



## **Parasha Tol'dot**

November 30, 2024

*Torah:* Genesis 25:19-28:9

*Haftarah:* Malachi 1:1-2:7

**See message notes [beitshalom.us](http://beitshalom.us) for parasha specific messages** *Ketuvim*

*Shlichim:* Luke 1:67-79

**Specific to today's message**

### **Disciples of Yeshua 6**

Last *Shabbat*, we ended with *Yosef* taking his family from Egypt to Nazareth. Time has passed, and Yeshua is now twelve years old, having spent His childhood years in Nazareth. This missing period is often called the silent years since nothing about it is revealed in Scripture. There are a number of non-canonized Gospel accounts that claim to add to the story. There are two Gospels of Thomas, and one is about Yeshua's infancy. Both are from the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century. The Gospel of Mary is also from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, as is the Gospel of Judas. The Gospel of Philip is from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and there are numerous others. All of these individuals whose names were used were long dead in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries and who knows who the authors were. As you might suspect, I'm about to get on my soapbox again. I do not recommend any of these and I caution you against reading them, adding the Book of Enoch to this list. Neither Jews nor Christians have canonized the Book of Enoch, and it can lead one astray. That Yeshua's brother *Yehudah* (Jude) quoted it does not make it kosher. The only canonized part of the Book of Enoch is these two verses which *Yehudah* wrote: 14 ... "*Behold, the Lord came with myriads of His kedoshim, 15 to execute judgment against all. He will convict all the ungodly for all their ungodly deeds that they have done in an ungodly way, and for all of the harsh things ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.*" (Jude 14b-15 TLV). This sounds very much like "the day of ADONAI," which we will discuss shortly. But our emphasis is that we can only rely on canonized Scripture and not depend upon anything else to be ADONAI's truth, not the *Talmud* or any traditions of man. We can bring in information from these sources as background for understanding, but we cannot claim anything other than Scripture, Genesis through Revelation, to be truth. Judaism asserts that the *Talmud* holds authority equal to the written *Torah* and *Tanakh*, something we completely disagree with. If you want to study

this further, I recommend the book *The Non-Torah: Exposing The Myth of Divine Oral Torah*. Canonized Scripture is the only Divine and authoritative source that a follower of Yeshua should use to establish ADONAI's truth.

As we learned during our study of the birth and infancy of Yeshua, His family followed the commands of the *Torah* very closely. It was no different with Passover: *41 Now His parents were going every year to Jerusalem for the Passover feast.* (Luke 2:41 TLV). ADONAI commanded all Israelite males, age 19 and over, to attend Passover each year and the festivals of *Shavuot* and *Sukkot*. (Exodus 23:17; 34:23; Deuteronomy 16:16). That the family attended Passover each year shows Joseph's zealousness to obey ADONAI. Not nearly every Israelite did that, even those living in Israel. For some living outside of *Eretz Yisra'el*, it was a once-in-a-lifetime event. But Yeshua's family went every year. Shmuel Safrai of *Jerusalem Perspective* discussed this in his article *Pilgrimage In The Time of Jesus*. He wrote: "During the Second Temple period, these verses were not understood to mean that one was obliged to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem three times a year, but rather that pilgrimage was associated with these festivals. The pilgrimage was considered a commandment that "has no measure," as stated in *Mishnah, Peah* 1:1: "The following are the things for which no definite quantity is prescribed...appearing [before the Lord]...." In other words, the leaders of this period, the Pharisees, interpreted the *Torah* in ways other than what it stated. Stating that this came from the *Mishnah* is an anachronism since the *Mishnah* was not written down until 200 CE, long after the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. During the Second Temple period, the Pharisees, the main teachers of Jewish law, interpreted the *Torah* based on the Oral *Torah*. The time we are discussing, Yeshua's lifetime, is from the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE to about 30 CE. Most scholars believe that Yeshua was born between 6 and 4 BCE, a time near Herod's death in 4 BCE.

