

Triennial Torah Study – 4th Year 2610/2013

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We continue this weekend with our regular Triennial Torah reading which can be found at https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf

Gen 7	Josh 16-18	Ps 13-17	Mat 10
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The Deluge Begins (Genesis 7)

God gave Noah instructions to build a large ship, capable of housing himself, his family, a pair of every unclean animal and seven pairs of every clean animal. The Hebrew of Genesis 7:2 is literally “seven [and] seven” and the phrase is followed by “a male and his female.” Incidentally, this passage proves that the distinction between clean and unclean animals came long before the Sinai Covenant at the time of Moses. Only clean animals could be eaten by people or sacrificed to God. And thus we see a compelling reason that God instructed that more of the clean animals be taken on the ark than the unclean—perhaps in addition to the fact that the clean animals are often prey for the predators and any ecosystem needs much more prey than predators to persist.

Of course, atheists, unbelievers and scholars have scoffed at the idea that the account of the ark is true, claiming that such a ship would need to be of gargantuan proportions, far beyond what is recorded in Genesis or what was possible for the ancients to accomplish. But their criticism rests on some very questionable assumptions.

The critics frequently state that the number of animals aboard the ark would be in the scores of thousands if two of each were freighted. But this assumes that the biblical kinds are equivalent to scientific species. This is not necessarily the case. Biblical kinds appear to be distinct breeding groups, but scientific species can often interbreed—showing that multiple interbreeding species could perhaps make up a single kind. It may be that a biblical kind would be closer to a scientific genus, thereby dramatically reducing the number of required animals. It is a well-known fact that all modern dog varieties could be produced from one pair of “generic” dog by the application of selective breeding principles, from the diminutive Chihuahua to the imposing Saint Bernard. Moreover, the objection also fails to consider that the vast majority of land-bound animals are insects, most of which would require only a few square millimeters of space. Furthermore, the average-sized land animal would require only a cubic foot and a half of space. Suffice it to say here that many studies have concluded that a ship the size and design of the ark would be capable of containing the required animals and still have a great amount of space left for storage and living quarters.

The Deluge began in the 600th year of Noah’s life, the year also in which Methuselah died. The Bible records that it rained for 40 days and 40 nights, the “windows of heaven” being opened (which we’ll see more about in our reading of Genesis 9). But it is also recorded that “all the fountains of the great deep were broken up” (7:11). This refers to subterranean aquifers which were emptied, perhaps by tectonic up-thrusting. A common critical objection raised against the story of the Flood is that there simply was not enough water required to cover the

mountains, as required by verse 19. But this objection assumes that the topography of the earth today is what was present in Noah's day. Scripture, however, seems to indicate that this may not have been so. For example, Genesis 1:9 states that the waters of the earth (i.e., seas) were gathered into one place. It also seems to indicate that the land was one huge mass in its own place. Today, however, we see the land masses of the earth scattered about its surface, so that the seas are not literally in one place. It may be that some elements of the current topography of the earth have been altered since the time of Adam as the result of tremendous geologic upheaval at the time of the Flood or since.

Territory of Ephraim and Manasseh (Joshua 16-17)

Ephraim was given the next allotment of land, north of Jerusalem in the southern part of what will later be the Kingdom of Israel. Cities in their territory included Bethel in the south, Shiloh in the middle, and Shechem in the north.

Manasseh received the land just north of Ephraim, which together formed the lot for Joseph. It was actually adjacent to the other half of their territory east of the Jordan, which effectively put the river in the midst of their land instead of on the border. Cities included Tirzah (used as a capital city of the northern kingdom, see 1 Kings 15:33), Megiddo (see 2 Kings 23:29; Revelation 16:16), Endor (1 Samuel 28:7), and Shunem (2 Kings 4:8).

When the tribe of Joseph complained that they thought they should have more land, Joshua had a simple solution—conquer the northern parts still occupied by the Canaanites. They fell back into their more fearful attitudes, but Joshua reminded them that since they were such a great people in need of more land, they should have no trouble (Joshua 17:14-18).

It is interesting to note the amount of land occupied by Ephraim and Manasseh in the Promised Land. Manasseh had much more than Ephraim, particularly when we consider the area east of the Jordan. Yet the greater national blessings had been prophesied to fall upon Ephraim (see Genesis 48). How do we reconcile this? Simple. The prophecies regarding Ephraim and Manasseh were not fulfilled in the land of Canaan. They would be fulfilled much later, following Israelite migrations to future settlements in Northwest Europe and beyond. In later world history, while Manasseh, as the United States of America, will occupy a much larger country, Ephraim, as the British Empire, will rule more territory than any other people ever has.

