



Parasha Ki Tavo

September 2, 2023

Torah: Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8

Haftarah: Isaiah 60:1-22

K'tuvim Shlichim: Romans 11:1-15

Talmidim Shel Yeshua 3

Shabbat shalom Mishpacha! Our *parasha* this week is *Ki Tavo*, meaning “when you come in” referring to coming into the Land of Promise. The first verses are about bringing the first fruits of the earth once Israel has entered the land, but it would be some time before they would be able to bring them because it would take some years before they would subdue the land by defeating its inhabitants. A second major theme was to recite the blessings on Mount Gerizim and the curses on Mount Ebal. History has shown us that ADONAI did bring these curses on Israel for their idolatry as He promised. They came in the form of the destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem and Israel’s captivity in Babylon. Today, 2500 years later, we are approaching His time of final blessing of His Jewish people. Isaiah wrote: 9 “*For this is like the waters of Noah to Me: for as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more cover the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, nor will I rebuke you.* 10 *Though the mountains depart and the hills be shaken, My love will not depart from you, nor will My covenant of peace be shaken, says Adonai who has compassion on you.* (Isaiah 54:9-10 TLV). The curses have passed, the blessings are soon to come.

In our continuing topic *Talmidim Shel Yeshua*, Disciples of Yeshua, our subtopic today is “Yeshua Our Jewish Messiah.” This title agrees with our belief that the Bible is a Jewish document from Genesis to Revelation. Not only was it written by Hebrews, a people today known as Jews, but its content is thoroughly Hebraic. It is best understood when it is read by paying attention to the Jewish idioms within it and the Jewish methods of thought and Jewish Biblical exegesis, that is, interpretation of its Jewish themes. It is my very great desire that Bible readers in Yeshua’s greater body would read with these things in mind and seek to understand what the writer originally meant rather than trying to “Gentilize” their words and take away its original meaning. That’s not a real word, but you understand what I mean.

Torah says: 2 “*You must not add to the word that I am commanding you or take away from it—in order to keep the mitzvot of Adonai your God that I am commanding you.*” (Deuteronomy 4:2 TLV). (also Deuteronomy 12:32). ADONAI only wishes what He has inspired in His writers and has been confirmed as Scripture to be followed. Within our Messianic Jewish faith, we strictly follow these words from *Devarim*, Deuteronomy. But, we also understand that some of Yeshua’s followers have different beliefs regarding this. We do not prescribe for them what they should obey. Yeshua said to *Shimon Kefa*: 19 “*I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will have been forbidden in heaven and what you permit on earth will have been permitted in heaven.*” (Matthew 16:19 TLV). The keys to the kingdom of heaven is the authority to bind and to loose, to forbid and to permit, that is, to make congregational *halacha* for Yeshua’s followers. When He spoke of binding and loosing, Yeshua referred to the practice which had been going on for several

generations in Israel. The two greatest rabbis of that era were *Hillel* and *Shammai*. Examples from their history show us how it was applied. Regarding a particular command in *Torah*, we read that *Rabbi Shammai* binds while *Rabbi Hillel* looses.” This demonstrates that each leader has the authority to decide how to interpret Scripture, something which has been done in Judaism for millennia. Reading between the lines of what Yeshua said, we understand that He knew that this divergence of belief would come and gave the authority to interpret *Torah*. We respect our Christian brothers and sisters in their sincere desire to follow Jesus and also recognize that Yeshua has given both Christian leaders and Messianic Jewish leaders the liberty to interpret *halacha*, how each walks according to Scripture. We also wish to be in unity of spirit with them even though we understand some things differently.

Yeshua, the Son of G-d, when He was born into the world was a Jewish man. He is the son of a Jewish woman, who at the time of His birth, was a virgin, a miraculous thing brought about by ADONAI who incarnated His Son in her womb. She, *Miryam*, after Yeshua’s birth had sons and daughters including his half-brothers *Ya’acov* (James) and *Yehudah* (Jude), both of whom wrote letters which were included in the *Ketuvim Shlichim*, the writings of Yeshua’s *shlichim*, His apostles. His tribe, Judah, was foretold in the *Torah* by His ancestor *Ya’acov*, Jacob. Regarding his son *Yehudah*, Judah, Jacob said: 10 “*The scepter will not pass from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs will come. To him will be the obedience of the peoples.*” (Genesis 49:10 TLV). The kingship of the Messiah was also foretold by a Gentile. The Prophet Balaam said: 17 “*I see him, yet not at this moment. I behold him, yet not in this location. For a star will come from Jacob, a scepter will arise from Israel.*” (Numbers 14:17a TLV). It was not a secret that ADONAI planned to send a *Mashiach*, an Anointed One, to Israel. The Prophet Micah wrote of Him: 1 *But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah— least among the clans of Judah— from you will come out to Me One to be ruler in Israel, One whose goings forth are from of old, from days of eternity.* (Micah 5:1 TLV). In these verses, Micah identifies *Mashiach* as an eternal being. Even the Magi, the Babylonians who later came to worship the infant Yeshua in *Beit Lechem*, knew by reading the *Tanakh* that a *Mashiach*, an anointed One, was to come.

