



**Form Good Patterns for Life
(Accompanying teaching for the Torah portion Miketz)
by Moshe Schwab**

Names

Kefa – Peter

Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ in the Greek means to be smudged – anointed

Moshe – Moses

Shaul – Paul

Shlomo – Solomon

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)

Y'hudah – Judah

Yochanan – John

Yosef – Joseph

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets

Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible

Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah

Miketz – 10th Torah portion

Believers in God can struggle with giving God charge of their lives or forming godly spiritual patterns. Shaul tells not to destroy our lives over worldly matters. "Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers;" 2 Timothy 2:14 NKJV.

Is the driving motivation in your life divided? (When it matters, do we trust in God to come through or help us?)

There is often a struggle in life for us to take charge or do we let God take charge? Whether I am thinking about something that I need or something that God wants me to do, I sometimes need to stop what I am thinking and just trust in God. I trust that God will do better than what I can do. Rabbi Shaul tells us not to be anxious, but to talk to God about the situation or problem.

Just as a reminder; Shaul was a Jewish leader. When he identifies himself as a Jewish leader, the other leaders present don't argue that he isn't a Jewish leader, but they argue about the resurrection. It says in Acts 23:6-8, "But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, 'Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!' And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both."

I've heard people say that Shaul wasn't Jewish; it just isn't true. In fact, Shaul identifies himself in several places in the Bible as being Jewish. **He also says he keeps the Jewish laws in the Old Testament portion and believes in them.** Shaul said, "I worship the God of my fathers, **believing** all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. Acts 24:14-15 NKJV. He says he believes in them and he keeps God's commandments from the Old Testament portion. Again, he said he believes in them; so much for people saying

that he didn't. You'd better get your thinking turned around. Shaul also said, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." Romans 3:31 NKJV. Shaul emphatically says the laws of God in the Old Testament portion are NOT DONE AWAY WITH; They are "Certainly not" done away with.

Back to the topic. Shaul tells us not to be anxious. Philippians 4:3-7 NKJV says:

"My fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life. Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

We understand that Shaul is giving us some inspired advice. Have joy, be gentle, and pray instead of being anxious.

Notice also that Shaul refers to the book of life that Yeshua also talks about. Yeshua says, "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life;" Revelation 3:5 NKJV. Note how Yeshua says that we are to be faithful to God and overcome sin or we will be blotted out of the book of life. So, don't have a divided heart towards God. Ya'akov said in James "But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind;" James 1:6 NKJV. We are supposed to live in faith, live like God tells us to live, and trust in God.

What we do is the message of our life. Give a godly message by how you live.

Do you celebrate God's feasts? If you don't, what kind of message is that to others or to God? God said that these are His feasts. Leviticus 23:2 NKJV says, "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." So what makes people think they can dismiss God's feasts. People keep secular holidays. They don't decide not to keep them and tell their bosses they want to work.

There are a lot of messages we send to others when we don't keep God's commandments. I understand that your company doesn't like to give you days off for God's holidays and that can be an issue. We have to work in order to eat. What other messages do we give to others by our permissive attitudes. I try to make sure people know that I want to be a good person. Yet people would try to get me to sin. You need to be ready to let people know that you want to be a kind and caring person who does what is right.

1 Peter 4:3-5 NKJV talks about the attitudes of these evil people: "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead." There is nothing wrong with telling them that wrong behaviors bring pain and hurt others and themselves. Especially if they are flaunting their evil activities at you. God says they will be

judged for their behaviors. Let God judge them; don't react. If you do react, make sure you apologize and say God cares about you.

Is your glass filled with worldly things or the light and power of God?

We've all probably heard the expression, 'you are what you eat.' It means that you should eat healthy food. Having your glass filled with worldly things then means we are living on worldly things. Just like eating healthy food makes you healthy, having your life filled with the light and power of God makes you a healthy person spiritually.

Perhaps you think of these scriptures when you think of being a person of light; light often refers to a person of understanding.

Deuteronomy 4:5-8 NKJV:

Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for **this is your wisdom and your understanding** in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation **is a wise and understanding people.**' "For what great nation is there that has **God so near** to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has such **statutes and righteous judgments** as are in all this law which I set before you this day?

God's commandments are truly a light for our paths. God wants us to succeed so He gave us good statutes to live by. Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV, "You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is **right and good** in the sight of the LORD."

Shaul talks about keeping God's commandments in Ephesians 5:8-11 NKJV, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all **goodness, righteousness, and truth**), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." Don't sin; instead do what is right and good.

Since we understand that light refers to understanding, Shaul is actually referring to the Old Testament portion. Being a person of light means we are keeping God's commandments. We are not a people of darkness; namely, those who don't keep God's commandments. We live right (righteousness) and don't live with sinful patterns in our lives.

Glorify God through godly life patterns, and not worldly patterns of life and wrong beliefs or superstitious beliefs.

First of all, what does it mean to be godly? It means to keep God's commandments and imitate God's nature. For example, God is loving and caring, so being loving and caring should be our first line of thought instead of being defensive, selfish, and having values that differ from God's commandments. Keeping God's commandments is the most loving thing to

do because God is the creator and knows what is best for mankind.

"You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy;" Leviticus 19:2 NKJV.

"Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them;" Leviticus 20:7-8 NKJV.

"And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine;" Leviticus 20:26 NKJV.

We are to be holy like God is holy. One of the ways to do that is to keep God's commandments. If we don't keep God's commandments, that is like saying to God that we can live life without God. Think about it. If someone gave you some good advice and you decided not to follow it, you have decided that you don't need their advice.

We often live our lives through the patterns that we develop. If we think and develop worldly patterns or keep false doctrine our lives are worldly and devoid of God. In essence, we brainwash our minds to remove godly values. People who do not follow God are brainwashed into living without God. Titus 3:3 NKJV says, "For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." This sounds terrible doesn't it.

Yeshua said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin;" John 8:34 NKJV. Because we form patterns of behavior, when we do things the wrong way, we go back to doing those things over and over the wrong way. We actually become slaves to doing evil instead of doing good. I don't want to be foolish, deceived, and living in hate. It sounds like an awful way to live; what mindless person would want to live that way?

Don't brainwash your mind with evil.

Say that you are an auto mechanic and on all the cars you worked on, you tightened the fan belts too tight so that it broke the components connected to the belts (the generator and the water pump). You did it wrong so that every car you did this to ended up breaking down. That is like living your life wrong in sin. Instead of helping people, you were messing up their cars. Instead of leading people to live right, we are teaching them hurt and pain. We should want to do what is right; that's what makes sense. Shaul said in Romans 6:17-18 NKJV, "But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."

We used to be slaves to doing things the wrong way, but now we have formed good patterns in life where we do what is right. Righteousness means to live right. We change our patterns of life where we did wrong and now live right. In whatever we do, we become slaves to those behaviors; why not become a slave of doing what is right and bring goodness and blessing to this world?