We must understand the Pharisees. They were not all bad guys as they are often depicted. There were hypocritical and self-serving Pharisees but also very good Pharisees. Two of Yeshua's disciples were Pharisees, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Another group of Pharisees warned Yeshua that Herod Antipas wanted to kill Him. (Luke 13:31-35). As a group, the Pharisees evolved from a new religious movement that began soon after the return from Babylonian captivity, a group called "The Men of the Great Assembly." The priest Ezra was a member. This group refocused on the *Torah* and called the people to be faithful to ADONAI. During these years, what came to be known as "the Oral *Torah*" appeared on the scene, with those coming after that time claiming it to have been present since the time of Moses. The Pharisees of Yeshua's day emphasized the written *Torah*, but sometimes stressed the Oral *Torah* as being more authoritative for the Jew. Yeshua's responses to their traditions showed that He rejected the Oral *Torah* as having any authority at all. But overall, the Pharisees should be seen in a good light, that of calling Israel to righteousness, and not just focusing on the hypocritical ones.

Luke tells about Joseph's family attending Passover when Yeshua was twelve years old. *41 Now His parents were going every year to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. 42 When He became twelve years old, they were going up according to festival custom.* (Luke 2:41-42 TLV). What Joseph and his family did by attending Passover each year was extraordinary, much above what most Jews did. *As they headed home after completing the days, the boy Yeshua remained in Jerusalem, but His parents didn't know.* (Luke 2:43 TLV). After *Pesach* was over, they began their two to three-day journey home, not realizing Yeshua wasn't with them. They were traveling in a caravan with neighbors from Nazareth and other groups that had joined them. After they had traveled for a day, *Yosef and Miryam* realized that Yeshua was not in the group, and they turned back to look for Him. When they got to Jerusalem, finding Him took them another three days. *46 After three days they found Him in the Temple, sitting in the center of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all those hearing Him were astonished at His understanding and His answers.* (Luke 2:46-47 TLV). His parents asked Him why He would do this and cause them to have to search for Him. *49 He said to them, "Why were you searching for Me? Didn't you know that I must be about the things of My Father?" 50 But they did not grasp the message He was telling them. 51 Then He went down with them to Natzeret and was obedient to them.* (Luke 2:49-51a TLV). We must believe that Yeshua understood who He was, and that understanding motivated his dialogue with the Teachers of Israel. But after this one time of frightening his parents, He obeyed His parents and seemingly lived as a typical Jewish boy and young man until it was time for His ministry to begin. This is the only event of Yeshua's childhood years to be disclosed. And at age 12, He was internally preparing for His life's purpose. He knew who He was even then but did not reveal it for the same reason "because," as it later says in other places in the Gospels, "because His time had not yet come." But He also fulfilled His human obligations as an obedient son. *51 Then He went down with them to Natzeret and was obedient to them.* (Luke 2:51a TLV). As an obedient son, he would have done all the things that Jewish boys of that time did, submitting to their parents and to Adonai.

Modern Jewish males aged 13 years usually have a *Bar Mitzvah*, meaning "Son of the Commandment." It is a ceremony that promotes them from childhood to adulthood and causes them to be subject to "the commandments," that is the *Torah*. After this, they are themselves responsible for following the commandments rather than being under parental authority. There are no records about this from the 1<sup>st</sup> century, but there are suggestions from the Oral *Torah* about 200 years earlier that the time of becoming an adult was a part of Jewish life for males. It is possible that Yeshua had a *Bar Mitzvah* the following year at age 13. Whether He did or not is not essential to our belief, but is interesting to consider. If Jewish males in Nazareth were having *Bar Mitzvahs*, would not Yeshua as well? For Jewish boys, the significance is that they reach the age recognized as adulthood, the point at which they become personally

responsible for their sins. *Bar Mitzvah* is not a *Torah* commandment, but it is possible that Yeshua's family would have followed the customs of that day.