The first seventeen verses of Matthew chapter 1 deal with the genealogy of Yeshua. This is one of two genealogies found for Him in the Gospels. The other is in Luke. The two are significantly different. Why would ADONAI give two different genealogies? The simplest explanation may be that the genealogy in Matthew shows Yeshua's descent through his legally adopted father, *Yosef*, Joseph. At the end of His genealogy, Matthew wrote: 16 ... “*and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Miriam, from whom was born Yeshua who is called the Messiah.*” (Matthew 1:16 TLV). The genealogy in Luke 3 is thought to be Yeshua’s descent through his mother *Miryam*. Given in reverse order, the genealogy begins: 23 “*Yeshua was about thirty years old when He began his ministry. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,*” (Luke 3:23 TLV). If this is her genealogy, it means that she was descended from King David through his son Nathan, *Batsheva*’s fourth son by *David*: 31 ..., *the son of Nathan, the son of David,*” (Luke 3:31b TLV). If that is true, Yeshua was “Son of David” by both His adopted and legal father *Yosef* and His mother *Miryam*, but through different sons of David.

Yeshua’s genealogy in Matthew is one of those Hebraic constructions which was mentioned a moment ago. This listing of ancestors was not intended by Matthew to be Yeshua’s actual genealogy and does not include all of His ancestors. By reading in 1st and 2nd Kings and 2nd Chronicles, we can find the complete list of Joseph’s ancestors which includes the four that were left out. Why was Matthew not being accurate in his presentation

of Joseph's line? He was not being dishonest because it was not intended to be an accurate representation of the ancestors. But, it is not an untruth because Matthew was not trying to give a complete genealogy. By managing the number of ancestors in the genealogy, he was sending a hidden Hebraic message. Written as it is, we understand that this is not a completely correct genealogy, but symbolism used to make a specific point. The other ancestors of Yeshua are still there between the lines although unwritten. Matthew knew about the others in Joseph's ancestry, but he purposefully chose to leave them out and to write it this way. He left out some generations so that those which remained formed a pattern, a pattern which would make his point. He wrote the genealogy in three sets of generations: 17 "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the Babylonian exile are fourteen generations, and from the Babylonian exile until the Messiah are fourteen generations." (Matthew 1:17 TLV). Three sets of fourteen generations add up to a total of 42 generations. Four generations were left out, *Ahaziah* (son of *Athalia*), Queen *Athalia*, *Jehoash* (son of *Ahaziah*) and *Amaziah* (son of *Jehoash*). There is also a possibility that leaving them out had a purpose. They were all G-dless rulers, the men, the descendants of *Athalia*, a G-dless queen, the daughter of *Omri*, a G-dless king of Israel, the Northern Kingdom. So, there are actually 46 generations from Abraham to Joseph. But, by reducing the 46 generations to three sets of 14, a total of 42, Matthew used the symbolism of *gematria*, a well-known Hebrew system using numbers to hint at an underlying message. It is a system of letters and numbers which assigns a numerical value to a name, a word or a phrase based upon its letters. In Yeshua's Matthew genealogy, it is based on its numbers and then converted to letters.

This is how we understand it. The Hebrew letter *dalet* , ד, a "d" sound, has the numerical value of 4 and the letter *vav* , ו, a "v" sound, has the numerical value of 6. The word *David*, in Hebrew, ד ו ו ד, *dalet vav dalet*, has the numerical value of 14, 4 plus 6 plus 4. Since we have three groups of 14 generations leading to Yeshua, Matthew is using *gematria* to very boldly state: *David! David! David!* This is about Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel being "Son of David." Matthew's intended message to the reader is: Son of David! Son of David! Son of David! – in other words, this is the Messiah of Israel!

