

Transcript – The Word of YHWH and Mount Sinai

Shabbat Shalom and Shabbat Shalom to those who will hear this message later. Kind of interesting, a couple of weeks ago I gave a message on Corinthians 8:1 on “Knowledge Puffs Up But Love Builds Up”. Today I’m going to give the other side of the story and show the importance of literacy, basically. And the message is called ‘**The Word of Yahweh and Mount Sinai**’ or ‘**The Progression of Language and Mount Sinai**’. And although, of course, love is the most important ingredient in anything in life because it’s Yahweh’s character, I really want to show though, with the progression of language and particularly with the 10 commandments, the importance also of literacy though.

Just starting out the debate and most people are shocked when they come to Israel and they realize that there’s a ... and I wouldn’t say a majority ... there’s a vast amount of people in Israel; archeologist and you know, everybody from Tel Aviv University, you know on that side, that **do not even believe that King David and King Solomon were figures**. They don’t believe; they think that Israel was a very very small country and that when they came in here in that very small country, they were trying to build a history like other nations. And then they **created this fantastic character of King David fighting this big Goliath and Solomon** and whatnot. And today is still goes on, this debate has been going on for many many years and today it goes on and continues. There is some legitimacy to the debate because when you are looking at Solomon being the greatest king that ever lived, right? And having this great empire, **there has never been anything found with Solomon’s name outside the Bible**. There has never been anything found depicting this great kingdom that Solomon has had.

Now on the other end and this is what I like to show when I show the progression of language, **when King Solomon was around, writing was not normal**. It’s like, almost like somebody saying, “Well, I don’t believe that there’s a New Testament because I don’t find any Bibles like this that go back to the 2nd century.” Well, you know **the printing press only started with Gutenberg in 1450** or somewhere around there and that’s why today everybody has a Bible in their hand or where we want it. So remember, **in ancient times writing is extremely rare**. You know, we don’t find writing and that’s why when people say about **the Book of Enoch**, how could there be a Book of Enoch? You know, look in Genesis how old Enoch is; there’s no writing then. There’s no writing, there’s no alphabet, there’s not even hieroglyphics back then. You know, we don’t see Adam and Eve’s carving somewhere in a wall, you know, down near the Gihon Spring. It just ... it wasn’t realistic.

So the debate that went on here in Israel with King David, really and like I said, it goes on today but it changed a little bit in the 1990’s because of this **first slide** I want to show, **The Beit David Stone in Tel Dan**. So everybody has been up there to Tel Dan and you know they have all the great big city walls and the gates up there. And when they were digging there back in the mid-1990’s and a student happened to overturn one of the rocks that was in the ground and what does he find? He finds this stone. You know you can see it’s ancient Paleo-Hebrew writing and as he finds the stone and there’s two of them that go in together and what happens? It talks about a great victory of a Syrian king and mentions ‘**from the house of or from the dynasty of David**’ ... from David! And then everyone is going wild. You know, like I said, to the person that believes in the Bible and everything else, it’s no big deal. I mean we have hundreds of Psalms that David wrote with his own hand, can you imagine?

But many people are not taking the Bible as their final authority so they needed something else to find and this stone that they found really really made a big difference. But remember, without literacy, without an alphabet, you couldn’t have written this. So this couldn’t have been written if David lived in, let’s say, the 3rd millennial BC because there was no alphabet at that time. So, just this alone should show us the importance of literacy. And I’ll read you what literacy is according to definition. Literacy is defined as ‘the ability to read and to use the information and to write appropriately in a range of contexts. It is used to develop knowledge and understanding to achieve a personal growth and to function efficiently in society.’ So basically, it’s the ability to write and to read and to gain knowledge; you know that’s what

literacy is for. So without literacy, we wouldn't have had this. Now again, what did we have before that? Like is said, when Adam and Eve were created, there is no really anything that we know of that is any form of communication through writing in any way, whatsoever. We have going back to the 3rd millennial BC and maybe even the 4th millennial BC, we start to have something called **cuneiform writing by the Akkadians, also the Sumerians and then eventually the Egyptians**. So this is going back now in the 4th millennial BC like the 3,000, 3500 BC that we are having this.

I'll show you a little bit how it works. (New slide 'Hieroglyphics') This is hieroglyphics which comes out of the writing, like I said you have the **pictograph that starts with pictures**. So that's the original things and again very different from an alphabet though where people are taking a picture of something and putting pictures together and starting to come up with different writing. And that's how you get hieroglyphic. You get cuneiform, that's the same thing. I'll show you **another slide** here. This is **Egyptian cuneiform writing**, the same kind of thing as you're having pictures that are putting together. In some ancient writing, as they start to understand what the words mean, and then you get different something different like **the Rosetta Stone where you have it in three different languages**, it really helps to understand it because now you're seeing the symbol you know what it means in Egypt and now we're seeing it in Assyrian so now we are understanding what Assyrian is.

So these are all things as far as deciphering language; they are very important but still very different than what an alphabet is because with this, there is nothing of phonetic significance whatsoever. So you are taking a picture of, like we said of **ancient Paleo-Hebrew**, right? You take a **picture** of an 'ox' which became the 'aleph', you take the picture of a 'house'; and then you put the 'ox' and the 'house' together. The 'ox' means 'strength', the 'house' you know is 'family'; so in Hebrew the 'aleph' and the 'beit' which comes from the word of 'abba'; the 'abba' is 'the strength of the family'. But as far as phonetics, there is no way of knowing and if you just think of a little bit of let's say **a modern day hieroglyphic, you could say numbers**, right? The number 1, if you put a number 1 there, phonetically it has nothing to do with that number. The number doesn't mean nothing, that number is **a symbol** that tells you something. So if you see this that is a 3, you know there is this many (3 fingers) but it has **nothing to do with the pronunciation** of it. Because in Italian, you would say 'uno' for 1, in Hebrew you would say 'achat', in English we say 'one'; so phonetically, there is no connection to them, so it's a form of a hieroglyphic, a form of a cuneiform that is coming from that.

