



## Parasha Ki Tisa

Torah: Exodus 30:11-34:35

Haftarah: 1Kings 18:1-39

Ketuvim Shlichim: Matthew 5:1-12

February 19, 2022

### “Yeshua, Our Jewish Messiah, Part 6”

We continue today with “Yeshua, Our Jewish Messiah, Part 6. But first, a synopsis of *Parasha Ki Tisa*. Israel was commanded to give ½ shekel atonement money whenever a census was taken. It was a ransom for their souls so that no plague would fall on them with the funds being dedicated to the sanctuary. Instructions were also given regarding the making of the basin of bronze for washing, the anointing oil and the incense. Betzalel was anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit and Aholiav called to assist him in the construction of the Tent of Meeting and everything in it. Israel was commanded to keep the *Shabbat* as a sign between them and ADONAI throughout their generations so that they would know that it is *Adonai* who sanctifies them. While Moses was on Mount Sinai, the people made a golden calf and worshipped it. ADONAI wished to destroy them, but Moses interceded for them. When Moses came down from the mountain with the engraved two tablets of the testimony and saw the people dancing around their idol, he broke the tablets, destroyed the golden calf, and had the instigators put to death. Moses entreated ADONAI to forgive them saying: “If You do not forgive them, blot me out from the book that You have written.” ADONAI forgave, but said that the effect of their sin would be felt for many generations. Moses prepared a new set of tablets and again ascended the mountain where ADONAI re-inscribed the Ten Words. Moses asked ADONAI to show him His glory. On the mountain, ADONAI passed before Moses and he heard these words: 6 ....., “*Adonai, Adonai, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth, 7 showing mercy to a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means leaving the guilty unpunished, but bringing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, to the third and fourth generation.*” (Exodus 34:6b-7 TLV). When he returned, Moses’ face was shining so much that he had to cover it with a veil.

To introduce Yeshua Our Jewish Messiah, Part 6, we begin with a bit of religious history, history beginning just before the year 70 and the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. It comes from Eusebius Pamphilus, the Gentile Bishop of Caesarea, who lived in Israel from about 265 to about 340. He wrote a number of books, including one entitled *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus*. In it, he tells that *Ya’akov*, the brother of Yeshua, whom he calls James the Just, died as a martyr at the hand of a group of Jews. His death was just before Vespasian’s son Titus invaded and blockaded Jerusalem leading to the destruction of the Temple, most likely in late 69 CE. We know *Ya’akov* from the Book of Acts and also from his letter which is usually called James. Eusebius confirmed that *Ya’akov* was the much loved leader of the congregation in Jerusalem, a very righteous man and that he was martyred in Jerusalem. Thrown down from a wing of the Temple, he didn’t die immediately, but began praying for those who threw him down even as they began to stone him. He died by having his brains beat out by a man wielding a fuller’s club, a mallet used to beat out the dirt in clothes when washing them.

Eusebius is shown in his writings to be distinctly anti-Semitic and he proposed that the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 which followed almost immediately after Ya'acov's death happened as punishment of the Jews for killing him. Eusebius lists the first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem as all being relatives of Yeshua. We would call them by the title *nasi*, Hebrew for prince or in modern terms, president. Simeon, the son of Cleopas, the *nasi* who followed Ya'acov was crucified, also dying as a martyr. The relatives of Yeshua continued to lead the congregation at Jerusalem until the second Jewish revolt against Rome which occurred from 132-135 CE. Then, the Roman Emperor Hadrian banned Jews from Jerusalem when he changed the name of the city to Aelia Capitolina in an attempt to cleanse the city of its Jewishness and there were no more Jewish leaders in the body of Messiah.

Today, we see Jerusalem as a very Jewish city, no matter what the Palestinians claim. But, we see the modern presentation of the writings of the disciples of Yeshua as being almost sanitized of its Jewishness. Writing in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Eusebius reported that Matthew "also having first proclaimed the gospel in Hebrew, when on the point of going also to other nations, committed it to writing in his native tongue, and thus supplied the want of his presence to them, by his writings." (Ecclesiastical History, page108). That Matthew originally wrote in Hebrew was also reported in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century by Papias, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century by Origen, and by Epiphanius and Jerome in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Today, we find the need to reclaim the Jewishness of Yeshua and also the Jewishness of the things written about Him.