Benjamin's Territory (Joshua 18)

Now that Ephraim's territory has been assigned, Joshua (an Ephraimite) and the children of Israel relocate the tabernacle and central gathering point from Gilgal to Shiloh, some 15-20 miles to the northwest, in the midst of the new land of Ephraim. In verse 5, Joshua points out that Judah has the territory in the south, conquered in chapter 10, and Joseph the northern territory, conquered in chapter 11. While we think of this territory and these tribes as being divided when the monarchy splits, in fact, the Bible records they always maintained a sort of independence from one another. Even during the united monarchy, Saul and David had to deal with the two factions (compare 1 Samuel 11:8; 17:52; 18:16; 2 Samuel 2:10; 3:9-10; 5:5; 19:9-43; 20:1-22).

The remainder of the land is apportioned out at Shiloh to the remaining seven tribes based on the results of a land survey conducted by three members of each tribe. Seven parcels are described, and the lots cast to determine where God wanted each tribe located. The first parcel went to Benjamin. A narrow strip of land sandwiched between Ephraim and Judah, it became a very significant piece of real estate. Jerusalem was on the south, right next to the border with Judah. North of there was Gibeah, where Saul would have his home, and Ramah where Samuel would live, and Mizpeh and Gibeon. Even Jericho was part of Benjamin's territory. Bethel

is also listed, and was at least a border town with the territory of the Ephraimites, who conquered it in Judges 1:22-26 and kept it when the land was divided.

Psalm 13. In the throes of anxiety over a situation that could spell death for David, he asks God four times how long He will refrain from intervening to help (verses 1-2). The question “How long shall I take counsel in my soul...?” (verse 2) could also be phrased as “How long must I wrestle with my thoughts...?” (NIV).

David appeals to God’s honor, for his death would mean to his enemies either that David was not a legitimate servant of God contrary to God’s own testimony or that God was unable to save Him. “The enemies’ rejoicing [over David’s fall] would be intolerable because it would be aimed in part against God in whom the psalmist has trusted (35:19)” (Nelson Study Bible, note on 13:4).

In verse 5 we come to a turning point. It appears that God has now granted David a proper perspective. He thus ends the psalm confidently by focusing on God’s mercy (hesed)—His covenant faithfulness, His un failing love—remembering God’s goodness to Him in the past (verse 6).

Psalm 14, of which Psalm 53 is a somewhat revised duplicate, is a lament about the foolishness of “practical atheism.” The fool (nabal, wicked, impious person) convinces himself, “There is no God” (14:1)—or at least no God who would deign to impact his life. Determining the concept of God to be essentially irrelevant, the fool “intentionally flouts his independence from God and his commandments” (Expositor’s Bible Commentary, note on verse 1).

The Zondervan NIV Study Bible comments on Psalm 14: “This psalm brings to closure the collection of prayers that began with Ps 3.... Five psalms (and 64 Hebrew poetic lines) after Ps 8’s surprising evocation of humanity’s ‘glory and honor’ (8:5), this psalm highlights their disgrace.... In this it serves as a counterpoint to that earlier recollection of humanity’s high dignity and thereby exposes more sharply the depth of their disgrace—from which the petitioners in this and the preceding psalms have suffered.”

While fools go about denying God’s existence, He looks down on humanity, assessing its wickedness (14:2). David says that God has found everyone corrupt (verses 1-3). The apostle Paul will quote this verdict in Romans 3:10-12. It is not clear if David intends to include in this indictment those he refers to as “the generation of the righteous” (verse 5). No doubt he realizes that they were not righteous to begin with but had needed to come to God in repentance. Paul’s use of this passage is to show that all are guilty of sin and in need of God’s grace. Yet those who respond in faith become the godly in contrast to the godless hosts of mankind.

Eventually the wicked of every age who refuse to repent will face the consequences of their foolishness. “There,” at a specific time of judgment, they will greatly fear (verse 5). And at that time, God’s people, those who repent of their wayward human nature, will be saved (verses 6-7).