Maybe show one more here and just real a little bit about the symbols, how they started as **picture graph sketches of an actual object which was used to represent an idea or a specific word**. So again remember, this is coming ... the world has been here about 6,000 years, so the first 2,000 – 2,500 we don't have anything of communication through writing. We know that people communicated, we know there is language because the Bible tells us that there is language but there is no writing. So around 3,500 – 4,000, maybe 3,500 – 3,000 BC you are starting to get these things, that people are sketching objects to represent a word or an idea. From all the evidence of these two systems, **the hieroglyphic and the cuneiform, they came around the same time. Cuneiform sign represent full syllables including vowel points**, thus we know much more about how language is written in cuneiform were pronounced than we do from Egyptian hieroglyphics. Only used for ancient Egyptians, the hieroglyphics. The **writing system started by the Sumerians** and picked widely by the Mesopotamian speakers of a Semitic language unrelated to Sumerian. The language of the Babylonian and the Assyrians is called Akkadian by modern scholars and from there it was used for other languages; Elamite which was modern day Persia or Iran and the Hittites. And then **Egyptian hieroglyphics continued to be clear pictographs** as you can see it from here. Cuneiform shifts to forms using more abstract styled forms, you know that come from there.

So, I'm just giving you a very very brief analysis of how it started because I really ... what I want to show you today is, I really want to show you the importance of literacy and that **you can't get literacy without an alphabet**. It's impossible to get literacy without an alphabet. So this kind of system that if you were living in; you could give basic communication of something, you could write something, but you are not going to get literacy. I'm going to read a little bit from a book

here called **'The Writing of God' by a man by the name of Miles Jones**, a friend of mine. He was out here last year and gave a lecture actually to the school and it's a pretty interesting book. So a couple of things that I am going to take out of this book today and ... from here remember **everything is being written on stone** mostly and then **Egypt is the first one to go to papyrus**. (New slide) And he says, "The stalks of the papyrus plant were split lengthwise and then flattened, layered, pounded and bleached. Parchment was made by stretching and scraping hides of animals until they were supple enough to write upon. Both papyrus and parchment were expensive and usually in short supply."

So you could see kind of the progression that's happening now. That originally there is nothing and then after that you are going to just basic symbols of whatever, of an animal or of something, putting together to make an expression and then from here we are going to hieroglyphics where they are making them into actual words and syllables and stories and now you are actually getting it not on stone but putting it on papyrus and these kind of things. Like he said, only educated people wrote; very little supply and knowing how to write. So in these days, **literacy was power** and that's why today you can see places like North Korea, right? And even China, they don't want anybody on the Internet, they don't want anybody reading. Like in North Korea, most books are illegal; you can't have books because literacy is power. Because once you begin to read and understand, what does it do? It opens up your whole world to something different, the same way all of us, right? All of us grew up in countries that were first world countries where there wasn't dictatorship and we had the ability, right? To go out and read what we wanted and do whatever and yet, I believe, every one of us here grew up or was born basically into false religion. And how did we come out of it? Through literacy, if you didn't know how to write and you didn't know how to read, chances are you may still be sitting ... you know in a Catholic Church or another church somewhere. So I want to really show that because I am going to show the contrast of Yahweh's truth to paganism and show that **literacy really is the most important thing to keep you out of paganism** and to help you from paganism.

This is the **ancient Hebrew letters** (new slide) but we know that the **Paleo-Hebrew** came the same way, you know it **started out as a pictograph language** and then it changes over into the language but like we said, in ancient times only the most educated ... and isn't it interesting that here is Moses, when Moses is born, what happens? He's born, you know he's a Hebrew but he's not born as a Hebrew, you know. And I don't know if you ever thought about it but it's a good thing to think; why would Yahweh have him born in Pharaoh's court and come up as the Pharaoh and the Prince of Egypt and all these other things, you know? And as you start to see in this sermon here, you'll start to see a lot of is because of literacy. He needed someone who was literate to take the Israelites out of Egypt because there is going to be a gigantic change over when we get to Mount Sinai that happens over here. So **Moses definitely was literate**, he was educated in Pharaoh's court. He probably spoke more than one language and it helped to a certain degree. This is another (slide) **Progression of the Pictograph** language from Israel. So we could see this right here. I'm going to go to Exodus 17:14, so this is before, the Israelites are just coming out of Egypt. They don't even get to Mount Sinai.

Exo 17:14 And YAHWEH said to Moses, **Write this**, a memorial in a book, and set it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly wipe away the remembrance of Amalek under the heavens ... So here it is, they are just coming out. This is the very beginning of it and He's telling Moses to write something. So **apparently Moses had to know how to write**, he had to be literate for this. And as far as history shows us, I think Dr Jones does a good point showing this in his book, **up to this point there still was no alphabet**. If you look at the time that the Israelites are coming out in the 15th century BC, there's not an alphabet to this point. So **hieroglyphics are still being used** but we are going to see in a minute, there's a problem with that when we get to Mount Sinai because if you go to Exodus 20:4

Exo 20:4 You shall **not make a graven image** for yourself, or any likeness in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth ... You shall not make a **graven image** and literally in the Hebrew, that's an **etched image**. It's a scratching, it's etching something.