We begin today by speaking about what is usually called "The Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew 5, 6 and 7. Matthew 5, verses 3-11, which we read today during our *Torah* service are referred to as "the beatitudes." The Sermon on the Mount is introduced by the last words of Matthew chapter 4: 23 *Yeshua was going throughout all the Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people. 24 News about Him spread throughout all Syria. And they brought to Him all the sick—those tormented by various diseases and afflictions, those plagued by demons, the epileptics, the paralyzed—and He healed them. 25 And large crowds followed Him from the Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.* (Matthew 4:23-25 TLV). What we learn from these verses is that large crowds followed Yeshua and He healed them. Chapter 5 begins: *1 Now when Yeshua saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain. And after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. 2 And He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying...* (Matthew 5:1-2 TLV). No doubt, Yeshua's healing of all their diseases had a huge effect and multitudes followed Him everywhere He went.

It was no accident that Yeshua spoke the next nine verses, Matthew 5:3-11, while seated on a mountain. It is almost certain that Yeshua was presenting Himself as the Prophet Like Moses and He used this picture of Himself to bring to the mind of His Jewish audience the giving of the *Torah* on Mount Sinai and particularly the Ten Words. Although there are only nine beatitudes, that's close enough. But, the nine verses of the beatitudes also present a Jewish picture of another event on a mountain, the reciting of the blessings on Mount Gerizim after Israel entered into the Land of Promise. 26 "*See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse— 27 the blessing, if you listen to the mitzvot of Adonai your God that I am commanding you today, 28 but the curse, if you do not listen to the mitzvot of Adonai your God, but turn from the way I am commanding you today, to go after other gods you have not known. 29 Now when Adonai your God brings you into the land you are going in to possess, you are to set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal*" (Deuteronomy 11:26-29 TLV). The blessings that were spoken are found in Deuteronomy 28:1-14. The whole picture of the beatitudes in Matthew 5, the blessings being presented on a mountain,

are a shadow of the blessings that Israel spoke on Mount Gerizim. Matthew seems to intentionally form two pictures, one of the second Moses sitting on a mountain as at Mount Sinai, but also a second picture, the shadow of ADONAI's blessings being spoken at Mount Gerizim. The multitude of people gathered around Yeshua also most certainly would have thought of Moses words: 15 "Adonai your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst—from your brothers. To him you must listen." (Deuteronomy 18:15 TLV). And, they listened intently to Him. As we read a moment ago, Yeshua sat down to teach His disciples, but He also wanted the others around Him to hear. Yeshua's sitting down to teach was the very Hebraic way that rabbis of that day taught their disciples. "Sitting at the feet of" describes a disciple listening to their teacher.

Verses 3-11 of Matthew chapter 5 are nine declarations spoken by Yeshua. We usually refer to them as "the Beatitudes," which is said to mean "blessed," the first word of each verse. Looking at them from a Hebraic standpoint, Yeshua very possibly would have said *ashrei*, which means happy. Similar words in Psalm 1 make us wonder if Yeshua was using *remez* and hinting back, at Psalm 1. It begins: 1 *Ashrei ha'Ish*, "happy is the man," (אָשָׁר אֲיַשֵּׁ). Happy is not an exact translation of *ashrei* and there is not just one English word available to use in translating it into Hebrew. It is more properly translated as "how happy." "Blessed" does not convey the deeper meaning of the Hebrew. The Hebrew root *aleph, shem, resh*, אשר, the root of *ashrei*, conveys the meaning of walking righteously in joy. That is what Yeshua seems to have been saying. When these things happen, you are to walk righteously and joyfully, even happy. The Beatitudes also speak of people who are humble, not prideful. The opposite of *ashrei*, "how happy," is not just being sad. In Hebrew the opposite is said to be *oy*, אֹי. Most English translations render *oy* as "woe," meaning great sorrow or distress; something much more serious than just being sad.

Our goal in studying Scripture is to understand what ADONAI meant when He inspired the writers. In order to understand Yeshua's original meaning for His nine proclamations, I have used the research of a Christian pastor, Dr. Robert Lindsey and the organization which he founded in Jerusalem, The Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research. It's also a bit of irony that Christian scholarship is being used to restore the Jewishness of a Gospel. Dr. Lindsey's story is quite a story and is included as Addendum B after the written message. And, the Jerusalem School is his legacy which lives on today.

Dr. Lindsey, fluent in Hebrew from forty or more years of study and living in Jerusalem, tells us that there is a tense problem between the Greek and the Hebrew of these nine verses. Understanding that Matthew originally wrote them in Hebrew and examining them in Hebrew, as Dr. Lindsey did, he found no future tenses there. But, the Greek does put them as either future or past tenses. Matthew wrote these verses as present tense but the translation into Greek puts them in either future or past tense. Sitting on the Mountain, Yeshua was speaking about then, right then, His present day. He was not talking about inaugurating or setting up the Kingdom sometime in the future. It was already in existence then. But, many theologians consider Him to be speaking about something coming in the future. We understand and believe that the kingdom is now!