“Preserve Me, O God, for in You I Put My Trust” (Psalms 15-17)

Psalm 15 begins a new group of psalms (15-24). As the Zondervan NIV Study Bible notes, “Ps 15 and its distinctive counterpart, Ps 24, frame a cluster of psalms that have been arranged in a concentric pattern with Ps 19 serving as the hinge.... [There are] thematic links between Ps 16 and 23, between Ps 17 and 22, and between Ps 18 and 20-21.... The framing psalms (15; 24) are thematically linked by their evocation of the high majesty of God and their insistence on moral purity ‘without {which} no one will see the Lord’ (Heb 12:14). At the center, Ps 19 uniquely combines a celebration of the divine majesty as displayed in the creation and an exposition of how moral purity is attained through God’s law, forgiveness and shepherding care. Together, these three psalms (15; 19; 24) provide instructive words concerning the petitioners heard in the enclosed psalms, offer a counterpoint to Ps 14, and reinforce the instruction of Ps 1.”

Psalm 15 identifies some of the important requirements for someone coming into God’s presence. The psalm brings to mind pilgrims making their way to Jerusalem for the annual worship festivals. “As the pilgrims approached Jerusalem—the city of God, where His ‘sanctuary’ was located on the ‘holy hill’—they had to examine themselves before entering the courts of God’s sanctuary” (Expositor’s Bible Commentary, note on verse 1).

In a larger sense, the psalm presents a number of points of examination for anyone who wants to be in God’s presence. Such an individual 1) follows what is right as a general way of life, 2) obeys God’s commandments, 3) speaks truthfully, 4) doesn’t make spiteful remarks about others, 5) doesn’t intentionally hurt others, 6) doesn’t spread false accusations against others; 7) shuns the wicked and their ways, 8) honors godly people, 9) keeps promises even when it hurts, 10) doesn’t take advantage of those in need, 11) doesn’t act against innocent people for gain.

The figure surely extends to the future temple of God in His Kingdom. Of course, just trying to follow these points will not gain us access to God through entrance into His Presence and Kingdom—because no one is innocent and no one can succeed in this effort on his own. God imputes true righteousness to those “who believe in Him who raised up Yeshua from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification” (Romans 4: 24-25). For those who are so justified, the points of Psalm 15 constitute one of many “lists” of right things to practice as part of building on a strong foundation (Matthew 7:24-25)—so that they “will never be shaken” (Psalm 15:5, NIV).

Psalm 16 is referred to in its superscription as a mikhtam. “The term remains unexplained, though it always stands in the superscription of Davidic prayers occasioned by great danger (see Ps 56-60)” (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, note on Psalm 16). The Septuagint renders the word as the Greek *stelographa*, meaning “an inscription on a slab.” Mikhtam is possibly related to the similar-sounding word *mikhtav*, meaning “writing” in Isaiah 38:9. Perhaps these particular psalms were originally written not as songs but as poems.

David begins Psalm 16 with a petition for protection and deliverance to God in whom he has placed his trust (verse 1). David then reflects in verses 2-3 on the basis on which God hears him: 1) he has confessed God as the Lord of his life; 2) he recognizes that whatever good he has comes only from God and not from himself; and 3) he honors and takes joy in the “saints” or “holy ones”—the other followers of the true God.

David thinks next about the sorrows men bring on themselves when they chase after false gods (verse 4). Indeed, the religions of the cultures surrounding Israel in his day included some obvious examples of this. “If he had chosen the god Moloch of the Canaanites, for example, he would have had to sacrifice one of his babies to that god (Lev. 20:2). If he had gone to live in Carthage, and had adopted its religion, he would have had to participate in human sacrifice. Obviously he shrank in horror from the very idea of both practices” (Knight,

Psalms, comments on Psalm 16:1-11). Of course, David likely meant much more than this. False religion has spawned many wrong concepts and practices that lead mankind away from true happiness.

David then addresses God again, saying, “You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot” (verse 5). “The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places” (verse 6). Several words here recall the apportioning of the Promised Land to Israel: “chosen portion,” “inheritance,” “lot,” “boundary lines.” The Nelson Study Bible comments that “David had an ancestral inheritance in the land. As king, he also had extensive royal holdings. But he realized that no inheritance was greater than his relationship with Almighty God” (note on verses 5-8).