So now, they get to Mount Sinai, right? Yahweh's got to give them the 10 commandments and what's the alphabet they have? They have the alphabet like this (new slide) with all kinds of animals. So He's going to tell them, "*You're not to do this*" by giving them the commandments that have this. So there's a problem here and that's what Dr. Jones puts in his book making, I think, a very good case, that **Yahweh was literally the One who wrote the first alphabet**. There is no other reason for it, there's no other ... and when we see the Phoenician and we see the other alphabets that came from this alphabet, we see why Yahweh had to do it because the second commandments literally says *You're not to make an etched image. You're not to make an etched image.*

Lev 26:1 *You shall not make idols to yourselves; and you shall not set up for yourselves graven images ... So they are two different things; one is an idol is like the golden calf as we are going to see but then the other thing is etched images, carving into rock or carvings into something else ... or a memorial pillar. And you shall not place any stone image in your land, to bow yourselves to it; for I am YAHWEH your Elohim ... So this is what He is talking about, the Apis Bulls of Egypt (new slide) and the Apis Bulls of Egypt were what? There were used as worship; they were looked as deities, right? And this, some of these bulls were part of the hieroglyphics that they had in that day.*

Deuteronomy 7:25-26 ... He says ... *You shall burn the carved images of their Elohim with fire; and you shall not lust after the silver and gold on them, nor shall you take it to yourself, that you not be snared by it; for it is an abomination to YAHWEH. And you shall not bring an abomination into your house, that you not be a cursed thing like it. You shall utterly detest it, and you shall utterly hate it; for it is a cursed thing ... So He says ... You shall burn the carved images of their Elohim with fire; and you shall not lust after it or make anything that is like it .. So again, this is He says a memorial pillar (new slide); this is what you see here. You see, literally they would make a memorial pillar which would be etched carvings and they you can see all the other hieroglyphics that go with it. So very very clearly we could see that hieroglyphics would be breaking the second commandment, without a shadow of a doubt. Matter of fact, in the Greek, the word 'hieroglyphic' literally means 'a sacred carving' and in Egyptian it meant 'a deity marking', 'a deity marking'. So it wasn't just a simple ... used simply for languages, it was used basically for cultic practices.*

Maybe I'll read a little bit from his book again. He says, "Standing images or statues like the golden calf were distinguished from graven images etched into smooth stone, even though, both were abominations. *No idols or graven images nor rear you up any standing image*" ... what I just read from Leviticus 7:26. "Graven images refer specifically to hieroglyphics; the Greek word" ... like I said ... "meant 'sacred carving', the Egyptian word meant 'god markings' ... or deity markings ... "Hieroglyphics were icons of idolatry. A graven image was such an abomination to Yahweh that He commanded that *Thou shall utterly detest it and thou shall utterly abhor it for it is a cursed thing.* The writing or Elohim, therefore, could not have been picture graph. Picture graphs would have violated Yahweh's absolute prohibition against the worship of idols and the makings of graven images. Therefore **the writing of the Hebrew Torah, the first books of the Bible, was the first step away from picture graph writing to alphabetic symbols.**"

So the reason why Yahweh would have had to write it this way, maybe another reason why Moses was up there 40 days, you know, learning the alphabet that he had to get from it but certainly, this is what would have had it. We go to **Exodus 32:1-4** *And the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain. And the people gathered to Aaron. And they said to him, Rise up, make for us gods who may go before our face. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him. And Aaron said to them, Break off the rings of gold which are in the ears of your wives, your sons and your daughters; and bring them to me. And all the people broke off the rings of gold in their ears, and they brought to Aaron. And he took them from their hand and formed it with an engraving tool. And he made it a casted calf. And they said, These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.*

So interesting ... that **it's in the plural**. He didn't say, "So there's one calf" but why would he say, "**These are your gods**" if there is one calf? Because, this is exactly what they found at Mount Sinai. (New slide) So there were **two sins** that were done. One was **the golden calf**, itself, but one was **the etched writings that they did in the altar**. And this is from the actual altar in Saudi Arabia that they found at Mount Sinai showing the **Apis Bulls** like we just showed that they did not have in this area over there. So without a shadow of a doubt, these are Egyptians and they come from there. Like I said, the rock of Horeb, 75 feet high in an area that gets 1 ounce ... 1 inch of rain in every 10 years, I believe. And they have erosion patterns from that split-rock that show massive amounts of water coming out of from there and an aquifer underneath the rock to show it. There's a close-up of one of the hieroglyph cows that was there.

So what happens? Moses comes down, he sees this, right? And then when we get down to verse 19 and what is the first thing he does? ... **Exo 32:19** *And it happened, as he came near to the camp and **saw** the calf and dances, the anger of Moses glowed. And he threw the tablets from his hands, and he broke them below the mountain ...* So here it is. He's coming down to educate them; he's coming down to give them, not only to give them the gift of the word but the literacy because as we see literacy is power. You know, it's the first thing you tell your children; we were telling Moriah this when she was little and she was learning to read. We said, "Look if you can't learn to read, you'll do nothing else in life." You know, reading opens up a world to everything else. So here it is, Moses is all excited, he's coming down with the very first writing coming from Yahweh, Himself, to not only give the gift of the word but to give them the gift that is going **to make them above every other nation because there is no other nation on earth that is literate**. And he sees it and what does he do? He breaks the stones ... **Exo 32:20** *And he took the calf which they had made and burned it with fire and ground it until it was fine, then he scattered it on the face of the water. And he made the sons of Israel to drink it ...* We go to Exodus 34, Exodus 34, a couple of pages over.

Exo 34:1 *And YAHWEH said to Moses, Cut out for yourself two tablets of stone, like the former. And **I will write on the tablets the words** which were on the former tablet, which you broke ...* So clearly, this is **not hieroglyphic**; He is writing **words** that is on here; so again, showing the first alphabet.

