

MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY

MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY

First Steps to Studying
God's Word



Faith Walker

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You, for reading this book and applying God’s Word to your life. ☺

Blessings in Yeshua,

Faith

*This book is dedicated to Shani, Brittany,
Rebecca, Chad, and Beth.*

*I pray that this book is a blessing to everyone who reads it,
and that God does amazing things in and through your
lives as you study and apply His Word.*

*“The LORD bless you, and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine on you,
And be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance on you,
And give you peace.”
~Numbers 6:24-26~*

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INTRODUCTION

God's Word is the "instruction manual" for life. As this acronym expresses it: *BIBLE: Basic Instruction Before Leaving Earth*.

Not only does the Bible teach us about God, our Creator, it teaches us about His expectations and plans for the Jewish people and for all of humanity. It teaches us about ourselves, our relationship with God and with each other. The Bible shows us the result of specific actions, based on spiritual laws, which are in effect in our world and universe. These laws are as real as the law of gravity.

God's Word will guide us to live lives that are pleasing in His sight, full of goodness and blessing, if we will read it, believe it and obey/apply it. This is not to say that life will be free from hardship or suffering, but a life that follows what is taught in God's Word will have peace and joy, even in hardship and suffering.

Whether you are a Jew or a Gentile, this book is written to help you investigate the riches of God's Word for yourself, and learn to apply it to your life. In doing so, you will begin to know God and the Messiah whom He sent to earth as the Saviour of all mankind, and you will begin to live an abundant life with the ultimate promise of eternal life. (*John 17:3*)

Throughout this book I will use the words "Bible," "Holy Scriptures," "Scriptures," "the Word" and "God's Word" interchangeably. They all refer to a collection of books and letters that were written over a time span of more than fifteen hundred years by forty different human authors. The authors came from different walks of life and backgrounds, but the thematic consistency that threads throughout the books is just one of the proofs that they were divinely inspired. Though men "penned" these books, the true Author is God.

The Bible includes the Old Testament (Tanakh) and the

New Testament (Brit HaChadasha in Hebrew.) These books contain a history of God's people – the Jews – and the birth, life and teachings of Yeshua HaMashiach.

Yeshua is the Hebrew name of the One known as Jesus. His Hebrew name (the name He went by) actually means "God Saves," or "Saviour," and HaMashiach means "the Messiah" in Hebrew, which is translated as "the Christ" in English. Messiah means "Anointed One." To be anointed means to pour or rub olive oil on someone to give honor, or to show that the person has been appointed to a special task. This is first seen in Scripture in the book of Exodus chapter 28, verses 40 and 41, when God commanded Moses:

"For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics; you shall also make sashes for them, and you shall make caps for them, for glory and for beauty. You shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him; and you shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests."

God's Word walks us through history; from creation through the end of time as we know it. As well as being historic books, God's Word contains prophecies written by prophets to teach God's commandments and laws, and to communicate God's plan about Israel and the Messiah to all people. Prophecies are predictions of future events, or the speaking of divine words (divine revelation) through human messengers (prophets) chosen by God to function as such.

In order to navigate through the Scriptures, when referring to certain passages, references are divided into chapters and verses. For example: Genesis 1:22 refers to the first chapter of Genesis, twenty-second verse. When you open any Bible you will see the corresponding numbers next to the Scripture passages. This makes finding passages very simple.

When you run across Scripture references in this book,

take the time to look them up in the Bible. It may take a while before you are familiar with the order of the books of the Bible and are able to find the references quickly, but be patient with yourself. Though our society teaches us that we must always be in a rush, there is no hurry when studying the Word of God. In fact, quite the opposite is true. Take your time to read the references. Think about them and about how they apply to your life. This is the way you'll get the most out of the time you spend reading the Word of God.

When you run across words that you're unfamiliar with, look them up in a dictionary. There are many online resources to use. I often use a web search to find the word I want to look up, followed by the word, "definition." This is a quick and easy way to learn the meaning of new words and concepts. There will no doubt be many new words for you to understand in order to fully grasp what the Bible teaches. Be patient, take your time and enjoy the journey of learning.