The *Mishnah*, the written form of what was earlier known as the "Oral *Torah*," became written about 200 CE. In it, we find *Pirkei Avot*, "The Sayings (or the Ethics) of the Fathers," a series of writings supposedly originating about 200 BCE. In Yeshua's time, it would have been in the oral form. This version is from *Chabad.org, Ethics of the Fathers: Chapter Five: 21 ...Ben Hei Hei would say: "According to the pain is the gain." (Pirkei Avot 5:21b)*. I bet you didn't know that the saying "no pain, no gain" came from post-Babylon Israel in did you? Apparently, it applied to not only exercise, but spiritual development. 5:22: "He would also say: Five years is the age for the study of Scripture. Ten, for the study of *Mishnah*. Thirteen, for the obligation to observe the *mitzvot*. Fifteen, for the study of *Talmud*. Eighteen, for marriage. Twenty, to pursue [a livelihood]. Thirty, for strength." Forty, for understanding. Fifty, for counsel. Sixty, for sagacity. Seventy, for elderliness. Eighty, for power. Ninety, to stoop. A hundred-year-old is as one who has died and passed away and has been negated from the world." (*Pirkei Avot 5:22*). Jewish males were started early in preparation for spiritual adulthood. This was something that was primarily carried out in the synagogues. Whether or not the *Bar Mitzvah* was a ceremony or just the acknowledgment of the requirement at that age, we don't know, but Yeshua probably participated however it was. Regarding the ages of 10 for the study of *Mishnah* and 15 for the study of *Talmud*, these references are anachronisms, events set outside of the proper time in which they occurred. Neither the *Mishnah* nor the *Talmud* was present in Yeshua's time because the Oral *Torah* did not become written until about 200 CE, almost 200 years after Yeshua's birth, and the *Talmud* was not compiled until about 400 CE. In 200 CE, it would have been "the study of *Torah She-ba'al Peh*," Oral *Torah*, literally, *Torah* of the mouth. The words *Mishnah* and *Talmud* would have been added later to the original words. "At eighteen, the bridal canopy." There was no bridal canopy for Yeshua. Regardless of what some conspiracy theorists say, He did not marry *Miryam* of *Magdala*, nor did they have a child. "At twenty for pursuit [of livelihood]." Yeshua would have taken up the profession of his father *Yosef* at the age of twenty. Mark 6:3 identifies Him as a carpenter, Greek *tehton*, and He would have worked his trade as a builder until he began His ministry. "At thirty, the peak of strength" aligns with Luke 3:23, which tells us that Yeshua started His ministry at age 30. Numbers 4:2-3 may also be related to His life events. It tells that *kohanim*, priests, were to begin their ministry in the Tabernacle at age 30. The Book of Hebrews states that Yeshua became a priest, the High Priest of Israel. (Hebrews 4:14 TLV). Even though He was not from the Tribe of *Levi*, Yeshua began His ministry at age 30, just as the Levitical priests did. Talking about these things is not to suggest that *Pirkei Avot* is a reliable resource. It is not Scripture, but it probably does give a partially accurate view of a male's life in Israel's early centuries. Yeshua's human life ended at about age 33, so the remaining ages did not apply to Him.

Even though I have attained the age of 80, I don't know that "80 for power" applies to me, but it is interesting to consider. Some versions say "strength," and I have reached the age of 87 and the decade referred to as power or strength. ADONAI has most definitely given me strength to continue, but He also has allowed me to be useful at this age. I want to share something I have never shared before, mainly because I did not understand it until recently. *Beit Shalom* has made three festival pilgrimages to Israel, in 2003 for *Sukkot*, in 2005 for *Shavuot* and in 2008 for *Matzah* and Passover. We always invited some of Yeshua's local followers to speak to us at our hotel. At the Mount Zion Hotel in 2005, we invited Jan Willem van der Hoeven, the man who had founded the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) some years earlier. After he spoke, I walked with him to the parking lot and his car. As we stood there talking, he laid his hands on me and prophesied. He said quite a bit, but I don't remember most of it. I do remember this one statement: "You will be a Moses to your people." I have thought about it for years but never understood it until recently. At the time of the prophecy in 2005, I was 67 years old and had no vision of the future. It seems clear now that ADONAI was saying that I would still be serving Him and you at Moses' age of 80, something I could not understand until I arrived at that age. You can also tell by looking at me that I have received the "stoop," the bent body of the 90 year old, but just a few years early.