Exo 34:4-5 *And he cut out two tablets of stone like the former. And Moses rose early in the morning and went up into Mount Sinai, as YAHWEH had commanded him. And he took in his hand the two tablets of stone. And YAHWEH came down in the cloud. And he placed himself there with Him, and he called on the name of YAHWEH ...* So we see this is the **Thaumudic Alphabet** (New slide). They have more than a thousand writings that they found near Mount Sinai from this alphabet. It's the **precursor to Paleo-Hebrew** and very similar but a little different; this is the alphabet that would have been used to write the original commandments on. That's just a replica of the 10 Commandments. (New slide)

If we go to **Exodus 24:4** *And **Moses wrote** all the Words of YAHWEH. And he rose early in the morning and built an altar below the mountain and twelve memorial pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel ...* Now, it's really interesting because here it is; **the very altar that Moses built was the one that they etched the cows on**. So you can see how angry he was because he builds the altar. They find the pillars that are still there too, at least pieces of it. But he *wrote all the Words of YAHWEH. Verse 7* *And he took the book of the covenant, and **read** in the ears of the people. And they said, We will do all that YAHWEH has spoken ...* So again, Moses is writing and Moses is reading; he is reading from the book of the covenant.

Exo 24:12 *And YAHWEH said to Moses, Come up to Me to the mountain, and be there. And I will give to you the tablets of stone, and the Torah, and the commandments which **I have written**, to teach them ...* So why is He giving? He's giving them ... **He's writing them to teach them** because you need writing to learn. Literacy, it's so simple when you think about it.

Exodus 31:18, Exodus 31:18, and you know it's interesting when you look today, you look ... if you think this is not powerful, **the New World Order** knows how the lack of literacy holds people back because just look today ... Africa lacks

nothing when it comes to minerals and growing and everything compared let's say America or Great Britain and why, why then in Africa is there such famine? Why is there such things? Because of illiteracy because they purposely make sure that they **keep the majority in Africa illiterate** so they can't get to the same wealth level that the others can get to. So the New World Order understands the power of literacy and they purposely work against it ... **Exo 31:18** *And when He finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave to Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, **written by the finger of Yahweh** ...* So again, clearly showing that it's written.

Exo 32:15-16 *And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, the two tablets of the testimony in his hand, **tablets written on their two sides**, on this and on that side they were written. And the tablets were the work of Elohim, and the **writing was the writing of Elohim**; it was engraved on the tablets ...* So clearly amazing, we see the very first time in human history that we have recorded that the **writing coming directly from Yahweh** which is just amazing to think about.

Deu 28:13 *And YAHWEH shall make **you the head, and not the tail**. And you shall be only above, and you shall not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of YAHWEH your Elohim, which I am commanding you today, to be watchful to do them ...* So again, their blessing is going to be, they are going to be the head and not the tail. So by teaching them, by making them literate, by giving them an alphabet, by giving them not only a means for themselves but **a means to educate generation to generation ; it's going to put them above all other people of the earth.** Malachi 2:7

Mal 2:7 *For the **lips of the priest** should guard knowledge, and they should seek the Torah from his mouth; for he is the messenger of YAHWEH of Hosts ... the lips of the priest should guard knowledge ...* So that's the point; first the priests had to become literate, they had to learn and then they would be teaching the people from that point.

Deuteronomy 31, Deuteronomy 31, and I think because we live in, primarily at least most of us coming from first-world nations, we take for granted of what literacy really means and what it does for your life and how it changes your life from those that are illiterate.

Deu 31:9-13 *And Moses **wrote** this Torah, and delivered it to the priests ... Right? Because the priests had to teach the people ... the sons of Levi, those bearing the ark of the covenant of YAHWEH, and to all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, **At the end of seven years in the appointed time, in the year of release, in the Feast of Sukkot**, when all Israel comes in to see the face of YAHWEH in the place which He chooses (Jerusalem), **you shall proclaim this Torah before all Israel**, in their ears. Assemble the people, men and women, and the little ones, and your foreigner who is within your gates, so that they may hear, and so that **they may learn**, and may fear YAHWEH your Elohim, and take heed to do all the Words of this Torah; and their sons who have not known shall hear, and shall learn to fear YAHWEH your Elohim all the days which you live on the land where you are crossing over the Jordan to possess it.*

So that's the reason why every 7th year ... because remember we didn't have the printing press, everyone didn't have Bibles. They only had one copy of that Torah maybe, or several copies but not many. So **every 7th year everyone had to come together to have the Torah read to them.** The point of it was, to make Israel a nation above other nations; first it was by the literacy of the teaching but second it was that they had to carry it out ... you know because if they didn't carry it out what good would it be that they learned.

Deuteronomy 6:6 ... And then every family head had the responsibility to make sure his children were literate. It says ... *And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart, **Deuteronomy 6:6-9** And you shall **diligently teach them** to your sons, and shall speak of them as you sit in your house, and as you walk in the way, and as you are lying down, and as you are rising up. And you shall bind them for a sign on your hand; and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. And you shall **write them on the doorposts of your house, and on your gates** ...* You've got to be literate to do that ... Now it's interesting, today we know ... We are here in Israel ... We know they put the little

mezuzahs but you know, it's interesting the Samaritans don't do it that way. The Samaritans do it like this. (New slide) They literally write it out because when it says put it on your doorpost; the lintel is also called the door post. And many people believe it literally **putting it across you door** that when people come in, they know, *Hey these people are Yahweh people. These people are Torah people ... They know how to do it, more than just putting this little tiny symbolism on the door that comes there.*

But we see, you had to be literate to know how to write and of course it also had to be on your heart and teach them to your children. Another thing ... just coming here to Israel, finding something like Gilgal, right? In a million years, nobody would have ever thought that **Gilgal was made in the shape of a sandal** even though they said for thousands of years "Aliya l'regel" ("We're going by foot") and yet 'Aliya l'regel' literally means 'Going to the foot'. But it shows you the mentality of the people that were illiterate that were coming from that such a basic mindset. Yet when Yahweh says, "Every place that foot goes is yours"; they are making this worship in a big foot because that is what is the simple mindset. Now again, as hundreds of years go by and the people are no longer illiterate, they still understand the concept of Gilgal but they are not thinking the same way.