The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and is referred to by the Jewish people as the Tanakh (also Tenakh or Tanach) which is an acronym that uses the first letters in the three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Torah: The five books of Moses, also called the Chumash ("five part" in Hebrew) and Pentateuch ("five scrolls" in Greek).

The Torah includes the following books:

- Bereshit, or Genesis
- Shemot, or Exodus
- VaYikra, or Leviticus
- BaMidbar, or Numbers
- Devarim, or Deuteronomy

Nevi'im: "The prophets"

These books generally cover the period of time from when

the children of Israel entered the land of Israel until the Babylonian captivity (between 1400 BCE—586 BCE). A prophet is a person who is inspired and instructed by God to speak in His name to reveal God's will, or to announce future events. In the Jewish Scriptures Nevi'im is divided into two sections:

The Nevi'im Rishonim: "The former prophets"

Note: Melachim (I & II Kings) covers the same time period as most of the books of the later prophets, but it is included here because of its narrative style.

- Yehoshua, or Joshua
- Shoftim, or Judges
- Shmuel, or Samuel I and II
- Melachim, or Kings I and II

The Nevi'im Acharonim: "The later prophets"

- Yeshayahu, or Isaiah
- Yirmiyahu, or Jeremiah
- Yechezkel, or Ezekiel

The Trei Asar: "The twelve prophets"

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi

The books of the prophets are sometimes referred to as the Major Prophets (the larger books) and the Minor Prophets (the smaller books.) This reference has nothing to do with their importance, only the size of their writings.

Ketuvim: "Writings"

In the Jewish Scriptures these encompass all the remaining books. They are sometimes divided into categories such as "The Wisdom Books" of Job, Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs; "The Poetry Books" of Psalms, Lamentations and Song of Solomon;

and “The Historical Books” of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. It includes the “Sifrei Emet” or “Books of Truth.”

- Tehilim, or Psalms
- Mishlei, or Proverbs
- Iyov, or Job

The “Five Megilot” or “Five Scrolls”

- Shir HaShirim, or Song of Songs
- Rut, or Ruth
- Eichah, or Lamentations
- Kohelet, or Ecclesiastes
- Esther

And the “Other Writings”

- Daniel
- Ezra-Nehemiah
- Divrei HaYamim, or Chronicles I and II.

The New Testament, or Brit HaChadasha in Hebrew, was originally written in Greek, and consists of twenty-seven small books, which were originally letters. Collectively they are called the New Testament because they focus on the new covenant (testament) that was effected by the death and resurrection of the Messiah Yeshua (*Luke 22:20*).

Throughout Scripture, God talks about a coming Messiah. *Messiah* is the translation of the Hebrew word *Mashiach*, which has the same meaning as the English word *Christ*, which comes from the Greek word *Khristos*, meaning “anointed one” or “chosen one.”

Messiah’s given name is Yeshua. Yeshua is a Hebrew name that has been transliterated into Greek as Iesous (pronounced “ee-ay-sus”). The English “Jesus” comes from the Latin transliteration of this Greek name into the Latin Iesus. The name Yeshua (יֵשׁוּעַ) is similar to the noun form יְשׁוּעָה yshua (“salvation”) and to the verb form יוֹשִׁיעַ yoshia (“he will save”). All these forms of the Messiah’s name reveal Yeshua’s

God-given purpose on earth some two thousand years ago.

The Brit HaChadasha, the New Testament/New Covenant, both fulfills and contrasts the old covenant, the Tanakh (*II Corinthians 3:7-17*). The two beautifully weave together to support and confirm each other as being the entire Word of God, and the truth.

