



## **Parasha Ekev**

August 24, 2024

*Torah:* Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25  
*Haftarah:* Isaiah 49:14-51:3  
*K'tuvim Shlichim:* James 5:7-11

*Shabbat shalom Mishpacha.* Our *parasha* is *Ekev*, “Because.” It begins 12 “Then it will happen, as a result *ekev* (**because**) of your listening to these ordinances, when you keep and do them, that Adonai your God will keep with you the covenant kindness that He swore to your fathers” (Deuteronomy 7:12 TLV). This is a beautiful promise to Israel, but unfortunately, they did not obey and observe the ordinances, and because of that, we find ourselves where we are in history today. But ADONAI’s promises go far beyond what happened in Israel in past years. He has promised that He will restore all things through His Son, Yeshua, and we are nearing His restoration time.

Last *Shabbat*, you heard “It’s Later Than You Think, Part 1.” This is Part 2. The overall theme of the message is that we are much further along in ADONAI’s end-time schedule than a large segment of Yeshua’s body believes. As Yeshua’s *talmidim*, we must have our eyes open to discern the times so that we will not be surprised or disappointed by things that happen. To be ready, we have to critically examine the eschatology available today critically and decide what we believe. In our last message, we examined Amillennialism, Postmillennialism, Premillennialism, and Dispensationalism and found they did not fit our understanding of Scripture. Our foundation for theological understanding is based entirely on Scripture, Genesis through Revelation. Traditions and rabbinic writings are not used in developing our eschatology.

Last *Shabbat*, the order for this study was given. It is **A** Who is Israel according to Jeremiah 31. **B** The latter part of the Daniel 9 prophecy occurred in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, primarily referring to Yeshua. **C** *HaSatan* was bound when Yeshua died on the cross and has been released to deceive the nations. **D** The Great Tribulation prophesied by Yeshua has already happened. **E** There is no physical Antichrist coming. **F** There is no millennium reign of Messiah prophesied. **G** Everything required to happen for the latter events of the “Last Days” is in place. **A** and **B** were covered last week and we now take up **C**.

**C** *HaSatan* was bound when Yeshua died on the cross and has already been released to deceive the nations.

No one can state with certainty that they understand Revelation. I certainly don’t and don’t claim to, just the opposite. But while I do not consider myself an expert in the study of Revelation, I believe that much of its content is symbolic and that problems in understanding arise when too much symbolism is deemed factual. My foundational comprehension, which brought me to this point, originated with Reverend Ellis Skolfield, believing he had the answer to many things in Revelation. But he, like all of us, saw through a glass darkly, and his writings bear our scrutiny. You can find his materials at <https://www.ellisskolfield.net/>. Even with this disclaimer, his understanding of the

“millennium” is the best I have seen. He recognized its symbolism many years ago and was able to give credible possibilities. Relatively unknown in the United States, he spent most of his ministry years in Africa, retiring to Florida where he died in 2015 at age 88.

His theory regarding *HaSatan*’s chaining and release began with the verses immediately after Yeshua was immersed into His ministry and approved by His Father at the Jordan River. Driven into the wilderness, He was tempted by *HaSatan* for forty days. Luke wrote: *5 And leading Him up, the devil showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant. 6 And the devil said to Him, “I’ll give to You all this authority along with its glory, because it has been handed over to me and I can give it to anyone I wish.”* (Luke 4:5-6 TLV). And He was able to lead some astray. *4 In their case, the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, so they might not see the light of the Good News of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of God.* (2 Corinthians 4:4 TLV). The Devil, referred to as “the god of this world” by *Sha’ul* said the authority was his and was correct in stating that he had authority over the kingdoms of the earth. In the wilderness, Yeshua did not contradict him. *HaSatan* had dominion over the world’s empires at the time of Yeshua’s temptation, a dominion he had for centuries.