The first beatitude is: 3 "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" (TLV). This is in the present tense in Greek, so there is no tense problem here. There is no tense problem, but there is a problem with the translation of the Greek *auton* as "theirs." Underlying it is the Hebrew *lahem/lahema*, meaning "theirs." Lindsey contends that it should be based upon the Hebrew *meihem/meihema*, meaning "of these." "Blessed are the

poor in spirit, for of these is the kingdom of heaven” would be a minimal change of the TLV. Lindsey translates it as: 3 “Blest are those not dependent on self, for of these God makes up his kingdom.” He believes this is better word usage because Yeshua’s followers don’t possess the kingdom. The kingdom is not theirs, but they make up the kingdom. That they are not dependent on self also shows their dependence on ADONAI.

4 “*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*” (TLV) Dr. Lindsey found a tense problem in this verse. The first phrase is present tense and the second is future tense. He believes that both should be present tense. Lindsey suggests: 4 “Blest are those who mourn for they get comforted.” They are comforted now, not sometime in the future.

5 “*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*” (TLV). Lindsey notes a tense problem in this verse, suggesting that the second phrase should be present tense rather than future tense. He also suggests that “meek” be changed to “humble.” He suggests: 5 “Blest are the humble, for they inherit the earth.” The word humble, speaking of those who have a low estimation of their own importance, seems better suited than meek, those who are submissive. The humble inherit the earth now, not sometime in the future. Speaking in the present tense, Yeshua seemed to be characterizing the multitudes of Israel, the people who were under the oppression and taxation of the Romans.

6 “*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*” (TLV). Again we have the same tense problem, present tense in the first phrase and future in the second. Both phrases should be present tense. Lindsey suggests: 6 “Blest are those hungry for deliverance, for they get satisfied.” Those who put their trust in Yeshua’s sacrifice are not satisfied in the future, they are satisfied right now. They are satisfied at the time that they place their trust in Yeshua. Yeshua was telling His disciples that righteousness was present and available right then. Lindsey proposes that these sayings of Yeshua are typical Hebrew proverbs, but must be in the present tense to show that they are proverbial.

7 “*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy.*” (TLV). Again, the second phrase should be present tense. Lindsey suggests: 7 “Blest are those who extend mercy, for they get mercy extended to them.” Mercy now and not in the future.

8 “*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*” (TLV). Again, the second phrase should be present tense, not future. Blest are the pure in heart for they see God now. They are already in a relationship with ADONAI and trust in Him now.

9 “*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*” (TLV). The second phrase should be present tense rather than future. Lindsey suggests: 9 “*Blest are those who make peace, for they get called “Children of God.”*” We are called to be peacemakers now, not in the future.

10 “*Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” (TLV). There is also a tense problem here. The first phrase should be present tense rather than past tense. And again, Lindsey disputes the use of the Greek *auton* translated as “theirs” and prefers “of these.” We saw the same situation in Matthew 5:3. By saying, “of these,” rather than “theirs” we do away with the idea that the kingdom is owned by Yeshua’s followers and correctly state that the kingdom is made up of them. Lindsey’s associate, Professor Flusser, an orthodox Jew, the Professor of New Testament Studies at Hebrew University and who was a student of the Essenes, the residents of *Kumran*, argued that “persecuted” is incorrect and that the underlying Hebrew was *nirdefei tsedaka*, meaning “pursue righteousness.” He believed that the meaning of this beatitude was that

the people of the Kingdom were inwardly driven to get the saving power of God, pursuing righteousness. Lindsey suggests: 10 “Blest are those who cry for the redemption of the world, for of these God makes up His kingdom.” That is our cry today: *hosiana Yeshua!* Save us now! The Kingdom of Heaven is not futuristic. It is now! In this beatitude, Yeshua is not discussing persecution at all. He is describing people whose chief desire is for ADONAI to redeem the world. Thinking this way, the nine beatitudes taken together are a description of the people who make up the Kingdom of Heaven. They are those who are submitted to Yeshua and fitting in with his plans. That’s where we want to be!

11 “*Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me.*” 12 “*Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great! For in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*” (TLV). The ninth beatitude is verses 11 and 12. Again, we see in the traditional readings the promise of reward for being persecuted which Lindsey did not believe was Yeshua’s intent. The primary understanding that we get from Lindsey is that the Kingdom is not future, but is now. *HaMalchut haShemayim*, “the Kingdom of the Heaven,” is not futuristic, but is a present reality wherever ADONAI is ruling. His Kingdom is present in each of us whose hearts He rules. Lindsey suggests: 11 “Don’t be discouraged when you are cursed or slandered on account of Me, 12 but rejoice, realizing that the prophets before you faced the same kind of persecution.” The understanding of the Greek text as translated in most Bibles is that the Kingdom is near, but it has not yet come. But, if you put the passages dealing with the Kingdom back into Hebrew, it is apparent that the Kingdom has already arrived, almost the exact opposite of the Greek meaning.