The names of the books of the New Testament are based on the names of the men who wrote the letters. All of these men were Jewish, except Luke. Following are their names in English and in Hebrew:

Matthew - Mattityahu

Mark

Luke

John - Yochanan

Paul - Sha'ul

James - Ya'akov

Peter - Kefa

Jude - Y'hudah

These men wrote under the inspiration of the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit), as evidenced by the timeless truths conveyed in their letters. Despite the wide diversity of themes, personalities, backgrounds and purposes, as a collection, these books weave a beautiful tapestry that embellish and affirm the truth of the Tanakh, while bringing to light the fulfillment of prophecies spoken of thousands of years prior.

The first four books in the New Testament are four different people's account of the life of Yeshua: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In a court of law, testimony is taken from two or more witnesses in order to corroborate the truth. I believe God had these four men tell their stories about Yeshua's life and death so that we could see and validate what we read as truth. These four books are known collectively as The Gos-

pels. “Gospel” comes from the Greek word *euangelion*, meaning “good news.” The first three of these books, Matthew, Mark and Luke, are known as the “synoptic gospels” because they are similar in form, outline, and contents. Synoptic is a term from the Greek *sunoptikos*, which means “seeing together” or “having a common view of.”

After The Gospels comes The Book of Acts, which was written by Luke, tracing the beginning and growth of the New Testament church, or congregation, which was the Body of believers in Messiah Yeshua. “Church” is the English word for the Greek word *ecclesia*, meaning “the called out assembly or community” made up of both Jews and Gentiles. In society today we identify the word “church” as a building. Biblically the term refers to a group of people.

Following The Book of Acts are letters written by Rav Shaul (the Apostle Paul) under the influence of the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit), which address specific problems and issues having to do with the life and expansion of the Church.

James, Peter, John, Jude and Timothy were the other authors of New Testament books. The truths they share are just as relevant to life today as they were some two thousand years ago, and therein lies more proof that the real Author of these books is God.

The last book of the Brit HaChadash is called Revelation, and it is the “revelation” or “unveiling” God gave to John while he was in exile on the Isle of Patmos. Just as Genesis is the book of beginnings, Revelation is a book about the end of time. It is a book of prophecy that unveils the character and ultimate redemptive plan of God.

Throughout the Brit HaChadasha (New Testament), there are many references to the Tanakh, further connecting the two as one book. In many Bibles, those passages will be written in all capital letters, identifying them as passages

from the Old Testament. The people who wrote the letters of the New Testament were well-versed in the Holy Scriptures of the Tanakh, and saw the fulfillment of prophecies from the Scriptures right before their very eyes.

Redemption is a theme that runs throughout the Word of God. It simply means “paying back something that is owed.” This is what God has done for us through the work of the Messiah, and what is chronicled throughout Scripture. God paid the ultimate price in order to restore relationship with us. In reading His Word, we see aspects of His character that cause us to love and worship Him, and desire to please Him with our lives. This is what Messianic Bible Study is all about; learning to study the Word of God so we can apply the wisdom and knowledge the Lord has shared with us, and in so doing, live lives that are pleasing to Him.

In this book, I will use the English names when referencing New Testament books. If you’re reading a version of the Bible such as the Complete Jewish Version, the Hebrew names of the books will be the ones you’ll be using more frequently. This is the reason I’ve listed the names in Hebrew *and* English in this introduction.

Many of us have never been taught about God’s Word, and now the task of studying it might seem overwhelming and confusing. We mustn’t expect that we will understand it all at once—but with persistent study, and the Holy Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) as our teacher (*John 14:26*), we will begin to delight in the things that God teaches us, as we make the effort (little by little) to learn the truths His Word contains.

Throughout our lives many of us have been taught ideas, concepts, life patterns, value systems and ideals that are not from the Word of God. They are based on man’s ideas, and therefore, may not necessarily be based on truth. Because of this, they don’t lead to living lives of peace and contentment. The Scriptures, however, do contain truth, so when we repent

(turn away from old lifestyles, ideas and life patterns and choose to apply God's Word to our thoughts and lives) we find that our lives are filled with health, goodness, peace and joy (*Exodus 15:26; Romans 14:17*). What a fabulous reason for making a serious effort to study God's Word and apply it to our lives!