Also related to this idea of generations is comparing years. I recently read a book entitled *From Jerusalem To Jerusalem*, an autobiographical sketch of the life of *Moshe Imanuel Ben-Meir*, a man who was born in Jerusalem in 1905. He was a Messianic Jew who met his *Mashiach* in the 1920's and served Him all his life. He lived through World War I, World War II, the war for the independence of Israel, in which he served, and also the Six Day War. When he was born, Israel, then called Palestine, was under the rule of the Ottoman Turks. During World War I, the Turks were allied with Germany and there were both German and Turkish soldiers in Jerusalem. Food became very scarce and many were starving. *Moshe* tells how the Turkish soldiers would break into their house and steal their food. When his family began hiding the food, they would beat them until they told where the food was hidden. *Moshe's* grandmother actually died from starvation during that time. But, *Moshe* was also privileged to watch Jerusalem be liberated. He wrote that the British General *Allenby* began by sending up a number of airplanes to just fly over and around Jerusalem. You can imagine the sight; two winged, open cockpit planes buzzing around and around. Seeing this, the Turks all fled and General *Allenby* took Jerusalem without firing a shot. And, *Moshe* saw it all.

But, this is what he said about Yeshua. When he first read Matthew, he was immediately struck with the idea that this was a Jewish book. Walking in Jerusalem one

day, he found a little book on the ground. Who did ADONAI cause to lose that book so that *Moshe* could find it? I'm certain it was left there for him to find it. But, he didn't read it in English. It was written in Hebrew and was entitled *Sefer ha-Brit ha-Chadasha*, "The Book of the New Covenant." What he read shocked him. It said: *Eleh toledot Yeshua ha-Mashiach Ben-David Ben-Avraham*, "these are the generations of Yeshua the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham." To get to the point, *Moshe Ben-Meir* related the 42 generations in Yeshua's genealogy to the 42 stops, or resting places from Egypt to *Eretz Yisra'el* as shown in Numbers 33. At the beginning 42 stops, it was *Moshe* who took them out of Egypt and it was *Yehoshua*, Joshua, who led them into the Promised Land. At the beginning of the 42 generations was *Avraham* who received the promise of what *Moshe Ben-Meir* calls "the promise of the Blessed Seed." At the end of the 42 generation is a greater *Yehoshua*, *Yeshua*, in whom all the promises culminate and are fulfilled. He also noted that *Jehoiachin*, also called Jeconiah or Coniah, was included in the generation list even though a curse had been pronounced on him by ADONAI to remain childless (Jeremiah 22:28-30). 2Kings (vv. 27-30) tells us that he was released from prison in Babylon and that he continued to live there. My thoughts on this are that he did remain childless, but that ADONAI in His mercy allowed him to be included in the genealogy. The king listed after him, Zedekiah, was not his son, but his uncle.

I am about to run a bit of a rabbit trail, but one still related to our subject. *Moshe Ben-Meir* also wrote about *Yosef Rabinowitz*, an early Messianic Jew. I have read about him in a separate book written about his life. In 1878, he went to Jerusalem and there sitting on the Mount of Olives, had a vision of Yeshua. He went back to Kishinev, South Russia, his home, and opened a Messianic congregation. Do you remember the movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind?" My family had one with *Yosef Rabinowitz*. After becoming separately ordained, he had not been authorized by the Russian government to perform immersions. In order to have *tevilah*, immersion, performed for some of the first Jews to trust in Yeshua in his ministry, he had to have someone else do it. He went to the nearby town of *Rohrbach*, South Russia, now Ukraine, to have *tevillah* done by a pastor of the German Reform Church who was Jewish. He was the pastor of the church in the town in which my non-Jewish Ackermann family had been living since emigrating there from Germany in 1809. But, it was only a close encounter, not an encounter. My family left *Rohrbach* for the United States in 1886 when my grandfather was eleven years old, just a few months before *Yosef* went there. While *Yosef Rabinowitz* is considered to be the earliest Messianic Jewish *rabbi* of modern times, we note that Jewish men and women like him have been trusting Yeshua throughout all the generations. There has always been a Jewish remnant who followed Yeshua.

After we are given Yeshua's Jewish genealogy, Matthew tells us about His birth: *18 Now the birth of Yeshua the Messiah happened this way. When His mother Miriam was engaged to Joseph but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Ruach haKodesh. 19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, made up his mind to dismiss her secretly.*" (Matthew 1:18-19 TLV). Understanding something about ancient Jewish marriage customs gives us insight as to what was actually taking place and allows us to read between the lines of these verses. By saying that *Miryam* was engaged to *Yosef*, it meant that as a couple they had undergone *kiddushin*, the betrothal ceremony (sometimes called *erusin*). In the 1st century, the betrothal period was usually a period of around one year. Sexual intimacy would not take place until the actual marriage, *nissuin*, was performed. *Yosef* and *Miryam* were betrothed, but not married. We have no way of knowing how long they had been betrothed when *Yosef* noticed *Miryam's*

pregnancy. Since he knew that he had not been intimate with her, he assumed that she had been unfaithful, but did not want to utterly disgrace her by making a public announcement.