Here is a compilation of the Beatitudes based upon the understanding of Dr. Lindsey.

- (5:3) “Blest are those not dependent on self, for of these God makes up his kingdom.”
- (5:4) “Blest are those who mourn for they get comforted.”
- (5:5) “Blest are the humble, for they inherit the earth.”
- (5:6) “Blest are those hungry for deliverance, for they get satisfied.”
- (5:7) “Blest are those who extend mercy, for they get mercy extended to them.”
- (5:8) “Blest are the pure in heart, for they see God.”
- (5:9) “Blest are those who make peace, for they get called “Children of God.”
- (5:10) “Blest are those who cry for the redemption of the world, for of these God makes up His kingdom.”
- (5:11) “Don’t be discouraged when you are cursed or slandered on account of Me, (5:12) but rejoice, realizing that the prophets before you faced the same kind of persecution.”

Our statement of faith regarding Scripture is that the Bible is true and correct as originally written. But, the problem is that what is written down as this Bible version or that Bible version is man’s interpretation of what either the Hebrew or Greek words say. All Bible versions claim to be truth, but because they are so different, that has to be impossible. Man’s interpretation of Scripture does not always express our Father’s intention. A more Hebraic understanding of Matthew 5 teaches us that Messiah brought His kingdom to earth when He came down as the Jewish man Yeshua. His kingdom is not future, but here now.

That Matthew originally wrote his Gospel in Hebrew is logical. He was a Jew writing primarily to Hebrew speakers. That it was translated into Greek created some problems such as the tense problems which we noted. But in it we also find a number of Hebrew idioms which were directly translated from Hebrew to Greek to English and they are still being mistranslated in English. Until the advent of Hebrew based Bible translations, this verse from the Sermon on the Mount was totally misunderstood. 22 *"The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.* 23 *But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* (Matthew 6:22-23 KJV). The King James Bible was translated directly from the Greek with the translators not knowing that this is a Hebrew idiom. The Amplified Bible tries to explain the English translation by adding words in brackets to help the reader understand. 22 *"The eye is the lamp of the body; so if your eye is clear [spiritually perceptive], your whole body will be full of light [benefiting from God's precepts].* 23 *But if your eye is bad [spiritually blind], your whole body will be full of darkness [devoid of God's precepts]. So if the [very] light inside you [your inner self, your heart, your conscience] is darkness, how great and terrible is that darkness!"* (Matthew 6:22-23 AMP). Is that what Yeshua meant? Was He saying that this was all about spiritual precepts and that the difference between light and darkness was understanding G-d's precepts? We know that is not true. These translators did their best to explain the English, but it is not just plain English. It is an idiom originally written in Hebrew translated first into Greek and then into English. You have to know that's what it is. A Hebraic roots Bible explains this: 22 *"The eye is the lamp of the body.'* So if you have a 'good eye' [that is, if you are generous] your whole body will be full of light; 23 *but if you have an 'evil eye'* [if you are stingy] your whole body will be full of darkness. If, then, the light in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:22-23 TLV). Dr. Stern, the translator of the Complete Jewish Bible did the same thing that the translators of the Amplified Bible did but he knew what he was talking about. The correct Hebrew understanding of these verses is that a good eye is a Hebrew idiom for being generous and an evil eye is an idiom for being stingy. Matthew wrote it in Hebrew. Others translated it into Greek and eventually English. You can't always understand what is written from a Hebrew background by just reading it in English. Sometimes the English is sufficient to understand it, but usually not.

We have been praying for revival for several years. What is revival? By definition, it is the state of being revived: such as a renewed attention to or interest in something old or a new presentation or publication of something old. What we are doing today and what has been presented in our six messages about Yeshua, Our Jewish Messiah, is revival. We are in revival and many in Messianic Judaism and others in Yeshua's body are also. They are doing the same. We and they are restoring what was lost. That's what revival is, bringing back something which has been lost, in this case the Jewishness of Yeshua and the Jewishness of the Scriptures. This is the task which ADONAI has given us in Messianic Judaism for today; a return to a more correct understanding of Scripture.

This is a return to the ancient paths of ADONAI. When Jerusalem was under siege by the Babylonians, ADONAI spoke through Jeremiah: 16 *Thus says Adonai: "Stand in the roads and look. Ask for the ancient paths— where the good way is— and walk in it. Then you will find rest for your souls."* (Jeremiah 6:16a TLV). ADONAI said that teshuvah, repentance, was the answer, but those in Jerusalem did not walk in that path and the city was destroyed and they were killed. The "ancient paths," the good way, are the correct understanding of ADONAI's words and walking in them. The Jewishness of the Bible cannot be removed

without changing the meaning of what ADONAI and Yeshua said. This is where we are now. We must return. This is revival!