So literacy will change the way you think. It will make you **understand the work of Yahweh in a much greater way**. Now again, salvation can come on the basic level, I've said that many times. The Bible is like archeology, you keep going down. So you can get the basic level of salvation; our fallen nature, we need to repent, we need to turn back to Yahweh and be obedient to His Torah; very easily, you know. But if you really want to get the deep things of Yahweh and be closer to Him, you need literacy. You know, there is a part of it that is simply knowledge based.

Deuteronomy 12, because now I want to get into another side of this because it will also keep you away from falling into paganism ... because face it, you might look today and say, "How on earth? Look how ugly those gods looked!" You know, look at the fat Buddha, who could ever bow down to him and want to worship that? But people that aren't literate, people that are so simple minded that don't know any better, they fall into paganism and it happens at times. Literacy will help you to see how ridiculous that is; literacy helps you to see that no, that is not serving Yahweh.

Deu 12:28-31 ... He says ... *Take heed to listen to all these Words which I am commanding you, in order that it may be well with you and with your sons after you forever, when you do that which is good and right in the eyes of YAHWEH your Elohim. When YAHWEH your Elohim shall cut off the nations from before you, where you are going in to possess them, and you shall possess them, and shall live in their land, take heed to yourself that you **not be snared to follow them** after they have been destroyed before you; and that you **not inquire after their gods**, saying, How did these nations serve their Elohim? And I shall do so, even I. You shall **not do so to YAHWEH** your Elohim; for everything hateful to YAHWEH, which He detests, they have done to their gods. For they have even burned their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods ... Which was very common in ancient times ... **All the things that I command you, take heed to do them and you shall not add to it, nor take away from it.***

So literally, by being literate, it would help them to have knowledge to stay away from paganism because remember **Exodus 32:5** *And Aaron saw, and he built an altar before it. And Aaron called and said, a feast to YAHWEH tomorrow.*

So when they built the golden calf, **they were calling the golden calf Yahweh!** They were literally, they didn't know any better because of their simple-minded and their illiteracy that they are calling the golden calf Yahweh. **Literacy gives power and knowledge not to be deceived.** Again, you have free will, you have to use it but it gives you knowledge not to be deceived. So there's an image of a golden calf that they would have had back then. (New slide)

Isaiah 42:8 ... You know Yahweh says ... *I am YAHWEH; that is My name; and I will not give My glory to graven images ...* So for us it seems pretty simple. Why? Because we have understanding, because we have understanding but to many people for thousands of years it didn't. And **never take it for granted**, you know, that we have not only one Bible but we

have thousands of different Bibles, concordances, lexicons. We have so much at our disposal in the end time because the stakes are so high that Yahweh gives us everything not to be deceived. But we could have just as easily have lived 4,000 years ago where we didn't know any better and we did think, you know, because you did need sunshine and you need rain for your crops and you could have thought like these people who thought that there's Baal the sun god, and there's Chemosh, this god and all these other things. So praise Yahweh that He does give us the literacy that we need at this time.

Let's go to I Corinthians 10, I Corinthians 10, because it's inconceivable in the time we live in why anybody should have to be deceived in paganism and yet, and yet, like I said, there's a ... **more than a billion people in the world that believe in the Bible, they believe that Yahshua is the Messiah and they still worship Yahweh through paganism**, more than a billion people, you know. Again, so why is it? Why is it? Because it's not just enough just to have the knowledge, you have to apply the knowledge. So I want to read I Corinthians 10 and interestingly enough because it's even talking about going back to Mount Sinai. He says

1Co 10:1-11 *And I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the Sea. And all were baptized to Moses in the cloud, and in the Sea, and all ate the same spiritual food. And all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual rock following, and that Rock was Messiah. Yet Elohim was not pleased with most of them, "For they were scattered in the deserted place." But these things became **examples for us**, so that we may not be lusting after evil, even as those indeed lusted. Neither be idolaters, even as some of them, as it has been written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Nor should we commit fornication, as some of them fornicated, and twenty three thousand fell in one day. Neither let us tempt the Messiah, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. Neither should you murmur, as also some of them murmured, and perished by the hand of the destroyer. And all these things happened to those **as examples, and it was written for our warning**, on whom the ends of the ages have come.*

So if there was no progression of alphabet, we wouldn't have, we wouldn't know it. We would have no understanding that they did it and we might be making the same mistakes that they did. But Yahweh did give this progression of alphabet and writing and literacy and like he says there, *it was written for our warning*.

1Co 10:12-15 *So that he that thinks he can stand, let him be careful that he not fall. No temptation has taken you except what is human; but YAHWEH is faithful, who will not allow you to be tested above what you are able. But with the trial, He will also make the way out, so that you may be able to bear it. On account of this, **keep away from idolatry**, my beloved. I speak as to **prudent** ... Look up that word. It means intelligent, wise ... I speak as to **prudent** ones; you judge what I say ... Right? So now he's saying this is the case where you do need ... without having some type of literacy and some type of knowledge, it's very easy to fall because you don't know any better. Just like all of us, our parents did it, they taught us so we are doing it but is it pleasing to Yahweh? That's what the key is. Drop down to verse 18.*

1Co 10:18-22 *Look at Israel whose observances is according to flesh; are not those eating the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What then do I say, that an idol is anything, or that an idolatrous sacrifice is anything? No. But the things the pagans sacrifice, "**They sacrifice to demons, and not to YAHWEH.**" (Deut. 32:17) But I do not want you to have **fellowship with demons**; you cannot drink the cup of our Master and a cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of our Master, and a table of demons. Or do we provoke our Master to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?*