20 But while he considered these things, behold, an angel of Adonai appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Miriam as your wife, for the Child conceived in her is from the Ruach ha-Kodesh. 21 She will give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:20-21 TLV). In his dream, the angel addressed Joseph as son of David, verifying that he, Joseph, was in David’s royal line. This would have been one of the reasons that ADONAI chose him to be the legal father of Yeshua along with him being a righteous man. The angel told Joseph that he was to name the child, and to name Him Yeshua. In Jewish tradition, the father names the child. The Greek text says: “Name him *Iésous* (ee-ay-sooce’). *Strong’s Online Concordance* tells that *Iésous* is the Greek form of Joshua.

The Bible version I’m using is a Hebraic oriented translation, the Tree Of Life Version, and it puts back in some of the Jewishness of the content. This allows us to understand as we read, that even though written in English, this is a Jewish document. I also believe that the original language of Matthew was Hebrew. There is nothing in Scripture to indicate that, but several non-biblical sources say that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew. This also seems to be borne out by the many Hebraic ways of teaching such as the one which we just saw regarding Yeshua’s genealogy and the numerous Hebrew idioms scattered throughout it. The final statement in verse 21, “*and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins,*” is extremely important and we will examine it in Hebrew. There are several Hebrew versions from which they can read today. As in *Moshe Ben-Meir’s* case, there was a Hebrew version available in the 1920’s and probably much further back than that. For our purposes today, I am using the Transliterated Hebrew New Testament program from Hebrew Heart Media.

Here is Matthew 1:21 in Hebrew, transliterated Hebrew and also English.

וְהָיָא יִלְדֵת בֶּן וְקָרָאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יֵשׁוּעַ כִּי הוּא יוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת־עַמּוֹ מִחַטָּאתֵיהֶם: 21. *Ve’hi yoledet” ben v’karata et sh’mo Yeshua ki hu yoshia et-amo me’chatoteihem. 21 She will give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins.*” (Matthew 1:21 TLV). Within this verse we find another Hebraic method of writing and teaching. One word is linked to a similar word in order to make a point, essentially, a Hebraic pun. In the King James Version this verse reads: *21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: **for*** (Gr. *gar*; for, because) *he shall save his people from their sins.* There is no logical connection between these two underlined words, Jesus and save. It was translated from Greek to English without regard for its Hebrew meaning. The "for" in both the TLV and the KJV indicates that the second phrase is linked to and related to the first phrase. Written this way in the KJV and other bibles, "Jesus" and "save" don't have any logical word connection. Yes, Jesus does save, but the name Jesus does not have the semantic relationship with save such as Yeshua does. The problem is that this phrase was originally written in Hebrew and when read in Hebrew, it’s quite different. Yeshua in Hebrew means salvation, but more specifically, it means “*YHVH is salvation.*” That’s because Yeshua is a shortened form of *Yehoshua*, Joshua, and both mean ADONAI is salvation. By putting Jesus and save back into Hebrew, we read: **<19>** “Name him Yeshua for he will yoshia his people.” Here, we do see the connection.

Yeshua = salvation

yoshia = save

Yeshua and *yoshia* are related words, salvation and save. The TLV causes verse 21 to say what Matthew intended: *21 She will give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins* (Matthew 1:21 TLV), meaning, “ADONAI who is salvation will save His people from their sins.”

In the last two thousand years, Jesus has been a valid name for our Messiah and what I am teaching today is not an attempt to denigrate it. Millions have called upon Jesus and been saved by their confession of faith in His sacrificial death. Various transliterations of His name are spoken in the many languages of the earth. That’s what they are, transliterations. To transliterate is to represent or spell in the language of another alphabet. The transliteration of the Hebrew, יֵשׁוּעַ, *Yeshua*, into Greek is Ἰησοῦς – *Iésous* (ee-ay-sooce'). The Greek *Iésous* was then transliterated into English as Jesus. It is not His name, but a transliteration of it. His name is *Yeshua*, the name which the angel told Joseph that it was to be, a name chosen by ADONAI and relayed to Joseph by the *malach Gavri'el*. It is a shortened form of *Yehoshua*, Joshua. In the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the *Tanakh*, Joshua’s name in the Book of Joshua is *Iésous* (ee-ay-sooce'), the very same as *Yeshua*’s. Also illustrating this truth, we find in the Hebrew *Tanakh* that Joshua’s name, *Yehoshua Ben-Nun*, is written as *Yeshua Ben-Nun* in the Book of Nehemiah (8:17).