When Yeshua came to earth to live as a man, He came as the “suffering servant” and had not been given “earthly” authority over a kingdom. Answering Pilate’s question about why He had been arrested: *36 Yeshua answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I wouldn’t be handed over to the Judean leaders. But as it is, My kingdom is not from here.”* (John 18:36 TLV). That is how it was until Yeshua went to the cross and died. But, when He died on the stake and ascended to the Father’s right hand, all things were given into His hands. *Sha’ul* explained how ADONAI raised Yeshua from the dead to His seat of power: *20 This power He (ADONAI) exercised in Messiah when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heaven. 21 He is far above any ruler, authority, power, leader, and every name that is named—not only in the Olam hazeh but also in the Olam haba. 22 God placed all things under Messiah’s feet and appointed Him as head over all things for His community— 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.* (Ephesians 1:20-23 TLV). *Olam hazeh* is “this world,” and *Olam habah* is “the world to come.” ADONAI placed all things under Yeshua’s feet when He died and ascended to Him. He has that authority right now as *Melekh Yisra’el*, King of Israel (1 Timothy 6:13-15), and He will soon return as king over the whole earth to conquer His enemies. This is the reality: Yeshua’s Kingdom exists right now.

*HaSatan* had it his way until Yeshua went to the cross. Yeshua told His disciples what would happen to *HaSatan*. He said: *23 ... , “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified!” 27 “Now My soul is troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But it was for this reason I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify Your name!” Then a voice came out of heaven, “I have glorified it, and again I will glorify it!” 29 Therefore the crowd that was standing there and heard it was saying that it had thundered. Others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.”* (John 18:23b; 27-29 TLV). Yeshua then gave the defining statement about *HaSatan*: *30 ... , “This voice hasn’t come for My sake, but for yours. 31 “Now is the judgment of this world! Now the prince of this world will be driven out!”* (John 12:30b-31 TLV). The prince of this world, *HaSatan*, was driven out when Yeshua died on the cross. *Sha’ul* describes the spiritual effect of Yeshua’s death: *15 After disarming the principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross.* (Colossians 2:15 TLV). Through His death, Yeshua not only defeated *HaSatan* but

also his demon princes and powers. These Scriptures show us that Yeshua's death on the stake not only defeated *HaSatan* but also took away his authority over the earth. When Yeshua died, *HaSatan* lost his position as "god of this world."

What happened to him after that? Was he able to continue his temptations? No, he was not! Yeshua said: "Now the prince of this world will be driven out!" The word translated as "driven out" is *ekblēthēsetai* (ek-blay-thay-se-ti) from *ekballo*, meaning "throw, cast, put out, banish, etc." The King James Version reads: *31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* (John 12:31 KJV). Where was he cast? *HaSatan* was cast into the Abyss. *1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon—the ancient serpent, who is the devil and satan—and bound him for a thousand years.* (Revelation 20:1-2 TLV). That's what Revelation 20, verses 1-3 are about. But, it happened when Yeshua died on the stake 2000 years ago and is not 1000 years in the future as Dispensationalism states. *HaSatan* was put in chains in 30 CE when Yeshua died on the cross, and he stayed in the abyss for a symbolic period of a thousand years.

That time has expired, and he has been released from the abyss. *3 He also threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were 4 completed. After these things, he must be released for a short while.* (Revelation 20:3 TLV). When was he released? As we see the greatly increasing lawlessness and violence throughout the earth, we realize that *HaSatan* is free today and actively trying to regain the kingdoms that Yeshua took from him today. *HaSatan* was bound in 30 CE when Yeshua died on the stake and was in the abyss for a symbolic thousand-year period, *chillioi* (khil'-ee-oy) in Greek. *7 When the thousand years has ended, satan shall be released from his prison, 8 and he shall come out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for the battle.* (Revelation 20:7-8a TLV). This is where we are now. *HaSatan* has been released and is working very hard through his demonic princes and powers, primarily through Islam, to deceive all the nations of the earth and bring about the great end-time battle. I believe we saw his tempting activities in the nations that attacked Israel in 1948 immediately after Israel was declared a nation. We saw it in the nations that attacked Israel in 1967 during the Six-Day War. We have seen it in Yasser Arafat and the so-called Palestinians and in Hamas, Hezbollah, *Fatah*, ISIS, and Iran. This anti-Israel activity began when Israel became a nation again, activities instigated by *HaSatan* after he was released from the abyss to deceive the nations for a little while.

