far surpasses ancient Yisrael. The  
purported proof of this higher level of spirituality we enjoy today is suggested  
further by contrasting the new covenant with the old covenant by speaking of this  
new work of the spirit in the New Covenant as opposed to the somewhat  
temporary and sporadic work in the Old Covenant. It is taught we are today at a  
50 level of spirituality that far exceeds that of the saints of old along with the  
following proof texts.

***Yochanan / John 7:39***

55 *7:39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him  
were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet  
glorified. (NASB)*

***Yochanan / John 14:17***

60 *14:17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it  
does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with  
you and will be in you. (NASB)*

The idea that after Yeshua our spirituality exceeds that before Him is based  
upon certain misconceptions. The first misconception is related to the concept of  
65 "New" verses "Old" covenants. The classical understanding is the old covenant  
describes G-d's people prior to the coming of Yeshua and the new covenant  
describes life after the coming of Yeshua. There are no scriptures found in the  
entire bible which define this type of thinking. Keeping that in mind, again, there  
is no biblical basis for viewing the Hebrew Scripture's (Tanach) as the "old  
70 covenant" and the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings, NT) as the "new  
covenant." The writers of the scriptures did not define "old" and "new"  
covenants as successive eras or generations where "old covenant" refers to back

75 then and “new covenant” refers to the present future. The New Covenant is however used throughout the entire Bible so it would be instructive to examine some biblical text that makes reference to the New Covenant. A good starting place would be to examine an important text on the “New Covenant” which is prophesied in the book of Jeremiah. The prophecy gives us a little insight into the meaning behind the New Covenant.

80 ***Jeremiah 31:31-34***

85 *31:31 ‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 31:32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,’ declares the Lord. 31:33 ‘But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the Lord, ‘I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 31:34 ‘They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ declares the Lord, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.’ (NASB)*

95 Here Jeremiah is saying the covenant is a national covenant that is made with the House of Yisrael and with Judah in which the Torah of Sinai will be written upon their hearts. This New Covenant will for the first time in history cause the nation of Yisrael to be loyal to her G-d through faith in His Messiah, Yeshua. The New Covenant is based upon faith through which is obtained the forgiveness of sins.

100 Not only is the phrase “New Covenant” used in the Bible but also the phrase “Old Covenant” is used. Let’s look at one such instance where “Old Covenant” are used in the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) in ***2 Corinthians 3:14***. Here, understanding the context of the verse, Shaul (Paul) is referring to a Jewish person who reads the Tanach apart from the illuminating work of the Spirit.

105 ***2 Corinthians 3:14***

*3:14 But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. (NASB)*

110 This doesn’t mean the Torah is passed away but that as long as one reads the Tanach as mere letters without the Spirit elucidating them, the Jewish believer will not see the Messiah because a veil is over his/her heart. Until one receives the Spirit one will never see the Messiah of whom the prophets spoke of. The “Old Covenant” does not describe the life of G-d’s people before the coming of the Messiah because the term old covenant is a phrase Shaul (Paul) used to describe the faithlessness of the people which is the very thing that defined Yisrael when the nation fell into idolatry or away in grumbings and not trusting in HaShem in ***Shmot / Exodus 16:4-10***. The “Old Covenant” is Shaul’s term for living with the knowledge of the Torah but not receiving it by faith and therefore

120 missing the very goal of the Torah. So you may ask what is the goal of the  
Torah? To answer this question let's look at a section of verses from the Ketuvei  
Shelachim where interestingly Yeshua actually spoke on the verses for this  
week's parsha in *Yochanan / john 6:24-36*.

125 ***Yochanan / John 6:24-36***

125 *6:24 So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples,  
they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum seeking  
Jesus. 6:25 When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to  
130 Him, 'Rabbi, when did You get here?' 6:26 Jesus answered them and  
said, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs,  
but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 6:27 'Do not work for  
the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life,  
which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set  
135 His seal.' 6:28 Therefore they said to Him, 'What shall we do, so that we  
may work the works of God?' 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them,  
'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.' 6:30  
So they said to Him, 'What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see,  
and believe You? What work do You perform? 6:31 'Our fathers ate the  
140 manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of  
heaven to eat.'" 6:32 Jesus then said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, it  
is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My  
Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. 6:33 'For the bread of  
God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.'  
145 6:34 Then they said to Him, 'Lord, always give us this bread.' 6:35 Jesus  
said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger,  
and he who believes in Me will never thirst. 6:36 'But I said to you that  
you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. (NASB)*

150 Understanding from Yeshua's explanation of the text, He is the goal of the  
Torah. When the Torah is accepted apart from faith it comes as a letter of  
condemnation and death, not the life giving tree G-d intended for His elect ones  
such as you and I. The point of the Torah is not that one keeps the mitzvot  
(commandments) to get into the covenant but that the mitzvot (commandments)  
are kept precisely because we are members of the covenant.