So very clearly, you know when we're looking at these things whether it's **Christmas, Easter, birthdays**; these are things that all came from paganism. You know and it's really interesting because when you look, **every pagan ritual, it's celebratory and pleasure based but it's not worship to Yahweh**, right? And that's what you think about ... *all things we do; do to the glory of Yahweh*. So if something is only bringing glory toward a human being, why on earth would you do it? You know the Bible does say *give honor where honor is due* and I don't think there is anything wrong with you have

parent that might be 70 or 80 years old and you are just honoring them, that Yahweh allowed them to live and you are saying congratulating them that you know that they are that certain age. That's fine. But to every year, celebrate your birth, as if each of us has this important thing, **it's idolatry and it's against the word of Yahweh.**

You can look from the earliest writings from the second century, it says the **early believers despised birthdays** because birthdays were only celebrated by kings. And like I said, all you have to do is, right? We are literate now, we're educated. Let's look at it on an educated level. Look in your Bible and see how many births there are. There's births of Adam and Eve, there's birth of Moses, there's births of so many people and you show me one date that a person was born on. Even Yahshua the Messiah; we have a chapter on His birth never telling you the date. Why? Pretty simple is the answer because **Yahweh doesn't want us to celebrate it; He doesn't want us to celebrate anybody's birth.**

The Bible says the **day of your death is better than the day of your birth** and the Bible doesn't tell us to celebrate even Yahshua's birth but it does tell us to celebrate His death. It's so simple, you know. But again, you've got to be literate; you've got to be literate to understand it because literacy means putting concepts together. It's being able to take things that are put in a rational way and are putting it together and come up with the right concept for it. So the same thing with **Christmas** and people say, "Well It's only ... It's only ... a meal. We're only having a meal." What does he say here? He says, "No, **they are worshipping to demons.**" And even though they don't know any better, **Christmas is a demonic holiday.** You know, putting up a Christmas tree, all the holly. You don't have to go far, get an encyclopedia; educate yourself, become literate and then you will see that **everything that is affiliated with Christmas is demonic.** So why would I want to go and eat with them when the Bible says you cannot partake of the table of Yahweh which means taking the Passover every year which we know how serious it is and partake of the table of demons. It's a choice each person has to make. Interesting enough when we go to Exodus 34, even way back in the book of Exodus with Moses, he says the same thing. Exodus 34:14, just like we said, pagan rituals are celebratory, they are pleasure based but they certainly are not worshipful.

Exo 34:14 ... It says ... *For you shall **not bow to another Elohim**, for YAHWEH whose name is Jealous, He is a jealous Elohim; that you **not cut a covenant with the people of the land**, and they fornicate with their Elohims ...* Just like they do on Christmas and Easter celebrations ... *and they call to you, and you **eat from his sacrifice** ...* Sure they may say it's only a dinner but why are they eating that dinner on that day? They are doing it because they are worshipping that pagan whatever Christmas, Easter, whatever you want to call it. They are worshipping that but we know better, we are literate. We have a gift from Yahweh, we have the Word; He has risen us above this, that we don't have to fall into paganism because of it. Again, because He loves us, he gives us free choice and we have to make the choice. And He says

Exo 34:16-17 *and if you take from their daughters for your sons, and their daughters fornicate with their Elohims, and they lead your sons to fornicate with their Elohims. You shall not make for yourself casted Elohims ...* So we see that Yahweh not only forbids the blending of this, you know it doesn't really matter what situation it is; if they are having Christmas parties, Christmas this ... No thank you! I'm too literate to fall for that kind of thing. But also He says **not to intermarry with people that aren't of the faith.** Why? Because they are going to intermarry with them and they are going to get into all of this stuff and they're going to pull you into it. So that's why Yahweh says it and it's repeated in the New Covenant that you must marry a believer. You can go to I Corinthians 7 that even a widow can remarry but it has to be somebody of the faith. It's very clear what Yahweh says there. So He forbids marriage with non-believers because He knew what **the spirit of compromise** would bring, He knew what the spirit of compromise would bring. Drop down to verse 27 of the same chapter.

Exo 34:27-28 *And YAHWEH said to Moses, **Write these words for yourself ... Write the words ... for on the mouth of these words I will cut a covenant with you and with Israel ...*** If you are not literate, how do you cut a covenant, you know,

at least this covenant because it's important ... *And he was there with YAHWEH forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread and he did not drink water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Words.*

So again we see the power of literacy. I want to go to II Kings 22 because if you don't think that literacy is powerful then this story really helps because you know what happened? Israel didn't always keep their literacy. The Bible doesn't tell us how this happened but somehow **they lost the Torah for a period**. They lost the Torah and what happened as soon as they lost the Torah? **They got into all kinds of pagan worship**, not because they were sinister and evil although our human nature is evil, we know that, but they lost the ... they went into paganism because we are creatures of habit. They didn't know any better, you know and they went back to what they didn't know. So, II Kings 22, I'm going to jump around a little bit but I'm going to start in verse 8, it says

2Ki 22:8 *And Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the Book of the Torah in the house of YAHWEH; and Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it ...* So what happened? The house of Yahweh needed repair, they were going into repair it and they find the book of the Torah in there! So they didn't ... we don't know how long it was lost to this point but it seemed to be a considerable amount of time and now he finds the book and what does he say? *And he read it. And he read it.* Praise Yahweh for literacy! If he wasn't literate what good would that book have done for him? Absolutely nothing! Go down to verse 10.

2Ki 22:10-11 *And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest has given a book to me; and Shaphan read it before the king. And it happened when the king heard the Words of the Book of the Torah, he ripped his garments ...* This is Josiah; this is a righteous king that is there and he's saying, "We're doing everything wrong. We didn't know any better but we are doing it."