We don't know exactly when he was released from the abyss. There are several possibilities. It could have been during Hitler's rise to power in the 1930s, an opportunity for him to influence Hitler's persecution of the Jews and bring about the Holocaust. It could have been in 1948 when Israel became a nation or even possibly in 1967 when the "times of the Gentiles" ended and Jews controlled Jerusalem for the first time in over 2500 years, a fulfillment of Yeshua's prophecy in Luke 21:24. Jerusalem is no longer under the feet of the Gentiles and Jerusalem is in the "times of the Jews." The current era is called "the times of the Messiah," a period known as *Acharit hayamim*, or "the end of days." This time is described by Christians as "the birth pangs of the Messiah," while Jews refer to it as *Ikvot Meshicha*, which translates to "the heels of *Moshiach*" or "the footsteps of the Messiah." In this period, Israel came to worldwide attention as a fulfillment of the prophecies written about Yeshua and Israel in the latter days. It will end with the return of our Messiah.

The “thousand years” requires more explanation. In the three verses of Revelation 20:1-3, we see *HaSatan* both bound and released and his release repeated in verse 7. How can the thousand years be understood? Reverend Skolfield believed that the word thousand, from the Greek *chilioi*, was an indefinite plural and that it could mean one thousand but also many thousands. That one word is what makes these verses so difficult to understand. But, after searching for more information, I don’t believe he was correct. I cannot find any statement to that effect in any Greek lexicon. *Chilioi* does mean thousand, but an actual thousand. The Blue Letter Bible makes this statement: “*χιλιοι chilioi*, khil'-ee-oy; plural of uncertain affinity; a thousand:—thousand.” Dake’s Bible Discussion Board states that *chilia*, the word in the verse, means thousand. This means that the answer to the question is not grammar but hermeneutics. Hermeneutics, interpretation, supplies the answer. Even though the word means exactly “one thousand,” there is room for interpretation. Though the translation of the plural word *chilioi*, the root word of *chilia* as one thousand, is technically correct, if we insist on it meaning exactly 1000 years, the sense of the passage would be lost. Yes, it means one thousand, but symbolically, it could be any number or even thousands of years. Understanding that Revelation is primarily symbolism, we apply this meaning to *HaSatan*’s time of captivity. In Revelation 20, verse 2, *HaSatan* is described as a *drakonta*, a dragon, and an *ophis*, a snake and we understand this is symbolic language. It is not unreasonable to recognize *chilia*, a word in the same verse as also being symbolic. Applying it this way can mean he was bound for over one thousand years, even almost two thousand years. That is the reality. *HaSatan* was bound when Yeshua died on the stake in 30 CE and released sometime between the time of Hitler in the 1930s and when Jerusalem was freed from the Gentiles in 1967. The Book of Revelation's prophetic meaning is much deeper than the English words reveal, and attempting a factual understanding will lead us astray.

**D** The Great Tribulation prophesied by Yeshua has already happened.

Within the framework of Dispensationalism, a concept often linked to the "Great Tribulation" is the "abomination of desolation" and is identified with the Antichrist, who is believed to be coming. Sitting on the Mount of Olives, Yeshua told His disciples: 14 *“But when you see ‘the abomination of desolation’ standing where it should not be (let the reader understand, then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. 15 The one on the roof must not go down, nor enter to take anything out of his house. 16 And the one in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. 17 Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18 Pray that it will not happen in winter. 19 “For in those days there will be trouble such as has never happened, not since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will. 20 And unless Adonai had cut short those days, no one would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He cut short the days”* (Mark 13:14-20 TLV). He said essentially the same thing in Matthew chapter 24 (15-22). The Mark Scripture is important because in it, Yeshua told us that the “abomination of desolation” is not the Antichrist. Mark wrote: “the abomination of desolation’ standing where ‘it’ should not be.” An “it” is not a person. It is a thing. The “abomination” is also found in the Matthew Scripture, and is not identified as a person. Matthew refers to it as “the abomination of desolation,” but adds, “which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet.” In saying this, Yeshua warned His disciples about what would happen in Jerusalem in coming years, telling those in Judea “to get away from there” when they saw the things He described happening.