155 **Obedience to G-d is the hallmark of our covenant  
membership.**

160 Another way of saying it "loving G-d" is the mark of a true covenant member.  
So what did Yeshua have to say about being a true covenant member? Yeshua  
said:

165 ***Yochanan / John 14:13-16***

*14:13 'Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father  
may be glorified in the Son. 14:14 'If you ask Me anything in My name, I*

*will do it. 14:15 'If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. 14:16 'I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; (NASB)*

170 Yeshua said “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” The question remains what commandments are Yeshua referring too? Let’s have a look at what Yeshua said in *Yochanan / John 6:24-36*. The attitude of the people in *Shmot / Exodus 16:4-10*, draws a parallel to the attitude of the crowd in Yeshua’s day which generates the message Yeshua gives in *Yochanan 6*. The  
175 miraculous sign which Yeshua was demonstrating should have awoken consciousness of G-d, however these people are conscious only of their own physical needs, just like those in *Shmot 16* after G-d performed such a wonderful miracle by the dividing of the Red sea. The people ask what they need to do in order to perform the good works of G-d. The people are probably not asking how  
180 to do miracles but how to please G-d. This is accentuated by their question “what miracle will you do?” this is a strange question for people who have just seen Yeshua do one in *Yochanan / John 6:10-14*. They yet seem determined on the importance of having a greater miracle by stating “our fathers ate manna in the desert (*Shmot / Exodus 16:4, 15; Bamidbar / Numbers 11:8*). Yeshua corrects his  
185 questioners on the Tanach by contrasting the food which passes away and the food that stays on unto eternal life. Yeshua is pointing to himself as that food, and in context with other text found in the gospels it is through faith, specifically through faith in G-d’s Messiah Yeshua we have eternal life.

## 190 **Conclusion**

So when someone asks you what you have done for the Lord, don’t think of it in terms of earning favor, earning some sort of reward or even salvation which has so erroneously been taught in the church today. Yeshua gave us the example  
195 *Yochanan / John 15:13 'Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. (NASB)* If one accepts this definition of “love” then the “details” of the covenant rather than being a burden becomes the opportunity to “know” G-d at every level of one’s life and in every activity. The apostle Shaul (Paul) understood this when he wrote: *1 Corinthians 10:31 'Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.'* Even as a husband  
200 and wife who genuinely love each other desire to know even the details of each other likes and dislikes, so our love for G-d should drive us to know the “finer points” of what He in His infinite holiness desires for us and what He despises. Surely we know what He desires, all is written in the Holy Scriptures, the  
205 question remains should we start living as He desires or do we remain in this dispensationalist mindset? The idea of greater spirituality among the people of G-d after the appearance of Yeshua is a tradition of men not warranted when examining the biblical text. The fact is the Scriptures everywhere from the book of Genesis to Revelation speak of only one means of salvation for all people, in  
210 all generations. The Scriptures further point to the fact that the Spirit must be active in all areas of our life this relates to how we live and what we believe. It is unfortunate the description of the life of a believer today has become

215 compartmentalized where one believes in (i) Yeshua and the Bible and (ii) “real  
life” where somehow Yeshua and the Scriptures have no place in “real life.” The  
placing of the role of the Spirit and the Scriptures outside of day to day life makes  
living for the Lord extremely difficult. If we remove from our lives G-d’s way of  
holiness, life is difficult because society expects of us one thing while G-d expects  
another, and we are caught in between not knowing what we should really do.  
220 Can a person who lives like this call themselves a child of G-d or even a covenant  
member? That is a question only you can answer for this calls into question your  
relationship with the Most High G-d through faith in the Messiah Yeshua on the  
matter of authenticity, are you really living it? Have you compartmentalized your  
life? Have you somehow brought less meaning to the Word of G-d and the role of  
225 the Spirit in your life? I guess one could ask how has the Spirit worked in your  
life and what has been its role? If you have not considered this can it be said  
spiritually you are better off now than before?

230 אבינו ומלכנו (Our Father and Our King),

Thank you Lord for your Holy Word and for the freedom to study the  
Scriptures so that I might know you better; help me to apply what I learn in the  
Scriptures so that I might become a what you would have me to become. I want  
today Lord to change my life. I feel I might have compartmentalized my life and  
235 so I ask you to help me to have a life that honors, glorifies, and serves you. I want  
to begin by asking you to forgive me of my sins. Please have mercy on me and  
forgive me. Today I place my faith in Yeshua your Messiah. I believe His blood  
was shed for the forgiveness of my sins. Help me Lord to continue loving and  
living for you.

240 In Yeshua’s name I pray. Amen.

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255 **Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

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הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,

“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

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