To better understand Yeshua, we must also understand His cousin *Yochanan*, John, the son of Zechariah the Priest, and his wife, Elizabeth. According to the Scripture account in Luke chapter 1, Cousin John was about six months older than Yeshua. We assume they were cousins but don't really know how they were related since Scripture only describes *Elisheva* as *Miryam's* relative. Since we know that *Miryam's* father was from the Tribe of Judah, it had to be that her mother had Levite ancestry. This would mean that Yeshua would have received some Levite DNA from His mother. This much would be true. But Scripture does not tell us anything else, and that's where we must stop. Some try to make a case for Yeshua also being from the Tribe of *Levi* and a descendant of the High Priest *Zadok*. This is beyond what ADONAI wants us to know since the writer of Hebrews explicitly wrote: *14 For it is clear that our Lord has sprung forth from Judah—concerning this tribe, Moses said nothing about kohanim.* (Hebrews 7:14 TLV). However, it is interesting that ADONAI chose Yeshua's relative, a member of the Tribe of *Levi* and a priest, to be His forerunner, the Elijah figure of that generation.

The circumstances surrounding John's birth are described in Luke chapter 1. His father, *Zechar'yah*, was of the Tribe of *Levi* and a *kohen*, a priest. His mother *Elisheva*, Elizabeth, was also from the Tribe of Levi. Scripture says this about them: *6 Together they were righteous before Adonai, walking without fault in all His commandments and instructions.* (Luke 1:6 TLV). That Zechariah was a *kohen* means that John was also a *kohen*, but he seemingly rejected it and chose to live in the wilderness. We are not told why, but a possible reason may

have been because of his calling as told by the Angel Gabriel: *15 He will be great before Adonai; and he should not drink wine and intoxicating beverage, but he will be filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh just out of his mother's womb.* (Luke 1:15 TLV). This indicates that John would have known that there was a special calling on his life, a calling possibly leading him to be a lifelong Nazirite. He knew that he was being guided by the *Ruach*. A second reason he rejected serving as a priest may have been the corruption of the leading priests. We get a sense of this in his criticism of some Sadducees in Matthew 3:7 as “a group of vipers,” and it is undeniable that the priesthood was corrupt under the High Priest Caiaphas, who bought his High Priesthood from Rome and perpetrated Yeshua’s murder.

On the eighth day at John’s *b’rit milah*, his covenant of circumcision, and his naming, his father Zechariah prophesied about him, saying: *76 “And you, child, will be called a prophet of Elyon. For you will go before Adonai to prepare His ways, 77 to give knowledge of salvation to His people through removal of their sins.”* (Luke 1:76-77 TLV). These were not Zechariah’s words but words directly from the Holy Spirit. “*For you will go before ADONAI to prepare His ways*” is a quotation from Malachi 3:1. What Zechariah prophesied meant that his son John was to be an Elijah figure for his day and time.

Mark introduces John in his Gospel by writing: *2 As Isaiah the prophet has written, “Behold, I send My messenger before You, who will prepare Your way.”* (Mark 1:2 TLV). There is one small problem with this statement. It was not Isaiah who wrote this. As we just noted, it was Malachi. Theologians explain this by referring to it as a “composite quotation,” a quotation from more than one source, and say that the most crucial author is the one referenced. We will see that momentarily as the quotation continues with Isaiah’s words in the next verse.

But Malachi’s words are important and that’s not all that he said. Reading just that much would cause those in Yeshua’s day to remember the rest of what Malachi wrote, another case of *remez*, hinting at another Scripture, which we described last week: *1 “Behold, I am sending My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. Suddenly He will come to His Temple—the Lord whom you seek—and the Messenger of the covenant—the One whom you desire— behold, He is coming,” says Adonai-Tzva’ot.* (Malachi 3:1 TLV). Note the reference: Malachi chapter 3, verse 1. Christian oriented Bibles add a chapter 4 with this verse being Malachi 4:5-6. I recommend that everyone read from a Hebrew oriented Bible such as the TLV or the CJB. This verse points out a part of the need for doing just that. This happens fairly frequently throughout the *Tanakh*. But, don’t just rely on your Bible and refer frequently to concordances. See what the Hebrew or the Greek says to verify what you read in your Hebrew-oriented Bible. From these words, we need to remember that Mark revealed that John was the 1st century Elijah figure who would clear the way before the Messiah. He would begin the cry for *teshuvah*, repentance, and then physically introduce the Messiah. But after his *b’rit milah*, we hear no more from John until adulthood.