If we have lived our lives with thought patterns that are not based on truth, when we start to read the Bible it may seem very foreign to us, and quite opposite of the things we have believed to be true our entire lives. In fact, many of the truths in the Kingdom of God, which is what is taught and revealed through God's Word, *are* the exact opposite of what the world thinks to be true. For example, the Bible teaches that it is better to give than to receive (*Acts 20:35*), and that the greatest among us are those who are willing to be servants (*Matthew 23:11*). Be willing to have an open mind, and with humility be willing to learn new truths. Have faith in God! He is all-knowing, all-powerful and the true King of the universe, who wants you to know Him and know the truth. You can trust Him and you can trust that His Word is true!

God is all-knowing and all-powerful. He is eternal; "without beginning or end." Because of this, the Bible can be read in different ways and applied to different people. For example, the words written to the children of Israel in the prophet Jeremiah's day are historically specific to them, but the promises and warnings apply to us as well. Also, two people may read the same passage of Scripture and receive different, yet equally valid instruction and revelation. This is fine as long as it lines up with what the Word of God says as a whole; God never contradicts Himself.

Besides teaching us how to relate to God, the Bible teaches us how to relate to one another. The Word of God tells us how to act and how not to act. Our obedience or disobedience to these instructions will have a direct effect on the outcome

of our lives. This is why many people call the Bible “the instruction manual for life.” If we do what it instructs, our lives will be truly successful. If, on the other hand, we ignore its teachings and decide to live life our own way, or live our lives based on the dictates of the world, the outcome will be disastrous. The consequences will reflect not only in our life here on earth, but in our eternal life as well. We’ll learn more about this as we study God’s Word in this book.

The Bible teaches about God’s calling on the nation of Israel and all believers in Messiah. Not only does the Bible teach us about national callings and responsibilities, it is also a way for God to communicate directly to us regarding His plans for our individual lives (*Jeremiah 29:11-14; Hebrews 4:1-12*).

The Bible is much more than any instruction manual you’ve ever read before, though. Look at it like a means through which you get spiritual nourishment. That’s really what it is. Through it God gives us food for our souls and our spirits. Just as it’s important to eat food each day for physical nourishment, growth and strength, it’s equally important to eat “food” for spiritual nourishment. And the great thing about the “food” you get from God’s Word is that you can never eat too much of it. In fact, the more you read God’s Word, the stronger you become.

Not only is the Bible spiritual “food,” it’s also a powerful weapon for us to use. When read, meditated on, memorized and spoken out loud, it supernaturally combats depression, uncertainty, failure, wrong thoughts and desires, and all kinds of evil.

It’s a great idea to have a journal/notebook next to you when reading God’s Word. In it you can write down Scripture passages that are especially meaningful to you. You can write down things that God reveals to you as you read His Word. And, you can also use it to write out your own pray-

ers, as well as God's answers to those prayers. When you do this, studying the Bible becomes a beautiful time of communion with God. It's a time where you can focus your heart and mind on your loving Creator and learn about Him and His desires for your life. Journaling while reading the Bible also helps you be attentive to "listening" for God's voice while you're reading His Word. As you're reading, one passage of Scripture might stand out to you more than others. This may indicate that the Lord wants to speak to you through that particular passage. When this happens, slow down, "chew" on the words, and ask God to reveal to you what He wants to show you. Be ready for Him to begin to change you, and change your life as a result of the things He's showing you in His Word. God speaks in a still, small voice in the depth of your being (*1 Kings 19:9-12*). Be ready to hear Him, but be very careful to confirm what you think God is saying, with what is written in the Scriptures. God never contradicts Himself—I cannot say that too often!

I want to take a minute and address the topic of Bible translations. Because the Bible was written in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic, and most of us speak English as our primary language, the Bible has been translated into English by numerous people and groups of scholars. You can find these translations in book stores and online. These translations have various names such as: The New American Standard Bible; The Amplified Bible; Complete Jewish Bible; English Standard Version, the list goes on and on. The ones I've mentioned are some of my favorites, and in time, you, too, will have your favorites. Don't be afraid to read different versions of the Scriptures. Different versions simply use different words in the attempt to communicate the text of the original languages.