Today, many are walking in counterfeit paths, paths which lead to destruction. *Sha'ul* prophesied of the “last days,” saying: 1 “*But understand this, that in the last days hard times will come—*” (2Timothy 3:1 TLV). Hard times are here and even harder times are on the way. We need to prepare ourselves for the harder times coming. 2 “*for people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 hardhearted, unforgiving, backbiting, without self-control, brutal, hating what is good, 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,*”.. (2Timothy 3:2-4 TLV). Isn’t this an accurate picture of our day? 5 “*holding to an outward form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid these people!*” (2Timothy 3:5 TLV). This is an indictment of those in Yeshua’s body who say they worship G-d, but don’t. They make an outward display of religion and present themselves as godly, but it is fake. There is no spiritual power in their religion and their lives are unchanged. Many today speak of G-d but live in sin. And, there are so many of them today that it’s difficult to avoid them.

Recently I saw a PBS program showing a group of followers of a Middle Eastern sect, a group of pagans, who were ministering to the homeless. What they were doing was good and right, but what they were teaching was false. Their belief is that Krishna is god and that humans are trapped in an endless cycle of reincarnation. And, they do a lot of humming; mmmmm. I point this out to show that we can do good but be spiritually dead and on the wrong path. Unless these people repent and turn to Yeshua, their life will end permanently when they die. They were holding up a number of hand-written signs. The one that caught my eye was: “*So much privilege, but so little to show for it.*” It made me think of the greater body of Yeshua, the group which *Sha'ul* spoke about, the group that would be present in the last days. So many of us in this country who have been given so much in material wealth and advantages beyond most of the people of the world, use it for ourselves and not for Yeshua’s kingdom. That’s the irony of that statement; we have been given so much, but have little of value to show for it. This is what revival will change. It will turn those with a form of godliness into fire breathing spirit filled evangelists. That’s what we are desperately looking for now. Pour out your latter rain on us ADONAI. Pour it out now! *Shabbat Shalom!*

#### **Addendum A:**

#### **Exodus 34:6-7, The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy**

The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy is the rabbis’ interpretation of what ADONAI said after passing before Moses so that he could see His glory. 6 *Then Adonai passed before him, and proclaimed, “Adonai, Adonai, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth, 7 showing mercy to a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means leaving the guilty unpunished, but bringing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, to the third and fourth generation”* (Exodus 34:6-7 TLV). The first phrase, *Then Adonai passed before him, and proclaimed,,* and the last phrases, *yet by no means leaving the guilty unpunished, but bringing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, to the third and fourth generation,* are not a part of the 13 attributes. Here are the 13 attributes in Hebrew from the Mechon-Mamre Hebrew Bible.

יהוה יְהוָה, אֱלֹהִים וּמֶלֶךְ – אֱלֹהִים, וּרְבָּחָסֵד וְאַמְתָה. נָצַר חֶסֶד לְאַלְפִים, נִשְׁאָעַן זֶפֶשׁ וּמְטָה; וְנִקְהָ, לֹא!  
! נִקְהָ – פְּקֻד עַזְן אֲבוֹת עַל-בָּנִים וּלְבָנִים, עַל-שְׁלֹשִׁים וּלְרַבָּעִים.

As we read through these words, we might not stop and consider them individually or even count them, but that is what the rabbis did. The rabbis through the centuries have really dug deeply into ADONAI's *Torah*, seeking meaning from each word. That's a great thing. They have left us a legacy of information which will enrich our study of *Torah*. Of course, we must examine everything critically to eliminate any of their teaching which is opposition to our understanding of *Torah*. What I'm referring to is the traditional position which gives the *Talmud* scriptural authority equal to the *Torah*. We disagree. We can certainly learn from the *Talmud*, but if it is in disagreement with *Torah*, Genesis to Revelation, we reject it. Or, if it includes something which is added; something not found in *Torah*; we reject it. But, there is still much that we can learn from the rabbis.

Just these few words in the two verses of attributes show us how far above our meager understanding ADONAI really is! But, these words do not even begin to describe the awesomeness of our G-d. Our understanding is so small, so finite, that we cannot begin to describe his infiniteness. But understanding these particular verses will help us to better know the awesome Father Who in His love has invited us to also come and sit on His lap. That is what is hard to understand; He and Yeshua are "the totality of the universe," yet they have chosen us and love us; both individually and as a called-out body; the Israel of G-d.