Just as Christ is a transliteration of the Greek, *Christos*, *Christos* is the Greek word translating the Hebrew *Mashiach*, rendered as Messiah, and meaning “anointed one.” ADONAI caused the writings of the *Shlichim* to be written in Greek, probably because it was a widely spoken language in that day and in that regard, He is the One who proclaimed the name of Jesus. It is an honored name and many have been saved by calling upon *Yeshua* as Jesus. But, our point here is that unless we understand the Hebrew background of the Scriptures, we are missing some of the vital information which the writers placed there under ADONAI’s inspiration.

In the 1st century, Greek had become a primary language of many Jews, particularly those in Egypt and that was where the *Septuagint*, the Greek language translation of the Hebrew *Tanakh* was made. The name *Septuagint* comes from the Latin *septuaginta*, meaning “70.” It is also called the LXX, the Roman numerals for seventy. Seventy was derived from the legend that there were 72 translators, 6 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The five books of the *Torah* were completed in about 250 BCE and the rest of the *Tanakh* 50-60 years later.

The Messianic Jewish author Daniel Gruber gives us some interesting information about the Greek of the LXX and what would become the Greek of the *Ketwim Shlichim* hundreds of years later. In his book, *The Separation of Church and Faith, Copernicus And The Jews*, he writes about what he calls “Jewish Greek.” He states that “The New Testament is a Jewish document written in Jewish Greek.” What does he mean by Jewish Greek? He says that “it is the Greek language with the addition of many new words invented by the translators of the LXX to express Hebraic terms.” There were no Greek words to portray many different Hebraic concepts. Native Greek speakers of today questioned by Daniel Gruber say that “New Testament” Greek is neither *koine* Greek, common Greek, nor classical Greek. That is because they find so many words within it that are not Greek. What Gruber calls “Jewish Greek” is essentially common Greek with many Jewish Greek words, words created to express Hebraic concepts. It’s very important that we as Messianic *talmidim* of *Yeshua* understand that even though the *Tanakh*, the Hebrew Bible, was translated into

Greek in the *Septuagint*, it was never separated from its Hebraic foundation and principles. And, the same is true for the Greek of the *Ketuvim Shlichim*, the New Covenant Scriptures. It was never intended to be separated from its Hebrew foundations. It is Hebrew thought expressed in Greek which then became translated into hundreds of other languages. But, it was never intended to be separated from the Jewish thought behind it. That is why we must continue to seek its underlying meaning even though we are reading it today in English. *Shimon Kefa* (Simon Peter), *Yochanan* (John), *Ya'acov* (Jacob/James, Yeshua's brother) and *Sha'ul* (Paul) all thought in Hebrew even when they wrote in Greek. But, Yeshua's name was not a newly created Jewish Greek word such as some were in the LXX. As we said, Yeshua's actual name is Hebrew and it was transliterated into Greek by its Jewish authors..

Sha'ul wrote: 5 *“Have this attitude in yourselves, which also was in Messiah Yeshua, 6 Who, though existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal to God a thing to be grasped. 7 But He emptied Himself— taking on the form of a slave, becoming the likeness of men and being found in appearance as a man. 8 He humbled Himself— becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”* (Philippians 2:5-8 TLV). There's a lot of meat in these verses. Yeshua, even though being G-d Himself, did not consider Himself equal to G-d, G-d the Father, but humbled Himself and came in the form of a man as a slave, a servant to all, and willingly died for us. We are told by *Sha'ul*: *“Have this attitude in yourselves.”* We have received such a wonderful gift, the gift of eternal life, through Yeshua. It is our duty as His *talmidim*, His disciples, to have the same attitude which He had; to humble ourselves and be servants to each other and also to be willing to die for our Messiah. Many of Yeshua's early disciples did and many still do today.

Sha'ul continued: 8 *He humbled Himself— becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 “For this reason God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Yeshua every knee should bow, in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue profess that Yeshua the Messiah is Lord—to the glory of God the Father.”* (Philippians 2:8-11 TLV). What is the “name above all names?” It is Yeshua, the name of our Jewish Messiah, a name which means “ADONAI is salvation.” He is our salvation. His name is the name above all names and we must profess that He is our Master, the Son of G-d, our Owner, who through His death bought and paid for our salvation. 10 ... *“at the name of Yeshua every knee should bow, in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue profess that Yeshua the Messiah is Lord—‘* This humble man is our Jewish Messiah, the Son of G-d, the Son of David, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah and the King of Israel! We walk humbly before Him, King of all kings and Lord of all lords! *Shabbat shalom!*