When I began reading the Bible I chose the version used by the leader of the congregation I was attending. One of the

keys to help you learn the Bible is to attend a weekly congregational meeting where you can be taught the Word of God. And as I did, it's a good idea to ask the teacher at the congregation what version of the Bible he or she uses, and begin your studies with that version.

No matter what version of the Bible you use, studying the Word of God is not meant to be static or purely "routine." Quite the opposite, the Word of God is living and active (*Hebrews 4:12*), and as time goes on, your studies can take on different dimensions when approached from different angles. For example, at one time you may spend time reading God's Word to learn about history. At another time you may read the same books with the intent of learning more about God Himself, or to look for God's assistance in helping you overcome difficulties in your life. Any of these aims are valuable to your study of the Bible and in applying it to your life. It's amazing to see the beauty and uniqueness of God's Word in this regard. It is infinite and multi-dimensional. Even when reading the same Scripture passage over and over, each time you read it God may reveal something new to you. Because of this, re-reading the Scriptures is never a waste of time.

Here's just one way you can approach studying the Bible: in your Bible study each day, take some time to look for one aspect of who God is in the passage you're reading. Write out one sentence of praise to Him and one sentence of thanks to Him, and pray for Him to show you His faithfulness today. Use your journal to write out the Scripture passage, the sentences, and God's answer to your prayer.

No matter how you approach your time of studying the Word of God, most importantly, come with expectation and excitement that God will meet you right where you are. He's all-knowing, all-seeing and knows exactly what you need today! You will find this out for yourself as you begin to open up His Word.

The personal application questions in this book are asked with the intention of drawing your attention to truths taught in the Word of God, and to encourage you think about how they apply to your life. Be open and honest with yourself and look to the Lord's Spirit to help you answer the questions. You may find that the Bible challenges you to think very differently about things than you ever have before. As I've already said, the truths of the Kingdom of God are very often the exact opposite from those we've been taught to believe. When answering the questions, remember that there are no wrong answers. Just be honest and try to use the words of the Scriptures in your answers where applicable. You might find that you come up with different answers when sitting down to re-study a particular Scripture passage. This is okay, and it's part of the infinite nature of the Word of God, and our growth in the knowledge of it. I hope you're getting excited about beginning your journey into the Word of God—let's dive in and expect God to do great things through the process!

It's wise to begin every time of Bible study with a prayer. Prayer is simply talking and listening to God. Here's a sample prayer:

Father God, I pray that Your Spirit, Your Ruach, would come and open my heart to the truth. Teach me and guide me as I read Your Word today. Help me apply what I read to my life, and help me know You more, and understand Your ways in the process. Fill my life with health and goodness as I seek to follow Your commandments. In Yeshua's name I pray, Amen.

Old Testament (Tanakh)

39 Books

People divide the Tanakh differently – Here is one example:

History

17 Books
(English/Hebrew)

Poetry

5 Books
(English/Hebrew)

Prophecy

17 Books
(English/Hebrew)

Law (Torah)

Genesis - B'reshet
Exodus - Sh'mot
Leviticus - Vayikra
Numbers - B'midbar
Deuteronomy -
D'varim