Luke ends his story with this: *80 And the child kept growing and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.* (Luke 1:80 TLV).

Mark also wrote: *3 “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way of Adonai, and make His paths straight.’”* (Mark 1:3 TLV). This quotation is another incident of *remez*, a reference to Isaiah, whom Mark originally quoted in the verse before, verse 2. This verse is the second part of a composite quotation, one with more than one individual referenced. Mark wanted his readers to understand that it was Isaiah who was speaking, and his words would have brought this verse to their minds: *3 A voice cries out in the wilderness, “Prepare the way of Adonai, Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”* (Isaiah 40:3 TLV). In his chapter 3, Matthew also quotes this same verse. And, Luke adds more from Isaiah chapter 40: *5 “Every valley shall be filled up, and every mountain and hill brought low. The crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways made smooth, 6 and all humanity shall see the salvation of God,”* (Luke 3:5-6 TLV). This is a quote from Isaiah 40:3-5. All humanity, every human being, shall see the salvation of G-d, a direct reference to Yeshua, whose name means “ADONAI is salvation.” This was true in the 1<sup>st</sup> century and is still true today. Physically, anyone can “see Yeshua” today but many do not recognize that ADONAI’s salvation is in and through Him.

What is the connection between the actual Prophet Elijah and the Elijah figure prophesied to come? The *rabbis* believe that Malachi and Isaiah prophesied of an Elijah figure who would return because he did not die but was taken up in a whirlwind by ADONAI. Not accepting the writings of Yeshua’s disciples, they don’t recognize *Yochanan* and stop there. But we don’t. Before John was born, the angel Gabriel, speaking of the Messiah, told his father Zechariah: *17 “And he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers to the children and the disobedient ones to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready for Adonai a prepared people.”* (John 1:17 TLV). John would precede Yeshua in fulfilling the purpose of Elijah’s ministry. Luke 3 tells us that John began his ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the rule of Tiberius Caesar. That would have been the year 26 which is also believed to be the year of Yeshua’s immersion by John. John’s mission was the same as Elijah’s: to bring Israel back to faithful worship of G-d. Elijah continually exhorted the people to repent of their sins, to return to G-d, and to warn them of His judgment if they did not. John served with that same zeal for ADONAI as Elijah, condemning sin and urging the people of Judah to confess and repent of their sins in preparation for the appearance of the Messiah. Those who repented were immersed in the Jordan River as a sign of their *teshuvah*, their turning away from sin.

Who was the voice crying in the wilderness prophesied by Isaiah? It was *Yochanan*, John, the Elijah figure for the 1<sup>st</sup> century, who would come on the scene just before Yeshua revealed Himself to the people. Yeshua later confirmed to His disciples that the Elijah figure was John. *10 The disciples questioned Him, saying, “Why then do the Torah scholars say that Elijah must come first?”*

11 Yeshua replied, *“Indeed, Elijah is coming and will restore all things. 12 I tell you that Elijah already came; and they didn’t recognize him, but did to him whatever they wanted. In the same way, the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands.”* 13 *Then the disciples understood that He was speaking to them about John the Immerser.* (Matthew 17:10-13 TLV). (also Mark 9:11-13).