In verse 10, where the NKJV has “You will not leave my soul in Sheol,” the NIV has “You will not abandon me to the grave.” This could be understood as meaning either that God will not allow David to go to the grave in his present circumstances or that, even if David dies, God will resurrect him from the grave. The latter seems to be intended by what follows: “Nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption” or, as the NIV translates it, “decay.” Yet this reference to the Holy One was in fact a prophecy of the Messiah. “If this could be said of David—and of all those godly Israelites who made David’s prayer their own—how much more of David’s promised Son! So Peter quotes vv. 8-11 and declares that with these words David prophesied of Christ and his resurrection (Ac 2:25-28...)” (Zondervan, note on Psalm 16:9-11). Indeed, Jesus is more exactly meant by these verses because, unlike David, He was resurrected before His body started to decay. As the apostle Paul explained in Acts 13:35-36: “Therefore He also says in another Psalm: ‘You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.’ For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption; but He whom God raised up saw no corruption.”

David concludes this psalm by expressing confidence that God will show him the way to eternal life, the “path of life” in God’s presence (verse 11), which he describes as full of joy and pleasure forever.

Psalm 17. David calls for God’s attention and vindication. His is a “just cause,” and he knows that God is aware of his innocence (verses 1-3). Yet we should recognize that David is not at all prideful over his obedience to God, as he realizes the need for God’s help to continue in His ways (verse 5). David bases his request for vindication on God’s “lovingkindness” (hesed)—His covenant loyalty, whereby He is faithful to save those who trust in Him (verse 7).

David’s request that God keep him as the “apple of Your eye” (verse 8) makes use of an expression also found in Deuteronomy 32:10, Proverbs 7:2 and Zechariah 2:8. This phrase poetically depicts the sensitivity of the pupil (apple) of one’s eye and portrays God as focused on and very attentive to His people. Interestingly, “in Old English the pupil of the eye was called a ‘mannikin,’ meaning ‘little man,’ because the pupil gave back the reflection of a grown man as a little man. So too with the Hebrew, for it too means ‘little man,’ or even ‘dear little man’” (Knight, Psalms, comments on Psalm 17:1-15).

David’s desire that God hide him “under the shadow of Your wings” (verse 8) pictures the protection a mother hen provides her chicks. It also portrays an intimate relationship with God (see the Bible Reading Program comments on Ruth 3). David pictures his enemies, on the other hand, as young lions, “lurking in secret places,” eager to strike (verses 11-12). Their having “fat hearts” in verse 10 speaks of “their greedy, self-loving, and insensitive nature” (Expositor’s Bible Commentary, note on verses 10-12)—their “callous hearts” (NIV).

Commentators are not clear on the correct translation of the second half of verse 14. Where the first half is clearly talking about the worldly people who receive their portion in this life, it is not clear whether the second half is still speaking of these (as in the NKJV) or if the reference changes to the godly (as in the NIV). Related to this is the question over whether the phrase translated "hidden treasure" in the NKJV denotes something positive or negative. If negative, the righteous could not be meant. If positive, either the righteous or the wicked could be meant. The evidence seems to favor the understanding that the meaning is positive and that worldly people are meant. These are content to amass possessions and leave them to their children. Their sights are set on nothing higher than what falls to them in this life.

David in contrast looks to the far future for his ultimate reward. His reflection here on the resurrection, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness" (verse 15) reminds us of the apostle John's wonderful prophetic declaration concerning our awesome destiny, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2).

Matthew 10

10:1 Disciples/Apostles

These men became emissaries on behalf of the Messiah and in the power of Messiah. The miracles they were able to perform (as Yeshua did) were continued evidence that the offer of the Kingdom of God was being offered.

One of the little mentioned facts about Yeshua, is that He was able to attract followers from all of the major religious groups within Judaism, many of whom were usually at odds with each other. This included Essene types such as Peter and Andrew (who were disciples of John), Zealots (such as Simon and Judas?), and "outcasts" such as Matthew, who was an tax collector working for Rome. Pharisees were also a part of his following as seen by Paul, Nicodemus and those mentioned in Acts 15 and Luke 13.

10:1 ... power against unclean spirits

The power against demons was, and remains, directly related to the advancement of God's kingdom. Though it may be possible to "cast out" demons even today, one must carefully consider the root, and ultimate result, of this activity. As Yeshua said earlier, not all those casting out demons in His name, would be recognized by Him (Matthew 7:15-27).