The first of the attributes is יהוה which we speak as ADONAI. The rabbinic interpretation of *HaShem*, "the Name," as the first attribute is that ADONAI is the source of everything that exists. It is an encompassing declaration of Who He is! He is the source of everything; the universe and all worlds within it. It also includes us, our existence as human being, which is an expression of His loving will. The rabbis also break His love down to this individual point; He has compassion for a person before he or she sins. This is what they understand the first statement of His name means. No one can really know if that is what ADONAI meant when He spoke these words to Moses. But I don't doubt that His infinite love is included in His name, יהוה, which He explained to Moses as: אהיה אשר אהיה, *ehyeh aśher ehyeh*. I am Who I am; in the past, in the present and in the future. And who He is, is love. His love is a part of His name.

The second of the attributes is also יהוה!, ADONAI. Why did He speak His name twice? The rabbis say that the second attribute of ADONAI as revealed in the repetition of His name, takes into consideration that even though man sinned; we're talking about Adam; His compassion did not change. He remained the same compassionate Creator after Adam sinned. Even though we as human beings have used the free will which He gave to us and sinned, He remains compassionate after we sin. His compassion opens *teshuvah*, repentance, to us, and shows his willingness to forgive those who repent.

The third attribute in the Hebrew is *El*, אל. I like the way that the Complete Jewish Bible puts this part better: 6 ADONAI passed before him and proclaimed: "YUD-HEH-VAV-HEH!!! Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [ADONAI] is God,.. (Exodus 34:6 CJB). In the Hebrew it says: יהוה; Yod Heh Vav Heh, Yod Heh Vav Heh, *El*. The rabbis take the position that this is a reference to who He is as *Elohim*, G-d, and not just as a modifier as the TLV has it; *the compassionate and gracious God*,. The rabbis understand this to be a description of *El*, Himself, as the Almighty and Omnipotent whose compassion is bestowed according to need.

The fourth attribute is the next Hebrew word; רָחוּם, *v'rachum*, meaning “and mercy.” The rabbis say that this mercy is given so that mankind would not be stressed. In the root of *rachum*, *resh*, *chet*, *mem*, we find the word, רָחֵם, *rachem* which means womb. The womb is a picture of ADONAI’s constant, nurturing care for His creation. *Rachamim*, רָחָמִים, another form of the word, means merciful. He is merciful to those whom He has created.

The fifth attribute in the Hebrew text is *v'chanun*, חָנָעַן, meaning “and *chanun*;” “and gracious.” *Chen*, חֶן, is the Hebrew word for grace. In Exodus 33 as ADONAI is about to cause His glory to pass before Moses, He says: 19..... “*I will cause all My goodness to pass before you, and call out the Name of Adonai before you. I will be gracious toward whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will be merciful*” (Exodus 33:19 TLV). We understand these words in the sense of the definition of grace as “unmerited favor; His grace to us who are unworthy.” The rabbis add: He is “gracious if mankind is already in distress.” This implies His compassion for those in distress; He suffers with us.

The sixth attribute, אֶרְךָ אֲפָיִם, *erech apayim*, is often rendered as “long suffering.” This, to me, does not describe the situation as well as the words, “slow to anger.” *Erech apayim*, in reality, means “long nose.” Unless you knew that this was an idiom, you would be clueless. But, it is an idiom, and simply means, “patient.” It’s a good thing for us that ADONAI is patient; we fail Him and Yeshua over and over. He gives us time to correct our relationship, but not forever. It is better that we get right with Him sooner than later.

The seventh attribute, תֹּף-בָּר, is *rav chesed*. The Hebrew reads, *v'rav chesed*, וּרְבָ-חֶסֶד, with the *vav* being the conjunction, “and.” We generally understand *chesed* to mean “loving kindness,” or from a more Judaic point of view, just “kindness.” With the *rav* meaning “great or abundant,” we can best understand it as “the abundant love for all of His creatures is ADONAI’s nature.” Yeshua’s words, 16 “*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life*” (John 3:16 TLV), best exemplify His encompassing love.

The eighth attribute, תְּמִימָה, *emet* means “truth.” And we again have the *vav*, meaning “and.” But, rather than just consider this one word, *emet*, by itself, we should consider the final phrase as a whole, תְּמִימָה וְתֹבֵד אֶתְמָתָה, *v'rav chesed v'etmet*. ADONAI’s truth receives the same adjective as His loving kindness. Applying the word *rav*, meaning abundant, we could read this as: “and, abundant loving kindness and abundant truth.” Abundant truth tells us that ADONAI is truthful “to the max.” Torah says: 19 *God is not a man who lies, or a son of man who changes his mind! Does He speak and then not do it, or promise and not fulfill it* (Numbers 23:19 TLV)?