2Ki 22:12-13 *And the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah the king's servant, saying, Go, inquire of YAHWEH for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, as to the Words of this Book that has been found; for great is the wrath of YAHWEH that burns against us, because our fathers have not listened to the Words of this Book, to do according to all that which is written concerning us ...* So again **Yahweh could have mercy on our ignorance** and like I said, someone who doesn't know the name Yahweh, they may pray to Him. If their heart is right, He can answer our prayer but certainly, **Yahweh can't bless you if you are sinning**. So maybe the accountability is less but He is certainly not going to bless you. He's not blessing people who are sitting around a Christmas table, no matter how much their heart might be right; He can't do it. He's not going to violate His own word.

And that's why literacy and the word is power because it draws us closer to Yahweh. Remember Yahweh is Spirit and those that worship Him, **must worship Him in Spirit and truth**. **Acts 17** *In times past, Yahweh winked at our ignorances ... because they didn't know any better ... but now He calls every man everywhere to repent.* There is no reason for us to be Biblical illiterates any more. There's too much we have here; we have the Spirit that opens up our mind and tells us these things. So the only reason if you are going to be a Biblical illiterate is that you are choosing it. You're choosing it for yourself. Drop down to verse 15.

2Ki 22:15 *And she said to them ...* So they go over here and also they go to **Huldah the prophetess** and this is what she is saying to them ... *So says YAHWEH, the Elohim of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, So says YAHWEH, Behold, I will bring evil on this place, and on its inhabitants, even all the Words of the Book which the king of Judah has read; because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore My wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched ...* So again, they are doing this evil, they are worshipping the false deities and then we get to chapter 23 verse 1.

2Ki 23:1-3 *And the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of YAHWEH, and every man of Judah, and all the ones living in Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, from small to great; and he read in their ears all the Words of the Book of the covenant that was found in the house of YAHWEH. And the king stood by the pillar, and made the covenant before YAHWEH, to walk after YAHWEH, and to keep His commandments, and His testimonies, and His statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to lift up the Words of this covenant that were written in this Book. And all the people stood to the covenant ... No alphabet, no book; where would they be?*

2Ki 23:4-5 *And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring out from the temple of YAHWEH all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for Asherah, and for all the host of the heavens. And he burned them at the outside of Jerusalem, in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. And he caused to cease the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had given place to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places around Jerusalem, and those burning incense to Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to constellations, and to all the host of the heavens.*

So again, without literacy what happens? You need the sun, you need the rain, that's what they start to worship, that's what they go back to. But here it is, they found the book, they were able to read and it took them away from those things. **Finding the book of the covenant and reading, they were able to repent.** Just like all of us, found the book of the covenant and we were able to repent. **How blessed we are to have the written word of Yahweh.** Never take for granted as Yahweh creating an alphabet is why we have the word today. So like I said, it's very living in Israel; we never want to take one day for granted that we are here in the Promised Land. It's the same way since you can go anywhere and Bibles are everywhere and you buy hundreds of them. **Never take for granted the blessing that Yahweh gives us through this word.** Remember, to much is given, much is expected; to more is given, more is required. So **He's given us such a great gift to have not only literacy but have His Spirit open up our mind to the truth of that.**

I just want to ... have too much left but I also want to tie it in a little bit to the New Testament because again, **without the Tanach, there wouldn't be a Brit Chadashah** so let's go to II Timothy 4. I talked about this many times. We have some lessons on –line about this. The early believers believed that there was a 40 year period from Yahshua's death in 30 AD to 70AD, that Yahshua would return by 70 AD and when Yahshua did not return by 70 AD, actually it was several years before that by about 67; they knew things weren't coming about. **There was a great falling away that happened and many people that went into the Great Revolt against the Romans** and it was really a bad time for believers. It was real disarray, people being killed and martyred and what-not. But when Peter, Apostle Peter and Apostle Paul realized Yahshua would not be returning by 70 AD, they got together in Rome and they put together the books that we know today as the New Testament. There's a scripture I'm going to read you here in II Timothy that's a prelude to this and it starts in II Timothy 4. Paul says

2Ti 4:1-4 *I solemnly charge you before YAHWEH and the Master Yahshua Messiah, He being about to judge the living and the dead at His appearance and His kingdom: **Preach the Word! Stand by it** in season and out of season. Convict, warn, encourage with all patience and teaching ... Again literacy ... For a time will be when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own lusts, they will add to themselves extra teachers according to their own desires; and they will **turn away their ears from the truth and will be turned aside to fables** ... We see a lot of that happening today but again, not because it has to be. The truth is there. What Paul is saying, there is a time coming where it's going to be really bad and then really interesting ... drop down to verse 9, he says*

2Ti 4:9-13 *Make every effort to come to me soon ... He knew he was going to be beheaded and he was very shortly after this ... For Demas deserted me, having loved this world, and he went to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark ... He's talking about John Mark ... and bring him with you, for he is useful to*

me for ministry. But I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. When you come, **bring the book carrier** which I left in Troas with Carpus, **and the books, especially the parchments.**

And these **parchments** were what? **These are the letters that would become what we know as the Brit Chadashah** and interesting enough, that's why it's called the Bible. The first one was made in Byblos in which is modern day Lebanon, ancient Tyre and it was the **first book that was binded**, that was not scrolled. So they took these scrolls, they wrote them in a bounded book and the very first one was the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament. So here we see the **Khaburis Peshitta, the oldest in the world.** (New slide) This copy here is more than a thousand years old; it's official with a seal inside of it. The person who's writing is saying, "I am looking at a **second century text** and I am writing it exactly word for word." It's a scribe that's doing it, an official, real scribe. And that's why I say, this is **more authentic than the Dead Sea Scrolls**, although the Dead Sea scrolls may be older, we don't know who wrote them. We have no idea, they are not written on official parchment. You know all we know is they are ancient and we are taking for granted because they **say the same thing** of ones we have a thousand years later that they are official. But this shows the **official seal**, it shows the man who's doing it, everything from it. So we have here the **oldest New Testament writing going back to the second century.**