Job - Iyov

Psalms - Tehillim

Proverbs - Mishlei

Ecclesiastes - Ko-
helet

Song of Solomon -
Shir-HaShirim

Major Prophets

Isaiah - Yehsa'yahu

Jeremiah - Yirmeya-
hu

Lamentations -

Eikhah

Ezekiel - Yechezk'el

Daniel - Dani'el

History

Joshua - Y'hoshua

Judges - Shoftim

Ruth - Rut

1 Samuel - Sh'mu'el

Alef

2 Samuel - Sh'mu'el

Bet

1 Kings - M'lakhim Alef

2 Kings - M'lakhim Bet

1 Chronicles - Divrei-

HaYamim Alef

2 Chronicles - Divrei-

HaYamim Bet

Ezra - Ezra

Nehemiah - Neche-
myah

Esther - Ester

Minor Prophets

Hosea - Hoshea

Joel - Yo'el

Amos - 'Amos

Obadiah - Ovadyah

Jonah - Yonah

Micah - Mikhah

Nahum - Nachum

Habakkuk - Havakuk

Zephaniah -

Tz'fanyah

Haggai - Hagai

Zechariah -

Z'kharyah

Malachi - Mal'akhi

New Testament (Brit HaChadasha)
27 Books

History

5 Books
(English/Hebrew)

Teaching

21 Books

Prophecy

1 Book

Gospels

Matthew - Mattityahu
Mark
Luke
John - Yochanan

Acts

Paul (Shaul's)

Letters

Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon

Revelation

General Letters

Hebrews
James - Ya'akov
1 Peter - 1 Kefa
2 Peter - 2 Kefa
1 John - 1 Yochanan
2 John - 2 Yochanan
3 John - 3 Yochanan
Jude - Y'hudah

The Old Testament is the New Concealed while the New Testament is the Old Revealed.

MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY

Hebrew Pronunciations:

English Translation	Hebrew Pronunciation		Examples:
im	eem	Denotes plural	El = God Elohim - The name of God (The Creator) pronounced Eloheem proves the plurality of God
a	uh		Abraham - uhvruhum
i	ee		seen
o	ohé not owe		(soft "o" sound like in the words orange & or)
e	eh		Like in the word "get"
u	oo		room
th	t		i.e. "Ruth" said, "Root"
b	B or v		You have to see the word written in Hebrew to know if the bet is a bet (b) or a vet (v), by the presence of the dot (bet), or lack thereof (vet).
ch; kh			Guttural Hebrew letter "Chet"
aim	Uheem		Ephraim – efruyeem; Ai=uhee
aa	uhuh		Baal – buhuhl; Canaan - cnuhuhn
j	y		Joel - Yoehl



GOD KNOWS YOU AND HAS A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

Lord, as I read Your Word today, teach me about You and about the plan that You have for my life. In Yeshua's name I pray. Amen

Psalm 139

- 1 O LORD, You have searched me and known me.*
- 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar.*
- 3 You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways.*
- 4 Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O LORD, You know it all.*
- 5 You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me.*
- 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain to it.*
- 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?*
- 8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.*
- 9 If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,*
- 10 Even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me.*
- 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night,"*
- 12 Even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.*
- 13 For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb.*
- 14 I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well.*
- 15 My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret,*

- and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;*
- 16 *Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.*
- 17 *How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them!*
- 18 *If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You.*
- 19 *O that You would slay the wicked, O God; depart from me, therefore, men of bloodshed.*
- 20 *For they speak against You wickedly, and Your enemies take Your name in vain.*
- 21 *Do I not hate those who hate You, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You?*
- 22 *I hate them with the utmost hatred; they have become my enemies.*
- 23 *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts;*
- 24 *And see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.*

Personal Application:

List 3 things you've learned about God from Psalm 139

List 3 things you can learn about yourself from Psalm 139

List 3 things (enemies) that you would like God to remove from your life. What part can you play in seeing God remove these things from your life?



GOD MAKES COVENANTS

Promises made by God with humanity

Abba (Father), You have spoken to our ancestors and have made covenants with them. Show me what this means to me in my life. Thank You that Your covenants help me trust You, and because of them I can trust Your Word. Thank You for being a God who makes and keeps covenants with Your people. In Yeshua's Name, Amen.

A covenant is a promise to do or not do something specified. There are two types of covenants in Scripture. First, there are conditional covenants that guarantee God will do His part when humans do what is required of them. Secondly, there are unconditional covenants that are only dependent on God's power and sovereignty for their fulfillment.

Covenants are an important concept in Scripture. For an example that is well-known in Judaism: God made a covenant with Abraham that He would bless his descendents and make them more numerous than the stars. God made history-making covenants with Moses and David as well. Suffice it to say, God is a God who makes covenants.