The ninth attribute, נִצְרָן כָּלָד לְאֱלֹהִים, *notzer chesed l'alafim*, according to the TLV is “showing mercy to a thousand generations.” This is also an idiom. ADONAI’s mercy does not end at a thousand generations, and this idiom means that His mercy is endless. Even when we deserve His judgement, He is merciful.

The tenth attribute, נִשְׁעָן אָוֹן, *noseh avon*, means forgiving iniquity. According to the NAS Old Testament Lexicon, *avon* is “perversity, depravity, iniquity, or guilt.” It is also defined as “immoral or grossly unfair behavior.” But, what actually is iniquity? What all of this should mean to us is that ADONAI forgives anything, shouldn’t it? But, what about blasphemy of the *Ruach Kodesh*; blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? My understanding of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is that it occurs when a person is so perverse; so altered and so evil, that he or she cannot repent; that is, they can’t return to G-d; they can’t get themselves right with

G-d. They totally reject ADONAI and their evil nature has gone so far away from G-d that they cannot return. To me, *noseh avon*, forgiving iniquity, means that ADONAI and Yeshua want to forgive and will forgive any sin; any sin which is sincerely repented. The opposite of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit; rebellion against G-d, is the contrite and complete acceptance of G-d's authority.

The eleventh attribute, **עַוְנָה**, *fesha*, also has the conjunction *vav*; and; “and *fesha*.” According to Strong’s Concordance, it is pronounced *pesha*, but it is *fesha* in modern Hebrew and it means transgression. But, what is transgression? Strong’s says that it is: rebellion or being rebellious; a rebellious act or rebellious acts. We can further break this down to: transgression of G-d’s commands in a rebellious way; not just disobedience, but “rebellious disobedience.”

The twelfth attribute is, **חַטָּאת**, *v’chata’ah*; meaning, “and sin.” *Chattat* is “a sin offering” and *chata’ah* is the “practice of sin.” Both come from the Hebrew for sin; *chet*. How is the twelfth attribute, sin, different than the previous two, iniquity or transgression? There is a difference. Sin is described as wrongful acts which are inadvertently committed. In other words, doing something and not knowing it is sin. It’s important that we understand the difference in these last three attributes. Iniquity is immoral behavior, transgression is rebellious transgression of G-d’s commands and sin is the breaking of His commands. The modifier *noseh* meaning “forgiving,” applies to attributes 10, 11 and 12: *noseh avon*, *noseh fesha* and *noseh chata’ah*: forgiving iniquity, forgiving transgression and forgiving sin. ADONAI is a forgiving G-d and He will forgive any of these which is sincerely repented.

The thirteenth attribute is, **נִזְקָה**, *v’nakeh*; and pardoning. The thirteenth attribute confirms what we have already said; ADONAI pardons, or forgives, the guilty. But He only does it in the context of all His other requirements. In the days of the Tabernacle and later, the Temple, He atoned for the people’s sins, that is, He covered them for one year, through the sacrificial blood of animals. But now, He only pardons and forgives through His Son and His perfect sacrificial blood. Anyone who hopes to be forgiven of any act against ADONAI’s nature must comply with His directions. He has placed all authority in His Son, including the forgiveness of sins. And, it is to Yeshua that we must repent.

To avoid any confusion here, we must go back to the beginning. First, we have to repent of our past sins and commit ourselves to follow Yeshua. Our sincere repentance and sincere commitment to Yeshua affords us the promise of salvation and eternal life. But, that doesn’t mean that after we make this commitment to Yeshua that additional sins are free. There are those who say that they are, but they are not. They say that Yeshua’s grace extends even to sins after salvation and that repentance for them is not required. They say they were all covered in the initial repentance. How far from the truth of the Scriptures can we get? Yes, Yeshua atoned for all sin; past, present and future. But, sin we commit after accepting Yeshua is only remitted when we sincerely repent. We still have the promise of salvation, but any sins committed afterward and not repented of will have to be answered at Yeshua’s judgement seat. What this means is, that we must continually keep our relationship with Yeshua clean. When we commit *avon*, (iniquity), *fesha*, (transgression) or *chata’ah*, (sin), we must repent.