Interesting also when you look at Revelation 3:8, **Rev 3:8** ... Yahweh says ... *I know your works. Behold, I have given a door being opened before you, and no one is able to shut it, for you have a little strength and have kept My Word* ... He puts this open door and it's interesting in the historical part of the Philadelphia Era that starts in 1620 ... Remember there is **1,260** years in the wilderness from Revelation 12 that **starts in 360 AD** at the Council of Laodicea where the people are fleeing to Armenia and these other areas and then it **ends in 1620** when the Pilgrims come to America. Right after the time the printing press is just made and now for the first time ever, including the days of Yahshua, for the first time, believers have not only an open door that they have a printing press that they can print things but there is no persecution. Because right before that, one of the reasons why many Sabbath keepers came to the New World with the Pilgrims was the King of England at that time had made a decree that everyone must go to church on Sunday or be put in prison and many of the Sabbath keepers came over on the pilgrim boats. So it's kind of interesting, you know when you are looking at this, **right after the printing press**, this is the first time where you are going to getting **mass writings** and at the same time that's when you have the **first Bibles that are written**; the Tyndale Bible, the King James Bible, you know, some of them even with the Sacred Name originally.

So **Hosea 4:6** ... Says ... **My people perish for lack of knowledge.** *Because you rejected the knowledge, I also rejected you from being priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the Torah of your Elohim, I will forget your sons, even I* ... So the people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. So again, knowledge in itself is not the end of all ends. It's like we know, knowledge without love only leads to pride and to vanity but at the same rate, true knowledge, the true knowledge of Yahweh leads to literacy, Bible literacy, that leads to a closer relationship to Yahweh and it helps us to be closer to Him from not having to be deceived.

The **greatest gift that Yahweh ever gave was His Son, the Word of Yah**; John 1:1, right? He was called the Word, the living Torah. And **to be able to understand this great gift, He gave us the second greatest gift, the written Word of Yah.** Because without the written word, what good is Yahshua? You wouldn't know who He is, right? How many people that saw Him here in Galilee and even today, Jews all around here that they have no significance? Why, why do we believe that He is the Son of Yahweh? Because of the word, because **Yahweh gave us undeniable proof that this Bible, the Tanach and the Brit Chadashah, is His unadulterated word**, that we can bank on all of it; the Holy Spirit opened up our mind to that. But **without the written word, how would we know about Yahshua?** How would we know everything He did? And that's why I say I love Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, could read them a thousand times over; they are so amazing. Paul's letters opening up to the grace of Yahweh through Yahshua. Every single part of the Brit Chadashah is an

amazing book. But again, without the second gift of the word of Yah, it would be very hard to understand the greatest gift that He gave, the Word of Yah, His Son.

In Genesis 2:9, it speaks about the tree of life but then when we get to Exodus 32:32 it talks about the book of life, so there's a changeover. Because in Genesis, you didn't need any book, right? You didn't need the literacy because you basically ... it was a perfect environment there. But when mankind rejected Yahweh's perfect environment, and now you're living in an environment of Satan, you had better believe you need literacy. You need literacy first, regular literacy to be able to read and write and then of course you need Bible literacy through the Holy Spirit to be able to interpret. But again, Genesis talks about the tree of life, Exodus talks about the book of life.

Literacy for the Israelites was not only to make them more educated than the neighbors around them but to **educate them in the proper worship and love of Yahweh and love toward our fellow man**. So it's not about having more knowledge base than other people but again, if you look out there ... If you look even at Catholicism, some Catholics are the most loving, caring people you ever meet in your life but they are still bowing down to statues. They are still lighting candles to statues because they're **Bible illiterates**; they don't know any better, they're worshipping Mary who's a pagan goddess, right? It's Ishtar; it's not Mary the mother of Yahshua. It's the Ishtar and they don't know any better because they are not literate.

So **Bible literacy teaches us how to worship Yahweh** and because He is Yahweh and He will not give His glory to graven images, you better believe it's important because He might not ... it might not be the same accountability against you than somebody that knows, there's still accountability. Because like we see, he who knew to do better and didn't will get many stripes; he who didn't know, still gets stripes; maybe not as many but they are still getting stripes. And Yahweh cannot go against His own word. So again, having been Bible literate, it helps you to properly worship Him and greater than that, by worship, it means having **a greater relationship with Him**. Because you can only build a relationship with Him through truth, the same way human relationships are not built through lies and error, they are built through truth. So education was not given and literacy just to make them more educated than their neighbors but to help them with proper worship and love of Yahweh and their fellow man.

In Daniel 12:4, it talks about in the end time knowledge being increased and like we said, we don't want to take for granted because both knowledges ... **you have worldly knowledge and you have Yahweh's knowledge**. And with knowledge being increased, it also says in Revelation 12:9 that Satan has deceived the whole world, so Satan is much smarter than we are and unfortunately much more literate than we are, you know, but He is not literate in the word of Yahweh and that's why when we **surrender to Yahweh and His Spirit**, then Yahweh can make us properly literate in the things that we need to do. But today, here we have, like I said, we have concordances, we have lexicons, we have all kinds of study aids and Bible translations and we should **never take it for granted** because we are the only generation that's ever had all these things and **we need to use them**. And above all that, the fact, at least for us English speakers, maybe in other languages like **Hebrew and Aramaic they never lost the original scriptures**, but at least in English I believe we also have the closest Bible translation to the original Hebrew and Aramaic, that we have ever had, that's ever been done. So we want to make sure we are thanking Yahweh for that and we are not taking it for granted and that we are using it every day, we are reading it every day and we are growing in our literacy to grow in our relationship with Him. But again, because we have to choose the truth, we have to make sure we are surrendering our self and our pride and our self-will to Yahweh and we are choosing His truth. So how important is the written word of Yahweh? It's life giving and it's lifesaving. Yahweh bless. Shabbat shalom.