The abomination of desolation in Daniel found in chapter 11, verse 31, appeared during the time of the Maccabees almost two hundred years earlier. In about 167 BCE, the Syrian army invaded Jerusalem and desecrated the Temple. The abomination was the Syrian army, but underlying and causing their actions was a specific demon spirit from *HaSatan*, probably accompanied by thousands of others. According to the dictionary, an abomination is a thing which causes disgust or hatred. Desolation is a state of complete emptiness or destruction. From Maccabees, books we consider history and not scripture, we read what the Syrian army did in the Temple: *59 On the twenty-fifth day of each month they sacrificed on the pagan altar that was over the altar of burnt offerings.* (1Maccabees 1:54-61). The Syrians made an altar and placed it over the Temple altar. The abomination of desolation had been in Jerusalem and the Temple once before. It was coming again, a hated thing that would cause emptiness or destruction and make the Temple desolate for Jewish worship. Yeshua said, “Flee from it.” Initially, Yeshua spoke about the days of the Maccabees, but His warning was about something in the future. History tells us that it was the Roman army, which destroyed the Temple 40 years later in the year 70. The abomination was not a physical Antichrist in the year 70, and there is no coming Antichrist person in our future.

In His warning, Yeshua told His disciples to pray that this would not happen in winter; it didn't; it happened in spring. In the year 70CE, Roman General Titus's legions breached the walls of Jerusalem and entered. They slaughtered almost the entire population of Jerusalem. Yeshua had said that the coming time would be the worst in Jerusalem ever, days when they would see Jerusalem surrounded by armies. When they saw them, they were to “flee to the hills.” Forty years later, Yeshua's prophecy about the Temple and its destruction came to pass. Referring to the Jews in Jerusalem at that time, He said, *24 “They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all the nations.”* (Luke 21:24a TLV). It happened in 70 CE during “the Great Tribulation” when the armies of Rome destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple.

There was an eyewitness to everything that happened. A former general of Israel's army, *Yosef ben Mattityahu*, had commanded the Jewish defenses in the Galilee and surrendered to General Vespasian at the Battle of *Yodfat* in 67 CE. Vespasian, who became Emperor of Rome in 69, took him as a slave and gave him the Roman name Josephus. Josephus, who began documenting the events in Israel, wrote of what happened in Jerusalem: “Now the number of those that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand (**97,000**), as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand (**1,100,000**), the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation [with the citizens of Jerusalem], but not belonging to the city itself; for they were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut up by an army, which, at the very first, occasioned so great a traitness among them that there came a pestilential destruction upon them, and soon afterward such a famine, as destroyed them more suddenly.” (The Works of Josephus, translated by William Whiston, Hendrickson Publishers, 1987). 1,100,000 died and 97,000 were taken as slaves. A total of 1.2 million Jews either died or were taken captive from the City of Jerusalem in the year 70. There was an unusually large number of people present, a number much greater than Jerusalem's usual population because they had come for *Pesach*, Passover. They were shut in and cut off from any food supplies from before Passover on 14 *Nisan* until the 9th of *Av* when the Romans broke through and destroyed the Temple. The Roman general Titus, Emperor Vespasian's son, surrounded Jerusalem on about April 3rd and maintained his blockade until July 26<sup>th</sup>, when his forces

finally broke through Jerusalem's walls. The dates from Whiston's translation of The Works of Josephus are said to be approximate due to the uncertain correlation of the two calendars. Still, Jewish tradition regarding the date of the Temple's destruction is well established as being on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av.