Jeremiah 31

- 1 *"At that time," declares the LORD, "I will be the **God of all the families of Israel**, and they shall be My people."*
- 2 *Thus says **the LORD**, "The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness – Israel, when it went to find its rest."*
- 3 *The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness."*
- 4 *"Again I will build you and you will be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel!
Again you will take up your tambourines, and go forth to the*

dances of the merry-makers.

- 5 *"Again you will plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria; the planters will plant and will enjoy them.*
- 6 *"For there will be a day when watchmen on the hills of Ephraim call out, 'Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to **the LORD our God.**'"*
- 7 *For thus says the LORD, "Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise and say, 'O LORD, save Your people, the remnant of Israel.'*
- 8 *"Behold, I am bringing them from the north country, and I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and she who is in labor with child, together; a great company, they will return here.*
- 9 *"With weeping they will come, and by supplication I will lead them; I will make them walk by streams of waters, on a straight path in which they will not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn."*
- 10 *Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare in the coastlands afar off, and say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock."*
- 11 *For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and redeemed him from the hand of him who was stronger than he.*
- 12 *"They will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion, and they will be radiant over the bounty of the LORD – over the grain and the new wine and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; and their life will be like a watered garden, and they will never languish again.*
- 13 *"Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old, together, for I will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and give them joy for their sorrow.*
- 14 *"I will fill the soul of the priests with abundance, and My people will be satisfied with My goodness," declares the LORD.*

- 15 *Thus says the LORD, "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more."*
- 16 *Thus says the LORD, "Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; for your work will be rewarded," declares the LORD, "And they will return from the land of the enemy."*
- 17 *"There is hope for your future," declares the LORD, "And your children will return to their own territory."*
- 18 *"I have surely heard Ephraim grieving, 'You have chastised me, and I was chastised, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for You are **the LORD my God**."*
- 19 *'For after I turned back, I repented; and after I was instructed, I smote on my thigh; I was ashamed and also humiliated because I bore the reproach of my youth.'*
- 20 *"Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a delightful child? Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him, I certainly still remember him; therefore My heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him," declares the LORD.*
- 21 *"Set up for yourself roadmarks, place for yourself guideposts; direct your mind to the highway, the way by which you went return, O virgin of Israel, return to these your cities."*
- 22 *"How long will you go here and there, O faithless daughter? For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth – a woman will encompass a man."*
- 23 *Thus says **the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel**, "Once again they will speak this word in the land of Judah and in its cities when I restore their fortunes, 'The LORD bless you, O abode of righteousness, O holy hill!'"*
- 24 *"Judah and all its cities will dwell together in it, the farmer and they who go about with flocks."*
- 25 *"For I satisfy the weary ones and refresh everyone who languishes."*
- 26 *At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.*

A New Covenant

- 27 *"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast.*
- 28 *"As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant," declares the LORD.*
- 29 *"In those days they will not say again, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.'*
- 30 *"But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.*
- 31 *"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,*
- 32 *Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a **husband** to them," declares the LORD.*
- 33 *"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God and they shall be My people.*
- 34 *"They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*
- 35 *Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; **the LORD of hosts** is His name:*
- 36 *"If this fixed order departs from before Me," declares the LORD, "Then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before Me forever."*
- 37 *Thus says the LORD, "If the heavens above can be measured*

and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done," declares the LORD.

38 *"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the city will be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.*

39 *"The measuring line will go out farther straight ahead to the hill Gareb; then it will turn to Goah.*

40 *"And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD; it will not be plucked up or overthrown anymore forever."*

Personal Application:

With what quality (attribute) does God draw us to Himself?
(see v.3)

How do we see the prophecy in verse 8 unfolding before our very eyes in this day and age?

MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY

List the names that are given to God in this chapter.

List all the things in this chapter that God promises to do.

MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY

Describe the New Covenant that God promises to make with His people.

Why do you think God made a New Covenant?

What does verse 37 say to you?