The criteria to judge these things by is this: What is being promoted; Torah-observant faith in Yeshua or some anti-Torah system of belief that says it is of God? The former advances the Kingdom, the latter is not the faith God established, and therefore is of darkness, not light. Even though it may completely have the appearance of light, it is not the gospel of the true Yeshua (2 Corinthians, chapter 11).

10:1 ... unclean spirits

What's with all this "demonic" activity in the four Gospels? There are several specific periods in history where a rise in demonic activity occurred or will occur. Each of these coincides with a "birth" of someone (or something) very significant. Each period is also a time of God causing a great "spiritual awakening."

They are as follows:

The birth of Abraham: In chapter eight of the book of Jasher (1) an account is given of the birth of Abraham. Here we find Nimrod, who was ruling the known world, learning from his astrologers about the birth of a child born to Terah who would usurp him and whose descendants would possess all the earth. Their attempts to kill the baby Abraham are thwarted by God.

The birth of Moses: In the beginning of the book of Exodus, a new Pharaoh feels threatened by the growing number of Hebrew slaves and orders the execution of newborn males. Moses miraculously survives. Pharaoh's guidance comes from his own mystics who later do spiritual battle with Moses.

The births of John the Baptist and Yeshua the Messiah: The Gospel of Matthew recounts the story of how Yeshua escaped death at the hand of Herod's decree. During his lifetime we see Him and His apostles casting out many demons. What isn't explained is how his cousin John, only six months younger than Him, survived Herod's massacre. There is an account in the Pseudepigrapha, concerning John being protected by God throughout this ordeal and thus ending up living in the wilderness, where he was "taken in" by the community of people who lived in that area and trained to be a priest.

The return of Yeshua: The book of Revelation shows that the most ferocious period of demonic activity the world will have seen is yet to come — it precedes the return of Yeshua and is part of what is called the birthpangs of the Messiah.

10:5-7 Go not into the way of the Gentiles ... the Kingdom of heaven is at hand

The Messiah and the Kingdom of God were promised to the Jews. He is their living Torah. They in turn are to be a light to the world (Matthew 5:14-16). Gentiles, as a whole, would not receive the message of salvation until after Yeshua had died.

God's salvation plan has always been and remains the same:

Romans 1:16 – ... to the Jew first, and also to the gentiles

10:7 The kingdom of heaven

"Kingdom of Heaven" and "Kingdom of God" are interchangeable. It was and still is common practice among Jews to refer to God in this fashion – out of deep respect for the name of God. Even today, the term "HaShem," meaning "the Name" is often used in place of "God," both in Jewish writings and conversation.

10:8 ... freely ye have received, freely give

The benefit the apostles received cannot be overstated. They had directly received the gift of the Kingdom from the Messiah Himself. The proof of their receiving and giving the Kingdom is seen in verse 14 & 15. These apostles receive special recognition at the return of Messiah, as stated in the book of Revelation. Yeshua mentions their special place in His mystical prayer of John 17, where He elevates them before the Father, and also those who receive their teachings.

10:14,15 ... more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha

Why is this so? Because Sodom and Gomorrha did not have the witness of the Torah and the prophets and the Messiah's own emissaries. By the time the apostles are witnessing to Israel, they have had the written Torah for some 1300 years. Yeshua's group of twelve are upholding the witness of the Torah and the prophets. They are the "third witness" to come to Israel.

How did so many of them miss the fact that Yeshua was the Messiah?

Matthew 16:3 – O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

Paul addressed what the problem of many of his Jewish brethren was — they did not submit to God's righteousness, as taught in the Torah, and sought their own. When Yeshua, who was/is the "goal" or "aim" of the Torah arrived, they did not discern who He was.

Chapter 10 of Paul's letter to the Romans explains this. Unfortunately key parts to this are mistranslated in all Christian texts, thus we supply the following from the Jewish New Testament for a pivotal verse:

Romans 10:4 – The goal at which the Torah aims is the Messiah ... (2)

10:16 ... harmless as doves

Humility and obedience (to the point of accepting death), regarding walking with God and teaching the Torah, is the theme of the balance of this chapter. The word for "harmless" in verse 16, has the meaning of: unmixed, pure as with metal or wine, without a mixture of guile. What is the "unmixed" message they are testifying to? God's Torah.