When the Roman forces reached the Temple, they did what the Syrians had done during the Maccabees' time, offer sacrifices. "AND now the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus imperator with the greatest acclamations of joy." (THE WARS OF THE JEWS, The History Of The Destruction Of Jerusalem, Book VI, Chapters I – X. Flavius Josephus, 75 C.E. Translated from the Greek, William Whiston, 1737; Hendrickson Publishers, 1987). Their ensigns were flags bearing images to which they offered sacrifices. April 3<sup>rd</sup> until July 26<sup>th</sup> is almost four months of being surrounded without the opportunity to replenish food supplies. Yeshua warned His disciples about it. 21 *"For then there will be great trouble, such as has not happened since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. 22 And unless those days were cut short, no one would be delivered. But for the sake of the chosen, those days will be cut short."* (Matthew 24:21-22 TLV). As Yeshua said, what happened in Jerusalem at that time was a "great tribulation," but it will never happen again. "The chosen" were Yeshua's followers whom He had told to flee the city before this happened, and likely, there were also some of His followers within the 97,000 Jews whom the Romans carried away as slaves. They were the Messianic remnant who survived to take Yeshua's message to the world as He had commanded His disciples. (Matthew 28:19-20). That was the "Great Tribulation" of prophecy. It is not a future seven-year event caused by a person called the Antichrist.

Luke wrote about something that neither Matthew nor Mark did. Yeshua said: 24 *"They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."* (Luke 21:24 TLV). This verse is usually not recognized as being about the Great Tribulation, but it most definitely refers to it. Those killed and taken as slaves were a result of what happened in Jerusalem during the Tribulation. Now, they are being physically regathered, with almost one-half of the world's Jewish population living in the Nation of Israel. Being "trampled by the Gentiles" was a prophecy about Jerusalem. Yeshua said: "Jerusalem would be under the control of Gentile nations until that control ended." It ended in July 1967 during the Six Day War when the Israeli army recaptured and gained control of Jerusalem for the first time since Yeshua uttered these words. His prophecy indicated that the physical dominion over Jerusalem, which had been held by various Gentile powers since the 1st century—including the Romans, a Muslim Caliphate, the Ottomans, and finally, Great Britain—would come to a conclusion. But the story of the abomination continues. There is a third evolution of "the abomination of desolation" standing on the Temple Mount today, and we will speak about it next *Shabbat*. But the Great Tribulation has already happened. The context of Yeshua's message to His disciples was clearly about Jerusalem and not the whole world. The Dispensational theology concerning "The Great Tribulation" represents an interpretation that diverges from the explicit context of Yeshua's teachings. Instead, it is a synthesis of fabrications attributed to Jesuit priests, specifically Francisco Ribera in the 16th century and Manuel Lacunza in the 18th century, along with the contributions of English Christian John Nelson Darby in the early 19th century. We

are told that the Jesuits wrote to deflect Protestant criticism away from the Catholic Church, but have to believe that Darby's motives were pure, although wrong.

It's later than we think. For many years, the United States was called a Christian nation, and for the most part, it was. The government generally reacted morally concerning its domestic and foreign policies, and Christians were the majority. But we have seen many changes in recent years. Christians, now, are not in the majority, and a large portion of the Christian body has succumbed to liberal and anti-biblical thinking. This week, delegates to the Democrat National Convention in Chicago approved a party platform that increases support for abortion and "gender-affirming health care," both a direct violation of ADONAI's Word. Yeshua warned us. He said: 37 *"For just as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For in those days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. 39 And they did not understand until the flood came and swept them all away. So shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man."* (Matthew 24:37-39 TLV). Most of the world is acting as if there is no G-d and a large part of Yeshua's body is asleep. Many in His body say, "It's not coming in our time" and "It's a long time off." Many people, even believers, live far from what the Bible teaches. "Body of Yeshua," wake up! The *Ikvot Mashiach* are becoming louder and louder and closer and closer! But we are not to fear! Yeshua said: 27 *"Shalom I leave you, My shalom I give to you; but not as the world gives! Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid."* (John 14:27 TLV). 20 ... *"And remember! I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* (Matthew 28:20b TLV). Even as the world grows darker, Yeshua is with us. He is coming soon! *Shabbat shalom!*

***Revival Begins With Me!***

***Return to Yeshua!  
Return to Authority!  
Return to Attendance!***

***Pass it on!***