John was the Elijah figure who preceded Yeshua in His first coming, but Scripture indicates that there will be another appearance of an Elijah in the future who will precede Yeshua’s second coming. Through the prophet Malachi, ADONAI also said: 23 *“Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of Adonai. 24 He will turn the hearts of fathers to the children, and the hearts of children to their fathers—else I will come and strike the land with utter destruction.”* (Malachi 3:23-24 TLV). What is the “great and terrible day of ADONAI?” The Day of ADONAI, *Yom YHVH*, יום יהוה, is also spoken of by the Prophet Zephaniah: 14 *The great day of Adonai is near—near and coming very quickly! The sound of the day of Adonai is bitter—the shouting of the warrior is there. 15 That day is a day of wrath a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastating storm and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 a day of shofar and alarm against the fortified cities and against the high corner towers. 17 I will bring such distress upon mankind that they will walk like the blind—for they have sinned against Adonai. Their blood will be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. 18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to rescue them on the day of Adonai’s wrath. With the fire of His passion the entire earth will be consumed. For He will make a total, dreadful annihilation of all the inhabitants of the earth.”* (Zephaniah 1:14-18 TLV). The prophets indicate that this event is unprecedented and will affect the entire earth. The great and terrible day of ADONAI is a day of terrible destruction, His vengeance on the wicked of the present world. Yeshua told us what would immediately precede *Yom ADONAI* when He said: 29 *“But immediately after the trouble of those days, ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.’ 30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land will mourn, and they will see ‘the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven’ with power and great glory.”* (Matthew 24:29-30 TLV). Yeshua will return to receive us, His followers, before *Yom ADONAI*, the great and terrible day of G-d’s judgment. There will be no fear for those of us who have trusted in Yeshua. On *Yom ADONAI*, we will be in our resurrection bodies (1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17) accompanying our Messiah, who will act as ADONAI’s instrument of judgment upon the wicked. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century, that day was far off, but not so today. It is on the horizon, a judgment against all of the wickedness in the world. For us, it will be a joyful day because when the Day of the LORD comes, we will be with our Messiah and will not experience what the godless in the world will undergo.

It is a tradition at Passover to set a place for Elijah. In our *Beit Shalom Pesach Hagaddah*, we find: “In Jewish tradition, the Prophet Elijah is the



messenger of ADONAI appointed to herald the coming of the Messiah, when the Jewish people and all peoples throughout the world will be free. *Look, I will send to you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Adonai.* (Malachi 4:5 CJB).” Other Passover *haggdot* also quote these verses: 22 *“Remember the Torah of Moses My servant, whom I commanded at Horeb—statutes and ordinances for all Israel.* 23 *“Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of Adonai.* 24 *He will turn the hearts of fathers to the children, and the hearts of children to their fathers—else I will come and strike the land with utter destruction.”* (Malachi 3:22-24 TLV). Jews have been looking for Elijah for centuries, and today, we are looking and waiting with them for the Elijah figure for our time, the one who will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. The whole world is in desperate need of the return of our Messiah. There is also another level of meaning of the fathers and children. It’s about Jews and Gentiles. The Jews are the fathers of our faith. Right now, we have an ever-increasing amount of antisemitism over all the earth, a visible rejection of the fathers. Sadly, antisemitism is also within the Church as many there reject Israel as a nation. Yes, the coming Elijah will turn back our physical children to us, their fathers, and we fathers to our children, but just as importantly, he will also turn back our spiritual Fathers, the Jews, to us, their Gentile children and we, their Gentile children to them. Whether this coming Elijah figure is a physical man or a move of ADONAI’s Spirit, we don’t know. But, we need ADONAI to send him now to bring about the great revival, which we are sensing is near. The coming Elijah could be the key to a revival before the great and terrible day of ADONAI.

Regarding Zechariah and Elizabeth, Luke wrote: *6 Together they were righteous before Adonai, walking without fault in all His commandments and instructions.* (Luke 1:6 TLV). Today, most don’t understand or even believe that this is possible. How could they walk without fault in all His commandments and instructions? They did it by keeping the *Torah* as best they could and then repenting and asking forgiveness when they failed. Even we can be righteous before ADONAI today, walking without fault in all His commandments and instructions. It begins with acknowledging Yeshua’s death as payment for our sins and our commitment to faithfully serve Him. After that, to remain in a right relationship with Him, we must be obedient to the commandments, just as Zechariah and Elizabeth were, and to ask forgiveness when we fail. It is up to us to know what commandments are required today and then, to obey them. Following our salvation, we can “walk righteously in His commands.” It’s up to us to choose to obey and then to repent and ask forgiveness when we fail. Our repentance and continual attitude of seeking righteousness will cause ADONAI to recognize us as being righteous, just as Zechariah and Elizabeth were. *Shabbat shalom!*