The term "harmless" is the same one that Paul uses in his letter to the Philippians. It is interesting that we see several of the same themes in Paul's letters as we do in this chapter of Matthew. In Philippians chapter 2, Paul speaks of obeying God's Torah as part of "working out your salvation." Note that the Torah/Tenakh is all that they could be "obeying," and that not remaining pure to Torah was the only thing they could rightfully be "rebuked" for.

This section (below) comes on the heels of the preceding verses (5-11) that describe Yeshua receiving His reward because He was faithful unto death. (See Matthew 10:22 below for what our standards are.) Here too, this same term (harmless, meaning "unmixed") is associated with the Torah, called, "the word of life.":

Phillipians 2:12-16 – Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and **harmless**, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth **the word of life**; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

10:21 ... brother shall deliver up the brother to death

The prophet Micah spoke of this in His day:

Micah 7:6 – For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.

10:22 ... but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

There is no "one time fix" in the Jewish view of salvation — no teaching of, "believe these things in your heart and you're saved for life." You can willfully turn away and be lost. It should be noted that Paul does teach in several places that nothing can take you away from God. However, he is not addressing free will choice of turning away in any of those verses.

This did not change with Yeshua or His disciples. Many attempts are made by certain groups (who do not understand the Hebrew interpretation of Scripture) to teach doctrines such as, "once saved, always saved." This spiritually arrogant concept is alien to the Judaism of Yeshua and goes against God's Torah and the teaching of Yeshua and His followers.

Great feats of theological gymnastics often occur when "explaining away" the simple message of Torah-based verses such as these:

Hebrews 6:4 – For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

James 5:19-20 – Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. (Paul did not take his salvation as a “sure thing.” See comments to verse 10:39 below.)

10:24,25 ... If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub ...

Yeshua goes as far to say that those persecuting the ones that follow Him (and therefore are correctly following the Torah) will think that they are the ones that are being true to God. It is a tragic fact of the times we live in, that those who are now coming to a Torah-based faith in Yeshua, are being persecuted by others who claim to be the “God’s people.” The latter even go as far as claiming that the modern day return to Torah is actually of Satan and a sign of the end times. Web sites and articles are now appearing, “warning” people not to let themselves be placed under the “bondage” of “the Law.”

10:26 for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed

It is the Torah (the only “word of God” that Yeshua and His followers ever knew or referred to) that reveals every hidden thing:

Hebrews 4:12 – For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

10:28 And fear not them which kill the body ...

This is a summation of this section – not fearing death as part of your faith.

10:29-30 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? ...

The context here is that God’s concern for you is primarily for your soul, not your physical body. You may in fact suffer in this life, and die for your faith.

In the book of Hebrews we are told the following:

Hebrews 11:35 – ... and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.

10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men

The word “confess” is homologeo in the Greek (Strong’s #3670). This is a compound word derived from homou (meaning “the same” or “akin to”) and logos. The term logos in its simplest meaning denotes “something said.” We know however, that it also has to do with Divine Expression, such as we see in chapter 1 of John’s gospel, where Yeshua is called the logos.

Hence, to “confess” Yeshua is not simply a matter of “saying the words,” but of identifying with who He is (what He represents), which is the Torah, as He is the goal of the Torah (Romans 10:4). This further explains His words in Matthew 7:21-29, where people who did things in His name are condemned by Him. They did not build their house on the foundation He represents, His word, which is the Word of the Father (John 14:24), which is His Torah.

10:34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth:

See note to 10:21 above.

10:38 And he that taketh not his cross ...

“Taking up your cross” in the context of this chapter, means not being afraid to be killed. The Greek word for “cross” found here is stavros, meaning a “persecution stake.” The Dutullet Hebrew Matthew has the word “gallows” in place of “cross.”

10:39 He that findeth his life shall lose it ...

John's Gospel includes this analogy:

John 12:24 – Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

Paul taught the same about himself. He "lost" his life of trying to gain salvation through his own merit. Again in this section, Paul makes clear that he does not take his salvation for granted:

Philippians 3:3-14 – For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. **Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect:** but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Brethren, **I count not myself to have apprehended:** but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

The preceding verse is often misapplied to teach that Paul taught against the Torah (the Law). Nothing is further from the truth. Here, Paul is stating that he no longer relies on his own prideful righteousness – following the Torah in the flesh to "earn" his salvation. He now humbly teaches following Torah in faith – as faith in Yeshua does not void the Torah:

Romans 3:31 – Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.