The thirteen attributes of ADONAI reveal to us a portion of His nature. But, there is no way that we can know Him completely. And, we also know that we can’t change His nature, even though some distort who He says He is for their own purposes. We will know Him better if we study His word. Study it all; Genesis to Revelation. Only by understanding

*Sha'ul's admonition to Timothy can we even come close to knowing ADONAI and Yeshua. 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for restoration, and for training in righteousness, 17 so that the person belonging to God may be capable, fully equipped for every good deed (2Timothy 3:16-17 TLV).* All Scripture at the time this was spoken was only the *Tanach*, the Hebrew Bible. There are four points in these two verses. 1) It is important that we use Scripture for teaching. This implies *Torah* which means teaching or instruction. 2) For reproving improper behavior; how we are to act as followers of Yeshua. 3) For restoring that which has been lost. This is what we are talking about today; restoring that which has been twisted and changed. And, 4) for learning how to live in ADONAI's righteousness. This doesn't mean that we neglect the *Ketuvim Sh'lachim*, the writings of Yeshua's disciples. It is equally important and within it we can find the same truths. But, it is important that we examine all things critically, and in the light of *Torah*. Don't take anything for granted. When we do this we also see the aspect of ADONAI's nature that is complete and total love. Do just as the Jews of the synagogue in Berea did: *searching the Scriptures each day to see whether these things were true.*

In our *Haftarah* reading for *Ki Tisa* today, many in the Northern Kingdom of Israel were in *Ba'al* worship. If we allow ADONAI's nature to be changed in our eyes, we are not any better than they were. On Mount Carmel when Elijah confronted the prophets of *Ba'al*, the fire of ADONAI's power consumed the offerings, the wood, the stones, the dust and even the water. When the people saw this, they said: "**Adonai, He is God! Adonai, He is God!**" (1Kings 18:39). He is a holy and unchanging G-d. When we see Him as He really is, our eyes are opened. Even though we have not had such a dramatic eye-opening as ADONAI provided through Elijah, we must nevertheless, come to that same realization. And it is important that as Yeshua's followers that we also confess: *ADONAI, hu ha'Elohim! ADONAI, hu ha'Elohim!* ADONAI, He is G-D! ADONAI, He is G-D! Beware of seducing gospels which twist ADONAI's *Torah*!

## **Addendum B:**

### **Dr. Robert Lindsey and The Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research**

The modern man who was most influential in bringing forth the theory that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew in my opinion was Robert L. Lindsey. I have also previously spoken about the book, *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus*, authored by David Bivin and Roy Blizzard. Dr. Lindsey was the mentor of both of these men. He spent the majority of his adult life living in Jerusalem as the pastor of the Narkis Street Baptist Church, but also as a lifelong Hebrew student who devoted his scholastic life to bring forth a better understanding of the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Dr. Lindsey first came to Israel in 1939 when it was called Palestine. He had just graduated from the University of Oklahoma and he went to Israel because as a Baptist "preacher" he realized that he could not fully understand Scripture unless he learned Hebrew from a Jewish perspective. He lived in Jerusalem, learning the language for a period of time, and then returned to the United States where he married and had two children. Then he and his family returned to Israel in 1945 when he was appointed pastor of the Baptist House on Narkis Street in Jerusalem. Incidentally, the Messianic Congregation with which we celebrated Passover in 2008, was meeting in the Baptist congregation's building. We had our

Passover *seder* there. The Lindseys eventually had four more children, who all grew up in Israel attending Israeli schools and speaking Hebrew like all the other youngsters.

As Dr. Lindsey became more proficient in Hebrew he undertook to translate the "New Testament" into Hebrew. The Book of Mark in 1969 was his first. He chose Mark because general understanding at that time suggested that Mark was one of the sources for the writing of Matthew and Luke, or, Markan priority, as it is called. As he continued his studies, he began to believe that scholars had been wrong in their thinking when they suggested that both Luke and Matthew copied part of their story from Mark. He eventually came to the conclusion that the truth was that Luke wrote his Gospel first and that Mark then wrote his with the help of Luke's story. Matthew came later and used Mark for part of his material. His approach is called Lukan priority. Of course, opinions regarding this are still very divided in the Biblical scholastic community.

After he had been in Jerusalem a few years, he met Professor David Flusser, an orthodox Jew and a scholar at Hebrew University. Although he was not a Christian, Professor Flusser's field of expertise was early Christianity and he taught it in modern Hebrew. The two men became close friends and colleagues who worked together for years at Hebrew University. They spent many hours together studying the Greek texts and searching the *Tanakh* for words and phrases which might have been Hebrew underlying the Greek. Together, they founded the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research, which continues today under the direction of David Bivin, one of the authors of *Understanding The Difficult Words of Jesus*, and whom I had the privilege of meeting during *Beit Shalom*'s trip to Israel in 2003. Beginning with Lindsey's suspicions and Flusser's contributions, the modern theory that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew began to develop. Explained very simply, the Hebraic form of sentence structures in Matthew, combined with the presence of numerous Hebrew idioms, was what first caused Lindsey to pursue this study. In his book, *Jesus, Rabbi, and Lord*, published in 1990, Dr. Lindsey explained how he came to his conclusions. It is very well worth reading and is now available on Amazon.com after having been out of print for a number of years.